

Service Planning

SCOPE

Service: Arts and Cultural Services

Director: Kerry Stubbings, Director Community Services

Manager: Peter Gore, Manager Youth Leisure and Cultural Services

SERVICE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

This Service Assessment will aim to answer the following key questions:

1. What should the role of Council be for this service?
2. What should be the strategic intent of the service?
3. What should be the service model for this service?
4. What service levels should this service deliver?
5. How could this service be more effective and efficient?

In accordance with the Council Plan, all Service Analyses will consider planning, where relevant, for an ageing population; and providing a range of programs, services and partnerships which aim to build connections between people and reduce social isolation.

INTRODUCTION

The Arts and Cultural Service forms part of the Youth, Leisure and Cultural Services Department within the Community Services Directorate. The key service areas are Leisure Services, Arts and Cultural Services and Youth Services.

The Arts and Cultural service delivers and engages the local community in a range of quality arts and cultural services and programs. Through community participation, creative and vibrant public places, partnership and leadership, community capacity development and performance and arts sector development.

Arts and Cultural Services offer local people access to quality arts and cultural opportunities within the municipality. It plays a key role in developing the city as 'culturally rich and active'. The service also seeks to engage support and assist local artists, not for profit arts and community organisations and groups in their practices and outputs.

The Arts and Cultural Service is currently operating in a competitive and changing environment. This has required the service to use a collaborative entrepreneurial and output driven approach to deliver on its goals.

The Scope document outlines the current service model and provides a preliminary service assessment of the existing service.

CURRENT SERVICE MODEL

Arts and Cultural Service Snapshot

Service budget 2015/2016:	
Income	\$408,000
Expenditure	\$1,854,000
Net	\$1,446,000

The Arts & Cultural service is delivered through a team consisting of 11 staff (8.49 EFT) based at the following Council facilities: Eastgate South; Knox Community Arts Centre, Bayswater and Ferntree Gully Community Arts Centre, Ferntree Gully.

The service is an in-house service supported by approximately 300 volunteers, artists (both locally and external to the municipality), consultants and specialist contractors to support the delivery of its service activities eg events chief production manager and site Manager.

The service's staffing comprises:

Position	EFT
Coordinator	1.0
Festival & Events Officer	1.0
Community & Public Art Officer	1.0
Team Leader Knox Community Arts Facilities	1.0
Administration officers	2.89
Marketing Officer	0.66
Recreation Centre Officer	0.32
Casual Technicians	0.62
TOTAL:	8.49

Council's Arts and Cultural Service is primarily funded by Council. It receives minor secondary income streams including: festivals and events (ticket revenue, stallholder costs), community arts centre activities (casual and regular hire charges), sponsorship and grants.

The Arts and Culture Service is underpinned by four key principles: Community Participation, Creative and Vibrant Public Places, Partnership and Leadership and Capacity and Performance:

- 1. Community Participation** - encourage and promote a wide range of opportunities for the enjoyment of and participation in the arts by all sectors of the community including encouraging greater engagement with our culturally and linguistically diverse communities and breaking down existing access and inclusion constraints.

2. **Creative and Vibrant Public Places** – identify and support opportunities to integrate the arts and a range of creative initiatives into the planning and delivery of public open spaces, improve access to the city’s existing Cultural Heritage infrastructure and contribute to the promotion of a vibrant and distinctive city identity.
3. **Partnership and Leadership** – foster and develop a leadership role for Council in the sector, identify and support opportunities partnerships and advocate for the benefits of creativity and innovation in a range of opportunities both internally and in the community.
4. **Capacity and Performance** – acknowledge and advance opportunities for the arts to contribute to the well-being of the city, identifying internal opportunities to improve and increase arts-focused amenity and infrastructure, and improve capacity and performance of the organisation to increase the cultural vitality, health and wellbeing of the city.

Source: Knox Arts and Cultural Plan 2012-22

The Arts and Culture Service utilises a range of roles to achieve the strategic intent of the service including:

- **Partner** – Developing partnerships with a range of stakeholders including local artists, craft workers, not for profit arts groups and organisations, as well as volunteers through schools, colleges etc. (Plus regional, national and international artists). The spirit of partnership also extends to potential sponsors, patrons, funders and regional and national grant giving bodies.
- **Provider** – The service delivers a broad range of quality arts and cultural programs, activities and projects including Festivals and Events, as well as the programming of Council’s two arts centres. It also oversees the management of several community facilities and the management of the Civic Art Collection and Placemakers Legacy.
- **Planner** – The service has establishes and maintains platforms for the local arts scene including networking, mentoring and strategic planning. The service has developed processes through which local communities can engage in the development of strategic plans and policies including Public Art Strategy and Public Art Policy.
- **Funder** – Annual delivery of the Knox Arts and Cultural Grant.
- **Advocate/influencer** – The service advocates both internally and externally through a range of platforms and processes including the Knox Arts and Cultural Advisory Committee, as well as being a key service advancing consultation and engagement to enable further developments of the arts in Knox.

The service outcomes identified in the current service profile for Council’s Arts and Culture Service are:

- Strengthened community connectedness
- Healthy and sustainable arts and culture groups
- Diverse, innovative, best practice arts and culture initiatives in Knox
- Community members enjoy and participate in arts and culture activities
- Recognition of the value of arts, heritage and cultural experiences
- Appreciation of Knox’s heritage
- Community pride and ownership of arts and culture facilities
- Empathy and understanding between different community values

- Arts and Cultural programs support creative ideas, innovation and community dialogue.

Appendix G-A outlines a current Arts and Cultural Service overview.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

The current Arts & Cultural Service activities are listed in the outer circles within the Arts & Cultural Service model below (see Diagram 1):

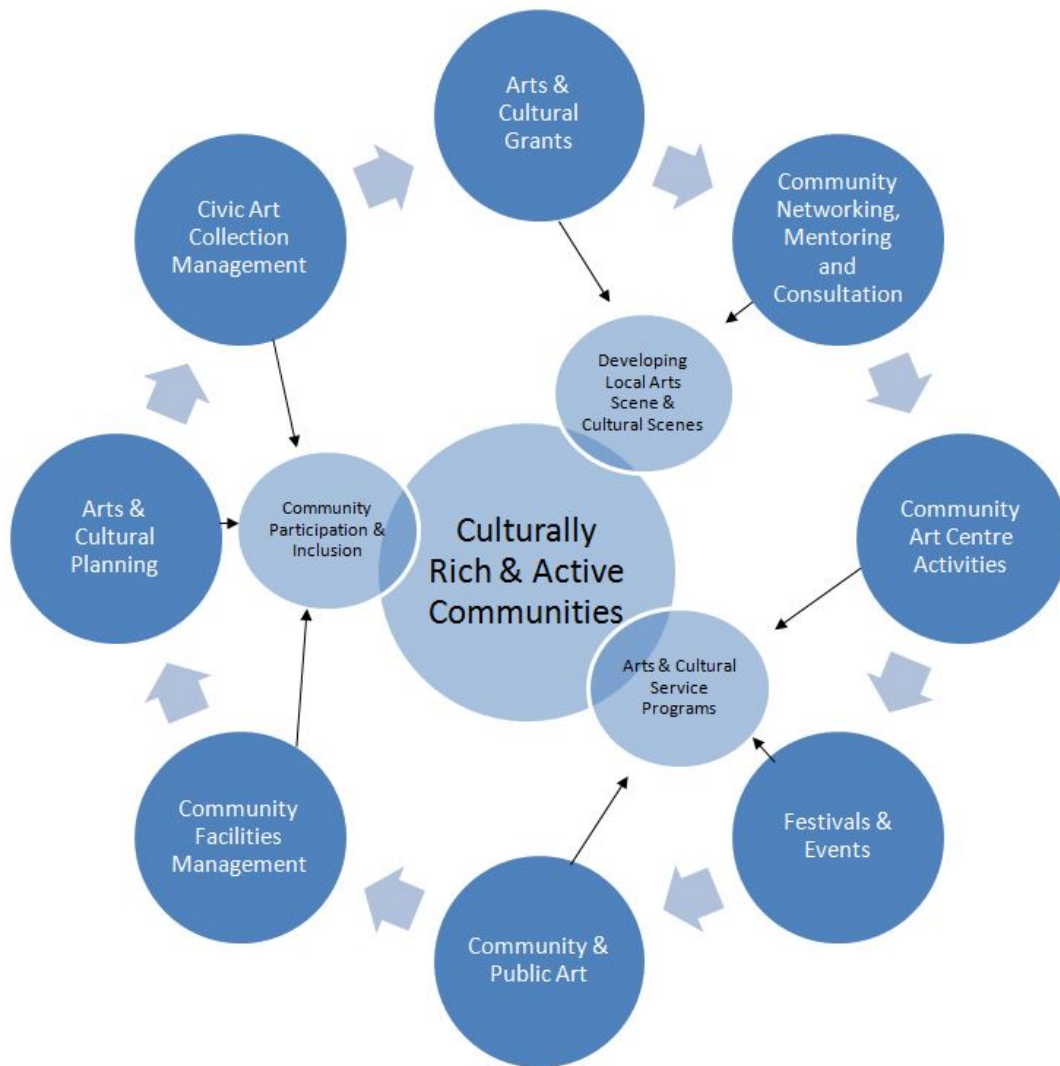


Diagram 1: Arts & Cultural service activities

A detailed description of activities and outputs audience profile is provided as Appendix G-A.

SERVICE ASSESSMENT

Role of Council

Local Government plays a key role in nurturing cultural vitality and enabling a culturally rich and vibrant Knox. Arts and Culture in the broad sense can provide individual and community benefits in areas such as health, education, community development and economic development.

While this service is not a legislative requirement for local government in Victoria, the Local Government Act requires Knox City Council to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions. It also identifies Council must have regard to the following facilitating objective:

- To improve the quality of life of people in the local community.

Knox City Council has had an enduring commitment to building a culturally rich and engaged community through the arts.

Public art has long been an integral and inspiring component of the city's landscape. An enduring legacy of the Placemaker program has been an increased interest and appreciation of public art. Council is also widely recognised for the quality, scale and level of community engagement created by its annual program of major festivals and events including Stringybark Sustainability Festival, Carols by Candlelight and Knox Festival.

The role of Council in this service is guided by Knox's *Vision* through Theme 1 and 4 being:

- **Culturally Rich and Active Communities** with an aspiration where:
 - Knox enjoys an active and engaged community, in which a range of major and local events and festivals thrive, and in which the local community comes together and diversity is valued.
 - Public art is appreciated for its contribution to public life.
 - People have access to a range of contemporary cultural and leisure facilities.
 - Cultural activities are enjoyed in parks and public spaces.
- **Healthy, Connected Communities** with an aspiration where there are many opportunities in Knox to make meaningful connections in the community that foster a sense of belonging.

The provision of the Arts and Cultural service is recognised as a critical and effective response to enable community health and wellbeing outcomes identified in Council's key strategic planning documents including in the City Plan, the Integrated City Strategy and associated plans and planning such as, Open Space Plan, the Municipal Strategic Statement, Youth Plan and Major Festivals and Events Plan.

Strategic Intent

The strategic intent of the Arts and Cultural service is to work towards delivering a Culturally Rich and Active Knox as defined in the City Vision. There are three aspects to the service delivered by Cultural Services:

1. *Delivery and engagement with the local community and local arts organisations in a range of quality arts and cultural services programs.*
2. *Development and support of the local arts and cultural scene, i.e. local artists and arts and cultural groups and organisations*
3. *Development of community participation and inclusion through effective promotion and advocacy of activities produced both internally and externally by the local community and the arts and cultural sector.*

This is supported by the following Knox strategic plans and strategies:

1. Knox Municipal Strategic Statement: ‘Encourage the provision of public art in public spaces in nodes of activity, activity centres and along major road networks including EastLink. Encourages the incorporation of public art in new development and public spaces.’

2. City Plan: ‘Promote and celebrate the arts in Knox and provide an environment in which artistic and cultural expression in the public domain is encouraged and valued.’

3. Arts and Cultural Plan 2012-22: ‘The arts contribute to the wellbeing of a city by supporting and promoting interesting and inspiring cultural and artistic initiatives creating opportunities for the community to connect with and engage in their environments and by increasing the capacity of the arts community to develop new skills. A vibrant city is a healthy and liveable city as it challenges and stimulates its communities in a range of ways: creating interesting destinations, exciting events and developing the social capital of its communities’.

The strength of the service lies in the synergies between the three strategic outputs and how these leverage off each other to create an environment where arts and culture in Knox can be supported and developed.

Objective 4 of the Arts and Cultural Plan 2012-22 outlines the requirement of the Service to advocate internally within Council. This is done through a variety of methods including conventional marketing and promotion, but also in the way that the Service engages interdepartmentally across Council. The partnering with other internal units strengthens the delivery of the service and assists Council with the engagement of the local community with regards to delivering Council messaging. These collaborative projects are designed to provide important avenues for social dialogue opportunities on a range of Council objectives. Examples have included: The Locker Room – prevention of violence against women; Racism: Not In My Backyard – impacts of racism in Knox; The Herbivore – healthy eating; Wearable Arts – sustainability and Wall-to-Wall –engagement of disenfranchised young people.

The Service also works interdepartmentally with other Units in a consultative capacity such as The Place Program, Community Strengthening and Economic Development. This activity assists and supports other Units on a range of needs such as the delivery of Public

Art and the support and guidance of communities who wish to deliver their own events on Council property.

Cultural Services is seeking to work more closely with the Place Program regarding building partnerships for the purpose of making key places in Knox better whilst maximising the benefits from Councils resources.

The service deliverables outlined above assists in the internal and external advocacy for the role of arts and culture in Knox.

The service analysis will seek to examine the current service model and set direction for the future.

Service Levels and Service Model

There are currently no legislative service level standards associated with the Arts and Cultural Service.

The Service Analysis will explore the range of service levels and model as outlined in the Arts and Cultural Overview (Appendix A) for existing activities and benchmark these with other relevant Councils.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

Key issues identified for exploration include:

1. This service operates in a competitive space for attracting audiences who spend their leisure time and resources to access a range of activities. There is therefore increasing need to review program activities and the current operation and outcomes of its Festival and Event's program, Community and Public Art and the arts centres to ensure their relevance at a grass roots level as well as their sustainability within a competitive environment. There is a need to map Council and external festivals and events to establish potential synergies and collaboration opportunities leading towards a more coordinated approach.
2. In supporting developing and promoting local artists and art organisations, there is a need to review the development of the local arts scene. Is Council's current support of the arts adequate and what more or less should Council do?
3. Community run activities (e.g. music festivals, yarn bombing, street celebrations and markets) are all seeking additional guidance and support to run safer and better planned and promoted events. There are also increasing compliance requirements (occupational health and safety). Empowering and building capacity in local community groups is a key outcome of this Service. Should this be formalised as a key Council initiative to support local community groups and if so, how would it be best resourced in the short and longer term?
4. There are increased opportunities for State, Federal and Local Government partnerships (art business incubation, creative industries) in particular, the opportunity for regional partnerships and shared services (eg. similar to Eastern Regional Libraries) and the potential to jointly produce events, performances and exhibitions.

Planning for the proposed Knox Performing Arts Centre should consider its juxtaposition with neighbouring municipality's facilities e.g. The Drum Theatre in Dandenong, Karralyka Centre in Ringwood and Burringa Cultural Centre in Upwey.

5. There is a requirement to consider how arts and cultural facilities might be constructed/refurbished into the future, in order to achieve and sustain flexible spaces for arts and culture. In addition to the built environment, consideration should be given to the role of the Service to develop innovative and entrepreneurial ventures particularly with respect to the staging of large outdoor commercial promotions. Is there a positive flow on to the community with these types of activities? This will be relevant particularly for the development of Knox Central and the proposed performing arts centre.

REFERENCES

1. Knox Vision: Our City Our Future.
2. Youth, Leisure & Cultural Services Business Plan 2015-16.
3. Service Profile: Arts & Cultural Services (December 2012).
4. Knox Arts and Cultural Plan 2012-22.

APPENDICES

- A. Arts & Cultural Service Model overview

Arts & Cultural Service Model Overview

Vision /outcome	Culturally Rich and Active Communities								
Key population groups and focus areas	Local artists, craft workers not for profit arts groups and organisations, schools, colleges etc (Plus regional, national and international artists)	Diverse community engagement and participation (all ages, ethnicity, ability, gender, sexuality etc)	Inter-departmental collaboration	Local business and corporate sponsors, patrons, funders and partners	Strategic planning for development of the arts in Knox – E.g. Consultation for Knox Central	Developing inspiring, interesting and engaging public spaces eg place management	Social Inclusion		
Strategic Outputs	Cultural Services and Program			Development of the local arts and cultural scene			Community Participation and Inclusion		
Service Activities	Festivals and Events	Community Arts Centre activities	Community and Public Art	Community Networking, Mentoring and Consultation	Community Facilities Management	Arts & Cultural Planning	Civic Art Collection Management	Arts & Cultural Grants	Arts & Cultural Programs and Initiatives
Service Outputs	A number of festivals and events are delivered by Council, including: Stringybark Suburban Sustainability Festival, Knox Carols by Candlelight, and Knox Festival. This Activity typically involves about 77,000 attendees from the Knox community for the 3 major events.	Two community Arts Centres provide venues for Council and community organised programs and activities. The Activity comprises 20-30 professional performances per annum, 18 weeks of amateur theatre with approximately 48,000 attendees over the year. Art classes for over 4,000 attendees per annum, and over 26,000 participants in Ferntree Gully Arts Centre activities.	Community artists engage with local communities to produce community art in addition to Council commissioning artists to produce public art.	A range of opportunities are provided for arts, culture and heritage groups to network, plan, and learn from each other. In addition the service provides practical advice and support to these groups.	Management and development of Council facilities sometimes working collaboratively with local not for profit art and cultural organisations and group, specifically: Knox Historical Society – Ambleside Homestead; Victoria Jazz Museum , Ferntree Gully Arts Society (The Hut) – Millers Homestead and the development of the Placemakers Shed.	Involves a range of activities which provide a strategic framework for the delivery of arts and culture in Knox in the short and longer term, including support for the Knox Arts & Cultural Development Advisory Committee and providing a basis for seeking external funding and partnerships.	Knox has an art collection with more than 200 items that represent a diverse range of materials including cultural artifacts, civic memorabilia and monuments and artworks representing a variety of media. In 2007 a fire destroyed most of the Civic Art Collection and following this, much of the current collection has been acquired from the Knox Rotary Art Show. Currently an acquisition policy is being developed which will be submitted to Council in 2017.	Grants are provided to encourage a range of activities within arts, culture and heritage groups, including: business development, master classes, training opportunities, strategic planning, arts-based activities, and the representation of Knox at recognised cultural forums.	A range of projects, programs and initiatives that are often developed through interdepartmental cross collaboration to inspire community engagement and input whilst also delivering Council messaging regarding issues such as prevention of domestic violence, healthy living, sustainable living and diversity.
		Knox Arts Centre Programming – e.g. Tea and Classics, Knox Factor, Open Mic Night, Professional and community programming (SLAMS, East City Sound, Heathmont School etc)	Wall 2 Wall eg Scoresby Village	Mentoring and consultation with artists eg Immerse program	Bayswater Youth Hall – hire to local community groups	Development of the Public Art Strategy and Blue Print	Management of the Civic Art Collection and Placemakers Legacy	Annual Arts & Cultural Grants program	Programs, Projects, Initiatives: The Locker Room, Herbivore, Spinning Yarns, Wearable Arts, Racism Not in My Back Yard (R:NIMBY), Knox Environmental Ambassadors Program (K.E.A.P), Immerse,
		Ferntree Gully Arts Centre and Library – Workshops for Ceramics, painting, drawing, craft, yoga, keep fit etc		Development of process to help communities engage on Council property	Community Facility Management: Millers Homestead, Ambleside Homestead & Placemakers Shed			Knox Arts and Cultural Grant	
				Networking platforms and opportunities: Artslink, Knox Craft Collective					
				Knox Arts and Cultural Advisory Committee					

Strategic Outputs	Cultural Services and Program			Development of the local arts and cultural scene			Community Participation and Inclusion		
Service Activities	Festivals and Events	Community Arts Centre activities	Community and Public Art	Community Networking, Mentoring and Consultation	Community Facilities Management	Arts & Cultural Planning	Civic Art Collection Management	Arts & Cultural Grants	Arts & Cultural Programs and Initiatives
Service Outcomes	Provision of quality, innovative and diverse initiatives; increased visitation to heritage sites; opportunities to engage with unique initiatives; increase in audiences trying different experiences; opportunities for community to engage with each other and community organisations to promote their services.	Provision of appropriate facilities for the delivery and support of arts, culture and heritage initiatives; spaces that are safe and appealing to audiences; provision of Council and community initiatives which encourage people to try and enjoy different experiences.	Increased connection between facilities and open space; increased active participation in arts and culture; opportunities to engage in unique initiatives and to create attractive and engaging public spaces with high levels of community ownership.	Increased knowledge, skills and confidence; increased planning and collaboration between groups; sustained attraction and retention of volunteers; sustained capacity of groups to deliver on their own organisational objectives; increased sharing of resources; more effective business connections; increased quality and diversity of initiatives; and increased active participation in arts, culture and heritage.	Positive articulation and use of existing Council facilities through the engagement of the Community, building Cultural Capital, social inclusion and working towards Knox Vision of Culturally Rich and Active.	The community and Council have a well informed plan and program for arts and culture opportunities in Knox.	Investment in quality art works as part of building a long term legacy for Knox which is valuable not only in arts and cultural terms but also in the dollar cost of the works. The display of the works which is accessible to the whole community to enjoy, such as the recent Civic Centre Foyer exhibition “Culturally Rich and Active”	Increased knowledge and skills, sustained attraction & retention of volunteers, sustained capacity for community groups and individuals to deliver an increased quality and diversity of initiatives; strong financial sustainability of community arts organisations.	Cross collaboration helps to strengthen the reach and effect of Council messaging in engaging and fun ways helping to disseminate information and effect positive behavioural change in the community. The work is also artistically excellent which ensures a high benchmark of arts practice intended to demonstrate Council leadership in the field and inspire local artists within their own practice and develop discerning audiences.

Service Catchment and Reach	Service Programs	Young families	14 – 24 year olds	25 -50 year olds	Over 50s	Seniors
	Festival and Events	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	The KEAP program		✓			
	Knox Factor		✓			
	Immerse	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Wall to Wall		✓			
	Public Art	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	The Locker Room		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Tea and Classics			✓	✓	✓
	R:NIMBY	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Service Planning

SCOPE

Service: Community Safety and Development

Director: Kerry Stubbings, Director Community Services

Manager: Kathy Parton, Manager Community Wellbeing

SERVICE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

This Service Assessment will aim to answer the following key questions:

1. What should the role of Council be for this Service?
2. What should be the strategic intent of the Service?
3. What should be the service model for this Service?
4. What should be the service levels for this Service?
5. How could this Service be more effective and efficient?

In accordance with the Council Plan, all Service Analyses will consider planning, where relevant, for an ageing population; and providing a range of programs, services and partnerships which aim to build connections between people and reduce social isolation.

INTRODUCTION

The Community Safety and Development Service provides specialist advice, support and delivers evidence based crime prevention programs to enhance community safety to enable the protection of neighbourhood amenity, people to feel safe and enjoy public spaces. The Service supports the delivery of key City Plan objectives and the Knox Vision: *'healthy, connected community where each member enjoys good health, both physically and mentally, feels safe, is connected to others and has access to excellent health and leisure facilities and services'*.¹

The Service is primarily an in-house service working collaboratively with a broad range of Council departments and key community partners; in particular Victoria Police, community organisations, and individuals. The Service is supported by a small team consisting of 3 staff (2.1 EFT). In addition consultants and university students are utilised on an as needs basis.

The Community Safety and Development Service are responsible for the research, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Knox Community Safety Plan 2013-2017. The current service activities are:

- Community capacity building;
- Community education;
- Advice and support;

¹ Knox City Council (2013-2017)- City Plan Vision Statement

- Community resourcing and development;
- Policy development;
- Program management and delivery;
- Evaluation and research;
- Asset Development;
- Place programs;
- Community Safety Audits;
- Master Planning;
- Public Communications; and
- Community Engagement Activities.

Due to strong links with community groups and organisations at the local level, the service is well-placed to facilitate and drive crime prevention responses to address community safety issues.

The service facilitates a multi-agency partnership approach with community organisations and groups to deliver community safety activities and outputs, as outlined in Table 1.

In 2013 Council developed its first Community Safety Plan for Knox in partnership with key community partners and the community. The Plan is underpinned by best practice crime prevention and community development principles that support sustainable community safety outcomes.

The Community Safety Plan priorities are:

- Young people and safety (including a focus on alcohol harm minimisation);
- Anti-social behaviour;
- Child abuse and neglect;
- Family violence;
- Transport-related issues including 'hoon' or dangerous driving;
- Graffiti;
- Perceptions of safety;
- Mental health issues; and
- Problem gambling.

The Community Safety and Development Service have a unique role in the context of crime prevention within a Local Government setting. Findings from the Victoria Government Inquiry into Locally Based Approaches to Community Safety and Crime Prevention (2012) support the premise that *'although crime prevention is the responsibility of all levels of government and community, initiatives developed and implemented at a local level are some of the best ways of reducing crime and antisocial behaviour.'*

The service ensures that external environmental influences such as State and Federal Government policy, research, and current community issues are considered to inform an effective range of responses to address community safety.

ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS
Evaluation and Research & Policy Development	Research and monitor incidents and trends in local crime Investigate priority concerns for local action
Community Capacity Building	Consult and involve the community in community safety initiatives so that efforts to reduce crime can be effectively targeted and implemented Delivery of community development programs that build and strengthen community resilience and responsibility for community safety issues
Place Management and Master Planning	Review public spaces and develop action plans to address and prevent localised issues of crime through crime prevention through environmental design and other community initiatives
Community Resourcing & Development	Fund and deliver community programs that address issues of community safety and crime prevention
Community Safety Audits	Engage with key partners inc Victoria Police, businesses and local residents Build partnerships to address specific safety and crime issues Empower community groups and organisations to address localised issues of safety.
Community Engagement Advice & Support	Advocate for adequate resources for community safety programs Advocate and influence policy reform
Asset Development	Identify specific crime prone 'hotspot' areas to reduce the opportunities for crime through crime prevention through environmental design initiatives. Influence, develop and implement street and building designs that reduce opportunities for crime
Program Management and Delivery	Multi-faceted crime prevention programs to address real and perceived safety issues
Community education	Raise awareness of community initiatives to reduce crime, increase community safety perceptions and enhance community responsibility of issues relating to safety
Communications	Develop resources and communication materials

Table 1: Community safety activities and outputs

This Service is well placed to understand and reflect the particular needs and issues of the local community; it generates and delivers the most appropriate prevention interventions with key partners. The Community Safety and Development Service also has a key leadership role in coordinating and mobilising partnerships to support and invest in crime prevention programs, as articulated in the Plan.

The Scope report outlines the current service model, a preliminary service assessment and key issues to be explored through the service analysis.

CURRENT SERVICE MODEL

Community Safety and Development Service Snapshot

Service budget 2015/2016:	
Income	\$110,000 (grants)*
Expenditure	\$537,000
Net	\$427,000
Service EFTs:	2.12

*\$100k -Federal Government Grant – installation of lighting within car park and village square - Scoresby Shopping Village.

\$10k Midnight Basketball Inc – Midnight Basketball Program

The Community Safety and Development Service is funded by Council.

The current staff roles are:

- Coordinator Community Safety & Development (1 EFT);
- Community Safety Project Officer (0.72 EFT); and
- Community Safety Project Officer (0.4 EFT).

The strategic intent of the Community Safety and Development Service is to:
Address real and perceived community safety issues through implementing sustainable crime prevention programs with key partners.

Coordination between all levels of government is critical to the implementation and success of the service programs and activities. The service model is therefore underpinned by key Federal and State Government policy directions that draws on established crime prevention principles and aims to create a shared understanding, commitment and consistent approach to respond to community safety priorities.

The current service model is founded on community development principles of good practice and crime prevention principles based on the National Crime Prevention Framework, which includes:²

- Crime and the causes of crime are complex and require different solutions to address issues in particular locations;
- Best practice and evidence-based solutions deliver sustainable results;
- Committed leadership, sustainable partnerships, and consultation with all levels of government, business and communities is required;
- Adopting a primary prevention and early intervention approach to community safety issues are best practice;
- Integrating work across the social, built, economic and natural environments that consider the broad determinants of health affecting community safety have the best outcomes;
- A community development approach which addresses social exclusion and promotes community cohesiveness and supports social and behaviour change; and

² Australian Institute of Criminology (2011) National Crime Prevention Framework

- Collaborating with key partners and the community to develop local solutions to local issues will create sustainable outcomes.

The Service endeavours to ensure rigorous monitoring and evaluation of programs to ensure they are evidence based and projected outcomes are delivered e.g. sustainable graffiti reduction or other social change in the community.

As outlined the Community Safety and Development Service provide a range of activities to deliver the current service which includes:

- Developing, **partnering** and implementing programs that reduce risk factors and increase protective factors for young people;
- **Providing** community education programs and information in partnership with Victoria Police and key partners;
- Providing advice and **expertise** to support Council planning in the built environment and localised crime issues;
- **Developing** Council policy and guidelines in relation to community safety and crime prevention issues;
- The Service is responsible for the **planning**, coordinating, monitoring and evaluation of the Community Safety Plan. The Service regularly engages with Victoria Police, community organisation and community members to support this work;
- The Service provides **advice** to Council departments, community organisations and other local governments on a range of crime prevention and community safety issues; and
- The Service supports council to **advocate** to local, state and federal government in relation to crime and community safety issues impacting the community.

A diagram of the current service model and external service influences is presented in Appendix I-A.

SERVICE ASSESSMENT

Role of Council

The *Local Government Act 1989* states that the role of Council is ‘...to provide leadership and endeavor to achieve the best outcomes for the local community’ and ‘to improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community.’

Local Government plays a central role in the design, management and delivery of crime prevention programs and policies.

Over recent years the role of Council in supporting and developing safe communities has changed from the more traditional safety definition of protection from hazard or harm to a ‘wellbeing’ model (often paired with ‘health’) to encompass many of the tangible and intangible factors that contribute to people’s quality of life. This change is informed by the

outcomes of research and inquiries at both State and National level³ citing that best practice models for developing safer communities is through prevention models that focus on the causes and contributory factors leading to crime and other behavior.

Over a long period of time the Service has developed strong partnerships with community groups and organisations at the local level. The preliminary service assessment has further confirmed that this Service is well-placed to facilitate and coordinate crime prevention responses to address local community safety issues. It is not the role of this Service to respond to and reduce the impact of these issues alone, rather that it contributes to community safety outcomes with many key partners including Victoria Police.

The preliminary service assessment has confirmed that effective work towards developing safe communities is complex, requires long term commitment and strong leadership. Consistent findings from international research⁴ provide evidence that Local Government plays a critical leadership role to plan, coordinate, facilitate and deliver crime prevention strategies in partnership with communities. A clear understanding of roles and responsibilities in community safety and crime prevention for Council, State and Federal Government, Victoria Police and the community is an essential part of enabling and allocating resources for effective community outcomes.

Given the policy environment described above, it will be important for the service analysis to examine the contemporary role of council in this service and service activities.

Strategic Intent

The strategic intent of the Community Safety and Development Service is to:
address real and perceived community safety issues through sustainable crime prevention programs by engaging with key partners.

Community safety and crime prevention priorities present complex issues, operating in a rapidly changing local environment. These priorities are also impacted by technology in particular social media, the changing economic environment and the variety of family structures.

Through the preliminary service assessment it became apparent that the Service needs to continue to be flexible and dynamic to changing community needs. Priorities (as articulated in the Community Safety Plan 2013-2017) align with current community need and have been further affirmed through program evaluation. Future focus will need to consider emerging community safety issues which could impact on the service's strategic intent.

³ Parliament of Victoria (2012) Inquiry into Locally Based Approaches to Community Safety and Crime Prevention
Australian Institute of Criminology (2011) National Crime Prevention Framework

⁴ Australian Institute of Criminology (2015) – Understanding the role of Local Government in Crime Prevention

The following provides a snapshot of the desk top preliminary service assessment and the service analysis will provide the opportunity to further explore these issues:

- The legislative requirements for the service are restricted to the *Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 Vic*, in relation to the removal of graffiti from private property. However, the Service needs to be responsive to possible changes in the legislative environment for example, potential recommendations and impacts emanating from the family violence royal commission, child safety standards, liquor control act review, state and federal government policy frameworks for crime prevention could all impact the policy and legislative environment for community safety work;
- The Service is often reliant on various grant funding opportunities to support key programs it is directly involved in. For example Communities that Care, Midnight Basketball, graffiti prevention projects (mural and public art), and capital infrastructure projects for community infrastructure improvements. The Service will need to be responsive to possible changes to funding criteria and the resource implications; and
- The Service needs to be responsive to the changing demographic and social profile of Knox and consider the most appropriate service activities to respond to this.

The Service analysis will therefore explore what is the most appropriate strategic intent for the Service (for Council and the community), and how this can be supported.

Service Model

The preliminary service assessment has identified some elements of the service model that need to be further explored through the service analysis to ensure the Community Safety and Development Service is utilising resources for effective and efficient service delivery into the future.

In order to achieve this, the following areas will be further explored:

- There is a need to further explore the service's role and capacity to continue to manage graffiti cleaning programs and vandalism incidents. The service analysis will therefore look at: What is the role for this service and the role of other Council services in relation to graffiti cleaning and vandalism incidents? Does the work align with the strategic intent of this Service or better aligns with another Council service?
- Currently the service activities focus on the coordination and delivery of broad objectives as articulated in the Community Safety Plan. The Service is supported by a small team, and although critical partnerships support the delivery of outcomes it will be important to clarify the role of the service along with other organisational and community partners and further explore if there is a need to shift the focus from broad community safety objectives, to invest in priority high risk community safety issues impacting the community to provide the greatest traction for social change and collective impact; and
- The Service also conducts program evaluation and invests in research to inform evidence based planning. This work enables activities to be based on informed decision making. The preliminary service assessment has highlighted the need to review sustainable options to ensure evaluation is embedded into ongoing delivery of

this service, due to the financial and resource implications of conducting program evaluation.

As outlined above, the service analysis will consider the following:
What is the most effective service delivery model for this Service?

Service Levels

There are no legislative service level requirements associated with the Community Safety and Development Service.

The service analysis will review the strategic intent of the Service, and most effective service delivery model. The key question in determining appropriate service levels will be where to invest limited resources to enable the greatest impact to strengthen community and coordinate and deliver crime prevention activities and programs. The assessment of service levels and service activities will be a focus of the service review, this will include an assessment of current roles and the relative alignment with the service intent and allocation of resources to support current and future community needs. A particular focus of the service analysis in relation to service levels will be a review of the role the Service plays maintaining and manage graffiti cleaning programs and contractors.

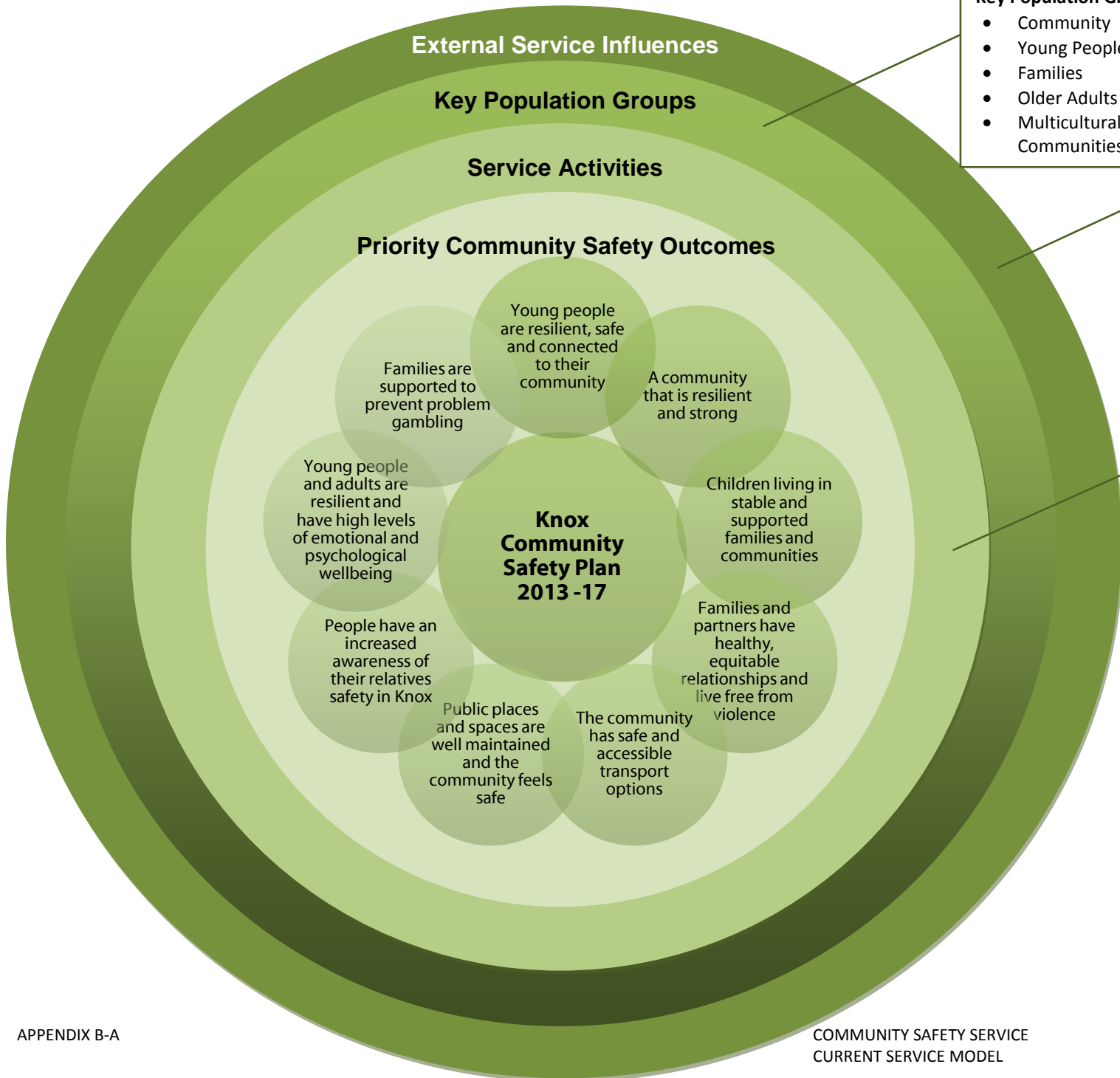
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APPENDICES

- A. Community Safety Service – Current Service Model

Community Safety Service Current Service Model



- Key Population Groups**
- Community
 - Young People
 - Families
 - Older Adults
 - Multicultural Communities

- External influences**
- State and Federal Government Policy
 - National and International Crime Prevention Research and Findings
 - Victoria Police Crime Data
 - Family Violence Royal Commission
 - NGOs
 - Australian Institute of Criminology Research
 - Current Drivers of Community Safety Issues at the Local and Regional Level

- Service Activities**
- Community Capacity Building
 - Community Education
 - Advice and support
 - Community resources development
 - Policy development
 - Program management and delivery
 - Evaluation and research
 - Public communications
 - Community resourcing
 - Community engagement activities
 - Community safety audits
 - Participation in the Place Program
 - Master Planning

- Internal Services involved in delivery**
- Local Laws
 - Open space and Landscape
 - Traffic and Transport
 - Parks
 - Facilities
 - Family & Children Services
 - Place Program
 - Arts & Culture
 - Youth Services
 - Active Aging
 - Leisure Services

Service Planning

SCOPE

Service: Preschool Services

Director: Kerry Stubbings, Director Community Services

Manager: Janine Brown, Manager Family and Children's Services

SERVICE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

This Service Assessment will aim to answer the following key questions:

1. What should be the service model for this service?
2. What should be the service levels for this service?
3. How could this service be more effective and efficient?

In accordance with the Council Plan, all Service Analyses will consider planning, where relevant, for an ageing population; and providing a range of programs, services and partnerships which aim to build connections between people and reduce social isolation.

INTRODUCTION

Preschool is a term that commonly refers to an early childhood education and care (ECEC) service for three to five year old children in the year, or two years prior to starting primary school. The service models for preschool differ across Australia.

The core preschool service in Victoria provides all eligible four year-old children in the year prior to primary school with access to 15 hours per week of "funded kindergarten". This is a universally available service but attendance is not compulsory. Eligible three year-old children and those who have been assessed as eligible for a second year of preschool are also entitled to access "funded kindergarten".

Victoria's core preschool service is provided by a range of different organisations and in a variety of models, including the traditional model of sessional preschool as well as in long day ECEC services. Further information about funding and service delivery models in Victoria and in Knox, is available in Attachment D-A.

Knox City Council's "funded kindergarten services" are called preschool and are provided by the Family and Children's Services Department. Council is the **Approved Provider** (under the Education and Care Services National Act and Regulations), and the **Kindergarten Cluster Manager** (KCM; as approved by the Victorian Department of Education and Training) of these services. These are Council's main roles in relation to preschool provision in Knox.

Whilst Council has been a provider of preschool for over 30 years, in addition to its roles as KCM and Approved Provider, Council also supports and resources the provision of preschool across the municipality, including some preschool services delivered by other Approved Providers. An overview of these roles is available in Attachment 2, and is also described in the following section – ‘Current Service Model’.

Local governments in Victoria are a major owner of infrastructure used to deliver preschool services and also play a role in the delivery, coordination and strategic planning for early childhood services, including preschool. The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET) have a formal partnership that commits both parties (and therefore Victorian local governments) to a collaborative and cooperative approach to the planning and delivery of early childhood services.

Available data indicates that:

- All 79 Victorian Local Governments own facilities from which early years services operate, and 43 of these Local Governments are the Approved Providers of the early years services in these facilities.
 - The remaining 36 Victorian Local Governments own facilities where early years services operate, but they are not the Approved Provider of the services.
- 27 Victorian Local Governments are Kindergarten Cluster Managers (and therefore also Approved Providers of preschool).
- 16 Victorian Local Governments are Approved Providers of preschool services (but are not Kindergarten Cluster Managers).
- 50 Victorian Local Governments provide a Central Enrolment Service in their municipality, but the early years services included in the Central Enrolment Service varies between municipalities.

CURRENT SERVICE MODEL

Preschool Service Snapshot

Since 2009, 15 hours per week of “funded kindergarten” has been jointly funded by the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments under National Partnership Agreements on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education. Under this Agreement, the Victorian Government grant subsidises ten hours, and the Commonwealth Government subsidises five hours of preschool for eligible children. This combined funding does not cover the full cost of providing preschool and Knox City Council’s preschool services are also funded from parent fees and a Council subsidy.

Preschool services in Victoria are regulated under the Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010) and Regulations (2011), and assessed against the National Quality Standard. The children’s educational program is guided by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.

The service delivery environment is different now to when Council began providing preschool over 30 years ago, however, some of the most significant changes have occurred during the last decade as listed below:

- 2010:
 - Introduction of national legislation (Education and Care Services National Act and Regulations).
 - Introduction of the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.
 - Requirement for Council to develop and administer a Priority of Access Policy to ensure equitable allocation of children through its Central Enrolment Service to Council’s preschool services, and Council’s compliance with the Charter of Human Rights.
- 2012:
 - Introduction of assessment and accreditation under the National Quality Framework.
- 2013:
 - Introduction of Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (15 Hours of Preschool).
- 2015:
 - Increase in “funded kindergarten” programs being offered by long day ECEC services.
- 2016:
 - Changes to child:staff ratios for three to five year-old children from 1:15 to 1:11.
 - Introduction of the Victorian Child Safe Standards (and associated legislation), and the implications for Council’s partnership with preschool committees.

Service budget 2014/2015: Income Expenditure Net	(\$5,671,339) \$5,876,618 \$205,279	Further Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1350 children attending 54 groups in 2014 calendar year • 1283 children attending 51 groups in 2015 calendar year • Child:staff ratio 1:15 no capped group sizes
Service EFTs:	67.25 <u>Approximately:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 Co-ordination Unit Staff • 115 Educators (Teachers and Assistants) 	

The income in 2014/15 includes \$5.3million in State/Commonwealth Government grants, and \$320,000 in parent fees. The State/Commonwealth Government grants include a per-capita grant for each child attending the service, as well as grant funding to support Council's role as a Kindergarten Cluster Manager.

The above EFT does not include early childhood teachers currently employed in Council's long day and occasional ECEC services.

In response to the introduction of changed child:staff ratios from the commencement of January 2016, Council resolved in February 2015 to cap group sizes to 22 children and only increase group sizes where significant demand and licensed floor space permitted group sizes of 30 children or more. This reduced the need for Council to employ an additional staff member in every group size over 22 children but also increased the number of groups across the service. The subsequent budgets for the 2015/16 and 2016/17 reflect this model of additional groups (and thus some additional staff) as well as employment conditions for educators under the Early Education Employees Agreement 2016.

Service budget 2015/2016: Income Expenditure Net	(\$5,383,583) \$6,075,560 \$691,977	Further Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1283 children attending 51 groups in 2015 calendar year • 1250 children attending 58 groups in 2016 calendar year • Child:staff ratio 1:11 and group sizes capped at 22
Service EFTs:	71.46 <u>Approximately:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Co-ordination Unit Staff • 130 Educators (Teachers and Assistants) 	

Proposed budget 2016/2017:		Further Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1250 children attending 58 groups in 2016 calendar year • Number of enrolments and group sizes still to be determined for 2017 calendar preschool year.
Income	(\$5,625,789)	
Expenditure	\$6,567,902	
Net	\$942,113	
Service EFTs:	75.46 <u>Approximately:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Co-ordination Unit Staff • 134 Educators (Teachers and Assistants) 	

The State Government is currently making adjustments to the subsidies they provide Knox City Council in recognition of the change to child:staff ratios and the recently approved Early Education Employees Award.

Service Provider

Council's main role is in the direct provision of preschool as an Approved Provider under the Education and Care Services National Act and Regulations and as a KCM. KCMs are funded by the State Government to manage clusters of preschool services in a municipality or across the state. KCMs are required to adhere to DET's Kindergarten Guide, which includes State Government targets and priorities, for example, strategically planning for and driving the implementation of major policy reforms such as Universal Access to 15 Hours of Preschool and the National Quality Framework.

As a KCM, Council is required to be an Approved Provider and is also required to be the employer of staff in the preschool service. Council could be an Approved Provider without being a KCM, but as an Approved Provider, would still be required to be the employer of staff in the preschool service.

Traditionally, Council has provided sessional preschool services, where children attend a service for 15 hours per week during school terms. In the 2016 calendar year, there are 58 sessional preschool groups operating from 30 Council-operated preschool centres. More recently, funded preschool programs were also introduced in Council's five long day ECEC services in response to the requirement under the National Quality Framework to employ degree-qualified early childhood teachers, and operate as part of Council's Kindergarten Cluster. This also provides children who are enrolled in these services with the opportunity to participate in a preschool program as part of the long day ECEC service.

Council is the largest provider of sessional preschool in the municipality. Council currently provides a central enrolment service for Council-operated sessional preschools and allocates children in accordance with Council's Funded Preschool Policy (2015). Each of Council's preschools (with the exception of Birch Street at Bayswater Primary School) has an incorporated volunteer preschool committee that supports the operation of the service through a range of activities outlined further in the 'Service Assessment' section under 'Service Model'.

Council collects *preschool term fees* from parents which are then provided as a grant to preschool committees in instalments each term. The grant is determined by the number of children enrolled each term – a formula that provides committees of preschools with higher enrolments with larger grants, and can result in some funds being carried over by committees from year to year as surplus funds. Preschools in more vulnerable areas of the municipality often have lower enrolments, and these communities may also have lower levels of capacity to fundraise for their local preschool. This can result in some preschool committees having fewer funds than other preschool committees to undertake the same activities.

An integrated service delivery model is used to delivery Council's early years services, including its preschool services. This means that staff working in Council's early years services, and in Council's early years facilities work together and work with parent committees and other key stakeholders (including local primary schools) so that children and families are better supported and improves learning and development outcomes for children.

Council's sessional preschool services (and not those operating in Council's long day ECEC services) which operate in Council's Kindergarten Cluster and under the Education and Care Services National Act and Regulations will be the focus of this service planning project.

Facility Owner

Council is the owner of 31 purpose-built facilities on Council land where sessional preschool services for four-year olds is provided. Council is the Approved Provider of the preschool service in 29 of these facilities. Council does not own the facility or the land where the Birch Street Preschool operates as the facility is part of Bayswater Primary School. However, Council is responsible for the maintenance of this facility, the preschool is operated as part of Council's Kindergarten Cluster, and Council is the Approved Provider of the preschool service.

Alchester Village is operated by an independent committee of management, and Colchester Park Preschool is operated by *bestchance* Kindergarten Cluster Management who each hold a License Agreement with Council for the use of these facilities.

In addition to four-year old preschool, other early years services operate from most of these facilities, such as Maternal and Child Health and playgroups. Further detail is provided in Attachment 3.

As the majority of these facilities were constructed between 1960 and 1988, a facility plan will be required in the future that outlines how Council can manage and/or replace these ageing assets into the future to ensure the infrastructure is supporting the delivery of the service/s. A valuation of Council's facilities is scheduled for the end of the 2015/16 financial year and updated valuation information can be provided as part of the Service Analysis.

Non-Council Preschool Services

Council is one of a range of service providers offering preschool in the Knox municipality. In addition to Alchester Village and Colchester Park Preschools, there are three schools that provide “funded kindergarten” programs, and many long day ECEC services also offer a “funded kindergarten” program.

There are currently 17 three-year old preschools and activity groups, and three services for children deferring preschool operating across the municipality in 2016. 18 of these services operate from Council-owned facilities, including Council’s early years facilities, Coonara Community House and Rowville Community Centre.

Coordination and Strategic Planning

As the largest sessional preschool provider in the municipality, the majority of planning and coordination undertaken is for Council-operated services. In recent years, the introduction of 15 Hours of Preschool and other major policy initiatives have required Council’s Family and Children’s Services Department to lead municipal-wide planning activities and provide support to all preschool providers in Knox. This has included the collection and reporting of municipal-wide data on behalf of the State Government to support the introduction of 15 Hours of Preschool across both Council and non-Council preschool services. However, this component of Council’s role is less developed than its role as a direct service provider.

SERVICE ASSESSMENT

Role of Council

As noted in the ‘Current Service Model’ above, Council’s main role in relation to four-year old preschool is as a Kindergarten Cluster Manager and Approved Provider.

As the Approved Provider, a Kindergarten Cluster Manager, and employer, Council is responsible for:

- Employment and supervision of, and professional development for preschool staff;
- Meeting all legislative and quality requirements under the Education and Care Services National Act and Regulations and National Quality Framework;
- Meeting requirements of the Funding and Service Agreement with the Victorian Government;
- Maintaining and renewing Council’s preschool facilities;
- Actively supporting the engagement and participation of vulnerable children in preschool programs; and
- Strategically planning for and driving of major policy reforms (such as the National Quality Framework).

Volunteer preschool committees play a key role in supporting the delivery of Council’s preschool programs. This is discussed in further detail in ‘Service Model’ section of this Scope.

Although preschool in Victoria is considered a universal service that provides all eligible children with access to a funded place, attendance is not compulsory. However, with the

increase in funded preschool places being provided in “market-driven” long day ECEC services, the Service Analysis will investigate the relevance of the National Competition Policy to Council’s preschool services. This will include an analysis of a number of scenarios, including working towards cost neutrality.

An analysis of Council’s roles as an Approved Provider and Kindergarten Cluster Manager will not form part of the Service Analysis as the focus will be on the service model and levels in regards to Council’s partnership with preschool committees; and efficiency through the Customer Focused Business Improvement program.

Strategic Intent

As outlined in the Municipal Early Years Plan, Council’s strategic intent for children and families is that:

- **Knox Children:** are enjoying a happy, safe childhood where they are loved, supported and nurtured. They are engaged towards optimal health, wellbeing and are active participants in their own learning, development and community;
- **Childhood in Knox:** is an important and recognised stage of life, where children play and example and are part of neighbourhoods, as their learning is supported by their family, friends and wider community;
- **Knox Families:** are richly diverse, and their role as their child’s first and most important teacher is acknowledged and valued. They are supported, encouraged, connected, informed and empowered to be nurturing, confident and thriving families.

In addition to the direct provision of four-year old preschool, Council supports preschool in the following ways.

Council supports the participation of three-year old children who may be experiencing vulnerability in its preschool programs through two State-funded initiatives:

- Early Start Kindergarten, and
- Access to Early Learning.

Council supports non-Council preschool providers (of both three and four-year old preschool services) through:

- Providing access to Council’s purpose-built early years facilities at peppercorn rent, or by waiving the license fee; and
- Supporting preschool committees through Council’s Early Years Facility and Committee Liaison Officers and facilitating an annual committee training program.

Council resolved in April 2010 to provide priority access to Council’s licensed early years playrooms to funded four-year old preschool services.

An analysis of Council’s strategic intent and the ways in which Council supports preschool across the Knox municipality as a service provider and facility owner will not form part of the Service Analysis as the focus will be on the service model and levels in regards to Council’s partnership with preschool committees; and efficiency through the Customer Focused Business Improvement program.

Future service reviews may focus on Council's strategic intent and role in supporting and delivering preschool services across the municipality. Any future reviews will be undertaken within the current service delivery, legislative and funding context to ensure the analysis is contemporary and up to date.

Service Model

Volunteer preschool committees support the day-to-day operation of Council's preschool services. Currently, Council requires these committees to be Incorporated Associations, and Committees take responsibility for a range of activities including:

- Minor facility maintenance, including working bees;
- Playground maintenance, development and renewal;
- Purchasing of equipment, consumables and resources for the preschool program;
- Oversee and manage contracts for cleaners and gardeners; and
- Some administrative tasks.

A particularly valued outcome of parent participation through committees is the sense of community that is fostered, and the contributions made to their local community/preschool facility.

Preschool term fees are set by Council following consideration of the fee proposal put forward by the Combined Preschool Committees Working Party. As outlined above, these fees are collected by Council and are paid directly to committees as an operational grant to assist with day to day preschool service expenses. Committees may also undertake fundraising activities. However, the combination of the formula used to calculate the grant and the varied capacity of some local communities to fundraise, results in some preschool committees having fewer funds to support the preschool. Initial analysis has identified this is an inequitable approach that potentially disadvantages children attending preschools with lower enrolments.

The partnership and funding arrangements that Council has with volunteer preschool committees has not been reviewed within the context of the significant changes outlined above in 'Role of Council'.

Key Areas for investigation for this Service Analysis will include:

- *Whether Council's current approach to working with, and funding preschool committees ensures that each child who attends a Council-operated preschool has equitable access to a consistently high quality program;*
- *Whether Council's current partnership arrangement with preschool committees allows Council to meet its obligations as the employer, Approved Provider, Kindergarten Cluster Manager; and in its role as municipal planner;*
- *Whether Council's roles and responsibilities, and those of preschool committees are suitable within the context of the National Quality Framework and other key legislative and policy changes, or should they be reviewed with consideration to Council's legislative responsibilities, risk to Council, and resources available to support and monitor the partnership;*

- *If as a result of this investigation, some roles and responsibilities change, how could the community capacity building and community connections be retained as a key function of preschool committees; and,*
- *What would be an equitable funding/grant arrangement between Council and committees.*

Service Levels

It is understood from available data that the majority of eligible children in Knox are enrolled in a funded preschool program.

In 2016, there are 1250 children enrolled in Council's sessional preschools across 58 groups in 30 centres. This is approximately 67% of all four-year olds in Knox and is a slight decrease from 1363 children enrolled in 2013. Eligible children not attending Council's sessional preschools are likely to be enrolled in non-Council sessional preschools or a funded preschool program offered in a long day ECEC service.

Due to changes to child:staff ratios that were introduced in January 2016, and following an analysis of options for a sustainable preschool service, Council resolved in February 2015 to cap the majority of groups sizes to 22 children and only increase group sizes where significant demand and licensed floor space allows.

Council currently offers 3 x 5 hour sessions or 2 x 7.5 hour sessions per week. This model appears to meet the community's needs; however there is a slightly higher demand for 2 x 7.5 hour sessions. Anecdotal feedback from families indicates that 2 x 7.5 hour sessions offer them an equivalent to two full days of preschool in a long day ECEC service which is cheaper by approximately \$6000 per year.

Some benchmarking undertaken in 2015 identified Knox Council's preschool fees as some of the lowest fees for Council-operated preschools in metropolitan Victoria.

Council's 2016 annual fee of \$1,079 is also lower than the State Government's annual *Kindergarten Fee Subsidy* of \$1,386 in 2016. This fee subsidy is designed to provide eligible children (such as those in families with a Commonwealth Health Care Card or on a Refugee Visa) with access to free or low-cost preschool and is in addition to the standard "per-capita" rate of \$3,390/child that Council receives for these children. This means that children who meet these eligibility criteria do not pay fees if they attend a Knox City Council-operated preschool as the place is fully funded by the State Government.

Council has a reputation for providing high quality preschool programs and the majority of Council's sessional preschool services have received a rating of *Exceeding the National Quality Standard*.

An analysis of Council's service levels in relation to its partnership with preschool committees will be included as part of the Service Analysis.

Efficiency

The Preschool Service is included in the Customer Focused Business Improvement program and will be examining how its processes could be improved for greater efficiency and customer friendliness.

Policy and Legislation

In addition to the specific policy initiatives outlined below, there has been a consistent focus in some other policies requiring changes to a range of universal children's services, such as Maternal and Child Health and preschool. For example, the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, implementation of the Out of Home Care Agreement, and recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence all require changes to preschool service delivery and practice by improving and enhancing participation of children with disability and those experiencing vulnerability in preschool programs. These policies also place preschool staff at the centre of the team of a range of professionals who may be working with the child and family, which can impact on time and resourcing that has traditionally been allocated to specifically to the preschool service and educational program.

National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education

It is of note that the current model of 15 hours of preschool for each eligible child does not have ongoing funding committed by the Commonwealth Government. Under the National Partnership Agreement, the Commonwealth Government funds five of the 15 hours, however this funding is only secured until the end of the 2017 school year.

Depending on the outcomes of any negotiations relating to this National Partnership Agreement over the next 12 to 18 months, the service model and service levels of Council's preschool service may change in response to future funding arrangements. Council is actively advocating to the Commonwealth Government for their commitment to ongoing funding for the initiative.

Education State (Victorian Department of Education and Training); and Roadmap for Reform: Strong Families, Safe Children (Victorian Department of Health and Human Services)

These two recently released State-based policies have a particular focus on improving outcomes for children and families who may be experiencing vulnerability within the early years service system, and more broadly in the family support service system.

A clear theme in both policies is the need to strengthen and integrate service delivery for children and families, and to improve data collection to enable better monitoring and reporting on outcomes. In relation to preschool, there is also focus on improving access to, and participation in preschool, particularly for three-year olds experiencing vulnerability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Funding for some initiatives from these policies have been announced as part of the 2016-17 Victoria Budget, however, further detail is yet to be released. As preschool is a universal service, it is expected that there will be some implications for service delivery and practice; however the specific details are not yet known.

Early Years Management Policy Framework and Early Years Management Kindergarten Operating Guidelines (Victorian Department of Education and Training)

At the time of writing, the Victorian Government released a new policy framework (Early Years Management [EYM] Policy Framework) and guidelines (Early Years Management Kindergarten Operating Guidelines) that will replace the 2009 Kindergarten Cluster Management Policy Framework.

As these documents relate to Council's role as a Kindergarten Cluster Manager and as a local government organisation working in partnership with the Victorian Government, they will now be reviewed as part of the Service Analysis. This will support Council to understand the implications for its preschool services and maintain compliance with the new requirements set out by the Victorian Government.

The Victorian Government expects that the EYM Policy Framework to be implemented over the next 18 months – by December 2017.

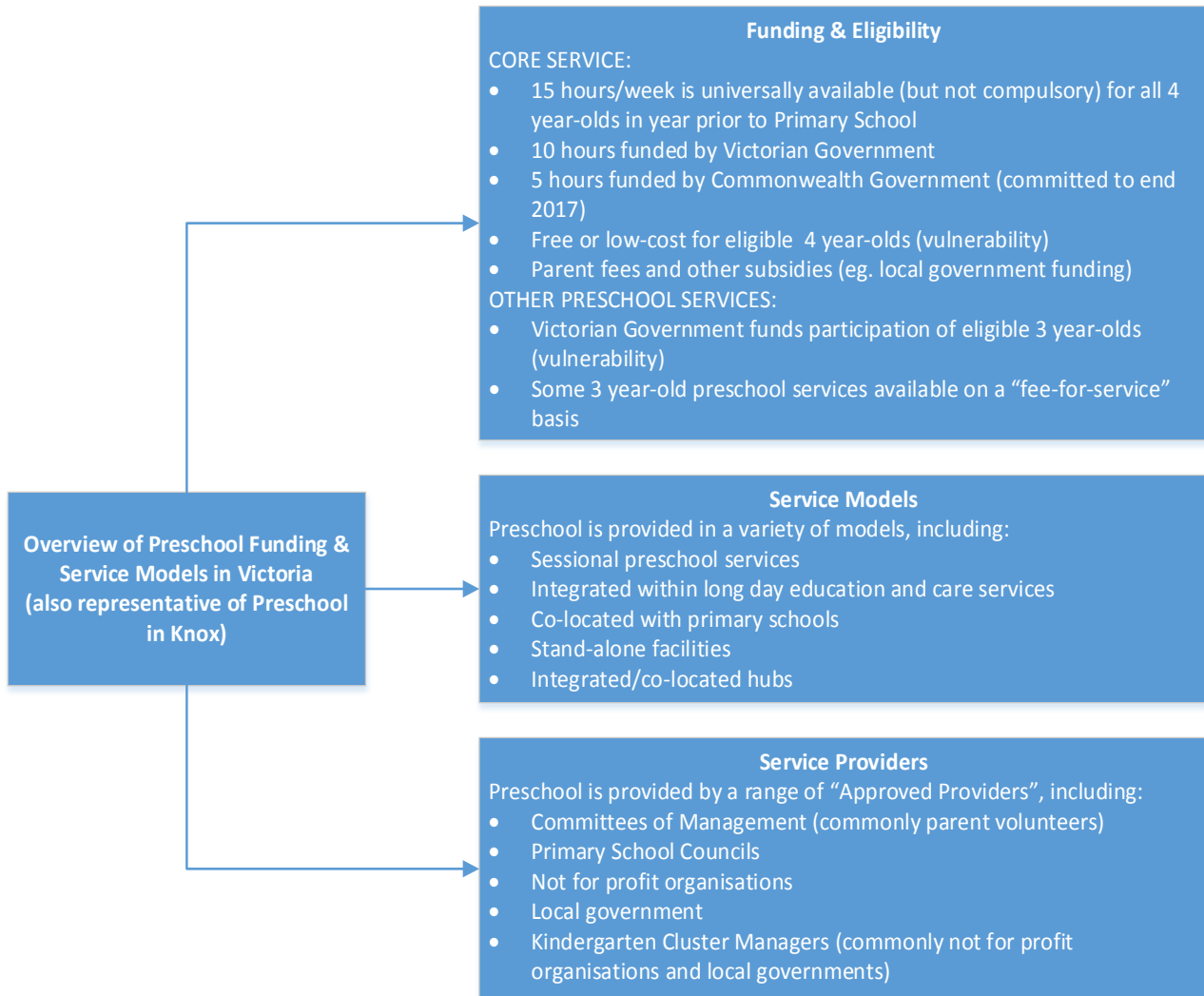
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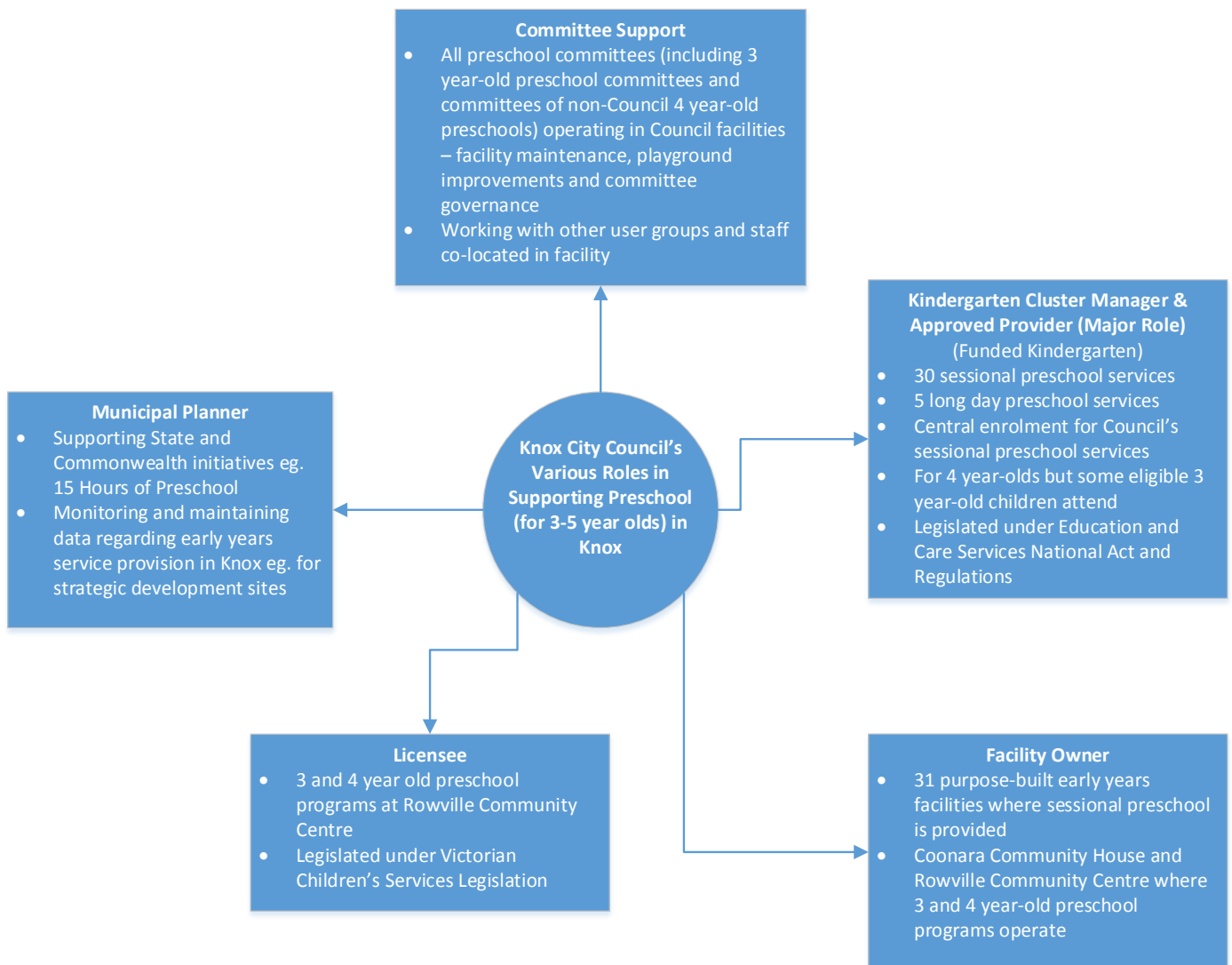
APPENDICES

- A. Victorian Preschool Funding & Service Models
- B. Knox City Council roles in supporting preschool in Knox municipality
- C. Knox City Council owned Early Years facilities where preschool is provided

VICTORIAN PRESCHOOL FUNDING & SERVICE MODELS



KNOX CITY COUNCIL'S ROLES IN SUPPORTING PRESCHOOL IN KNOX MUNICIPALITY



KNOX CITY COUNCIL- OWNED EARLY YEARS FACILITIES WHERE PRESCHOOL IS PROVIDED

Council-Owned Early Years Facility	Council Operated State-Funded 4 year-old Sessional Preschool	Community-managed 3 year-old sessional preschool or deferred 4 year-old preschool	Playgroup or 3 year-old activity group	Maternal Child Health	Other User Groups / Notes
Alexander Magit	✓	x	✓	x	
Alice Johnson	✓	✓	✓	x	
Bena Angliss	✓	x	✓	✓ <i>Forest Road</i>	
Berrabri	✓	x	x	x	
Billoo Park	✓	x	✓ <i>separate building, same land</i>	✓ <i>separate building, same land</i>	
Blue Hills	✓	x	✓	✓	PLACE Program Early Years Hub site
Cooinda	✓	x	✓	x	
Eildon Parade	✓	x	x	x	Kidz Bizz Little Premmies
Flamingo	✓	✓	✓	x	
F.W Kerr	✓	x	x	x	
Goodwin Estate	✓	✓	✓	x	
Haering Road	✓	x	✓	x	
Knoxfield	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Knox Gardens	✓	x	x	x	Early Years Hub site
Kinderlea	x	✓	x	x	Staff offices
Liberty Avenue	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Mariemont	✓	✓	x	x	
Murrindal	✓	x	✓	✓	Family counselling provided by Anglicare
NG Haynes	x	x	✓	✓	
Park Ridge	✓	x	✓	x	
Riddell Road	✓	x	✓	x	
Rowville	✓	✓	✓	x	
Scoresby West	✓	x	✓	x	
Taylors Lane	✓	x	✓	x	
Templeton Orchards	✓	✓	x	x	
The Basin	✓	✓	✓	x	
The Fields	✓	x	x	x	
Upper Ferntree Gully	✓	x	✓	x	
Wattleview	✓	x	✓	✓	
West Gully	✓	x	✓	x	
Windermere	✓	✓	✓	x	
Alchester Village	x <i>Operated by Committee of Management</i>	✓ <i>Operated by Committee of Management</i>	✓	x	
Colchester Park	x <i>Operated by Best Chance KCM</i>	✓ <i>Operated by Best Chance KCM</i>	x	x	

Service Planning

SCOPE

Service: Asset Management

Director: Ian Bell, Director Engineering and Infrastructure

Manager: Matt Hanrahan, Manager Sustainable Infrastructure

SERVICE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

This Service Assessment will aim to answer the following key questions:

1. What should be the strategic intent of the service?
2. What should be the service model for this service?
3. How could this service be more effective and efficient?

In accordance with the Council Plan, all Service Analyses will consider planning, where relevant, for an ageing population; and providing a range of programs, services and partnerships which aim to build connections between people and reduce social isolation.

INTRODUCTION

Knox City Council (Council) manages more than \$1.5 billion in property, infrastructure, and plant and equipment assets on behalf of the community. It is generally accepted that these assets exist to directly, and indirectly, support the services that Council delivers to the community. A significant proportion of Council's operational and capital budgets are directed to managing Council's assets. As a result, Asset Management is a core operational function of Council. Council's Asset Management Policy notes:

Assets enable the provision of services to the community [...] Sustainable service outcomes for the community are very much dependent on the performance of the assets that support those services.

(Knox City Council 2013, p. 2).



Council's Asset Management Policy defines Asset Management as:

The process applied to manage assets over each stage of their service life, from asset needs analysis, creation, operation, maintenance, renewal and disposal. The objective of asset management is to meet a required level of service in the most cost effective manner, through the management of assets for present and future customers.

(Knox City Council 2013, p. 3).

The *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act) outlines the role and functions of Council, which include the responsible management of resources, the provision of services and facilities, and the provision and maintenance of community infrastructure. As a collective response to these overarching objectives (and additional regulations imposed by the *Road Management Act 2004*), Council has developed an Asset Management Framework which is outlined in the Strategic Asset Management Plan (2014). As a result, Asset Management is delivered cross organisationally and requires a concerted and collaborative effort of many Council teams and external service providers.

Although the broad definition of Asset Management means it is a service practised across the organisation, it is centrally facilitated by the Asset Strategy team. This team provides strategic direction for Asset Management, incorporating the development of processes and systems to maintain Council's asset datasets and management systems, and the development and implementation of strategic Asset Management Plans for all asset categories.

In general terms, the centralised Asset Management services delivered by the Asset Strategy team provide the following key functions and associated sub-functions. The service analysis will be limited in scope to focus on these functions and sub-functions.

Function	Sub-Function
Strategic Asset Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AM Policy • AM Strategy • AM Plans (Development, Review, Implementation, Monitoring) • Renewal modelling and forecasting • Internal Reporting • Corporate AM – advice, promotion and service integration • Corporate Projects • Process improvement
Asset System Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AM System and Work Order System development • AM System and Work Order System support/management • GIS Asset management • System integration with core Council applications • Process improvement • Software vendor management
Asset Data Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Register/GIS management • Condition Audits • Asset Financial Valuations • Road Management (including compliance monitoring and Public Road Register) • External Reporting (MAV, VGC, State of the Assets, LGPRF) • Asset enquiries

Table 1: Asset Management (AM) functions and sub-functions

The Asset Management service is participating in both the Service Planning and Customer Focused Business Improvement (CFBI) programs. The scope of the Service Planning component will be narrow in order to accommodate the CFBI work.

CURRENT SERVICE MODEL

Asset Management Service Snapshot

Most of Council's Asset Management functions fall within the responsibilities of the Engineering & Infrastructure Directorate.

Within the Sustainable Infrastructure Department, the Asset Strategy team provides a centralised Asset Management leadership role, utilising its relationships with Service Owners (e.g. Customer Service, Leisure Services), Operational teams (e.g. Facilities, Works Services) and Council support services (e.g. Finance, Information Management) to strive towards integrated Asset Management. It is this facilitation and leadership role, as an internal service, which is the primary focus of this scope document.

The three key functions of Asset Management delivered by the Asset Strategy team (as outlined in the Introduction) are:

1. Strategic Asset Management
2. Asset System Management
3. Asset Data Management

The current service model is predominantly delivered in-house through a small team of staff directly employed by Council. The Asset Strategy team consists of a coordinator, an asset engineer, two asset systems officers and an asset management officer. Asset Strategy regularly engages external consultants to perform independent asset condition audits. External asset specialists have also been engaged at times to assist in the development of Asset Management Plans and to provide system development support.

The key functions managed by the Asset Strategy team have previously been presented in Table 1.

Service budget 2015/2016:	
Income	\$0
Expenditure	\$838,847
Net	\$838,847
Service EFTs:	5.0

Council's Asset Management Policy 2013 (and its previous iteration) was introduced to ensure Asset Management is undertaken in a structured, coordinated, cost effective and financially sustainable manner across the whole of the organisation. The policy defines principal actions and responsibilities required by Council to achieve effective Asset Management. The primary intention of the Asset Strategy team has been to drive the adoption of the policy across Council and in doing so achieve the sustainable and strategic provision of Asset Management.

Council's Asset Management and Work Order System, 'Lifecycle', is predominantly managed by two systems officers within the Asset Strategy team, with minimal support being required from the software vendor or the Information Management department.

The day to day operational functions to create, operate and maintain, rehabilitate/ replace and dispose assets are decentralised across Council's Operations department teams (Works Services, Parks Services – Active Open Space and Passive Open Space and Construction) and also the Facilities team. These teams use both internal staff and external service providers to manage the range of day to day asset management activities with the transactional data being recorded in Council's Asset Management System.

SERVICE ASSESSMENT

Role of Council

According to the Act, Section 3D-2(c), the role of a Council includes “maintaining the viability of the Council by ensuring that resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner”. In Section 3E-1(b,c) the Act goes on to define the functions of a Council to include “planning for and providing services and facilities for the local community” and “providing and maintaining community infrastructure in the municipal district”.

Council, therefore, has responsibility for a significant portfolio of infrastructure assets, and is a custodian of these assets for and on behalf of the community. These assets in turn underpin service delivery – hence Council has a default role in Asset Management if it continues to deliver asset dependent services in accordance with the Act. The Asset Management activities applied across Council ensure that all Council services are supported through the ongoing provision of assets at agreed service levels. In addition to the Act, the *Road Management Act 2004* requires Council to maintain, administer and enact a Public Road Register and Road Management Plan.

Given Council has a legislated role in the provision and maintenance of community infrastructure assets and a fundamental role in the provision of an Asset Management service, the role of Council will not be a focus of the service analysis.

Strategic Intent

The outcomes of the Asset Management service are defined in the Asset Management Service Profile (2012) and describe at a high level what the Asset Management service is trying to achieve:

1. Financially sustainable provision and management of assets to support Council service delivery
2. Maximisation of the life of Assets
3. Assets that are safe, functional and constructed to acceptable standards
4. Asset Management systems that are functional, accessible and available to users, and where the integrity of data is maintained

The Knox Asset Management Framework is Council's response to the legislative requirement to provide and maintain community infrastructure, and includes a focus on people, processes and systems. The Framework's hierarchy of documentation is represented in Figure 1.

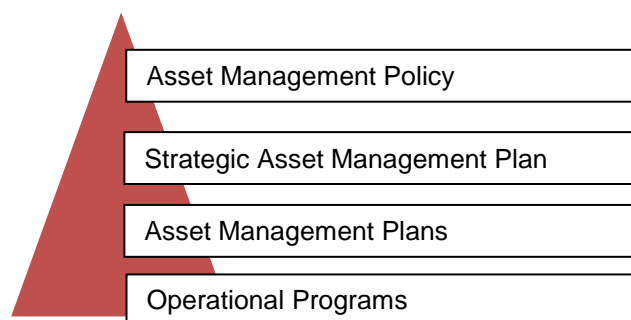


Figure 1: Knox Asset Management Framework

Asset Management Plans, with their strategic and operational intent, provide the key linkage between community needs identified by service owners, asset lifecycle activities, levels of service and budget requirements.

A further outcome sought by the Asset Management service is to ensure the service levels defined in Asset Management Plans are representative of community needs and expectations. This is an emerging challenge in the service to ensure there is better integration between service planning and Asset Management. The Asset Management service will therefore need to investigate and implement enhanced methods of community consultation and engagement around the different asset classes and types to ensure an appropriate balance between financial sustainability and the delivery of agreed levels of service.

Through its membership of the Municipal Association of Victoria, Council's Asset Management Framework is audited annually by the Municipal Association of Victoria using the National Asset Management Assessment Framework. Late last year, three International Organisation for Standardisation – Asset Management Standards were released. ISO 55000 provides an overview of asset management, its principles and terminology, and the expected benefits from adopting asset management. ISO 55001 specifies requirements for an asset management system within the context of the organisation. ISO 55002 provides guidance for the application of an asset management system, in accordance with the requirements of ISO 55001. The flow on effect of the new standard in respect of regulation and compliance is unknown, however Council will need to monitor any potential impact.

The new ISO standard ISO55000 lists a range of business objectives delivered by effective Asset Management:

1. Improved financial performance
2. Better informed asset investment decisions
3. Better managed risk
4. Improved service outputs
5. Demonstrated social responsibility

6. Demonstrated compliance
7. Enhanced reputation
8. Improved organisational sustainability
9. Improved efficiency and effectiveness

Council's Asset Management service functions generally align with achieving these objectives through continuous improvement of Asset Management practices.

Service Model

Council's current service model for Asset Management has been discussed previously. Although it is practised across the organisation, it is primarily a service delivered internally by a centralised team. The functions that this service undertakes are listed in Table 1. The Asset Strategy team, in liaison with service owners, has generally provided a forward thinking focus for the majority of the Asset Management service, whilst the operational teams deliver the day to day management of Council assets.

There are a number of current issues and factors that may impact the existing service model:

A. Service and Place Planning

Alignment of Council's Service Planning process has raised the need for service owners to recognise the assets that are required to deliver their services and to think strategically in respect of future demand. In addition, Council's Place Program requires an integrated approach to the planning of activity centres and associated infrastructure to achieve better social, economic and environmental outcomes. The methods to achieve this alignment will need to be determined however it will most likely require resources (particularly data and systems) to provide 'what if' type analysis of current supply and demand. An example may be 'where to best site a new community hub'. The analysis may require information about demographics, transport services, current services and external competition, some of which does not currently exist in Council systems or is accessible by other means.

Better asset management requires a strategic partnership between service planners, asset planners and the community to validate the intrinsic relationship between service, asset and place planning.

The information, systems and change management required to support this alignment will need resourcing and leadership.

B. Integrated Facility Planning

Council's Community Facilities Planning Policy outlines Council's commitment to an integrated planning process for the planning, delivery and management of community facilities, and as part of that process, to consider opportunities for multipurpose, co-located or integrated uses of facilities. The topic of integrated facility planning is evolving in the sector and is requiring Councils to re-assess the traditional approach to the provision of community facilities.

C. Developer Contribution Plan

A Developer Contribution Plan is being considered by Council for recovery of funds for capital works projects and asset renewals. The information and systems required to support a Developer Contribution Scheme is most likely to fall within the responsibilities of the Asset Management service. The implementation of a Development Contribution Plan will seek to lock down future capital investment in assets.

D. Asset Management System

Council's Asset Management system 'Lifecycle' has surpassed the traditional application useful life of ten years. The 'Lifecycle' system implemented in 2004 has been significantly customised by the Asset Strategy systems officers and external developers to satisfy the unique needs of Council. The system modules include the Asset Register, Work Order System, Facilities System, Fleet System, Asset Inspections and Renewals. The system is the central repository for all asset related data and integrates with Council's other corporate systems including the financial system, customer request system and GIS. There are approximately fifty Lifecycle users.

The system is managed external to the Information Management department. This strategy presents some risk to Council in retention of system knowledge. The system does not conform to standards applied to corporate system and lacks process efficiencies delivered by products now available in the asset management system market place. The original system vendor was acquired by Technology One late in 2015. Council will need to consider the strategic direction for the existing system within 2-3 years.

E. Rate Capping

Reducing the funding gap for renewal of asset infrastructure is an objective defined in the Council Plan. The Asset Management service manages valuations, condition audits and performs renewal modelling for Council's assets, all of which inform the Long Term Financial Forecast. Since the inception of Council's Strategic Asset Management Framework in 2003 and the implementation of associated practices, Council has effectively closed its renewal gap. The Council Plan strategic indicator to allocate budget for the renewal of Council infrastructure to greater than 96% of required renewal funding by 2016/2017 stands to be achieved.

The introduction of rate capping by the Victorian State Government and its potential flow on effect to Council budgets will need to be monitored for any impact to the renewal funding strategies of Council infrastructure assets.

The service analysis will consider which service delivery model best positions Council to meet current and future challenges. This may be a combination of internal, community and external models, utilising embedded skillsets and centralised advisory services. It is difficult to consider specific changes to the model until Council demonstrates strategic dialogue with the community and sound Asset Management practices in

integrated planning decisions. Whichever model Council adopts, integrated Asset Management needs to be front and centre for all decision making.

Service Levels

The main focus of the service analysis will be the Strategic Intent and Service Delivery Model, therefore it is difficult to address this section without having certainty on those two components of the service. Service Levels in regards to community engagement have been addressed within the Strategic Intent section of this report.

Definition of service levels for functions delivered by the Asset Management service will be considered as a component of the service analysis, but will be addressed in more detail through the CFBI program. The type of work activity (i.e. project versus day to day) will need to be considered in determining whether process changes are necessary to implement a service level. For example a system development project may require a formal specification to be produced which details work effort, resources and lead times, whereas an asset based inquiry may be prioritised in respect of importance and current workloads.

Efficiency

The Asset Management service is included in the CFBI program and will be examining how its processes could be improved for greater efficiency and customer friendliness. Using CFBI, the following processes are to be reviewed:

- Develop/review Asset Management Plans
- Maintain Asset Databases
- Manage Asset System
- Audit Asset Condition

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1. IPWEA 2015, *International Infrastructure Management Manual – 2015*, Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia.
2. ISO 2014a, *ISO 55000 Asset Management – Overview, principles and Terminology*, International Standards Organisation, Switzerland.
3. ISO 2014b, *ISO 55001 Asset Management – Management systems – Requirements*, International Standards Organisation, Switzerland.
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5. Knox City Council 2013a, *Asset Management Policy*, Knox City Council, Victoria.
6. Knox City Council 2013b, *City Plan 2013-2017*, Knox City Council, Victoria.
7. Knox City Council 2014, *Strategic Asset Management Plan*, Knox City Council, Victoria.
8. Knox City Council 2016, *Community Facilities Planning Policy*, Knox City Council, Victoria.
9. *Local Government Act 1989*.

Service Planning

SCOPE

Service: Biodiversity

Director: Ian Bell, Director Engineering and Infrastructure

Manager: David Yeouart, Manager Community Infrastructure

SERVICE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

This Service Assessment will aim to answer the following key questions:

1. What should be the service model for this service?
2. How could this service be more efficient?
3. What would be the most effective future service delivery model?

In accordance with the Council Plan, all Service Analyses will consider planning, where relevant, for an ageing population; and providing a range of programs, services and partnerships which aim to build connections between people and reduce social isolation.

INTRODUCTION

Council and its community place a high value on its natural environment and endeavours to conserve and enhance its remaining natural habitat and biodiversity.

Fortunately, Knox has 118 sites of biological significance, including those of National, State, regional and local significance, as identified within the Sites of Biological Significance in Knox – 2nd Edition, 2010.

These sites provide a number of attractive and distinctive landscape features including creeks, water bodies, floodplains and hills which provide unique sanctuaries for indigenous vegetation and native fauna, which are at risk of degradation or loss as a consequence of urban development.

While Knox has a total land area of 11,380 Ha, less than five per cent (5%) is remnant, indigenous vegetation and almost 90% of this area is listed as endangered or vulnerable at the national or bioregional level - Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs).

Consequently, the conservation of indigenous flora and natural fauna habitat in Knox is at a critical stage and it has been estimated that a quarter to one half of the remaining flora species will be lost within one or two decades, unless preventative and positive action is taken to retain these essential sanctuaries.

Council understands the importance of retaining and enhancing Knox's native vegetation and sites of biological significance and supports the provision of a Biodiversity Service.

The Service:

- Provides for the conservation, enhancement and celebration of local biodiversity within the city of Knox.
- Delivers bushland management to protect and enhance over 70 Council reserves, over 120 sites of biological significance
- Delivers education/awareness programs in order to increase the appreciation and understanding of the values of biodiversity within the broader community.
- Encourages and supports active participation by members of the community in the conservation and enhancement of remnant vegetation on public and private land.
- Is integral to protecting and enhancing the remaining natural habitat and biodiversity values of Knox and minimising further decline and possible extinction.

The Biodiversity Service is considered in both Council's Service Planning Program and the Customer Focused Business Improvement (CFBI) Program.

As such, the scope of the Service Planning element will be summary in nature, with the primary focus being on CFBI opportunities.

CURRENT SERVICE MODEL

Biodiversity Service Snapshot

Service budget 2015/2016:	
Income	(\$176,943)
Expenditure	\$1,259,226
Net	\$1,082,283
Service EFTs:	7.8

Sources of income during 2015/2016 have included:

- **Net Gain Offset Developer Contributions** from developments requiring the removal of native vegetation (\$38,743). These contributions are transferred to a Reserve Fund for future acquisition of sites of biological significance e.g. Bateman Street Bushland Reserve, as per Council's Open Space Reserve - Revegetation Plan.
- **State and Federal Government grants.** Current project/funding streams include:
 - Knox One Tree per Child Program – Funded through Federal Government 20 Million Tree Program (\$17.5K).
 - Revegetation of Ferny Creek at Wally Tew Reserve, Ferntree Gully and Dandenong Creek Bayswater Program, Upper Ferntree Gully – Funded through Melbourne Water's Corridors of Green (\$20.7K).
 - Revegetation Plan Implementation (\$100K) – Council Open Space Reserve.

The Biodiversity Service is predominantly provided by an in-house service model, comprising of 7.8 staff in the Biodiversity Unit, within the Community Infrastructure Department. The Unit is the service owner and comprises of a Coordinator (environmental/social scientist), a community development and education officer, natural resource managers/environmental scientists and a Project Support Officer (part-time).

The Service is supplemented by: consultants for selected specialised skills and advice; contractors for general bushland management (where specific site/species knowledge is not required) and volunteers.

Also, community members, friends groups and Gardens for Wildlife volunteers, provide weed management, planting, garden assessments and support at community events on a voluntary basis.

The primary focus of the Service is to protect and enhance the remaining natural habitat and biodiversity values of Knox and to minimise any further decline or possible extinction.

As such, the Service is guided by three (3) principles:

- Conserving existing indigenous vegetation;
- Enhancing and connecting sites of biological significance, and
- Connecting the community to nature to support wellbeing, stewardship and resilience.

To achieve this outcome, the key activities of the Service are:

- **Service Level Planning and Contemporary Practice in Biodiversity Management:** Determining level of service and delivering activities such as, pest plant and animal management, bushfire preparedness, revegetation etc. is a core component of the Biodiversity service and is largely delivered by the Bushland Management Team.
- **Provision of Expert Advice:** The Biodiversity Service is the ‘service owner’ and provides advice for all biodiversity related matters within Knox, including specialist advice on developments, plans, strategies, government policies and initiatives.
- **Community Engagement and Education – Connecting to Nature:** The service currently provides a variety of programs to support the community and local business in connecting to nature.
- **Partnerships:** The Service is delivered in association with strategic internal and external stakeholders.
- **Internal partners include:**
 - Strategic and Statutory Planning: Development of biodiversity protection on private land, through overlays and local policy in Knox Planning Scheme; permit conditions for biodiversity protection and native vegetation offset requirements for proposed developments;
 - Open Space and Landscape Design: provision of open space to support biodiversity;
 - Parks Services: supporting Sites of Biological Significance through environmental weed management and revegetation on nearby Council reserves, supporting community biodiversity events and programs;
 - Local Laws: enforcement of Environmental Weed Local Law and pest animal control;

- Emergency Management: supports facilitation and provides advice in planned burn preparation and bushland fire preparedness works;
 - Sustainable Futures: support school engagement in biodiversity;
 - Family and Children's Services: provision of Early Years, Connecting to Nature Programs;
 - Stormwater: design, delivery and potential management/renewal of wetland systems and water bodies that support local flora and fauna;
 - Economic Development: Support and promotion of Corporate biodiversity programs, and
 - Social Planning: Development of health indicators for Gardens for Wildlife participants.
- **External partners include:**
 - Local friends groups: community education and promotion of local bushland reserves, environmental weed management, revegetation, citizen science program delivery;
 - Gardens for Wildlife community volunteers: private garden visits, volunteers at events;
 - Knox Environment Society: partner of the Gardens for Wildlife Program, delivers the seed collection and plant propagation for the Threatened species Management Plan;
 - Melbourne Water: support of Knox Revegetation Plan through aligned delivery of and provision of grant funding for environmental weed removal and revegetation along local waterways;
 - Country Fire Authority: Assist in delivering fuel reduction burns in Council bushland reserves;
 - Swinburne University: flora and fauna monitoring of key Sites of Biological Significance;
 - Deakin University: provision of students undergraduate and post graduate students to undertake biodiversity projects;
 - Port Philip and Westernport Catchment Authority: delivery of the master plan for the Living Links Project, supporting connected habitat corridors along the Dandenong Creek corridor;
 - Parks Victoria: supporting local biodiversity on Parks Victoria land, and
 - Department of Environment Land Water and Planning: supporting Knox biodiversity programs through their Knox branch and piloting a regional Gardens for Wildlife Program as an action for the recently drafted Victorian Biodiversity Strategy.

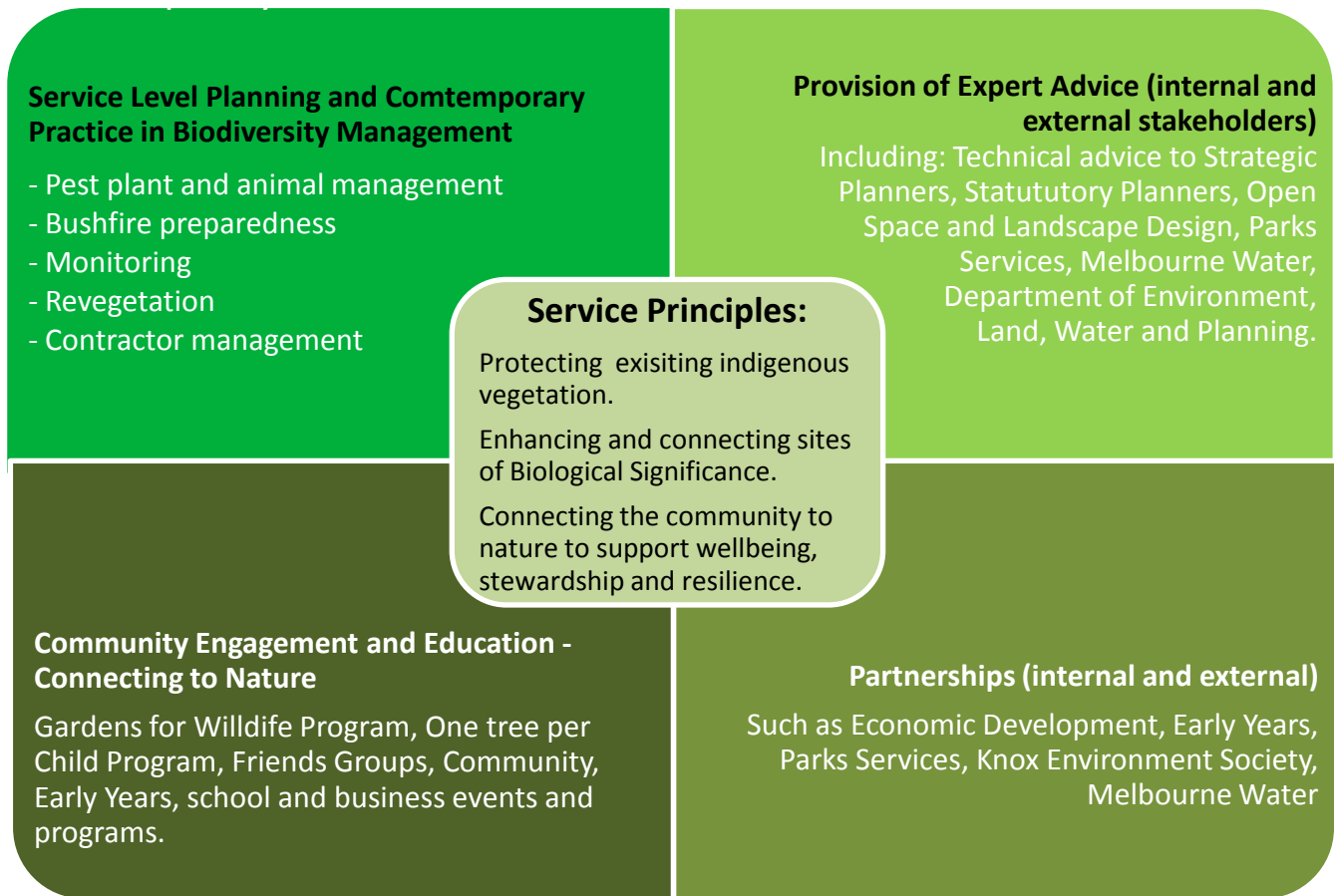


Figure 1: Biodiversity Service Model

SERVICE ASSESSMENT

Role of Council

The purpose of the Biodiversity Service is to work towards achieving the Council Vision; City Plan and the implementation of the Integrated City Strategy 2015-17 and meet legislative requirements.

Council is directed under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Federal legislation) and various State legislation (including Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 and Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994) to provide the Biodiversity service.

This suite of legislation primarily provides a structure to enable, promote and manage the conservation of Victoria's native flora and fauna.

Figure 2 and Appendix H-A summarises the purpose and objectives of the various legislation, strategies and policies applicable to this Service.

Activities which are delivered in accordance with the legislation include:

- management of environmental weeds and other threatening processes (such as waste dumping, trampling, pest animals);
- conservation of flora and habitat for fauna, and
- community education in the value and conservation of flora and fauna.

REGULATIONS DIRECTING BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION

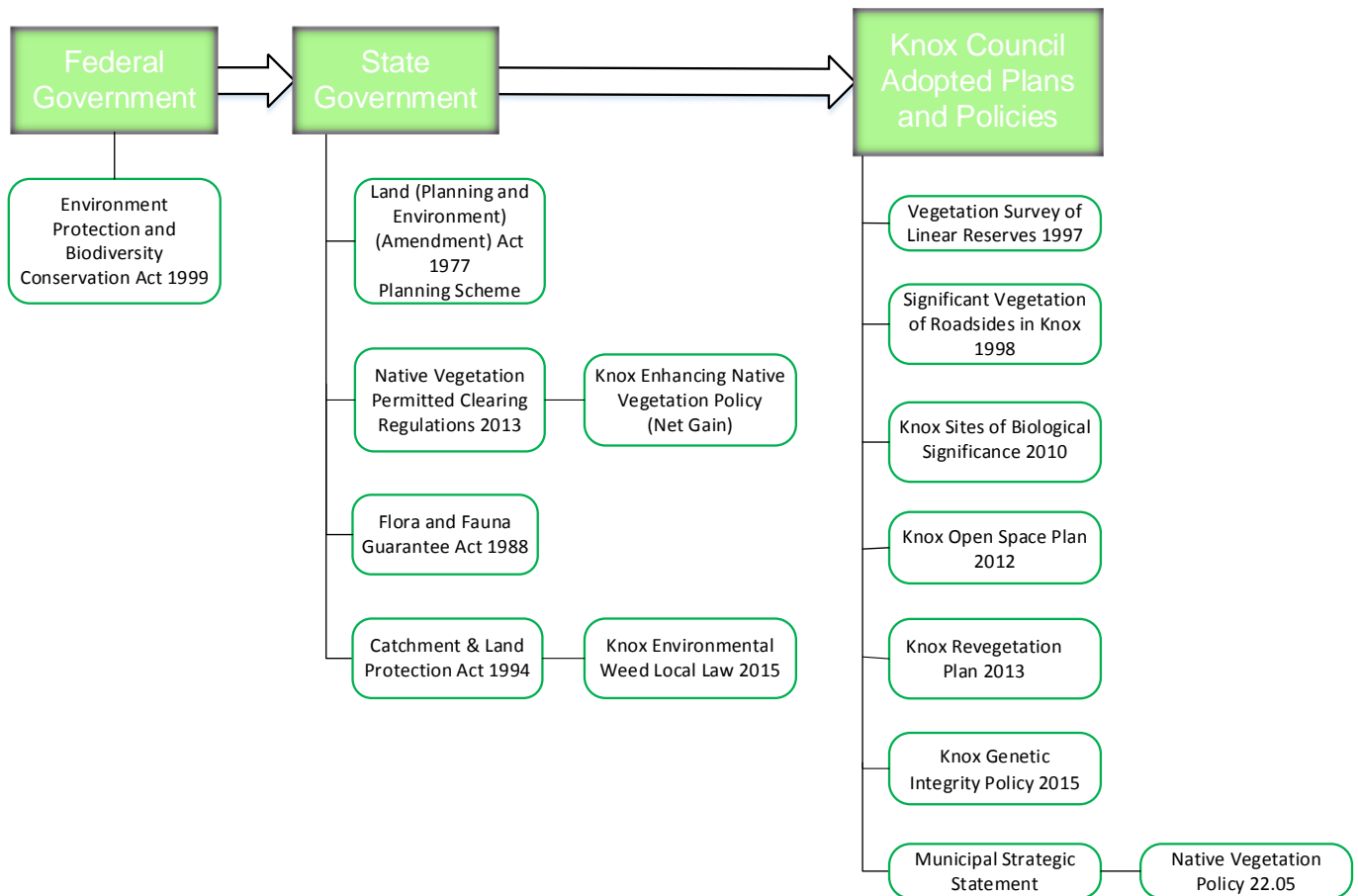


Figure 2: Regulations Directing Biodiversity Protection in Knox

Slightly more than half of the current indigenous plant species growing in Knox may become extinct within one or two decades (Figure 3).

However, 42% of the threatened plant species are not found in reserves or land managed for conservation and some are highly reliant on sites owned by State and Federal government, e.g. schools, roadsides or private (residential or industrial) land.

This means, non-Council land is critical for the future survival of threatened species and is the basic premise for Council’s Gardens for Wildlife Program.

Council also has a role in ensuring there is ‘no net loss’ of native vegetation biodiversity on private land through land use planning decisions and approvals. To this end, Council has also implemented a Native Vegetation Net Gain Policy to provide Knox sites of biological significance with planning protection and to support the Victorian Government set policy objectives.

The Victorian Government has recently prompted changes to the Knox Planning Scheme to identify and protect important habitat and indigenous vegetation across Knox and is currently developing a State Draft Biodiversity Strategy (which underlines the importance of urban biodiversity and the need for community to connect to nature for wellbeing and stewardship).

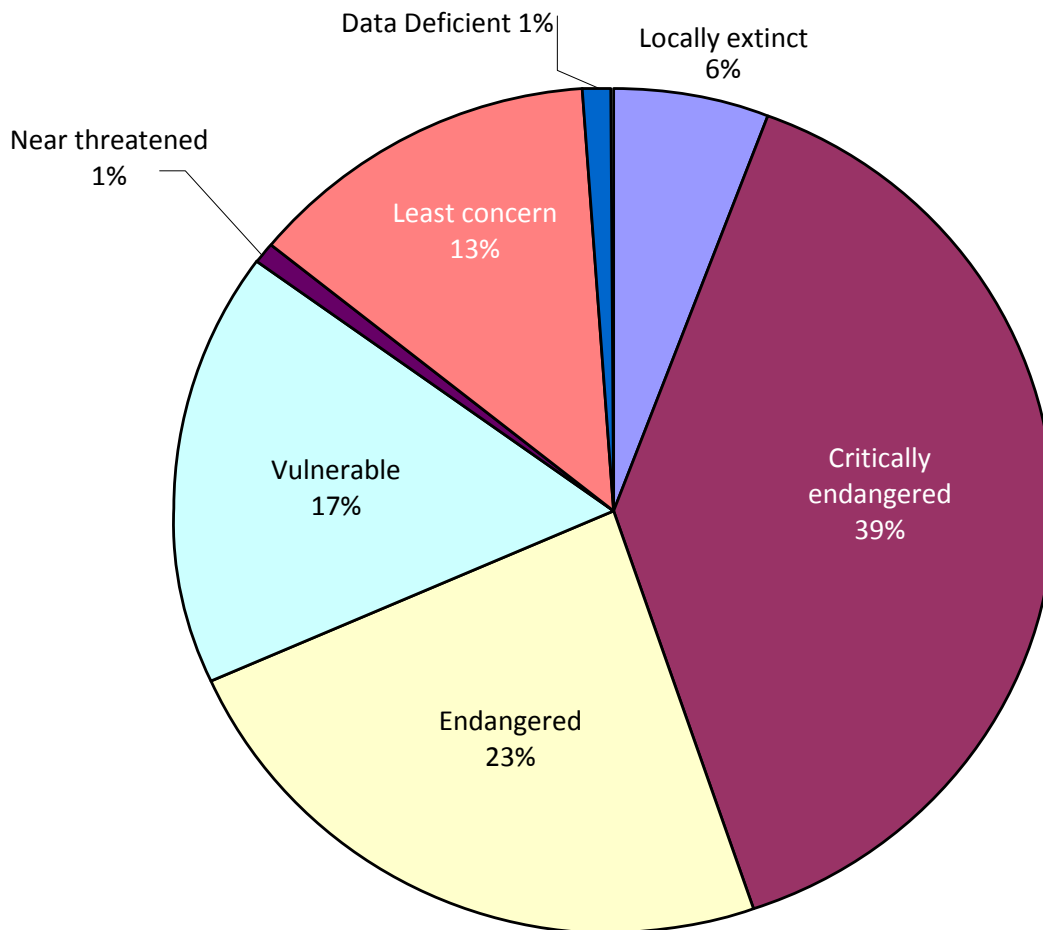


Figure 3: State of Flora Species in Knox

Given that Council has legislated obligations in the provision of this Service and that the service is a core component of the community’s vision for a green, liveable city, the Scope does not propose to review the role of Council in the delivery of this service.

Strategic Intent

The strategic intent of the Service is to provide contemporary, best practice management in the protection and enhancement of biodiversity on public and private land, which will also support the green and leafy image of Knox and promote community wellbeing.

Further analysis may result in a modification to the current strategic intent to include strategic acquisition and revegetation of sites of biological significance, due to the significant percentage of endangered species not currently on Council managed land.

Increased contribution and interest from community and business champions may also need to be considered in the future scope of this service.

Hence, a key opportunity of the Service Analysis will be to explore: the use of community champions; strategic acquisition and revegetation of biodiversity sites and the most appropriate model for the delivery of the Connecting with Nature Program.

The Integrated City Strategy and Implementation Plan 2015-17 provides strategic direction to assist Council and community partners to achieve the Knox Vision and City Plan.

One of the key desired outcomes is for Knox to have a healthy and diverse ecosystem and that people understand and value the benefits of living in a biodiverse community.

The strategy to achieve this outcome is for Council to:

'Enhance and protect biodiversity and the green leafy image by proactively managing local waterways, wildlife and significant vegetation communities, landscape character and streetscapes'.

The Biodiversity Service assists in the achievement of this outcome by:

- Delivering contemporary practice in biodiversity management on Council owned bushland reserves (77 Council bushland reserves (Appendix B), over 120 sites of biological significance (Appendix C),
- Community engagement and education programs (supporting the community and business to connect and appreciate nature for wellbeing and stewardship connecting to nature),
- Providing technical advice and support through an integrated approach with internal and external partners.

Collaborative partnerships

The Biodiversity Service is delivered in association with multiple internal and external partners.

In addition to supporting service delivery these partnerships help to extend audience reach, increase knowledge, develop awareness of biodiversity issues and build community.

Service Model Effectiveness and Efficiency

Community support for biodiversity is expanding through the development of several local friends groups and high attendance levels at community events.

The community engagement aspect of the Service continues to grow in response to greater demand by private landowners to form their own version of 'Gardens for Wildlife', further encouraging the return and proliferation of native wildlife and connecting with nature in their own space.

A key issue of the service model is how the major threats to biodiversity in Knox are managed (identified through the Sites of Biological Significance Study 2010).

A summary of these threats are:

Threat	Current Practice/Actions	Issues/Comments
Environmental Weeds	Weed Plan being prepared 2015-16 to provide strategic direction for the municipality in terms of priority weed species, locations of concern and timing of weed control.	The Weed Plan will increase the effectiveness and efficiencies in weed management in Knox on public and private land
Lack of Fire Regimes	Irregular burn plan development with Biodiversity/Emergency Management/CFA for fuel reduction.	No previous plan/policy exists for fire regimes to promote biodiversity regeneration. Native vegetation relies on fire regeneration which is a challenge in an urban environment.
Pest Animals (in particular foxes)	Partnership with Parks Victoria and City of Monash – annual fox culling in Wantirna to support breeding powerful owl.	No comprehensive pest animal management program exists and community concerns are increasing with regular phone, Facebook, email and local press enquiries. Currently, there are no controls on cats in Knox. Local Laws Domestic Animal Plan 2013-17 identifies an action to: investigate whether any benefit would be achieved by the introduction of a night time cat curfew.
Loss of genetic integrity of local indigenous flora species	Native Vegetation Genetic Integrity Policy 2015	Support the revegetation of local provenance plants to protect the local gene pool
Extinction of local threatened indigenous plant species	Knox Management Plan for Locally Threatened Species in Knox - 2010	The Plan identifies the process for locating local threatened species in Knox , seed collection and propagation with support of the Knox Environment Society

As the issues around environmental weeds is currently being addressed, via the Weed Plan, the next focus of the Service needs to be the major threats to biodiversity resulting from a lack of planned fire regimes and the management of pest animals.

The Service Analysis will explore:

- **Opportunities and effective measures to introduce fire regimes, in partnership with relevant stakeholders (such as CFA and Council’s Emergency Management Service, to support local biodiversity), and**
- **Council’s role in pest animal control.**

The level of service required in this area is driven by factors such as:

- Legislative requirements;
- Policy and strategic documents;
- Contemporary best practice and research;
- Weather and other climatic conditions;
- Local community aspirations and expectations;
- Increased focus on integrated service delivery to strategy, policy and major initiatives, and
- Increased expectations to collaborate and deliver regionally for best outcomes or seeking government funding.

The Biodiversity Service is in the Customer Focused Business Improvement program and will examine how its current processes may be improved.

The Service Analysis will test the efficiency and effectiveness of the Biodiversity service with its stakeholders, where it should focus its energy for greatest impact and where regional approaches may add value.

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2. *The Planning and Environment Amendment (General) Act 2013*
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5. *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1998*
6. *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*
7. Knox City: Our Vision our Future 2013-17
8. Knox City Plan 2013-17
9. Knox Integrated City Strategy and Implementation Plan 2015-17
10. Vegetation Survey of Linear Reserves 1997
11. Significant Vegetation of Roadsides in Knox 1998
12. Sites of Biological Significance in Knox – 2nd Edition 2010
13. Knox Open Space Plan 2012
14. Knox Revegetation Plan 2013
15. Municipal Strategic Statement
16. Native Vegetation Policy 22.05
17. Knox Native Vegetation Net Gain Policy 2011
18. Knox Genetic Integrity Policy 2015
19. Knox Environmental Weed Law 2015

APPENDICES

- A. Purpose and Objectives of Relevant Legislation
- B. Biodiversity Managed Areas in Knox - Bushland Reserves
- C. Sites of Biological Significance

Purpose and Objectives of Relevant Legislation

Federal Government:

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION ACT 1999

The objects of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* are:

- (a) to provide for the protection of the environment, especially those aspects of the environment that are matters of national environmental significance;
- (b) to promote ecologically sustainable development through the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of natural resources;
- (c) to promote the conservation of biodiversity;
- (ca) to provide for the protection and conservation of heritage;
- (d) to promote a cooperative approach to the protection and management of the environment involving governments, the community, land-holders and indigenous peoples;
- (e) to assist in the cooperative implementation of Australia's international environmental responsibilities;
- (f) to recognise the role of indigenous people in the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of Australia's biodiversity; and
- (g) to promote the use of indigenous peoples' knowledge of biodiversity with the involvement of, and in cooperation with, the owners of the knowledge.

State Legislation:

NATIVE VEGETATION PERMITTED CLEARING REGULATIONS 2013

The *Permitted clearing of native vegetation – Biodiversity assessment guidelines* (the Guidelines) outline how impacts on Victoria's biodiversity are assessed when an application to remove native vegetation is lodged. The Guidelines are an incorporated document in all Victorian planning schemes.

The Knox Native Vegetation Net Gain Policy provides the local response to these requirements.

The Victorian Government is currently reviewing the State's native vegetation clearing regulations to ensure they judiciously protect sensitive native vegetation across Victoria.

FLORA AND FAUNA GUARANTEE ACT 1988

The purpose of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* is to establish a legal and administrative structure to enable and promote the conservation of Victoria's native flora and fauna and to provide for a choice of procedures which can be used for the conservation, management or control of flora and fauna and the management of potentially threatening processes

The flora and fauna conservation and management objectives, as outlined under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*, are:

- a. to guarantee that all taxa of Victoria's flora and fauna can survive, flourish and retain their potential for evolutionary development in the wild;
- b. to conserve Victoria's communities of flora and fauna;
- c. to manage potentially threatening processes;
- d. to ensure that any use of flora or fauna by humans is sustainable;
- e. to ensure that the genetic diversity of flora and fauna is maintained;
- f. to provide programs:
 1. of community education in the conservation of flora and fauna;
 2. to encourage cooperative management of flora and fauna through, amongst other things, the entering into of land management cooperative agreements under the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987*; and
 3. to assist and give incentives to people, including landholders, to enable flora and fauna to be conserved.
- g. to encourage the conserving of flora and fauna through cooperative community endeavours.

CATCHMENT AND LAND PROTECTION ACT 1994

Purposes

The following are the purposes of the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* are:

- (a) to set up a framework for the integrated management and protection of catchments;
- (b) to encourage community participation in the management of land and water resources;
- (c) to set up a system of controls on noxious weeds and pest animals.

Biodiversity Managed Areas in Knox	
Number of areas	Bushland Reserves
1	Kn 1 Mountain Highway, The Basin
2	Kn 2 Mountain Highway, Boronia
3	Kn 3 Boronia Road, Boronia
4	Kn 5 Wellington Road Rowville
5	Kn 6 Napoleon Road Rowville
6	Kn 7 Wellington and Kellets Roads Rowville
7	Kn 8 Kellets Road Rowville
8	Kn 9 Burwood Highway Wantirna
9	Kn 10 Kellets Road Rowville
10	Kn 11 Wellington & Kellets & Glen Roads Lysterfield
11	Kn 12 Wellington, Glen & Powells Road Lysterfield
12	Kn 16 Lysterfield Road (South) Lysterfield
13	Kn 17 Lysterfield Road (North) Lysterfield
14	Kn 18 Lysterfield Road (Middle) Lysterfield
15	Kn 19 Wellington & Kellets Road Rowville
16	Kn 20 Mountain Highway, Wantirna
17	Kn 43 Koolamara Waters Wetland, Ferntree Gully
18	Kn 46 Ferny Creek, Kings Park-to Stud Road, Ferntree Gully-Rowville
19	Kn 47 Bergins Rd, Rowville
20	Kn 48 Major Cres Grassland, Rowville
21	Kn 49 Blind Creek Corridor (Cathies Lane), Wantirna South
22	Kn 50 Egan Lee Reserve, Knoxfield
23	Kn51 Lakewood Reserve, Knoxfield
24	KN 52 Redcourt Reserve, Scoresby
25	Kn 53 Flamingo Reserve, Wantirna
26	Kn 54 Lewis Park, Wantirna South
27	Kn 55 Mansons Reserve, Wantirna
28	Kn 56 W.G.Morris, Wantirna
29	Kn 58 Starlight Reserve, Rowville
30	KN 59 Rowville Reserve, Rowville
31	Kn 60 Delta Reserve, Rowville
32	Kn 61 Napoleon Road Extension, Rowville
33	Kn 62 Whitecliff Reserve, Rowville
34	Kn 63 Pine Hill Reserve, Rowville
35	Kn 66 Wadhurst Drive, (Bike track) Boronia
36	Kn 67 Bayswater Park, Bayswater
37	Kn 68 Stringybark Reserve, Wantirna
38	Kn 69 Clyde Reserve, Ferntree Gully
39	Kn 70 Roselyn Cres, Boronia
40	Kn 71 Yarrabing Reserve, Wantrina

Biodiversity Managed Areas in Knox

Number of areas	Bushland Reserves
41	Kn 74 Koolunga Reserve, Ferntree Gully
42	Kn 75 Wirreander Reserve, Boronia
43	Kn 76 Wicks, The Basin
44	Kn 77 Wicks East Reserve, The Basin
45	Kn 78 George Grumont, The Basin
46	Kn 79 Millers Reserve, Boronia
47	Kn 80 Vaughan Rd Reserve, Ferntree Gully
48	Kn 81 Norvel Road Reserve (Surrounding Scout Hall), Ferntree Gully
49	Kn 84 Penrith Reserve, Boronia
50	Kn 85 Sundew (Genista) Reserve, Boronia
51	Kn 86 Blamey Court Reserve, Boronia
52	Kn 87 Old Joes Creek, Boronia
53	Kn 88 Lucus Close, Reserves, Boronia
54	Kn 89 Blind Creek Billabong, Ferntree Gully
55	Kn 90 Mortiboy Reserve, The Basin
56	Kn 92 Karoo Road Rowville
57	Kn 93 Inverness Avenue, The Basin
58	Kn 94 Doongalla Road, The Basin
59	Kn 95 Bateman Street Bushland, Wantirna
60	Kn 96 Heany Park, Rowville
61	Kn 97 Bayview Crescent, The Basin
62	Kn 98 Coppelia Street Reserve & Llewellyn Reserve, Wantirna South
63	Kn 100 Golden Grove Reserve, The Basin
64	Kn 101 Colchester Reserve Wetland, Boronia
65	Kn 102 The Avenue, Ferntree Gully
66	Kn 103 Peregrine Heights, Upper Ferntree Gully
67	Kn 105 Reservoir Crescent, Lysterfield
68	Kn 106 Boronia Road Janville St-Zeising Ct, Boronia
69	Kn 113 The Basin Scout Hall, The Basin
70	Kn 114 Varms Site, Wantirna South
71	Kn 115 Ferny Creek Reserve, UFTG
Revegetation Sites	
72	Rveg 4 Dandenong Creek – Dorset Rd to Bayswater Road, Bayswater
73	Rveg 5 Bayswater Park – Adjacent to Old Joes Creek, Bayswater
74	Rveg 6 Wedmore Road, Boronia.
75	Rveg 7 Lakewood Reserve, Knoxfield
76	Rveg 8 Ferny Creek, UFTG
77	Rveg 9 Blind Creek West of Eastlink, Wantirna South

Sites of Biological Significance in Knox

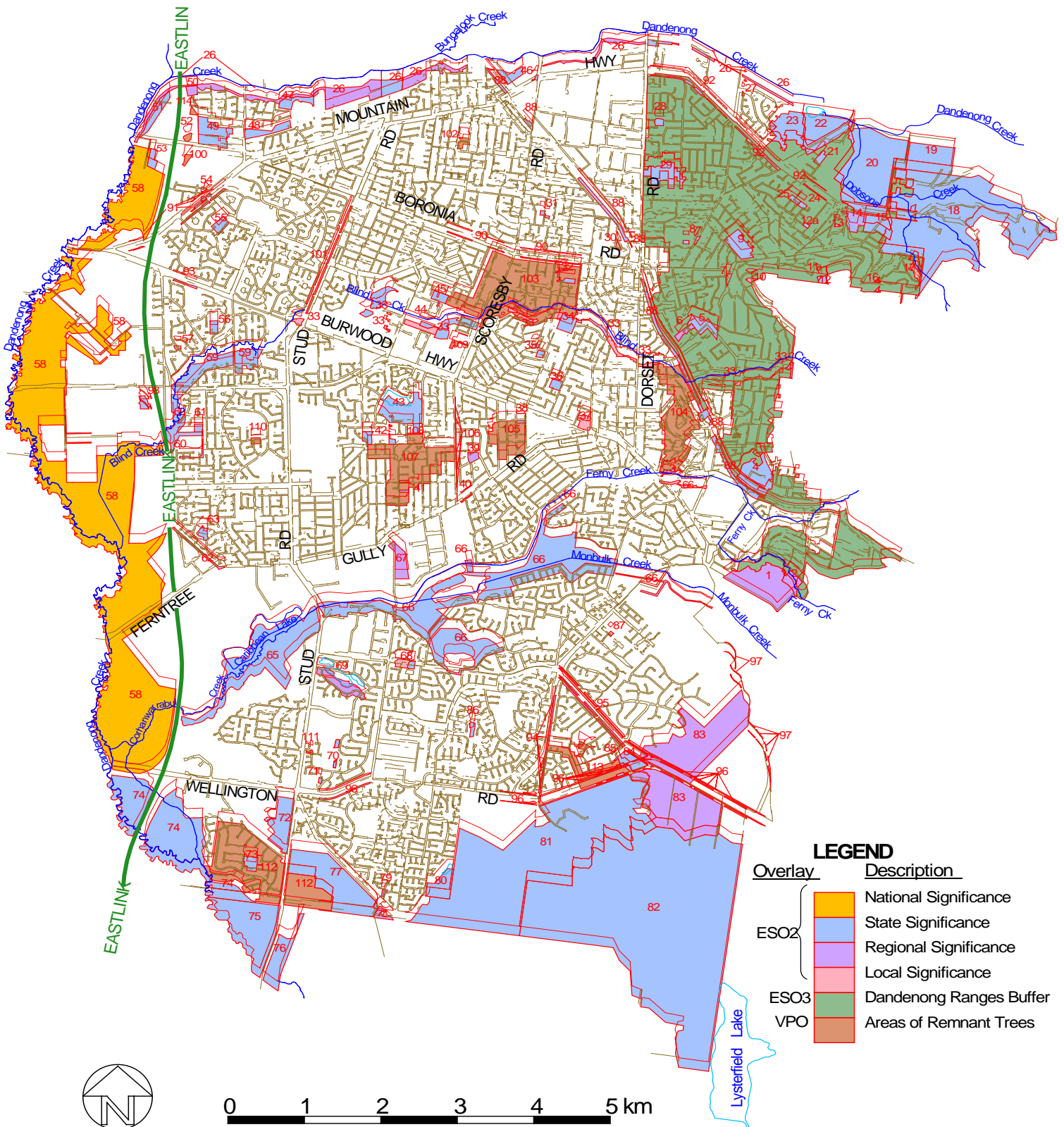
- Site 1. Glenfern Road Woodland, Upper Ferntree Gully
- Site 2. Gilmour Park, Upper Ferntree Gully
- Site 3. End of The Avenue, Ferntree Gully
- Site 4. Former CSR Ferntree Gully Quarry
- Site 5. Koolunga Native Reserve, Ferntree Gully
- Site 6. Vaughan Road Bushland, Ferntree Gully
- Site 7. Wirrianda Reserve, Boronia
- Site 8. Boronia Primary School
- Site 9. Boronia Heights College
- Site 10. Corner Philippa Rd & Hansen Rd, Boronia
- Site 11. Bayview Crescent Reserve, The Basin
- Site 12. Bayview Crescent Water Tank, The Basin
- Site 12a. Mortiboy Reserve, The Basin
- Site 13. The Basin Scout Hall Reserve
- Site 14. West of Wicks Reserve, The Basin
- Site 15. Wicks Reserve & Wicks East Nature Reserve, The Basin
- Site 16. Inverness Avenue Reserve, The Basin
- Site 17. 'The Ravine', The Basin
- Site 18. The Basin - Sassafras Forest Precinct
- Site 19. Hillside above Sheffield Road, The Basin
- Site 20. Lower Dobson Creek, The Basin
- Site 21. Dobson's Treed Paddock, The Basin
- Site 22. Liverpool Road Retarding Basin, Boronia
- Site 23. Sugarloaf Hill, Boronia
- Site 24. St Bernadette's Primary School, The Basin
- Site 25. George Grumont Reserve, The Basin
- Site 26. Dandenong Creek Corridor
- Site 27. Colchester Reserve Wetland, Boronia
- Site 28. Blamey Court Reserve, Boronia
- Site 29. Old Joes Creek Bushland, Boronia
- Site 30. Sundew Reserve, Boronia
- Site 31. Knox Jaycees Reserve & Haering Rd Child Centre, Boronia
- Site 32. St Joseph's School, Boronia
- Site 33. Blind Creek Corridor
- Site 34. Blind Creek Billabong & Quarry, Ferntree Gully
- Site 35. Norvel Rd Reserves, Ferntree Gully
- Site 36. Burke Road Reserve and Knox Reservoir, Ferntree Gully
- Site 37. Pickett Reserve, Ferntree Gully
- Site 38. Clyde Reserve, Ferntree Gully
- Site 39. Kent Park, Ferntree Gully
- Site 40. Ferntree Gully Rd Verge, Ferntree Gully
- Site 41. 52 Kathryn Rd, Knoxfield
- Site 42. R.D. Egan-Lee Reserve, Knoxfield
- Site 43. Lakewood Nature Reserve, Knoxfield
- Site 44. Wadhurst Drive BMX Park, Boronia
- Site 45. Roselyn Crescent Reserve, Boronia
- Site 46. Bayswater Park
- Site 47. J.W. Manson Reserve, Wantirna

- Site 48. Healesville Freeway Reservation, Wantirna
- Site 49. Bateman Street Bush, Wantirna
- Site 50. Yarrabing Wetlands Reserve, Wantirna
- Site 51. Winton Wetlands, Wantirna
- Site 52. Winton Farm, Boronia Rd, Wantirna
- Site 53. Ardnehue Rd Land, Wantirna
- Site 54. Stringybark Reserve, Wantirna
- Site 55. W.G. Morris Reserve, Wantirna
- Site 56. Flamingo Reserve, Wantirna
- Site 57. Wakley Reserve, Wantirna South
- Site 58. Dandenong Valley Parklands
- Site 59. Timmothy Drive Bushland, Wantirna South
- Site 60. Cathies Lane Bushland & Llewellyn Reserve, Wantirna South
- Site 61. Coppelia Street Bushland, Wantirna South
- Site 62. Cathies Lane Reservation, Scoresby
- Site 63. Redcourt Reserve, Scoresby
- Site 65. Stamford Park, Rowville and Caribbean Lake
- Site 66. Corhanwarrabul Creek and its Tributaries
- Site 67. Henderson Road Wetlands, Knoxfield
- Site 68. Hillside Park, Rowville
- Site 69. Cogley, Sutton and Hill Lakes, Rowville
- Site 70. Rowville Primary & Secondary Schools
- Site 71. Delta Court Reserve, Rowville
- Site 72. Rowville Electricity Terminal Station
- Site 73. Starlight Reserve, Rowville
- Site 74. Police Road Retarding Basin and Tirhatuan Wetlands
- Site 75. Tirhatuan Lakes Golf Course, Rowville
- Site 76. Dandenong Police Paddocks Reserve, Rowville
- Site 77. Waverley Golf Club, Rowville
- Site 78. Bergins Rd Extension, Rowville
- Site 79. Whitecliffe Reserve, Rowville
- Site 80. Heany Park, Rowville
- Site 81. Lysterfield Hills
- Site 82. Lysterfield Park
- Site 83. Lysterfield Valley
- Site 84. Fruitful Vine Melbourne Church, Lysterfield
- Site 85. Provence Rise Reserve, Rowville
- Site 86. Pine Hill Reserve, Rowville
- Site 87. Napoleon Rd Bushland, Ferntree Gully
- Site 98. Treed Paddock, High Street Rd, Wantirna Sth
- Site 88. Belgrave Railway Line Corridor
- Site 90. Boronia Rd Roadside, Boronia
- Site 91. Mountain Hwy Roadside, Wantirna
- Site 92. Mountain Hwy Roadside, Boronia to The Basin
- Site 93. Burwood Hwy Roadside, Wantirna
- Site 94. Napoleon Rd Roadside, Rowville
- Site 95. Kelletts Rd Roadside east of Napoleon Rd
- Site 96. Wellington Rd Roadside, Rowville & Lysterfield
- Site 97. Lysterfield Rd Roadside, Lysterfield
- Site 99. Dandenong Ranges Buffer

- Site 100. Forest Lodge, Boronia Rd, Wantirna
- Site 101. Stud Rd Roadside, Wantirna
- Site 102. Ash Grove Precinct, Bayswater
- Site 103. Blind Creek Valley, Boronia
- Site 104. Ferntree Gully Ridge
- Site 105. Dobson Street Treed Precinct, Ferntree Gully
- Site 106. Scoresby Rd Verge, South of Burwood Hwy
- Site 107. Knoxfield Treed Precinct
- Site 108. Knox Park Primary School
- Site 109. Fairhills High School, Knoxfield
- Site 110. Knox Gardens Primary School, Wantirna South
- Site 111. Brusco Close, Rowville
- Site 112. Starlight Treed Precinct, Rowville
- Site 113. Major Crescent Precinct, Rowville
- Site 114. Clarence Rd Treed Paddock, Wantirna
- Site 115. Lysterfield Rural Properties
- Site 116. Road Verges
 - Site 116a. Colchester Rd Roadside, Boronia
 - Site 116b. Taylors Lane Roadside, Rowville
- Site 117. Schools
- Site 118. Parks and Reserves
 - Site 118a. Birchfield Reserve, Wantirna
 - Site 118b. Michelle Drive Reserve, Scoresby
 - Site 118c. Peregrine Reserve, Rowville
 - Site 118d. Teofilo Drive Reserve, Lysterfield

Key Map of Sites of Biological Significance in Knox

recommended for Planning Scheme Overlays



LEGEND

Overlay	Description
ESO1	National Significance
ESO2	State Significance
ESO2	Regional Significance
ESO2	Local Significance
ESO3	Dandenong Ranges Buffer
VPO	Areas of Remnant Trees

Service Planning

SCOPE

Service: Traffic and Transport

Director: Ian Bell, Director Engineering and Infrastructure

Manager: Matthew Hanrahan, Manager Sustainable Infrastructure

SERVICE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

This Service Assessment will aim to answer the following key questions:

1. What should be the strategic intent of this service?
2. What should be the service model for this service?
3. What service levels should this service deliver?
4. How could this service be more effective and efficient?

In accordance with the Council Plan, all Service Analyses will consider planning, where relevant, for an ageing population; and providing a range of programs, services and partnerships which aim to build connections between people and reduce social isolation.

INTRODUCTION

The Traffic and Transport service is responsible for the long-term planning of transport networks and day-to-day management of traffic on the local road network in the municipality.

There are a number of issues which must be considered when planning for future transport needs within the Knox municipality. These were explored in the Integrated Transport Plan and highlight the importance of providing for and supporting the use of sustainable transport choices. Key factors include:

- Fluctuating fuel prices
- Changing population demographics (greater number of older and younger people)
- Obesity levels rising
- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Road congestion rising
- Road Safety concerns
- Technology improvements available
- Land use integration
- Community connections

The Traffic and Transport Service has a number of roles it undertakes, which can generally be put into one of six categories - planning and policy, regulatory, operational, specialist, advocacy and project delivery.

The current service incorporates a mix of both reactive and proactive work. This includes investigating resident concerns regarding on-street parking or road safety, in addition to providing specialist advice in response to planning referrals. With changes to land use and development patterns in Knox, particularly in activity centres, the reactive component of work undertaken by the Traffic and Transport team has been steadily increasing.

Proactive work therefore represents a smaller component of the Traffic and Transport service offer and includes the development of transport plans and policies which guide Council's transport system delivery and management, as well as ranking and planning of transport related Capital Works Programs and the development of planning guidelines for developers.

Other activities currently supported by the Traffic and Transport Service include sustainable transport promotion and education such as: the annual Ride2Work community breakfast; Oppy bike ride; bicycle valet service at the Knox and Stringybark Festivals and Walk2School month. The Transport and Traffic service also provides facilitation and administrative support to two committees – the Transport and Mobility Advisory Committee and the Eastern Transport Coalition (while a Knox Councillor is the Chair).

The Traffic and Transport service is participating in both the Service Planning and Customer Focused Business Improvement (CFBI) programs. The scope of the Service Planning component will be narrow in order to accommodate the CFBI work.

CURRENT SERVICE MODEL

Traffic and Transport Service Snapshot

Service budget 2015/2016:	
Income	(\$5,212)
Expenditure	\$3,175,635
Net	\$3,170,423
Service EFTs:	6.8

The Traffic and Transport service is a team of seven staff (6.8 EFT) – a Coordinator, Senior Traffic Engineer, two Traffic Engineers, Sustainable Transport Planner, Sustainable Transport Officer and an annual Student placement.

Key activities being undertaken by the Traffic and Transport Service include:

- Traffic control – managing traffic movement;
- Parking management;
- Street lighting – management of invoices, assessing requests for new lights and arranging non-standard lighting repairs;
- Planning and providing pedestrian infrastructure;
- Planning and providing cycling infrastructure;
- Assessing heavy vehicle applications;
- Public transport advocacy;

- Behavioural change programs;
- Actively seeking opportunities to apply for grant funding for infrastructure or initiatives consistent with themes and strategies in the City Plan; and
- Specialist advice to internal departments and external organisations (e.g. Planning referrals, Structure Plans, liaising with Public Transport Victoria or VicRoads etc.)

The current Traffic and Transport service is predominately delivered in-house with contractors often utilised for the manufacture and installation of signage, linemarking, street furniture, completion of traffic surveys, transport studies etc. The majority of the construction works for the Traffic and Transport service (both minor and capital works) are delivered through Council's Construction Team.

There are also a number of other Council teams delivering on Council's transport objectives such as Community Transport, Community Safety, Strategic Planning etc.

Council acts as an interface between the State and Federal Government and the community, and therefore has a role to ensure that the needs of the community are met. This is seen, for example, as Council advocating for funding for key transport projects for the municipality or working with the State Government on the delivery of a transport project such as Bayswater Level Crossing Removal.

SERVICE ASSESSMENT

Role of Council

The *Road Management Act 2004* sets out roles and responsibilities that Council (as a Road Authority) must adhere to in order to adequately exercise its duty. The Road Management Act sits alongside the *Transport Act 1983*, the *Road Safety Act 1986*, and the *Local Government Act 1989* in setting out principles and applicability to the management of the road network.

The *Local Government Act 1989* states that the primary objective of Council is "to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions." In seeking to achieve this, Council must "promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district" and "improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community."

The *Transport Integration Act 2010* (Victoria's principal transport statute) also seeks to ensure that all decisions affecting the transport system support an integrated and sustainable network.

Strategic Intent

In addition to fulfilling the legislative requirements of a Road Authority, the Traffic and Transport service has had a long history of supporting integrated and sustainable transport provision within Knox. It has been recognised through Council's Vision, Council Plan and Integrated Transport Plan that high quality, affordable and accessible transport choices are

essential to reduce social isolation, encourage physical activity and make doing business in Knox more attractive.

The *Transport Integration Act 2010* provides a framework with six transport system objectives which Victorian transport agencies must have regard to when making decisions and provides a well-grounded basis for articulating transport aspirations for Knox. The identified objectives include:

- Social and Economic Inclusion;
- Economic Prosperity;
- Environmental Sustainability;
- Integration of Transport and Land Use;
- Efficiency, Coordination and Reliability;
- Safety, Health and Wellbeing.

It is generally acknowledged that these objectives sit at the forefront of decision making, regardless of the specifics of the service offering.

The current intent of the Traffic and Transport Service is to meet community needs in relation to small scale infrastructure improvements such as traffic management or parking, through to advocating to the State Government for major transport projects or educating and/or influencing the community in regards to travel choices and behaviour.

Travel behaviour programs can be very cost effective at influencing the travel choices of Knox residents. In particular, if single occupant car trips can be reduced, then it has ability to minimise many of the day-to-day issues raised by the community in relation to parking management and traffic control while also assisting in meeting Council's legislative responsibilities.

Currently, a large component of the Traffic and Transport Service is reactive in nature. There is an opportunity however to provide a greater focus on the strategic aspects of the Service and thereby reduce the reactive work undertaken.

Service Model

There are opportunities to explore different ways of providing aspects of the Traffic and Transport Service. Particular areas which will be included as part of this service review are:

- Traffic control – how localised traffic issues are addressed, including LATM's
- Parking management – becoming more proactive in addressing parking in an area
- Street lighting
- Advocacy
- Behavioural Change Programs.

While traffic control, parking management and street lighting are clearly related to fulfilling a legislative requirement and are therefore 'non-discretionary' tasks for the Traffic and Transport Service, there are also a number of other 'discretionary' tasks which assist

Council in reducing its legislative role and achieve objectives identified within Council's Vision and Council Plan.

There are also opportunities to further build capacity and partnerships with other teams within Council to support the delivery of Council's transport objectives.

A summary of the components of the Traffic and Transport Service to be examined as part of this service review is shown in Appendix B-A.

Service Levels/ Efficiencies

In exercising its responsibilities, the Traffic and Transport team are tasked with providing both non-discretionary and discretionary service offerings on behalf of Council. There are many aspects of the Traffic and Transport Service which could benefit from refinements to processes.

The Transport and Traffic service is included in the Customer Focused Business Improvement (CFBI) program and will be examining how its processes could be improved for greater efficiency and customer friendliness. Using CFBI the following processes are to be reviewed:

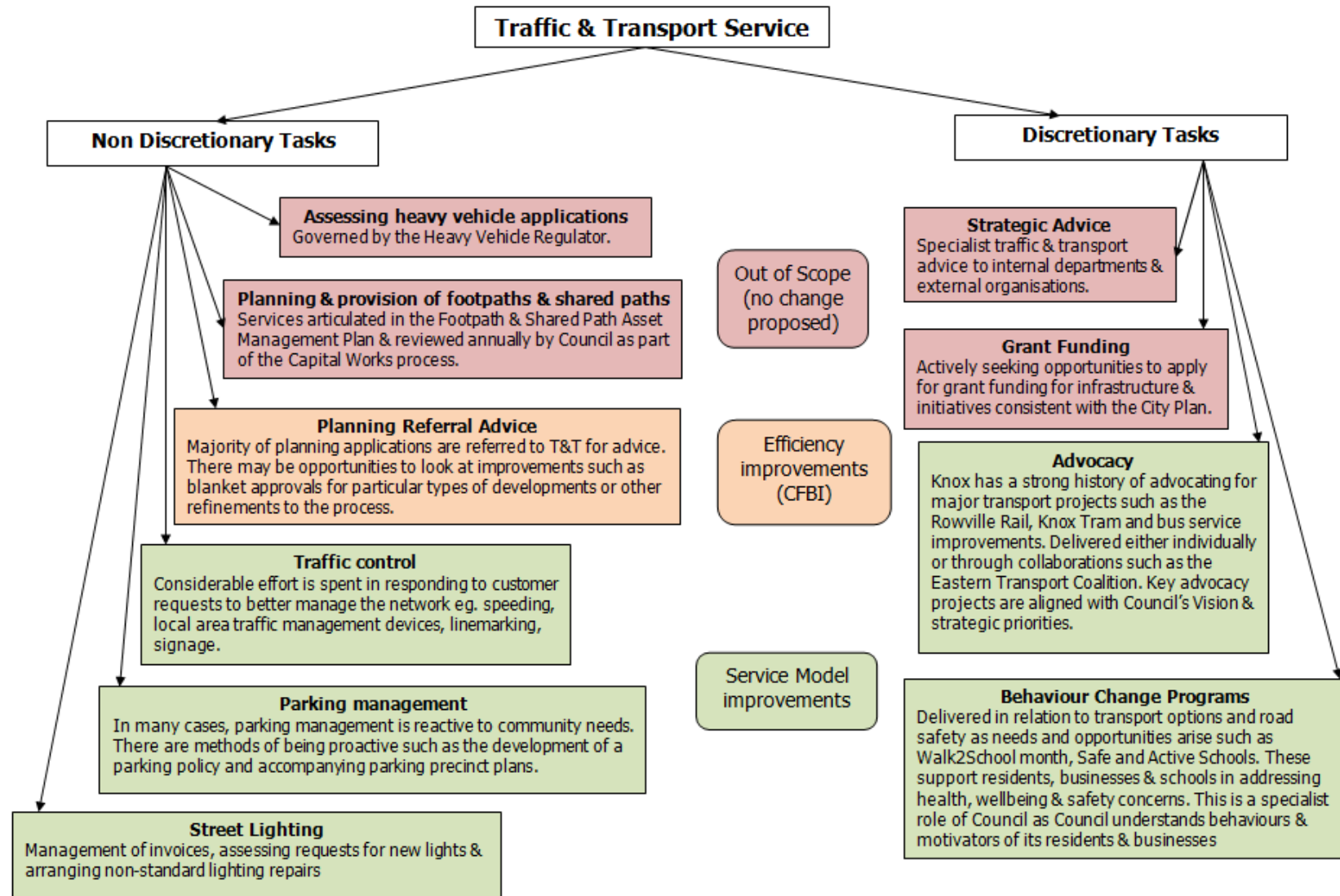
- Planning Referral Advice
- Behavioural Change Programs
- PT Advocacy

REFERENCES

1. Knox City Council, *Integrated Transport Plan*, 2015
2. Knox City Council, *Road Management Plan*, 2004
3. Victorian State Government, *Transport Integration Act 2010*

APPENDICES

- A. Summary of Traffic and Transport Service Planning Scope



Service Planning

SCOPE

Service: Emergency Management

Director: Angelo Kourambas, Director City Development

Manager: Steven Dickson, Manager City Safety and Health

SERVICE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

This Service Assessment will aim to answer the following key questions:

1. What should the role of Council be for this service?
2. What should be the strategic intent of the service?
3. What should be the service model for this service?
4. What service levels should this service deliver?
5. How could this service be more effective and efficient?

In accordance with the Council Plan, all Service Analyses will consider planning, where relevant, for an ageing population; and providing a range of programs, services and partnerships which aim to build connections between people and reduce social isolation.

INTRODUCTION

Emergency Management...

Emergency management contributes to community safety through the reduction of the impact of emergency related events that can cause death, injury, loss of property and community disruption" (EMMV, 6-3).

The Emergency Management Unit manages and delivers Council's responsibilities in planning, preparedness and prevention functions in emergency management. It operates under the *Emergency Management Act 1986* (Vic). Authorised statutory roles administered by the Unit includes; Municipal Emergency Resource Officer (MERO); the Municipal Recovery Manager (MRM); and Municipal Fire Prevention Officer (MFPO) in line with the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

The service outcomes are as follows:

- ✓ An informed, prepared and resilient community for emergencies.
- ✓ Community risks are identified and appropriate planning and mitigations are in place
- ✓ Legislative guidelines implemented and/or met
- ✓ Staff and agencies are trained to assist the needs of the communities to respond to and recover from emergencies
- ✓ Community needs are advocated in changes to the legislation and guidelines.

The Unit operates within the wider emergency management field at both State and regional level. One principle of emergency management is that building capacity of councils will enable councils to assist each other during emergencies. This participation provides a consistent and efficient way of managing any emergency. An example of this was during the recent Christmas Day Wye River fires, Municipal Emergency Resources Officers and Recovery Team members were moved from Yarra Ranges Shire to Otway's Shire to assist the relief and recovery efforts for that emergency.

CURRENT SERVICE MODEL

Emergency Management Team Service Snapshot

Service budget 2015/2016:	
Income	(\$115,367)
Expenditure	\$451,195
Net	\$335,828
Service EFTs:	2.6

The Emergency Management Team (**Team**) staffing consists of a Coordinator (1.0) and two Emergency Management Officers (1.6). The part-time (0.6) Officer is engaged in the fire prevention area. The role of the staff is to ensure that the mandatory legislative requirements are met by Council. The team also ensures that prevention/mitigation work for risks identified in the Municipal Emergency Management Plan is undertaken. The ten identified risks under the current Municipal Emergency Management Plan is located at Appendix J-B.

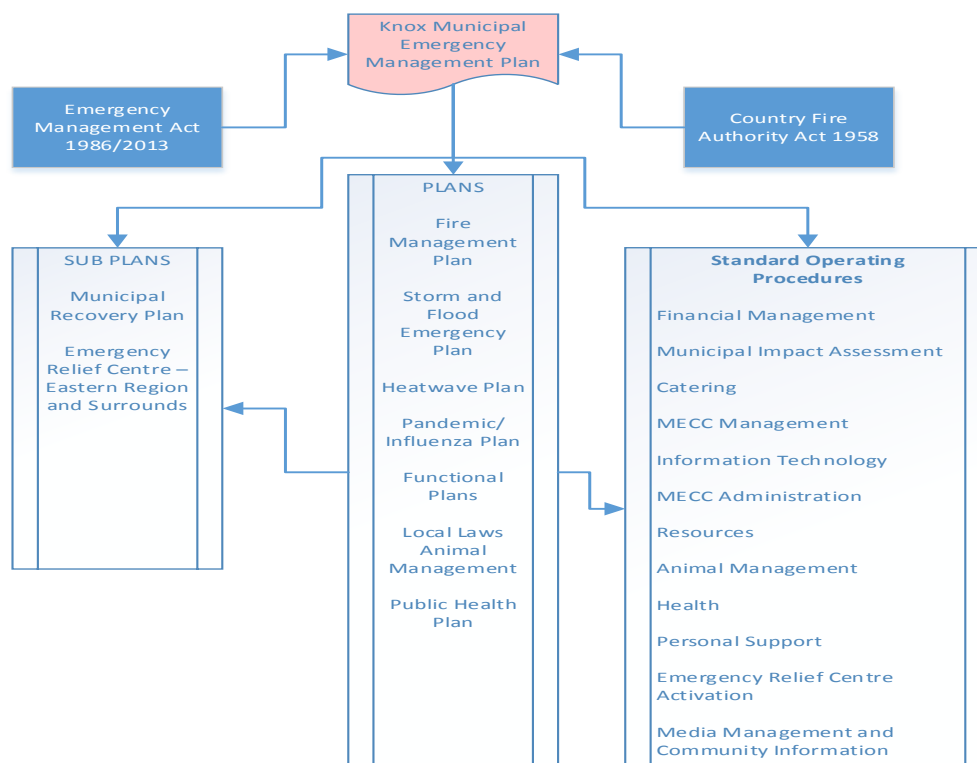


Figure 1: Responsibilities of the Knox Municipal Emergency Plan

The team is responsible for Council meeting the legislative requirements under the Municipal Emergency Management Plan and its various sub-plans (see Figure 1).

This team supports the broader requirements of direct emergency incident management. The wider incident management team consists of legislatively advised or required positions.

The team is responsible for the establishment, management, training, engagement and activation (when required) of over 100 Knox staff. These staff will perform various roles to ensure council can respond to an emergency. These staff members do not report to the Emergency Management Team and respond in an almost voluntary fashion to assist Council and the Community. The roles they undertake are specialist roles and require clear role descriptions and appropriate training to enable these staff to effectively meet the needs of the community.



Figure 2: Volunteers/Staff coordinated by Emergency Management Team

In addition to coordination and support of the incident management team and the emergency support team, the team provides a liaison role between various emergency responder and other government and not-for-profit organisations.

During the response to an emergency Council must coordinate and manage Council resources. Coordination during this phase includes; ensuring Council resources are efficiently and effectively used; fatigue management for staff is undertaken; consequence

and risk management is undertaken; financial accountability is maintained; council assets are maintained; information is provided to the community that is both timely and accurate; and, usual business continues (as much as possible) or business is correctly prioritised.

Under Part 7 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria, local government authorities are responsible for recovery from all emergencies. The Department of Health and Human Services have an oversight role in this response. The recovery process commences when a response to an emergency is initiated.

Emergency management is a continually changing sector. The traditional planning for natural type emergencies is changing to also include human influenced emergencies. The legislation that controls Council's responsibilities is also changing to meet community expectation.

Emerging risks and changes

The Knox emergency profile is becoming more complex due to its demographic and higher density development. Knox is seeing an increase in multi-unit developments and an increase in density in specific locations. An incident at or near such developments may result in significant numbers of people being impacted, even in smaller local incidents. Evidence also identifies that elderly in multi-storey developments may be at increased risk in some emergencies. As Knox's profile changes, the risk also changes.

Other wider risks exist within our community. The emergence of terrorism and police actions within our community or the wider community may cause temporary displacement of local residents. Internet or technology based failure pose a risk to both our residents and business communities. These emerging threats may result in the need for Council to enact local arrangements in certain circumstances.

It is also known that the legislative framework in which emergency management currently operates is undergoing change. The draft legislation was released in early May 2016. The draft legislation does not include the Ministerial guidelines (Regulations). It appears that there will be some terminology changes. There will also be new requirements which will expand the Regional Emergency Management Planning process.

One significant change is that the "All Hazards – All Agencies" approach has been replaced with the "All Communities – All Emergencies" approach. The change in approach places the focus away from agency response (such as the CFA attending fires) to being the need to encompass the whole community in approaches to emergencies. The legislation identifies local government as the government closest to the people and as such infers an increase in focus for local government in emergency management. Council will still be required to operate across all levels of emergencies being; Mitigation; Response; and, Recovery, but may have an increased role in the community in all three phases.

It is also noted that Local Government Victoria is taking a more active role in emergency management. This further strengthens the significance of the role that Council undertakes in emergency management.

SERVICE ASSESSMENT

The role of the Emergency Management Team has two distinctly different roles; statutory and discretionary. The statutory or legislative requirements under the relevant Acts are independently assessed through audit process. The Knox Municipal Emergency Management Plan was assessed in 2016 as achieving “best practice”. The Municipal Fire Management Plan was also assessed in 2015 and passed without change.

It is clear, through the rigorous audit process and the oversight of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee, that the legislative service provisions are being met at Knox. For this reason it is recommended that the legislative requirements will not be subject to the service plan review.

For the above reason, the service review will examine the discretionary aspects of the service.

Role of Council

The analysis will investigate areas of the discretionary service and will examine the evidence to support a priority approach to service delivery. Our service may be able to realign work practices and provide opportunity in some delivery areas. By example, can a re-prioritised approach to regional meeting participation provide opportunity for increasing roles within the community resilience space? The analysis will identify these opportunities.

It is assumed in this scope that Council will continue to maintain the previously identified functions and there is scope for an expanded role in the in the three areas of emergency management. The analysis will review opportunities for enhancement or extension of the service within existing resources.

Council has a significant role within the resilience space. In context, resilience is defined as *the ability of a community to prepare for, mitigate the risks, respond to and recover from emergencies. This is a cycle which feeds in learned information from previous emergencies or indeed emergencies from other areas (shared learning).* Within this context Council must be considered part of the community as opposed to an emergency responder within the incident. Council should be in a position to lead our community through all phases of the emergency management process.

Strategic Intent

The strategic intent of the Unit is to prepare for; prevention of; response to and recovery from emergencies. The changes in the legislation will readjust the strategic intent which must take into consideration the legislative requirements as well as identifying the needs of

our local, regional and wider community. The strategic intent of the unit is largely governed by the legislative requirements under the various Acts.

In reviewing the strategic intent on the discretionary services, consideration will be made to the initial findings in the service assessment. Within this area there appears to be opportunity for improvement of services in the community space and the Knox Council space.

The analysis will be conducted to identify what opportunities exist to improve resilience in both the organisation and the community. Resilience is a common theme in emergency management. It is important to understand that in essence, resilience is the capacity, skills, knowledge and resources for a community to be able to share their collective actions to learn how to; prevent or reduce the impact of; prepare for; respond to; and recover from disasters.

The analysis will examine what programs exist in the area that can be delivered to the community. The analysis will examine the special needs of vulnerable and at risk members of the community.

The analysis will examine how the service can assist in adding value to other business units within Council to improve and increase resilience. In an emergency, including local storm events, most Directorates are involved in the response and recovery phase. It is important that appropriate and effective communications are provided before, during and after an event. The sharing of information and intelligence from responder agencies such as the SES or CFA will allow all areas of Council to prepare an appropriate and efficient response to the event. This coordinated approach by Council will assist the community in responding to and recovering from the emergency, thus increasing the resilience of the community.

Given Knox's role within the Cluster¹ and region in the relief/recovery space, Knox has an opportunity to become the centre of excellence within the 'resilience space'. Council's continued involvement with regional and state organisations will enable a selection of programs that will provide the best outcome for Knox residents.

Current Resilience Programs Under Consideration

Whilst the analysis is important to identify opportunities, within the space of service provision and development, the team is currently examining some opportunities. The programs currently under consideration are as follows:

- **United Nations Global Cities** – a new resilience program that Knox may host an international trial. For more on the broader program please see the Global Cities website within the reference section.
- **Crisis Cleanup** - is a community based tool to request clean up after an emergency. This is a US developed tool that is currently being adapted for Australia. For more on this (US) program please view as per the website within the reference section.

¹ The current cluster consists of Maroondah, Yarra Ranges and Knox Municipalities

- **Tiqbiz** is an app for all phones. This is an app developed for schools by a local (Wantirna South) company. This app will provide the Unit with the ability to improve communications within Council. For more on this app please view the website in the reference section.

Service Model

As previously identified the service model has two distinct types. These types are; mandatory legislative/statutory service; and, discretionary services. As has been identified the service is performing well in the mandatory area. There is opportunity to provide improved services both to internal Council and to the wider community. This will in turn provide Council with increased regional and state opportunities as a leader in resilience.

The service model will be developed from the analysis that will consider the following questions:

Can the Emergency Management Service:

- 1. Improve cross Council Department relations to improve Council's capacity and performance in Emergency Management?**
- 2. Develop and implement a strategy that focuses on developing or improving resilience and engagement within our community?**
- 3. Identify, assess and implement programs that will assist in achieving the outcomes of the strategy developed to improve resilience and engagement within the community?**
- 4. What opportunities exist for Council to introduce a levy or obtain external State or Federal funding to recover the costs to Council in the provision of the current or any future legislated emergency management service?**

Service Levels

Increasing resilience in emergency management is a whole of Council requirement. In the event of a major storm in Knox, different areas of Council will receive reports and requests from the community. An example may be that a local sporting club will notify the recreation area of a post storm clean up at their venue. Through liaising with the sporting club perhaps a similar working bee at the neighbouring playgroup/kinder could assist that section of the community recover more quickly from the event. Through the sharing of information, Council resources may assist the local group in the provision of removal of collected debris. This will allow the group or organisation to return to their business and thus promote a quicker recovery and therefore a more resilient local outcome.

Our community has a history of being impacted by significant natural emergency events. If climate modelling is correct, our community may continue to be impacted by more frequent severe events. This coupled with increasing population will place a greater requirement on the unit to provide for greater need. These types of events will increase the need for Council to improve the disaster and emergency resilience within the community. This requires the unit to reconsider and re-examine how we provide services and what services we provide.

Changes in the services provided may be impacted by the legislative review currently being undertaken by the State Government. It will be imperative that the analysis considers the legislative impacts on the service plan.

Effectiveness and efficiencies

It is identified that Knox participates well in the regional and state space. The ability of the team to learn and develop new programs, without re-inventing the wheel, will see improvements in both effectiveness and efficiencies.

It is also suspected and will be considered in the analysis that the team can improve in the area of service provided to other business units of Council. It is suspected that by providing a more coordinated response to local emergencies, efficiencies can be achieved which will provide a more resilient community.

There is significant work occurring in resilience and capability building within the community. There is potential opportunity to increase emergency resilience by tapping into the existing network.

There is also significant opportunity to develop local programs that assist in engaging with the community. The analysis will identify gaps in our current service. The analysis will identify opportunities to use existing programs or develop new programs to engage the community in emergency resilience building.

REFERENCES

1. Crisis Cleanup Program; 2016 as viewed at <https://www.crisiscleanup.org/>
2. Emergency Management Australia; 2016; Emergency Management in Australia – Concepts and Principles Volume 1, as viewed at <https://www.ag.gov.au/EmergencyManagement/Tools-and-resources/Publications/Documents/Manual-series/manual-1-concepts-and-principles.pdf>
3. Emergency Management Manual of Victoria (**EMMV**), as viewed at <http://fire-com-live-wp.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/Part-7-EMMV.pdf>
4. Tiqbiz application information available via <http://tiqbiz.com/au/tiqbizapp/>
5. United Nations Global Cities Strategy (2016) as available at <http://global-cities.info/>

APPENDICES

- A. Glossary of Terms
- B. Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA) Heat Map

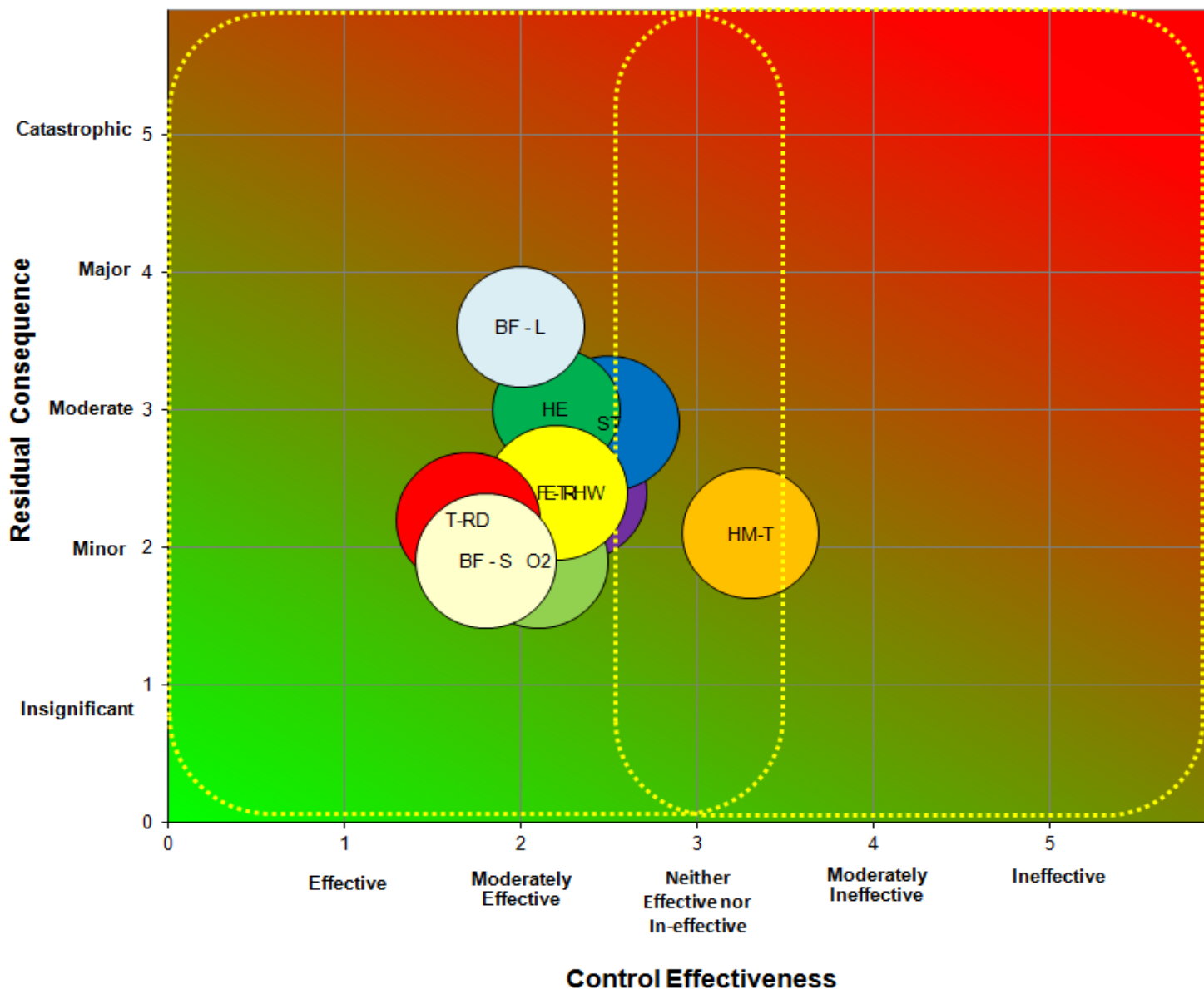
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

TERM	DEFINITION
CFA	Country Fire Authority
Community helping community program	Is a program being developed by the unit to assist in engaging local community organisations in the emergency management process. This program is in the development stage. It is planned that development of the program will be complete by July 2016
Council	Knox City Council
Crisis Cleanup	A US based Information Technology product that enables members of the public to register the need for clean up assistance post emergency.
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services, a State government department
ERC	Emergency Relief Centre which may be operated to provide temporary relief for people displaced due to an emergency
Incident Controller	Is the person who is responsible from the designated control agency who has the responsibility for controlling a response to an emergency
MECC	Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre which is the location that is established to coordinate all council and other non-responder assistance needed to support during an emergency
MEMP	Municipal Emergency Management Plan as required by the <i>Emergency Management Act</i> which is the plan that guides the emergency coordination for Council
MERP	Municipal Emergency Resourcing Program which is a state government funded program providing resources for municipal councils
MFB	Metropolitan Fire Brigade
Police actions	Incidents and emergencies that require police to take action to prevent loss of life or serious injury to people. These may include, but are not limited to; domestic violence incidents, clandestine drug laboratories, unexplained death investigations (murder), psychiatrically disturbed persons, and siege situations.
Resilience	The ability of a community to prepare for, mitigate the risks of, respond to, and recover from emergencies.
UNGC Resilience Program	This is a United Nations program that currently operates within the City of Melbourne. The resilience aspect of the program is currently being developed by the RMIT University in Melbourne. Knox has been approached to trial the program. Program to be assessed prior to commencing trial.
Unit	Emergency Management Unit
V-BERAP	Victorian Built Environment Risk Assessment Process. Similar to bushfire risk models such as the Victorian Fire Risk Register and the Bushfire Management Overlay, V-BERAP is using information and data to identify fire risks within urban areas. This will enable better plans and risk management in the event of a structure fire through the municipality. This is a joint MFB/CFA project which Council has been invited to trial. This trial is expected to commence in 2016.
VPR	Vulnerable Persons Register which a register that is maintained by Council for use by Victoria Police in the event of an emergency

Community Emergency Risk Assessment (CERA) Heat Map

MONITOR CONTROLS

IMPROVE CONTROLS



Knox City Council - 9 May 2013						
Risk #	Code	Risk	Ratings Confidence	Residual Risk Rating	Risk Rating	
1	ET-HW	Extreme temperatures - heatwave	High	High	27.05	
2	ST	Storm	High	High	34.08	
3	O1	Fire in next region (ANALYSED AS PART OF BUSHFIRE - LARGE)	<Select>		0.00	
4	HE	Human epidemic / pandemic	High	High	25.08	
5	O2	Flash Flooding	High	Medium	18.35	
6	F - R	Fire - residential	Med	High	24.82	
7	HM-T	Hazardous materials release - in transport	Med	High	30.49	
8	T-RD	Transport Accident - Road, private vehicle, incl bicycle	High	High	17.95	
9	HM-F	Hazardous materials release - from a facility	<Select>		0.00	
10	BF - L	Bushfire - large, regional	High	High	27.36	

Service Planning

SCOPE

Service: Strategic Planning

Director: Angelo Kourambas, Director City Development

Manager: Kim Rawlings, Manager City Futures

SERVICE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

This service assessment will aim to answer the following key questions:

1. What should the role of Council be for this service?
2. What should be the strategic intent of the service?
3. What should be the service model for this service?
4. What service levels should this service deliver?
5. How could this service be more effective and efficient?

In accordance with the Council Plan, all service analyses will consider planning, where relevant, for an ageing population; and providing a range of programs, services and partnerships which aim to build connections between people and reduce social isolation.

INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Planning Service is part of the City Futures Department within the City Development Directorate. The key program areas in City Futures are: sustainable futures; economic development; place program; strategic planning; and business strategy and integration. The purpose of the City Futures Department is to strategically work across the organisation and with the Community¹ to understand and manage the changing city.

All program areas in City Futures work in an integrated manner, therefore this Service review does not seek to duplicate work completed as part of the Sustainable Futures, Economic Development or Place Program service reviews. Please refer to Appendix 1 for an overview of the City Futures Department, and role of this service within the department.

The term 'strategic planning' is used to describe activities relating to the future planning and development of the municipality. It is the area where Council has an important long term impact. The Strategic Planning Service delivers research (including community engagement) to inform planning policies and ultimately development applications. The Service proactively updates the Knox Planning Scheme to reflect the Council Plan and other adopted Council policies; and reactively in response to landowner requests.

¹ Where community is defined as an interacting group of people living, working or playing in the local government area of Knox. It includes residents, businesses, organisations and groups.

CURRENT SERVICE MODEL

Strategic Planning Service Snapshot

Service Budget 2015/2016	
<i>Core Operational</i>	
Income	(\$6,390)
Expenditure	\$830,443 ²
<i>New Initiatives – Projects³</i>	
Income	(\$0)
Expenditure	\$546,196
Net	\$1,370,249
Service EFTs:	4.8 Permanent EFT 1.0 Temporary EFT

Minimal income is derived from fees associated with planning scheme amendments. These statutory fees are set out in the Planning and Environment Regulations⁴ and cannot be varied by Council. Currently developers pay a total of \$2,120 for an amendment request to be considered, assessed and adopted by Council. These fees do not reflect the cost true cost of assessing and processing a planning scheme amendment. It is worth noting that there is currently a proposed State-wide review of the planning system fees and charges, this may occur during the timeframe of this review and will be considered should this occur.

The Strategic Planning Service is primarily delivered by a combination of in house staff, consultancies and agency and temporary staff. As at April 2016 the strategic planning team was comprised of: a Coordinator (1.0 EFT) and project staff (3.8 EFT permanent and 4.1EFT temporary contract and agency staff).

As part of the City Futures Department the primary outcome of the Strategic Planning Service is an integrated and place-based approach to policy and strategic planning. This is based on community engagement supported by high quality evidence and research.

To support this outcome the key activities delivered by this service are:

- **Strategic Research:** Research to understand changes – and what drives them; and responding to proposed changes to government policy and regulations (for example Plan Melbourne). An important component of this activity is spatial analysis, an area that is expanding as a result of the corporate roll out new gis software (qgis). This activity informs major strategic projects across City Futures and the wider organisation and can provide the strategic basis for future planning scheme amendments.
- **Community engagement:** As a research activity, community engagement informs our understanding of the community, and community aspirations. It is a core activity in the development of City Strategy, place based planning and policy. Community

² Core operational expenditure includes employee costs and on costs for 4.8EFT in Strategic Planning service plus 25% of Manager City Futures and Executive Officer City Futures.

³ This figure varies from year to year depending on business cases and projects

⁴ *Planning and Environment (Fees) Interim Regulations 2012* (Regulation 6).

engagement provides an important input to major projects. It helps to shape policy direction and offers an opportunity to test ideas. The service also engages with the community through the public exhibition of proposed amendments to the planning scheme.

- **Major Strategic Policy Projects:** Development of major policy projects based on issues and/or places which may inform changes to the Planning Scheme. Examples include reviewing the Knox Housing Policy, investigations into Development Contribution Plans, and reviewing the Boronia and Bayswater Structure Plans. The service works in an integrated manner with Place Program and other services such as, Social Policy and Planning and Economic Development in the development of place based Structure Plans.
- **Expert Planning Advice:** Providing expert advice within the organisation, to Council and the community. This activity is often provided in conjunction with the Urban Planning Service.
- **Planning Scheme and Planning Scheme Amendments:** This service is primarily responsible for the development and maintenance of the Knox Planning Scheme including, developing, assessing and processing amendments to the Planning Scheme in response to State Government and Council policy changes, major strategic policy projects or at the request of landowners.
- **Process Improvements and Reporting:** Activities which result in improvements to the planning service, including responding to State policy and legislation changes; reporting to the State Government on land availability for housing and industry; and annual monitoring of the Housing Policy. Monitoring and reporting supports improved strategic research and the delivery of Council initiatives such as State of Knox.

These activities are delivered by a combination of in-house staff, agency and temporary staff and consultants. Technical studies to support major projects and some aspects of the planning scheme amendment process (such as representation at Planning Panels) are supported by consultants. Recent examples of work completed by consultants include:

- land use modelling to support the implementation of a Development Contribution Plan
- transport and parking studies (for Upper Ferntree Gully and Knox Central)
- a technical report on land use and economics for Upper Ferntree Gully
- view line analysis to support the development of built form guidelines for Alchester Village and The Basin
- legal advice.

SERVICE ASSESSMENT

Role of Council

Section 12 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* sets out the duties of planning authorities (typically local government). Under s.12 Knox City Council must:

- a) *implement the objectives of planning in Victoria;*
- b) *provide sound, strategic and co-ordinated planning of the use and development of land in its area;*

- c) *review regularly the provisions of the planning scheme for which it is a planning authority;*
- d) *prepare amendments to a planning scheme for which it is a planning authority;*
- e) *prepare an explanatory report in respect of any proposed amendment to a planning scheme;*
- f) *provide information and reports as required by the Minister.*

In addition s.12A states that Council *'must prepare a municipal strategic statement'* (MSS). The MSS must further the objectives of planning in Victoria, and contain the strategic planning, land use and development objectives of Council. The MSS must also be consistent with the current Council Plan (approved under section 125 of the *Local Government Act 1989*). However planning is more than a regulatory or statutory process involving the administration of the planning scheme and assessment of development applications. It is about developing strategic objectives and making planning decisions to further the objectives and policies of the municipality – supporting the delivery of City Plan. The Strategic Planning Service delivers this important role of Council primarily by maintaining a contemporary local planning scheme and assessing and processing changes to the planning scheme.

In line with the purpose of the City Futures Department the Service works in an integrated manner across other services to support the delivery of City Plan. There are a number of clear benefits to this including a shared and deep understanding of community aspirations and drivers of change. This enables the creation of proposed changes to the planning scheme to be developed in parallel with major policy projects with a direct and clear relationship to the intent of the project and/or policy. Proposed changes to the Knox Planning Scheme are understood in terms of how they support implementation of City Plan.

The Service has a close relationship with the Urban Planning Service, which is responsible for the development assessment process and implementation of the Planning Scheme. The service analysis will therefore explore the most appropriate service model to continue to strengthen relationships and processes between the two land use planning services to better achieve the intent of land use policy through the development assessment process.

The role of Council with regards to the maintaining a contemporary local planning scheme and processing amendments is clear. Therefore the service analysis will not explore this role in detail. However consideration will be given to the most effective and efficient way to deliver this aspect of the service. This will include consideration of the relationship between the two planning services (Strategic Planning and Urban Planning).

Strategic Intent

The strategic intent of the Strategic Planning Service can be best articulated by what the City Futures Department seeks to achieve. The City Futures Department ensures responsive and robust strategies capitalise and respond to the unique qualities and resources of our City and its communities; to ensure resilient, sustainable outcomes

consistent with Council's vision and City Plan, in a manner that strengthens our communities now and into the future. The work of the City Futures Department seeks to inform and influence the business of Council. City Futures has a futures focus and seeks to: understand our changing city and respond; and to proactively lead change working across the organisation. The Service does this through supporting the development and delivery of research and policy such as the State of Knox, and City Plan. Council then in turn provides strategic direction for the service through the Knox Planning Scheme (including the identification of future strategic work). The service analysis will explore whether the current strategic intent is contemporary.

A key opportunity of the service analysis will be to build on the three completed service analyses from the City Futures Department to further clarify and refine the intent (and role) of the Department.

Service Model

The current service model is primarily delivered by a combination of permanent in house staff and temporary/project based staff. As outlined above research, major projects and some aspects of the planning scheme amendment process (such as representation at Planning Panels) are often supported by consultants.

The service has been delivered since 2010 via this model of a combination of a mix of in house staff and temporary staff and agency staff. Staff on fixed term contracts have been funded in part by major project budgets. For example the Housing Policy Review, the Rowville Plan and Development Contribution Plans. In addition to permanent staff (currently 3.8EFT) since 2010 the service has been supported by 2 - 4 additional temporary staff at any point in time, this level of resourcing reflected and continues to reflect the necessary resourcing needed to deliver major policy projects.

The number of key strategic projects and important major projects such as Development Contributions Plans, Rural Land Study, Land for Business study, Knox Central Structure Plan and the Planning Scheme Review currently requires up to up to 11 staff members (mix of in house, temporary and agency) to resource this. Previous experience has shown that this mix of staffing arrangements (with the majority of staff being short term and in temporary arrangements) creates a number of challenges and inefficiencies, loss of corporate knowledge and result in increased costs (relating to temporary and agency staff).

The service analysis will seek to explore the most appropriate service model for the service, and how this mix of resourcing can support the delivery of an effective and efficient service model. The service analysis will also explore the range of activities delivered by the service and explore the most appropriate service model (in house and use of consultants) – within the context of the City Futures Department.

The Strategic Planning Service has a close working relationship with the Urban Planning Service, which processes, assesses (and enforces) development applications. Under the current service model the Strategic Planning Service is responsible for updating the Knox

Planning Scheme to reflect the Council Plan and other adopted Council policies. The Urban Planning Service then uses the Planning Scheme to guide assessment and decisions on planning permit applications.

Council policies, such as place based Structure Plans are often developed to address a particular issue or policy gap, and provide a clear roadmap for the future development of the area. Community engagement is a critical input to the development of these policies. Often Council and the Community will seek a particular outcome of the policy that relates directly to land use and development. This often includes a desire from the community to limit change within their neighbourhood. Where this becomes a clear intent of Council policy it is then implemented through changes to the Planning Scheme. However Council does not have the final say on change to the Planning Scheme. The ultimate decision maker is the Minister for Planning. This can lead to outcomes that are not consistent with community expectations. For example the recently approved changes to the Planning Scheme which Council sought to implement the Knox Housing Policy.

The Planning Scheme is the primary tool used by Council, the Urban Planning Service and VCAT to assess planning permit applications. The Urban Planning Service staff and to a lesser extent VCAT do not necessarily rely on the source policy or strategy (for example a Structure Plan) to guide day to day decision making, unless it is specifically incorporated into the planning scheme.

The service analysis will explore how the intent of Council policies and strategies could be better translated into planning policy, and ways to continue to strengthen the intent of land use policy being achieved through the development assessment process.

The service analysis will also explore the most effective way to deliver: minor planning scheme amendments, combined permit amendments and the approval of development plans – across both planning services.

The assessing and processing of amendments is a 'statutory requirement' and therefore difficult to pre-empt or predict in annual work programs. Amendments always span at least two financial years (often three). As outlined above there are challenges and inefficiencies relying on project staff on fixed term and temporary contracts to manage projects when timeframes can be longer than anticipated.

In response to this in 2015 Council offered the developer of Kingston Links (a strategic redevelopment site) an option to cover the costs of a dedicated senior officer (to provide a single point of contact and expedite the effective and efficient management of their amendment request). The option, which was accepted, was for a payment of \$40,000 for 12 months. This is the first time this option has been explored. Legal advice, sought prior to this offer being made was clear that this approach must be voluntary and cannot disadvantage those who choose not to pay – Council staff must still engage in appropriate pre-amendment process for those who chose not to pay or use this option. This 'user pays' approach is also reflective of the fact that the current fees payable for amendments go nowhere near covering the costs of most amendments. As previously mentioned there is

currently a proposed review of the Planning fees and charges set by the Minister, should this occur the outcome of this review, which forecasts that fees will reflect more closely the scale of amendments and therefore the true cost will be considered as part of this service review process.

The service analysis will explore options for moving towards a cost recovery model including: a possible voluntary ‘user pays’ model for planning scheme amendments, and consideration of proposed changes to the planning fees and charges review.

Service Levels

There are a number of drivers of the Strategic Planning Service that Council has very limited control over. Council, and therefore the service cannot determine when major sites and or strategic sites are redeveloped. Good relationships with major land owners and a collaborative pre-application process can help manage workloads to some extent. When several large and/or complex planning scheme amendments are being processed at the same time this can create substantial pressures on service levels – both on developer led amendments and on Council work program priorities which are then at risk of being deferred or delayed.

In addition Ministerial timeframes relating to planning scheme amendments are often uncertain, despite the introduction of Ministerial Direction No 15 (The Planning Scheme Amendment Process) in October 2013. This Direction requires the Minister for Planning to make a decision on an amendment lodged for approval within 40 business days. However since the introduction of Direction No 15 the average time for the approval of amendments to the Knox Planning Scheme is approximately 190 business days.⁵ These delays can also have a large impact on service levels at any point in time.

Given the nature of the service (and limited control of timeframes with regards to processing planning scheme amendments) the service analysis will not explore service levels in detail. However the service analysis will explore service levels in the context of the resources required for major projects to assist with setting priorities.

REFERENCES

1. City Futures 2015-16 Business Plan
2. *Local Government Act 1989* (Vic). Available from <http://www.austlii.edu.au>
3. *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic). Available from <http://www.austlii.edu.au>
4. *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic). Section 12(2)(a) Direction No. 15. Available from <http://www.dtpli.vic.gov.au/planning/about-planning/the-ministers-role/ministerial-directions>
5. *Planning and Environment (Fees) Interim Regulations 2012* (Vic). Available from <http://www.austlii.edu.au>

⁵ Internal analysis of planning scheme amendment data, unpublished (April 2016)

APPENDICES

- A. City Futures Department overview
- B. 'Strategic Planning and Policy Development' from *Land Use Planning in Victoria A Guide for Councillors 2012*. Available from [http://www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/planning-building/Documents/Land use planning in Victoria - a guide for councillors.docx](http://www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/planning-building/Documents/Land%20use%20planning%20in%20Victoria%20-%20a%20guide%20for%20councillors.docx)

CITY FUTURES DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The City Futures Department purpose is to strategically work across the organisation and with the Community to understand, plan for and 'manage the changing city'.

The Department seeks to understand the community aspirations and the drivers of change facing Knox and works in collaboration across the organisation and externally to plan for and respond to these drivers, thereby seeking to embed sustainability, create a prosperous city and strengthen the health and wellbeing of our community.

The City Futures Department develops responsive and robust strategies to capitalise and respond to the unique qualities and resources of our City and its communities, to ensure resilient, sustainable outcomes consistent with Council's vision, City Plan and Integrated City Strategy, and in a manner that strengthens our communities now and into the future. City Futures does this with an understanding of urban, social, economic and environmental systems and the important interrelationships between them.

The work of City Futures is informed by the following approaches:

- **Building relationships/partnerships**

In order for City Futures to work effectively it must build and manage many different types of relationships. These range from those we build with our community of Knox, through to strategic partners and alliances to enable desired outcomes for the city.

- **Evidence Based Planning/Research**

City Futures seeks to make informed decision regarding strategic direction setting and therefore better manage the investment in a healthier, more prosperous and resilient Knox. A crucial step in this is to ensure that decisions are informed and based on thorough research and evidence.

- **A futures and foresight focus**

City Futures always has a futures focus and seeks to both understand our changing city and respond; and proactively lead change and work across and with the whole organisation to assist our communities/places to both understand and adapt.

- **Integrated Model of Practice**

The task of making and managing a resilient city requires the Department and the organisation to engage in:

- An understanding and explaining the State of Knox (State of Knox Report), and consistently improve our knowledge and understanding of community aspirations for the city and drivers of change affecting our city
- An understanding Knox Council's priorities for implementing Knox Vision and City Plan (Integrated City Strategy)
- Identifying the strategic investment required to make Knox more resilient and achieve Council and community aspirations
- Identifying opportunities for different parts of the department, organisation and the community to work collaboratively to achieve the desired outcomes of the Integrated City Strategy and City Plan
- Building partnerships and developing strategic projects, projects and initiatives
- Applying a place based approach to our work.

While the intent and way of working hasn't changed since the inception of the Department, the landscape within which it operates has changed substantially. This means that City Futures is moving to formalise a more integrated way of working. In the context of changing pressures in the city, local government needs to focus on and deliver more now than ever on the 'strengthening' of its communities, both current and future, alongside its traditional business of 'servicing' them.

It is therefore proposed that the core focus areas for the City Futures Department going forward consist of:

- **City Partnerships and Investment**
- **City Strategy and Planning**
- **City Research, mapping and monitoring**
- **City Business development and support services**

The core focus areas above have been informed by Service Planning and Service Analysis processes completed for three of the four services in City Futures to date, the strategic intent for these services is as follows:

Sustainable Futures

The Strategic Intent of the Sustainable Futures service is to lead environmental sustainable best practice to achieve more efficient local use of natural resources by Council and the community while minimising negative impacts on the natural environment.

It is intended that this will be achieved through focus on the following:

- Partnering to be a proactive leader and driver of sustainable practices
- Integrated service and planning focus
- Increased external focus through partnerships
- Embedding sustainability in each service across council
- Taking a Leading role

Economic Development

The Strategic Intent of the service is to contribute to the overall health and wellbeing of the Knox community by building partnerships, providing a range of economic development and business support services, underpinned by the service principles of Economic Prosperity, Business Resilience, Capacity Building, and Collaboration and partnerships.

It is intended that this will be achieved through focus on the following:

- Understanding our local economy and business community
- Supporting our business
- Growing our local economy
- Enabling prosperous places

Place Program

To improve the performance of places in Knox through a coordinated, integrated multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder engagement approach. It involves harnessing the knowledge, skills and resources from within Council, the community and key investment partnerships to deliver better places as outlined in Council's Vision Statement and City Plan. It is about making places in Knox better for the present and future Knox community whilst maximising the benefits from Council's limited resources.

It is intended that this will be achieved through focus on the following:

- Partnerships development and management
- Stakeholder management and engagement
- Investment and development
- Return on Investment (ROI) monitoring and evaluation

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The term 'strategic planning' is used to describe activities relating to the future planning and development of the municipality. It is the area where councillors will have the most important long term impact.

Strategic planning activities include:

- Providing leadership and direction on key land use and development issues facing the municipality
- Developing, monitoring and reviewing the MSS and local policies that make up the Local Planning Policy Framework in the planning scheme
- Undertaking studies into key issues emerging in the municipality that could lead to a change to the planning scheme to refine the MSS, or support the introduction of a zone change or the introduction of an overlay or a change to an existing overlay, or a new policy
- An analysis of the implications of state policy at the local level
- The development of local policies to give effect to state policies; an example is the development of a housing strategy and related local housing policy to implement the directions in any Metropolitan Strategy.

Planning is much more than a regulatory or statutory process involving the administration of the planning scheme and assessment of permit applications. It is about developing strategic objectives and policies and making planning decisions to further the objectives and policies of the municipality. In addition to the state policies in the State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF), the local policies in the Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) of the planning scheme are a driving force in decision making.

In most zones in the planning scheme, a council has wide discretion about whether or not to grant a planning permit. The council has to make an assessment about how well a planning proposal meets a performance objective or outcome in the planning scheme as set out in the SPPF, local policies, and the objectives of the zone or overlay(s) which apply to the land. The council, as a collective body, has to decide if the proposal will result in an acceptable planning outcome. The combination of wide discretion and performance based provisions can create uncertainty unless there is a strong policy base that explains how the council's discretion will be exercised, and that policy is consistently applied.

Most planning permit applicants and objectors have difficulty understanding this fundamental aspect of the planning system. It means that negotiation between the permit applicant, any objectors and the council planner is likely to be a usual part of the assessment process. There is scope to make changes to plans and comply with the planning scheme and achieve an appropriate planning outcome.

The zones and overlays in the planning scheme contain decision guidelines to assist a council, as a collective body, assess a planning permit application against the relevant planning considerations. The decision guidelines always require the council to consider the State Planning Policy Framework and the Local Planning Policy Framework.

All planning schemes contain:

- The State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF)
- The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS)
- Local policies to guide decision-making.

If the objectives and strategies in the MSS and the supporting local policies are clear and unambiguous, then councillors can be confident about delegating most planning permit application decisions to the council planner.

The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS)

The MSS is the foundation of the strategic planning framework and provides the basis of planning decisions in a municipality. A councillor needs to know what the MSS says about the future direction of the municipality. If a development proposal is not consistent with the MSS, it will be difficult to justify its approval, and vice versa. Generally speaking, the MSS sets out a broad vision for the future and identifies key issues facing the municipality. It may be necessary to change the MSS to enable support for a type of proposal, which takes time. Councillors and planners must consider the MSS when it makes a decision about a planning permit application.

The Act requires the MSS to contain:

- The council's strategic planning, land use and development objectives
- The strategies for achieving the objectives
- A general explanation of the relationship between those objectives and strategies and the controls on the use and development of land in the planning scheme
- Any matter that the Minister directs to be included.

The MSS must be:

- Consistent with the current Council Plan
- Reviewed as part of the planning scheme review at least once every four years.

The MSS is not set in stone. It must respond to the changing needs of the community and other influences such as state policy. Council can change the strategic direction expressed in the MSS. A change to the MSS requires a planning scheme amendment.

A change to the MSS may be necessary to:

- Implement a new strategy such as a retail strategy or an open space strategy
- Respond to a particular issue
- Implement a State Government strategy at the local level.

Changes to the MSS between the regular four-yearly review are infrequent. The MSS should be written to accommodate changes consistent with its broad strategic intentions. Frequent changes undermine the broad strategic directions and the stability and certainty established in the MSS.

Source: Municipal Association of Victoria (2012) Land Use Planning in Victoria A Guide for Councillors 2012. Available from [http://www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/planning-building/Documents/Land use planning in Victoria - a guide for councillors.docx](http://www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/planning-building/Documents/Land%20use%20planning%20in%20Victoria%20-%20a%20guide%20for%20councillors.docx)

Service Planning

SCOPE

Service: Urban Planning

Director: Angelo Kourambas, Director City Development

Manager: Paul Dickie, Manager City Planning and Building

SERVICE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

This Service Assessment will aim to answer the following key questions:

1. What should be the service model for this service?
2. What service levels should this service deliver?
3. How could this service be more effective and efficient?

In accordance with the Council Plan, all Service Analyses will consider planning, where relevant, for an ageing population; and providing a range of programs, services and partnerships which aim to build connections between people and reduce social isolation.

INTRODUCTION

As Council is the Responsible Authority under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act), the Urban Planning Service is responsible for the administration of the Act and the Knox Planning Scheme including the processing and enforcement of planning applications.

The Urban Planning Service Assessment will address each of the service assessment questions outlined above. As the service is also participating in the Customer Focused Business Improvement (CFBI) program, a hybrid approach will be taken to incorporate aspects of traditional service planning and the CFBI program. The scope of the service planning component will be narrower in order to accommodate the CFBI work and the business processes identified for analysis and improvement through the CFBI program are directly linked to the questions to be asked as part of the service assessment.

The service has a close working relationship with the Strategic Planning Service in the City Futures Department. The service analysis will explore the most appropriate service model to continue to strengthen relationships between the two services to better achieve the intent of land use policy through the development assessment process.

It is important to note that the delegation of powers (from Council to the service) are not included in the scope, as they will be reviewed through a separate process after the next Local Government elections.

CURRENT SERVICE MODEL

Urban Planning Service Snapshot

Service budget 2015/2016:	
Income ¹	\$849,350
Expenditure	\$2,991,258
Net	-\$2,141,908
Service EFTs:	23.8

Role of Council

The Act, the *Planning and Environment Regulations* (the Regulations), the *Local Government Act 1989*, the *Subdivision Act 1988* and the Knox Planning Scheme (the Scheme) provide the legal framework for the administration, regulation and enforcement work undertaken by the Urban Planning Service. The service also works within the framework of other acts such as Aboriginal Heritage, Environment Protection, Flora and Fauna Guarantee, Heritage, Gambling Regulation, Infringements, Liquor Control Reform, Sex Work, and Major Transport.

Current Service Model

The current service model is predominantly delivered in-house by a team of staff directly employed by Council. The service is part of the City Planning and Building Department, and included in the City Development Directorate. The service consists of two Coordinators, seven Planning Officers, two Subdivision Officers, two Planning Support Officers, two Development Engineers, an Arborist, two Landscape Assessment Officers and three Planning Enforcement Officers. The service is supported by 40% of the Planning and Building Administration Team, making a total of 23.8EFT. The service is supported by 1.0EFT in the Customer Service team.

The provision of planning services is at times supplemented through the use of external providers and specialists. For example, planning consultants are used at peak times to write delegate reports and represent Council at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). For complex planning applications, legal representation is engaged to act for Council at VCAT. External consultants also provide regular advice regarding Environmental Sustainable Design (ESD) and Urban Design matters.

It is worth noting that there is currently a proposed State wide review of the Planning system Fees and Charges, this may occur during the timeframe of this review and will be considered should this occur.

¹ Income is derived from fees associated with planning applications and fines. It *does not* include income derived from open space contributions (estimated to be \$2,500,000 for 2015/2016).

Current Service Activities

Key activities undertaken by the Urban Planning Service are:

- **Planning Assessment & Determination:** In the 2014-2015 year: processing and assessing of 1328 planning applications²; 130 pre-applications; undertaking site inspections; public notification of 371 planning applications; meetings with stakeholders (including monthly public consultation meetings); issuing notices of decision of planning applications (i.e. planning permits); answering public and stakeholder enquiries; preparing reports and issuing decisions. It also includes representing Council at VCAT and the assessment of drainage and landscape plans if required.
- **Enforcement:** Inspect properties, investigate and respond to complaints about land uses and works done without appropriate planning approval, issuing fines and notices etc with a focus on compliance.
- **Subdivisions:** Processing and assessing subdivision applications (216 in 2014/15), including pre-applications, undertaking site inspections, advertising, meetings (including consultation meetings), answering enquiries as required, preparing reports, issuing decisions (Notice of Decision/Permit/Refusal, Certification and Statement of Compliance), representing Council at VCAT, and the assessment of drainage and landscape plans if required.
- **Information and advice:** Responding to general enquiries (via phone, counter, letter and email) relating to planning, subdivision, enforcement and vegetation removal. In 2014/15, the Urban Planning Service received approximately 38,500 phone calls.
- **Process Improvements and Reporting:** Activities which result in improvements to the service, including responding to new State legislation changes; reporting to Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) on planning applications and land that could be used for housing or industry; and providing data to assist with monitoring of the Housing Policy.

Over the years, statutory planning in Victoria has become more and more complex, with an increasingly multi disciplinary approach being applied as a vehicle to trigger preferred change. Figure 1 demonstrates the many influences on the Urban Planning Service.

These influences often have competing objectives and the Urban Planning Service seeks to balance them to make sound planning decisions that deliver good outcomes in line with the objectives of the Scheme. The service must also balance the competing expectations of Councillors, the community and developers and as a result decisions are rarely popular across all groups and the service often obtains varied and conflicting feedback. The complexity of planning, together with high demand on the service and community and customer expectations has a significant effect on service resources, requiring it to be flexible, highly skilled and responsive.

² Figure includes amendments, secondary consents and extension of time requests.

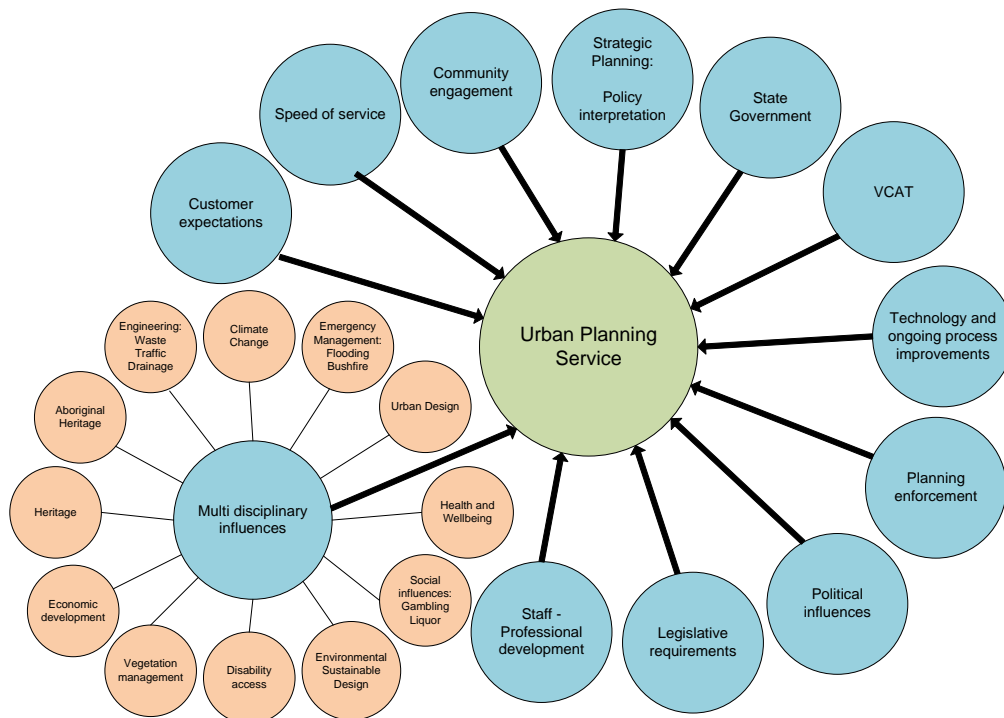


Figure 1: Influences on the Urban Planning Service

The ‘Know your Council’³ website, released by the State Government in 2015, compares the key indicators of Victorian Councils across various services, including statutory planning. The Knox Urban Planning Service was placed 5th highest across metropolitan Melbourne for processing planning applications within 60 days with 70% of applications being decided within 60 statutory days. The provision of this information to the community in a highly accessible format places a greater emphasis on timeliness and transparency of decisions by Council. The service’s focus on timeliness of decisions and the balance between thoroughness and timeliness is an important issue for Council.

SERVICE ASSESSMENT

Role of Council

As outlined above, one of the key requirements of Council’s role under the Act is the Responsible Authority, which is to manage, regulate and enforce the Scheme. The role of Council is intrinsic and legislated, which cannot be delivered by an external body and as such it is not proposed to further consider or review Council’s role in the service analysis.

Strategic Intent

The strategic intent of the Urban Planning Service is to provide effective guidance and regulation of development and land use changes across the municipality to meet the objectives of the Knox Planning Scheme and to make decisions which balance the present and future interests of Knox residents while providing an efficient service to its customers.

³ <https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/>

Service Model

The current service model is for activities to be primarily delivered by staff, supported by consultants and contract staff on an as needed basis during peak periods. As discussed above, the many influences on planning, together with high demand on the service and expectations of the community and customers has a significant effect on service resources.

It is difficult to predict peak periods and demand for the service. For example, the service cannot determine when large complex development applications will be submitted or strategic sites be redeveloped, requiring greater investment of staff resources. Changes in the economy or legislation can cause fluctuations in workloads, particularly as many developments are speculative. There is a need to ensure the service is flexible in order to adapt to the changing planning landscape and demand. The service analysis will investigate the existing service model to ensure the service is well equipped and able to be flexible to respond to demand.

The timing of the CFBI program for the Urban Planning Service could not be better. The service has recently commenced some process improvement work, but due to resourcing constraints the service has not been able to give as much focus to this as it would like. There is a greater expectation from the community and customers to be able to access and deliver information electronically at a time that suits them. The service analysis will investigate how ongoing process improvement, including updating information technology to a paper-less environment, can be accommodated into the future as a permanent, ongoing focus of the service model.

The service has a close working relationship with the Strategic Planning Service. Under the current service model the Strategic Planning Service is responsible for updating the Scheme to reflect the Council Plan and other adopted Council policies. The Urban Planning Service then uses the Scheme to guide decisions on planning permit applications. Council policies, such as place based Structure Plans are often developed to provide leadership and address a particular issue or policy gap. Community engagement is a critical input to the development of these policies. Often Council and the community will seek a particular outcome of the policy that relates directly to land use and development. This often includes a desire from the community to limit change within their neighbourhood. Where this becomes a clear intent of the policy it is then implemented through changes to the Scheme. However Council does not have the final say on change to the Scheme. The ultimate decision maker is the Minister for Planning. This can lead to outcomes that are not consistent with community expectations. For example the recently approved changes to the Scheme which Council sought to implement the Knox Housing Policy. Subsequently, the relationship between the two services is unique and different to relationships with other services as the services are co-dependent on one another. The service analysis will explore the most appropriate service model to continue to strengthen relationships between the two land use planning services to better achieve the intent of land use policy through the development assessment process.

Relationships with other services across the organisation are also important to ensure appropriate multi-disciplinary input into the planning permit application process. The service analysis will investigate the best model for incorporating multi-disciplinary input into the planning permit application process. The CFBI program will also include a review of the internal referral process to assist with this.

The service analysis will explore the range of activities delivered by the service and explore the best service model in which to deliver these activities. Questions for the service analysis will include:

- **What is the most appropriate structure for the service to respond to fluctuations in complexity and demand of planning applications including customer service?**
- **What is the best way to incorporate continuous process improvement and IT updates to make and keep the service contemporary and relevant to its customers and the community and to maximise income?**
- **What is the best model to ensure multi-disciplinary input from across the organisation into the planning permit application process?**
- **What is the best service model to strengthen the working relationship between the Strategic Planning and Urban Planning services to better achieve the intent of the Knox Planning Scheme?**

Service Levels

As discussed above, there is greater awareness and emphasis being placed on application timeframes by the State Government, customers and the community. How competitive does Knox want to be in terms of its application turnaround times? This is an important question for Council, as simply reducing application turnaround times may impact upon the quality and thoroughness of decisions and outcomes, particularly given how complex the planning system is. The service also has a high level of customer service contact. In the 2014/15, the service received approximately 38,500 phone calls and 10,500 counter enquiries. There are expectations that Planning Officers are immediately available to customers. However, it is difficult to balance competing objectives, demands and expectations and produce timely, quality decisions. What are the appropriate customer service standards for the service? The service analysis will investigate this issue, together with timeliness of decisions, further.

Parts of the service, such as the assessment of drainage and landscaping plans, have evolved over the years as a consequence of the complex nature of planning. The assessment of drainage and landscape plans was originally undertaken by other departments of Council and is now performed by officers within the Urban Planning Service. This process has grown in complexity and the timeframes for completing post permit plans are often lengthy and are typically not meeting customer expectations. The hybrid approach to service planning and CFBI will be particularly useful here, as while it is intended that this process be included as part of the CFBI program to improve processes and find efficiencies, an important question for Council is to what level does Council want to continue this part of the service? Service levels analysis will investigate the service provision of drainage and landscaping requirements at a strategic level.

The current enforcement model for the Urban Planning service is focussed on compliance and responding to complaints. Enforcement officers focus on pro active inspections of completed developments to ensure appropriate built form, landscaping and drainage outcomes are consistent with that approved by the planning permit. Complaints are responded to promptly, with a focus on resolving issues informally if possible. The issuing of fines and commencement of legal proceedings are used only when necessary as a last resort. What is the appropriate balance between proactive and complaint based enforcement approaches for the service? The service's approach to enforcement needs to be considered by Council as part of service planning.

Questions for the service analysis will include:

- **What is the appropriate level of service in terms of application turnaround times?**
- **What are the appropriate customer service standards for the service?**
- **What level of service should be provided in the assessment of drainage and landscape plans?**
- **What enforcement approach should be adopted (proactive vs. complaints)?**

Efficiency

The Urban Planning Service is included in the Customer Focused Business Improvement program and will be examining how its processes could be improved for greater efficiency and customer value. The service has recently commenced an evaluation of its processes to identify where the key areas of opportunity are. In light of the discussion above, the following business processes have been identified for analysis and improvement through the CFBI program:

- The advertising (public notification) of planning applications process;
- Internal referral of planning applications process;
- The assessment of Condition 1 plans post permit (including drainage and landscaping plans); and
- Customer service – with a focus on the process of responding to enquiries (all formats including phone calls, email etc).

REFERENCES

1. *Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)*. Available from <http://www.austlii.edu.au>
2. *Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)*. Available from <http://www.austlii.edu.au>
3. Knox City Council, (2013). *Instrument of Delegation to Members of Council Staff (Planning)*.
4. Knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au. (2015). *Know Your Council*. Available at: <https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/>

Service Planning

SCOPE

Service: Finance

Director: Joanne Truman, Corporate Development

Manager: Dale Monk, Finance and Property Services

SERVICE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

This Service Assessment will aim to answer the following key questions:

1. What should be the strategic intent of the service?
2. What should be the service model for this service?
3. What service levels should this service deliver?
4. How could this service be more effective and efficient?

In accordance with the Council Plan, all Service Analyses will consider planning, where relevant, for an ageing population; and providing a range of programs, services and partnerships which aim to build connections between people and reduce social isolation.

INTRODUCTION

The Finance Service is participating in both the Service Planning and Customer Focused Business Improvement (CFBI) programs. The majority of the functions of the Finance Service are defined and governed by legislation, regulations and standard. Focus will be placed on CFBI initiatives to enhance the value of the Service both internally and externally.

The Finance Service provides the strategic thinking, leadership, service delivery and management of all matters related to responsible financial management, supporting the financial health of the organisation's operations. The Finance Services is responsible for leading key processes around budgeting and forecasting, long term financial planning, monthly and quarterly financial reporting, annual accounts preparation, statutory reporting, rating services, accounts payable and accounts receivable functions. Working closely with Governance and Innovation to develop and support the organisation's financial compliance framework, the Service is focussed on continuously improving to remain a leader in the sector.

The Finance Service is also the contracted service provider for financial, management and asset accounting services to the Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation (ERLC) and the Ferntree Gully Cemetery Trust.

CURRENT SERVICE MODEL

Finance Service Snapshot

Service budget 2015/2016:	
Income*	(\$106,333,878)
Expenditure#	\$1,978,207
Net	(\$104,355,671)
Service EFTs:	17

* Income includes:

- Rates revenue of \$97,738,000 (net of Council rebate)
- Victoria Grants Commission Funds of \$3,003,718
- Transfer from Unexpended Grants Reserve – Victoria Grants Commission Funds received in 2014/15 financial year for 2015/16 financial year of \$3,286,090
- Interest on Investments of \$1,321,000
- Interest on Rates of \$444,000

Expenditure includes:

- Loan repayments of \$3,461,398
- Loan proceeds of \$5,285,000
- Maternity leave cover \$363,747

The Finance Service administers the framework for and collects the largest source of Council income being rates revenue, as well as a number of general purpose financial grants. The balance of income is generated through the investment of council funds.

To support this outcome, the key activities delivered by this service are:

- **Financial Accounting** provides the framework for statutory compliance and the preparation of the Annual Financial Report. Responsibilities of this function are:
 - Accounts payable
 - Accounts receivable
 - Treasury management
 - Statutory reporting and taxation compliance
 - Annual Financial Report
 - Financial Framework including internal controls and policy compliance
 - Financial management system
- **Management Accounting** provides the framework for budgetary management, financial performance and sustainability. Responsibilities of this function are:
 - Budget framework
 - Annual budget development
 - Management reporting on financial performance
 - Long term financial forecast
 - Asset accounting
 - Financial management system

- **Rates and Valuations** provides the framework and strategic direction for the levying and collection of rates income. Responsibilities of this function are:
 - Rating strategy
 - Levying and collection of Council rates and charges
 - Levying and collection of State Government charges
 - Maintain property data for valuation purposes
 - General revaluation of properties
 - Name and Address Register
 - Electoral Roll
 - Administer legislative obligations

These activities are supported by a combination of in-house staff and contract valuers.

SERVICE ASSESSMENT

Strategic Intent

The strategic intent of the Finance Service is to empower the organisation to achieve long term financial sustainability and innovation to support implementation of the City Plan through the development and implementation of a contemporary financial framework.

Current activities are strongly focussed on compliance. Challenges, however, are now posed by internal demands for greater accountability and flexibility, coupled with external demands for a more efficient and integrated customer experience supported by relevant and present technologies.

The Finance Service seeks to review its strategic intent to ensure it is both clear and contemporary.

Service Model

The Finance Service and its structure currently reflect legislative requirements. The service planning process will assist in addressing a number of questions including how the Service is provided and to whom. With both internal and external customers, great focus will be placed on the method of service delivery in light of technological advancements in service provision and increased demand for independence in service utilisation.

The Finance Services seeks to address the following questions as part of the service analysis:

- **Is the Service best structured to support and empower the organisation?**
- **Are internal systems, processes and functions contemporary?**
- **How can the Service best meet the needs of external customers in providing a flexible and dynamic customer experience?**
- **Is the current model for Valuations effective and appropriate?**

The Customer Focus Business Improvement approach will, in particular, focus on the Rates and Valuations activities. These activities have the highest transactional relationships with ratepayers and can assist in driving operational efficiencies across the business.

Growing demand for payment options and frequency exceed the capacity of current systems, with payment options falling well behind industry standards for electronic commerce. With a growing shift away from face-to-face interaction for simple transactions, the absence of a flexible council-customer interface has affected internal efficiency with outdated manual intervention required. Transaction costs will be reviewed along with incentives for electronic receipt of rates notices. The great advantage of an effective interface for the payment of rates provides a model that is scalable across all service interactions across the organisation.

Internal reporting to support decision making currently provided by both the Financial Accounting and Management Accounting activities will be reviewed to ensure they are contemporary and relevant to users.

Service Delivery Model for Valuation Services

Council is required under the Local Government Act 1989 and the Valuation of Land Act 1960 to undertake a general valuation of all properties within the municipality every two years. Council currently undertakes this function through the appointment of contract valuers. There is an opportunity to investigate the service delivery model for valuation services. Three service delivery models will be investigated:

- Appointment of contract valuers. Valuation data is supplied to the Valuer-General (current model).
- Employment of in-house valuers. Valuation data is supplied to the Valuer-General.
- Engagement of the Valuer-General to provide valuation data.

Advantages and disadvantages are present under each model, however with rates and charges income representing the greatest component (60% - 70%) of Council income, it is important to arrive at the most suitable model for the foreseeable future.

Service Levels

Service levels will be reviewed as part of the service planning process to ensure sustainable and efficient service delivery.

Efficiency

The Finance Service is participating in the Customer Focused Business Improvement (CFBI) program and will be examining how its processes could be improved for greater customer service and efficiency. All activities of the Service will be reviewed to ensure alignment with and achievement of the Service's strategic intent. Using CFBI, the following processes will be reviewed:

The process of:

- reporting the financial health of the organisation by way of monthly and quarterly financial reports in a timely and accurate manner.
- maintaining the Name and Address Register with accurate information.
- customer service delivered by the Rates and Valuations function.
- entering supplier invoices
- drawing refund cheques – including the use of cheques as a payment method only in limited circumstances.
- processing of invoices and statements and the model of service provision (centralised, decentralised, centre-led).
- payment channels and transaction flow.

In addition to these processes, the Service will investigate the appetite for collaboration with other councils for uniform finance systems.

REFERENCES

1. *Local Government Act 1989*
2. *Valuation of Land Act 1960*