



Information Guide

Lake Macquarie City Council
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PREFACE

In accordance with Section 20 of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act), Lake Macquarie City Council has prepared an Information Guide.

The following information is contained in this document:

- Section 1: Council's structure and functions
- Section 2: The way Council's functions affect the public
- Section 3: How the public may participate in Council's policy development
- Section 4: The kind of documents Council holds
- Section 5: How members of the public may access and amend Council documents

In accordance with the GIPA Act, this Information Guide is available on Council's website, lakemac.com.au.

Section 1

Council's structure and functions

Our mission:

Lake Macquarie City Council provides a diverse range of services and facilities to residents. Our mission statement, 'Quality Lifestyle', represents and embodies our overarching goal in providing these services, and is simple but instantly accessible.

Our vision:

- To establish a place where the environment will be protected and enhanced and where people and native flora and fauna will co-exist in harmony;
- have a prosperous economy with a supportive attitude to balanced economic growth managed in a way to enhance quality of life and satisfy the employment and environmental aims of the community;
- recognise, encourage and develop the City's diverse cultural life and talents and protect and promote its heritage;
- encourage a community spirit, which promotes a fulfilling lifestyle, enhances health and social wellbeing, encourages family life and lifestyle choices, allows opportunities to participate in sport and recreation, promotes equal access to all services and facilities, as well as enables all citizens to contribute to the City's economic and social development; and
- encourage and enable all people to participate fully in the economic and social life of the community as well as enjoy equal life chances and equal opportunity for access to the resources of the community.

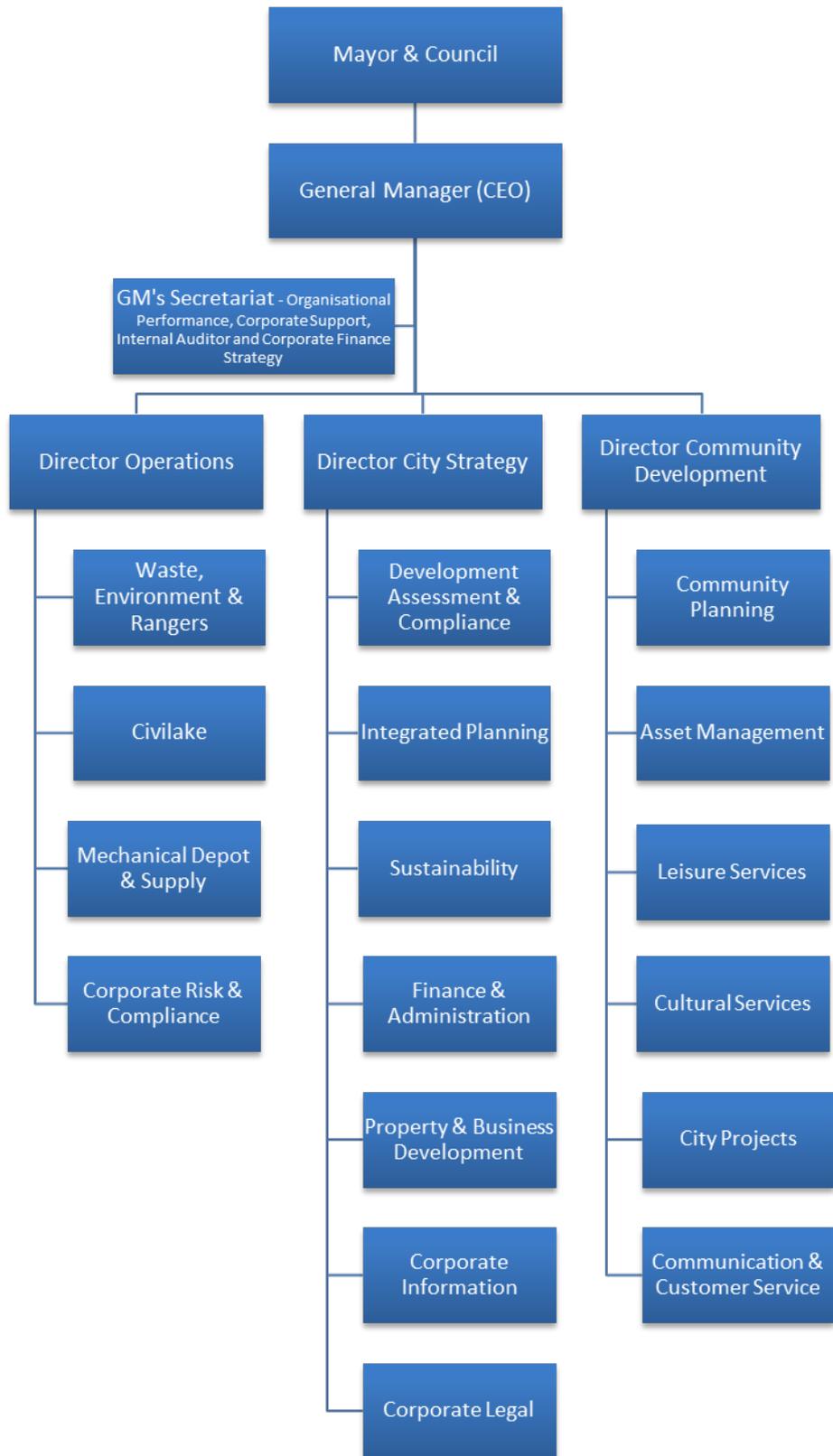
Our values:

- Leadership: Considering how today's decisions will impact on tomorrow and setting an example through our actions;
- Excellence: Our reputation comes from efficiently delivering quality services and outcomes. We support each other to achieve our best;
- Innovation: Creating an environment where fresh ideas and new ways of doing things are encouraged and supported;
- Professionalism: Taking ownership of our decisions whether popular or not. Our integrity is evident in our transparent and accountable processes;
- Relationships: Building collaborative partnerships through mutual understanding and respect, honest and inclusive communication, and integrity of action;
- Community: Bringing people together to support each other, inspire change, and achieve our common goals; and
- Balance: Recognising the changing needs of our community and being committed to providing opportunities to create a balanced lifestyle and sustainable environment for all.

Our goals:

- To deliver all of our services in a demonstrably competitive manner;
- achieve world's best practice through the implementation of the Quality Workstyle philosophy;
- generate sustainable growth through economic development;
- facilitate community consultation and participation in the decision making process;
- provide and maintain an effective physical infrastructure;
- protect and enhance the environment through waste management and balanced development;
- plan and provide social infrastructure to meet community needs;
- maximise employment in the City through economic growth;
- safeguard the quality of lifestyle in Lake Macquarie; and
- carry out entrepreneurial activities (where appropriate).

Organisation structure 2016



Organisation structure 2016

Structure

Lake Macquarie City Council consists of three divisions:

- **Community Development**
- **City Strategy**
- **Operations**

In addition, the General Manager's Secretariat provides direct support to the Mayor, General Manager and Directors.

General Manager – Brian Bell

The General Manager leads the employees and is directly responsible to the elected Council. The Council has overall responsibility for the policy and strategic management of the affairs of Council and the General Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management. The Council appoints the General Manager and the General Manager appoints all other staff members.

Directors

- **Director City Strategy, Tony Farrell**
- **Director Community Development, Morven Cameron**
- **Director Operations, Amanda Colbey**

Their main responsibilities are leadership and organisational issues. They set long-term direction for the organisation and determine sensitive or complex issues relating to staff and operational activities. The General Manager and the three Directors meet every Tuesday as the Executive. The purpose of these meetings is to set long-term direction for the organisation and to determine sensitive or complex issues relating to staff and operational activities. The agenda always lists items relating to work health and safety (WHS), quality, environmental considerations and the upcoming Business Paper for Council and Committee Meetings.

Managers

Managers are responsible for all working matters within their department. Some managers are required to attend Council meetings and provide advice directly to Council. This provides improved access and timeliness of information for councillors. These arrangements provide opportunities for managers to play a significant role in Lake Macquarie City Council.

Corporate Management Team (CMT)

The Corporate Management Team (CMT) is comprised of the Managers, the Corporate Lawyer, the Internal Auditor, the Directors, and the General Manager. The CMT meet on the third Thursday of each month to discuss and determine organisational significant issues.

The agenda always lists items relating to the WHS, quality and environment systems and workplace development. The discussions and the decision making process ensure a consistent approach to these important issues across the organisation.

General Manager's Secretariat

- **Organisational Performance**
- **Corporate Support**
- **Internal Auditor**
- **Corporate Finance Strategy**

The General Manager's Secretariat provides support to the Mayor, Councillors and the General Manager. They also respond to public enquiries, coordinate civic receptions, and citizenship ceremonies.

Organisational Performance Department

Manager, Laura Kendall

Organisational Performance is responsible for business improvement, corporate planning, governance, councillor support services, workforce planning and development, recruitment, employee relations, payroll, injury management, and Workers Compensation.

Corporate Support

Corporate Support Officers and Directors' Personal Assistants

The Corporate Support Officers provide assistance and advice to the Directors and General Manager on matters of organisational significance. The Corporate Support Officers undertake projects covering a wide range of areas throughout the organisation with an emphasis on delivering systematic improvements and quality assurance through the development of policy, procedures, business rules, and programs. The Directors' Personal Assistants provide administrative support to the Directors and assist the Mayor and General Manager's Executive Assistants.

Internal Auditor

Sharlene Boules

The Internal Auditor is responsible for the implementation, reinforcement, and monitoring of Council's Code of Conduct including the development of corruption prevention procedures. The Internal Auditor investigates, monitors, and reviews Council's systems and control procedures for compliance with relevant legislation, regulations, and internal controls in relation to accounting standards, budget control, and reporting mechanisms. The Internal Auditor acts as Council's Public Interests Disclosure Officer and Child Protection Officer.

Corporate Finance Strategy

Corporate Finance Strategist

Corporate Finance Strategy provides executive level decision support and corporate advisory to ensure the delivery of Council's Long Term Financial Plans. This position is responsible for commercial advice across all aspects of the organisation and to identify strategies to ensure operational efficiency and sound financial performance.

Community Development - Director, Morven Cameron

Community Planning

Manager, John Ferguson

Community Planning is responsible for strategic direction and service development for social, community, cultural and recreation services and facilities. The work of the department includes identifying social needs, developing and publishing strategies to respond to those, and designing facilities, structures and processes to improve the quality of life for residents. Some of the target areas for which the department has particular responsibility include Aboriginal services, services for children, responses for people with a disability, cultural facilities, recreation facilities and parks, cemeteries, community buildings, services for older people and S94 development contributions plans.

Asset Management

Manager, Glen Walker

Asset Management is responsible for the management and long term planning of the City's infrastructure including public buildings, roads and associated facilities, transport facilities, drainage, parks and reserves. The department is also responsible for managing natural areas, Landcare operations, transportation planning, and infrastructure capital works programs.

Cultural Services

Manager, Jacqui Hemsley

Cultural Services is responsible for Lake Mac Libraries, Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery and Lake Macquarie Tourism. Lake Mac Libraries delivers services from 10 branches, a Mobile Library, and a home library service. The Art Gallery is situated at Booragul, surrounded by a sculpture park and is the Hunter's only waterfront gallery. Lake Macquarie Tourism is located at the Swansea Centre servicing visitors to our region through the Visitor Information Centre as well as marketing Lake Macquarie to the rest of the nation.

Leisure Services

Manager, Brad Sutton

Leisure Services is responsible for the operational management of Lake Macquarie City Council beaches and swim centres. The beaches team deliver professional lifeguard patrol services at Redhead, Blacksmiths, Caves Beach and Catherine Hill Bay between the months of September to April. During the winter period, our professional lifeguards deliver a water safety education program to Lake Macquarie primary schools and participate in coastal dune rehabilitation operations. Council's professional lifeguards are on call year-round to provide coastal emergency response services in to assist in multi-agency rescue operations. Leisure Services also ensure the delivery of swim centre operations at our seasonal facilities located at Swansea and Speers Point and year-round operations at Charlestown and West Wallsend. The Leisure Services department also oversees the contract management of the seasonal swim centre at Morisset and the year-round Toronto swim centre. These centres provide for a range of casual and formal options including lap swimming, squad training, learn to swim and fitness classes as well as hosting a variety of aquatic sport, school and family events.

City Projects

Manager, Adam Wakeman

City Projects provide design, engineering, survey and project management services to the organisation. City Projects are responsible for ensuring that the design and construction of the City's infrastructure is carried out to an appropriate standard, whether constructed by Council, contractors or through agreements with third parties.

Communications and Customer Service

Manager, TBA

Lake Macquarie City Council's Communications and Customer Service Department manages the organisation's first-contact communication with the residents, visitors, businesses and industry of Lake Macquarie, through phone and email correspondence, public relations and media matters, community engagement, promotional events and advertising, and at-counter service in the Customer Service Centre. The Department consists of three units, Media and Public Relations, Promotions, and Customer Service, which together are responsible for face-to-face service and information delivery, external communication methods and strategies that inform our community about Council's programs, projects, activities and developments, and internal communication channels that inform, educate and empower Council staff.

City Strategy - Director, Tony Farrell

Development Assessment and Compliance

Manager, Steve Brown

Development Assessment and Compliance is responsible for ensuring timely assessments and excellent customer service for planning, subdivision and building applications and associated functions.

Integrated Planning

Manager, Sharon Pope

Integrated Planning is responsible for long-term land use planning activities that will deliver innovative, sustainable, and practical outcomes for the City. The group is responsible for land use planning and rezoning, urban design guidelines, development control plans, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage planning, monitoring the availability of land for housing, industrial, retail and commercial uses and retaining bushland and significant natural areas in conservation zones.

Sustainability

Acting Manager, Dean Chapman

The Sustainability department is responsible for providing integrated environmental management and strategic planning to enhance and sustain the natural and built environment. Sustainability is responsible for floodplain, catchment and coastal management; climate change mitigation and adaptation; recycling and green waste management; community engagement; and State of the Environment reporting.

Finance and Administration

Chief Financial Officer, TBA

Finance and Administration is responsible for Council's financial services including rates, annual statements, grants and contributions, investments, accounts payable, creditors, insurance claims, risk management in relation to insurance claims and budget and financial

reporting. Finance and Administration oversees Lakemac Print, which is Council's printing and graphic design business.

Property and Business Development

Manager, Kate Cramp

Property is responsible for the management of Council's rental properties, the development of Council owned land, sales, acquisitions and the provision of valuation services. The department also manages Council's four holiday parks.

Corporate Information

Chief Information Officer, Brooke Humphries

Corporate Information is responsible for information management and process automation practices across the Council, and for the underpinning IT infrastructure. The department also provides records management and spatial information services to the organisation.

Corporate Legal

Corporate Lawyer, Sean Lucy

The Corporate Lawyer provides legal services to the Council.

Operations – Director, Amanda Colbey

Waste, Environment and Rangers

Manager, Keith Stevenson

Waste, Environment and Rangers is responsible for waste management services, domestic and commercial waste collection and disposal, and city cleaning. Waste, Environment and Rangers is also responsible for environmental compliance, public health inspections of regulated premises, septic tank approval and food premises compliance. It is also responsible for companion animal control, the enforcement of parking and litter regulations, and the enforcement of the relevant legislation relating to public places and roads.

CiviLake

Manager, Peter Murray

CiviLake provides a wide range of civil engineering, horticultural and building trades, works and services to Council and external clients. These comprise of the maintenance, construction and rehabilitation of roads, drainage, traffic facilities, public open space, shared pathways and footpaths, buildings, playgrounds, soft engineering, including landscaping, foreshore stabilisation, stormwater quality improvement devices, erosion and sediment control and associated infrastructure.

Mechanical Depot and Supply

Manager, Michael Gray

Mechanical Depot and Supply provides mechanical, plant, automotive maintenance, plant replacement, work health and safety, accident investigation, safety risk management and supply services to the organisation. Mechanical Depot and Supply coordinates procurement activities including overseeing the tendering process.

Corporate Risk and Compliance

Corporate Risk and Compliance Officer, Amy Daley

The Corporate Risk and Compliance Officer is responsible for the design and implementation of Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework (ERMF). Responsibilities include providing ongoing stakeholder support and education, ensuring all related documentation remains current and meaningful, benchmarking Council's ERMF against other public and private organisations, suggesting and coordinating continuous improvement initiatives, managing the Risk Champion network (comprised of representatives from each department), ensuring Council compliance with all internal and external risk related obligations and actively participating in industry forums. The Enterprise Risk Management Framework allows Council to identify, prioritise and close out vulnerabilities, and exploit opportunities. The ERMF provides greater levels of assurance to staff, management and the community that risks are being managed responsibly, with appropriate contingency measures implemented.

Section 2

The way Council's functions affect the public

Meetings of the Council and its committees are open to members of the public to attend. Occasionally meetings or parts of meetings may be closed to allow councillors to discuss confidential matters.

By arrangement, community groups or individuals are granted an opportunity to briefly address councillors in public access sessions at appropriate meetings.

All of Council's functions and decisions affect the residents of the City. These include:

- determining the rating structure and thus the amount of rates to be paid by property owners;
- determining the fees and charges to be levied for services provided by Council;
- determining applications and granting approvals; and
- determining policies and procedures, which concern services, provided in the following key focus areas:
 - Caring for the Environment;
 - Caring for our Community;
 - Sport, Recreation and Culture;
 - Transport, Roads and Drainage;
 - Urban and Economic Development; and
 - Civic Leadership and Management.

Planning mechanisms within Council

The main management planning instruments of Council are:

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Council has an Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework in place to ensure the organisation operates efficiently and is able to meet the immediate and future needs of the community. The Framework also helps Council to manage its finances more effectively as it allows us to anticipate future initiatives, which require spending money.

The framework consists of the following:

- **Lifestyle 2030 ‘A Strategy for our Future’** – provides the long-term strategic direction for the future land use pattern for Lake Macquarie City, based on achieving the principles of ecological sustainability.
- **Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023** – represents the partnership between Council and the people of Lake Macquarie, and captures our shared vision for our City. As Council's key strategic planning document, the Plan presents the main priorities of the community and sets out the long-term strategies developed to respond to these priorities.
- **Resourcing Strategy** - supporting document to the Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023, which highlights the resources required to fulfil the long-term needs of the community. The Resourcing Strategy is comprised of the:
 - Long-Term Financial Plan;
 - Workforce Management Strategy;
 - Asset Management Strategy;
 - Information Technology and Information Management Strategy; and
 - Plant and Fleet Strategy.
- **Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plans** - establish a framework to guide the planning, construction, maintenance, and operation of the infrastructure essential for Lake Macquarie City Council to provide services to the community.
- **Operational Plan 2015-2016, incorporating the Delivery Program 2013-2017** – defines the actions Council will take towards achieving our community's vision for our City, as captured in the Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023. Each Operational Plan action relates to a Delivery Program Strategy, which is then linked to a priority in Council's Community Strategic Plan. This ensures that Council's long-term planning is consistent with the current and future needs of the community.
- **Annual Report** – reflects the organisation's performance and activities for the financial year.

Council has developed a number of other plans or strategies that not only meet the targets set out in Council's 10 Year Community Strategic Plan, but identify and address the social needs of various groups within our City. These plans include:

- Children and Family Strategy 2015-2020;
- Crime Prevention Strategy 2015-2018;
- Ageing Population Strategy 2014-2017;
- Aboriginal Community Plan 2012-2015;
- Youth Strategy 2014-2019;

- Disability Action Plan 2013-2017;
- Seniors Housing Strategy 2012;
- Multicultural Plan 2016-2020; and
- Community Facilities Strategy 2011.

Community survey

One of the ways Lake Macquarie residents have input into Council's corporate planning processes is through a community survey. Council conducts a random telephone survey of 1000 residents every two years. The primary aims of the survey are to gauge community importance and satisfaction levels with Council services, gather feedback on standards of communication between Council and the community, and obtain information on what the community thinks should be long-term priorities for the City.

In the latest survey in 2016, the results showed that maintaining road surfaces, public toilet cleaning and illegal dumping control are the most important services for residents and they are most satisfied with kerbside waste, green waste and recycling collection, libraries and Council's Beach lifeguard patrol.

The results from the survey is incorporated into Council's corporate planning activities. Survey results are available on Council's website, lakemac.com.au.

Lifestyle 2030 Strategy

Lake Macquarie City Council recognises that the City's prosperity, natural assets, and community are essential elements of residents' quality of life. It is important to have in place a strategy that provides the direction for the future urban and rural land use pattern, based on achieving the principles of sustainability. Lifestyle 2030 Strategy provides the long-term direction for the overall development of the City and describes Council's high-level policies for managing private and public development in Lake Macquarie. Lifestyle 2020 has served the Lake Macquarie community for 10 years; Lifestyle 2030 Strategy is a revised version of that Strategic Plan, reflecting shifts in planning policy and social, economic and environmental trends through the period 2000 to 2012. Lifestyle 2030 is a long-range land use strategic plan and policy document. Supporting documentation to Lifestyle 2030 includes:

- Lifestyle 2020 Review Discussion Paper 2010;
- Biodiversity Background Technical Report 2011 – LMCC Sustainability Department; and
- Employment Lands Study 2010 – SGS Economics and Planning.

View Lifestyle 2030 Strategy on the City website, lakemac.com.au.

Local Environmental Plan 2014

The Lake Macquarie Local Environment Plan (LMLEP) 2014 was published on 12 September 2014 and became effective on Friday 10 October 2014. It consists of a written document and a comprehensive series of maps illustrating the controls applying to land in Lake Macquarie City. The LMLEP contains standards that apply to development in Lake Macquarie. It also establishes the types of development that may be permitted on a particular parcel of land with the permission of Council. Some changes were made as directed by the Department of Planning and Environment and Parliamentary Counsel.

View the Lake Macquarie LEP 2014 on the City website, lakemac.com.au.

Lake Macquarie Development Control Plan 2014

The Lake Macquarie Development Control Plan is the supporting document for the LMLEP 2014, and became effective on Friday 10 October 2014. It provides guidance and detailed requirements for development.

State of the Environment reporting

Under Section 428A of *the Local Government Act 1993*, Council is required to submit a comprehensive State of the Environment Report to the Minister of Local Government in a year in which an ordinary election of councillors is held. Lake Macquarie City Council's procedure is to also provide an update on the State of the Environment each year as part of the Annual Report.

The State of the Environment (SOE) Report contains information regarding the current condition of Lake Macquarie's environment, the pressures being placed on it, and how we will manage and respond to these pressures.

The latest report 2014/2015 provides an assessment of the current condition of the environmental sectors of:

- energy;
- waste;
- water and land (including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage);
- transport;
- natural environment;
- climate change adaptation;
- natural; and
- environmental health.

The Report further highlights the City's efforts to better integrate environmental, social, economic and governance goal. The Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2014-2023 tells residents what Council will do to achieve improved environmental sustainability for Lake Macquarie City.

Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS)

Council is committed to providing the safest possible work sites for our workers and visitors. To ensure continuing improvement Council has developed a WHS Management System that drives this improvement.

Resources of Council

Council employs approximately 850 permanent staff with additional casual, contract, seasonal and job scheme staff as required.

Assets at current values include:

office equipment	approximately \$4.9 million
plant and equipment	approximately \$28.9 million
buildings and other structures	approximately \$242.4 million
land and land improvements	approximately \$435 million
road infrastructure	approximately \$1282 million
drainage	approximately \$287.6 million
other sundry	approximately \$16.2 million

Section 3

How the public may participate in Council policy development

Development applications

In processing development applications, Council will notify adjoining owners and others where it is considered that others may be affected, seeking comments on the proposals.

Public information about development applications is accessible on Council's website, lakemac.com.au, through Application Tracking and MyLakemac.

Community representations on committees involved in policy formulation

Community groups or private individuals are represented on the following committees that assist in formulation of Council's policy:

- Aquatic Services Committee;
- Art Gallery Advisory Committee;
- Lake Macquarie Australia Day Awards Committee;
- Lake Macquarie Combined Chambers Committee;
- Lake Macquarie Sports Council;
- Aboriginal Grants Committee;
- Lake Macquarie City Council and Rural Fire Service Liaison;
- Companion Animals Advisory Committee;
- Cycling Advisory Group;
- Lake Macquarie Ageing and Disability Advisory Panel;
- Environmental Sustainability Grants Committee;
- Lake Macquarie Environmental Research Grants Committee; and
- Lake Macquarie Youth Advisory Council.

Section 4

The types of information that Council holds

Council information is anything held in Council record, on behalf of Council by a government contractor, or by the State Records Authority. A record means any document or other source of information compiled, recorded or stored in written or electronic form.

Council holds many files, documents, manuals, and electronic media related to its operations. In some circumstances, certain documentation may not be readily available for public viewing under the provisions of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (PIIP Act), or without a formal application being made under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act).

Personal information (as defined by the PIIP Act) contained in any of the documents specifically mentioned below, or otherwise held by Council, will only be supplied in accordance with the provisions of the PIIP Act, Council's Privacy Management Plan and/or any relevant Privacy Code of Practice.

Details on how to apply for access to information under GIPA Act are contained in Section 5 – Access Arrangements.

Council records are stored in an electronic document and records management system. Non-electronic documents are held either in files or on microfilm, with some being kept on Council's premises at Speers Point. Archived records are held at Hunter Records Storage at Thornton and the State Government Records Repository at Kingswood in Sydney.

Application Tracking on Council's website allows access to information relating to development applications, and access to publicly available application documents registered since 18 April 2005.

Copies of petitions and minutes that Council holds of meetings by public groups, as well as submissions made by the public in response to any exhibition or request for public input made by Council, can be supplied on request.

Documents subject to copyright may be viewed only. Copies can be obtained from the author.

Open access information

The following information held by Council is open access information that is required to be made publicly available under Section 6 of the GIPA Act (mandatory proactive release of certain government information):

- the agency's current information guide;
- information about the agency contained in any document tabled in Parliament by or on behalf of the agency, other than any document tabled by order of either House of Parliament;
- the agency's policy documents;
- the agency's disclosure log of access applications;
- the agency's register of government contracts;
- the agency's record (kept under Section 6) of the open access information (if any) that it does not make publicly available on the basis of an overriding public interest against disclosure; and

- other government information as may be prescribed by the regulations as open access information.

Additional open access information as prescribed by *Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2009*

Information about local authority

- 1) Information contained in the current version and the most recent previous version of the following records is prescribed as open access information:
 - a) the model code prescribed under Section 440 (1) of the *Local Government Act 1993* (The Act) and the Code of Conduct adopted under Section 440 (3) of The Act;
 - b) Code of Meeting Practice;
 - c) Annual Report;
 - d) annual financial reports;
 - e) Auditor's Report;
 - f) Management Plan;
 - g) Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan;
 - h) policy concerning the payment of expenses incurred by, and the provision of facilities to, councillors;
 - i) annual reports of bodies exercising functions delegated by the local authority; and
 - j) any codes referred to in The Act.
- 2) Information contained in the following records (whenever created) is prescribed as open access information:
 - a) returns of the interests of councillors, designated persons and delegates;
 - b) agendas and business papers for any meeting of the local authority or any committee of the local authority (but not including business papers for matters considered when part of a meeting is closed to the public);
 - c) minutes of any meeting of the local authority or any committee of the local authority, but restricted (in the case of any part of a meeting that is closed to the public) to the resolutions and recommendations of the meeting;
 - d) departmental representative reports presented at a meeting of the local authority in accordance with Section 433 of The Act.
- 3) Information contained in the current version of the following records is prescribed as open access information:
 - a) land register;
 - b) register of investments;
 - c) register of delegations;
 - d) register of graffiti removal work kept in accordance with section 13 of the [Graffiti Control Act 2008](#);

- e) register of current declarations of disclosures of political donations kept in accordance with section 328A of The Act; and
- f) the register of voting on planning matters kept in accordance with Section 375A of The Act.

Plans and policies

Information contained in the current version and the most recent previous version of the following records is prescribed as open access information:

- a) local policies adopted by the local authority concerning approvals and orders;
- b) plans of management for community land; and
- c) environmental planning instruments, development control plans and contributions plans made under the [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979](#) applying to land within the local authority's area.

Information about development applications

- 1) Information contained in the following records (whenever created) is prescribed as open access information:
 - a) development applications (within the meaning of the [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979](#)) and any associated documents received in relation to a proposed development including the following:
 - i) home warranty insurance documents;
 - ii) construction certificates;
 - iii) occupation certificates;
 - iv) structural certification documents;
 - v) town planner reports;
 - vi) submissions received on development applications;
 - vii) heritage consultant reports;
 - viii) tree inspection consultant reports;
 - ix) acoustics consultant reports;
 - x) land contamination consultant reports;
 - b) records of decisions on development applications (including decisions made on appeal); and
 - c) a record that describes the general nature of the documents that the local authority decides are excluded from the operation of this clause by subclause (2);
- 2) This clause does not apply to so much of the information referred to in subclause (1) (a) as consists of:

- a) the plans and specifications for any residential parts of a proposed building, other than plans that merely show its height and its external configuration in relation to the site on which it is proposed to be erected; or
 - b) commercial information, if the information would be likely to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it or to reveal a trade secret.
- 3) A local authority must keep the record referred to in subclause (1) (c).

Approvals, orders and other documents

Information contained in the following records (whenever created) is prescribed as open access information:

- a) applications for approvals under Part 1 of Chapter 7 of The Act and any associated documents received in relation to such an application;
- b) applications for approvals under any other act and any associated documents received in relation to such an application;
- c) records of approvals granted or refused, any variation from local policies with reasons for the variation, and decisions made on appeals concerning approvals;
- d) orders given under Part 2 of Chapter 7 of The Act, and any reasons given under Section 136 of The Act;
- e) orders given under the authority of any other act;
- f) records of building certificates under the [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979](#);
- g) plans of land proposed to be compulsorily acquired by the local authority;
- h) compulsory acquisition notices; and
- i) leases and licences for use of public land classified as community land.

Section 5

How members of the public may access information and amend Council documents

Lake Macquarie City Council is subject to NSW legislation that requires it to be open and accountable in the exercise of its functions, and to handle personal and health information in a fair and reasonable manner. Council will seek to ensure that legitimate requests for access to information are handled promptly and that members of the public are able to access information, subject to the need to protect the privacy of others, commercially sensitive information and information the disclosure of which would not be in the public interest. The GIPA Act establishes four pathways for accessing information:

1. Mandatory release

Council is required to publish specific open access information on the website, free of charge. These include a register of government contracts, policies, media releases and annual reports.

2. Proactive release

Council is encouraged to make as much other information as possible publicly available in an appropriate manner, including on the internet. For example, frequently requested information or information of public interest should be made readily available. The information will be free of charge or at the lowest reasonable cost.

3. Informal release

Council is authorised to release other information in response to an informal request, subject to any reasonable conditions we impose. For example, such information could include requests for personal information by the individual concerned.

4. Formal release

In some circumstances, access to information will require a formal access application, if the information is not available any other way. Council has a pre-printed application forms to assist applicants in this process. This form can be accessed through Council's website, or by contacting Council. Before applications are considered, the appropriate fee of \$30 must be paid. Under certain circumstances, an applicant may be entitled to a 50 per cent reduction in the processing charge (not the application fee). The GIPA legislation provides Council with the discretion to waive the fees if appropriate.

The public may be able to access information by mail, email, telephone or in person at the Council Administrative Centre on Main Road, Speers Point, subject to the legal requirements of the GIPA Act, PPIPA Act, Council's Privacy Management Plan, and the relevant Privacy Codes of Practice.

Enquiries should initially be directed to either:

Ms Angela Leadbeatter	or	Mr Troy Hamilton
or Ms Ella Wroblewski		Customer Service Centre Coordinator
Access to Information Officers		(Public Officer)

Lake Macquarie City Council

Telephone 02 4921 0333

Fax 02 4958 7257

Box 1906, Hunter Regional Mail Centre NSW 2310

Email: council@lakemac.nsw.gov.au

Website: lakemac.com.au

Enquiry counters at the Administration Centre are open from 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Further advice or assistance about access to information may be obtained from the Information and Privacy Commission by free call 1800 472 679, email ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au or via website ipc.nsw.gov.au.