



KEMPSEY
Shire Council

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

16th January 2007

GM4	TOWN PLANNING STAFF	{Folio No. *}
	FILE: 924 AVB	

SUMMARY:

To outline to Council a succession plan being introduced in Sustainable Development Services to overcome the shortage in Town Planning staff.

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DESCRIPTION:

Council's problems in filling vacant Town Planning positions are well documented. The problem is ongoing and we are currently experiencing difficulty in filling a number of positions that are senior and offering competitive salary packages.

A profile of the current workforce and functions, including workforce demographics and broad skills and capabilities has been undertaken. This profile, coupled with knowledge and understanding of external labour market data has been used to indicate trends likely to contribute to the future availability of the future desired workforce. These trends contribute to council's capacity to meet its business objectives at the expected performance levels in the medium to longer term.

Options for meeting our workforce requirements include both:

- Shorter term initiatives that are effective in providing more immediate workforce solutions and which at least start to move the Department to its preferred position; and
- Longer term initiatives that provide solid and credible foundation for any change in culture and in Council's approach and commitment to people management

Options

- 1 Not plan for the future
- 2 Wait for possibility of a planning staff member leaving Council and then try to replace at the then market rate
- 3 Formalise cadetship program and seek year 1 cadet – 10 weeks placement in first year

4 Commence traineeship with a mature age staff member

Option 1

It is considered this is not an option

Option 2

This option is weak and relies on a planner being available within the market, a market already weak and identified as a high risk skills shortages area in the survey conducted by a taskforce established by the Department of Local Government. This option would add cost to Council by way of having to offer a leaseback vehicle in an effort to attract talent.

Option 3

This option is considered viable for a long term workforce planning strategy. However, shorter term planning would not be addressed. This option is a longer term strategy.

Option 4

This is the preferred option. A traineeship would provide the necessary on the job support that is required to position ourselves effectively in an area that is hardest hit by skills shortages. This shorter term option would be the most cost effective in the event that a planner leaves. This option would demonstrate our support for career development within council and would also offset the workload of current planning staff thereby freeing up time for further strategic planning projects. The trainee would focus on minor Development Applications as well providing support to the Development Engineers.

Following extensive consultation with the sector, TAFENSW will now be offering three new courses in 2007. These are:

- A national statement of Attainment in Local Government Planning
- Certificate IV in Local Government Planning; and
- Diploma in Environmental Health and Building Assessment

The trainee will undertake and complete a Certificate IV in Town Planning over a 2 year period at a cost of approximately \$4,000.

A similar arrangement is in place with a trainee Building Inspector. This arrangement offered career development to an existing staff member as well as reducing costs associated with employing a fully qualified Building Inspector.

The current staffing levels in Sustainable Development Services will increase from 29.4 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to 30.4 FTE. The current departmental staffing costs in the 2006/7 budget would increase by approximately \$26,000 including overheads which can be funded from salary savings due to vacancies. The \$4,000 TAFE cost should be met by employer incentives but if not will be provided from the HR training budget.

I have approved the appointment of the trainee Town Planner as the appointment process needed to be undertaken in December to allow enrolment in TAFE for the 2007 year. The additional appointment was on the proviso that when the next administrative position in the department

becomes available it will not be replaced or a less expensive option is investigated

REPORT IMPLICATIONS

- ♦ *Environmental*

Nil

- ♦ *Social*

Nil

- ♦ *Economic*

There will not be any affect on the 2006/07 budget but if an administrative vacancy does not prior to the 1st July the 2007/08 salary vote could be affected. On past trends though town planning vacancies will continue and these vacancies should cover salary costs in the future.

- ♦ *General Manager's Review*

As per report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirm the action taken to increase staff members by employing a trainer Town Planner.

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**A V Burgess
GENERAL MANAGER**