



KEMPSEY
Shire Council

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

3rd February 2009

GM10	CORRESPONDENCE AND COMPLAINT HANDLING
	FILE: 584 AVB (NRN) {Folio No. 353601}

SUMMARY:

Reporting to Council on outstanding correspondence and complaints for the quarter ending 31st December 2008

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DESCRIPTION:

Council's Service Standards require correspondence to be answered within 14 days and for complaints to be handled within 10 days.

Recommendation six of the Department of Local Government Report – Promoting Better Practice is, "Reports should be provided to Council on a regular basis on council's complaint handling activities so that Councillors receive information about Council's handling of complaints and correspondence".

The action plan forwarded to the Department of Local Government indicated that it is proposed to report to Council quarterly in August, November, February and May each year.

At the June 2006 meeting of Council it was resolved: -

- "2. That the information on Councillor requests received and dealt with be included in the quarterly report on the complaints and correspondence handling system.*
- 3. That a resource usage estimate be included in this report."*

CORRESPONDENCE

A report which summarises Council's correspondence handling performance is attached at [\(Appendix H – Page K149\)](#).

The report shows on the left-hand side the Workload indicators, i.e. number of items of correspondence outstanding; new correspondence; and finalised correspondence. It should be noted that these figures refer to all items of correspondence, – not just those which were outstanding more than 14 days.

The right-hand side of the report indicates Council's performance as

compared to the Service Standard period of 14 days, i.e. of the 812 items of correspondence finalised within the December 2008 Quarter, 71.43% of these were dealt with in not more than 14 days.

Reasons for correspondence not being answered within 14 days include:-

General Managers Unit

42 items of correspondence finalised during the Quarter, of which 76.19% were completed within 14 days.

The reasons for correspondence not being answered within 14 days include:

- Prolonged Industrial Matter
- Letters incorrectly allocated

Corporate and Community Services

320 items of correspondence finalised during the Quarter, of which 72.19% were completed within 14 days.

The reasons for correspondence not being answered within 14 days include:

- Administration – Letters from Dept Lands relating to conversion of old system title deeds to Torrens title; Insurance claims requiring reports on incidents. Verbal contact usually made prior to determination and written reply; Freedom of information requests requiring detailed assessment prior to reply.
- Business Services – Awaiting results of research. Finalising EOI and tender processes. Awaiting advice from other government agencies.
- Financial Services - answered 82.69%v within 14 days, of the nine matters which exceeded the 14 day benchmark four were answered in line with the writers timeframes whilst the remaining five were in respect of issues requiring extensive research prior to the provision of a response
- Fleet – Number of letters regarding Road Sweeper Tender. A report will be presented to the 3rd February 2009 Council meeting. Responses will be sent within 14 days of this date.
- Customer and Community Services – Waiting on data to form a response.
- IT & Communications – Staff changes & requestor changed requested information; Responded to on Internet within requested period.

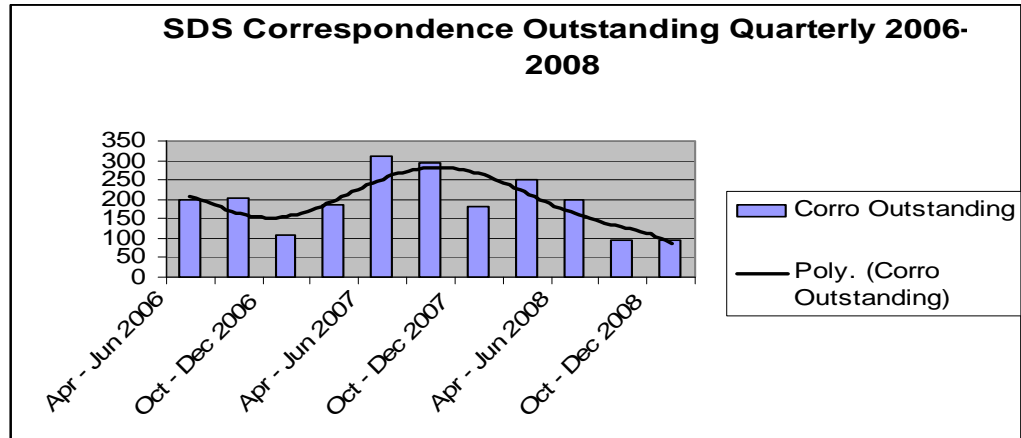
Sustainable Development Services

Of the 255 responses sent in the period, 68.6% were completed within 14 days and 79.61% within 28 days.

93 items were outstanding at the end of the period which represents a significant reduction from previous reporting periods.

Of the 93 items outstanding at the end of the period: -

- 7 are objections to DAs that have not been determined
- 10 refer to matters that do not require a response
- 12 relate to matters replied to by the determination of the application to which they refer
- 2 were replied to but not marked off



Shire Services

156 items of correspondence were finalised during the quarter of which 69.87% were completed within 14 days.

The reasons for correspondence not being answered within 14 days include:

- Staff vacancies contributed to the capacity to respond to correspondence within 14 days.
- Land acquisition and road opening/closing that required advice or approval from third parties e.g. solicitors or government departments.
- A number of letters relating to the condition of Council's roads
- Large capital works projects are taking priority involving extensive on site time.
- Some have been replied to but not marked completed on the system.

COMPLAINTS

A report which summarises Council's complaints handling performance is attached at [\(Appendix I – Page K151\)](#).

In summary the report indicates that during the Quarter 12 complaints were completed, with 83.33% of these being dealt with in not more than 10 days.

Reasons for complaints not being finalised within 10 days include:

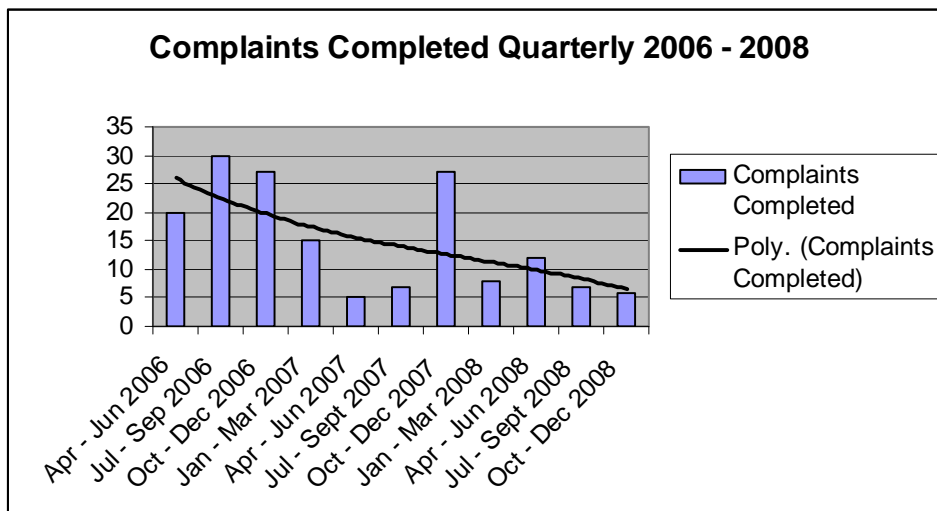
Sustainable Development Services

Of the 6 complaints completed in the period, 83.33% were completed within 10 days.

The significant reduction in the number of complaints is largely attributable to the system for dealing with dog complaints developed in consultation with the Companion Animals Management Committee.

Of the 2 complaints outstanding at the end of the period:

- o 1 relates to food handling
- o 1 relates to the operation of a landscape supply business which is the subject of a DA



Shire Services

This quarter Shire Services received only 4 complaints which have all been answered. 75% were completed in less than 10 days.

The complaints received were:

- 2 relating to Road Maintenance
- 1 Water
- 1 Sewer

COUNCILLORS REQUESTS

A report on Councillors requests received and dealt with is attached at [\(Appendix J – Page K153\)](#).

The report shows as follows –

Outstanding Requests at 1 st October 2008	-	1
New Requests during Quarter	-	9
Requests finalised during Quarter	-	7
Outstanding Requests at 31 st December 2008	-	3

The cost of staff responding to these requests has been estimated at \$429.10 for the October to December Quarter.

RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS:

- *Environmental*

Nil

- *Social*

Nil

- *Economic (Financial)*

Nil

- *Policy or Statutory*

Nil

- *General Manager Comments*

Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information be noted.

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A V Burgess
GENERAL MANAGER