



2013 Rates and Services Review

Answers to Questions from the Community Working Group

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Population and growth

Will population increase be natural increase or immigration?

Our population projections show that the increase will be both natural increase and immigration. In the next ten years we estimate births of about 24,000, overseas immigration of about 24,000, deaths of about 14,000, and migration out of the city to elsewhere in Sydney, NSW and Australia of about 22,000, leaving a net increase of about 12,000.

Is more dense development the solution?

More dense development does accommodate an increase in population into the limited area of the City of Canterbury. Because of the limits on the way in which council is allowed to levy property rates under the Local Government Act, however, the additional income from rates on more dense development does not necessarily cover the costs of the additional demand for services generated by the additional population.

What are the long term benefits to the council by approving multi storey buildings?

From a finance perspective, there is additional income for Council. The issue though is whether that additional income is sufficient to provide the existing services to the increased population of our City. An analysis performed by our rating staff and using ABS data of average number of people per household indicates that the average rate per head of population actually decreases when a parcel of land is subdivided into smaller strata blocks. Additionally, there is the question of whether increasing the density of our population will require Council to increase the service level of our existing services and/or provide new services.

Increases in the number of dwellings results in Council receiving contributions under S94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. These contributions are quarantined and must only be used for specific projects such as the acquisition, development and improvement of public facilities. These funds cannot be used to fund Council's day-to-day operations or fund asset renewal.

Can we get developers to contribute more to the local area eg. playground improvement, footpaths?

The amount we can obtain from developers to contribute to the local area is outlined in our Development Contributions Plan (also sometimes referred to as a S94 Plan, as this is the section of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act under which this plan is made). We have just adopted a new Development Contributions Plan which includes a number of major projects over the next ten years that are shown in the table on the following page.

Reference	Description (Location)
Parks Improvement Works Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Salt Pan Creek Reserve - Open Space Masterplan Implementation (Riverwood) ⇒ Salt Pan Creek Reserve - Tip Closure and remediation (Riverwood) ⇒ Ewen Park - Masterplan Implementation (Hurlstone Park) ⇒ Wiley Park - Implement Master Plan (Wiley Park) ⇒ Rotary Park - New playground and amenities at (Riverwood) ⇒ Campbell Oval - New Synthetic Running Track (Canterbury) ⇒ Tasker Park - New wet and dry playground (Canterbury) ⇒ Waterworth Park - Field Renovation plus additional field (Earlwood) ⇒ Rosedale Reserve - New amenities Block (Croydon Park) ⇒ Tasker Park - Facilities Improvement (Canterbury) ⇒ Rotary Park - New Pedestrian and Bike path to King Georges Road (Riverwood) ⇒ Guide Park Belmore - Youth Recreation centre (Belmore) ⇒ Beaman Park - Field Renovation (Earlwood)
Community Facilities Plan 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Earlwood Library and Community Centre (Earlwood) ⇒ Canterbury/ Hurlstone Park Community Centre (Canterbury) ⇒ Fit-out Campsie Community Arts Centre (Campsie) ⇒ Riverwood Library (Riverwood) ⇒ Design and Construction of Lakemba Community Centre (Lakemba)

Income

Are there development and income generating opportunities along the Cooks River eg. cafes, bars etc.?

Yes. For example, there are plans to lease space in a public amenities building at Ewen Park for instance for a kiosk. Income to council from this sort of lease, however, is typically only a few thousand dollars per year.

How can council diversify its income streams so it is less reliant on residential rates?

Councils have four primary sources of income – from **citizens** in the form of property rates and grants from other levels of government, from **customers** in the form of fees for service, from **contributions** from development, and from **enterprise** such as investments, permitted business activities, and property ownership.

Most of these income sources are highly regulated – even a large proportion of fees for services are prescribed by regulation. Grants are highly dependent on the political

environment and the fiscal position of state and federal governments. Commercial enterprises are generally regulated by the Division of Local Government. The reality is that councils have limited scope to diversify their income streams.

What contributes to 'other' when referring to sources of income in 2014-15

'Other' mostly refers to income from the rental or use of council property, fines from enforcement activities, income from pool kiosks, and contributions to works (eg. vehicular crossings).

If the referendum RE direct federal funding gets a YES what is the expected impact on finance levels?

The referendum has now been deferred.

What if IPART rejects council's submission for increased revenue?

Council currently allocates its scarce resources amongst many competing activities of which asset renewal is one. Nothing will be different in the future, however residents may see declining asset conditions and also a reduction in services and service standards. A real possibility is that as asset condition declines, insurance premiums increase which creates a spiral of having less and less funds available to maintain assets.

Income from Rates

How are rates calculated per household?

Our Rating Structure is to levy rates by the 'Minimum Rates' concept. This means Council may charge a minimum rate on each parcel of land.

Generally speaking, the rate each household pays is calculated by multiplying the 'rate in the \$' (or ad valorem rate) by the land value of that property. However, if the result is below a minimum amount, then minimum rates will apply.

The 'rate in the \$' is obtained by dividing the revenue required by the total land value of all land in the area.

For example, to keep the calculations simple, assume a council as only having 5 properties with the following land values:

Property A - \$1,000,000, Property B - \$500,000, Property C - \$200,000, Property D - \$400,000 and Property A - \$100,000. (Total Land Value = \$2,200,000)

This council has decided that it needs to raise about \$153,000 from ordinary rates. It has also stated that the minimum rate will be set at \$7,500 meaning that no ratepayer will pay less than \$7,500.

In this scenario, the 'rate in the \$' is 0.06954 ie. $\frac{\text{Rate Required}}{\text{Total Land Value}}$ or $\frac{153,000}{2,200,000}$

Now this 'rate in the \$' of 0.06954 will be used to calculate the rate payable by each property in this council area. The calculations are as follows:

Property A: \$1,000,000 X 0.06954 = \$69,540
Property B: \$500,000 X 0.06954 = \$34,770
Property C: \$200,000 X 0.06954 = \$13,908
Property D: \$400,000 X 0.06954 = \$27,816
Property E: \$100,000 X 0.06954 = \$6,954

With respect to property E, because the result is below \$7,500, it will pay the minimum rate of \$7,500.

In addition to the ordinary rate, council also makes a charge for the provision of annual waste management services. The cost of this service is normally shared equally by each rate payer. For example, if the above council's annual cost for waste management service was \$20,000, then each rate payer will pay an additional \$4,000 for this service. Therefore the total payable by property A will be \$73,540, ie \$69,540 plus \$4,000.

Council rates in Canterbury City are calculated in a similar manner to the above example. For the 2013/2014 rating year our 'Rate in the \$' was set at 0.002803 for residences and 0.007441 for businesses with a minimum rate of \$525.35. The annual waste charge of \$349.50 also applies to each property.

Therefore, a residential property with a land value of \$280,000 in Canterbury will pay Council \$1,134.30, being \$784.40 for ordinary rates (\$280,000 X 0.002803) and \$349.50 for waste management charges. However, any property with a land value of \$187,500 or less will only pay \$525.35 (minimum rate) in rates and \$349.50 for waste charges, a total of \$874.85.

Are we charging medium density housing the same rates, after we collect their garbage and they use facilities?

As mentioned earlier, ordinary rates are based on the land value of the property, therefore, the amount can vary from property to property if the land values are different or be the same amount if all the land values are the same.

For example, a single dwelling on a property valued at, say \$250,000 in Canterbury will pay the same ordinary rate as a property with the same land value in Punchbowl. This is regardless of whether the Punchbowl property is vacant land, a house or a block of 10 flats. The only difference will be in the amount of waste charge paid by both properties. In addition, the rates paid by both properties also have no relevance to the number of people residing at each property.

Therefore, it follows that unless the medium density or high density building is strata titled, it will end up paying the same ordinary rate as a single dwelling house if their land values happen to be set at the same level.

On the other hand, units in a high or medium density building that are strata titled will be rated separately. Although rates for these units are computed on the apportioned land values, they most often end up paying only the minimum rates.

How much can be raised if rates increase by 1%?

Based on 2013-14 rate levies, a one (1) per cent increase in ordinary rates will raise an additional \$545,000.

Income from Fees

What extra services can Council offer on a fee for service basis eg. landscaping advice, garden planning, pest control?

Generally we can offer services for a fee where there is free capacity in the resources (people, assets or money) that are used to undertake them. With significant reductions in staff in recent years, rationalisation of plant and equipment, and the reduction in our investments there is no free capacity with which we can offer services for a fee. Council is limited by the Local Government Act in the range and size of commercial activities which it can undertake. We are unable to establish a business for the purpose of generating a profit without the approval of the Minister for Local Government.

Are there services that council provides that a pay per use system can be introduced?

Council currently charges on a pay per use for a wide range of services. These are documented in our Fees and Charges 2013-14, and include things like aquatic centre entry fees and memberships, inspection services, fees for the issue of various planning services and activities, children's services (Early Learning Centres, Family Day Care, Outside School Hours Care, and Vacation Care), and the hire of council buildings and sporting facilities. We review these fees and charges every year to ensure that they are appropriate, and to look for additional services that can be. For example we recently reduced fees to encourage the use of footpaths for outdoor dining – they were so high that they were preventing this activity from occurring rather than generating a reasonable amount of income. We also recently introduced a tree inspection fee. We are also investigating pay-for-parking – currently we do not have any fees for either on-street parking or public car parks.

Income from Car parking

What is the cost of car parking?

\$85,000 per year for maintenance and improvements on council's public car parks.

Could council build a parking facility and charge for its use?

The answer is yes, Council could, but the more important question is should Council do this. Parking, provided in a multi-level structure, in a LGA such as Canterbury, is only ever likely to be located in and around the LGA's town centres. This is where demand for parking is highest and where that high demand drives the quest for better, more-economically-efficient use of land Council owns and uses for car parking. Each different town centre has different characteristics which must be considered. It is unlikely that anywhere in Canterbury expected future income from pay-parking in such a structure is ever going to justify (in purely commercial terms) the expenditure needed to build and maintain such a structure. Investigations are currently underway concerning the likely cost/benefits of a proposed structure nearby to the Lakemba Town Centre. In deciding whether or not to proceed matters such as the following are to be considered:

- the likely cost of building the structure
- parking availability during any construction phase
- likely operating and recurrent upkeep costs
- likely income sources from the structure (including parking fees/fines)
- uses for, and value of, other Council land nearby (which as a result of the proposed multi-decked car park structure is thereby released from needing to continue to be provided as a site for at grade car parking)
- the nature and extent of the positive economic development effect of better activating the Council land holdings.

Could council impose car parking fees? (Pay for Parking)

The introduction of pay for parking in an area such as Canterbury, which historically has not introduced this either in off-street car parks or on-street parking in town centres using parking meters, is possible. Experience in other council areas has indicated that Many people consider the introduction of a charge on parking activities to be reasonable, and that such a charge has the positive effect of producing greater turnover of car space availability (to the benefit of shopkeepers and customers alike). However any such proposal is likely to be met with opposition.

High level preliminary investigations into pay-for-parking to date have focussed on off-street car parks, rather than on-street parking because of concern regarding the impact on the competitiveness of our town centres. Many of our off-street car parks are, however, sited on

railway land, and are restricted to free parking by the arrangement with the railway authority. The investigations have also revealed a number of other issues including potential impacts to surrounding streets, and the potential need for a Resident Parking Scheme in affected areas. The willingness and capacity of people to pay in some areas is also a consideration. In view of these issues, further detailed investigation is needed to assess the feasibility of both off-street and on-street parking, and ensure that any scheme proposed can achieve a net benefit ie. income generated more than the costs of the scheme(s) over its projected lifetime.

Expenses

What is the proportion of income and spend for all services provided by council?

Refer to the 2013 Rates and Service Review brochure for the information.

Apart from some commercial activities like the Early Learning Centres and the Aquatic and Fitness Centres and the operation of our Domestic Waste service, other activities only have nominal income streams and/or receive grant income.

Untied income from rates, the Financial Assistance grant, fees and charges, fines, investment income and property rents is essentially pooled and used to fund the delivery of services.

What has already been committed?

Committed can mean several different things so I have prepared several responses.

Council has many long term contracts such as the collection and disposal of waste which would be classed as a commitment. We also have s94 Contribution Plans which commits Council to the delivery of improvements to public facilities.

We make commitments to deliver services when we enter into agreements with the providers of grants. Council has approximately 100 grant funded projects each year.

Council has adopted its Annual Budget, Operating Plan and Fees and Charges for the 2013-14 financial year. This effectively commits Council to deliver services in line with the adopted operating plan and within the constraints of the adopted budget.

Council issues purchase orders as part of its procurement procedures. Generally open purchase orders total in the vicinity of \$1.5M at any time. These can also be considered as a commitment.

If the question may be along the lines of: "Are there already some boundaries (Commitments made) which will restrict the scope of the Rates and Services Review or the ability to implement the recommended outcomes of the review?" There are none that I am aware of.

Why is council paying \$1.2 million in loan repayments?

One question often asked is why does Council have loans when it has large investments? Council holds funds for specific purposes like s94 contributions which are linked to a schedule of improvements to public facilities within the City. Other significant funds are held for grants where the funds must be spent on specific activities. We also make allocation of funds for future events such as payment of employee leave entitlements, election expenses and the repayment of security deposits.

The following table lists details of Council's current loans (excluding the \$1.8m loan which will be funded by the Infrastructure Renewal Levy at effectively 0% interest over the next three years). These loans were used to fund our asset renewal program.

Drawn Down Date	Amount	Terms	Interest Rate
30/06/2009	\$560,000	10 Years – Fixed Interest	7.67%pa
30/06/2010	\$4,000,000	10 Years – Fixed Interest	6.88%pa
30/06/2011	\$1,500,000	10 Years – Fixed Interest	7.05%pa
1/06/2012	\$3,000,000	10 Years – Fixed Interest	6.33%pa

Note the cost the repay existing loans is very small by local government standards for a council of Canterbury's size.

Our projections indicate that we will continue to pay \$120k per annum in loan repayments up until 30 June 2019, when the repayments will decrease as the loans are paid out.

It is also important to note that loans are not a source of funds. Surpluses from operations are a source of funds. Loans are a financial tool which allow you to spend in advance of generating the surpluses from operations, necessary to fund the loan repayments.

Why does the deficit jump from \$2.4 in 2013-14 to \$9.2 million in 2014-15?

The adopted budget for 2013-14 does not include the up-to-date costs of improving infrastructure, and uses our savings to cover the deficit.

What is the cost of street-lighting?

\$2.2 million in 2013-14.

What impact would improved public transport have on road maintenance costs?

Improved public transport could have the effect of reducing the number of passenger vehicles on the road, which would improve travel times, and provide associated economic and quality of life benefits. Damage to council's road pavements and the costs of maintenance associated with this are not due to passenger vehicles, however, but rather commercial vehicles, trucks and buses. As a consequence improved public transport would not reduce on our road maintenance costs.

Services

What are council's core functions?

Council's core functions are those activities that we are required to undertake by legislation, or to provide a basic level of services. These include planning, design, operations and maintenance of roads, drainage, bridges, parks, buildings and facilities; compliance and enforcement activities, fire safety services, local emergency management and street lighting, urban planning and development assessment, public libraries, domestic waste and recycling collections, and corporate functions that support these including human resources, workplace health and safety, property portfolio and asset management, fleet management, financial management, information technology, records management, insurance, council operations and governance. About 65% of council's expenditure is on core functions.

How can you identify what services to reduce?

Identifying what services are to be reduced is one of the key tasks for the Community Working Group. A key question for group members is:

"What would you need to know in order to determine which services should be reduced?"

For example one factor in determining what services to be reduced could be how important they are to our community. In our regular surveys of community attitudes towards services and facilities that council provides we ask residents to tell us how important services are to them. The results from the most recent survey in 2012 are shown in the table below, with the most important first, and the least important last. Importance is a score out of 5, where 1 is not at all important, and 5 is very important.

Service / facility (rank order)	Importance
Garbage / Recycling / Green Waste collection services	4.79
Health & Hygiene of local restaurants & takeaway	4.71
Maintenance of local roads	4.60
Smooth & safe flow of traffic	4.60
Clean-up of street litter & dumped rubbish	4.55
Lighting of public places	4.55
Maintenance of footpaths	4.55
Encouraging local industry & jobs	4.44
Maintenance of Public toilets & rest areas	4.43
Condition of the Cooks River	4.42
Services & facilities for people with disabilities	4.42
Maintenance of parks & gardens	4.40
Environmental education	4.39
Library services	4.39
Provision of children's play grounds & equipment	4.36
Services & facilities for older	4.34
Maintenance of sports grounds & playing fields	4.33
Overall appearance of the city	4.33
Provision of parking	4.30
Appearance and mix of businesses in town centres	4.29
Consultation with the community by Council	4.26
Council's community safety programs	4.25
Information on Council Services & activities	4.25
Services & facilities for youth	4.25
Planning of urban areas	4.21
Child care facilities & services	4.18
Graffiti removal	4.18
Services & facilities for people from various cultural backgrounds	4.13
Assessment of building & development applications	4.12
Maintenance of public swimming pools	4.09
Tree planting & preservation	4.08
Provision of bus shelters	4.04
Putting on Community events & festivals	4.04
Local baby health & immunisation centres	4.03
Domestic animal control	4.01
Provision of community halls & community centres	3.96
Fitness centres & programs	3.90
Provision of bike paths	3.35

Have previous community surveys been undertaken?

Yes we have undertaken surveys of community attitudes to services and facilities provided by council in 2007, 2010, and 2012.

Why don't the results of the survey match the word clouds in the Community Strategic Plan?

The survey results in the Answers to Questions are people's rating of the importance and satisfaction with a range of services and facilities provided by council. This is people's feedback on what council is providing now.

The word clouds in the Community Strategic Plan are a representation of people's responses to the questions 'What do you love about Canterbury?' and 'What would a better life look like for you here in Canterbury in ten years'. The responses to these questions represent what people value, and what they want for the future of the City.

Can council cost-shift anything to the State Government? If so, how?

Councils in NSW are given their authority to operate by state legislation – the Local Government Act 1993. As a result the State Government can, by changing legislation, change the responsibilities and functions of local councils as it chooses. Unfortunately local councils do not have the power to shift responsibilities to the state government. They can only advocate to or lobby the state government, and often attempt to do this through the peak industry association LG NSW.

How can council partner with organisations eg. leagues clubs to gain financial benefit

Council currently partners with a wide range of community organisations and state agencies to deliver services to the people of the City of Canterbury. The table on the following page outlines some of our most important partnerships. We are always on the lookout for opportunities in this regard and have been developing new partnerships with YMCA, South West Sydney Institute of TAFE, and Creating Better Career Connections.

Type of organisation	Partners	Services
Association of 16 Councils	SSROC (Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils)	Environmental programs Waste Street lighting
Association of 8 councils	Cooks River Alliance	Environmental programs
Community Organisations	Canterbury City Community Centre	Environmental programs Community development
	CECAL	Environmental programs Community development
	Ethnic Communities Council - Sustainable Living Project	Environmental programs
	Riverwood Community Centre	Environmental programs Community development Waste education
Council partnership	Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils - Planning Unit	Development assessment
Local government	Neighbouring councils (Rockdale, Burwood, Marrickville, Hurstville, Ashfield, Strathfield, Bankstown)	Infrastructure
Not for profit company	Bankstown Canterbury Community Transport (BCCT)	Community development
	Inner West Community Transport (IWCT)	Community development
	Riverwood Community Centre	Community development
	Salvos Legal Humanitarian	Community development
	YMCA	Community development
	Southern Sydney Business Enterprise Centre	Economic Development
Volunteer	Canterbury SES	Infrastructure
	Wolli Creek Preservation Society (WCPS)	Environmental programs
NSW Government	Building Professionals Board	Development assessment
	Department of Planning and Infrastructure	Development assessment Urban planning
	EPA	Infrastructure
	NSW Sport & Recreation	Infrastructure
	Office of Environment and Heritage (OE&H)	Infrastructure
	RailCorp	Development assessment
	Roads and Maritime Services	Road Safety Traffic Committee Development assessment Infrastructure
	Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority	Environmental programs
	Sydney Water	Infrastructure Development assessment Environmental programs
	The State Library of New South Wales, Public Library Services	Library services
	Housing NSW	Waste education
	NSW Trade and Investment	Economic development
Australian Government	Australian Bureau of Statistics	Infrastructure
	Department of Infrastructure and Transport	Infrastructure

What is being planned for an ageing demographic eg. Baby Boomers?

One of the most important issues facing Australia is our ageing population. Older people now and in the coming decades will live longer, healthier lives and will remain independent, socially engaged and productive. The City of Canterbury is ageing along with the rest of Australia, and over the next 10 years, the percentage of residents aged 55 years and older will increase significantly from 22 per cent in 2006 to 26 per cent in 2021. This is expected to lead to a growing demand for aged care services and local infrastructure. It is therefore vitally important that we plan for and respond to the future hopes, dreams, values and needs of older residents. Responding to this challenge council is implementing its Ageing Strategy 2011-2015. The Strategy sets out our commitment to positive ageing and reaffirms the value of older people in our community. The strategy outlines the five key themes for action:

- getting around is safe and accessible;
- access to a range of affordable and safe housing options;
- access to services and support to remain independent;
- active participation in our community; and,
- respect and connection with the community.

During its development, the Strategy had significant input from Council's Advisory Committees, older people, residents, service providers, organisations and internal stakeholders that contributed their experience, ideas and professional expertise towards creating this important community document.

How can community centres (eg. in Ashbury) be better utilised by the community and perhaps earn an income?

Council does currently hire out community centres, halls and facilities for private use, and thus does earn a small amount of income (about \$40,000 per year).

Our facilities are also used extensively by a wide range of community organisations that do not pay for the use of the facilities. This is unusual – in almost all other council areas in Sydney community organisations do pay for the use of facilities, although sometimes only a small amount. Introduction of a fee for the use of community halls and facilities by community organisations is possible, but would only generate a small amount of income.

Would the council provide free tutoring classes for school children by volunteers?

We have provided a free tutoring service from our libraries since 1999. The service include a Homework Assistance Program for Years 3 to 12 during school terms, with a tutor on hand to help at Campsie two nights a week as well as one weekend session, at Earlwood & Lakemba on one night per week and at Riverwood for two nights per week. Tutors are qualified teachers who are paid for their services. We consider that using paid teachers provides a much needed level of quality assurance.

Using volunteers would be possible, but would probably need the current service to be discontinued for a time (eg. a year), and then the reintroduction of a different service. More information about the current service is available at:

<http://www.canterbury.nsw.gov.au/www/html/941-homework-help.asp?intSiteID=1>

What is the process for installing speed humps?

Studies here in Australia and internationally have shown that speed is the key contributing factor to serious injury in the event of a road accident, and that reducing speed greatly reduces injuries and loss of life. Such devices are therefore highly beneficial in terms of road safety.

A request from residents usually triggers an investigation into the need for 'traffic calming devices such as speed humps. This investigation may include traffic counts and speed monitoring. If the investigation indicates traffic calming would be beneficial then this is recommended to the Local Traffic Committee, an independent body comprising representatives from council, local police, Roads and Maritime Services, and others. The Traffic Committee then determines if the installation should be undertaken.

Service efficiency

Has an audit been undertaken on the use of services run by council eg. pools, libraries, parks etc. and could this save funds?

Through our Service Review Program, which commenced in 2008, we have worked hard to manage our expenses, and maximise revenue in recent years. Reviews of specific services have included:

- childrens' centres;
- library operations;
- aquatic centres;
- garage operations;
- parks and property;
- waste collection;
- street cleaning;
- tree maintenance;
- building cleaning.

As a result of these reviews, action we have taken has included:

- implemented changes to collection of waste from litter bins in parks and town centres;
- outsourced golf course operations;
- sold our Trade Waste collection business;
- reduced the number of annual waste calendars printed from 40,000 to 2,000;

- introduced the Tree Preservation Order Assessment charge;
- combined After School Care services in Punchbowl and Lakemba;
- introduced Remote Frequency Identification (RFID) checkout for books at our libraries;
- reviewed operating hours at our aquatic centres and attempted to implement winter pool closures;
- reduced by half the amount of advertising space used by the weekly council column;
- sold a number of drainage reserves to adjacent landowners, whilst retaining easement rights.

Can council run more effectively to cut down the deficit?

In a continuation of the Service Review Program, in 2011 we involved managers, supervisors and staff in further reviewing services to identify savings from reducing levels of service, and from streamlining processes; and further reviewing rates, fees and charges, sources of grant income, and any other potential source of additional revenue. This work has yielded a number of proposals in three broad categories:

- operational initiatives that involve changes to the way in which our services are delivered, in terms of processes, technology or staff resources;
- service level reductions that involve changing the level of service provided to our customers or community;
- major revenue initiatives that involve obtaining additional revenue through rates, fees or charges;
- initiatives needing further investigation.

The feasibility of these proposals has been assessed, with some proposals discarded as having either no benefit or not feasible to implement.

Examples of operational initiatives that have since been completed include:

- Implementation of a dumped rubbish minimisation strategy
- Disconnect unused telephone lines
- Review need for new aerial photography
- Review processes for senior citizens bookings
- Restructure mapping team
- Outsource waste call centre operations
- Review provision of free accommodation at BYRC
- Review need for pool vehicle for Community Development
- Introduce a new salary system
- Review need to prepare demographic and social profiles
- Review security schedules
- Review insurance excess for public liability

Operational initiatives that are in progress include:

- Drainage reserve sale program
- Operate aquatic centres under contract
- Implement roster changes for rangers
- Review provision of the Women's Rest Centres

Service level changes that have been implemented include:

- Review bus brokerage service
- Discontinue Child and Family Interagency partnership
- Discontinue the Immunisation Services

Other service level reductions that are being investigated include:

- sideline mowing
- street cleaning
- festivals
- outside school hours care and vacation care
- community information van

Revenue initiatives that are being investigated include this Rates and Services Review, and pay for parking. Introduction of a Stormwater Levy to provide funds for the repairs of our drainage systems has been investigated and found to be not feasible.

Can any services be outsourced?

Through our Service Review Program we regularly assess the opportunities for outsourcing various activities. Outsourcing is appropriate where the cost of delivering the services by a contractor is less than the cost where council delivers the service, or where our resources are not fully utilised. In recent years we have outsourced much of our infrastructure construction and maintenance, waste and recycling collection for council facilities, town centres and parks, tennis and golf course operations, and our waste call centre service.

Sporting fields

What is the cost of sports grounds and tennis courts, and income from these?

Sports fields cost about \$1.5 million pa to provide – about \$25,000 per field, with major costs being ground maintenance, electricity, water, and refurbishments from time to time. There is seasonal variation in these costs, with maintenance and water costs being higher in spring-summer, and electricity being higher in winter-autumn. Costs also vary from park to park – from about \$2 - \$25 per available hour, with the average being about \$10 per available hour. Income from the use of sporting fields is approximately \$280,000.

How much can be raised from charging a fee for the use of sporting grounds?

We currently receive about \$280,000 from fees for the use of sporting grounds.

Waste and Recycling

How can we encourage collective consumption to reduce the costs of waste and recycling?

Protecting and preserving our environment is a major priority for Council. Every household across our City is allocated three garbage bins: rubbish, recycling and garden vegetation. We are currently diverting 42% of total household waste away from landfill sites. Our multiple-bin system has annually reduced the amount of rubbish being sent to landfill by 10,625 tonnes, increased the amount of recycling by 6,859 tonnes and increased our City's green waste collection by 5,412 tonnes or 122%. The amount of recycled materials collected in our City for re-use has virtually doubled since 2002.

Through a range of education programs we are also promoting ways to reduce waste and recycling generation. We run regular workshops on composting and worm farming, are supporting the Love Food Hate Waste program for food businesses, and provide advice, tips and training through our local community gardens. We have produced an award winning community education video and information kit in different languages to help our community understand how the waste collection system works, and ways to minimise waste.

Rates and Services Review

We aim to identify answers to a number of the questions that were posed by the Community Working Group through their work, and through the input from the wider community to the 2013 Rates and Services Review.

Something for working group members and the community to consider is:

What would you need to know in order to determine:

- ***What services are to be reduced or cut?***
- ***If you increase rates, how much is not too much?***
- ***Do ratepayers value the amenity of the local government area enough to pay more rates?***
- ***What benefits or incentives could be offered to residential ratepayers to encourage them to pay higher rates?***