

## BEST VALUE PROGRAM

Council has adopted a five-year program of Best Value Service Reviews in accordance with the requirements of section 208 of the Local Government Act 1989. This report provides information on Council's approach to Best Value and on the status and outcome of Best Value Service Reviews carried out in 2002-2003. Information on Council's approach to Best Value, and the timetable for the conduct of the service reviews, is located on Council's website, [www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au](http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au) under Policies and Publications.

### A. Council's Approach to Best Value

Council is required by the Local Government Act to carry out reviews of all its services over the next five years. These reviews are expected to take account of the Best Value principles enshrined in Section 208B of the legislation, namely:

- 1 The need for services to deliver against agreed quality and cost standards.
- 2 Services being responsive to changing community needs.
- 3 Accessibility of services to those who need them.
- 4 Continuous improvement in the delivery of services.
- 5 Community consultation on services and activities.
- 6 Regular annual reporting to the community on Council's performance.

Furthermore, section 208C of the Act requires Council to take account of these factors when developing its quality and cost standards:

- 1 The best on offer in the public and private sectors.
- 2 Value for money.
- 3 Community expectations and values.
- 4 Balance of affordability and accessibility.
- 5 Opportunities for local employment growth.
- 6 Partnership building with other levels of government.
- 7 Environmental sustainability.

Three fundamental principles guide the implementation of Best Value at the City of Whitehorse, namely:

- 1 The Best Value process at the City of Whitehorse is used to ensure that all of the City's services and activities provide high quality and good value for money to the Community;
- 2 Council is committed to ensuring that, where appropriate, the services being provided by Council staff continue to be delivered internally unless it can be demonstrated that it would be better value to the community for these services to be provided by others; and
- 3 The Best Value process is implemented in accordance with the Victorian Government's Competitive Neutrality Policy Victoria 2000.

### B. Conduct of Best Value Service Reviews

Each Best Value Service Review is conducted by the relevant work team, led by the manager of that team. Managers and teams are supported in this process through the use of a common review template and the provision of a central resource that provides information, advice and training. Service reviews have three distinct stages:



At the conclusion of each service review, Council receives a report that contains:

- a description of existing service standards and a proposed method of service delivery, with defined service levels and cost and quality standards that have been benchmarked and tested through consultation;
- an analysis of the service delivery options available, including an analysis of the maturity of the market, a risk assessment of each option and an assessment against Competitive Neutrality policy; and
- advice on the preferred service delivery option.

### C. Progress of Service Reviews

During 2002-2003, 20 service reviews were conducted in accordance with Council's Best Value Service Review Program. Twelve reviews were completed. The timetable for the conduct of the service reviews, is located on Council's website, [www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au](http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au) under Policies and Publications. Progress of these reviews is listed below:

Service	Commencement Date of Review	Status
Building Services	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter 2000-2001	Completed
Children's Services (Long Day Care, Family Day Care, Maternal and Child Health Service)	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2001-2002	Completed
Youth Services	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2001-2002	Completed
Health Services	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2001-2002	Completed
Traffic Management	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2001-2002	Completed
Active Leisure Centres	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2001-2002	Completed
Arts and Culture	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2001-2002	Completed
Community Facilities	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2001-2002	Completed
Local Laws	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2001-2002	Completed
Human Resources (separated from Corporate Services Review)	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2001-2002	Completed
Aged Services	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter 2001-2002	In progress
Disability Services	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter 2001-2002	In progress
Civic Services	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter 2001-2002	In progress
Residential Services	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2002-2003	In progress
Engineering Design/Urban Design/Capital Works	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2002-2003	In progress
Economic Development	1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2002-2003	In progress
Infrastructure Maintenance	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter 2002-2003	In progress
Open Space	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter 2002-2003	In progress

Three changes were made to the review timetable in 2002-2003. The Engineering Design, Urban Design and Capital Works reviews were combined into a single review focusing on the Capital Works process, as this is the

core activity of these three units. Building Maintenance has been separated from Infrastructure Maintenance and a separate review will be undertaken of Building Maintenance commencing in 2003-2004. A separate review will not be made of the Nursery, as that Department no longer operates as a separate entity and is now part of the ParksWide Department. As such, the nursery's activities are included in the review of Open Space.

### D. Outcome of Completed Service Reviews

The outcomes of the Best Value Service Reviews, completed in 2002-2003, are as follows:

#### Building Services

In 2002-2003 Council's Building Services functions were provided internally, through a small unit of six EFT staff and an expenditure budget of \$325,774. The Department has five broad service streams that fulfil Council's statutory, community education and commercial functions. These are:

1. Statutory public safety services – swimming pool safety, enforcement of Building Code, fire safety;
2. Statutory administrative services – property information, provision of building permits for Class 1 and Class 10 buildings;
3. Commercial services – building permits for other classes of buildings, inspections and consulting;
4. Community services – advice and dispute resolution; and
5. Public education – information on disability access, energy efficiency and public advocacy.

#### *Response To Best Value Principles*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	Cost of building permits (adjusted annually in accordance with Council's long-term financial plan):			
	Dwelling additions to value of \$75000: \$430	\$430	\$450	\$470
	Dwelling additions /new dwellings exceeding \$75,000: \$500	\$500	\$520	\$540
	Multi-unit developments: \$900	\$900	\$940	\$980
Quality Standard	Building permits: 85% completed within 10 days	85%	85%	85%
	Swimming pool inspections: 90% responded to by next working day	90%	90%	90%

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	Council participated in a benchmarking study of Council Building Services in the eastern metropolitan region. Private firms were approached but were unwilling to participate. This study enabled Council to compare its costs and service levels with other local governments. Consultation with users identified user expectations and values, and considered questions of accessibility of the service and the cost of the service to Council. Value for money was determined through this benchmarking exercise.
208B(b) 208C(c) Responsiveness to community needs	Service needs were determined through consultation with external users and the broader community through Council's Annual Community Survey and surveys of service users.
208B(c) 208C(d) Accessibility of service	The Building Services Department recognises that community access to the service is influenced by cost and by residents' and businesses' knowledge of building requirements. Accordingly, the Department does not charge a fee for its swimming pool inspection service provides a discounted fee for small building projects, and has an extensive community information program that includes regular joint seminars with the MFESB on fire safety in buildings which have been well attended by building owners.
208B(d) Continuous improvement	The continuous improvement targets set for the Department are to increase the proportion of building permit applications processed within 10 days from 85% to 90% and to ensure that all enquiries regarding swimming pool safety are responded to within 24 hours.
208B(e) Consultation with community	Consultation has occurred through the Annual Community Survey and through surveys of service users, in particular, a survey of participants of fire safety programs and feedback through its occasional update newsletter to regular users of the service.
208B(f) Reporting to the community	Council reports on the progress of its Best Value service reviews in its Annual Reports. A copy of this report is located on Council's website, <a href="http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au">www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au</a> , under Policies and Publications.

Children's Services

The Best Value Review of Children's Services conducted three distinct reviews, looking separately at long day care, family day care and the maternal and child health service.

*Long day care*

Council's program aims to provide the community with a quality centre-based childcare option that will assist women in particular with the ability to pursue work opportunities following maternity leave. The program has operated in the municipality since 1986. It accounts for 230 effective full-time childcare places of the 1562 (centre-based) places available in the municipality. This represents approximately 15% of the total market. The service comprises five long day care centres providing 195 places and one occasional care centre providing 35 places. The program caters for 470 families in the long day care service and 330 families in the occasional care service. In 2002-2003, the program had an expenditure budget of \$2.84 million, which was offset by externally generated income of \$2.2 million. Council contributes about \$645,000, which represents the net cost of the program to the community.

*Response To Best Value Principles*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	Net annual cost to Council per childcare place of no greater than \$2,700	\$2700	\$2700	\$2700
Quality Standard	Achieve maximum level of accreditation	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	Council participated in a benchmarking study with 20 other Victorian Local Government Authorities that was sponsored by LGPro and conducted by Benchmarking Plus. This study enabled Council to compare its costs and service levels with other local governments. Consultation with users identified user expectations and values, and considered questions of accessibility of the service and the cost of the service to Council. Value for money was determined through this benchmarking exercise.
208B(b) 208C(c) Responsiveness to community needs	Service needs were determined through an extensive consultation process with the community that involved public consultation forums and community/client surveys, as well as Council's Annual Community Survey.
208B(c) 208C(d) Accessibility of service	Accessibility to the program is governed by the Commonwealth Government's Priority of Access guidelines for Commonwealth funded childcare services.
208B(d) Continuous improvement	The continuous improvement targets for the service are to ensure that the high quality standards of the program are maintained, the customer satisfaction rating improved and that the overall net cost of the program in the medium to long-term future decreased.
208B(e) Consultation with community	Four information forums were held as part of the Public Interest Test process and attracted 87 attendees. Responses from 82 attendees were received from these forums. A further 177 written responses were received as part of the community/client survey process.
208B(f) Reporting to the community	Council reports on the progress of its Best Value service reviews in its Annual Reports. A copy of this report is located on Council's website, <a href="http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au">www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au</a> , under Policies and Publications.

*Maternal and Child Health Service*

The Whitehorse Maternal and Child Health Service is part of a state-wide program designed to provide support and assistance to all families with children aged 0-6 years. The Service provides support for parents and offers information and advice regarding parenting, child health and development, child behaviour, maternal health and well-being, child safety, immunisation, breastfeeding, nutrition and family planning. First-time parents can join groups that provide health information and an opportunity to meet other parents in the area. The Whitehorse program services just under 7000 active clients in the 0-6 year age range within the municipality and caters for approximately 1900 new born infants each year. The core elements of the Service, which represents those elements of the program that are part funded by the Department of Human Services, are based on the 10 key Health and Development Assessments performed by each Maternal and Child Health Nurse. These assessments evaluate each child's health and development at particular ages. Council currently employs 17 Maternal and Child Health Nurses (1 EFT) who are accommodated across Council's six multi-service family centres. Two full-time administrative support staff are employed across two of these centres (Burgess and Box Hill South) providing general administrative support and reception services for all service programs operating at each centre. An additional 0.5 EFT Administrative Support Officer is employed directly by the Maternal and Child Health Unit and operates from the Nunawading Civic Centre. The budgeted expenditure in 2002-2003 for the program (excluding the Enhanced Home Visiting Program) was \$1,032,000. A Department of Human Services grant of \$422,000 was received by Council (excluding funding for the Enhanced Home Visiting Program).

*Response To Best Value Principles*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	Annual net cost to Council of program to be no greater than \$538,000, adjusted each year by parameters of Council's long-term financial plan	\$538,000	\$554,140	\$570,764
Quality Standard	Maintain 95% customer satisfaction	95%	95%	95%

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	Council participated in a benchmarking study with 46 other Victorian Local Government Authorities (LGAs), which was sponsored by LGPro and conducted by Benchmarking Plus. A further more specific benchmarking exercise was conducted with six other municipalities. This study enabled Council to compare its costs and service levels with other local governments. Consultation with users identified user expectations and values, and considered questions of accessibility of the service and the cost of the service to Council. Value for money was determined through this benchmarking exercise.
208B(b) 208C(c) Responsiveness to community needs	Service needs were determined through an extensive consultation process with the community that involved client survey sheets, survey forms forwarded to families who were not attending the service and survey forms to agencies commonly receiving referrals from the Maternal and Child Health Service.
208B(c) 208C(d) Accessibility of service	The Maternal and Child Health Service is a universal service provided free of charge to all families in the community with children aged 0-6 years. The universal nature of the Service forms part of the service agreement between Council and the Victorian Department of Human Services.
208B(d) Continuous Improvement	It is proposed that the continuous improvement targets for the Service be set in partnership with the State Government with the objective of acquiring additional funding from the State Government to employ extra staff resources for the program to reduce the workload and access-related issues with the program.
208B(e) Consultation with community	The review used an extensive consultation process with the community that involved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• client survey sheets to 340 clients with 187 (55%) returns being registered;</li> <li>• survey forms to 100 families who were not attending the service with only eight (8%) returns being registered; and</li> <li>• survey forms to 23 agencies commonly receiving referrals from the Maternal and Child Health Program with 15 (65%) returns being registered.</li> </ul>
208B(f)	Council reports on the progress of its Best Value Service Reviews in its Annual Reports. A copy

Reporting to the Community	of this report is located on Council's website, <a href="http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au">www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au</a> , under Policies and Publications.
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### *Family Day Care*

Council's Family Day Care program aims to provide the community with a quality home-based childcare option that will assist women, in particular, to pursue work, training and educational opportunities following maternity leave. The Program is provided by 70 registered care providers who are residents of the municipality. The program, which is co-ordinated by Council's Family Day Care Service Department, provides 245 equivalent full-time places (EFT) for approximately 530 families per annum who live, work, study or require respite care services. Council has sponsored the Family Day Care program for more than 20 years. The budgeted expenditure of the program in 2002-2003 was \$1,940,000. Council budgeted a contribution of \$20,000 to the program and the Commonwealth Government provided an operational grant of \$257,000, with the remainder of the costs being covered by service fees/childcare benefits and other government grants.

### *Response To Best Value Principles*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	Net annual cost to Council per childcare place of \$1470 and to be reduced over the next five years	\$1470	\$1426	\$1382
Quality Standard	Achieve full national accreditation	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	Council participated in a benchmarking study with 46 other Victorian Local Government Authorities that was sponsored by LGPro and conducted by Benchmarking Plus. This study enabled Council to compare its costs and service levels with other local governments. Consultation with users identified user expectations and values, and considered questions of accessibility of the service and the cost of the service to Council. Value for money was determined through this benchmarking exercise.
208B(b) 208C(c) Responsiveness to community needs	Service needs were determined through community/client surveys conducted by the Service Department. A total of 324 surveys were distributed with 149 returns received.
208B(c) 208C(d) Accessibility of service	Accessibility to the program is governed by the Commonwealth Government's Priority of Access guidelines for Commonwealth funded childcare services.
208B(d) Continuous improvement	The continuous improvement targets for the service are to ensure that the high quality standards of the program are maintained, the customer satisfaction rating improved and that the overall net cost of the program in the medium to long-term future decreased.
208B(e) Consultation with community	As part of the review the Service Unit surveyed both parents and carers of the service. A total of 324 surveys were distributed with 149 returns received.
208B(f) Reporting to the community	Council reports on the progress of its Best Value Service Reviews in its Annual Reports. A copy of this report is located on Council's website, <a href="http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au">www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au</a> , under Policies and Publications.

Youth Services

Council's Youth Services Department works in close collaboration with a number of community-based organisations to provide a range of programs that focus on supporting and encouraging young people and their families in the municipality. These programs are primarily based on early intervention and prevention strategies that target emerging issues in young people's lives and work to prevent personal issues escalating into major crises. These programs also aim to assist and empower young people to cope with crises and play an important role in developing life skills. The total cost of Council's Youth Services in 2002-2003 was \$351,500, of which Council contributed close to 90%. Council provided a further \$100,000 in community grants to five community agencies for specific youth-related programs.

*Response To Best Value Principles*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	Net annual cost to Council of program be no greater than \$318,500 adjusted by parameters of Council's long-term financial plan	\$318,500	\$328,055	\$337,897
Quality Standard	Maintain client satisfaction at or above 85%	85%	85%	85%

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	Council participated in a benchmarking study with 32 other Victorian Local Government Authorities that was sponsored by LGPro and conducted by Benchmarking Plus. The study highlighted Youth Services, from among 20 other service areas, as an area difficult to benchmark given the lack of service commonality across the benchmarking group. The Service Unit's benchmarking study of a smaller group of six Councils in the Eastern region also identified a lack of service commonality among the benchmark group. Consultation with users identified user expectations and values, and considered questions of accessibility of the service and the cost of the service to Council. Value for money was determined through this benchmarking exercise.
208B(b) 208C(c) Responsiveness to community needs	Service needs were determined through community/client surveys conducted by the Service Unit.
208B(c) 208C(d) Accessibility of service	Accessibility is a key service factor that is regularly reviewed by the Youth Service team and is a key component of the quality improvement tool used by the team. The Unit uses a number of strategies to monitor access issues, including a Youth Representative Committee.
208B(d) Continuous improvement	The continuous improvement targets for the service be set to ensure that the high quality standards of the program are maintained, the customer satisfaction rating improved and that the overall net cost of the program in the medium to long term future is maintained at the levels set in the long term financial plan.
208B(e) Consultation with community	The review distributed 320 surveys with 89 returns received. Consultation also used existing networks such as the Youth Representative Committee and the Whitehorse Youth Services Network.
208B(f) Reporting to the community	Council reports on the progress of its Best Value service reviews in its Annual Reports. A copy of this report is located on Council's website, <a href="http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au">www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au</a> , under Policies and Publications.

Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Department's primary role is the provision of a diverse range of public health services aimed at protecting and promoting both individual and community health and well-being. The Department's functions are governed and guided by both state legislative responsibilities and community expectations. The Department's key functions relate to the monitoring of food safety standards in all commercial and other non-private food outlets in the municipality (985 premises); the education of business proprietors and residents on food safety requirements; the provision of immunisation sessions to the community (102 immunisation sessions per year); the investigation of infectious disease notifications; the monitoring of hygiene and cleanliness conditions within certain types of businesses specified in the Health Act (169 premises); the monitoring of all food premises with respect to compliance with anti-tobacco laws and the provision of a number of Health Promotion campaigns each year. The total budgeted expenditure of Council's Environmental Health Service in 2002-2003 is \$718,900, of which Council contributes \$380,685 or approximately 54% of the total cost. The remaining sources of income received by the unit came from Food Premise registration fees (22%), Government grants and subsidies (13%), Health Act Registration fees (2%), non-subsidised immunisation vaccines (2%) miscellaneous (7%).

*Response To Best Value Principles*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	Net annual cost to Council of program is no greater than \$354,837, adjusted each year by parameters of Council's long-term financial plan	\$354,837	\$365,482	\$376,446
Quality Standard	Maintain customer satisfaction with immunization program at or above 94%	94%	94%	94%

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	Council participated in a benchmarking study with five other Victorian Local Government Authorities. The Council's selected were chosen on the basis of common issues relating to population size, service practices and workload factors. This study enabled Council to compare its costs and service levels with other local governments. Consultation with users identified user expectations and values, and considered questions of accessibility of the service and the cost of the service to Council. Value for money was determined through this benchmarking exercise.
208B(b) 208C(c) Responsiveness to community needs	Service needs were determined through community/client surveys conducted by the Service Department.
208B(c) 208C(d) Accessibility of service	Accessibility is a key service factor that is regularly reviewed by the team. The key barriers to accessing the service that have been identified by the team relate to people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds. To address this problem, the Department has introduced a number of measures that include the translation of a number of food safety information kits for food proprietors and the general community into a number of different languages. A similar initiative has also been undertaken with literature relating to Council's Immunisation Program. The Department is also fortunate to have four members of its team who are bilingual in languages other than English that are common in the municipality.
208B(d) Continuous Improvement	Significant work will be undertaken over the coming year to improve the community's perception of food safety standards within the municipality.
208B(e) Consultation with community	The Department distributed 1276 community/client surveys (eight different surveys targeting different groups) to the community with 175 returns received.
208B(f) Reporting to the community	Council reports on the progress of its Best Value Service Reviews in its Annual Reports. A copy of this report is located on Council's website, <a href="http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au">www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au</a> , under Policies and Publications.

Traffic Management

Council's Traffic Engineering Services functions are provided internally through a small unit of 5.4 EFT staff and a budget of \$485,000. The Department generates income each year from VicRoads funding through various programs including the Blackspot program. The goals of the service are to:

- administer Council's traffic management policies and implement them efficiently;
- identify and resolve traffic management problems;
- provide Council with timely advice and thorough information; and
- assist Council to develop strategic traffic management framework and policies.

The cost to Council of Traffic Engineering Services in 2002-2003 is \$485,000.

*Response To Best Value Principles*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	Cost per hour of service: \$30.92, adjusted by parameters of Council's long-term financial plan	\$30.92	\$32.34	\$33.83
Quality Standard	Maintain customer satisfaction at or above 70%	70%	70%	70%

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	Council benchmarked with four other councils to the north, east and inner Melbourne where we shared information including number of staff, staff experience, number of requests, type of service, budgets and strategies in place. Reasons for selection of these councils were that there were similar traffic issues and three of the other councils were Group One Councils. This study enabled Council to compare its costs and service levels with other local governments. Comparison with the private sector was carried out when consultants recently tendered for a Traffic Engineering Consultancy and provided hourly rates for staff. Consultation with users identified user expectations and values, and considered questions of accessibility of the service and the cost of the service to Council. Value for money was determined through this benchmarking exercise.
208B(b) 208C(c) Responsiveness to community needs	Service needs were determined through consultation on a number of important strategies, namely the Integrated Transport Strategy and the Road Safety Strategy. The Integrated Transport Strategy sought the opinions of residents and stakeholders about transport services in the City. The Road Safety Strategy involved extensive consultation with both internal and external stakeholders. Analysis was also taken of responses to Council's Annual Community Satisfaction Surveys and the Department of Infrastructure's Annual Community Satisfaction Surveys
208B(c) 208C(d) Accessibility of service	Residents are able to access the service easily through letter, telephone calls, resident requests, counter enquiries and Councillor enquiries. The Department receives 1200-1500 requests per year. It should be noted that with more staff than the other benchmarked councils we are able to offer higher levels of direct customer service. The challenge for the Department is to maintain quality services.
208B(d) Continuous improvement	Improvements can be made in the Department's responsiveness to customer requests. This will be shown through levels of satisfaction in the annual community survey where the Department plans to improve customer satisfaction by 3% over five years
208B(e) Consultation with community	The Integrated Transport Strategy sought the opinions of residents and stakeholders about transport services in the City. Advertisements were placed in the media, workshops and meetings with stakeholders were held, analysis of Council's past surveys, analysis of customer service data, and informal discussions with individuals and groups were held as the opportunities arose. Advertisements inviting comment from the community were placed in the local paper and a number of workshops were undertaken with stakeholders and community representatives.  A Steering Committee was established to oversee the development of the Road Safety Strategy comprising Council officers, representatives of VicRoads and the community. A road safety workshop was also conducted on May 2, 2001 and attended by 45 people

	including the Police, VicRoads, Council officers, community groups, traders, public transport operators and other community representatives. In addition, an advertisement was placed in the September edition of the <u>Whitehorse News</u> and in the local paper inviting the public to comment on the draft report.
208B(f) Reporting to the community	Council reports on the progress of its Best Value service reviews in its Annual Reports. A copy of this report is located on Council's website, <a href="http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au">www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au</a> , under Policies and Publications.

### Active Leisure Centres

Council has two active leisure centres, the Whitehorse Aquatic and Leisure Centre (WALC) and the Nunawading Aquatic and Fitness Centre (NAFC), whose management and operation is provided in-house. Both centres provide a wide range of casual and programmed activities in swimming, health and fitness. The active leisure centres are open seven days a week, 362 days a year. There are 200 people employed across the two sites with an equivalent full time staff (EFT) of 48.9. The active leisure centres operate with a Council subsidy that supports the provision of affordable community access to the aquatic facilities. The total recurrent cost to Council, using cost reflective pricing in accordance with government competitive neutrality policy, is \$781,000. It is worth noting that the health and fitness component of the budget returns a surplus of \$175,000. This surplus is redirected towards supporting public policy objectives within the centres.

### *Response To Best Value Principles*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS			
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
Cost Standard	Cost to Council in its subsidy per visit and cost to consumer reflected in fees per visit, adjusted by Council's long-term financial plan parameters	WALC: subsidy per visit: consumer cost per visit NAFC: subsidy per visit: consumer cost per visit	\$0.62 \$3.95 \$0.89 \$3.00	\$0.65 \$4.11 \$0.93 \$3.12	\$0.68 \$4.27 \$0.97 \$3.25
Quality Standard	Maintain customer satisfaction at or above latest CERM survey result	WALC NAFC	5.46 5.38	5.46 5.38	5.46 5.38

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	Quality standards were established utilising the CERM PI® performance indicators established by the University of South Australia. (Details about CERM are presented below under consultation with community. These indicators are based on a benchmarking review of a wide range of community facilities across Australia. This study enabled Council to compare its costs and service levels with other similar providers in the public and private sectors. Consultation with users identified user expectations and values, and considered questions of accessibility of the service and the cost of the service to Council. Value for money was determined through this benchmarking exercise.
208B(b) 208C(c) Responsiveness to community needs	Both centres seek feedback from users via the annual CERM survey and also from customer feedback sheets and meetings with current hirers/user groups.
208B(c) 208C(d) Accessibility of service	Accessibility of services is addressed by ensuring that pricing for use of the facilities remains affordable. This is achieved by offering discounted pricing for concession card holders, students, seniors and children. Physical access is also addressed at both venues via the provision of disabled car parking spaces, a hoist for entry into the pools and family/disabled change rooms. Both Services are now addressing language barriers and the need to provide information to customers in a language other than English.
208B(d) Continuous improvement	Continuous improvement is addressed in both the quality and cost standards. Targets have been set to improve the overall satisfaction rating at both venues over the next three years. The target for cost standards is to keep the hourly unit cost within the parameters of Council's long-term financial plan.
208B(e)	Community consultation was undertaken utilising the CERM PI® Performance Indicators.

Consultation with community	The Centre for Environmental and Recreation Management (CERM) is an applied research centre of the University of South Australia, linked to the School of Environmental and Recreation Management. CERM PI® currently provides reviews for over 200 public and private facilities and services in Australia and New Zealand. The surveys were based on the "effectiveness performance indicators" which measure on a set of customer service quality attributes. They include the following process dimensions of service delivery: responsiveness, assurance, tangibles and empathy. Eight hundred surveys were distributed to groups that use the Whitehorse Aquatic and Leisure Centre. Three hundred and ninety surveys were distributed to groups that use the Nunawading Aquatic and Fitness Centre.
208B(f) Reporting to the community	Council reports on the progress of its Best Value Service Reviews in its Annual Reports. A copy of this report is located on Council's website, <a href="http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au">www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au</a> , under Policies and Publications.

### Arts and Cultural Services

The focus of the Best Value Review was the operation of the Box Hill Community Arts Centre and the Whitehorse Centre as these facilities are the major vehicles for the implementation of Council's arts and cultural strategy. The management and operation of both these facilities is provided in-house.

Services provided at Box Hill Community Arts Centre include programmed activities such as school holiday programs, hireable space (particularly for community groups) and the provision of expert advice on art and craft. The Arts Centre is open from 9am to 10.30pm weekdays and 8.30am to 7pm weekends. In total, it is open 87 hours a week, 48 weeks a year. In 2002-2003 the Centre was booked for 4285 sessions, catered for 1063 children in holiday programs and had about 81,000 visitors during the year. The Centre has an equivalent full-time staff of 3.6, with many of the staff being part-time or sessional tutors.

Services provided at the Whitehorse Centre include a professional theatre program; a quality, licensed venue for hire, encompassing the theatre, function room, ancillary meeting rooms and ballet studios and provision of technical advice and planning, including front of house, ticketing and technical staff at performances. The Whitehorse Centre is available for use from 6am to 1am, seven days per week. In 2002-2003, there were about 145,000 visits to the Centre. Each year, the Centre caters for more than 50 performing arts clients, 100 function clients and 50 meeting room clients. There are 10.69 equivalent full-time staff employed at the Centre with many of these being part-time or casual.

Both centres operate with a Council subsidy. In 2002-2003, the budgeted subsidy required to operate the Box Hill Community Arts Centre was \$78,458 and to operate the Whitehorse Centre was \$62,110 (not including internal recharges).

### *Response To Best Value Principles*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	To meet or improve annual budget targets. Whitehorse Centre: Council's annual subsidy of \$69,751 Box Hill Community Arts Centre: \$73,065 (adjusted by the parameters of Council's long-term financial plan).	\$69,751 \$73,065	\$72,771 \$76,426	\$7,119 \$75,562
Quality Standard	Maintain customer satisfaction at or above: Whitehorse Centre: 90% overall Box Hill CAC: 70% at excellent	90% 70%	90% 70%	90% 70%

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	To benchmark performing arts centres the peak body, the Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres (VAPAC), employed Horizon Business Solutions to undertake a benchmarking project across 21 performing arts centres in the VAPAC network. VAPAC's members include venues owned by local government, state government and universities. The Whitehorse Centre participated in this benchmarking exercise. The Box Hill Community Arts Centre was benchmarked against seven other similar centres. Cost standards, service provision and quality service were compared. Consultation with users identified user expectations and values, and considered questions of accessibility of the service and the cost of the service to Council. Value for money was determined through this benchmarking exercise.
208B(b) 208C(c) Responsiveness to community needs	<p>Whitehorse Centre: All clients hiring the venue are surveyed at the conclusion of a hire asking for comment on the various services provided. Clients provide an overall rating of the Centre and its services. Major theatre clients are invited to a debriefing session after each season. The centre also seeks feedback from package buyers to the professional theatre season at the conclusion of each season.</p> <p>Box Hill Community Arts Centre: The Centre asks user groups and course participants to fill in feedback forms. It meets with major clients regularly, conducts User Forums 5 times a year and has regular meetings with tutors. It also responds to suggestions from external sources and is developing a closer relationship to Council's Youth Services team</p>
208B(c) 208C(d) Accessibility of service	<p>Whitehorse Centre: Cost, information and physical accessibility are the three issues identified as potentially impacting on accessibility to the service. Fees and charges are based on the cost of delivering the service, but use of the facilities remains affordable to community groups by way of community grants discounted support. Clients whose primary language is not English are assisted either by staff, or by engaging the interpreter service. The Centre is fully accessible to the disabled.</p> <p>Box Hill Community Arts Centre: Language, access and location are the three issues identified as potentially impacting on accessibility to the service. About 20% of current user groups are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The Centre is fully accessible to the disabled.</p>
208B(d) Continuous improvement	<p>Continuous improvement is addressed in utilisation rates and in quality and cost standards.</p> <p>Cost: The target for cost standards is to maintain costs within the parameters of Council's financial plan and in the long-term reduce the annual subsidy.</p> <p>Utilisation: <u>Whitehorse Centre</u> To increase the number of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• performances from 190 in 2002-2003 to 195 in 2003-2004;</li> <li>• functions from 230 in 2002-2003 to 250 in 2003-2004; and</li> <li>• attendances from 150,000 in 2002-2003 to 155,000 in 2003-2004.</li> </ul> <u>Box Hill Community Arts Centre</u> To increase the number of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children using the school holiday program from 627 to 647;</li> <li>• casual hirers using the Centre each year from 63 to 68; and</li> <li>• sessions booked at the Centre from 4200 to 4346.</li> </ul> </p>
208B(e) Consultation with community	<p>Consultation for both Centres was undertaken on a number of levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• as part of the preparation of Council's Arts and Culture Strategy;</li> <li>• as part of the preparation of the Centres' Strategic Plan;</li> <li>• through customer feedback of hirers;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>through customer feedback of visitors; and</li> <li>by surveys to non-users.</li> </ul>
208B(f) Reporting to the community	Council reports on the progress of its Best Value Service Reviews in its Annual Reports. A copy of this report is located on Council's website, <a href="http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au">www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au</a> , under Policies and Publications.

### Community Facilities

Council's principal community facilities are the Nunawading Community Centre and the Box Hill Town Hall. Services provided include hall and room rental for meetings, exhibitions, seminars, conferences and civic functions; recreation facilities; and accommodation for community based organisations. Box Hill Town Hall hosts in excess of 900 functions and events per annum ranging from dinner dances for community groups to seminars and conferences for businesses. The Box Hill Historical Society is also located within the building. The major tenants of Nunawading Community Centre are Nunawading University of the Third Age, Whitehorse Arts Association, Louise Multi Cultural Community Centre and Eastern Recreation and Leisure Services.

The Box Hill Town Hall is available seven days a week, 365 days a year. Nunawading Community Centre is available seven days a week, 361 days a year (closed Good Friday, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Anzac Day). There are nine people employed across the two sites with an equivalent full-time staff (EFT) of 7.6. The community facilities operate with a Council subsidy that supports the provision of affordable community access to these facilities. The total recurrent cost to Council for these facilities in 2002-2003 is \$114,608 (not including internal recharges).

### *Response To Best Value Principles*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	Cost per hour of service (adjusted by parameters of Council's long-term financial plan):			
	Box Hill Town Hall	\$53	\$56	\$59
	Nunawading Community Centre	\$48	\$50	\$52
Quality Standard	Maintain customer satisfaction as measured in annual CERM survey:			
	Box Hill Town Hall	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Nunawading Community Centre	5.8	5.8	5.8

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	There are no established industry benchmarks for these facilities therefore quality standards were established utilising the CERM PI® performance indicators established by the University of South Australia. (Details about CERM are presented below under consultation with the community). These indicators are based on a benchmarking review of a wide range of community facilities across Australia. Cost standards were established on the basis of the current hourly cost to Council to provide the service. Again difficulty was experienced with both venues when attempting to identify benchmarking partners as few Councils operate either similar facilities or manage and operate their Town Halls in similar ways. Consultation with users identified user expectations and values, and considered questions of accessibility of the service and the cost of the service to Council. Value for money was determined through this benchmarking exercise.
208B(b) 208C(c) Responsiveness to community needs	Regular meetings are held with the tenants of Nunawading Community Centre where the following needs were identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>access to low cost, well maintained facilities for recreation, meetings, classes and group activities; and</li> <li>safe and secure parking in the local vicinity was identified as needing to be addressed in the future as was the need for the capacity to expand to cater for an increasing ageing population.</li> </ul>

	Box Hill Town Hall seeks feedback from users via the CERM survey and also from feedback sheets and meetings with current hirers.
208B(c) 208C(d) Accessibility of service	<p>Accessibility of services is addressed by ensuring that pricing for use of the facilities remains affordable. This is achieved by utilising Council's discounted support scheme for community groups while there is a higher charge for the business sector.</p> <p>Physical access is also addressed at both venues via the provision of disabled car parking spaces, additional handrails located at access points and internally as well as the provision of a lift at Box Hill Town Hall.</p> <p>Both Services are now addressing language barriers and the need to provide information to customers in a language other than English.</p>
208B(d) Continuous improvement	Continuous improvement is addressed in both the quality and cost standards. Targets have been set to improve the overall satisfaction rating at both venues over the next three years. The range of user groups by number and type is also a continuous improvement target for the Nunawading Community Centre. The target for cost standards is to keep the hourly unit cost within the parameters of Council's long-term financial plan.
208B(e) Consultation with community	<p>Community consultation was undertaken utilising the CERM PI® Performance Indicators. The Centre for Environmental and Recreation Management (CERM) is an applied research centre of the University of South Australia, linked to the School of Environmental and Recreation Management. CERM PI® currently provides reviews for more than 200 facilities and services in Australia and New Zealand.</p> <p>The surveys were based on the effectiveness performance indicators which measure on a set of customer service quality attributes. They include the following process dimensions of service delivery: responsiveness (eg, prompt response to customer problems); assurance (eg, competence of staff); tangibles (eg, facility presentation) and empathy (eg, consideration and understanding shown by staff to customers).</p> <p>Customers of Box Hill Town Hall and Nunawading Community Centre were asked to complete a self-administered questionnaire in February 2002 and March 2002. The times chosen to administer the questionnaire were nominated by staff in order to produce a representative sample of customers in the survey. One hundred surveys were distributed to groups that use the Box Hill Town Hall. A total of 150 surveys were distributed to groups that use the Nunawading Community Centre.</p>
208B(f) Reporting to the community	Council reports on the progress of its Best Value Service Reviews in its Annual Reports. A copy of this report is located on Council's website, <a href="http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au">www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au</a> , under Policies and Publications.

Traffic and Local Laws

The focus of Council's Best Value Review was the provision of Council's School Crossing Supervision Services, because of the high priority placed on the safety of pedestrian movement at school crossings and school children's safety, as part of Council's Road Safety Strategy. Council's School Crossing Supervision Services are provided internally by 94.5 part-time school crossing supervisors servicing 61 schools throughout the municipality, and supported by officers of the Traffic and Local Laws Department. The expenditure budget for 2002-2003 is \$540,396 and a subsidy of \$224,545 is received from VicRoads.

*Response To Best Value Principles*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	The cost standard for the service is the cost per hour of service before VicRoads subsidy is received. The current cost of \$10.81 per hour should be kept within the parameters of Council's long-term financial plan	\$10.81	\$11.31	\$11.83
Quality Standard	Compliance with the requirements of VicRoads Agreement for the training and performance of supervisors and the maintenance of Council's eligibility to receive the VicRoads subsidy	Complied	Complied	Complied

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	The Department compared its cost and quality standards with six inner metropolitan Councils selected at random. Consultation with users, such as school principals, identified user expectations and values, and considered questions of accessibility of the service and the cost of the service to Council. Value for money was determined through this benchmarking exercise.
208B(b) 208C(c) Responsiveness to community needs	A questionnaire was sent to all schools that have a school crossing supervisor, asking for their comments on the standard of service and, in particular, their rating of the key performance standards for school crossing supervisors.
208B(c) 208C(d) Accessibility of service	The existing Service is delivered to all school crossings where a Service has been requested and where Council has identified a need for the Service based on VicRoads guidelines.
208B(d) Continuous Improvement	It is intended that the continuous improvement target for the Department is to decrease the number of complaints per year to 20 or less.
208B(e) Consultation with community	Primary and secondary school principals were surveyed. A total of 32 completed questionnaires were returned (78% response rate).
208B(f) Reporting to the community	Council reports on the progress of its Best Value Service Reviews in its Annual Reports. A copy of this report is located on Council's website, <a href="http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au">www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au</a> , under Policies and Publications.

### Human Resources

Council's Human Resource functions are mostly provided internally, supported with external resources on an 'as needed' basis. There are two components – Human Resources Management and Risk Management. Council's Human Resources Management function is structured so as to support and resource managers, supervisors and staff as the Human Resources function is delegated to line management. Human Resources Management is a small Department, with a staff of 4.4 EFT and a budget of \$633,900 (2002-2003). Council's Risk Management Department provides advice and support in three areas – Occupational Health and Safety, WorkCover and Risk Management. The unit's 2.6 EFT staff also manage insurance and WorkCover claims, conduct risk identification assessment and control programs, and oversee Occupational Health and Safety policies and programs with Council's Occupational Health and Safety Committee in training and resourcing staff. Of a budget of \$1.5 million in 2002-2003, only \$213,130 is for operational costs - the remainder of the budget is to cover Council's insurance and worker's compensation premiums.

### *Response To Best Value Principles*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	Annual cost per EFT employee of \$1,067, adjusted each year by parameters of Council's long-term financial plan	\$1,067	\$1,116	\$1,167
Quality Standard	Maintain a minimum of 70% customer satisfaction	70%	70%	70%

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	The Department participated in three benchmarking exercises. Council participated in a benchmarking study with 46 other Victorian local governments, auspiced by LGPro and conducted by Benchmarking Plus. Council's insurers also benchmarked Council's performance against other Councils and officers also benchmarked existing operational practices with those employed in other Councils. The private sector was approached to participate in benchmarking activity but declined to participate. Consultation with users identified user expectations and values, and considered questions of accessibility of the service and the cost of the service to Council. Value for money was determined through this benchmarking exercise.
208B(b) 208C(c) Responsiveness to community needs	Service needs were determined through consultation with internal users, a mixture of managers, supervisors and staff, to identify current and future service needs and areas for service improvement.
208B(c) 208C(d) Accessibility of service	Accessibility is an important issue as for all of these activities. The Human Resources Department provides systems, information, advice and training that contribute to the efficient operation of Council's administration. Careful attention, therefore, was paid to a variety of accessibility issues, such as the quality of information provided, the timeliness of advice, the speed of administrative processes and access to training.
208B(d) Continuous improvement	It is intended that the Department conduct an annual survey of internal users to monitor user satisfaction with service provision. In the risk management area, this is supplemented by periodic reviews of Council's insurance risk carried out by Council's insurers. It is proposed that the continuous improvement targets for the Department is to retain costs within the parameters of Council's long-term financial plan and to introduce SafetyMap systems in Council's major work sites to ensure continued compliance with Occupational Health and Safety requirements.
208B(e) Consultation with community	The Human Resources Department conducted four focus groups with a mixture of managers, supervisors and staff to identify current and future service needs and areas for service improvement. The Risk Management Department surveyed officers from across the organisation as well as liaising with the Council's Occupational Health and Safety Committee.
208B(f) Reporting to the community	Council reports on the progress of its Best Value Service Reviews in its Annual Reports. A copy of this report is located on Council's website, <a href="http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au">www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au</a> , under Policies and Publications.

## BEST VALUE REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE

Kerbside Waste Collection and Recycling*Performance in second year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE				EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2001-2002	Actual 2001-2002	Target 2002-2003	Actual 2002-2003	
Cost Standard	Service costs per tenement per year:					New contract that commenced in January 2002 resulted in reduced collection costs for all services, as reflected in actual costs for the 2002-2003 financial year.
	Domestic Garbage	\$56	\$42.75	\$45	\$42.40	
	Recycling	\$30	\$28.27	\$28	\$26.69	
	Hard and Green Waste	\$13	\$11.90	\$12	\$10.65	
	All services	\$99	\$82.92	\$85	\$79.74	
Quality Standard	Waste Services Users' Satisfaction Survey	95% satisfaction	91%	95%	89%	Resident satisfaction is still very high. The higher performance standards in the new contract have resulted in lower levels of complaints.
	Complaints per 10,000 users	411	458	355	321	

Fleet Management*Performance in first year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		TARGET 2002-2003	ACTUAL 2002-2003	
Cost Standard	Vehicle maintenance costs set at 1.2 cents per kilometre traveled	1.2 cents per km traveled	0.63 cents per km traveled	Adherence to replacement cycle of two-year/40,000km assisted in reducing vehicle maintenance costs.
	Plant and equipment costs kept at \$490,000 pa as per the 2001-2002 budget (growth limited to increases defined by Council's long-term financial plan)	\$490,000 pa	\$455,535	Many of the larger more expensive items of plant were replaced with new ones hence the maintenance costs were reduced.

Quality Standard	Maintain 80% plus rating in customer satisfaction on all four key service features – courtesy, repair quality, understanding customer needs and value for money.	80%	Courtesy 96% Repair Quality 89% Customer needs 94% Value 88%	
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Corporate Services*Performance in first year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		TARGET 2002-2003	ACTUAL 2002-2003	
Cost Standard	Annual IT equipment ownership per device is \$2,700 pa (adjusted by CPI)	\$2700	\$2474	A stable computer infrastructure means we have bettered our target.
Quality Standard	Maintain 95% customer satisfaction on five key service features – helpdesk service, timeliness of response, effectiveness of response, systems availability and adequacy of IT tools.	95%	96%	Overall – an excellent result given this period was a period of significant change for the computer systems.