

CITY OF



WHITEHORSE

BEST VALUE ANNUAL REPORT

2003-04

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 2003-2004. 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 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:

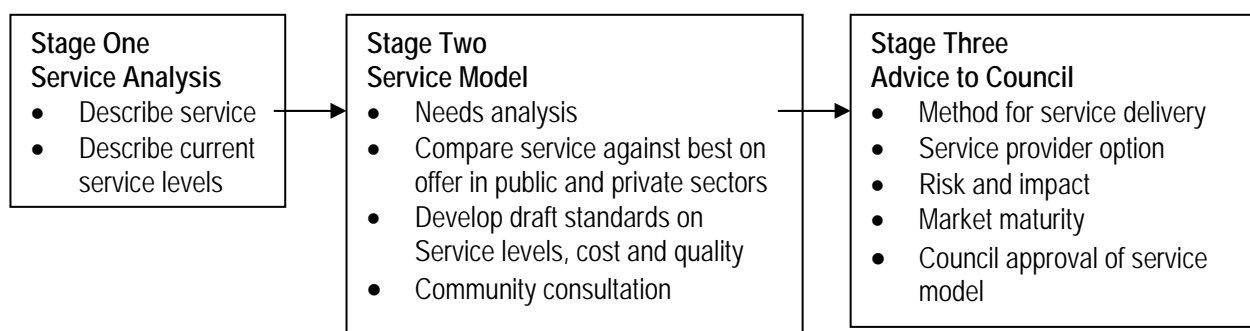
- 1 The best on offer in the public and private sectors.
- 2 Value for money.
- 3 Community expectations and values.
- 4 Balance of affordability and accessibility.
- 5 Opportunities for local employment growth.
- 6 Partnership building with other levels of government.
- 7 Environmental sustainability.

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 2003-2004, 10 service reviews were conducted in accordance with Council's Best Value Service Review Program. Four reviews were completed. The timetable for the conduct of the service reviews, is located on Council's website, www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au under Policies and Publications. Progress of these reviews is listed below:

Service	Commencement Date of Review	Status
Civic Services	3 rd quarter 2001-2002	Completed
Engineering Design/Urban Design/Capital Works	1 st quarter 2002-2003	Completed
Economic Development	1 st quarter 2002-2003	Completed
Open Space	3 rd quarter 2002-2003	Completed
Aged Services	3 rd quarter 2001-2002	In progress
Disability Services	3 rd quarter 2001-2002	In progress
Residential Services	1 st quarter 2002-2003	In progress
Infrastructure Maintenance	3 rd quarter 2002-2003	In progress
Building Maintenance (separated form Infrastructure maintenance)	1 st quarter 2003-2004	In progress
Planning	1 st quarter 2003-2004	In progress

One change was made to the review timetable in 2003-2004. The planned review of the Waste Transfer Station will not proceed as this task has been subsumed by the development of Council's Waste Management Strategy and the development by EcoRecycle of guidelines for the operation of such facilities.

D. Outcome of Completed Service Reviews

The outcomes of the Best Value Service Reviews, completed in 2003-2004, are as follows:

Civic Services

The focus of the Civic Services review was the Council's Customer Service function provided through its three service centres at Nunawading, Forest Hill and Box Hill. In 2003-2004 Council's Service Centres employed seventeen EFT on a budget of \$876,940. Service Centres were introduced as a concept of a 'one stop shop' where staff at the front line could answer the majority of queries formerly handled by various departments. The staff handle enquiries, provide a cashiering function, act as a reception desk at the Whitehorse Civic Centre and at the Box Hill Town Hall they act as point of contact when Hall staff are absent from the office and provide some supervision of the public art space. The three Service Centres average around 3540 monthly customer contacts for cashiering transactions, direct counter enquiries and Customer requests. The unit also provides a call centre operation during working hours with after hours provision delivered externally through Link Communications. The call centre averages around 450 calls per day. This internally provided service is complemented with external provision of after-hours telephone service and a variety of external payment options.

Response To Best Value Principles

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES 208B(a)	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	Cost of the service (adjusted annually in accordance with Council's long-term financial plan):	\$904,850	\$948,283	\$993,801
Quality Standard	Achieve a minimum of 80% satisfaction as measured in the statewide survey on resident satisfaction with customer contact	80%	80%	80%

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	<p>Best on offer: Cost comparisons were made, comparing the transaction costs of the Centres with those associated with other payment options. The results indicate that transaction costs to Council average \$1.40 per transaction across the three centres operating during normal business hours. In comparison, the costs to Council for the use of external agencies for the payment of Council accounts is between \$0.60 and \$1.80 per transaction.</p> <p>Quality comparisons were made using resident satisfaction data collected nationally and with neighbouring Councils. The statewide annual community survey of local governments indicates that the level of resident satisfaction with Council's customer contact has consistently been superior to the average for Group One (inner Melbourne) councils. Whitehorse used a similar customer satisfaction survey as another eastern region Council, in order to obtain comparable data. The results confirm the information from the statewide survey, that is, that the levels of resident satisfaction in terms of excellent/good scores are very high.</p> <p>Comparison with private sector firms has been difficult, as private service centres do not offer the same mix of services offered, that is, cashiering, customer contact, and call centre. However, in 1999 and 2000, Council did participate in the Customer Service Awards Scheme from Australian Customer Service Association. On both occasions Council won awards for Excellence in Customer Service Delivery.</p>

	<p>Value for money: Value for money was assessed by comparing the cost of the service with the service outcomes achieved, both in terms of services provided and levels of user satisfaction. It was concluded that retaining a mix of in-house delivery of customer service during normal office hours, supplemented with external provision of after-hours telephone service and a variety of external payment options provides Council and the community with the most efficient use of its resources and positions Council well in terms of planning for the future</p> <p>Community Expectations and Values: Community expectations and values were assessed through consultative processes that are reported below under Consultation.</p> <p>Affordability and accessibility: Affordability was defined as operating within the parameters of Council's long-term financial plan, which forms the basis for Council's annual budget and Strategic Resource Plan. The cost standard has been prepared within this framework. Accessibility issues were identified during consultation and reported below under Accessibility.</p> <p>Local employment: Council's Economic Development Strategy has identified that a major expectation of local businesses is the provision of soft infrastructure as such infrastructure contributes to the desirability of the municipality as a residence for highly skilled employees. The provision of quality service centres contributes to Council's overall provision of soft infrastructure.</p>
208B(b) Responsiveness to community needs	Council continues to review its service provision in this area in the light of changing patterns of resident usage. This Best Value Service Review Service sought the views both of external and internal service users. Details of the consultation processes used are listed under Consultation.
208B(c) Accessibility of service	<p>Residents are able to access the service from three locations – Nunawading 8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday, Box Hill 8.45am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday and Forest Hill from 8.30 am to 5:00 pm Monday to Friday with Saturdays from 9 am to 12 noon, Forest Hill only. An after hours and weekend service is provided through Link Communications. Residents also access a wide variety of payment options, with direct payment through a Council service centre being one of those options.</p> <p>Consultation with users has identified that there are still some access issues associated with the Box Hill Service Centre, in particular location and parking. Additional signage has been put in but signage and parking will again be reviewed and publicity on the location and services provided by the Centre will be made a feature article in a future addition of the Whitehorse News.</p>
208B(d) Continuous improvement	In the light of user feedback especially around the Box Hill service, it is proposed that service arrangements at Box Hill be reviewed to address access issues identified by users. Council will continue to review the mix and level of services required at service centres generally in the light of changing patterns of usage, especially changes that may arise as Council modifies payment options for residents and local businesses.
208B(e) Consultation with community	<p>This Best Value Service Review Service sought the views both of external and internal service users. In February 2003, 281 face to face interviews were conducted with customers leaving the three Whitehorse Customer Service Centres. On these occasions, 55% of customers interviewed rated the overall service provided at the centres as excellent, whilst 42% rated the service as good. The interviewers also received spontaneous comments regarding satisfaction with the service provided and the pleasant manner of the staff.</p> <p>During February 2003, 15 departments were also consulted, targeting administration staff in each department. There was a 93% response rate from departments, with 61% of administration staff responding. The data confirmed a</p>

	high level of usage by administration staff, with 78% of staff communicating with all three centres on a daily basis, while 14% communicating with Whitehorse only on a daily basis. Overall results were consistently high, with 80% finding staff responsive, helpful and friendly, and courteous.
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, www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au , under Policies and Publications.

Engineering Design/ Urban Design/ Capital Works

Council annually initiates a substantial and varied capital works program. In 2003/04 capital works expenditure has been budgeted at over \$21 million. The program is coordinated at a corporate level through the Manager Capital Works, with a staff of 1.5 EFT. Engineering and Urban Design have responsibility for the design and delivery of specific capital works projects. Urban Design has 3 EFT staff and an operating budget in 2003/04 of \$218,000 and Engineering Design has 7 EFT staff and an operating budget of \$473,130. The services provided by the design units in project management include consultation, scoping and investigation of project, survey, design and project documentation, cost planning, tendering, contract management, construction supervision and liaison with the public. The projects are delivered across a range of capital areas – buildings, roads, drainage, traffic management, parks, streetscapes, and plant and equipment. The corporate management of the capital works program provides overall budgetary control, project programming, project assessment, reporting to Council, dissemination of project information and asset management. While the management of the capital works program is carried out by Council staff, the design and management of individual projects will involve a mix of in-house and external resources.

Response To Best Value Principles

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES 208B(a)	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	The percentage of total capital works project costs that are allocated to project management and design (for civil/urban design projects under \$500,000)	5.5%	5.5%	5.5%
Quality Standard	Completion of 96% of capital works projects on time	96%	96%	96%
	Minimum of 85% satisfaction with condition of roads, as measured in the Council's annual community survey.	85%	85%	85%

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	<p>Best on offer: Council benchmarked both its corporate capital works management activity and its individual design function with other Councils and the private sector. Whitehorse participated along with seven other municipalities in a benchmarking survey of the process for undertaking new Works & Services (Capital Works). Whitehorse's process in relation to its Capital Works Program and its methods for evaluating and reporting were shown to be very similar to the other Councils, with most Councils taking similar paths and determining their programs at similar times (between December and June). Council used three benchmarking exercises to compare the performance of its design/project management function. Council participated in a benchmarking exercise with the Port Phillip, Banyule and Monash Councils as these Councils were of a similar size in terms of population, area and asset portfolios. The review also used industry benchmarking data collected by LGPro in its Engineering Design Benchmarking project. Finally, the review used the tendered prices from Council's panel of external consultants as another benchmarking tool.</p> <p>Value for money: Value for money was assessed by comparing the cost of the service with the service outcomes achieved, both in terms of services provided and levels of user satisfaction. It was concluded that Council retain a mix of in-house and external resources to provide overall capital works management, design and management of individual capital works projects. This option provides Council with a good balance of control and flexibility, allowing Council to deliver a very large capital works program in each year. This option maximises the efficiency of Council's resources and provides a vehicle for Council to utilise the best external resources while fostering the development of its own staff.</p> <p>Community Expectations and Values: Community expectations and values were assessed through consultative processes that are reported below under Consultation.</p> <p>Affordability and accessibility: Affordability was defined as operating within the parameters of Council's long-term financial plan, which forms the basis for Council's annual budget and Strategic Resource Plan. The cost standard has been prepared within this framework. Accessibility issues were identified during consultation and reported below under Accessibility.</p> <p>Local employment: Council's Economic Development Strategy has identified that a major expectation of local businesses is the provision of hard infrastructure as such infrastructure contributes to the desirability of the municipality as an investment opportunity. The design and management of Council's Capital Works program contributes directly to the provision of essential hard infrastructure for the municipality's economic development.</p>
208B(b) Responsiveness to community needs	Council continues to review its service provision in this area in the light of changing patterns of resident usage. This Best Value Service Review Service sought the views both of external and internal service users. Details of the consultation processes used are listed under Consultation.
208B(c) Accessibility of service	Council has, and plans in the future to have, a significantly large capital works program. In 2003/04, for example, Council planned to deliver 214 individual capital works projects. This scale and scope of the program reflects its accessibility, with Council funding both large projects such as the refurbishment of the Nunawading Aquatic and Leisure Centre and smaller projects such as rainwater tanks at neighbourhood/community houses. Nonetheless it is recognised that community demands and expectations always exceed Council's capacity to deliver. Operationally there is also an ongoing need to balance works that maintain and enhance existing infrastructure against projects that create new assets. Further, Council needs to be cognisant of its ability to meet long-term

	<p>renewal investment needs for infrastructure assets, that is, its Renewal Gap. Council is fortunate that it has been able to keep that gap to around one percent.</p>
208B(d) Continuous improvement	<p>Performance is monitored regularly, through monthly management reports to Council on the conduct of the capital works program as a whole.</p> <p>Residents' concern about communication has been acknowledged with a commitment to reviewing our communication strategies and a continuous improvement target set to measure and improve the level of resident satisfaction with this aspect of our work. Contractors' concerns about Council's tendering practices have been considered in the review of Council's tender administration and staff concern about project assessment, communication and handover will be addressed through the adoption of a business case approach to project proposals and improvements in internal procedures. Finally, contractors' concerns about decision making, staff understanding, clear instructions have been improved through better selection and recruitment of short term employees and consultants used for project management tasks. It is also proposed to review the methodology used to identify design and management costs for capital works projects.</p>
208B(e) Consultation with community	<p>A number of strategies were employed to consult with the community and users. Council's annual community survey was used to survey residents about the general satisfaction with the impact of Council's capital works program and with the quality of service associated with the management of projects. The 2003 survey identified that 88% of residents were satisfied with the condition of local roads. Over half (56%) of residents thought the appearance of the City had improved over the last three years.</p> <p>In 2002, data was collected through the survey on residents' experience with capital works projects. The results indicated high levels of satisfaction with the final product but low to moderate levels of satisfaction with communication with residents. Seven of Council's major contractors, from building, civic engineering and urban design projects, were interviewed individually and asked to rate Council's performance in terms of the quality of plans and documentation, the on-site management of projects, payment and tendering processes. These contractors rated highly the information and user friendliness of Council's documentation, the availability of officers on site and Council's payment processes. On the other hand they were more critical of Council's tendering processes, the promptness of decision-making and officers' knowledge of the construction process and the lack of clear instructions.</p> <p>Finally, Council staff who use the capital works design and project management services of both the Engineering and Urban Design Departments were surveyed. The results identified that there was high satisfaction with assistance provided during project formation, with design advice, project management, budget management, the level of disruption caused during construction and level of overall assistance. Lower scores were achieved for assessment of project proposals, delivery of project on time, project handover, feedback and standard of final product.</p>
208B(f) Reporting to the community	<p>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, www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au, under Policies and Publications.</p>

Economic Development

Council's Business Relations Department's objective is to facilitate the local business community's development of strategies to maximise business and investment activity in order to retain and grow existing businesses and attract new business investment. The Department does this within the context of the Whitehorse Economic Development Strategy 2001-2006 which was adopted by Council in August 2001. The Department has a dedicated team of 4 full time staff and uses outside consultants on a project-by-project basis from time to time, for example, technical assistance for the day-to-day management of the online business directory, wbiz.com.au and the gathering of economic data. Typically 10 percent of the Business Relations budget is allocated for this purpose and grants are often sought to complement Council's funds. Including salaries, the Business Relations Department is supported by an annual budget of approximately \$550,000. Approximately half of this budget provides for recurrent operational costs (i.e. Salaries, materials, recharges etc.) with the remainder funding specific initiatives such as retail, multimedia, networking, training, communications and marketing projects. Typically Council provides a further \$1.5M towards capital (hard) infrastructure improvements within commercial precincts to support this activity.

Response To Best Value Principles

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES 208B(a)	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	The average unit cost (spend per business) adjusted by parameters of Council's long-term financial plan	\$52.82	\$55.35	\$58.01
Quality Standard	The Business Monitor survey will provide the performance measurement tool for this standard. The key indicators of quality will be: 1. A minimum satisfaction level with Council's service of 85% 2. An overall positive outlook for the local economy.	85% positive	85% positive	85% positive

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	<p>Best on offer: The Department's activities and costs were benchmarked with eight other Councils – five adjoining Councils in 2004 and three other Councils with similar client base in 2001. Comparison of the operating costs of Economic Development units reveals that Whitehorse's costs are around the average. A comparison of services provided to support economic development was made with eight other Councils and resident satisfaction was compared using the Statewide Annual Resident Survey.</p> <p>Value for money: Value for money was assessed by comparing the cost of the service with the service outcomes achieved, both in terms of services provided and levels of user satisfaction. It was concluded that Council continue to maintain an internal service delivery model. This approach enables Council to take advantage of the benefits of regional economic development models and private sector input while maintaining its capacity to coordinate its economic development goals with its social and environmental agendas. Council control also enables Council to negotiate effectively with State and Federal Governments on economic development issues, including participating in Government programs and funding opportunities. Finally, it meets the expectations of local businesses that there is a first point of contact within Council for business assistance and that they have a representative within Council.</p>

	<p>Community Expectations and Values: Community expectations and values were assessed through consultative processes that are reported below under Consultation.</p> <p>Affordability and accessibility: Affordability was defined as operating within the parameters of Council's long-term financial plan, which forms the basis for Council's annual budget and Strategic Resource Plan. The cost standard has been prepared within this framework. Accessibility issues were identified during consultation and reported below under Accessibility.</p> <p>Local employment: Council's Economic Development Strategy which is implemented and coordinated by the Business Relations Unit has been developed with the specific intention of growing local employment opportunities</p>
208B(b) Responsiveness to community needs	<p>Council continues to review its service provision in this area in the light of changing patterns of community and business needs. This Best Value Service Review Service sought the views of the business community about their requirements. Details of the consultation processes used are listed under Consultation.</p>
208B(c) Accessibility of service	<p>There are some 8,500 businesses in the municipality. The Business Relations Department seeks to meet the needs of these firms through a broad range of activities that are underpinned by the Council's Economic Development Strategy. These key activities are infrastructure management, provision of information and research, provision of networking and training opportunities, regular communication with businesses, advocacy on behalf of local business and strategic planning. A significant network of volunteers also supports a number of the initiatives offered by the Department. The Board members of the Whitehorse Business Group and the Committee members of the various Trader Associations provide particular assistance.</p>
208B(d) Continuous improvement	<p>In terms of determining the ongoing quality of the services being delivered it is important that an annual means of measuring the quality of the service is established. For this reason the Whitehorse Economic Development Strategy identified the need to undertake an annual Business Monitor survey that will measure the standards considered to reflect the service quality. In developing the survey careful consideration has been given to enabling the collation of results that can be compared with National and State findings with respect to business activity and confidence as much of the influence on business is at these levels. The survey will however also enable Council to identify local inhibitors that it can directly influence. The survey will be direct mailed to all businesses contained on Council's business directory and placed on Council's website (www.wbiz.com.au) to ensure maximum participation.</p> <p>In addition to collecting this formal information, Council will also continue to obtain information with respect to its service level quality via the Whitehorse Business Group Board and functions, and the networking afforded through Whitehorse Business Week. All of these forums provide important feedback through a number of conduits including Councillors, Executive Officers and Senior Officers.</p>
208B(e) Consultation with community	<p>In determining the local business and community's needs consultation was undertaken during the development of the Whitehorse Economic Development Strategy using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workshops with representatives from key stakeholder groups in Whitehorse (involving the Whitehorse Business Group; Local Chambers and Business Associations, 'Top 100' enterprises; and home based businesses); • 2 workshops with Council staff (involving departments that both directly and indirectly affect local business operations); • In-depth interviews with key regional stakeholders, namely the Victorian Business Centre (State Government, Jobs East (Easter Area Consultative

	Committee/Federal Government), adjoining local Councils, and the Valley of the Arts Tourism Marketing Board; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-depth interviews with Councillors.
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, www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au , under Policies and Publications.

Open Space

A review was carried out on Council's ParksWide Department during 2003-2004. This review focussed on the management and maintenance of Council's arboricultural assets and customer service. ParksWide provides a number of services in relation to the tree assets under the control of the City of Whitehorse. These services are provided by both in-house and contracted services and include:

- After Hours / Emergency tree pruning service;
- Programmed Block (Suburb) street tree pruning (Every 2 years);
- Programmed Park Tree Pruning
- Programmed Bushland Tree Pruning (Every 3 years);
- Annual Elm Leaf Beetle Control program;
- Tree Planting;
- Root control barriers;
- Tree stump removals;
- Tree condition reports; and
- Associated customer service provision for all of the above.

The cost of the Arbor and Customer Service components in 2003/04 were \$1,369,845. A total of eight staff are employed to provide these services.

Response To Best Value Principles

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES 208B(a)	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE TARGETS		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Cost Standard	Total Street Tree Mgt Cost / Tree	\$6.90	\$7.23	\$7.58
	Total Street Tree Mgt Cost / Resident	\$14.32	\$15.01	\$15.73
	Total Street Tree Mgt Cost / Km	\$1510	\$1582	\$1658
Quality Standard	Maintain customer satisfaction as measured by the benchmarked results from the annual IOSS Park User Satisfaction Survey at above Metropolitan average of 7.3.	7.8	7.8	7.8

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	Action taken to apply the principle
208C Development of cost and quality standards	Best on offer: Council benchmarked, through Integrated Open Space Services (IOSS) the financial component of arboricultural services with 16 other metropolitan councils (IOSS Benchmarking KPIs) and also benchmarked overall customer satisfaction with ParksWide activities with 15 other metropolitan councils (IOSS Customer Satisfaction).

	<p>Value for money: Value for money was assessed by comparing the cost of the service with the service outcomes achieved, both in terms of services provided and levels of user satisfaction. It was concluded that which is the current combination model made up of an in-house responsive tree crew, customer service provision and overall tree management, with contractors responsible for block pruning, specialist tree works and various sundry arboricultural requirements. The current service model has served the City of Whitehorse well over the past 5 years and has been adopted by most metropolitan Councils as providing the highest quality / cost savings / risk minimisation and flexibility of all the service models investigated.</p> <p>Community Expectations and Values: Community expectations and values were assessed through consultative processes that are reported below under Consultation.</p> <p>Affordability and accessibility: Affordability was defined as operating within the parameters of Council's long-term financial plan, which forms the basis for Council's annual budget and Strategic Resource Plan. The cost standard has been prepared within this framework. Accessibility issues were identified during consultation and reported below under Accessibility.</p> <p>Local employment: Council's Economic Development Strategy has identified that a major expectation of local businesses is the provision of soft infrastructure as such infrastructure contributes to the desirability of the municipality as a residence for highly skilled employees. The provision of attractive streetscapes and responsive tree crews contributes to Council's overall provision of soft infrastructure.</p>
208B(b) Responsiveness to community needs	Council continues to review its service provision in this area in the light of changing patterns of community and business needs. This Best Value Service Review Service sought the views of the community about their requirements. Details of the consultation processes used are listed under Consultation.
208B(c) Accessibility of service	<p>Resident's ability to access the services provided by ParksWide are reflected in the availability of ParksWide during business hours and the after-hours customer service system ie:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ParksWide main office is open from 7.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday; • The ParksWide Responsive Tree Crew is available from 7.30am to 4.15pm, Monday to Friday; and • The Council's After Hours Emergency Response Crew (organised by the Infrastructure Department and supported by members of ParksWide) is available from 4.30pm to 7.30am, seven days a week.
208B(d) Continuous improvement	<p>In response to this feedback from our customers, a number of initiatives are being put in place such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calling Cards so that it is clear to residents who have made a tree related request that their tree has been inspected; • Information Sheets to assist residents with understanding the different types of tree services provided by the City of Whitehorse; • An increase in the Responsive Tree Crew by one EFT from 3 to 4, within the existing budget, which has greatly improved flexibility; • Changed from arbitrary geographical blocks to pruning suburb by suburb to improve communication with residents; • New Notification Cards which outline to the resident when block pruning is going to occur; • New Private Vegetation Pruning Notification Card which are delivered to all residents in a suburb after block pruning is complete; • Published a timetable of pruning in the Whitehorse News and for the "on-hold" message for the general Whitehorse phone line.
208B(e)	A wide range of consultation tools were used to obtain feedback from residents

Consultation with community	and users. These included: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• two detailed independent Customer Service Reviews.• Participation in industry benchmarking that included questions of park users• Telephone technique customer service audit; and• Additional questions in Council's annual community survey
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, www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au , under Policies and Publications.

BEST VALUE REPORTING ON PERFORMANCE

Kerbside Waste Collection and Recycling*Performance in third year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE						EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2001-2002	Actual 2001-2002	Target 2002-2003	Actual 2002-2003	Target 2003-2004	Actual 2003-2004	
Cost Standard	Service costs per tenement per year: Domestic Garbage Recycling Hard and Green Waste All services	\$56 \$30 \$13 \$99	\$42.75 \$28.27 \$11.90 \$82.92	\$45 \$28 \$12 \$85	\$42.40 \$26.69 \$10.65 \$79.74	\$53 \$26 \$10 \$89	\$46.60 \$28.17 \$ 9.98 \$84.75	Disposal fee increase was greater than CPI. Changes in OHS Guidelines resulted in extra collection costs.
Quality Standard	Waste Services Users' Satisfaction Survey	95% satisfaction	91%	95%	89%	95%	86%	Residents dissatisfied with recycling options. These are being revised in new waste management strategy.
	Complaints per 10,000 users	411	458	355	321	390	370	

Fleet Management*Performance in second year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE				EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		TARGET 2002/2003	ACTUAL 2002/2003	TARGET 2003/04	ACTUAL 2003/04	
Cost Standard	Vehicle maintenance costs set at 1.2 cents per km traveled	1.2 cents per km traveled	0.63 cents per km	1.2 cents per km travelled	0.69 cents per km	
	Plant & 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	\$490,000	\$519,344	Major breakdowns in plant at the Waste Transfer Centre; 3 unexpected transmission failures in light commercial utilities and an unexpected number of tyre replacements meant the target was exceeded for the 1st time in 5 years
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%	80%	Courtesy 94% Repair Quality 88% Customer needs 91% Value 87%	

Corporate Services*Performance in second year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE				EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		TARGET 2002/2003	ACTUAL 2002/2003	TARGET 2003/04	ACTUAL 2003/04	
Cost Standard	Annual IT equipment ownership per device is \$2,700 pa (adjusted by CPI)	\$2700	\$2474	\$2781	\$2582	Improvements in costs reflect increased cost efficiencies introduced by the Information Systems Department.
Quality Standard	Maintain 95% customer satisfaction on five key service features – helpdesk service, timeliness of response, effectiveness of response, systems availability, adequacy of IT tools.	95%	96%	95%	98%	

Arts & Cultural Services:
Performance in first year

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	
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	\$67,592 \$43,806	
Quality Standard	Maintain customer satisfaction at or above: Whitehorse Centre: 90% overall Box Hill CAC: 70% at excellent	90% 70%	96% 74%	

Active Leisure Centres
Performance in first year

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR		PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
			Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	
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	Box Hill: subsidy per visit: consumer cost per visit Nunawading: subsidy per visit: consumer cost per visit	\$0.62 \$3.95 \$0.89 \$3.00	\$0.18 \$4.30 \$0.91 \$6.38	Box Hill had a higher attendance level than previous year. Variation in Nunawading due to partial closure of the facility for capital improvement that has led to a significant reduction in income and greater reduction in attendances.
Quality Standard	Maintain customer satisfaction at or above latest CERM survey result	WALC NAFC	5.46 5.38	5.54 5.65	

Community facilities*Performance in first year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	
Cost Standard	Cost per hour of service (adjusted by parameters of Council's long-term financial plan): Box Hill Town Hall: Nunawading Community Centre:	\$53 \$23	\$0 \$20	The Box Hill Town Hall returned an operational surplus for the year ending 30 June 2004. No subsidy was required to operate the facility
Quality Standard	Maintain customer satisfaction as measured in annual CERM survey Box Hill Town Hall: Nunawading Community Centre:	5.6 5.8	5.7 6.05	

Long Day Care:*Performance in first year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	
Cost Standard	Net annual cost to Council per childcare place of no greater than \$2,700	\$2700	\$2,300	Increased efficiencies delivered to the program since the BV report was prepared in early 2002 combined with a change in accounting recognition of accommodation charges for two centres.
Quality Standard	Achieve maximum level of accreditation	Achieved	Achieved	

Family Day Care*Performance in first year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	
Cost Standard	Net annual cost to Council per childcare place of \$1470, and to be reduced over the next five years	\$1470	\$209	Increased number of EFTs catered for which attracted increased operational funding.
Quality Standard	Achieve full national accreditation	Achieved	Achieved	

Maternal & Child Health*Performance in first year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	
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	\$602,574	Report prepared in 2002. Staff salary increases at 5% greater than 3% projected. Additional staff added to the program (1.4EFT) above the level funded for by an increase in DHS funding in 2003 (1.2EFT). Additional staff relief costs required due to long term sick leave of several staff.
Quality Standard	Maintain 95% customer satisfaction	95%	90%	The result is a very positive in view of the public campaign undertaken by staff in EPA negotiations last year

Youth Services*Performance in first year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	
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	\$321,727	
Quality Standard	Maintain client satisfaction at or above 85%	85%	84%	

Environmental Health*Performance in first year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	
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	\$303,835	The unit's meningococcal and food safety programs attracted higher levels of grant and fee income than projected.
Quality Standard	Maintain customer satisfaction with immunization program at or above 94%	94%	95%	

Building Services*Performance in first year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	
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	\$430	
	Dwelling additions /new dwellings exceeding \$75,000: \$500	\$500	\$500	
	Multi Unit Developments: \$900	\$900	\$900	
Quality Standard	Building permits: 85% completed within 10 days	85%	75%	Performance has not reached expected levels due to the impact of a high turnover of staff during the year which ha disrupted service delivery.
	Swimming pool inspections: 90% responded to by next working day	90%	75%	

Traffic Management*Performance in first year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	
Cost Standard	Cost per hour of service: \$30.92, adjusted by parameters of Council's long-term financial plan	\$30.92	\$31.08	
Quality Standard	Maintain customer satisfaction at or above 70%	70%	74%	

Traffic & Local Laws*Performance in first year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	
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	\$12.16	The cost for this period reflects a shortage of available school crossing supervisors and the reliance on Local Laws Officers to deliver the program fully.
Quality Standard	Compliance with the requirements of Vic Roads Agreement for the training and performance of Supervisors and the maintenance of Council's eligibility to receive the VicRoads subsidy.	Complied	Complied	

Human Resources*Performance in first year*

BEST VALUE PRINCIPLES	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE		EXPLANATION FOR VARIANCE
		Target 2003/04	Actual 2003/04	
Cost Standard	Annual cost per EFT employee of \$1,067, adjusted each year by parameters of Council's long-term financial plan	\$1,067	\$1,182	Costs exceeded budget due to increased advertising and recruitment costs associated with higher than anticipated levels of staff turnover and senior recruitment during the year.
Quality Standard	Maintain a minimum of 70% customer satisfaction	70%	77%	Improvement reflects changes in business practices to improve customer service.