



6-MONTHLY REPORT

Report for the period:
July 2012 – December 2012
on Port Stephens Council
Operational Plan 2012-2013



This Six-Monthly Report July – December 2012
was adopted by Council on 12 February 2013
in accordance with Section 404(5) of the Local
Government Act 1993.

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Message from the General Manager

In 2008 the community of Port Stephens voted to change the composition of its Council, to three Councillors per Ward and a popularly elected Mayor at the 2012 election. On 8 September 2012 the community elected Councillor Bruce MacKenzie as its first popularly-elected Mayor. Six Councillors were re-elected and three first-term Councillors were elected. The full Council is:

Cr Bruce MacKenzie (Mayor)
East Ward: Cr Sally Dover (Deputy Mayor), Crs John Morello, and John Nell;
Central Ward: Crs Geoff Dingle, Chris Doohan, Steve Tucker;
West Ward: Crs Ken Jordan, Peter Kafer and Paul Le Mottee.



I look forward to working with the Council to provide the services and facilities that our community values.

As a result of changes to legislation Council was able to conduct the election itself rather than being required to use the NSW Electoral Commission. The process was tendered out to Australian Election Company with Council conducting its own advertising. This approach resulted in a saving to Council of approximately \$53,000.

The State government's review of local government continues apace with the Independent Review Panel chaired by Professor Graham Sansom. In this period another Independent Panel was appointed to review the Local Government Act, which was last reviewed in 1993 but which has had a large number of amendments since that time. The Act has become unwieldy and contains numerous internal contradictions. It is encouraging that the Act Review Panel has taken the view that it will start afresh rather than tinker with the existing legislation. Council has made submissions to both the Independent Local Government Review Panel and the Independent Local Government Act Review Panel and we have participated in the regional representation through Hunter Councils when each Panel visited the Hunter. These were opportunities to emphasise the role of Hunter Councils as a model for regional cooperation and resource-sharing and we anticipate that this model will be incorporated in some form into the new Local Government Act.

Council's Sustainability Review was finalised in the six months with all Council's services having been reviewed, leading to savings and efficiencies that total more than \$2.7 million per annum. Council has determined that this process will not be a 'one-off' but will be continued on a four-yearly cycle across all Council's services, both internal and external.

As part of the Sustainability Review we made further changes to the organisational structure in addition to those that came into effect from 1 July 2012. Economic Development and Communications Section was re-focused to business support, tourism and events, customer service and communications and we welcomed Ross Smart as the Manager of this Section. We also moved Business Improvement to the renamed Business Support Section (formerly Information Management). Reviewing the organisation structure will be an on-going consideration as we fine tune the provision of services that our customers value.

Council's financial position continues to improve in line with the Long Term Financial Plan. In the past six months independent financial reviews of Council's current position and forecast financial position have been conducted. These reviews were conducted by New South Wales Treasury Corporation and Lawler Partners (internal auditor) and have confirmed that Council is financially sustainable and is on target to reach a breakeven point in the 2014/2015 financial year. The reviews have confirmed that Council is financially well managed and is now strategically placed to face the many financial challenges of the next few years. Forecasts have been made showing a potential to substantially increase cash flows into Council through initiatives such as commercial land

redevelopment, environmental bio-banking, sand extraction and the restructure of the Newcastle Airport to name but a few.

Council has for a second year capped the recurrent operating budget and with these additional significant increases in cash flow, Council will be well placed to address the identified short fall in asset renewal without having to resort to large increases in other revenue raising operations. Continued prudent financial management will ensure that Port Stephens Council remains financially viable.

For some years the Samurai Beach Resort has been operating at a loss to Council and so in November Council voted to close it after considering various options. Affected staff will be redeployed within the organisation.

Council was notified in late December of the State government's changes to emergency management structures across NSW. The revised governance requirements include that the General Managers of councils convene and chair Local Emergency Management Committees and documentation places local government at the first line of response in emergencies. The government is proposing a new emergency planning template to increase the effectiveness of Emergency Management Plans, having taken account of recent disaster management in other states and as part of a national partnership of state and territory governments with the Federal government signed in 2009.

A new guide entitled *Government, You and What to Do: A guide for Natural Disasters in NSW* has been issued and is available on the website of the Ministry of Police and Emergency Management.

With the election of the new Council a new planning cycle has commenced. The provisions of Integrated Planning and Reporting in the Local Government Act are being implemented to review the Community Strategic Plan and develop a new Delivery Program and Operational Plan. To that end, in October and November Council conducted consultations with the community of Port Stephens through workshops at Salt Ash and Salamander Bay, a World Café consultation with young people across the LGA, a workshop with agencies and non-government providers of services to the LGA, and a community survey including our Residents Panel members and a randomly selected sample from across Port Stephens. The Integrated Plans and associated Resource Strategy will be put to Council in March for public exhibition in April 2013.

I am pleased to advise that after several years of work and extensive consultation with stakeholders Council's draft Local Environment Plan was placed on exhibition for six weeks in November and December. Ninety-one submissions were received and will be considered by Council in March 2013.

The Report which follows provides a snapshot of progress that Council is making across all its operations to achieve the objectives of the Delivery Program 2011-2015 and the Operational Plan 2012-2013.




Variance to Note











Despite considerable effort from all staff the number of workplace safety incidents spiked in November, resulting in an increase in lost time hours due to injury. However the severity of the incidents and the time away from work decreased substantially, and Council's Work Health and Safety Unit are analysing causes and developing further initiatives to continue the downward trend shown in the graph on page 5 of this Report. The net result of these variations is expected to reduce Council's workers compensation premium.

Peter Gesling
General Manager

Summary of Performance July – December 2012

The table below provides a snapshot of Council's performance against key result areas determined by Council to be significant. These outcomes are described in more detail in the pages which follow.

Legend:  Target Achieved or Exceeded
 Target Not Achieved
 No Status (Annual Target)

Indicator	Result vs Target
Budget Performance: Original Budget	
Budget Performance: Revised Budget	
Project Performance	
Operational Plan 2012-2013	
Employee Engagement	
Voluntary Staff Turnover	
Customer Satisfaction	
Development Application Processing Times	
Enterprise Risk Management: Public Liability	
Enterprise Risk Management: Lost Time Injuries	

Principal Activities – Performance in Key Result Areas

Operating Budget Performance

Target: < 105% of original budget net operating result excluding depreciation and overheads.

Result: 101% of original budget. However Council achieved a result of <104% of the revised budget after budget reviews in September and December 2012. Revised budgets refer to alterations under Clause 203 of Local Government (General) Regulation 2005. Quarterly reviews of budgets are required and allow for adjustments to account, for example, for grants received that were not known at the time the budget was prepared, revised estimates of expenditure etc.

Capital Projects

Target: 95% on time and on budget.

Result: 95% of projects were completed within one month of scheduled finish date; 94.1% of projects were on or under budget.

Capital projects valued at \$6,946,666 were completed in this period. Please refer to Attachment 1 for details of completed projects.

Operational Plan 2012-2013

Target: 90% of actions due for completion by December 2012 were completed.

Result: 97.7% of actions that were due were completed on or before time; 2.3 % (2 actions) were not achieved within the timeframe.

Employee Engagement

Target: Results of annual survey 65% of staff engaged.

Result: 49% of staff engaged, which is an increase of 10% on the previous year and the trend is positive with a significant increase in those 'nearly engaged'.

Voluntary Staff Turnover

Target: The annual workforce cumulative voluntary turnover <10% of EFT (equivalent full time).

Actual: YTD workforce cumulative voluntary turnover was 2.75% of EFT (equivalent full time).
Note: Voluntary turnover refers to decisions of staff to leave Council's employment of their own volition for a variety of reasons such as retirement, new job elsewhere etc.

Customer Satisfaction

Target: >50% overall satisfaction with Council.

Result: 75.1% from the survey conducted in May 2012 and reported to Council and the community in July 2012. The next survey will be conducted in May 2013.

Development Applications

Target: Median processing time of <40 days.

Actual: Median processing time for the six months was 24.5 days.

During the period Council processed 429 development applications with a value of \$137,480,813 and issued 224 construction certificates.

Enterprise Risk Management

- Professional Indemnity/Public Liability

Target: < 16 incidents per month.

Result: average of 11 incidents per month, compared to 19 per month in the same period last year.

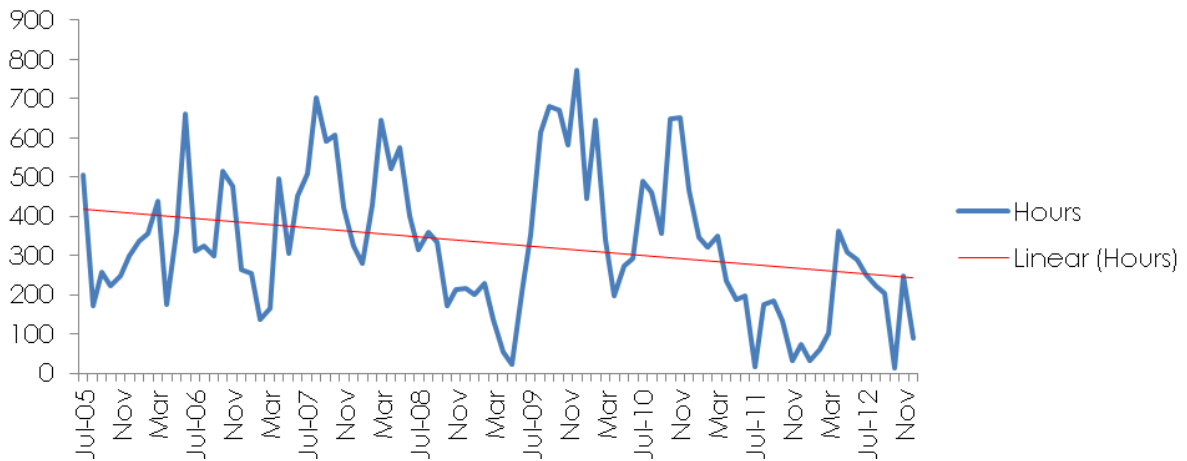
- Lost Time Hours Due to Injury

Target: Reduce lost time hours by 4% on previous annual total.

Result: YTD 67% increase (1,028 hours compared to 613 hours for the same SIX month period last year).

Notwithstanding the spike due to incidents in November overall the downward trend in lost time hours continues with decreases in severity of injuries and time away from work, which have been achieved through enhanced injury management processes.

Lost Time Hours since 2005



Highlights

July

After almost 20 years as a not-for-profit airport owned jointly by Port Stephens and Newcastle City Councils, both Councils voted to modernise the structure of Newcastle Airport enabling increased expansion.

A corporate restructure for Newcastle Airport Limited (NAL) will capitalise on future growth and expansion opportunities. The restructure will allow the airport to substantially increase its borrowings, pay dividends to its two majority shareholders (Port Stephens Council and Newcastle City Council) and allow for the introduction of third party investment if required in the future. Next steps include obtaining the concurrence of the Department of Defence to lease to the new entity and incorporation of the new structure.

Upgrades to Seaham Road were completed at a cost of \$758,000.

August

More than 80 guests from the Port Stephens community attended the Council chambers to celebrate the achievements of local heroes that were nominated for the **Port Stephens Community Awards**.

Taking out the top honour of the evening, the prestigious title of Freeman of Port Stephens was **Helen Ryan**, first female president of the Rotary Club of Nelson Bay, instigator of the Tomaree Peninsula Primary School Literacy Program and the force behind the sending of two tonnes of books to schools in Papua New Guinea.

Bernie Fitzsimons, a retired policeman, now president of the Port Stephens Suicide Prevention Network, was the recipient of the Port Stephens Medal 2012. **Terance Corcoran**, a member of the Australian RAAF, Terry retired to Medowie and has become an active member of the community, and on Friday night was the recipient of the Port Stephens Award 2012.

The title of Freeman of Port Stephens was awarded to **Glenys Francis**, retiring Councillor. Freeman of Port Stephens is an honour given to individuals who have distinguished themselves with the highest order of community service.

September

Council elections were held on 8 September and Port Stephens chose its first popularly-elected Mayor, Councillor Bruce MacKenzie and nine Councillors from three Wards;

East Ward: Councillors John Nell, Sally Dover and John Morello;

Central Ward: Councillors Chris Doohan, Geoff Dingle and Steve Tucker;

West Ward: Councillors Ken Jordan, Peter Kafer and Paul Le Mottee.

At the first meeting of the new Council, Councillor Sally Dover was elected Deputy Mayor.

To celebrate Biodiversity month in September, Port Stephens Council once again offered the annual "Creatures of the Night" spotlighting tours for free at five different locations throughout the month. These were:

- o 5 September – Salamander Bay, ages 8 - adult
- o 11 September – One Mile Beach, suitable for young children
- o 13 September – Butterwick, ages 8 - adult
- o 19 September – Soldiers Point, ages 8 - adult
- o 24 September – Tanilba Bay, suitable for young children

All walks were FREE and started at either 6.30pm or 7pm.

Lemon Tree Passage Road and Oyster Cove Road intersection was completed at a cost of \$219,000.

October

Council was successful in its bid to obtain State government funding to combat coastal erosion. An allocation of \$230,000 was granted to help stop coastal erosion at Tanilba Bay and works will commence in 2013.

Thousands of people flocked to Raymond Terrace on the long weekend when Council's Lakeside Sporting Complex was the venue for the running of the 42nd Annual NSW Aboriginal Rugby League knockout. 93 teams were registered in open age, under 17, under 15 and women's competitions. An estimated 2,500 players and officials – and many more supporters – came into the region in time for kick off.

Gan Gan Lookout redevelopment was completed at a cost of \$150,000.

November

Council hosted the Port Stephens Business Leaders Lunch, an invitation-only event is designed to be an opportunity for Port Stephens' leading business people and government agency representatives to meet and mingle with Councillors and senior Council staff.

At the event, the guests heard first-hand about plans for a \$300 million industrial and business park at Tomago, to be known as Northbank Enterprise Hub, which are currently before the Department of Planning. Northbank Enterprise Hub director David Aspinall was the guest speaker at the event only a day after the close of development's public comment. The project is expected to create 180 jobs during construction, and eight operational jobs once complete.

Shoal Bay Boat Ramp carpark was completed at a cost of \$248,000.

December

The 2013 Port Stephens Mayoral Academic Scholarships were opened and nominations called for 10 worthy recipients to receive cash to help them on their way to further education. This year, as an extra bonus, the scholarships will also encourage students to consider their physical wellbeing with the YMCA partnering with Port Stephens Council to provide a 12-month membership to each scholarship recipient.

Port Stephens residents embarking on a tertiary or trade qualification in 2013 are being encouraged to apply for a scholarship - each worth \$2,000 to contribute to costs associated with their studies - which will now also include access to YMCA aquatic and gym facilities in Port Stephens.




In its fourth year, the Port Stephens Mayoral Academic Scholarships program is a partnership between Port Stephens Council and local businesses to support the next generation of business and industry leaders. 2013 sponsors include Ampcontrol, Newcastle Airport, Sandvik, Tomago Aluminium, Macka's Sand, Raymond Terrace Business Association, Nelson Bay and District Business Chamber and Port Stephens Tourism Limited.




This month also saw the completion of the Fingal Bay Surf Club at a cost of \$3.4 million.

Principal Activities – July to December 2012







The table below sets out details of Council's principal activities as required by the Operational Plan 2012-2013 and which are required to be reported for the period 1 July 2012 to 31 December 2012. The actions are grouped according to the Group or Section with primary responsibility for the action and cross-referenced to the actions in the Operational Plan 2012-2013.

Legend:

-  Completed ahead of schedule
-  On schedule or completed on time
-  Not completed as required




Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
Corporate Services			
5.2.6	Implement the corporate restructure of the Newcastle Airport Limited		Newcastle Airport restructure is progressing. Department of Defence (Defence Support Group) approval to concurrent lease is pending.
Business Systems Support			
5.11.1	Remediate the records management service to achieve compliance		Ongoing program of work to achieve compliance through the establishment of the Records Management System will be delivered through the Records Management Remediation Program. Resource allocation was delayed and a restructure of the Section has now put appropriate staff in place to progress the project.
5.11.2	Develop and maintain agreed Knowledge Management/Information and Communication Technology business continuity services		A solution is in place and is being maintained that will allow for the recovery of Council's ICT systems and services in less than 48 hours. A successful test was carried out in November to ensure that the solution would be effective in the event of an emergency.




Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
5.11.3	Upgrade information and Communication Technology infrastructure to current industry standards	●	Following the restructure of the Section, projects were identified to be undertaken as priorities. Completed in this period were the upgrade of the Internet service and the Tomaree Library remediation. Projects commenced with investigation and design include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domain remediation messaging systems • Messaging Systems Upgrade • Citrix Upgrade • Systems for all Holiday Parks and Ngioka Centre • Raymond Terrace Before and After School Care • Raymond Terrace Community Care Centre • Family Day Care Administration Office • Salamander Bay Waste Transfer Station • New Raymond Terrace Library
5.11.4	Provide information management services at agreed service levels	●	Services were delivered within Service Agreement tolerances. Two visible customer facing services had short term interruptions. The remedial action addressing the root underlying cause is within the scope of the ICT Infrastructure remediation project due to be completed in 2013.
5.11.5	Invest in the endorsed Knowledge Management/Information and Communication Technology capabilities to support evolving business requirements	●	The Section was restructured to include the Business Improvement function - transferred from Organisational Development; and the appointment of a business analyst. We also realigned the functions of Section staff to better focus on improvement projects of which seven have commenced in this period, including upgrading the Human Resource Management System and several business systems related to Council's income-generating businesses.
Corporate Strategy & Planning			
5.2.3	Review existing and potential fees and charges to adopted a appropriate cost recovery model	●	The Financial Analysis Team has recommended that the annualised Consumer Price Index as at September be applied as a minimum increase to all Council fees where Council has discretion to set the fees. This is in accordance with the Pricing Policy and will be recommended for fees and charges for 2013-2014 to go to exhibition in April 2013.
5.10.1	Monitor and report on the implementation of all plans and strategies	●	97.7% of actions that were due were completed on or before time; 2.3 % (2 actions) were not achieved within the timeframe.

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
5.10.2	Manage the integrated Planning and Reporting Framework projects		<p>During October community engagement was undertaken to review the Community Strategic Plan: 9 October - Inter Agencies Workshop for government and NGO suppliers of services to the LGA; 23 October a conversation was held with Councillors on the process and timelines; 24 October Community Workshop at Salamander Bay; 26 October Community Workshop at Salt Ash. A Community Survey was conducted in October and November and will further inform the Integrated Planning Process in 2013.</p> <p>To ensure the voices of youth were heard in the planning process, a World Cafe event was conducted at Council involving 20 representatives of young people across the LGA.</p>
5.10.3	Track and report on State agency progress through the Community Strategic Plan indicators		The End of Term Report 2008-2012 was tabled in July 2012 and contained updates on progress towards meeting the goals of the Community Strategic Plan achieved by State agencies and the community as well as Council.
Financial Services			
5.1.1	Manage outstanding debts owed to Council		Outstanding debts are reviewed on a monthly basis with referrals to external debt collection agencies in line with Council's policy. Council aims to have a consistent debt outstanding ratio of <5% and this has been maintained.
5.1.3	Deliver Council's annual budget in line with Council's long term financial strategies		The Long Term Financial Plan has been reviewed and updated for the next financial year, maintaining Council's strategy of a break even situation in the 2014-2015 financial year. Specific annual budget parameters have been developed in line with the Treasury model in use by Council.
5.2.7	Actively apply for and secure project specific grant funding from other levels of government		The Annual Grants Commission return has been reviewed and reworked to ensure the maximum allocation to Council. All other known grant opportunities have been taken up including the Local Infrastructure Renewal Program Round One for \$1 million for road resealing. An application under Round Two has been submitted and we are currently awaiting advice on determination.
5.7.3	Review processes to undertake timely and accurate financial reporting and facilitate the Quarterly Budget Review process		The timetable for the process review has been established and will commence early 2013. Statutory Quarterly Budget Reviews were presented to Council for September and December and adopted.








Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
Organisational Development			
5.3.1	Implement the learning and development component of the Workforce Strategy	●	<p>The High Performance Leadership Coach Program face to face sessions and one to one coaching sessions are complete. A date has been scheduled in 2013 for the leadership team to revisit skills and concepts they have developed to date to further enhance and develop their leadership skills.</p> <p>The Combined Leadership team are in the process of meeting with their managers to discuss the results of the 360 Degree Leadership survey and develop plans to maintain strengths and develop opportunities for improvement.</p>
5.3.3	Implement recommendations from the sustainability review of Council's levels of service and delivery	●	<p>The Sustainability Review of all Council's services was completed as scheduled in December 2012 and resulted in efficiencies and savings amounting to more than \$2.7 million.</p> <p>Council has decided that all services would be continuously reviewed on a four-yearly cycle to ensure that improvements continue to be made to how we add value to our customers.</p>
5.3.4	Develop and implement Council's Business Excellence program	●	<p>The Business Excellence Road map has now been incorporated into the Business Improvement Program of Works that will over time involve more than 54 projects.</p>
5.7.1	Continuously improve Council's Workplace Health & Safety Systems	●	<p>During the past six months the reviewing, updating and development (where identified through internal auditing) of the Work Health and Safety Management System has continued.</p> <p>During the six month period 11 documents were reviewed and endorsed by the Health and Safety Committee along with the Health and Safety Representatives. Changes in the WHS Legislation have meant that every safety document had to be reviewed to ensure compliance to the new Act and Legislation.</p> <p>Significant achievements continue to be made in relation to safety with a noticeable reduction in lost time injuries occurring.</p> <p>The recruitment of Peter Hull, Work Health and Safety Officer has also seen an increased presence in safety awareness out in the field.</p>

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
Property Services			
5.2.1	Undertake ongoing strategic long term analysis of Council's commercial investment portfolio to determine optimal investment mix and return	●	An extensive review of the portfolio was completed in December and it was determined that for the shorter term Council would maintain its existing portfolio.
Community Planning & Environmental Services			
1.1.2	Assist and partner with Council departments, the community and local organisations to provide crime prevention and community safety advice, information and planning requirements	●	<p>"Safer by Design" audits were completed for all large scale and commercial Development Applications.</p> <p>Crime Prevention Summer/Christmas flyers were developed, printed and disseminated over the December 2012 summer holiday period.</p> <p>Flyers were placed on vehicles in beach carparks in Port Stephens and posters were erected at Council's Holiday Parks over the December holiday period.</p> <p>Port Stephens Community Safety website was initiated with 'LIKE' target met for monthly users: currently 65 "LIKES" with an annual target of 200.</p>
1.1.4	Establish a policy and guidelines for dealing with liquor licensing proposals	●	Draft Alcohol Management Policy was completed; Draft Liquor license applications Process workflow chart has been completed and emailed to stakeholders for comment; Systems view for Liquor licence applications developed.
1.3.2	Advocate for seniors and people with disabilities	●	Customer Requests were completed for pending works by Council in the community e.g. tree lopping over footpaths. Advocacy undertaken within Council for volunteer opportunities. Successful grant funding obtained for development of an ageing strategy which will commence in 2013. Successful grant funding obtained for disability upgrade of the War Memorial in Apex Park, Nelson Bay. All large scale Development Applications and commercial applications were conditioned for disability access.
1.3.1	Provide education and awareness training regarding seniors and people with disabilities and ageing populations related to planning infrastructure, facilities and Council operations	●	A brochure was developed and disseminated within Council and is now included in the new staff induction process.

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
1.3.3	Consult with the community regarding access issues and planning for seniors and people with disabilities		<p>Consultation occurs regularly with developers regarding the legislative requirements for disability access for when they lodge Development Applications. Social Planning provided support and information regarding seniors for a grant submission lodged by the partnership between the Hunter Botanic Gardens and Council for 2013 funding.</p> <p>Information regarding location of resources within Port Stephens LGA for seniors and people with disabilities is regularly updated on Council's website.</p>
1.4.2	Provide for and advocate opportunities for young people to have a voice, access resources and pathways to education/training and employment		<p>Council has been advocating for enhanced opportunities for young people to access education, training and employment through participation in bi-monthly meetings convened by Hunter Youth Express. High School Principals, representatives from adult education and local industries have met to identify and enhance opportunities for young people to access employment. This forum was initially set up by the NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet.</p> <p>Council established and convenes meetings of Raymond Terrace Community Education Hub with representatives from Council's Economic Development Unit, local business chamber, WEA and Hunter Youth Express to explore the feasibility and planning a community education hub in Raymond Terrace as an alternate education model for young people at risk. This initiative is a sub-set of the above mentioned forum.</p> <p>In November and December Council conducted an online survey of adult education and training providers to better inform and guide planning and delivery of education and training for young people as part of clear pathways to accessing employment.</p>
1.4.3	Provide advice in the planning of infrastructure and facilities for children and young people		<p>Council supported young people's involvement in planning workshops linked to the development of commercial land in Salamander Bay precinct/ shopping centre. Discussions have commenced with Strategic Planning regarding the proposed Raymond Terrace Growth Strategy and the needs of local young people. Discussions were held with Council's Property Services Section about the need for a facility in Raymond Terrace for community education. Plans for a feasibility study have been started.</p>

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
1.4.4	Facilitate networking and consultative forums for children and young people		<p>Council convenes bi-monthly meetings of the Port Stephens Youth Interagency in accordance with Council's funding agreement with the NSW State Government pertaining to Council's youth development functions.</p> <p>Council also continues to support the members of the Port Stephens Independent Youth Network.</p>
1.5.2	Plan and advocate for liveable communities		<p>Planning and advocating for liveable communities occurs on an ongoing basis and in this period included appraisal and conditioning of Development Applications regarding access provisions for people with disabilities; appraisal and conditioning of relevant Development Applications with "Safer by Design" provisions; development of an updated Disability Action Plan which will be presented to Council for consideration in first quarter of 2013; commenced a review of Council's framework pertaining to social impact assessment.</p> <p>Revisions have been made to the Development Application Guide. Proposed changes will also be made to relevant Council policies and planning instruments aligned with the new framework. Council also facilitated the four-yearly Council Community Planning Survey in November 2012 to help gain data on liveability in Port Stephens. Results currently being analysed and will be reported to Council in coming months.</p> <p>Council continued to facilitate meetings of the Port Stephens Interagency which meets every two months and provides a forum for non-government and government agencies to improve the delivery of community support services to the LGA and to respond to gaps in service delivery and/or pressing or emerging social issues.</p>
1.5.3	Provide forums to strengthen the delivery of community services and facilities to respond to existing, emerging and future community needs		<p>In accordance with Council's service specification with NSW State government Department of Family & Community Services, Council convenes Port Stephens Interagency meetings every two months. This forum of non-government and government organisations provides opportunity for information sharing, work shopping of key social issues, advocacy and lobbying, forging of partnerships and seeking of available Council and non-Council funding opportunities.</p>






Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
1.5.4	Provide access to information to assist the community and service providers to access a range of support services and opportunities to enhance wellbeing and lifestyle	●	<p>Council continued to maintain and update its online 'Community Directory' listing of available community services which local residents can access electronically or download as a hard copy.</p> <p>We also continued to disseminate relevant Council and non-Council information to community service providers several times a week through a Council-established email link called 'MyLink Port Stephens'.</p>
2.1.4	Review Council's Cultural Program	●	<p>This review was completed and Council adopted a proposed revised cultural framework and associated changes to the role and functions of Council's Strategic Arts & Cultural Committee.</p>
2.4.1	Promote opportunities to celebrate Aboriginal culture and local cultural diversity.	●	<p>Council provided financial support of approximately \$2,000 towards the 2012 NAIDOC Week Celebrations along with in-kind support (advice, information) in July 2012.</p> <p>Council also hosted an Aboriginal Art Exhibition and smoking ceremony at Council's Administration Building as part of the 2012 NAIDOC Week Celebrations.</p> <p>Council provided support towards the annual Indigenous Football State Knockout held at Lakeside, Raymond Terrace in October 2012.</p> <p>Council has worked with Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council on reviewing wording and procedures associated with the Traditional Welcome to Country at Council meetings. The Traditional Welcome has been revised and proposed draft wording will be considered by Council's Aboriginal Strategic Committee when it next meets in February 2013.</p>
2.4.4	Provide cultural consultation forums to strengthen the development and delivery of cultural services and infrastructure	●	<p>Council has continued to support the bi-monthly meetings of the Port Stephens Cultural Interagency which are well attended with regular distribution of information and sharing of resources. Some strong partnerships between local cultural groups have emerged.</p> <p>Revision of the Strategic Arts and Culture Committee as approved by Council in July has now been fully implemented with a revised Schedule to the Constitution and framework, and revised membership.</p>

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
3.1.1	Increase environmental awareness and continue the implementation of Council's programs to protect and improve biodiversity across the LGA		Environmental education programs continued in this period, including presentations, tours and discovery walks. Very popular were the five 'Creatures by Night' walks held in September 2012.
3.1.3	Review land use strategies and policies with a view to increased protection of biodiversity in the LGA and of environmental processes		Council has commenced updating its Development Control Plan to incorporate appropriate land use controls in line with the new format Local Environment Plan.
3.1.4	Promote good land management practices on private and government land to protect flora and fauna, and water quality		Council has continued its program of aquatic weed control and advertised in the local paper when spraying is scheduled to occur. Council has also continued its implementation of the Regional Weeds Strategy and Noxious Weed management program. Volunteers and contractors have undertaken extensive bushland reserve revegetation work across the LGA.
3.3.1	Work with the Rural Fire Services to better align bush fire management with ecological standards		Council will discuss improvements with the Rural Fire Service after adoption of the new Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan.
3.4.1	Work to improve land use management in agricultural areas through partnerships with landholders and other agencies		There have been limited opportunities to assist with projects on some agricultural land due to limited landholder interest however we have worked with other agencies such as the Catchment Management Authority and Department of Agriculture to help them develop some innovative strategies to assist landholders. One of the recent outcomes includes a Catchment Action Plan for this region.
3.4.2	Participate in the Regional Weeds Strategy and work with all stakeholders to mitigate the spread of weeds on private and public land		The Weeds Team met monthly with the Regional Weed Management Professional Team at Hunter Councils. The teams discussed the weeds strategy, new weed infestations, updated projects and dealt with grants. An outcome of these is not only grant funding but also joint weed projects across the region.
3.4.3	Participate in aquatic weed treatments in accordance with the Regional Weeds Strategy		Initial aquatic weed treatments for Alligator weed, Water Hyacinth and Salvinia were completed for the Williams, Paterson and Hunter rivers as well as local impoundments. These treatments were effective but will need follow up treatments in January to March 2013.

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
3.6.2	Prepare local area strategies in growth areas	●	The Raymond Terrace/Heatherbrae Growth Strategy is currently being prepared. Background data collection and analysis are almost complete with the finalisation of the Traffic Study and economic analysis. The project will now commence with preliminary targeted consultation of stake holders prior to drafting of the document.
3.6.4	Prepare infrastructure management plans to facilitate new developments	●	The infrastructure planning work is continuing on the Kings Hill (North Raymond Terrace) Urban Release Area. The Traffic Study is currently being finalised by the consultant and a developer contributions plan is being prepared and will be presented to Council in early 2013.
3.6.5	Prepare the draft Port Stephens Principal Local Environmental Plan (LEP) for exhibition	●	The draft Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan 2012 was placed on exhibition from 1 November to 14 December 2012. Submissions are now being reviewed prior to a report to Council in March 2013.
3.6.6	Review the Port Stephens Development Control Plan for exhibition with Principal LEP	●	A review of the Development Control Plan 2007 is currently being undertaken. This review is primarily addressing the consequential changes required to implement the new draft Principal Local Environmental Plan 2012 once gazetted. A report will be presented to Council for exhibition of the document in early 2013.
3.6.7	Maintain property, strategic plans and certification processes and information within agreed Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and Local Government Act requirements	●	Development of a new template and improvements in presentation of the required data of the Planning Certificates has been completed.
Development Assessment & Compliance			
1.1.3	Conduct regulatory enforcement programs, including advice and education	●	For the six months to December 2012 Council through its regulatory officers (Rangers and Inspectors) dealt with a total of 1,251 compliance and regulatory incidents, of which 19 were deemed to be critical. Please refer to the graph at Attachment 2.
1.1.5	Manage the Development Compliance program	●	During the period Council dealt with 21 issues related to non-compliance with development and building conditions of consent, of which 2 were deemed critical. In the same period Council dealt with 97 issues related to illegal developments or land use, or illegal occupation of buildings. Please refer to the graph at Attachment 3.

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
3.7.1	Manage the development application and compliance processes to meet/exceed targets	●	During the period Council processed 429 Development Applications with a value of \$137,480,813 with a median net processing time of 24.5 day.
3.7.2	Manage the construction and building certifications process to meet/exceed targets	●	During the period Council issued 224 Construction Certificates with a median processing time of 22 days.
5.2.5	Develop and implement a campaign for on-going promotion of Council's Accredited Building Surveying Professional Services	●	Council completed its promotion campaign which resulted in an increase in market share to 76.9%.
Economic Development & Communications			
4.2.2	Assist local businesses to source state and federal funding to assist local business associations with community activities that retain consumer spending and attract visitors	●	<p>Council secured the NSW IRB Lifesaving State Championships held at Fingal Bay in July. There were 350 competitors and crowds of over 1,000 people across the weekend. This event has been confirmed again for 2013.</p> <p>Council sourced the NSW Country Under 17 Cricket Championships held in Raymond Terrace in November 2012. The economic impact was assessed at \$200,000.</p> <p>Council sponsored the 12th Annual Tastes at the Bay event held in Nelson Bay in November 2012. The event recorded the highest attendance numbers to date with over 25,000 people over the weekend.</p>
4.2.3	Provide advisory assistance to business associations	●	<p>Advice provided to Port Stephens business associations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Recreation Vehicle Strategies; · Administration support; · Business mentoring; · Financial Management; · Town Branding; · Town safety cameras; · Insurance provision; · Business retention and expansion surveys; · Business coaching programs; · Social media business opportunities; · Event management.
4.3.1	Provide developers and investors with pre-development application advice	●	A total of 55 Port Stephens developers and investors were provided with pre-development advice in the period.

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
4.3.2	Facilitate programs to provide small business advisory and support services	●	Small business advisory services were provided in Raymond Terrace three times a month and one day a month at Nelson Bay. Twenty-two business mentoring client sessions were completed in the period, including seven start-up businesses and established businesses with a turnover of \$1.7 million.
4.4.1	Identify skills gaps in business and liaise with training providers to tailor training to suit	●	Training providers completed training courses in the period including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job ready training; • Barista training; • Literacy, Language and Numeracy training; • Job Skills courses.
4.4.2	Maintain relationships with training providers and facilitate delivery of training services	●	Council's education and training facility - Communicate Port Stephens - facilitated the following courses in the period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barista training; • iPad training; • Work experience placements (school students and job seekers); • Internet access and training; • Job seekers training; • Seniors IT Training; • TAFE Literacy, Language and Numeracy training.
4.5.2	Aggregate demand to form a business core to support lobbying for priority investment	●	The business case will be developed in 2013 once information has been secured via business surveys which will be continuing until June 2013.
4.7.2	Advocate that the State government develop a Regional Transport Strategy including identification of key transport hubs	●	The draft NSW Long Term Master Transport Plan was released on 4 September 2012. Port Stephens Council's advocacy was via a submission that was part of that of the Hunter Councils. The Plan has a chapter on "Providing Essential Access for Regional NSW". As part of that chapter reference is made to better transport links into Newcastle and the Lower Hunter is recognised as a Regional Growth Centre.
4.7.3	Advocate for improved access for public transport and improved transport connections	●	The chapter mentioned above also makes reference to better bus services for regional towns and cities (more frequent services, wider network coverage and better integration between travel modes).
5.9.1	Monitor and report on the effectiveness of the Customer Service Charter and the Customer Request Management System	●	During the period Council responded to 2,384 new customer service requests. Please refer to Attachment 4 – Customer Requests.

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
Civil Assets			
1.2.2	Undertake planning, inspections and maintenance programs for all Council owned and managed assets		The Civil Assets Section Sustainability Review highlighted the gap between the "desired level of inspections" on our assets and "actual level of inspections" on our assets for risk, compliance, and safety. An action plan to reduce this gap has been developed and is to be implemented in the next eight months.
2.1.3	Maintain the performance, standard and appearance of those leisure facilities across the LGA that are within Council's control		The performance, standard, and appearance of the leisure centres is based on the number of requests received and the timeliness in responding to these requests. To date the number of requests is minimal and all responses have been actioned immediately.
4.7.4	Continue planning processes to build the Fingal Bay Link Road		The acquisition of the land near the intersection of Nelson Bay Road and the proposed Fingal Bay Link Road has not yet been resolved and negotiations with the land owners is still ongoing. Council remains committed to completing this long term transport infrastructure.
5.2.7	Actively apply for and secure project specific grant funding from other levels of government		In addition to the traditional funds gained from the Federal and State governments, Council has been successful in gaining a \$1 million dollar loan with interest subsidised through the Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme for the purpose of increasing our road resealing program. Council has also been successful in gaining funds for the Tanilba Bay Foreshore Erosion Protection Program. These works will be carried out over a number of years.
5.4.1	Review and enhance Council's asset management plans for all major asset groups and create and integrated Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) and works plan		Draft Strategic Asset Management Plan Version 3 has been completed including the 10 year forward capital works plan.

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
Community & Recreation Services			
1.2.1	Continue to monitor external operators and event organiser to ensure they implement effective risk treatment plans	●	<p>Expression of Interest Request for commercial operators on community and crown land was undertaken during this quarter. Strong response from the market has resulted in new licences for these sites.</p> <p>Commercial Fitness Operators Policy was endorsed by Council during this quarter. This Policy enables operators to access approved sites for the operation of their small businesses and do so within a formal agreement.</p>
1.3.4	Support a range of programs to aged and disabled clients and provide assessment and brokerage of services to facilitate healthy aging through Community Options programs	●	<p>As of 30 November 2012, ComPacks cease to continue as program went out to tender, and Hunter Health was the successful applicant.</p> <p>Two new tenders submitted on the 21 December 2012 to the Department of Mental Health & Ageing for new Mental Health programs for the Port Stephens LGA. Successful applicants will be notified in March 2013.</p>
1.3.5	Provide therapeutic and rehabilitation activities for people with disabilities through the Ngioka Centre	●	<p>Ngioka Horticultural Therapy Centre underwent a sustainability review during this period. The result is that the Centre will operate for two years with a focus on developing and delivery of a new business model that reduces the ratepayer subsidy by an agreed amount.</p>
1.5.1	Work with partners and volunteers to improve facilities and service delivery	●	<p>Volunteer Strategy Sustainability Review was completed in December 2012. Recommendations are being implemented during 2013. Main focus for volunteering is to create an environment where volunteering is easy, safe, adds value and complies with legislation.</p> <p>The Gan Gan Lookout Revitalisation project is a partnership project between Council and the Rotary Club of Nelson Bay. The project was effectively completed during the quarter with a project debrief to occur next quarter.</p>
1.4.1	Provide access to a range of social, development and educational activities and care programs for children and young people through the Children's Services, Youth Services and Library Services Programs	●	<p>Council offered long day care at Medowie Children's Centre, a mobile pre-school for up to 20 children aged between three and six years, and before/after school care at Medowie (up to 45 children) and Raymond Terrace (up to 50 children), and vacation care at Raymond Terrace and Medowie.</p> <p>Council also coordinated a regional in-home Family Day Care program for children aged from six weeks to 13 years.</p> <p>Library activities in the period were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful 2012 Sumer Reading Program

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
2.1.1	Maintain and operate open spaces, children's services, and services for seniors and people with disabilities	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stories in Karuah (Children's literacy) • Pre-School visits (Mobile Library) • Read & Rhyme and Story Time numbers continued to grow • Author visits from Dr Ian Pfennigwerth, Jaye Ford, Sharon Snir, Craig Hamilton and Don Tate • HSC High School visits • National Simultaneous Storytime • International Women's Day Morning Tea • Youth Night at Raymond Terrace • Autism Rainbow Day at Thou Walla • Legal Answers Foundation Training workshop • Storytime – Literacy for parents • Book Week outreach program (Salamander Childcare Centre) • Teddy Bear Storytime & Sleepover • Keith Whelan Writers workshops • School holiday programs <p>There were no disruption to the provision of open space, children's services and services that support seniors or people with disabilities during this quarter.</p>
2.1.2	Encourage commercial land/water operations to promote tourism	●	<p>An Expression of Interest Request for commercial operators on community and crown land was undertaken during this period. Strong response from the market which has resulted in new licences for these sites.</p> <p>Commercial Fitness Operators Policy was endorsed by Council during this quarter. This Policy enables operators to access approved sites for the operation of their small businesses and do so within a formal agreement.</p> <p>Commencement of one year trial of staff sharing between Community and Recreation Section and Business and Community Relation Section to develop and deliver new events management process that streamline and encourage tourism events.</p>

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
2.2.1	Develop and manage contracts and licences with internal and external providers	●	<p>Licence development is in progress with Nelson Bay Tennis Club.</p> <p>The end of Girl Guides Association lease on Raymond Terrace Girl Guides Hall occurred and planning in place to locate new tenant.</p> <p>New licence agreements are now in place for four new beach front operators.</p> <p>A sub lease for Fingal Bay Surf Life Saving Club progressed during this period. Completion is expected in next quarter.</p>
2.3.1	Implement the Draft Open Space Strategy	●	The draft Open Space Strategy is being further revised to account for the provisions of the draft Local Environment Plan and it is anticipated that it will be adopted by Council in Quarter Four of this year.
3.3.2	Contribute to the implementation and review of the Bushfire Management Plan	●	Port Stephens Council Bushfire Management Plan has not been reviewed since 2007. Focus is on updating this plan in context of the Lower Hunter Zone Bushfire Management Plan and report to Council in Quarter Four of this year.
Operations			
5.4.2	Continuously improve the project management process to always align with best practice	●	During this period Council developed and disseminated a new project management approach and it is currently being field tested.
5.4.5	Project manage and complete capital works projects for parks, roads and related assets safely, within budget and to agreed standards	●	Please refer to the schedule of completed capital works at Attachment 1.
5.4.6	Deliver safe maintenance related operations services for parks, roads, waste transfer and other community facilities that are valued by our community	●	Council's maintenance program was delivered as scheduled without significant disruption from weather or other factors.
General Manager's Office			
1.5.6	Conduct citizenship ceremonies as appropriate throughout the year	●	Council conducted a citizenship ceremony on 22 August 2012.

Operational Plan Ref.	Description	Status	Comment
5.1.5	Work with Hunter Councils to identify any services and activities that it could provide on Council's behalf	●	The General Manager: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · chaired the Panel that prepared the Regional Submission on NSW Transport Master Plan; · participated in Hunter Councils General Managers Advisory Committee that manages Hunter Councils' operations; · chaired the Board of Hunter Councils Inc. that operates the records storage business and Local Government Legal, and was appointed Chair of Local Government Legal at 2012 Annual General Meeting.
5.4.3	Advocate on behalf of Port Stephens LGA to State and Federal governments for improved and affordable utilities for our citizens	●	The General Manager held regular consultation and briefings with local Federal and State Members of Parliament, He also participated in consultations to effect the restructure of Newcastle Airport Limited to Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd.
5.6.1	Advocate for and build stronger partnerships between Council and State and Federal agencies, regional and private sector potential partners	●	Senior Council staff participated in regular discussions with Department of Defence, NSW Department of Premier & Cabinet regional office, Department of Planning, Division of Land and Property Management, Division of Minerals & Energy and Division of Local Government.
5.6.2	Provide an on-going program of development for Councillors	●	The newly elected Council attended Code of Conduct training on 27 September 2012. A full briefing was also provided to the new Council detailing all aspects of their roles as Mayor and Councillors. Council launched the new Mayor & Councillors Learning & Development page on Council's website.
5.7.4	Convene Council's Audit Committee each quarter	●	Council's Audit Committee's quarterly meeting was held on 25 October 2012.
5.7.5	Implement Council's Internal Audit Program	●	During this period Council's internal auditors, Lawler Partners, conducted audits of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Section 94 contributions; · Capital Projects/Works Management; · Asset Maintenance; · Financial Modelling.
5.7.2	Legal Services Ensure the provision of quality legal services to the Council	●	A proactive approach to legal matters remains a key focus and has contributed towards early settlement in some matters and an overall reduction in court proceedings.

Attachment 1 – Completed Projects

The table below lists capital works projects completed in the period 1 July 2012 to 31 December 2012. Costs shown reflect the latest estimates and may not include invoices yet to be received from external suppliers.

Project	Expenditure 2012-2013 Financial Year
Pavement rehabilitation: Seaham Road segment 110	\$824,138
Pavement rehabilitation: Seaham Road segment 70	\$758,000
Pavement Rehabilitation: Boyd Boulevard	\$265,569
Pavement rehabilitation: Lemon Tree Passage Road segment 210	\$218,831
Pavement rehabilitation: Port Stephens Drive	\$216,891
Pavement rehabilitation: Medowie Road	\$91,347
Bagnall's Beach Avenue: upgrade pathway	\$93,636
Medowie Hall: lighting	\$27,602
Bob Cairns Reserve, Salamander Bay: Sewer	\$9,750
Taylor's Beach: Wharf	\$15,008
Conroy Park and Little Beach: Sand Nourishment	\$98,986
Kirrang Drive, Medowie: Levee Bank	\$250,000
Fingal Bay Surf Club construction	\$3,500,000
Gan Gan Lookout Redevelopment	\$155,000
Mallabula Oval: grandstand	\$15,040
Tilligerry Aquatic Centre: splash pad	\$87,000
Shoal Bay: boat ramp carpark	\$248,000
Henderson Park: paths stage 1	\$36,744
Medowie tennis courts: surfacing	\$35,124

Attachment 2 – Regulatory Compliance All Categories by Ward

The following definitions apply to the severity of regulatory compliance incidents:

Critical incident:

Immediate action required
Dangerous to human health, public safety, environmental health

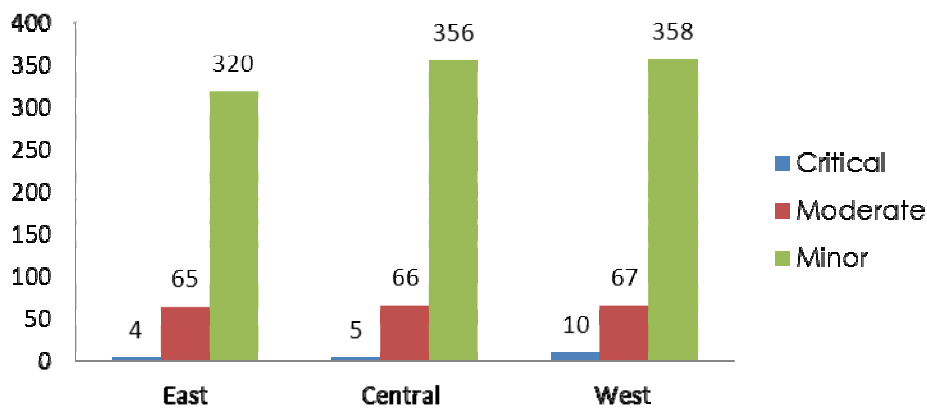
Moderate incident:

Important but not urgent
Moderate risk to human health, public safety, environmental health

Minor incident:

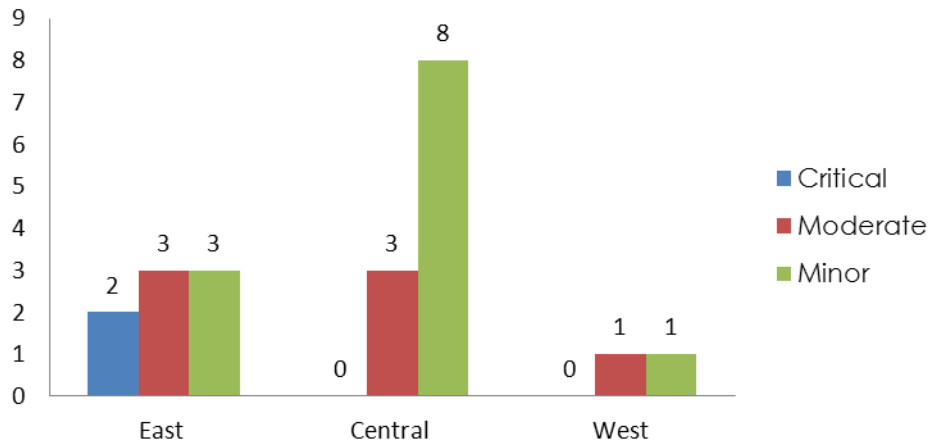
Needs attention but not urgent
Minimal or very low risk to human health, public safety, environmental health

**Regulatory Compliance Incidents - All Categories
July - December 2012**

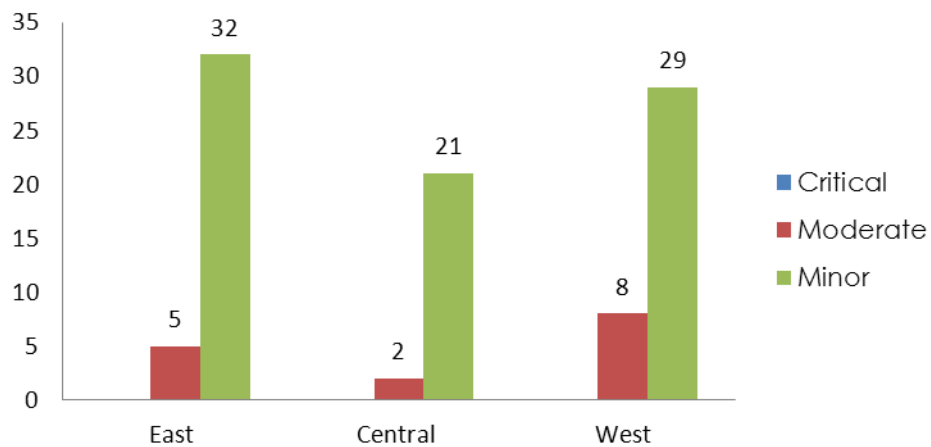


Attachment 3 – Development and Building Compliance By Ward

**Development & Building - Non Compliance
July - December 2012**



**Illegal Land Use / Occupation of Buildings
July - December 2012**



Attachment 4 – Customer Requests

The graph and table below detail the number of customer requests carried forward from the previous period, together with new requests, closed requests and requests to be carried forward to the next six monthly period.

Requests are grouped into seven categories:

1. Local Roads, Roadside Management, Street Lighting
2. Foreshore and Beaches
3. Parks, Reserves, Cemeteries & Associated Facilities
4. Drainage
5. Footpaths
6. Vandalism & Graffiti
7. Traffic

