



Annual Report 2011–12

Cardinia Shire Council

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(ABN: 32 210 906 807)

Henty Way, Pakenham

PO Box 7, Pakenham Vic 3810

Phone: 1300 787 624

Fax: (03) 5941 3784

Email: mail@cardinia.vic.gov.au

Web: www.cardinia.vic.gov.au

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Overview

Our vision

Cardinia Shire will be developed in a planned manner to enable future generations to enjoy and experience the diverse and distinctive characteristics of our municipality.

Our commitment

In all our dealings, we will be honest and ethical and respect the views of individuals. We will provide leadership to ensure the long-term sustainability of our communities and townships. We will be mindful of the social, environmental and economic impacts of our decisions and ensure future generations benefit from our decisions. We will practise good governance and meet recognised best practice standards. We will work to achieve excellence in every aspect of Council's activities.

Our logo

Council's logo, adopted in 2000, includes the design elements of a rising sun and a bird. The rising sun symbol links to a translation of the name 'Cardinia' from the language of the area's traditional owners, the Bunurong and Wurundjeri people, which is 'look to the rising sun'.

The graphic symbol of the sun also represents a hoof print to acknowledge the history of the 'pack tracks' the early settlers used to travel through the area to Gippsland.

Also significant to the municipality is the legend of the mythical 'bunyip' that inhabited the Koo Wee Rup swamp area. One extraction of this legend is that it is based on a rare bird that once inhabited the swamp – the 'bittern' bird. Hence, the inclusion of the bird symbol in the logo design.

Councillors 2011–12

Cardinia Shire Council elections were last held in November 2008. The Councillors elected will serve for a four-year period until October 2012. The elected Councillors are as follows.

Central Ward

Cr George Blenkhorn

First elected 2008

Mayor 2010–11

Council delegate:

- Australia Day Planning Committee
- Arts and Culture Reference Group
- CAN 11 Alliance
- Chief Executive Officer Appraisal Committee
- South East Region Mayors and CEOs' group

Cr Brett Owen

First elected 2005

Council delegate:

- Australia Day Planning Committee
- Disability Advisory Committee
- Graffiti Reference Group
- Grants Evaluation Committee
- Local Safety Committee
- Municipal Association of Victoria (substitute)
- Youth Strategy Reference Group

Cr Collin Ross

First elected 2008

Council delegate:

- Audit Committee (to May 2012)
- Cardinia Life Board
- Grants Evaluation Committee
- Metropolitan Local Government Waste Forum
- South East Business Park Project Control Group
- Victorian Local Governance Association (substitute)

Ranges Ward

Cr Graeme Legge OAM JP

First elected 1997

Mayor 2000–01, 2001–02, 2009–10

Council delegate:

- Audit Committee (from May 2012)
- Disability Advisory Committee
- Casey–Cardinia Library Corporation (substitute)
- Casey–Cardinia Local History Reference Group
- Chief Executive Officer Appraisal Committee
- Education Task Force
- Emergency Management Committee
- Grants Evaluation Committee
- Herb Thomas Memorial Trust
- Heritage Study Review Steering Committee
- Housing Strategy Steering Committee
- Inter-Council Aboriginal Consultative Committee
- Cardinia Foundation

Cr Ed Chatwin (Mayor 2011–12)

First elected 2005

Council delegate:

- Audit Committee
- Australia Day Planning Committee
- Casey–Cardinia Library Corporation
- Chief Executive Officer Appraisal Committee
- Emerald Lake Park Advisory Committee
- Interface Councils Group
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- National Growth Areas Alliance
- Positive Ageing Steering Committee
- Victorian Local Governance Association

Bunyip Ward

Cr Graeme Moore

First elected at a by-election held on 19 March 2011 to fill the vacancy caused by then Cr Bill Pearson's resignation.

Council delegate:

- Mt Shamrock Quarry Extension Environmental Review Committee
- Cardinia Life Board

Port Ward

Cr Stuart Halligan

First elected 2008

Council delegate:

- Mornington Peninsula and Westernport Biosphere Reserve Foundation
- South East Business Park Project Control Group
- Victorian Desalination Project Community Liaison Group
- Westernport Catchment Implementation Committee
- Yallock Drainage Advisory Committee to Melbourne Water

CEO's report

I am pleased to present the 2011–12 Cardinia Shire Council Annual Report. Council took on many challenges and opportunities in the year with much commitment and energy.

Our Council Plan lists actions across four policy areas: Our people; Our environment; Our community and Our economy. The report outlines our performance on the actions in these areas.

Leadership and governance

Council continued its role as a strong and effective advocate, lobbying for action on important local issues, particularly aged care, education and transport.

Community facilities, services, and programs received a boost; more than 50 per cent of applications lodged with State and Federal governments were successful. This has meant over \$11 million worth of grants approved. Approximately \$2.5 million will help Council implement the Prevention Community Model – a national push tackling obesity and promoting healthier living. Cardinia Shire is one of 14 municipalities in Victoria collaborating with other levels of government to lead the way in this 'Australian first' tailored health plan (see page 11).

Responsible financial management

In 2011–12, rising costs and the Shire's population and baby boom led Council to increase rates by 6.25 per cent (compared to 6.9 per cent in 2010–11). The rise was necessary to meet challenges associated with rapid growth while continuing service delivery and making improvements to community facilities and infrastructure.

The capital works program of \$28.6 million (an increase of \$5.6 million from 2010–11) helped ensure all parts of the Shire had access to a range of services, upgrades and initiatives (see page 15).

A new garbage and recycling waste collection contract has resulted in savings and improved service throughout the year. In preparing Council's 2012–13 budget, we were able to maintain the current garbage charge at the previous year's level to minimise price increases due to the potential impact of the carbon tax.

Organisation effectiveness

Council worked hard to invest in its staff by providing a range of development opportunities, including the Cultural Strengthening and Leadership program and online Corporate Training Plan. An organisational review of the 'Cardinia way values' was undertaken by all staff. The new framework supports Council's vision with five key values, customer focus, communication, respect, accountability and teamwork. These values encourage staff to improve the way we do things and deliver better, more effective services for our community (see page 47).

In dollar terms, we have delivered an additional \$847,000 worth of efficiencies for the 2011–12 year – comprising both real and opportunity savings that has increased Council's capacity to deliver its services. The improvements build on the \$2.37 million delivered in the preceding four years, producing \$3.22 million in savings for the five years (see page 45).

Securing our future

A key focus for Council staff has been to carefully plan in the growth corridor and secure the future viability of our smaller towns. A major highlight of 2011–12 was the State Government's approval of the *Officer Precinct Structure Plan (OPSP)*. Structure plans in Beaconsfield and Pakenham were also prepared to help guide the area's growth and development (see page 22).

Support for rural parts of the Shire continued to be a priority with infrastructure upgrades to several townships, including Bunyip, Cockatoo, Emerald, Gembrook, Koo Wee Rup, Nar Nar Goon, Tynong and Upper Beaconsfield (see page 15).

Works on Council's major projects progressed well. Hollins Children's Centre and Council's new youth facility My Place are two significant projects completed in the past year that will help secure the Shire's future. Both facilities provide a multitude of services to benefit the health and wellbeing of many families and young people (see pages 8 and 10).

Sustainability

Council continued to reduce greenhouse emissions and took action on several sustainability issues. The Bunyip carbon sink is complete enabling Council to offset vehicle fleet emissions using 12-hectares of trees, shrubs and grasses. Purchasing light vehicles with lower fuel consumptions and lower financial whole-of-life costs was still a priority.

In a first for Council, we gave incentives to residents to reduce the amount of waste they generated for landfill; ratepayers were able to exchange their 120-litre bin for an 80-litre option and receive a \$30 rate rebate. A separate \$30 rebate was also available for those who purchased a compost bin (see page 20).

Challenges ahead

Our priority is to continue making the Shire the best possible place to live, work, raise a family and do business for new and existing residents. We embrace this challenge and will continue to work with residents and advocate to other levels of government to make this happen.

We have a responsibility to manage growth and support our diverse communities. Creating job opportunities close to home is important for the wellbeing of our community and the local economy. Providing services and projects that help protect and enhance our natural environment for future generations is just as vital.

Thank you

The achievements in this annual report could not have happened without the efforts and commitment of Council staff, in partnership with the community and Councillors. Thank you and congratulations to all staff for their work in making the wellbeing of the community their priority. Together, all of us who work for Cardinia Shire Council look forward to another exciting and rewarding year ahead.

Garry McQuillan
Chief Executive Officer

2011–12 Snapshot of service provision

The following is a ‘snapshot’ of services delivered by Cardinia Shire Council compared to previous financial years. This is not a comprehensive list of Council services.

Table 1. Snapshot of service provision

	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12
After school care places	285	257	253
Before school care places	195	212	227
Birth notices	1,125	1,227	1,405
Bridges and major culverts maintained	204	212	217
Building permits lodged	2,510	2,481	2,098
Footpaths	386	430	466
Garbage collected (tonnes)	14,836	14,746	15,261
Immunisations	8,526	7,924	7,883
Increase in number of rateable properties (percentage based on previous year)	5.29%	7.14%	6.96%
New animal registrations	2,878	2,875	3,525
Parks and reserves maintained (including road treatments)	647	707	745
Planning applications	972	950	890
Public facilities managed	401	405	407
Recycling collected (tonnes)	6,144	7,996	7,977
Roads (sealed) maintained (km)	538	560	584
Roads (unsealed) maintained (km)	875	874	874
Underground drains maintained (km)	464	501	544
Vacation care places	165	120	165
Waste diverted from landfill (percentage)	40%	45%	46%
Youth contacts with Council	25,209	25,355	23,417

Highlights and achievements

Cardinia Shire Council develops its Council Plan, outlining goals, services and programs, around four key result areas.

- Our people
- Our environment
- Our community
- Our economy

This section highlights Council's achievements over the 2011–12 financial year in each of these key result areas.

Our people

Goal: We support a variety of lifestyles through programs that promote and develop the wellbeing of Cardinia Shire's people.

Access to a variety of services for all

Over the past 12 months, Council continued to implement and review services to ensure community needs were being met.

Pakenham Library, Hall and U3A officially opened in July and Council held a celebration ball to signify the opening of the new hall.

Council completed works on Hollins Children's Centre. The centre is co-located within the Cardinia Lakes shopping precinct and a future primary school. The facility features two kindergarten rooms, multipurpose and occasional care room, community kitchen, toy library, and maternal and child health (MCH) and early intervention services. The centre takes its name from Sister Lillian Hollins who was instrumental in establishing the Shire's first infant welfare health service in 1934.

Henry Road East Children's Centre is in its initial development stages and Council expects it to open in February 2014. In June, Council received \$1.4 million from the State Government towards its development. The centre will be co-located with a primary school and provide two kindergarten rooms, multipurpose and occasional care room, meeting and outdoor spaces, MCH services and a play area. Council is exploring opportunities to provide space in this centre for much-needed early childhood intervention services.

The '286 pregnancy to parenthood' program supported the health and wellbeing of two pregnant women (from 28 weeks) and 19 families with infants (up to six months). These residents were 'at risk' of domestic violence, mental illness, drug and alcohol abuse. The '286' in the program name stands for women 28 weeks pregnant and families with infants up to six months.

Council's Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) service provided care to children across 10 sites and took 28,322 bookings. A new program began at Koo Wee Rup, and programs at Pakenham Springs and Pakenham Lakeside primary schools received a record 278 applications. Pakenham's fast-growing population and unprecedented demand for limited places contributed to the increase. Council was forced to prioritise applications for the first

time, agreed to an increase in places at Pakenham Springs Primary School with the State Government, and negotiated additional space at Pakenham Lakeside Primary School. A BPAY system was also implemented to simplify and collect outstanding payments.

The PlayStart Van, a mobile playgroup van and toy library, supported an average of 72 families per week and coordinated five 'Playgroup in the park' sessions each week in local parks and community facilities in Cockatoo, Garfield, Gembrook, Koo Wee Rup and Pakenham. The Council program won a 2012 National Award for Local Government for 'Improving Services to Remote Communities' in May. By the end of 2011–12, 43 community and 25 supported playgroups were in place.

Council held its annual Road Safety Expo and Children's Day in October. More than 2,000 people attended the free event that promoted children's services and road safety. Popular attractions were the air ambulance helicopter and car and truck displays from Victoria's emergency service agencies. The event was coordinated by Council with Best Start Partnership, Victoria Police, CFA, RoadSafe, Parks Victoria and SES, supported by sponsorships from local business operators and organisations.

The 2011 Early Years conference, also in October, focused on 'creating a child-friendly city'. A total of 130 early years professionals attended, hearing about how the area is providing for the needs of its people, especially children. Keynote speakers included Pam Cahir, Julie Rudner and David Engwicht who explored ways to create child-friendly communities.

Council continued its support of the 4Cs Food Bank which provides crisis support, including emergency food, clothing and shelter, to residents. Council ensured the service had appropriate premises, direct grants, and staff programs to provide regular donations and seasonal food donations.

Improved access to youth services and facilities

Council provided various activities, programs and services for young people aged 10–25 who live, work, study or have a connection with the area. More than 23,400 contacts were made with young people in Council's youth activities, programs and services in 2011–12. Of these contacts with young people, 6,917 were through Council's mobile youth facility MYBus.

Council delivered an educational and developmental program called RAW (Resilience Awareness Workshop) to all Grade 6 students in the Shire. The program was in response to Council's annual youth forum survey, which found bullying to be the number one issue for 10–13 year olds. The survey captured the voices of more than 3,000 young people (25% of the Shire's youth population). This feedback helps Council with needs, issues and aspirations of local young people. Two other interface councils have since adopted the model and others are considering it in order to strengthen the evidence base for young people living in the interface areas.

The talents of 13 Pakenham Secondary College students were showcased through Council's SAY It! program in Term 2. Students participated in a variety of media and artistic experiences. The result was a documentary and CD of five original songs about a variety of social issues. Council will use the product in schools and the wider community to raise awareness of youth issues, increase positive images of young people and highlight the talents of participants.

Council, local artist Tara Kingston and Year 7 students at Pakenham Secondary College completed a mural for the school in October. The project applied the school's curriculum of art, mathematics and geography while exploring Pakenham's past, present and future in graphic form.

A workshop educating young people on the possible consequences of high-risk behaviours ran at seven secondary schools. 'Todd's story', coordinated by local teenager Todd Hansen, Victoria Police Pakenham and Council, received an overwhelming response from the schools and students. The workshop incorporated a DVD presentation highlighting the story of Todd who stole a car, despite being unlicensed and alcohol affected, and was later involved in a major car crash that caused a serious acquired brain injury.

Twenty Cardinia Shire students participated in Council's Young Leaders Program; building on existing leadership abilities and developing other life skills to use within their school and community. Council selected the students from nine secondary schools and OzChild's Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) program.

Sixty young people enjoy a supervised, six-day camp at Portsea in the September school holidays. Students took part in a range of activities, including snorkelling, surfing, movie making, basic first aid, fishing and a disco and talent show.

Electronic Productions (Council's FReeZA committee) organised eight FReeZA events attended by a record 2,880 young people. FReeZA is a Victorian Government program supporting young Victorians to get involved in community life by planning and running drug-, smoke- and alcohol-free music and cultural events for other young people. Cardinia Shire events included a music night, Battle of the Bands and Pakenham Youth Festival (Council's National Youth Week celebration) attended by 2,100 young people.

In addition to these programs and workshops, Council's Youth Services team delivered:

- Ignite program with Oz Child Community VCAL students (developed a short film that tackled the effects of drinking)
- Drum Beat program (music)
- 18 school holiday activities
- 12 dance workshops
- six Party Safe workshops
- four poetry slams
- four 'Shout Out' programs (self-esteem)
- school lunch-time programs at three secondary schools
- three after-school programs

Council's new youth facility My Place is now complete and will be operational in 2012–13. My Place will provide young people, parents and professionals with information and advice on a range of topics. The facility will open five days per week for young people aged 10–25. Services operating from My Place include Early In Life Mental Health, LINK Employment and Training, Marillac, South East Drug and Alcohol Service (SEADS), Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre and TaskForce Community Agency. Council adopted the Youth Strategy 2012–16 in May 2012 and will launch it at the official opening of My Place in August 2012.

Learning opportunities for all ages

Council supported and advocated to the State Government for the development of new and upgraded primary and secondary schools in 2011–12. New schools in the Pakenham–Officer area are important for providing primary and secondary education for young residents and to relieve pressure on existing schools.

The volunteer training program provided subsidised training to 172 people from 34 volunteer groups across the Shire.

Classes began in the new home of Emerald U3A in the former Emerald CFA building. In December, the building's \$57,000 upgrade was complete, including new carpets, air conditioning and painting.

Improved health and wellbeing for all

Council coordinated a range of projects and programs that helped support and improve the health and wellbeing of residents.

Council continued its commitment to increasing the health and wellbeing of seniors by encouraging and supporting healthy lifestyle programs in Cardinia Shire. The positive ageing program delivered information sessions on diabetes prevention and dementia awareness, and an inter-generational garden education program called 'Bouncing Back in Bunyip'. The garden program successfully connected older residents from Hillview Aged Care to students from Bunyip and Columba Catholic primary schools and allowed the residents to pass on their passion, skills and knowledge of gardening to a new generation. Seniors for Safety, funded by the Federal Government, finished in June. Approximately 480 seniors attended 32 workshops addressing physical and financial safety for seniors. Council also forwarded a submission to the Federal Government advocating for an increase in aged care bed allocation for the Shire.

Council expanded the Streets Ahead program, previously at four Pakenham primary schools, to all primary schools in Cardinia Shire. The program encourages children to get active in their community. A record 4,510 students from 14 local primary schools participated in Mobile March; students took active transport to and from school as often as they could during the month.

Cardinia Active and Nutritious (CAN II) worked towards a healthier Shire by combining with the community and local organisations to establish community gardens in Pakenham and Lang Lang. The project also introduced a community kitchen to Pakenham, which is proving to be successful. Support continued for the community kitchen in Cockatoo. CAN II was also responsible for running three successful BEAT IT! group-based physical exercise programs, in Cockatoo, Pakenham and Lang Lang. CAN II continues to develop a Healthy by Design draft plan that will provide direction when developing or redeveloping land to ensure the environment supports active living and is appropriate for residents of all ages.

Council received \$2.5 million over three years to become part of a national push to tackle obesity and promote healthier living. Cardinia Shire is one of 14 municipalities in Victoria collaborating with State and Federal government in an 'Australian first' tailored health plan called the Prevention Community Model. Council employed a team of health professionals to implement the model and recruited five-time world champion and Olympic aerial skier

Jacqui Cooper as the Shire's healthy living ambassador. The team will work with local community health organisations, communities, schools, early childhood services and workplaces to take action on preventable chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity and some cancers. Council plans to launch the model in early 2012–13.

The MetroAccess project facilitated an active gym program in partnership with Vibe Health and Fitness for primary and secondary school students with a disability in Emerald. Department of Human Services funded the program. MetroAccess also facilitated a group play activity for preschool children with a disability through funds provided through the Supported Playgroups and Parent Groups Initiative.

Variety of recreation and leisure opportunities

Council's commitment to providing new and improved recreation facilities for residents continued.

The new pavilion at Holm Park Recreation Reserve took shape with the installation of concrete walls and structural steel. The pavilion is an important part of the \$8.9 million sporting facility development in Beaconsfield. Floodlighting and netball court construction works have started. Ongoing wet weather caused delays during the autumn/winter months. When fully completed, the facility will include three ovals, four netball and tennis courts, four cricket nets, skate park, playground and more than 400 car parking spaces.

Design and scope of Heatherbrae Recreation Reserve is complete. Work on the ovals, roads, car parks and netball courts will start in 2012–13 as the tender has now been awarded to a contractor.

Support continued for the Officer Recreation Reserve Committee to design and construct a new pavilion. Council endorsed the reserve's master plan in March and the committee submitted design plans for review. Construction has started on site.

Council expects to adopt the Bunyip Recreation Reserve's draft master plan in August 2012. The long-term plan for the reserve will ensure appropriate facilities and spaces are in place to meet the current and future sporting and recreational needs of the Bunyip community.

Works were completed on Pakenham Upper Tennis Club pavilion and Recreation Reserve. Lightning during the February 2011 floods struck the original pavilion and caused it to burn down. Council worked closely with the club committee to ensure the club was operational as soon as possible. An outdoor deck and increased floor space are some of the building's improved amenities. Council completed a separate pavilion extension at the reserve in April that incorporates change room facilities.

Lawn bowling facilities in Koo Wee Rup and Pakenham had a makeover with the installation of synthetic bowling greens. Council also audited all of its netball facilities to develop a priority upgrade program for 2012–13.

During the year, Council signed a Heads of Agreement for the development of the Cardinia Motor Recreation and Education Park at McGregor Road, Pakenham. Plans and specifications for the proposal are now being developed.

Council received a funding boost of \$650,000 from the State Government for the Henry Road soccer facility. This funding will help Council provide a premier venue for junior and senior level soccer in Cardinia Shire and the surrounding region. Stage 1 works are due to begin in 2012–13 and include two new turf soccer fields, new entrance road and car park.

Council continued to provide safe and enjoyable aquatic facilities to residents and visitors. Cardinia Life Aquatic and Recreation Centre grew in popularity, recording 901,699 visits in 2011–12, an increase of 139,967 visits (or 18%) on the previous year. The centre's aquatic facilities temporarily closed for seven days to allow for major maintenance works and upgrades; part of an ongoing commitment by Council to provide the community with the highest quality recreational facilities possible. The closure was necessary for safety and access reasons and members incurred no financial disadvantage. Council examined future requirements of the centre in March; SGL Consulting Group undertook a feasibility study and randomly surveyed residents and Cardinia Life users. The study report is set to go to Council in July 2012.

Council re-tendered its seasonal aquatic facilities in early 2011–12 and awarded the contract to YMCA. Attendance figures at local outdoor pools from the year are:

- Emerald – 2,558
- Garfield – 3,125
- Koo Wee Rup – 11,136
- Pakenham – 10,526

During the year, Council improved the quality of water at Emerald Lake Park's wading pool by undertaking filtration system works. Council heard community concerns about the varied water colour of the wading pool and reassured residents it was safe to swim in by regular inspections and tests throughout the year and ensuring compliance with health and safety regulations. In May, residents had an opportunity to provide feedback on their experience at the park. Council will use this feedback to help review the park's strategic plan in 2012–13.

YMCA was awarded the management contract for Pakenham Regional Tennis Centre (PRTC) in April. An expert in facility management, YMCA already has a presence in Cardinia Shire managing the seasonal aquatic facilities and Cardinia Life.

Council adopted its first fishing policy which provides direction to residents about recreational fishing in Council-managed waterways. Council identified Emerald Lake Park and Garfield Recreation Reserve dam as suitable locations for safe fishing. The new policy notes Council's intention to approve fishing at Lakeside Pakenham and Lilliput Pond, Pakenham – subject to the provision of appropriate infrastructure. It is anticipated this will be addressed in the coming year.

Council reviewed its equestrian strategy in two stages. Stage 1 included desktop audit and status update of existing strategy; review of changes to new and existing facilities and the primary trail network; identification of current issues and opportunities; and directions and recommendations for the provision of equestrian trails and facilities within the Shire. Stage 2 will be implemented in 2012–13 and includes the development of a new strategy.

Increased perception of safety

Council continued to work with Victoria Police, CFA, external agencies and the community to improve perceptions of safety and reduce crime in the Shire.

During Community Safety Month in October, Council joined forces with Victoria Police, Metro and Cardinia–Casey Transport Connections and promoted commuter safety to more than 900 commuters. Staff attended Pakenham and Beaconsfield train stations and offered practical tips and advice to commuters in maintaining personal and vehicle safety when using public transport.

Council and Victoria Police offered free microfibre wipes to GPS owners. The wipes were able to remove suction cap marks from the windscreen and contained helpful hints and tips on protecting vehicles.

In May and June, Council undertook one of its most comprehensive annual Shire-wide graffiti audits and clean-ups and discovered an increase in the notable incidents of graffiti and the size (area of coverage). Council is mapping the incidents so early intervention programs can target problem areas across the Shire in the future. Council continued to offer free graffiti removal kits and paint vouchers to community members. The kits and vouchers encourage residents and business operators to remove graffiti from their property as soon as possible. The State Government awarded Council two \$10,000 grants to supply business operators with business 'graff-attack' packs and tins of anti-graffiti coating. The kits and vouchers form part of Council's ongoing 'Report, Remove, Reduce' graffiti campaign.

Council continued its support of Victoria Police's 'Safer Communities Group' by taking an active interest in the 'Safety Register', which is run by Victoria Police in partnership with Cardinia University of the Third Age (U3A).

Our environment

Goals: We will continue to plan and manage the built and natural environments for future generations.

Provision and maintenance of assets on a life-cycle basis

Council had a greater focus on surveillance and compliance with its Risk Management Plan and other legislative requirements this year. 'Conquest Mobile' was implemented, delivering a new asset maintenance and monitoring system which helps manage assets like roads and footpaths on a life-cycle basis while meeting any road management obligations.

The Shire's sealed road network grew by 26.57 km in 2011–12, taking the total sealed network to 584 kilometres. The combination of subdivision development and sealing of unsealed roads through special charge schemes or other external funding was a major growth factor.

Several road construction projects improved conditions and increased safety for motorists and pedestrians around the Shire. Road resealing works included Duffys Road, Emerald; Kennedy Road, Pakenham; Lewis Road, Upper Beaconsfield; Mirrabooka Road, Maryknoll; Moody Street, Koo Wee Rup; Nar Nar Goon Road, Nar Nar Goon; Railway Road, Dalmore; and Tynong North Road, Tynong North. Road rehabilitation projects included Garfield Road, Garfield; Henty Street, Pakenham; Manks Road, Koo Wee Rup; Pitt Road, Iona; Railway Avenue, Pakenham; Ronald Court, Pakenham; and Tivendale Road, Officer.

Council resurfaced unsealed footpaths throughout the Shire as part of its annual re-sheeting program. The program involved the replenishing of gravel material lost through natural wear and tear or storm events. Council graded and applied gravel to approximately 4 kilometres of gravel footpaths.

Council adopted a new policy to help guide the future development of new recreation reserve facilities and redevelopment of existing facilities. The *Recreation facility standards policy* also includes an assessment tool to help prioritise existing facilities needing maintenance or work.

Preparation began on Council's *Open Space Asset Management Plan*; this will be a long-term plan that outlines asset activities and programs for services relating to Council's open space facilities such as recreation and bushland reserves and parks. The plan will include details of the ongoing resources needed to provide service levels in a cost-effective way. Information gathering and compilation to develop the plan will start in 2012–13.

Much-needed drainage and irrigation works happened on four recreation reserves. Council replaced existing main drainage around Cardinia Recreation Reserve's oval perimeter and installed a subsurface drainage system across the oval. Works were also carried out on Cora Lynn and Pakenham Upper recreation reserves, including the installation of subsurface drainage and top dressing. Council received a \$100,000 grant from Sport and Recreation Victoria to undertake sub-surface drainage and irrigation works at Catani Recreation Reserve in time for the 2012 football season.

Upgrades to Charles Street (Pakenham) and JAC Russell Park (Gembrook) playgrounds were completed. Works on a new playground at Main Street, Nar Nar Goon will continue

in 2012–13. Council delayed the works due to persistent wet weather and unsuitable soil conditions. Council expects to resume works early in 2012–13.

Improvement works to Village Green Park in Beaconsfield's Panorama Estate were completed. New network concrete paths replaced the previous deteriorated network. Future works include the installation of new seats, fencing and trees. Council, in partnership with landscape contractors Citywide, performed major repairs on Gembrook Regional Park including the playground. Works included painting, woodwork repairs, upgraded surface and new drainage lines, the first in the Shire.

Council announced its decision to demolish the disused kindergarten at McBride Street, Cockatoo, and establish a community hub at the former Bailey Road store, purchased last financial year. A strong reaction from the community subsequently led Council to cease demolition and reconsider its decision. The old kindergarten building had served as a shelter for many local residents during the 1983 bushfires and gained worldwide attention when Prince Charles and the late Princess Diana visited Cockatoo in the wake of the devastating fires. Council reached an agreement with Cockatoo community representatives for the site to remain a special place for future generations. A working group representing both Council and the community was formed and created a detailed concept for a memorial that would symbolise the site's historical importance. Community consultation followed and a preferred model for the site is now under consideration. A tree planted by Princess Diana during her 1983 visit will be preserved and protected.

Plans progressed with Council and stakeholders for the refurbishment of the Bailey Road store as a community meeting and training facility. Council held initial meetings with the community regarding the store's rejuvenation. A draft refurbishment plan for the fit out was completed and Council undertook an expression of interest process to investigate the site's potential usage. Council expects the plan and fit out to be finalised in 2013.

The architect of the new Toomah Community Centre at Cardinia Road, Pakenham, is preparing plans and documentation for the building to go out to tender by September 2012. The building will include a training kitchen and cafe, consulting, office space and community meeting rooms, and offices for Windermere Child and Family Services. Council expects works to start January 2013.

Transport linkages to connect towns

Council continued to advocate for better transport connections for commuters, residents and the wider community. Cardinia Road Railway Station began operating in April and construction started on Beaconsfield train station's car park.

Council completed special charge schemes in George and Mary streets in Bunyip and Como Street, Berrys and Ferres roads, and Madigan Lane in Emerald. A special charge scheme is where Council and affected property owners share the cost. In Bunyip, works improved access to and from properties as both George and Mary streets were previously unsafe with serious drainage issues. The sealed roads have meant less dust in summer and less mud in winter, reduced erosion, easier nature strip maintenance and improved access.

Council and developers play a big role in constructing much-needed footpath links to connect neighbourhoods. Ensuring residents can move around their neighbourhood safely is a priority for Council. The footpath network comprised 466 kilometres of pathways at the

end of 2011–12; 37 per cent (172km) of which was constructed in the past five years. This equates to an average increase of 34 kilometres per year. The combination of footpaths constructed from subdivision development and Council's capital works program are growth factors.

Council constructed 1.5 kilometres of new concrete footpaths and 800 metres of gravel paths in 2011–12:

- Cambridge Street, Lang Lang connects with Western Port Road and Nellie Street
- Cameron Way, Kingston Road and Barrington Drive in Pakenham link with a path running behind the housing development
- Old Princes Highway, Beaconsfield, between O'Neil and Glissman roads, connects to the township
- new paths connect the new pedestrian rail crossing on McGregor Road, Pakenham.
- pathways improved in Gembrook, as identified in the township strategy, including a new, shared asphalt footpath from the town centre to the recreation reserve
- Station Street, Koo Wee Rup and Belgrave–Gembrook Road, Emerald have new paths.

Council completed the No.5 Drain Road bridge reconstruction in Bayles \$150,000 under budget and installed new guardrails at 15 bridge sites.

Designs are currently being finalised for Stage 2 of the McGregor Road duplication project. Negotiations are continuing with relevant authorities regarding the cost and scope of the relocation of services. Minor site works have started.

Council adopted its *Road Safety Strategy 2011–14*. The strategy has objectives in the areas of road and roadside safety, road user safety and vehicle safety and follows on from the successful 2007–10 strategy. It will continue to emphasise linking road safety messages to existing activities done by Council and other agencies. This will increase the community's exposure to road safety messages and avoid duplication.

Limit the impact of natural disasters and accidents

Council continued to feel the effects of the February 2011 floods in the 2011–12 financial year. Council budgeted \$2.5 million for flood mitigation works over a two-year period; a large number of projects were completed or committed. Council also undertook \$10 million in flood recovery projects over the same period; again a large numbers of projects have been completed or committed.

Berrys Road, Emerald has new drainage to reduce flooding issues. Alma Treloar Reserve in Cockatoo has an upgraded drainage network to protect the bowling green and other assets within the reserve from stormwater.

Council through local contractor Services South East reconstructed Salisbury Road. Works were necessary to repair a section of the road damaged by a landslip following the February 2011 floods. The road, which serves as a thoroughfare between Pakenham and Upper Beaconsfield, remained open while repairs took place. Works included a retaining wall to stabilise the surrounding area as well as repairs to the road surface on a section of approximately 100 metres. The construction works were valued at an estimated \$1.8 million.

Council, in partnership with Melbourne Water's Waterways Alliance, repaired flood-damaged sections of Bunyip Main Drain and Bunyip River Road. The works targeted areas affected by the floods and erosion. Landslips damaged a section of the drain's northern embankment so works included new guard railing and road reconstruction away from the drain's embankment to help protect the road and nearby properties against future flooding.

Council consolidated its approach and commitment to effective emergency management by forming a new business unit in August 2011. The Community, Risk and Emergency Management business unit brought together different portfolios of the organisation, including risk management, health and safety, resilience, relief and recovery, and emergency management response.

Unprecedented rainfall in June 2012 tested Council's fresh approach to emergency management. The rainfall affected Bayles, Koo Wee Rup, Lang Lang and Modella. In the Koo Wee Rup area, approximately 60 millimetres of rain fell in 24 hours. Flooding, water isolation and drainage were some of the issues experienced by residents, farmers and business operators.

Working in conjunction with emergency services organisations, Council activated its Municipal Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC) in Pakenham and one of its designated Emergency Relief Centres (ERC) at the Cardinia Cultural Centre. The ERC was open from midnight on 21 June until 9pm on 22 June. In that time, 51 people registered through the National Registration Inquiry System established by Red Cross. The ERC also sourced temporary accommodation for four residents and numerous dogs, cats and horses. Additionally, the ERC temporarily accommodated 160 students from Koo Wee Rup Secondary College whose redirected bus went from Phillip Island to Pakenham to avoid floodwaters.

During the height of the flood response, Council established a consequence management team to develop strategies that would deal with the consequence of the event and community recovery. The team had expertise across Council and leading external agencies comprising of Department of Human Services, Victoria Police, Department of Primary Industries, Red Cross and SES.

To support information flow to the impacted communities, Council opened and operated a flood recovery information centre for two and a half days at Koo Wee Rup. Flood-affected residents, property owners, business operators and farmers were encouraged to visit the centre for information, support and assistance from external agencies.

In 2011–12 Council undertook action to enhance emergency management arrangements relating to floods in the Shire. Council, under the auspices of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (peak emergency management planning committee in the Shire) established the Municipal Flood Planning Sub-Committee. This sub-committee, chaired by SES, will have the responsibility for emergency flood planning. To support the work of this sub-committee, Council and Melbourne Water engaged SKM Consulting in March to develop Cardinia Shire's first flood management framework. The framework will detail flooding history in the Shire, roles and responsibilities, hotspots, pressures, and drainage issues, and guide future flood infrastructure works. It will allow Council to develop a *Flood Asset Management Plan* and *Flood Emergency Plan* to ensure a more effective and

responsive approach in the future. The framework is due for completion by September 2012.

The draft *Cardinia Municipal Fire Management Plan* opened for a 10-week community consultation period. The plan is a collaborative effort between all agencies and organisations with a bushfire management responsibility, comprising of CFA, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, Victoria Police and Council. The plan will guide these agencies to prepare for, prevent, respond to and recover the community from the effects of bushfire. Community feedback was important in ensuring the plan was a reflection of community needs.

Council continued its support for the CFA's 'Adopt a hydrant' campaign in August. Council called on residents and business operators across the Shire to locate and check on the condition of their nearest hydrant and report damage or overgrowth to Council. A well-maintained hydrant was on display at the Council offices as an example to residents.

Enhance the natural environment

Council continued its commitment to enhancing the natural environment. In 2011–12 it took action on several fronts to help reduce greenhouse emissions and waste, increase sustainable water and energy practices, and promote and enhance local biodiversity.

Council, as part of the Western Port Greenhouse Alliance, completed the last stages of the 'carbon sink' in Bunyip Sanctuary. Council is one several councils in the alliance that use the area as an offset site for its vehicle greenhouse emissions. The carbon sink makes the sanctuary an important local weapon in the battle against global warming. Council planted indigenous trees, shrubs and grasses in 12 hectares of land. Council hopes the sink will absorb 3,825 tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere over three years, equivalent of taking more 950 cars off the road.

Council continued to implement the sustainable homes program and expanded it to other parts of the Shire. Successful workshops were held in Cockatoo, Garfield, Koo Wee Rup and Lang Lang. Topics focused on improving home energy usage, reducing water use and waste, developing productive gardens and exploring cost-effective solutions for households to reduce costs.

Council explored ways to reduce the environmental impacts of its car fleet and set realistic targets to reduce CO₂ in its light vehicles. The Australian average for CO₂ emissions from cars in 2011 was 206g/km. Statistics at June 2012 indicated Council was under this average with levels at 202.5g/km. Having light vehicles with lower fuel consumption and lower financial whole-of-life costs will continue to be a priority for Council in coming years.

Council started trialling an electric vehicle as part of the Department of Transport's Victorian Electric Vehicle Trial in June 2012. The Mitsubishi i-MiEV works on renewable energy and reduces urban air pollution, oil dependency and greenhouse gas emissions. The car has a range in excess of 100 kilometres and charges using a 15-amp power point. The car is similar to a conventional vehicle to drive and only costs \$3 to \$5 to recharge, depending on electricity costs. Staff have found it easy to use and fun to drive. In addition, Council's Operations team purchased its first electric vehicle, a Polaris, which will replace the existing quad bike for general maintenance activities around Emerald Lake Park in 2012–

13. Council will use feedback from staff driving these vehicles to assess future opportunities for electric fleet options.

A utility tracking system that will track and monitor energy and water usage of Council's facilities is 90 per cent complete. Council expects the system to generate preliminary carbon footprint reports and full-year comparisons by August 2012. Data entered into the system so far has provided a basic analysis of Council's 2010 bulk energy efficient lighting program. A 'business as usual' comparison with actual figures from July has shown financial and carbon emission savings of \$204.66 and 2.3 tonne per day. This system will help Council better understand its carbon footprint and develop actions to reduce further impact on the environment.

Council's garbage and recycling waste collections contract went out to tender early 2011–12. Council awarded the contract to Cleanaway and SKM Recycling, resulting in savings and improved service. Thiess has stayed on as the green waste collector. Due to the savings, Council was able to maintain the current garbage charge for 2012–13 at the previous year's levels and the only increases were due to the carbon tax.

Council gave residents an opportunity to request an 80-litre bin in exchange for their 120-litre garbage bin. Residents were able to view and compare the bins at several locations across the Shire. A total of 692 took up the offer of a smaller bin. A \$30 rebate from Council was also available to residents who purchased a compost bin from 1 October 2012. Thirty residents took up this offer in 2011–12.

The volume of garbage per household going to landfill in 2011–12 decreased to 515 per household from 531 kilograms in 2010–11. Green waste collection increased, 4,811 tonnes compared to 4,061 tonnes in 2010–11, which corresponded to an additional 1,349 services, totalling 12,207 at the end of the year. The amount of kerbside recycling this year is on par with last financial year's figures; almost 8,000 (7,977) tonnes were collected, 19 tonnes less than 2010–11. Due to Cardinia Shire's growth, this indicates reduced waste overall.

Council provided two Shire-wide hard and green waste collections and collected 2,710 tonnes of waste.

Council's electronic waste (e-waste) recycling day in November had a record number of items collected and weighed in at 15 tonnes. Common items included televisions, monitors, computers and microwaves. The volume of the e-waste was a 66 per cent increase on the drop-off day held in May 2011 and previous collections. The May collection received another 9 tonnes.

Residents diverted 28,000 kilograms of potentially harmful chemicals from landfill through Sustainability Victoria's 'Detox your home' chemical collection. More than 540 residents attended the November chemical collection day, which was Council-supported. Of the material collected, 52 per cent were paint tins, 16 per cent batteries, 10.5 per cent oil and 3.5 per cent gas cylinders, with the remainder being other harmful chemicals.

Council was successful in its applications for two State Government grants relating to waste minimisation. One grant has helped Council run the Cardinia Shire Public Place Resource Recovery project. Council installed new recycling bins at Emerald Lake Park, Pakenham Regional Tennis Centre, and Officer, Sutherland Park, and Catani recreation reserves. Council identified these locations as places with a large amount of used and discarded

recyclable products. Council hopes this project will help in litter prevention, litter management and resource recovery in public places. The 'Halve your waste' program received a boost of \$150,000, enabling Council to provide free recycling and compost bins to schools, expand its e-waste service, and educate residents about reducing waste in 2012–13.

In an effort to stamp out cigarette litter, Council installed 12 butt bins around the Shire. Locations include Cockatoo, Gembrook, Emerald, Lang Lang, Koo Wee Rup and Pakenham. Council and 12 volunteers conducted a litter audit in late 2012 to determine these locations. The project follows on from the successful 2010 butt bin trial completed in Pakenham. The bins hold up to 2,500 cigarettes and liquid inside the bin extinguishes butts immediately and eliminates any potential fire hazard.

Council continued to work with local volunteer 'friends' and residents groups to improve bushland reserves and local parks. Council hosted a family tree planting day at Toomuc Creek Reserve in Pakenham to celebrate National Tree Day. Twelve community members helped Council plant hundreds of local indigenous plants at the reserve.

The Six Towns Weed Control project completed a 'community behaviour change' research project. Starting in 2007, in partnership with the John's Hills Landcare group, the project examined barriers and benefits to landowners carrying out weed control on private land. Research revealed important areas of social thinking towards weed control and provided valuable input into Council's *Pest Plant Management Strategy 2012–16*, adopted in May. The strategy guides Council in its ongoing weed management and helps residents deal with weeds on private property through further engagement and community-based weed programs. The project was jointly funded by the Victorian Department of Primary Industries.

Council took action in December to stop water from draining out of Pakenham Lake at Lakeside Pakenham. Water levels rapidly decreased over a short period, prompting a number of queries from local residents. Council inspected the lake and found an open draining valve which was subsequently closed. Residents were reassured the condition of the lake would improve with rainfall. Over time, conditions did improve and Council re-activated the fountain and lights. Council advised residents the fountain would not operate if a westerly wind prevailed and/or if the wind speed was above 15 knots.

Council and contractor Citywide Services undertook a range of works in the Lakeside area; weed and vegetation control, reed removal and thinning, dead plant and weed removal, and new mulch. Garden bed rehabilitation works and cleaning and re-staining of park furniture will continue into 2012–13. Water quality testing and litter control in and around the lake continued on a regular basis.

Balance the needs of development, the community and the environment

Council received 890 planning applications; a 6 per cent decrease from the previous year. Council also issued 1,661 statements of compliance for residential lots; also a 7 per cent decrease from the previous year. These figures show the level of development activity that contributes to much of the Shire's growth. Council issued 2,098 building permits in 2011–12; down 15 per cent from the previous year in which 2,464 permits issued.

In order to plan and manage the environment for the future, Council has continued to prepare structure plans and development contribution plans for the Shire's growth area.

Council welcomed the approval of *Officer Precinct Structure Plan* and the Developer Contributions Plan (DCP) by the State Government. The approval gives certainty for the precinct that will provide 11,000 dwellings for up to 28,500 people as well as 6,500 jobs across a wide range of industries. Key features of the plan include major retail and entertainment facilities, district reserve, community facilities and the new Council civic centre. Council prepared the plan in close consultation with the community and government agencies. The Growth Areas Authority coordinated the plan's approval as well as the DCP and Planning Scheme Amendment for Officer. Following on from the approvals, Council purchased land at 28 Station Street Officer for Development Contribution Plan purposes.

Structure plans in Cardinia Shire guide growth and development for an area over the next 10–15 years. *Beaconsfield Structure Plan* issues and opportunities paper went on exhibition. Two information sessions provided residents with the chance to share their views on Beaconsfield's future development. Council received 14 submissions. The draft structure plan is due to go on exhibition in August 2012. An issues and opportunities paper for *Pakenham Structure Plan* went on exhibition. Council held a community workshop, two listening posts and an online survey to gather feedback. Council received 13 submissions, 115 community surveys and 36 youth surveys. This information will form a part of a draft structure plan.

A completed *Westernport Green Wedge Management Plan* discussion paper went on exhibition. Westernport green wedge is one of 12 green wedges around Melbourne and is largely located in Cardinia Shire along with the southern coastal and rural parts of the City of Casey. The paper plays an important role in identifying the vision, values, features and assets (environmental, social and economic) of the land. The Department of Planning and Community Development is no longer the lead agency for this project. Council and City of Casey will continue to work on the plan into 2012–13.

Township strategies help determine how and where additional growth and improvements can happen in a township for 10–15 years. Planning on Garfield's township strategy started and a workshop gave residents and business operators the opportunity have their say and express aspirations for their town. Further targeted consultation will happen in 2012–13. Council formed a reference group for the Koo Wee Rup strategy in early 2012. The draft strategy will be on exhibition early 2012–13. The implementation of Bunyip, Cockatoo, Emerald, Lang Lang and Upper Beaconsfield township strategies into the Cardinia Planning Scheme introduced a new Municipal Strategic Statement in June.

Our community

Goal: We will foster a strong sense of connection between Cardinia's diverse communities.

Meeting diverse community needs

Council continued to plan for future residential development and consider housing issues affecting residents of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. Council prepared a background paper and policy directions paper as the first two sections of its *Housing Strategy*. As a third component of the strategy, an action plan is currently under development and will outline Council's response to housing issues.

Council began a review of its Arts and Culture Policy through the Arts and Culture Reference Group. The reviewed policy suite is due to go on exhibition in July 2012.

Cardinia Cultural Centre had 67,124 patrons through its doors in 2011–12. Major events included Council's Australia Day celebrations and business awards, Pakenham pregnancy, baby and kids expo, BABBA and Dorothy the Dinosaur.

Cardinia Shire is experiencing a period of rapid growth that includes an increase in culturally diverse community members. During the past 12 months, Council achieved the following milestones:

The Building Harmony program was delivered to five multi-faith schools in Officer. In July, 150 students participated in an interactive workshop with renowned children's author Morris Gleitzman. Mr Gleitzman shared stories of his writing experience and discussed his novel *Boy Overboard*. Council held a visual arts exhibition in November 2011 to mark the end of a successful year of activities. Students attended the launch at the Cardinia Cultural Centre, themed 'Harmony: Understanding each other'. The Building Harmony program is a partnership between Council, Windermere Child and Family Services and Monash University.

Work started on Council's Cultural Diversity policy. The policy will outline Council's role in, and commitment to, supporting culturally diverse community members. Council plans to adopt the policy in July 2012.

The 2011–12 financial year also saw the establishment of the Shire's first interfaith and CALD networks. The Cardinia Interfaith network enabled faith leaders to learn from one another and celebrate diverse faiths within the Shire. The network has planned its first event 'Taste of faith' for early 2012–13. This event will include presentations from local faith groups, performances and a shared lunch. The Cardinia CALD network consists of local community service organisations committed to supporting a culturally diverse community. Council facilitated bi-monthly network meetings to identify service gaps, promote services and new initiatives and to explore partnership opportunities.

Council facilitated a successful local version of the 'Amazing Race' in support of Responsible Gambling Awareness Week. More than 10 local organisations opened their doors to 21 participants from a range of cultures wanting to learn more about the services available to them. Participants armed themselves with maps and 'passports' and made their way around Pakenham. The event was intended to educate culturally diverse communities on

responsible gambling as well as inform participants of the range of services available within a short distance.

Council won two awards for promoting cultural diversity in the Shire at the inaugural Gippsland and Cardinia Regional Diversity Awards in June. One award was under the 'Local government' category for delivering Shire-wide multicultural and multi-faith initiatives. The Building Harmony program steering group won the second award under the 'Education category'. In the same month, the Federal Government recognised Council through a commendation in the 'Strength in Diversity' category in the 2012 National Awards for Local Government.

Council has a Disability, Access and Inclusion Policy that affirms Council's commitment to the building of a welcoming and inclusive community where diversity and respect for all individuals is valued. Council reported on this policy regularly to relevant stakeholders, including the community, Council, Cardinia Shire's Disability Advisory Committee (DAC), and the Municipal Association of Victoria.

The DAC, coordinated by Council and comprising a cross-section of community members, Councillors and Council staff, had several achievements in the past year:

- review and redesign of Council's website ensuring it is accessible by all residents
- installation of a buzzer at the front entrance to the Council offices ensuring community members requiring assistance can access the building
- advocating for continued upgrades of Council's pathways and walking tracks
- advocating for the application of Council's Access Design Guidelines to all public facilities.

In Cardinia Shire, one in five people is affected by disability. For various reasons, these people have trouble accessing buildings, services, playgrounds, learning, sport, leisure and cultural activities. A range of works improved accessibility at Andrews and Koo Wee Rup kindergartens, Pakenham South and Yannathan halls, and the new Emerald U3A building. Works included the construction of accessible ramps, and major improvements to entrances and car parks. Cardinia Cultural Centre had an automatic door installed to its accessible toilet. Work on Clematis Hall's accessible car park and ramp is due to be completed in early 2012–13. Council's Disability, Access and Inclusion policy complemented the works by bringing Council-owned buildings to an enhanced disability standard.

The MetroAccess project engaged Council staff with communication diversity training, provided in partnership by Auslan Company and Scope Victoria. The training aimed to enhance staff's capacity to welcome and help community members with complex communication needs when they visit Council.

Communities actively engaged

Twenty-five nominations for the Cardinia Shire Citizen of the Year award formed part of Council's Australia Day celebrations in Pakenham.

Winners were:

- Citizen of the Year: Bronwyn Mepstead
- Senior Citizen of the Year: Michael Bishop
- Young Citizen of the Year: Sara Forte

- Community Service Award: David Greenaway
- Community organisation of the year: Pakenham Opportunity Shop
- Community Event of the Year: Pakenham pregnancy, baby and kids expo

The awards were announced at a ceremony at the Cardinia Cultural Centre. As well as the award presentation, 27 people took the Oath of Allegiance and joined the Cardinia Shire community as new, fully-fledged Australian citizens. Families enjoyed a range of activities including barbecues, lamingtons, face painting, a jumping castle, cricket, animal farm and native plant giveaways. Cockatoo, Koo Wee Rup and Lang Lang also held community celebrations to mark Australia Day.

Forty-five community groups, sporting clubs and organisations from around the Shire shared in \$513,780 of community capital grants to improve their Council-owned facilities. The grants were awarded at a presentation dinner in July which included the Stan Henwood award. Council presented John Cascone of Mount Burnett with the prestigious Stan Henwood award for outstanding community achievement. Recognised for his volunteer work for the Gembrook community over the past 26 years, Mr Cascone has been involved with more than 15 community groups and committees. The Stan Henwood award honours the lifetime contribution the late Stan Henwood made to Tynong and the municipality.

Council also provided important funding to local organisations under its Festivals and Events program. A wide-range of community groups shared in more than \$95,000 of funding to deliver events such as the Yakkerboo Festival in Pakenham and the PAVE festival at Emerald. Council also provided much-needed support through its Social Support and Minor Community Grants programs. In all, Council made available more than \$100,000 to community and not-for-profit organisations.

A total of 200 volunteers from more than 100 local not-for-profit organisations were acknowledged at a special reception during National Volunteer Week. Volunteers enjoyed a three-course meal and entertainment by local singing group Just Harmony. Reverend Dr Peter Crawford from St Mark's Church in Emerald was the night's guest speaker and talked about his work with volunteers.

Community gardens throughout the Shire provided healthy sustainable food for the local community and a place for gardeners to meet and share knowledge. Council supports these gardens through the CAN II project.

Council provided information to the community about its programs, events and activities in a variety of ways. *Connect* magazine was published six times and distributed to all households in the Shire. Council's website, including online events calendar and business and community directories, received an average of 23,008 visits per month. Council also produced a variety of publications, brochures and e-newsletters. Council now produces four e-newsletters, *Rec Rap*, *Showcase*, *Sport Access* and *Business Connections*; providing cost savings on printing and distribution.

Council continued with its social media presence on Facebook and Twitter. Posts and tweets regularly promoted media releases, upcoming events and activities, employment opportunities and other information published on Council's website. Council has 291 likes on Facebook and 1,118 followers on Twitter. Cardinia Cultural Centre's Facebook page has

542 likes. Both Facebook pages link to Council's twitter feed to cross-promote information. Work started on Council's smartphone application that is due to go live in early 2012–13.

To support Cardinia Shire's fast-growing population, Council developed new information to welcome residents and help them make the most of Council's services. Council's website now has a section focused on new residents and Council mails out an information pack featuring a welcome letter from the Mayor, information about Council's broad range of services and facilities and a 'settling in' checklist. For the first time, Council included multilingual content in a publication in recognition of the increasingly diverse population in Cardinia Shire. Council developed the resources after extensive consultation with new residents.

Council supported a week-long celebration of 'come and try' events in recognition of International Day of Disability, through its internal Disability Inclusion Group. The events brought together individuals, businesses and community organisations across the Shire to celebrate and acknowledge the contributions, skills and achievements of people with disability.

Increased levels of community participation

Neighbourhood houses, also known as community centres, learning centres and community houses, all provided their local communities with a welcoming environment with social, educational and recreational opportunities. The Shire has eight neighbourhood houses and community centres that together delivered more than 25,000 hours of community strengthening programs and activities.

Council held a successful Neighbour Day and free barbecue on 25 March attended by approximately 70 residents from Pakenham Lakeside. 'Get to know your neighbour' postcards were distributed and an important opportunity was provided for residents to come together to connect and share their stories.

A record 2,300 children in Cardinia Shire participated in the Australia Library and Information Association's National Simultaneous Storytime supported by Council. Council hosted its own session through 'Playgroups in the park', including the PlayStart Van, at Koo Wee Rup Community Centre. Approximately 25 children, parents and carers attended.

More than 100 people attended Council's inaugural Kardinyarr Arts and Culture Day in July as part of NAIDOC Week celebrations. Council and the Healesville Indigenous Arts Cooperative joined forces to host the event at the Cardinia Cultural Centre. Celebrations included performances, ochre painting and jewellery making workshops, dreamtime stories, market stalls featuring aboriginal arts, craft and wares, and native plant giveaways.

The planning and making of the Babel project took three years and went on exhibition in Cardinia Shire in July. The biblical story of the unfinished Tower of Babel was the project's inspiration. Georgia Metaxas, a Melbourne documentary photographer, worked with the diverse group of participants who attended workshops and created the Babel project. With the theme of domestic items in common, and using disposable cameras, participants took 1,000 photographs of shared domestic items including refrigerators, breakfasts, living rooms, couches, gardens, families, friends, shoes, the street and the sky. Eight of the 36 participants were Cardinia Shire residents and the result was a powerful, multimedia and soundscape installation.

Council's Summer Music Series at Emerald Lake Park in February attracted more than 400 visitors. The concerts gave the community a chance to hear and support some wonderful local performers, including Cardinia Civic Concert Band and Gemco Players Community Theatre.

Our economy

Goal: We will create and support local employment and business opportunities for our community and the wider region.

About 17,500 operating businesses are registered in Cardinia Shire and approximately 65 per cent of the Shire's working population of 27,000 are required to travel to work outside the Shire each day. Increasing the number and diversity of local employment opportunities remained a Council priority in 2011–12.

Increased business diversity in Cardinia Shire

Cardinia Shire's record population growth influenced the local economy, particularly in the construction industry.

Pakenham Marketplace opened in December 2011 featuring Woolworths, Big W and 30 speciality shops. The development created 700 jobs as well as more than 1,108 car parking spaces. This \$80 million project has provided a boost to the local economy and added to the retail offering in Pakenham. Preliminary analysis suggests the centre is now capturing around \$35 million per annum of expenditure that was previously going to other major shopping centres outside of Pakenham. Woolworths also opened up in Emerald and Koo Wee Rup in 2011–12.

More than 180 business operators and residents received an update on Cardinia Shire's economic development at the annual business address given by Council CEO Garry McQuillan in July 2011.

Council named Bellevue Orchard & Summer Snow Cardinia Shire's Business of the Year in May. The family-owned apple orchard won the award for its innovation, foresight, plans for diversity, and resilience. Master of Ceremonies John Blackman hosted the night at the Cardinia Cultural Centre attended by more than 200 people. The awards celebrated the excellence, success and achievements of Cardinia Shire's business operators in 14 categories and winners shared in \$7,000 in prizes. The annual awards are in their eighth year and continue to grow, with submissions up 28 per cent and award's attendees up 2 per cent from 2011.

Other award winners were:

- Access for all – Tour Local
- Agricultural and primary industries – Bellevue Orchard & Summer Snow
- Professional and business services – Greenview Accounting Group
- Employer of choice – Greenview Accounting Group
- Environmental sustainability – Mayberry Racing
- Food and wine – Elevation at Emerald Restaurant and Bar
- Home-based business – Upstaged Dance and Performance Studio
- Innovation – Brownie Points Australia
- Judges' recognition – Blackwood Lane Studio and Benher Signs
- Property trades and construction – Kleev Homes
- Retail – Emerald Village Pharmacy
- Tourism – Tour Local
- Manufacturing – EFI Group

Council and City of Casey jointly completed the 'Attracting Employment and Investment to the Casey–Cardinia Region' strategy. A taskforce, which includes the mayors of both councils, is now developing an action plan.

A big gain for the year was the removal of the tailgate inspection fee by Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) on shipping containers brought into the growth corridor by local business operators. For some companies, this is a saving of up to \$50,000 per annum. This advocacy effort by Council took five years and will take effect from 1 July 2012.

Maintain our strong agricultural business activities

For Cardinia Shire's farming communities, the single biggest issue was the maintenance of drains; having experienced two floods in the past 12 months. Following discussions with Melbourne Water and VicRoads, a maintenance program is being developed to avoid against these extreme weather conditions. Council will reach an agreement with Melbourne Water in 2012–13 on the future maintenance and capital works program.

Work on the Bunyip Food Belt progressed. Council as well as other proponents, Mornington Peninsula Shire and the City of Casey and water authorities South East Water, Melbourne Water and Southern Rural Water worked together on a proposal. The councils and water authorities undertook a pre-feasibility study of a food production concept supported by the supply of recycled water to growers in Melbourne's outer south-east. Consultants Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR) and RM Consulting Group (RMCG) were engaged to quantify the demand for recycled water and estimate infrastructure costs for the proposed food belt scheme. The study report was finalised and is due to go to a Council briefing in early 2012–13.

A contingent of top Melbourne foodies, chefs, fresh produce retailers and educators spent a day exploring the intricacies of asparagus farming. Supported by Council, held at Vizzarri Farms in Koo Wee Rup and hosted by the Australian Asparagus Council (AAC), the tour encouraged local and Melbourne guests to have a hands-on experience of the vegetable. The AAC welcomed the support of Council and local producers for the opportunity to engage and educate Melbourne and local food media about the quality food and wine found within the Bunyip Food Belt region. Asparagus from this region has earned a reputation for being 100 per cent clean, green and safe locally and internationally. Cardinia Shire's asparagus farmers produce more than 90 per cent of Australia's asparagus supplies.

Farming's future was the focus of a free workshop for farmers in May. Guest speakers from Department of Primary Industries and Council discussed the themes of carbon-neutral farming, climate projections and agricultural production in the Westernport Green Wedge. Council and the Department of Primary Industries sponsored the workshop.

Diverse and sustainable small business activity

Council supported small business operators across the Shire with training and networking opportunities.

More than 340 local business people listened to former Victorian Premier Jeff Kennett share his views on leadership at the Cardinia Business Breakfast in July. This was the largest crowd on record for a business breakfast at Cardinia Cultural Centre. Mr Kennett gave his views

on Australia's position in the world and the Asian region and expressed a need for stronger leadership in Australia at all levels, from government through to small business. More than 80 attendees heard world champion aerial skier Jacqui Cooper speak at the November breakfast. Ms Cooper shared her own story of self-belief, passion, triumph, tragedy and ability to overcome adversity.

The Cardinia–Casey Breakfast series started in March with first guest speaker former world champion runner, Steve Moneghetti. Council, City of Casey, Monash University and Melbourne Football Club worked in partnership to present the series, which will continue into 2012–13 with legendary media editor Ita Buttrose and Carman's muesli founder Carolyn Cresswell among the guest speakers.

Council hosted 22 business training events during the year which were attended by 455 business people. The events aimed to strengthen and develop local owners and operators' business skills. Three sessions sold out and two of these generated waiting lists for more sessions.

Registrations on Council's online business register increased to almost 1,000. Local and regional business operators and agencies on this register also received two editions of *Business Connections*.

Council started developing a tourism strategy in response to community requests to help shape and attract future tourism to the Shire. The strategy will also help expand Cardinia Shire's economy and job opportunities. In April, community consultation opportunities were organised for tourism operators, local businesses and residents to consider and comment on future local tourism opportunities. Questions and contributions to forum discussions were encouraged to help Council with a range of feedback into the development of the strategy. Development of the strategy will continue in 2012–13.

To complement this work, Council, in partnership with Cardinia Tourism and many local business operators, distributed a new visitor's guide to the Shire to every household. The map identifies attractions and business operators that provide services for visitors to the Shire.

Understanding our community

Key statistics

- Cardinia Shire land area is 1,280 square kilometres, more than one-eighth the size of metropolitan Melbourne.
- Cardinia Shire has 27 rural townships.
- Cardinia Shire is Victoria's second fastest growing municipality and Australia's fourth fastest growing municipality.
- Approximately five families move into Cardinia Shire every day.
- Cardinia Shire's population is expected to more than double by 2031 to about 155,618 residents.
- The median age of Cardinia Shire residents is 34.
- Approximately 645 Cardinia Shire residents have arrived to settle in Australia in the past two and a half years.
- By 2031, it is expected that more than 27,000 residents will be aged over 60 living in Cardinia Shire.
- The industry sectors that employ the most people in Cardinia Shire are manufacturing, construction, retail trades, property and business services, agriculture and retail sectors.
- The median family income in Cardinia Shire is slightly lower than the Melbourne metropolitan median.
- Cardinia Shire residents have high levels of car ownership; many families own three or four cars.

Shire snapshot

Cardinia Shire is located south-east of Melbourne and is one of nine 'interface councils' around the perimeter of metropolitan Melbourne, providing a transition between urban and rural areas. The primary urban centre is Pakenham, which is 55 kilometres from Melbourne's central business district (CBD).

The Princes Highway and Gippsland railway corridor runs east-west through the centre of the Cardinia Shire, providing a key road and rail link between Melbourne and West Gippsland. The western end of this corridor comprises the Cardinia Shire growth area (about 10 per cent of the Shire's land area).

With an annual growth rate of 5.9 per cent, Cardinia Shire is Victoria's second fastest growing municipality and the fourth fastest growing municipality in Australia for 2010–11. The population within the Shire's growth area is expected to grow from 45,969 in 2012 to 80,228 people by 2021 and an estimated 104,406 residents in 2031. By 2031, about 67 per cent of Cardinia Shire's population is forecast to reside in the designated growth area and the remaining 33 per cent to reside in the rest of the Shire. Combined with the neighbouring City of Casey, this State Government designated south-east urban growth region is forecast to be home to more than half a million people by 2031.

Cardinia Shire has a large rural population; 27 rural townships exist outside the urban growth area, resulting in unique service provision issues. The northern part of the Shire is set in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges, and includes Bunyip State Park and Cardinia

Reservoir. Koo Wee Rup swamp and Westernport Bay are significant features of the southern part of Cardinia Shire.

The municipality faces unique challenges highlighted by the aggregation of communities with varying needs and aspirations. Urban sprawl, existing rural communities and new suburbs all pose challenges and opportunities for managing the sustainability of the municipality both now and into the future. Council seeks to strive for a balance that achieves the outcomes desired by these communities while ensuring economic prosperity, social wellbeing and environmental sustainability.

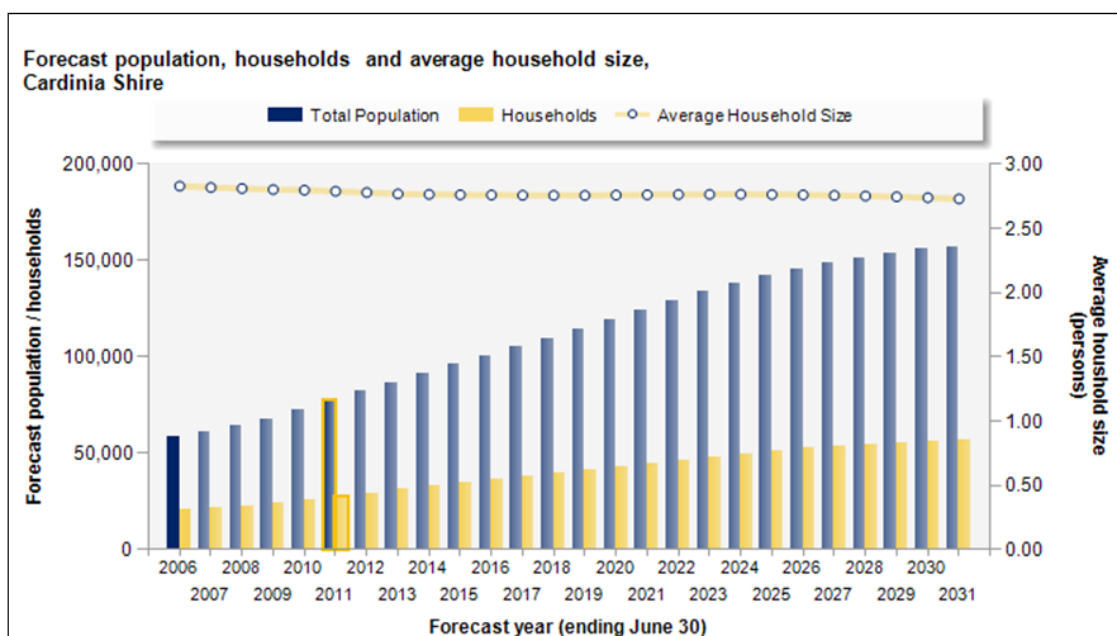
Community profile

Population

The State Government has nominated Casey–Cardinia as one of five regions around the fringe of metropolitan Melbourne where new housing and population growth is to be concentrated. As a result, rapid population growth will occur for the next 20 years within the Shire’s designated growth area, comprising the townships of Beaconsfield, Officer and Pakenham.

Cardinia Shire’s population growth is not evenly spread. More gradual population growth is occurring throughout the southern and eastern townships, while the northern hills sub-region is experiencing only minimal growth. Population growth will be restricted outside the designated growth area to preserve valuable agricultural land and environmentally sensitive ‘green wedge’ areas.

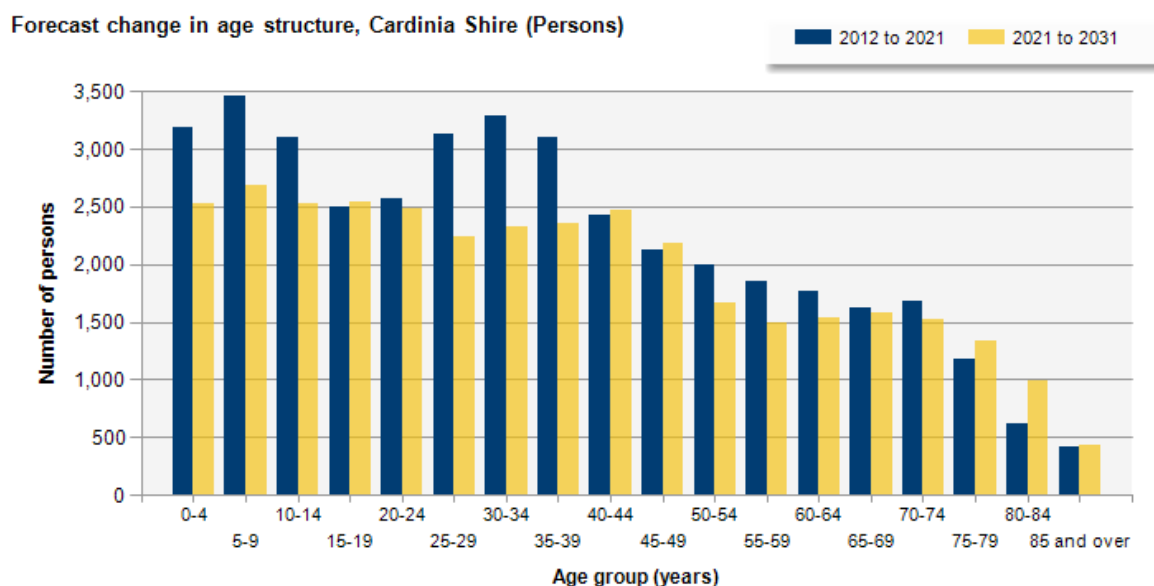
Figure 1. Forecast population, households and average household size



Age structure

Cardinia Shire has a higher proportion of young families than the Melbourne average. In contrast, the proportion within the 60 plus age group is lower when compared with metropolitan Melbourne. These patterns are typical of growth areas on the fringe of large cities where young couples often move out from rental accommodation in inner suburbs in search of affordable housing and larger family-sized dwellings.

Figure 2. Forecast increase in population by age group



Household structure

Couple families with dependents are the most prominent household type in Cardinia Shire. A considerable proportion of couples without dependents also exist. A growing number of lone person and one-parent family households are starting to emerge resulting in a forecast gradual decrease in household size between 2011 and 2031.

Ethnicity

Cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities comprise only a small proportion of the overall Cardinia Shire population. The most common countries of birth for non-Australian born residents in the Shire are the United Kingdom, New Zealand, the Netherlands, India, Germany, and Sri Lanka. Cardinia Shire is likely to experience growth in CALD communities in the future as the population increases.

Religion

At the time of the 2011 census, 62 per cent of Cardinia Shire's population identified as having a Christian faith and Catholic was the most prominent denomination chosen by residents. Just 2.9 per cent of residents identified with a non-Christian religion, the most common being Buddhism. Approximately 29.8 per cent of residents said they had no religion which is a higher proportion compared with metropolitan Melbourne (23.5%).

Education

In general, Cardinia Shire residents are achieving lower levels of educational and training attainment than elsewhere in metropolitan Melbourne. At the time of the 2011 census, 41 per cent of Cardinia Shire residents had completed Year 12 or equivalent, compared to the metropolitan Melbourne average of 56.7 per cent. Presently no tertiary education provider is located in Cardinia Shire which limits the availability of post-secondary education opportunities for residents.

Employment

Many residents travel outside the municipality to access their place of employment. Historically the manufacturing, construction, retail trades, property and business services, agriculture and retail sectors have been the five greatest contributors to local employment.

At the 2006 census, the highest number of jobs located in Cardinia Shire were found within the retail trades, manufacturing, and construction sectors. When the 2,500 hectares of employment land south of the Pakenham Bypass is developed, Cardinia Shire will become a regionally significant employment location, drawing on the skills and experiences of a regional labour force of more than 435,000.

Seniors

Over 11,560 residents aged 60 and over live in Cardinia Shire, representing 15.6 per cent of the total population. The number of senior residents living in Cardinia Shire is expected to increase to more than 27,000 residents aged 60 plus by 2031. This increase in the number of older residents will have a corresponding impact on the demand for community and aged services, health services, public transport and local infrastructure.

Socio-economic status

Overall, the municipality of Cardinia Shire has a 2006 socio-economic index for areas (SEIFA) of disadvantage of 1,027 which ranks Cardinia Shire as above the overall average on this socio-economic advantage/disadvantage scale for Australia. Census collection district scores range from 783 to 1,139, indicating pockets of distinct socio-economic disadvantage and advantage in Cardinia Shire.

Opportunities and challenges

Managing population growth

The estimated Cardinia Shire population of 80,709 living in 28,919 households is expected to almost double to about 155,618 people living in 57,441 households by 2031.

This population growth will be concentrated in the growth area sub-region of Beaconsfield, Officer and Pakenham. By 2031, 67 per cent of all households in the Shire will live in the growth area. The growth rate is expected to peak once the availability of land for urban development in the City of Casey begins to decrease.

Accompanying this rapid population growth will be changes to community composition, the physical appearance of townships, and the development of infrastructure such as roads, schools, shopping centres and recreation venues. Many municipalities in metropolitan Melbourne are experiencing an increase in one- and two-person households, an ageing population and greater ethnic diversity. In contrast, Cardinia Shire is forecast to continue to attract young families who are first and second home buyers. Given the geographic location of the Shire, car-dependence has the potential to rise, unless significant levels of public transport are provided.

Council's major challenge is to balance the need for local jobs, services, facilities, and other infrastructure of these growing regions together with meeting the needs of existing communities. The timely provision of infrastructure and increasing community expectations surrounding quality, liveable estates are also major challenges for Council.

Environmental sustainability

Cardinia Shire consists of a diverse physical environment including remnant forests, waterways, wetlands and nearly 20 kilometres of the internationally significant coastline of Westernport Bay. The northern part of the municipality is set in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges and has significant environmental values, including extensive areas of remnant vegetation which are of botanical and zoological value. The southern part of the municipality contains the former Koo Wee Rup swamp and the Westernport coastline. Westernport Bay is a Ramsar¹ wetland of international significance in recognition of its natural habitat values, particularly for migratory birds. The sea grass flats and mangrove-salt marsh vegetation play an important role in nutrient cycling, stabilising the coastal system and providing wildlife habitat.

Only 10 per cent of native vegetation remains in the northern foothills while only 1 per cent remains in the southern part of the Shire. Much of the remnant vegetation in Cardinia Shire is found on public land; major concentrations occur in Bunyip State Park, Cardinia Reservoir Park, waterways and coastal areas. It is estimated that on private land, more than 95 per cent of native vegetation has already been cleared.

¹ Ramsar wetlands are those that are representative, rare or unique wetlands, or are important for conserving biological diversity. These are included on the List of Wetlands of International Importance. (Source: Australian Government Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts).

Managing the natural and built environment is a significant challenge for Council which will have ongoing influence for future generations. The rapid changes occurring in both urban and rural areas of the municipality are causing conflicts. The challenge for Council and the community is to sustainably manage these diverse areas and meet community needs while addressing the social, cultural, financial and environmental impacts of urban growth. Council is working to ensure green wedges in both the hills and rural (south and east) sub-regions are maintained and protected.

Agricultural capacity

Cardinia Shire has some of Australia's most fertile and valuable agriculture areas that play an increasingly vital role in providing food for Victoria's population. The Shire has high levels of water availability, temperate climate, excellent soil types, a diversity of farming enterprises, close proximity to large ports and markets, and access to a substantial regional workforce. These advantages make the agricultural capacity of the region highly important to Victoria's economy.

At the 2006 census, agriculture contributed to 9.1 per cent of all jobs in Cardinia Shire (1,240) providing a total annual output estimated at \$283 million. The top five sectors in terms of output are 'other agriculture' (including production of vegetables and fruit orchards), beef cattle, dairy cattle, services to agriculture and poultry. This area produces approximately 90 per cent of Australia's asparagus, valued at \$40 million per year.

The location of these agricultural areas on the urban fringe results in a challenging tension between Melbourne's land supply needs versus securing fertile land to provide a nationally significant source of food supply. Planning is underway to assess the feasibility of establishing an intensive agricultural zone in the region to provide food security for Melbourne, and allow for the sale of produce to the rest of Australia, and contribute to export markets to help ensure global food security.

Assisting economic growth

A critical issue for Cardinia Shire over the next 20 years will be the need to provide more local employment within the region. The 2006 census indicated that more than 55 per cent of residents need to travel beyond the municipality to access employment and this proportion is likely to increase as the Cardinia Shire population grows. A considerable number of jobs will be needed if all of the municipality's resident labour force is to find employment locally.

In 2005, the State Government recognised a need for a significant number of jobs to be delivered within the Casey–Cardinia growth area, enabling a greater proportion of residents to access employment closer to where they live. When the urban growth boundary was last expanded in 2005, a 2,500-hectare section of land was designated as the Cardinia Employment Corridor with a target to eventually deliver between 100,000 and 140,000 jobs. Once developed, this corridor will deliver a broad range of employment and business opportunities for current and future residents.

Providing community services and infrastructure

A key challenge for Council is the timely and cost-effective provision of appropriate levels of infrastructure in the growth area sub-region, to ensure liveable and sustainable communities. As the population grows the need to provide new infrastructure, services and facilities to

meet community needs will increase. Physical linkages including roads, footpaths and bicycle paths to allow people to easily access services and facilities will also need to be created.

Cardinia Shire is classified as a metropolitan municipality, despite the large rural areas of the Shire. As a result, many community services only qualify for metropolitan funding structures, restricting the opportunity to secure extra funding for services. This leads to longer waiting lists for services, or long commutes to suburbs with appropriate levels of service provision such as Dandenong or Clayton. Cardinia Shire can also be disadvantaged by funding triggers linked to population levels resulting in infrastructure and services not being funded until certain population targets are met.

Accessibility

The Cardinia Shire growth area is situated between 45 and 55 kilometres from Melbourne CBD. The distances Cardinia Shire residents need to travel to access services and employment opportunities leads to a situation known as 'locational disadvantage'. Major hidden costs can be associated with living in one place and conducting daily activities in another.

This disadvantage is increased by the lack of adequate public transport infrastructure across the Shire. The lack of public transport and public transport connectivity also means that residents can have difficulty accessing schools, health and community services, employment and tertiary education. Accessibility challenges are often increased for vulnerable population groups including seniors, low income earners residents with disability and young people who are often forced to rely on public transport to get around. Cardinia Shire residents have high levels of car ownership (many families own three or four cars), which while a necessity for many families, means an increased burden on family budgets, especially with higher petrol prices.

Council's people

Management team and organisation structure

Senior management

Garry McQuillan – Chief Executive Officer

Garry McQuillan was appointed CEO in December 2006. He has tertiary and post-tertiary qualifications in business management and finance and is a member of Local Government Professionals (LG Pro). Garry has a long history in local government having held executive positions with the City of Boroondara and the City of Fairfield in New South Wales. He has been with Cardinia Shire Council since 2002.

Michael Ellis – General Manager Assets and Services

Michael joined Cardinia Shire Council in March 2000. He has management and engineering qualifications and more than 30 years' experience in local government and the private sector.

He is a fellow of the Institution of Engineers Australia and a member of both LG Pro and the Institute of Public Works Engineers Australia.

Forward planning of new assets and infrastructure has been Michael's priority, to ensure Council's long-term sustainability of assets and compatibility with the environment.

Business unit areas covered:

- engineering services and capital works
- environment and heritage
- waste management
- roads and drainage
- parks and gardens
- public buildings.

Fiona Hodges – General Manager Community Wellbeing

Fiona has been with Council since 2001, leading the Community Wellbeing Division for the past six years. She has a Bachelor of Education as well as business management and company of director's qualifications, and is a member of LG Pro. Her extensive community experience includes 10 years in secondary education, various roles in the sport and recreation sector, including at club and state level, as well as small-business management.

This broad experience has equipped her with a sound foundation to set direction across her portfolio to meet residents' needs about community services, arts, culture, recreation, leisure and employment needs of the current and future population. Fiona is committed to ensuring Cardinia Shire's communities are well connected, vibrant and sustainable.

Business unit areas covered:

- community services – maternal and child health, children, youth, positive ageing, health promotion and out of school hours care

- community strengthening – community engagement, disability strategies, community safety, neighbourhood development, events, community facilities and community grants
- sustainable communities – recreation, arts and culture and economic development
- communications.

Derek Madden – General Manager Corporate Services

Derek joined Council in 2010 and brought with him 10 years' experience in local government, having worked at both Moreland and Melbourne city councils. His most recent role was (Acting) Director of Corporate Services at Moreland City Council, a position he found both rewarding and challenging. His previous corporate finance roles include both Australian and overseas positions. Derek is a qualified accountant who also holds qualifications in organisational dynamics and business administration and is a Chartered Management Accountant (ACMA).

Business unit areas covered:

- finance
- property and rates
- governance
- information technology
- information management
- corporate and business alignment
- community safety
- risk management
- emergency management
- insurance
- occupational health and safety
- WorkCover and 'Return to work'

Phil Walton – General Manager Planning and Development

Phil has been with Council since 1995 and in this role for the last six years. He is a qualified planner who also holds qualifications in business management. As leader of Council's planning and development division, Phil's responsibilities cover a range of activities from strategic planning to compliance services.

Business unit areas covered:

- strategic planning
- statutory planning
- planning enforcement
- compliance services
- building.

Di Ashton – Manager Organisation Development

Di has worked for Cardinia Shire Council since 2001 in a number of roles. She is tertiary qualified and has extensive human resources experience, mainly in the local government and government sectors. In addition, she has a Diploma in Frontline Management and a Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment.

Di believes the organisation is facing, and will continue to face, exciting and challenging times. Council will continue to work at being an employer of choice and an 'Investor in People' organisation, so that it can attract the highest calibre of staff possible. Council is striving to provide a workplace culture that encourages learning and development both at a personal and a professional level so that staff are equipped to deliver outstanding service to our customers.

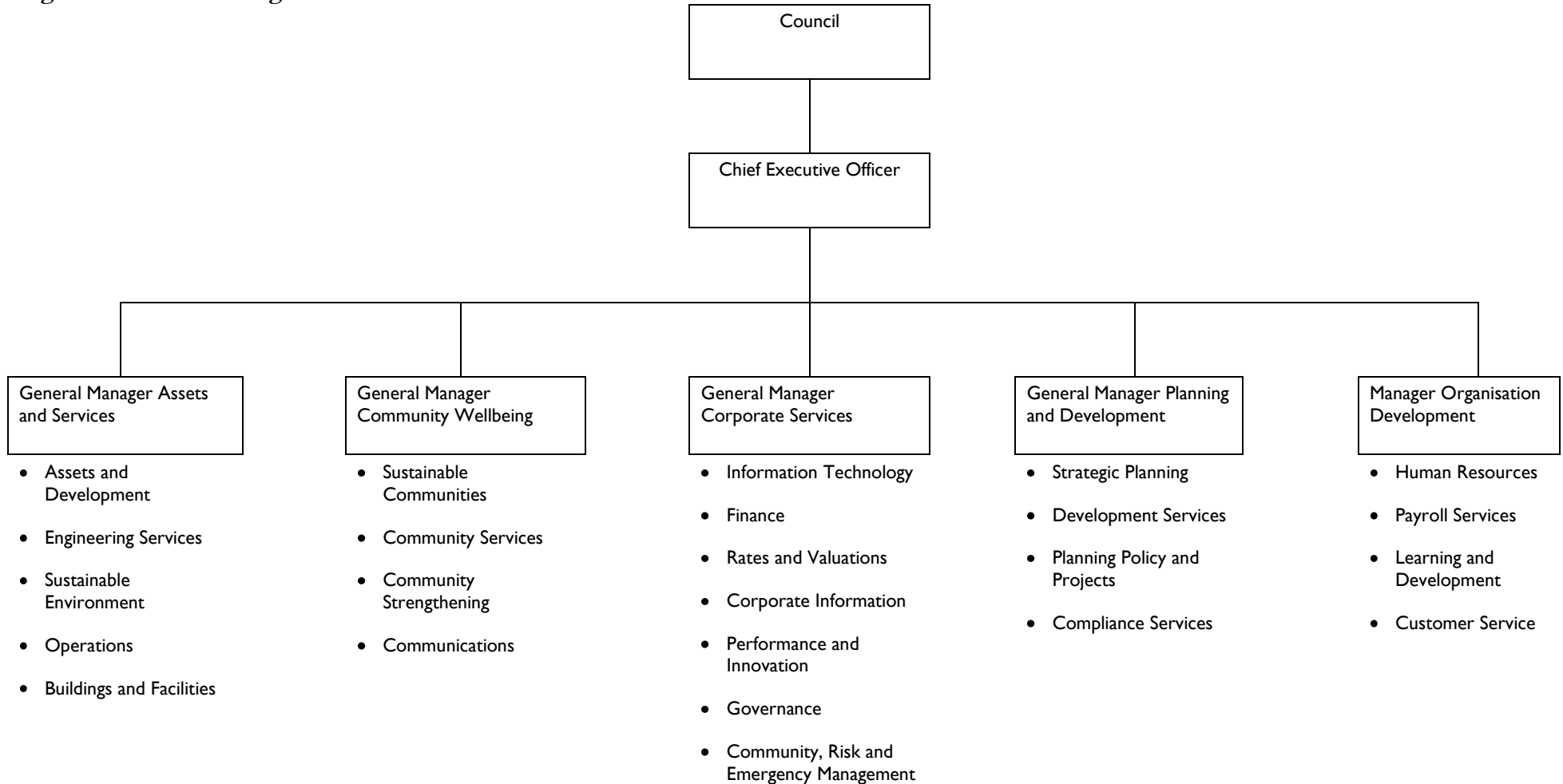
The organisation is continuing to focus on delivering a cultural strengthening and leadership program that will enhance leadership capability now and into the future.

Business unit areas covered:

- human resources
- learning and development
- recruitment and induction
- payroll and salary packaging
- customer service
- employee relations
- organisation development.

Organisational structure as at 30 June 2012

Figure 3. Council's organisation structure



Staffing at 30 June 2012

- 63.53 per cent of Council staff were female (including casuals)
- 36.47 per cent of Council staff were male (including casuals)
- 54.29 per cent of full time positions were held by men
- 89.86 per cent of part time positions were held by females
- 33.33 per cent of Council staff were part time

Table 2. Staffing numbers

Status	Males	Females	Totals
Full time	133	112	245
Part time	14	124	138
Casual	4	27	31
Total employees	151	263	414

Table 3. Staff demographic

Age	Percentage
15-19	0
20-24	7.97
25-34	22.71
35-44	23.67
45-54	23.67
55-64	16.18
65 and over	5.80

Note: Council's payroll system provides the above data which includes staff on extended leave without pay and parental leave. Where this is the case, employee numbers may be exaggerated due to extended position coverage. The data does not include contractors employed by other parties.

EEO statement

Cardinia Shire Council is committed to the principles of equal employment opportunity and the establishment and maintenance of a non-discriminatory work environment.

All staff and prospective staff will receive fair and equitable treatment in all policies and practices of Council without regard to attributes of age, breastfeeding, gender identity, impairment, industrial activity, employment activity, lawful sexual activity, marital status, status as a parent or carer, physical features, political beliefs or activities, pregnancy, race, religious belief or activity, sex, sexual orientation, or personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these personal characteristics.

Council will treat all individuals employed, or those considered for employment, on a merit basis according to their skills, aptitude, qualifications and experience, relevant to the work to be performed.

Council aims to ensure the most efficient and equitable use of the development of the skills and talents of all staff within the organisation. To achieve this, Council will, in consultation with staff, develop strategies to ensure equality at all stages of employment, including recruitment, selection and appointment, promotion, training and all other terms and conditions of employment.

All new Council staff complete induction training in equal opportunity, sexual harassment and bullying. Refresher training is coordinated for all staff every two years. Councillors also undergo this training.

Our organisation

Reporting Council's performance

Cardinia Shire Council measures its performance in a variety of ways. At a service level, Council monitors demand and delivery quality, and monitors and audits financial management. Importantly, Council regularly consults residents and ratepayers to gain an understanding of their perceptions of what is important and how the organisation performs.

Council produces quarterly performance reports providing detailed progress on actions undertaken to deliver the Council plan, major projects, improvement activities and key service provision and growth indicators. The report is available to the public via Council's website as part of the Council meeting agenda documents.

Council's key resident communication publication, *Connect* magazine, continues to provide updates on Council's activities in a narrative style, complementing the data provided in the quarterly performance reports.

This annual report provides an overall view of Council's activities within the 2011–12 financial year.

Council has continued its focus on independent auditing of both its financial practices and other key process to identify areas to both reduce Council's risk and to improve service delivery. These audits complement the internal focus on service improvement.

Local government community satisfaction survey

The Department of Community Planning and Development (DCPD) coordinates and auspices a Community Satisfaction Survey throughout Victorian Local Government areas each year.

Main objectives of the survey are to assess the performance of councils across a range of measures and to seek insight into ways to provide improved or more effective service delivery.

Community Satisfaction Survey results from 2011 and prior should not be compared with 2012 results. In 2012, in response to feedback from extensive consultations with councils, necessary and significant changes were made to the methodology and content of the survey that make comparisons with previous years invalid.

Changes to the survey include:

- survey is now conducted as a representative random probability survey of residents aged 18 years or over in local councils, whereas previously it was conducted as a 'head of household' survey
- results are now weighted post survey to the known population distribution of Cardinia Shire according to the most recently available Australian Bureau of Statistics population estimates, whereas the results were previously not weighted
- service responsibility area performance measures and the rating scale used to assess performance have also changed.

In 2012, Council recorded an 'overall performance index score' of 57. This is lower than the state-wide average of 60 for this measure and the average index score of 61 for the outer metropolitan group.

On other core performance measures (which can also be compared against all councils state-wide and the outer metropolitan group) Council scored as follows:

- 68 for customer service
- 57 for community consultation and engagement
- 56 for advocacy
- 51 for overall council direction

These results form part of the Victorian Local Government Indicators for all local government areas (see page 49).

Government grant applications

Council continued to seek grants from a variety of sources and lodged 51 applications for the 12 months ending 30 June. More than 50 per cent of these applications were successful and \$11,187,320 of grants was approved. A further 14 applications are pending an announcement concerning their success or otherwise.

The largest grant was for the reimbursement of damages caused by the flooding events; more than \$10 million in flood recovery grants was sought. Council also received a grant of \$2.5 million for a preventative health program jointly funded by the State and Federal governments. A new integrated children's centre and a new recreation reserve in Henry Road, Pakenham, also received major funding (see pages 8 and 13).

Business improvements

Best Value report 2011–12

Council continues to embrace the principles of Best Value. Council primarily applies these principles through its business and service delivery planning processes by monitoring the change in demand for its services and by identifying the appropriate resources to meet that demand in a fair manner for all the community.

Council has continued its journey of improving this planning process by more fully integrating place-based planning (working closely with the Shire's communities); using service planning and overall corporate planning to deliver desired outcomes.

Council also continues to work within existing partnerships while exploring new opportunities to deliver services.

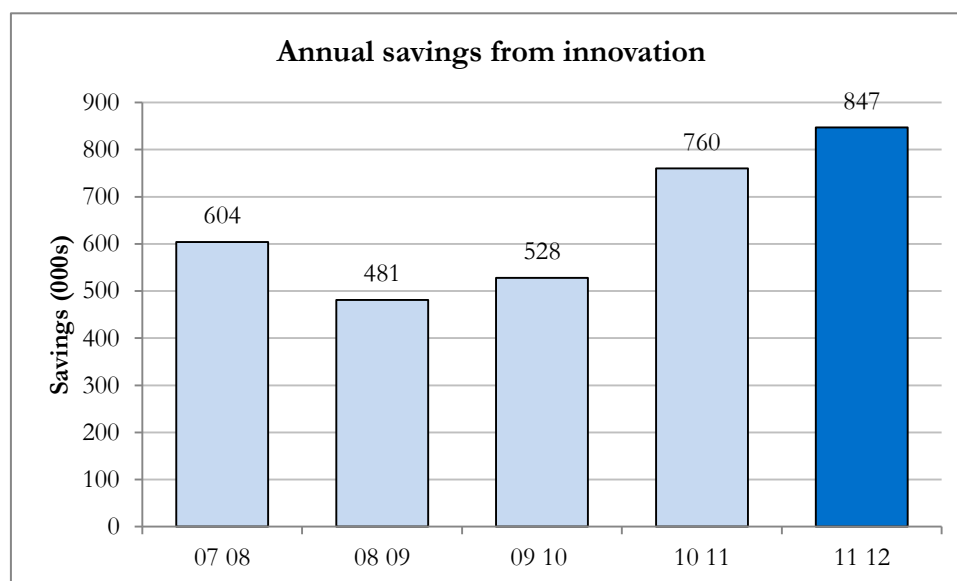
Council's improvement focus

Council continued to build its culture of improvement and innovation during 2011–12, building on the solid foundations of previous years.

In dollar terms, the program delivered an additional \$847,000 worth of efficiencies – comprising both real and opportunity savings that increase Council's capacity to deliver its services. The improvements identified and quantified for the 2011–12 year build on the

\$2.37 million delivered in the preceding four years, producing \$3.22 million in savings for the five years.

Figure 4. Annual savings from innovation



In addition to these improvements quantified in dollar terms, numerous activities have improved Council's functionality and provided benefits that are realised in non-financial terms. Activities include:

- implementing an online emergency management response system to improve the efficiency of the procurement and acquisition of resources needed during an emergency
- up-skilling staff to reduce reliance on consultants, for example, some bridge inspections, in-house document reviews and specialised staff training
- implementing sustainable water use initiatives such as re-use of rainwater and solar energy
- migrating Emerald Lake Park's website to Council's main website, providing more timely and integrated information at a lesser cost than hosting and updating two separate sites.

All Council's improvement activities help maximise the delivery potential of its existing staff. They ensure maximum benefit is gained by any increase in base staffing levels that are primarily the result of responding to the community growth.

Customer service

An important part of Council's services to residents is the provision of information on a timely basis delivered in an efficient and courteous manner. Council has a strong focus on responding to the needs of the community and this underpins the diverse range of services Council delivers.

Council ensures the services provided to local people, local businesses, and visitors are readily available, accessible to all, are of a high standard, and represent value for money.

The Customer Service team aims to provide a 'one-stop shop' approach to delivering Council services. This involves responding to customer requests for information and other

Council products and services received via telephone, fax, email, mail and direct face-to-face contact. Council manages telephone contact via its customer service centre.

Scope of services

- Managing and operating Council's call centre
- Providing information on Council and referral services
- Promoting a positive image of Council services
- Maintaining information promotion and displays at the Customer Service Centre
- Receipting payment of accounts and fees
- Input of customer requests for service via customer request tracking system.

Table 4. Service level statistics 2011–12

Call centre	Number of calls received	118,963
	Average wait time	48 seconds
	Percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds	68%
Customer service requests	Total number of requests logged	33,442
	Percentage completed on time	96%
Inwards correspondence	Total number of registered inwards mail items	74,022
Online communication	Monthly average visits	23,008
	Total number of visits on website	276,091

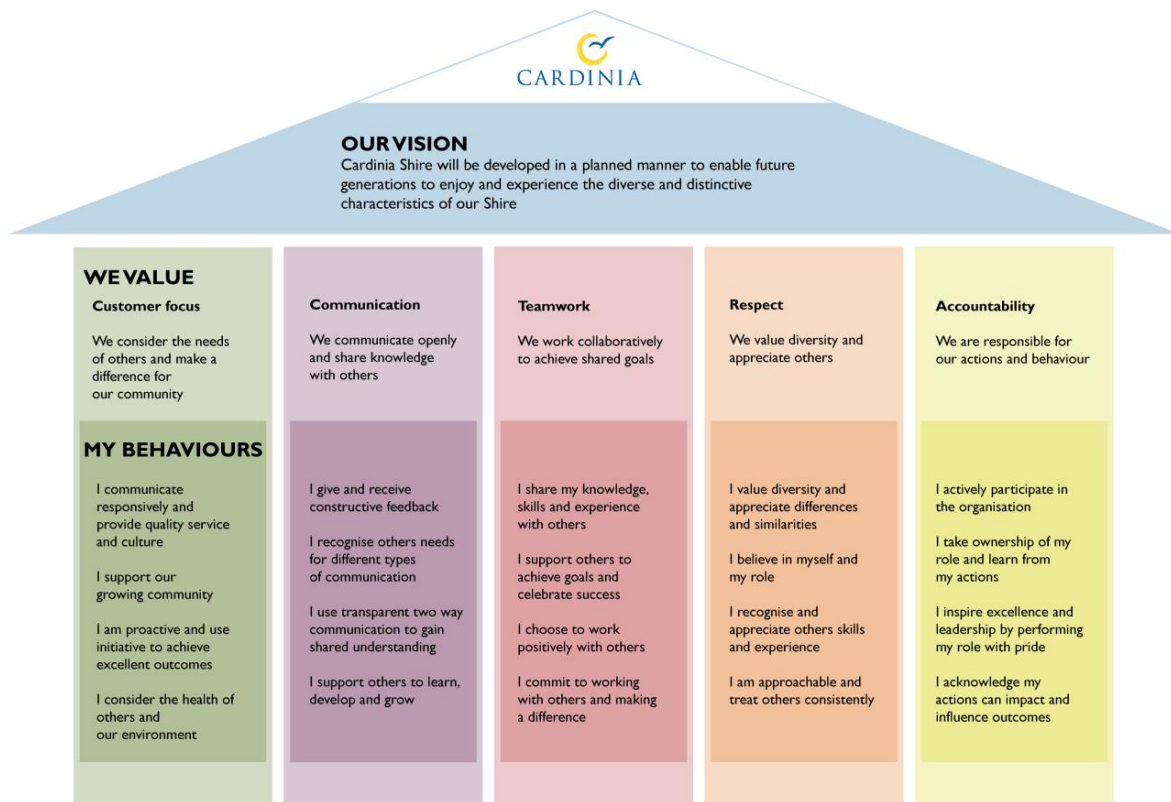
Staff development

Council is proud of its bronze status as an 'Investor in People' organisation. In the past 12 months, Council continued to implement numerous initiatives that support the development of its people, including the Cultural Strengthening and Leadership program (CSL). This program is dedicated to building leadership capacity, team effectiveness and a more cohesive culture across the organisation. The executive leadership development program has continued which is a whole-of-organisation program encouraging leadership at all levels. A range of elective programs supporting team effectiveness and enabling leadership, including an internal consulting program, has also continued. An internal staff mentoring program was developed to support staff engagement and confidence to have important conversations and take up a leadership role at all levels.

An organisational review of the 'Cardinia Way Values' was undertaken by all staff at all levels. The review was an initiative of the CSL program that suggested an organisation review was required to reinvigorate and review the values to increase ownership and accountability of how staff take-up their role in working with our community and each other. All staff were involved in the review and identification of key behaviours we all value

as an organisation. The revised Cardinia Values Framework (see Figure 5) supports the Council vision with five key values: customer focus, communication, respect, accountability and teamwork. Each of the values includes four key behaviours to demonstrate and call to account the way staff behave each day at work.

Figure 5. Cardinia Way Values



Council continues to offer a diverse range of development opportunities through its online corporate training plan and involvement in whole-of-local government initiatives such as the LGMA Challenge and LGPro programs.

Council staff are supported in their learning at all stages of their career. Council provides opportunities to access ‘education assistance’ as a way of engaging in formal education from certificate level courses to post-graduate qualifications. Council also supports a traineeship program offering a range of placement opportunities for trainees from school age to experience working in various business units across Council for up to 18 months. This year the organisation developed its first Human Capital Strategic Plan to guide its future human resources decisions. Council also undertook an extensive review of the staff induction program to improve the induction process for all new staff. Council is proud of its organisational culture and is committed to continuous improvement through engaging staff and assessing its performance through delivering the staff culture survey.

Victorian Local Government Indicators

Table 5. Local government indicators for previous and current year

Indicator	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Overall performance Community satisfaction rating for overall performance generally of Council	New survey process introduced in 2011-12, cannot compare results directly to previous years (see note on page 44).			57
Advocacy Community satisfaction rating for Council's advocacy and community representation on key local issues	As above			56
Engagement Community satisfaction rating for Council's engagement in decision making on key local issues	As above			57
All rates Average rates and charges per assessment	\$1,375	\$1,491	\$1,592	\$1,648
Residential rates Average residential rates and charges per assessment	\$1,230	\$1,291	\$1,403	\$1,496
Operating costs Average operating expenditure per assessment	\$2,254	\$2,395	\$2,682	\$2,685
Capital expenditure Average capital expenditure per assessment	\$749	\$940	\$827	\$723
Infrastructure renewal Renewal maintenance	56%	49%	50%	56%
	71%	67%	69%	72%
Debts Average liabilities per assessment	\$2,291	\$1,953	\$1,959	\$1,950
Operating result Operating result per assessment	\$1,271	\$956	\$1,470	\$1,007
Note: After deducting capital and developer contributions, the result would be \$99 per assessment (\$75 in 2010-11)				

Open and accountable governance

Council meetings

Council meets on the third Monday of every month. The meetings are open to the public. Council issues the agendas and minutes to journalists and places them online on Council's website.

Councillor responsibilities

Committees

As at June 2012, the following was the structure and composition of Council's committees.

Audit Committee

Council members: Crs Chatwin and Legge (Cr Ross resigned effective May 2012)
Independent members: Warwick Spargo (chairperson) and Brian Paynter

Town Planning Committee

Committee of the whole Council.

Resources, training and compensation for Councillors

It is important that Council's elected representatives are empowered to undertake their roles and responsibilities and are provided with the opportunity to acquire new skills and upgrade their existing capabilities.

Council has adopted a Councillor Expenses and Entitlements policy that covers matters such as the following.

Councillor allowances

Cardinia Shire Council is ranked as a Group 2 council in accordance with the Victorian Government's Policy Statement on Local Government Mayoral and Councillor Allowances and Resources, April 2008. The allowances therefore payable to Councillors are a maximum of \$21,236 per annum and for the Mayor a maximum of \$65,984. In addition, an amount equivalent to the Superannuation Guarantee Contribution (currently 9 per cent) is also payable.

Councillor expense entitlements

The policy adopted by Council provides for payment of travel allowances, child care expenses and communication expenses.

Council also provides a computer and internet connection, mobile phone, and fax/copy machine to all Councillors for Council business.

Councillor professional development

The policy provides support to Councillors for upgrading their skills during their term of office.

An amount of \$3,000 per Councillor is allocated in the budget. Programs that qualify for the expenditure include:

- seminars and conferences
- undergraduate and post graduate studies
- short courses and study tours.

Programs must relate to the areas of local government activity, leadership, governance in the context of the role of Councillor, or enhance the personal skills of the individual to undertake the role.

Councillor Code of Conduct

Council has adopted a Code of Conduct in accordance with the provisions of Section 76C(1)A of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Copies of the code are available via Council's website or from Council offices in Henty Way, Pakenham.

Available information

Cardinia Shire Council is committed to open governance. The following information is available for perusal at the Municipal Offices, Henty Way Pakenham during office hours:

- details of current allowances fixed for the Mayor and Councillors
- the total annual remuneration for all senior officers in respect of the current financial year and the previous financial
- details of overseas or interstate travel by Councillors or staff in previous 12 months
- names of Councillors/Council officers who submitted returns of interest and dates returns were submitted
- agendas and minutes of Ordinary and Special Meetings of Council except where such minutes relate to parts of meetings which have been closed in accordance with the provisions of Section 89 (2) of the *Local Government Act 1989*
- list of special committees established which were abolished or ceased to operate
- minutes of meetings of special committees
- register of delegations under sections 87, 88 and 98 of the Act
- submissions received under Section 223
- agreement to establish regional library
- register of leases
- register of authorised officers appointed under Section 224
- a list of donations and grants made by Council
- list of organisations of which Council was a member, including membership fees and other amounts and services.

Current Local Laws

As at 30 June 2012, Council had three principal Local Laws in operation.

Local Law No 8 Meeting Procedure Local Law

This local law regulates proceedings at meetings of Council, Special Committees and Advisory Committees; and regulates the use of the common seal.

Local Law No 9 Protection of Council Assets and Control of Building Sites Local Law

As this title indicates, the Local Law regulates activities on building sites to ensure that public assets are protected, that the presence and disposal of builders refuse and rubbish does not adversely affect the environment and residents' quality of life. The local law also attempts to educate and induce people involved in building work to act responsibly to reduce the extent and cost of infrastructure damage for the benefit of the wider community.

Local Law 10 Environment and Amenity Issues Local Law

This local law controls access to and behaviour in municipal places, including buildings and reserves, controls activities on and adjacent to roads, public places and adjoining lands which may adversely affect the enjoyment of life or which may be dangerous or unsafe and controls a range of activities that may be detrimental to the environment of the area.

Council Governance practices

FOI report

In accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* reporting requirements, the following information is supplied for the period 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012:

- (a) 17 Freedom of Information requests were made to Cardinia Shire Council
- (b) 17 requests were made for full access to documents for the above period; no requests for part access to documents pursuant were made and no requests were pending as at 30 June 2012
- (c) Manager Governance Doug Evans is the designated officer with authority to make a decision in relation to a request
- (d) no requests for internal review were made under Section 51 (1)
- (e) no application has been made to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal during the above period
- (f) no notices have been served on the agency under Section 12 (1)
- (g) no disciplinary action has been taken out against any officer in respect of the administration of this Act
- (h) a total charge of \$398 was levied on the applicants.

National Competition Policy Compliance 2011–12

Cardinia Shire Council has complied with the requirements of the National Competition Policy (NCP) for the period 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012.

Risk management highlights 2011–12

Risk management program

Council's risk management policy allocates responsibility for risk to appropriate managers. The objectives of the risk management policy ensure that Council can appropriately deal with risk, protect its assets, including people and property, and create an environment where all employees assume responsibility for managing risk. This is assisted with a new software program that provides staff with the ability to monitor and assess risks.

Insurance and risk audits

Council's insurer MAV Insurance audits councils every two years. At the most recent audit in 2012, Council received a score of 84 per cent that resulted in a state ranking of 32nd out of 79 councils.

Jardine Lloyd Thompson also audits Council on property risk management and fidelity risk management. For the 2011 audit, Council received a score of 57.67 per cent for the property risk audit (resulting in a ranking of 65 in the state), and 61 per cent for the fidelity audit that resulted in a ranking of 57 in the State.

Business continuity

Council has developed and tested its business continuity plan in November 2012. This plan will assist Council in continuing to provide services to the community should Council business be interrupted by an emergency event, including a pandemic. Council places a high level of importance on minimising the impact on service delivery to the community in the event of a business interruption.

WorkCover and OH&S highlights for 2011–12

Workplace safety

Council worked diligently in 2011–12 to create a positive safety culture through structured education and awareness sessions with management and employees. Council's early intervention injury management policy has assisted in effectively managing WorkCover premium sensitive claims.

Occupational Health and Safety – SafetyMap

Council has retained its SafetyMap accreditation. This Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS) has been subject to a rigorous external audit by Lloyds Register Quality Assurance (LRQA).

Council is reviewing its OHSMS to ensure that it keeps pace with industry best practice and meets the practical needs of its employees which will ensure that a 'top of mind' safety culture is generated and maintained within its work environment.

Council's finances

Understanding the financial statements

The financial statements are key reports that give information on how Council performed financially for the 2011–12 financial year, as well as giving an overall position of Council's finances at 30 June 2012.

Council staff prepare the financial statements to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act 1989, International Financial Reporting Standards and Australian Accounting Standards.

The Victorian Auditor-General's office audits the statements before approval in principle by Council's Audit Committee and Council itself. Council then forwards the financial statements to the Auditor-General for final approval.

For this financial year, Council has received a clear audit of its financial statements.

Four key financial reports and explanatory notes supporting the reports make-up the financial statements.

1. Comprehensive income statement
2. Balance sheet
3. Statement of changes in equity
4. Cash flow statement

Each report has a purpose and provides the reader with information in relation to an aspect of Council's financial operations. When the statements are read in conjunction with each other, it assists in the overall understanding of Council's financial position.

Comprehensive income statement

The comprehensive income statement shows:

- sources of Council revenue.
- expenses incurred in the delivery of services to the community and in running Council. These expenses do not include costs associated with the construction or purchase of assets. These are added to assets in the balance sheet. However, there is an operating expense for 'depreciation' that is the book value of assets used up during the year.
- surplus/(deficit) for the year, which is the equivalent to Council's profit (loss) for the year. A profit means that the income was greater than the expenditure. It must be considered that this does not necessarily equal a cash profit. The majority of Council's profit comes from developer-contributed assets, which must be recognised as revenue, even though they are in the form of infrastructure assets, not cash.

Balance sheet

This is a one-page snapshot of Council's financial position as at 30 June.

- Shows what Council owns as assets and what it owes as liabilities.
- The bottom line is total equity. This is the net worth of Council that has been built up over many years and equates to net assets (total assets less total liabilities)

- Assets and liabilities are separated into current and non-current. Generally speaking, current assets are those assets able to be converted to cash within 12 months. Current liabilities are those liabilities that are payable within 12 months. Non-current assets are those assets that are not expected to be converted to cash within 12 months. Non-current liabilities are those liabilities not required to be paid within the next 12 months.
- Accumulated surplus – the value of all net results from ordinary activities accumulated over time.
- Reserves – the sum of the opening recorded value of assets and equity, and any increase or decrease in their current values.

Statement of changes in equity

This statement shows the changes in the value of total Councils' equity and how changes arose.

Main reasons for the changes are:

- 'profit or loss' from operations, described in the statement as surplus/(deficit) for the year
- any increase or decrease in Council asset values
- revaluation of Council assets – while there is a requirement that Council land and buildings be re-valued every two years, Council's major asset categories are reviewed regularly to ensure they are carried at fair value.

Cash flow statement

- Summarises cash payments and cash receipts for the year. The values in the cash flow from operating activities may differ from those shown in the comprehensive income statement because the statement is prepared on an accrual accounting basis.
- Bottom line of the cash flow statement is the cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year, which is the physical cash held by Council at the end of the financial year. It must be considered that this cash is not surplus cash held at the end of the year. This cash is committed to current capital projects, as well as meeting Council's obligations in terms of its liabilities and provisions.

Notes to the accounts

- Important and informative section of the financial statements. To enable the reader to understand the basis on which the values shown in the statements are made, it is necessary to provide details of Council's accounting policies. These are described in Note 1.
- Give details behind the figures contained in the statements. The note numbers are shown beside the relevant items in the comprehensive income statement, balance sheet, and cash flow statement.
- Where Council wishes to disclose other information that cannot be incorporated into the statement, then this is also shown in the notes.
- Other notes include:
 - the cost of various functions of Council
 - the breakdown of expenses, revenues, reserves and other assets
 - contingent liabilities and contingent assets
 - transactions with persons related to Council.

Statements by Principal Accounting Officer and councillors

The Certification of the Principal Accounting Officer is a statement made by the person responsible for the financial management of Council that, in their opinion, the financial statements have met all the statutory and professional reporting requirements and they are fair and not misleading.

The Statement of Councillors is a statement made by two councillors on behalf of the Council that, in their opinion, the financial statements are fair and not misleading.

Auditor-General's report

The independent audit report is an external and independent opinion of the financial statements.

It provides the reader with an independent opinion on the financial statements.

The opinion covers both the statutory and professional requirements and also the fairness aspects of the financial statements.

Performance statement

This statement shows key strategic activities set by Council, and how it has performed in achieving these activities. These results are also audited by the Auditor-General's office.

Standard statements

The standard statements compare Council's financial plan, expressed through its budget, with actual performance.

Council is required to prepare and include audited standard statements within its annual report. There are four standard statements required this year: standard income statement; standard balance sheet, standard statement of cash flows, and standard statement of capital works, together with explanatory notes.

These statements and supporting notes form a special purpose financial report, which is prepared to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act 1989, and Local Government (Finance and Reporting) Regulations 2004.