

SERVICE REVIEW OUTCOMES – 2004/05

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DETAILS OF SERVICE

Economic Development is a service unit within the Corporate and Economic Development Directorate.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Economic Development service Team consists of 4.6 Equivalent Full Time staff and is responsible for the following services and strategic directions:

Services

- Retaining and developing existing business.
- Attracting new businesses.
- Providing networks for information, communication and training within the business community.
- Supporting Council's tourism and Heritage board.

Strategic directions

- Foster the sustainable development of local businesses.
- Promote and market key business opportunities and competitive strengths of the municipality.
- Encourage and support local employment opportunities.
- Establish and market a unique business identity of the municipality.
- Support, promote and participate in the development of the regional economy.
- Provides a co-ordinated and integrated approach to the development of viable and competitive commercial centres.

SERVICE STANDARDS

Note: The following is a summary of the activity and outcomes of the Best Value Service Review

Best Value Principle	Key Performance Indicator	Performance Result 2004-05	Target 2005-06	Target 2006-07
Cost Standard	Operate within Annual Financial Administration Budget 2004-05 Budget \$493,106 (net)	Exceeded budget by 3% *	Performance to budget	Performance to budget
Quality Standard	Business Week program satisfaction / level of participation	Under development as part for October 2005 Business week program		
Quality standard	Economic Development rating #	62 Indexed Mean	63 Indexed Mean	63 Indexed Mean

* Additional expenditure to support community business development initiatives.

Department for Victorian Communities, Annual Community Satisfaction Survey

Consideration of Best Value Factors in setting Cost and Quality standards

Factors

Best on offer 208C(a)

Consideration Comments

The sector comparison indicator is the Department for Victorian Communities, Annual Community Satisfaction Survey, Economic Development rating. This is a comparative measure of community satisfaction against the mean result of like local government councils.

One of the primary Best on Offer considerations is the level of service provided by the unit compared to the service levels experienced by other communities. The level of service provided by Economic Development units is largely a result of the level of financial resources provided. All council's have the opportunity to compete for funding from Commonwealth and State governments to reduce the cost to council and ensure provision of quality, best on offer programs and services. The successful acquisition of funding against competing council's is based on the quality of the submission and project proposal developed and prepared by the unit on behalf of the community and demonstrates the qualities of a best on offer service provider.

Consideration of Best Value Factors in setting Cost and Quality standards cont.

Factors

Consideration Comments

**Best on offer
208C(a) cont.**

Maroondah’s Economic Development unit has been able to deliver on budget, its programs by consistently being successful in the acquisition of external funding in competition with other councils. During the current financial period a total of \$108,000 in funding was procured from Federal and State government based on submissions to support the following projects:

- Streetlife program
- Group delivery program
- Regional Development Body Program
- Infrastructure funding for capital works (CRAMP building, Croydon)

**Value for money
208C(b)**

The primary role of the Economic development unit is to establish programs for Council to invest in the development of the economic viability and sustainability of its business community. The unit has an annual net budget of approximately \$476,200 (\$754,000 expenditure, \$278,000 income). This is one indicator of the units commitment to a level of service aimed at being best on offer.

The effective financial management of the service, the successful acquisition of funding and high ratio of budget invested in programs over the operating costs of the unit the value for money outputs provided to the community.

**Community
expectation and
values 208C(c)**

The broader community does not see the direct efforts of the unit’s activity, however, they do share the unit’s expectations and goal of enjoying a strong and vibrant economy through sustainable commercial and retail business environments and local employment.

This goal was originally established through consultation with the community during the development of Maroondah’s long-term vision strategy ‘Maroondah 2025’ and is currently a key strategic goal stated in the Council Plan, which is offered for community consultation and comment as part of the annual Council Plan process. The programs and projects coordinated by the unit in consultation with the community are aimed at achieving the ‘Maroondah 2025’ and Council Plan strategic goals. The level of satisfaction participants’ register in relation to the programs and activities indicate the level to which community expectations are being met by the service unit.

Consideration of Best Value Factors in setting Cost and Quality standards cont.

Factors	Consideration Comments
Community expectation and values 208C(c) cont.	<p>On-going consultation to identify or affirm community expectations has been undertaken as part of the development of the following strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Economic Development Strategy, ➤ Tourism and heritage Strategy, ➤ Regional economic Strategy for Melbourne South East.
Affordability and Accessibility 208C(d)	<p>The service provides coordinated access to a range of information and resources aimed at assisting businesses to develop and be sustainable, it also provides networking opportunities and educational support.</p> <p>Access to information including the Biz Maroondah website and resource material, Business Kits etc. is provided at no cost and are available to the entire community. There are costs associated with participation in network meetings and educational programs, the majority of these programs receive a level of subsidy either from Council and/or sponsorship or funding sourced by the unit. The subsequent fees are based on partial cost recovery.</p>
Local Employment 208C(e)	<p>One of the direct outcomes of the service area’s activity is to support the sustainability and success of businesses within Maroondah providing a foundation for increasing local employment opportunities.</p> <p>Maroondah’s Best Value Supporting Local Suppliers policy is a demonstration by Council of its commitment to supporting and promoting local businesses as a means of sponsoring local employment opportunities. A Council wide KPI relating to the policy is the target of 25% of purchasing activity to be directed to local suppliers of goods and services. The initiative also extends to the local advertisement of vacant positions and appropriate tenders.</p>

Best Value Principle

Actions Taken

Responsive to Community Needs

Economic Development is directly involved with the community through the membership and community participation in the following groups:

- Business Advisory Board,
- Ringwood and Croydon Chamber of Commerce committees,
- Regional Tourism Board.

In consultation and collaboration with these memberships the following strategies have been developed to respond to the needs and concerns raised in the above forums;

- Economic Development Strategy,
- Tourism and Heritage Strategy,
- Regional economic Strategy for Melbourne South East.

Accessible

The service maintains a dedicated website www.bizmaroondah.vic.gov.au which provides direct access, 24hours to the range of programs and projects being undertaken, contacts for registered businesses within Maroondah, network and support contacts and downloads of resources and information kits. The service also runs extensive media in local newspapers promoting training, educational and community events.

Access to the service and related information is also achieved between normal business hours, Monday to Friday from 8.30 am to 5.00 pm via telephone on 1300 882 233, via email: maroondah@maroondah.com.au or in person at one of Council's three Customer Service outlets. Council information is available 24 hours, seven days a week from Council's Web site, <http://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au>

Continuous Improvement

During the period of the best value review of the service the following service improvements were identified and implemented:

- The Bizmaroondah website was significantly redeveloped and relaunched in response to community feedback. The new look site has experienced an increase in activity of approximately 500% during the 2004-2005 period.
- Council's business kit for new business was redesigned and converted from hard copy to a CD providing additional forms and guides to assist new business.

Implementation of the revised Tourism Strategy will provide a number of future improvement initiatives.

Best Value Principle

Actions Taken

Consultation

While significant community consultation took place during the establishment of the ‘Maroondah 2025 strategy’ and annual Council Plan which providing part of the strategic focus for the service area’s activities, the service is also an active participant in partnership with the business communities in the following consultative forums:

- Business Advisory Board,
- Annual Business Week (annual 5 day business community event),
- Ringwood and Croydon Chamber of Commerce committees,
- Regional Tourism Board.

The service also maintains strong ongoing relationships with all trader groups within the municipality through direct contact, the provision of development and educational programs and their interactive web site.

Reporting

A copy Maroondah’s Best Value Annual Community Report of key findings and key performance target and results will be available to the community via the following methods and access points;

- Council’s community web page for public access,
- At each of our three Customer Service Centres for public viewing,
- At each of Council’s Public Libraries for public viewing.

Performance reporting against key service indicators is undertaken on a monthly basis and the results documented in Council’s monthly performance report. This report is tabled before Council on a quarterly basis and is a publicly available document. Each service area has an annual business plan, which is strategically aligned with Maroondah’s Council Plan, and our overarching strategic community plan Maroondah 2025. Annual performance and key achievements of the strategies in these plans is reported in Council’s Annual Report.