

**Business Paper of a duly convened Ordinary Meeting of the
Hawkesbury River County Council to be held at The Community Meeting Room,
The Hills Shire Council, 3 Columbia Court, Baulkham Hills on Thursday, 18
August 2016 commencing at 6.00pm**

1. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

2. APOLOGIES

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on Thursday, **9 June 2016** to be confirmed or altered.

4. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

5. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL'S OFFICERS:

a) From the General Manager

To the Chairperson and Council Members

I submit these Reports for Council's consideration:

ITEM GM 1. RESIGNATION OF Mr. ANDREW JEFFERIES

At 12pm on 31 July 2016, Mr. Andrew Jefferies resigned as a Councillor from The Hills Shire Council. He has taken up the role of a member of the Local Representation Advisory Committee with Parramatta City Council. Pursuant to Section 392 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) his resignation from The Hills Shire Council means he immediately vacates his position as Member of HRCC. The Hills Shire Council are currently undertaking a by-election process to replace Mr. Jefferies on HRCC.

Mr. Jefferies has represented The Hills Shire Council as a Member of HRCC since 11 October 2012. In his time at HRCC Mr. Jefferies has been a valued Member of the Board and a strong advocate for the residents of The Hills Shire. We wish him the very best in his future endeavors.

Recommendation:

1. *That the report is received and information noted.*
2. *The Chairman writes a letter of thanks acknowledging the efforts of Mr. Andrew Jefferies on the Board of HRCC.*

ITEM GM 2. RESULT OF THE HILLS SHIRE COUNCIL BY-ELECTION

On Tuesday 9 August 2016 the Hills Shire Council conducted a by-election to replace the seat vacated on HRCC by Mr. Andrew Jefferies. The election was conducted in accordance with Schedule 9 *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* (NSW).

The outcome of the election was that Clr. Alan Haselden was selected as The Hills Shire Council representative and Member of the HRCC Board.

Recommendation:

1. *That the report is received and information noted.*

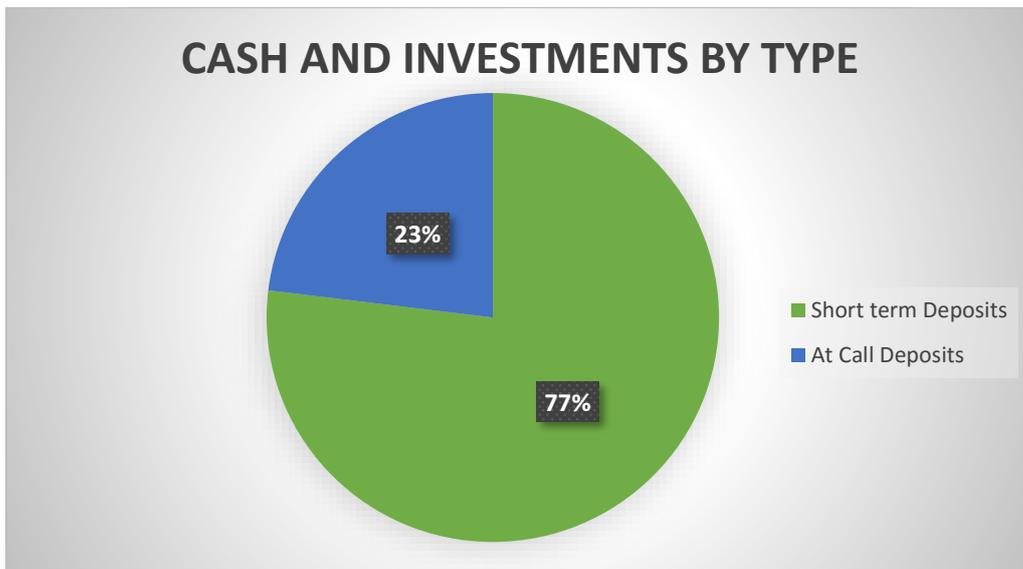
ITEM GM 3. REPORT ON MONEY’S INVESTED

Reason for Report: Statutory

Cash and Investments

The below investment summary represents Council’s total investments as at 31st July 2016 in accordance with Clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* (NSW).

Short-term Deposits		Term (Days)	Rate	Maturity Date	% of Portfolio	S & P Credit Rating
Bank of Sydney	\$250,000	116	3.05%	17/10/16	18.49%	Unrated
Bank of Queensland	\$100,000	210	3.05%	27/10/16	7.40%	A2
AMP Bank Ltd	\$140,000	186	3.00%	21/11/16	10.36%	A1
AMP Bank Ltd	\$150,000	180	3.00%	20/12/16	11.10%	A1
Bank of Sydney	\$400,000	270	3.25%	17/1/17	29.59%	Unrated
TOTAL	\$1,040,000					
At Call Deposits						
NAB Business Cheque A/c	\$267,119	At Call	0.01-0.05%	N/A	19.76%	
AMP Business Saver	\$ 44,714	At Call	2.30%	N/A	3.30%	
TOTAL	\$311,833					
Total Value of Investment Funds	\$1,351,833				100%	



Portfolio Analysis

At the RBA's August meeting it was decided to lower the cash rate by 25 basis points to 1.50%. All of the short-term deposits and AMP at call account are above this benchmark.

The team from Curve Securities suggests that the record low-interest rate environment in Australia is helping to fuel a "deposit war" by the banks. The banks were disinclined to pass on the full RBA rate cut since they were keen to protect their profits and reducing deposit rates would make it difficult to maintain funding for lending. So, hopefully, term deposit interest rates will not reduce in the medium term.

The NAB business cheque account generally only holds funds of any size due to operational reasons. In the case of July 2016, a term deposit matured on Friday 29th July which meant it was not able to be withdrawn until after the end of month.

Total funds invested for July 2016 were \$1,351,833. This is a decrease of \$219,082 from April 2016 investments which totalled \$1,570,915.

This decrease is somewhat due to the purchase of the following assets during the period: 50% deposit for new roller doors and lighting and security system, an earth auger for the Shaw's Island project, safety shower and eyewash station and a new photocopier. The remaining decrease in cash funds comes from operational requirements.

Bank Reconciliation as at 31/7/2016

Balance as per Bank Statement	\$	267,119.65
Less: Outstanding Cheques	-\$	1,785.04
Add: Outstanding Deposits	\$	0.00
Balance as per MYOB	\$	265,334.61

Legal

All investments are in accordance with section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* and Council's Investment Policy.

Recommendation:

1. *That the report is received and information noted.*

ITEM GM 4. HRCC 4TH QUARTER FINANCIAL REVIEW

Reason for Report: Statutory

The 4th Quarter Financial Review has been completed and is enclosed with this report. HRCC continues to track sustainably according to strategy and budget. Income lines such as “Private Property Works” continued to improve for the quarter as the result of some significant new contracts being completed.

Expenditure lines were pushed, in particular, staffing, to ensure adequate labor was available to meet the expanded operational requirements. In addition, an accounting error was detected in the accrual expenditure against our grant allocations. This was rectified in this quarter but had a negative budget impact to the effect of \$45K.

The overall budget position is healthy as we arrive at the conclusion of the financial year in a neutral position.

ENCLOSURES_GM4	HRCC 4 th Quarter Financial Report 2015-16
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Recommendation:

1. *That the report is received and noted.*

ITEM GM 5. HRCC DRAFT ANNUAL FINANCIAL REVIEW 2015-16

Reason for Report: Statutory

A Draft HRCC Annual Financial Review 2015/16 has been completed by compiling our quarterly reports. This is done in advance of the full external audit process to provide a timely indicator of financial performance. The audit will no doubt alter individual lines and summary tallies.

This draft review still gives a strong idea as to the financial status of Council prior to the formal Financial Statements, which will not be finalised until October 2016. The overall picture is positive with HRCC returning a neutral budget (small surplus) of \$3,301 (0.01%).

The neutral result can be related to employment tracking very close to budget due to high levels of employee retention. Additionally, significant operational costs such as depreciation have become much more predictable.

After producing three surplus budget results, HRCC has delivered a neutral budget. This places us on track to deliver a deficit budget in 2016/17 as planned by the Operational Report 2016/17. (See **Figure 1**).

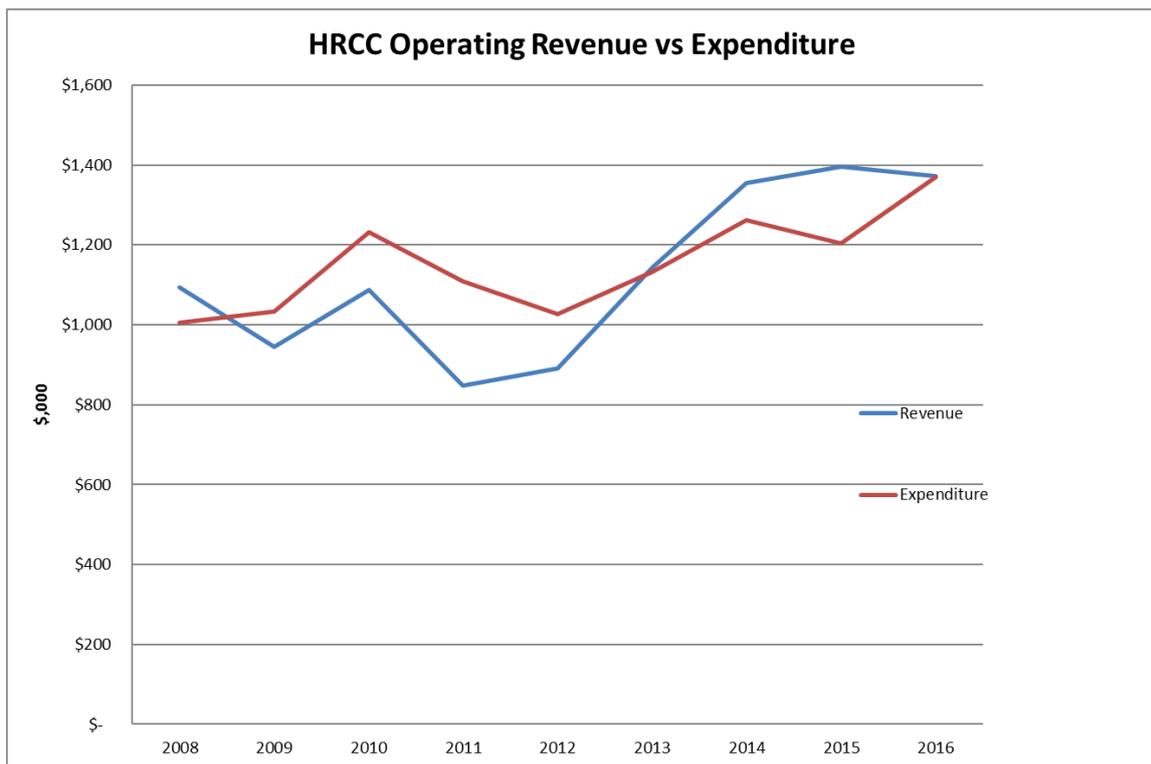


Figure 1: HRCC 8 Year Financial Operating Trend

Preparation of Financial Statements 2015/16

Pursuant to S413 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council must prepare financial reports for each year, and must refer them for audit as soon as practicable after the end of that year. A Council's financial report must include:

- a) A general purpose financial report
- b) Any other matters prescribed by the regulations, and
- c) A statement in the approved form by the Council as to its opinion on the general purpose report.

Pursuant to S418 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council must give public presentation of the audited financial reports as soon as practicable after they have been received by Council.

A Draft Annual Budget Review for 2015/16 has been prepared for the information of Council, and work is currently underway to develop the reports in the prescribed standard required for audit.

ENCLOSURE_GM5:	HRCC Draft Annual Financial Review 2015/16
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Recommendations:

1. *That the report is received and noted.*
2. *That Council prepares the Draft HRCC Financial Statements 2015/16 in accordance with the Australian Accounting and Standards Board and refers these for audit.*
3. *That the audited financial statements are publicly advertised once received by the General Manager.*
4. *That the Audited Financial Statements 2015/16 are presented to the Ordinary Meeting of 27 October 2016 and includes a report from the General Manager on any submissions made by the public.*

ITEM GM 6. ANNUAL OPERATIONAL RESULTS

Reason for Report: Informative

The General Manager will produce a complete Annual Report 2015/16 and table this at the next Ordinary Meeting. This year's Annual Report will also include an "end of term" report for 2012-2016. The 4th Quarter Operational Report has been completed and is enclosed with this report.

The results from the 4th Quarter Report indicate a significant increase in the output of our staff (See Figure 2). This is especially the case in weed control results in which a 48% increase was delivered in terms of weed hectares (Ha) controlled. This can be attributed to additional resources which were obtained in the 2015/16 FY from grant funds, and applying these to the employment of a trainee scheme. This result demonstrates a strong return on investment as the resource input was increased by 12% (\$167K) whilst delivering a 48% output growth.

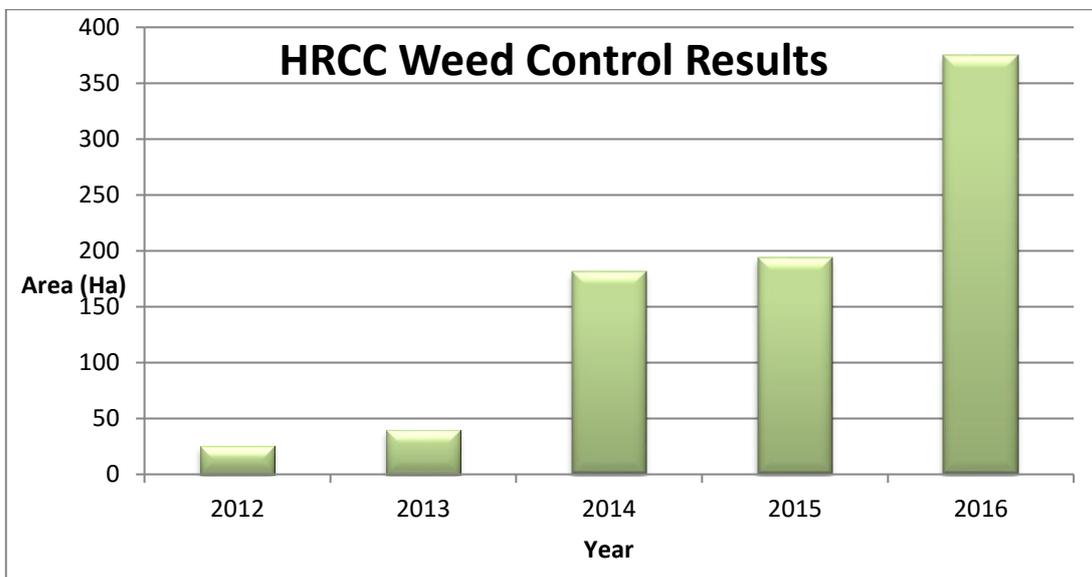


Figure 2: HRCC Weed Control Annual Results

In terms of our noxious weeds inspection and surveillance program, this held steady on the previous year with a healthy 5% increase in private properties visited. Resources to this part of the council were maintained as steady on the previous year. In addition to inspections this team of four staff are also responsible for the delivery of our educational program, and in 2015/16 they held 24 events and stalls at field days and shows in every LGA within the county.

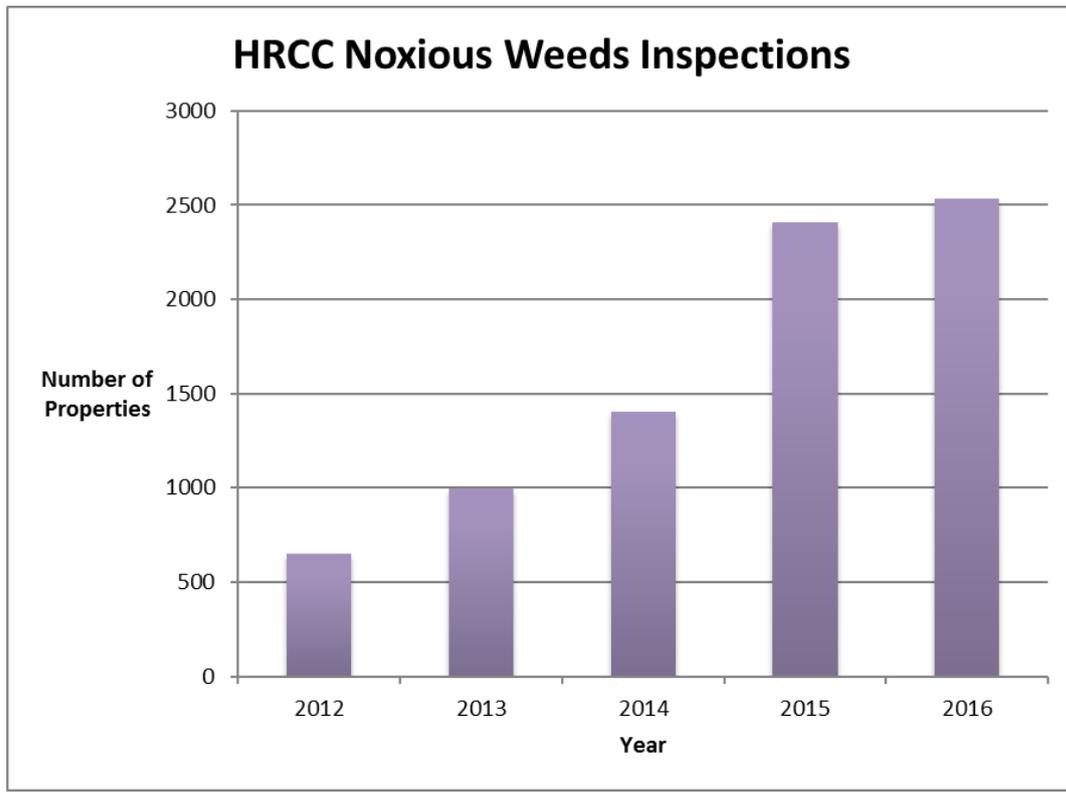


Figure 3: HRCC Private Properties Inspected

ENCLOSURE_GM6:	HRCC Operational Report 2015/16 Q4
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Recommendation:

1. That the report is received and noted.

ITEM GM 7. STAFFING

Reason for Report: Informative

Since the last Council meeting held on 9 June 2016, Council has employed one staff member

- Ms Holly Escott – Business Administration Trainee

HRCC currently employs a total of 18 people (at FTE of 17.6).

Recommendation:

1. *That the report is received and noted.*

ITEM GM 8. THE HILLS SHIRE AMALGAMATION WITH PARRAMATTA CITY COUNCIL

Reason for Report: Informative

At the Ordinary Meeting of 9 June 2016 it was reported to the Council that the amalgamation process which affected The Hills Shire and Parramatta Council's had an impact on the weed management of the issues of the affected area. Principally these were the suburbs south of the M2 motorway including Carlingford, North Rocks and Northmead. See Figure 2 below:

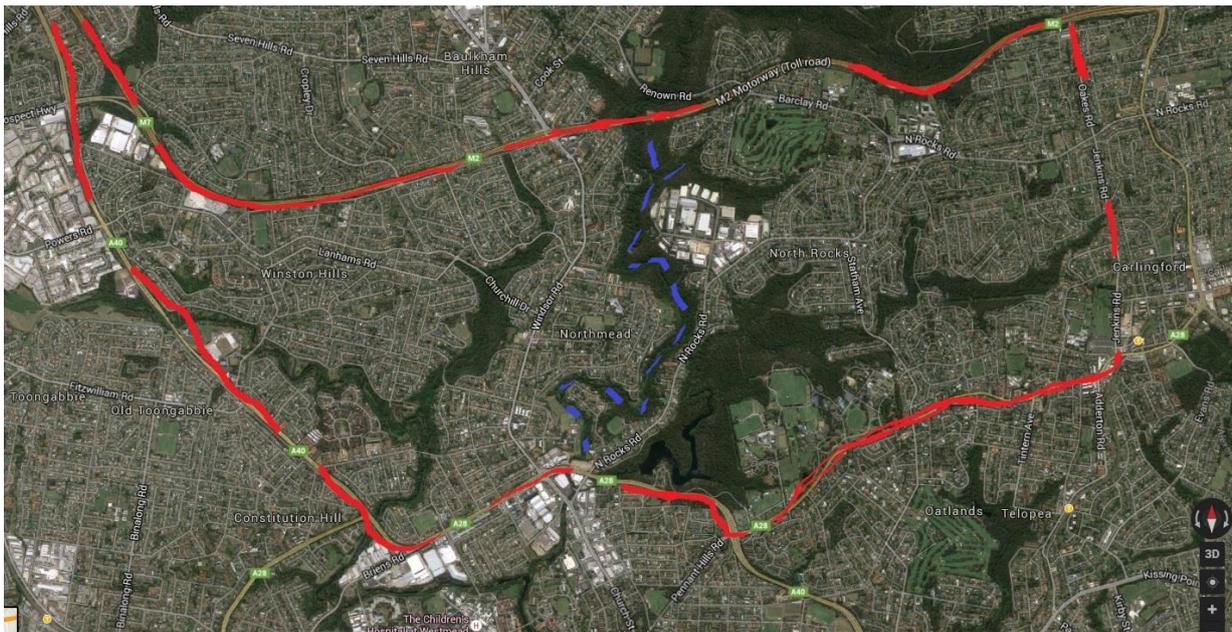


Figure 4: The area of land now under Parramatta City Council administration

This area of land was subject to a very high-risk weed, Kidney Leaf Mud Plantain, which grows along the proximity of Darling Mills Creek. It was resolved that the General Manager would meet with the Administrator of Parramatta City Council, Ms. Amanda Chadwick.

A meeting took place on 21 July 2016 with Amanda Chadwick (PCC), Tim Dale (PCC), David Hogan (GSLLS) and, Chris Dewhurst (HRCC). A briefing note was supplied to Parramatta Council one week before the meeting to outline their statutory requirements in relation to the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993 (NSW)*. The meeting was very positive with the Parramatta staff thanking HRCC for their efforts in bringing this issue to their attention. A number of service options were supplied to Parramatta including the possibility of joining the HRCC shared services arrangement.

ENCLOSURE_GM7:	Briefing note to Parramatta City Council
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Recommendation:

1. That the report is received and noted.

ITEM GM 9. COUNCILLOR PECUNIARY INTEREST RETURNS

Reason for Report: Statutory

Section 449 of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires that a Councillor or Designated Person holding that position at 30 June in any year must complete and lodge a return with the General Manager, within three months of that date (30 September 2015).

The following Members and General Manager are required to complete and lodge a disclosure of interest return:

- Clr Kevin Crameri OAM
- Clr Bob Porter
- Clr Warwick Mackay OAM
- Clr Marcus Cornish
- Clr Jess Diaz
- Clr Andrew Jeffries
- Clr Mark Taylor
- Mr Chris Dewhurst, General Manager

The following Designated Staff were required to complete and lodge a disclosure of interest return:

- Mr Chris Stanfield, Operations Manager
- Mr Steve Russell, Weeds Inspector
- Mr Karen Jenkin, Weeds Inspector
- Mr Gordon Blyth, Weeds Inspector
- Mr Daniel Cacatian, Weeds Inspector

Section 450A of the Act provides that the above-mentioned returns lodged with the General Manager must be kept in a register and tabled at the first Council meeting held after the last day of lodgement. The appropriate forms have now been distributed and completed returns will be tabled at the next Ordinary Meeting.

Recommendations:

1. *That the report be received and noted.*

5. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL'S OFFICERS:

(b) Operations Manager

To the Chairperson and Council Members,

I submit the following for your consideration:

ITEM OM1. OPERATIONAL REPORT

Reason for Report: Statutory

Weed Control Report

The increased rainfall of the last couple of months over the county has had a mixed impact on the local weed populations; aquatic weed infestations were dramatically reduced in size due to minor flooding experienced within the Hawkesbury/Nepean river, whilst South creek suffered a major flooding event that scoured the entire creek system.

Cool season weeds such as Boneseed and Mother of millions have taken advantage of the available moisture and are exhibiting strong growth and plenty of fresh seed germination. Rainfall on the site has also meant that weed control teams have needed to be flexible in their delivery of works of late.

Blacktown City Council

The primary targets of weed control in the Blacktown LGA have been; Boneseed, Mother of millions and Green Cestrum. Boneseed activity has been strong with the increased rainfall; Glenwood has been the most active of sites with new germination from the seed bank creating hordes of young boneseed plants within the parks and reserves of the area.

Mother of millions has quite a few strongholds in BCC; staff have been treating roadside and reserve infestations of Mother of millions in the following suburbs; Emerton, Whalan, Doonside, Mt. Druitt, Hebersham, Plumpton, Riverstone, Rouse Hill and Arndell Park. These infestations have been treated via selective herbicide application.

Green Cestrum and woody weeds (Lantana and Privet) have also been targeted by weed control teams in Soldiers settlement reserve, Nurragingy reserve, Timber Top reserve and Pearce reserve. Teams treated these weeds using bush regeneration, and manual weed control.

Salvinia has been in Lake Woodcroft for some time now, council has released bio-controls and tried to contain the infestation with booms, however neither of these controls have been effective, after discussion with BCC natural area management staff, council has decided to treat the majority of the infestation with selective herbicide, and mechanically harvest any remnant plants. Ensuring that the Salvinia is

removed from the lake prior to the spring growing season. Initial treatment of the Salvinia is showing very promising results.

Hawkesbury City Council

Mother of millions control has been the focus of weed control efforts in the Hawkesbury LGA. The Hawkesbury area has a multitude of areas that are favored by this resilient weed species. This season has been particularly productive for Mother of millions reproduction and weed control teams have been busy treating sites in the Hawkesbury. These sites include; South Windsor, Pitt town, Scheyville, Cattai, Sackville, Lower Portland, Freemans reach, Wilberforce, Ebenezer, Kurmond, Kurrajong, East Kurrajong, Tennyson, Grose Vale, North Richmond, Londonderry, and Clarendon. Control works on this species is expected to continue for a number of months yet.

Green Cestrum has also been targeted by weed control teams in the Hawkesbury LGA, where limited frosts have allowed many plants to flourish over the winter time when this weed is usually inactive. Most control works have been conducted in parks and reserves such as Macquarie Park, Governor Philip Park, Cattai bridge reserve and Hannah Park.

Hills Shire Council

In line with other council areas, Mother of millions has been the primary target of weed control activities conducted by staff this reporting period. Selective herbicide application has been carried across the breadth of the LGA reducing many of the large infestations that have established over the last twelve months. The areas that have been treated by our staff are Annangrove, Box Hill, Cattai, Maraylya, Kenthurst, Wiseman's ferry, Glenhaven, North Sackville, Leetsvale, Webbs Creek, Nelson, and Glenorie.

Boneseed is also quite prevalent in the Hills Shire; our teams have been sweeping through areas such as Bella Vista, Castle Hill, Cattai, Glenorie, Maroota and Annangrove treating young flowering plants and seedlings that have appeared since the rainfall has increased across the LGA. Staff reports that Bella Vista farm is near to being classed as Boneseed free, as successive inspection has failed to turn up significant numbers of this plant.

Bush regeneration activities have taken place along Cattai Creek at Newman road, Glenorie. This riparian site has been the focus of previous weed control works, however as the dynamics of this site change the need for further weed control sees the teams treating this site, every other month. Woody weed species are the primary target, as their populations wane, endemic plant growth fills the void these weeds leave.

Penrith City Council

Penrith council area is also host to large infestations of Mother of millions. Penrith council is very proactive in its reserve network treating this weed species. Council officers have used various control techniques including fire to manage plant numbers, these control works have been successful in a number of reserves. Road verges and reserves in the Penrith LGA hold substantial infestations of Mother of millions and

these have been targeted heavily by HRCC weed control staff, as with other LGA's the chosen method of control has been selective herbicide application. Treatment of Mother of millions has taken place in the following areas; Londonderry, Llandilo, Cranebrook, Cambridge gardens, Cambridge Park, Werrington County, Penrith, Orchard Hills, Claremont Meadows, Erskine Park, Glenmore Park, Luddenham, Mulgoa, Wallacia, and Regentville.

African olive and woody weed control has continued to take place in a number of reserves across the Penrith LGA; Fowler reserve at Wallacia, Samuel Marsden Park at Orchard Hills and Devlin Road at Castlereagh have been the sites of woody weed control, treating species such as African olive, Privet, Chinese Celtis and Lantana. A number of roadside sites in Emu Plains have also been treated for these weed species.

Aquatic weed species such as Salvinia and Water hyacinth that had begun to build in riverfront reserves such as Devlin Road and Weir reserve have certainly suffered under the flushing the river continues to receive from rain and water releases from Warragamba dam, these reserves are now free of floating aquatic weed species.

Hawkesbury/Nepean aquatic weed maintenance program July – August 2016

The Hawkesbury/Nepean River system has been the recipient of heavy rain events, flooding and sustained releases of water from Warragamba dam since the last HNAWMP report in June 2016. This increased and sustained volume of water in the rivers and creeks has given the system a thorough flushing which has been overwhelmingly good for the health of the river.

Floating aquatic weed populations had begun to build in number in the river, prior to the onset of wet conditions in June. Minor flood levels in the river and substantial flooding in South creek – a major tributary of the river have swept all but a remnant of these weed infestations well downstream into saltwater where they will perish.

Inspection of the river has also revealed that much of the infestations also ended up being stranded on dry land, where they pose no further threat. Submerged and attached aquatic weed species have suffered a similar fate to floating weed species and have been ripped from their anchor points and flushed into the saltwater stretches of the river. Native ribbon weed continues to flourish in the river. However, exotic weed species such as Egeria, Senegal tea plant, and Alligator weed are thoroughly suppressed at the time of reporting.

Councils weed containment booms have largely survived the flooding intact. However the fate of the Warragamba boom is currently unknown as Water NSW continue to release water from Warragamba dam, resulting in hazardous conditions for crews to access this boom at the moment.

South creek was greatly affected by recent flooding, with heavy loads of timber debris being flushed into the lower tidal sections of creek around Windsor. This timber inevitably moved on the tide until it formed tangled log jams that closed the creek to boat navigation. Council was also in receipt of phone calls informing us that the log jams were holding animal carcasses in place causing some distress to members of the public who came across the situation.

Council staff was able to clear the logjams and debris with the use of pole chainsaws and open the creek to navigation; thankfully staff were spared from having to deal with many of the animal carcasses that had disappeared by the time staff were onsite. A major downside of any flushing of the river is the loss of biological control agent populations that have built up over previous seasons. In the coming months, council staff will be on the river at regular intervals assessing biological control agent populations, and replenishing agents into weed infestations as they build.

The current condition of the river is good, although there is still quite a bit of suspended sediment clouding the river, as to be expected after a major flushing event. The water will clear slowly over the next month if further rainfall is not received and Warragamba dam is closed. Overall weed populations in the river are extremely low, and the river is open to all recreational activities.

Noxious Weed Inspection Program

June has seen the completion of the Dean Park inspection area with a further 324 private property inspections taking place; this gives a total of 1,298 inspections for the suburb. Residents and occupants were happy to engage with inspectors and took an interest in the information distributed, and the inspectors' local weed knowledge. Fortunately, no Boneseed was found in Dean Park, given the close proximity to known Boneseed infestations.

Following up on reports of a new incursion of the highly invasive Cats claw creeper from members of the community, inspection of the Cumberland Reach area in Hawkesbury Council has taken place. This resulted in 61 inspections of small acreage and residential blocks, inspecting, educating and mentoring landowners in identifying and treating this noxious weed. Cumberland reach is a small hamlet on the banks of the Hawkesbury River and is surrounded by several threatened vegetation communities, hence the need to protect these assets from this weed species. Two properties were identified containing the weed.

41 reactive inspections have been performed; these inspections are a result of the public calling the office to report various weed issues in the community. The main targets of these inspections were; Running bamboo, Privet, and Chinese Celtis.

5 Weed management plans have been developed on larger properties to help landowners abide by noxious weed legislation and reduce the weed infestations upon their properties, a number of these landholders had requested council assistance in regards to long term management of weeds on their lands, due to the perception that they were conducting illegal land clearing.

HRCC staff have attended a number of public awareness events this quarter. Penrith Home Show at the end of July always attracts lots of interested homeowners with questions on weeds and lawn care and generated over a dozen reactive noxious weed inspections.

July 30 was national tree day and staff attended 2 events that day – Hawkesbury Nursery Tree Day and Annangrove Environmental Day. Both events were well patronised, speaking to 220 people at both events. On the 13 August, our public

awareness display attended the Ebenezer Arts and Crafts Show which was well received by both local landholders and visitors to the area.

Inspectors are about to start inspecting properties at Windsor Downs, targeting Boneseed which is a class 1 noxious weed and various class 3 weeds such as Green Cestrum, Mother of millions, Montpellier broom, and Pampas grass. The inspectors will then be targeting aquatic weeds; Black willow, Salvinia, Water hyacinth and Ludwigia in Castlereagh and around Bushel's Lagoon at Wilberforce.

Online surveillance of Gumtree and eBay has continued, the council has approached one vendor who was offering Smooth tree pear for sale, a class 4 noxious species. NSW DPI has also been in communication with the council with concerns regarding the sale of this weed species. No noxious aquatic weeds were being offered for sale at the time of reporting.

ENCLOSURES_OM1:	HRCC LGA Operational Maps July/Aug 2016
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Recommendation:

- 1. That the report is received and noted.*

6. COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

From the Office of the General Manager to the Chairperson and Members, I submit the following report on, correspondence of note, which has been received and sent by Council since the last Ordinary meeting:

1. **DATED – 17 June 2016** – Letter from Mr. Bruce Christie, Department of Primary Industries, on behalf of Niall Blair MP re: visiting HRCC.
2. **SENT – 21 June 2016** – Letter to Mr David Hogan, General Manager, Greater Sydney Local Land Services. Re: renewal of HRCC shed lease agreement.
3. **SENT – 14 June 2016** – Letter to Mr. Robert Greenwood, General Manager, Blue Mountains City Council. Re: delegate for the Sydney Region Technical Sub-Committee.
4. **SENT – 5 July 2016** – Email to Ms. Amanda Chadwick, Administrator, Parramatta City Council. Re: operational impact of amalgamation. Actioning 9/6/2016 #1865-2.
5. **SENT – 9 August 2016** – Email to Minister for Local Government, all member council GM's and, HRCC Network Delegates re: HRCC Operational Plan 2016/17. Actioning 9/6/2016 #1860-4.

Recommendation:

1. *That the report on Correspondences is received and information noted.*

7. GENERAL BUSINESS / QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

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