

**Business Paper of a duly convened Ordinary Meeting of the
Hawkesbury River County Council to be held at 6 Walker St, South Windsor on
Thursday, 9 June 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, **7 April 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. REPORT ON MONIES INVESTED

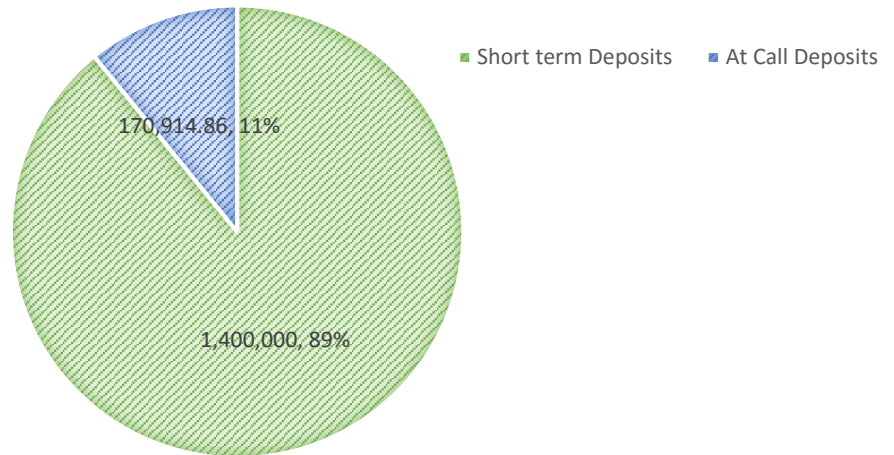
Reason for Report: Statutory

Cash and Investments

The below investment summary represents Council's total investments as at 30th April 2016 in accordance with Clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*.

		Term (Days)	Rate	Maturity Date	% of Portfolio	S&P Credit Rating
Short term Deposits	\$1,400,000.00					
AMP Bank Ltd	200,000	270	2.90%	17/5/2016	12.73%	A1
People's Choice Credit Union	500,000	364	2.93%	23/6/2016	31.83%	A2
Bank of Queensland	200,000	182	3.05%	29/7/2016	12.73%	A2
Bank of Queensland	100,000	210	3.00%	27/10/2016	6.36%	A2
Bank of Sydney	400,000	270	3.25%	17/01/2017	25.46%	NR
At Call Deposits	\$					
	170,914.86					
NAB Business Cheque Acc	\$ 23,763.73	At Call	0.01-0.05%	N/A		
AMP Business Saver Acc	\$ 147,151.13	At Call	2.55%	N/A		
Total Value of Investment Funds	\$1,570,914.86					
	100%					

CASH AND INVESTMENTS BY TYPE



Portfolio Analysis

At the RBA's May meeting it was decided to lower the cash rate by 25 basis points to 1.75%. All of the short term deposits and AMP at call account are above this benchmark. The NAB business cheque account generally only holds funds of any size due to operational reasons.

Total funds invested for April 2016 were \$1,570,914. This is a decrease of \$104,580.14 from March 2016 investments which totaled \$1,675,495:

March 2016 Investments:

Short term deposits	\$1,600,000
NAB Business Cheque Account	\$ 38,440
AMP Business Saver Account	\$ 37,055
TOTAL VALUE	\$1,675,495

This decrease is largely due to the purchase of a new motor vehicle, remitting WAP funds to the final member Council, purchase of some minor equipment and operational requirements.

Interest earned compared to the original budget is \$46,893 vs \$48,333 a deficit of \$1440. This is a 3% variance to budget which considering the declining interest rates during the first half of the financial year is to be expected.

Bank Reconciliation as at 30/4/2016

Balance as per Bank Statement	\$ 23,763.73
Less: Outstanding Cheques	-\$ 0.00
Add: Outstanding Deposits	\$ 0.00
Balance as per MYOB	\$ 23,763.73

General Fund

MYOB balance	\$	23,763.73
Bank balance	\$	23,763.73

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 2. HRCC FINANCIAL REVIEW – 3RD QUARTER 2015/16

Reason for Report: Statutory

The HRCC financial review for the third quarter of 2015/16 has been completed by the General Manager and is enclosed with this report. This quarter posted a deficit in operating expenditure of -\$22,217 (3%). However, this is still well within the budget parameters set by the operational plan. The YTD position has the organisation at a surplus of \$45,989.

The quarterly deficit can be account for by employee costs 11% above budget. However, this can be explained by the additional staff required to complete new grant projects coming on line in January 2016. The majority of the funds supporting these projects will be credited in Q4, bringing income and expenditure into balance. Additionally, \$86,912 was spent in plant renewal in Q3.

HRCC maintains a sustainable financial position.

ENCLOSURE_GM2	HRCC Financial Review – 3 rd Quarter 2015/16
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Recommendation:

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

ITEM GM 3. HRCC OPERATIONAL PLAN 2016-17

Reason for Report: Statutory

Background

The main strategic direction for HRCC is provided through the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) framework.

On 13 June 2013 HRCC adopted the following documents:

- HRCC Business Activity Strategic Plan (BASP) 2013-2023
- HRCC Delivery Program 2013-2017

As the BASP and Delivery Program are still current, and HRCC is still in the process of implementing its guidance, only the Operational Plan is required to be updated in 2016. At the Ordinary Meeting of 7 April 2016 Council resolved (#1846-4) to place on public exhibition the Draft HRCC Operational Plan 2016/17 for a period of 28 days.

Exhibition Process

The General Manager placed the draft plan on exhibition on 8 April 2016 up until 27 May 2016. This was done by making the document available on our website and through our office. Hard copies were provided free upon request. The member Councils were informed directly via the HRCC Management Network, and the General Managers were written to directly indicating the expected amount of member contribution for 2016/17.

There were no submissions received.

Document Changes

There were only minor changes made to the document

ENCLOSURE_GM3	HRCC Operational Plan 2016-17
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Recommendation

1. *That the report is received and noted.*
2. *That Council adopts the HRCC Annual Operational Plan 2016-17.*
3. *That the General Manager places the adopted document on the Council website within 28 days.*
4. *That the General Manager informs the NSW Minister for Local Government, the Director General and all constituent Council General Managers by providing a copy of the URL link to access the adopted plans.*

ITEM GM3. NSW WEEDS ACTION PROGRAM REPORT

Reason for Report: Informative

WAP Year 1 Financial Progress Report

The Profit and Loss statement for Q3 is attached below. Year to date expenditure vs budget is summarised below.

	Budget*	YTD \$	YTD %
5-3100 WAP Project Admin – Salary	\$63,800	\$38,890	61%
5-3200 WAP Project Grants and contingencies	\$939,024	\$427,009	45.5%
5-3300 WAP Project Admin – Operating	\$32,091	\$2,484	8%
TOTAL	\$1,034,915	\$472,670	45.7%

Only 45.5% of the Project Grants budget (5-3200) had been expended by 31 March 2016. It should be noted that:

- On the 1st of April 2016, \$416,075 for delivery of the HRCC WAP1520 project was transferred out of the Weeds Action Program account.
- Fairfield City Council was paid \$10,600 on 5th April 2016.
- Sydney Weeds Committee Inc. advised in February 2016 that it is no longer in a position to facilitate delivery of the WAP1520 capacity building program for weed officers. \$11,264 had been allocated in Year 1 to SWC. HRCC will instead use these funds to deliver:
 - a Weed Management Demonstration Day in August 2016, to 200 participants
 - a training event for 30 weed officers by September 2016.
 - \$15,000 allocated to the review and development of mandatory strategic documentation will be paid in the 2016/17 FY. Greater Sydney LLS is currently preparing a project proposal in collaboration with the Regional Weed Committee.
- \$31,776 of Year 1 project funds were allocated to the Year 2 budget by the grant assessment panel as a means of redressing the anticipated \$90,000 reduction in regional funding from DPI.
- \$10,000 of Year 1 project funds were allocated toward improving the ability of Local Control Authorities to meet their statutory requirements to electronically submit standard data to the centralised NSW Biosecurity Information System. The most cost-effective and beneficial use for these funds is yet to be determined. Those funds will be utilised in the 2016/17 FY.

Only 8% of the Project Administration budget has been spent to date. \$11,824 for the Lead Agency Administration fee and \$6,329 for Project Officer Accommodation Costs will be recorded against 5-3300 at the end of the financial year.

Recommendation

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

ITEM GM 4. GREATER SYDNEY WEEDS ACTION PROGRAM PROJECT BUDGET 2016/17

Reason for Report: Statutory

Background

The Greater Sydney Weeds Action Program 2015-2020 project (WAP1520) is a five year grant project funded by the NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) to address priority weed issues in the Greater Sydney Region.

2016/17 represents the second year of the project. In its capacity as Lead Agency for the project HRCC will be required to enter into a contractual agreement with NSW DPI, and thus will be responsible for distributing annual grant funds to 17 project partners across the Greater Sydney region which includes the Central Coast and the Blue Mountains.


NSW DPI has advised that up to 10% of the project grant may be retained for project administration, and the remaining 90% must be expended on on-ground activities (i.e. inspections, surveillance, management of high risk weeds and education/capacity building) as per the approved project application.

A forecasted budget (Table 1) has been prepared for the 2016/17 FY. The proposed budget includes the expected funding allocation from NSW DPI, unspent funding from previous years, anticipated payment of grant allocations, and administration costs.

Notes

- Weeds Action Project Grant – NSW DPI (\$945,725)
- Unspent funds from previous years - (\$115,353) includes \$30,000 of Year 1 WAP1520 funds allocated for review and development of mandatory strategic documentation; \$10,000 of Year 1 WAP1520 funds allocated to improve the ability of Local Control Authorities to meet their statutory requirements to submit data to the centralised BIS; \$12,720 of unspent WAP1015 project funds returned from Liverpool City Council; \$10,121 of unspent WAP1015 project funds returned from GSLLS; \$10,736 unspent WAP1520 Year 1 contingency funds; \$10,000 of unspent WAP1520 Year 1 operation budget, and; \$31,776 of WAP1520 Year 1 funds allocated to Year 2 to redress the anticipated \$90,000 reduction in regional funding.
- WAP Project Officer - Salary (\$72,493) includes base salary, superannuation, worker's compensation and accommodation expenses.
- WAP Project Operating (\$24,480) includes lead agency administration fee.

Table 1: Greater Sydney WAP Program Budget 2016/17

<p>Greater Sydney Weeds Action Program Operating Budget 2016-17</p>	
<p>Item</p>	<p>Income</p>
<p>Weeds Action Project Grant – NSW DPI</p>	<p>\$945,725</p>
<p>Unspent funds from previous years</p>	<p>\$115,353</p>
<p>Total</p>	<p>\$1,061,078</p>
<p></p>	<p></p>
<p>Item</p>	<p>Expenditure</p>
<p>WAP Project Officer – Salary</p>	<p>\$72,493</p>
<p>WAP Project - Operating</p>	<p>\$24,480</p>
<p>Project Partner Grants and contingencies</p>	<p>\$964,105</p>
<p>Total</p>	<p>\$1,061,078</p>

Recommendations

1. *That the report is received and noted.*
2. *That Council approves the Sydney Weeds Action Program Operating Budget for 2016-17.*

ITEM GM 5. HRCC PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY

Reason for Report: Statutory

Background

The NSW Ombudsman is responsible for promoting public awareness and understanding of the PID Act and monitoring its operation. The Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 (PID Act) sets up a system to encourage public officials to report serious wrong doing and to protect people who do so (whistleblowers). This includes:

- Corrupt conduct
- Serious maladministration
- Serious and substantial waste
- Failure to exercise functions properly in accordance with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.
- Breach of obligation of Local Government Act 1993 in respect to pecuniary interest.

It is NOT covered by the PID Act if it:

- Is made to avoid discipline
- Contains intentionally false statements
- It questions merits of government policy
- Is a grievance

To receive the protections of the PID Act, concerns must be about wrongdoing serious enough that it is clearly in the interests of the citizens of NSW that you report it. Any concerns that relate to the way someone's behaviour is affecting you as an individual employee or general complaints of dissatisfaction should be made using a grievance or other staff complaint process. This includes, for example, actions or decisions by managers or other employees that you believe involve inequitable treatment in the workplace, harassment or bullying that affect you personally (other than where this is part of a course of conduct, particularly of a general practice affecting a number of staff).

HRCC Policy

At the Ordinary Meeting of 7 April 2016, Council resolved (minute #1848) to place the Draft HRCC Internal Reporting Policy on public exhibition for a period of 28 days. The General Manager placed the document in Council office and the official website from 13 April 2016 to 25 May 2016. No public submissions were received.

ENCLOSURE_GM5:	HRCC Internal Reporting Policy 2016
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Recommendations:

1. *That the report is received and noted.*
2. *That Council adopts the HRCC Internal Reporting Policy 2016.*

ITEM GM 6. STAFFING

Reason for Report: Informative

Since the last Council meeting held on 7 April 2016 there has been no change in staff.

HRCC currently employs a total of 17 people (at FTE of 16.6).

Recommendation:

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

ITEM GM 7. IMPACT OF THE HILLS SHIRE BOUNDARY CHANGE ON HRCC OPERATIONS

Reason for Report: Informative

Recent notice of council boundary realignment between the Hills Shire Council and Parramatta City Council has seen The Hills Shire lose residential, industrial and parklands south of the M2 motorway to neighbouring Parramatta City Council.

The implication for HRCC and the Hills Shire Council is that we will lose control of a strategically important stretch of Darling Mills creek that contains a class 1 noxious weed – Kidney leaf mud plantain (*Heteranthera reniformis*). The surrounding suburbs and natural areas are also known to harbour a variety of widespread noxious weed species that council actively manages through weed control operations and private property inspection. These weed species are; Green cestrum, Boneseed, Alligator weed, Ludwigia, asparagus weeds and Chinese celtis.

Council has invested a substantial amount of financial and staff resourcing to bring this aquatic weed species under tight control – to the point where staff need to search the creek line intensely to find plant remnants. Private property inspection surrounding the Kidney leaf mud plantain infestation has also been carried out, searching for this weed species, educating the local community in regards to identifying, and reporting its presence and spread.

Council holds fears that the management of this aquatic noxious weed species will suffer under the new tenure, both from a lack of on ground control works, property inspection, and surveillance within the waterway. This weed species is a Class 1 noxious weed (highest rating) with a limited distribution locally, it must be given the appropriate resources to prevent spread further down the creek system, expanding its range, and infesting new areas.

Common and widespread weed species are also found in Parramatta's newly acquired lands, and although these do not pose the same level of environmental risk as Kidney leaf mud plantain, there is still a community service role that HRCC provides, as well as a source of weed control information that the local community could readily source. Council also regularly conducts property inspection upon private residences, as well as providing a surveillance program on public natural areas to identify and treat burgeoning weed issues.

Unless the current levels of weed management, community engagement and property inspection are sustained by the new land managers, the combined weed control efforts of the Hills Shire Council and HRCC will quickly be overtaken by unmanaged weed growth and community weed issues.

Recommendation:

- 1. That the report is received and noted.*
- 2. The General Manager meets with the new Parramatta City Council administrator to provide an offer of service to the region.*

ITEM GM 8. APPOINTMENT OF GENERAL MANAGER TO STATE WEEDS COMMITTEE

Reason for Report: Informative

On 10 May 2016, HRCC General Manager, Mr Chris Dewhurst was appointed to the State Weeds Committee as a representative of the NSW Weed Officers Association. Pursuant to the *NSW Noxious Weeds Act 1993* the committee is formed to provide direct advice to the Minister for Primary Industries on the following functions:

- Advising on regional and state weed management policy and strategy overseeing the implementation of the weeds component of the NSW Invasive Species Plan,
- Overseeing the implementation of, and reporting on, the NSW Government endorsed recommendations from the NSW Weed Review,
- Undertaking transparent evidence-based evaluations of weed declarations,
- Developing and communicating service delivery standards for NSW weeds management,
- Establishing priorities for grant projects and evaluating performance of the Weed Action Program,
- Commissioning audits of DPI, LLS and local control authorities weed functions where appropriate,
- Commissioning audits of Weed Action Program lead organisations where appropriate,
- Providing a forum for information from Regional Weeds Committees,
- Evaluating the performance of Regional Weeds Committees,
- Promoting best practice in strategy development and planning for weed control,
- Undertaking timely communication with member organisations, and
- Developing a 3-year action plan to guide the Committee.

The term of appointment is for three years, and the inaugural meeting is due to be held on 28 June 2016 in Sydney.

Recommendation:

1. *That the report is 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

Summary

Unusually warm weather remains over the county as we edge closer to winter. This mild weather has extended the growing season for many noxious weed species, both terrestrial and aquatic. Work teams have been dividing their time between treating the existing weed burden, as well as incorporating cool season weed species such as Mother of Millions and African boxthorn. Additionally, planting for the 20 million trees project on Shaw's island has commenced. HRCC staff are working alongside a Green Army team revegetating this former mining site.

Blacktown LGA

Weed control in the Blacktown LGA has continued to focus on terrestrial weeds in reserves and urban aquatic weed species such as Alligator weed. Nurragingy reserve at Doonside has had the weed control team onsite for a number of days, conducting bush regeneration and woody weed control. Target weed species here have primarily been Green cestrum, African olive and African boxthorn.

Bungarribee reserve at Arndell park has also had attention from the weed control teams. Target weeds in this location have been African boxthorn, Green cestrum, Blackberry, African olive and Privet. Aquatic weed species that have been treated in Bungarribee creek have been Alligator weed and Ludwigia. These species have been treated with herbicide in an attempt to reduce their presence in the creek.

Roadside spot spraying of woody weeds has seen teams treat the following roads; Stoney creek Rd, Garfield Rd east, Garfield Rd west, Hamilton St, Otago St, Edmund St and Riverstone parade. Green cestrum, African boxthorn and Blackberry.

Hawkesbury LGA

The Hawkesbury council area has seen weed control teams targeting woody weeds in reserves and along roadsides, aquatic weed species have also been treated along riverside reserves and parklands.

Roadside weed control has seen control teams targeting Blackberry, African boxthorn, Lantana and Green cestrum along the following roads; Comleroy Rd, Hermitage Rd, Mill Rd, King Rd, West Portland Rd, Greens Rd, Old Pitt town Rd, Wolseley Rd, Wisemans ferry Rd, Ghost hill Rd and Grose Vale Rd.

Parks and reserves that have received weed control have been Macquarie park, Hannah park, Governor Philip park, Yarramundi reserve, Cattai bridge reserve and Swallow rock reserve. The weed species targeted at these locations have been aquatic weeds such as Alligator weed, Salvinia, Water hyacinth, Senegal tea plant and Ludwigia. It has been an extremely long growing season for these aquatic weeds, herbicide control as well as the low night time temperatures we are now experiencing will stop this growth.

The Hills Shire

Boneseed has been the target of weed control this reporting period in the Hills Shire, roadside weed control has taken place, as well as aquatic weed control in creek lines and along the Hawkesbury River.

Boneseed control has been conducted across the LGA, germination has slowed significantly onsite although some persistent plants remain. Locations that have been treated for Boneseed are; Bella Vista, Norwest business park, Castle Hill, Cattai, Maroota, Glenhaven, Glenorie, Annangrove and Kenthurst. Cutting these plants and treating the stump with herbicide has been the control technique used.

Roadside weed control has addressed a number of woody weed species such as Green cestrum, African boxthorn and Lantana. Mother of millions control has also commenced in these areas, the treated locations are as follows; Maraylya, Cattai, Maroota, South Maroota, Glenhaven, Glenorie and Annangrove.

Reserves such as Newman road at Glenorie have been subject to bush regeneration works, treating annual weeds and ground covering weeds such as Tradescantia and masses of germinating Privet. Aquatic weed treatment has also been conducted from the reserve banks – spraying Senegal tea plant.

Aquatic weed treatment within the Hills Shire has seen Alligator weed, Senegal tea plant, Ludwigia treated in Cattai creek, Darling Mills creek and Small's creek, again weather conditions have impacted in the Hills with extended growing seasons for these weed species. Control works will arrest this growth until spring.

Aquatic weed control has also been carried on the Hawkesbury river, Alligator weed, Senegal tea plant and Ludwigia have been treated around the areas of Cattai, Sackville and Lower Portland. Ludwigia is numerous on the riverbanks at these locations, due to difficulty in controlling this species in a tidal environment. Alligator weed and Senegal tea plant have occurred in low numbers.

Penrith LGA

Weed control in the Penrith LGA this reporting period has focussed on roadside weed control, with some aquatic weed control also being conducted along riverfront parks at Penrith.

Areas such as Londonderry, Llandilo, Cranebrook, Werrington, Cambridge park and Penrith have been targeted treating, Green cestrum, African olive Bitou bush, African boxthorn and Blackberry. The majority of these weeds were in small infestations, or regrowth from previously treated weeds. Mother of millions treatment has commenced in Orchard hills, Mulgoa, Wallacia, Luddenham and Mt. Vernon. Roadsides at these locations have been sprayed with Affray herbicide, which will not affect surrounding vegetation.

The final Alligator weed treatment for this growing season along the riverfront parks in Penrith has been carried out by weed control teams. Alligator weed control in this area is particularly important due to the high risk of weed translocation from weed fragments.

20 Million Trees Commonwealth Grant Project

HRCC staff have commenced tree planting on Shaw's island as part of the 20 million trees grant funding that council secured earlier in the year.

Shaw's island is situated in the Nepean River at Castlereagh, it is a crown reserve. The site was formally used to extract gravel, pebble and sand. It has suffered many years of neglect, and lacks any substantial native vegetation. HRCC have been the only organisation to carry out on ground works at this location (weed control) in recent years.

The Manpower Green Army team have prepared planting sites for a number of weeks as well as planting native tube stock plants. A combined effort from both parties has seen well over 1,200 plants planted into this former extraction site. The HRCC staff have had a positive impact onsite, taking leadership in the tree planting role, and sharing work practises with the Green Army team.

Another 1500 plants will be installed on the island by mid-June 2016.

Aquatic Weed Control Report

A long autumn season with elevated temperatures, combined with low river levels and concentrated nutrient loads has aided in aquatic weed species beginning to build in number throughout the lower reaches of the Nepean River, and the upper reaches of the Hawkesbury River. The most prominent of these weed species are Salvinia and Water hyacinth which are most easily moved by river flows. Alligator weed, Senegal tea plant and Ludwigia have also been particularly persistent, although now that we are seeing night time temperatures down to 2°C and below that will halt this growth. Aquatic weed control is currently being finalised along the river, controlling the aforementioned weed species with herbicide. The areas treated have been; Castlereagh, Yarramundi, North Richmond, Windsor and Penrith. Staff are noticing a

distinct reaction from the treated weed species through herbicide action and cold temperatures, this will curb all aquatic weed growth until October 2016. Council is prepared for a higher than normal aquatic weed load this coming summer and is closely monitoring weed source points, accumulation zones within the river, and containment boom management. Biological control agent sources are also being safeguarded to provide additional agent numbers – as required.

Council's harvesting systems have been active of late, with all components being used on various job sites such as; The Sydney International Regatta Centre, Ribbon weed harvesting at Nurragingy reserve, Doonside and aquatic weed spraying on the Nepean river (Yarramundi). The harvesting systems are ready, should they be required later in 2016.

Senegal tea plant in Redbank creek has been treated as a late season growth spurt had been noticed by one of the local residents who promptly notified council, again this weed species will be suppressed for the next few months through herbicide and reduced activity levels from the weather.

Although this report notes a spike in aquatic weed activity in the river, council is well prepared for any weed issues and will be working throughout the winter to ensure a good level of weed management come the warmer weather. Currently the river is open for all activities, however river usage is well down due the colder weather.

ENCLOSURE_OM1:	HRCC Operational Maps
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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. **RECEIVED – 15 April 2016** - Letter from Donna Rygate, Chief Executive, Local Government NSW. Re: associate membership renewal
2. **SENT – 21 April 2016** – Letter to General Managers of HCC, PCC, HSC and PCC. Re: HRCC subscription 2016/17. *Action 1846-3.*
3. **SENT – 21 April 2016** – Letter to Hon. Niall Blair MP, Minister for Primary Industries. Re: Invitation to attend HRCC.
4. **RECEIVED – 10 May 2016** – Letter from Hon. Niall Blair MP, Minister for Primary Industries. Re: appointment of General Manager, Mr Chris Dewhurst to the State Weeds Committee.

Recommendation:

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

7. GENERAL BUSINESS / QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

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