

CLIENT: Newcastle City Council

PROJECT: Newcastle City Council Management Plan

PROJECT SUMMARY

ID	TOPIC	BY	ADDED ON	COMMENTS	VOTES	AGREE/ DISAGREE
1	Shape the future of our city	Samantha	04 Feb 2008	29	10	155
2	Managing the city's infrastructure	Samantha	04 Feb 2008	9	7	45
3	Recreational facilities	Samantha	04 Feb 2008	4	4	14
4	Environmental management and education	Samantha	04 Feb 2008	46	9	184
5	City administration	Samantha	04 Feb 2008	5	4	14
6	Most valued service or facility	Samantha	04 Feb 2008	24	8	131
7	Better quality in elected representatives	Mrs Mop	09 Feb 2008	10	5	41
8	The Key Budget Consultation KPI	Reformer	18 Mar 2008	1	3	2
9	Special Rate Increase for Infrastructure Improvements	Philip	19 Mar 2008	3	4	9
10	Reduce residential rates by 25%	Bigfeller	22 Mar 2008	0	2	0
11	LGA Clean Up	Bigfeller	22 Mar 2008	0	2	0
12	Art in the LGA	Bigfeller	22 Mar 2008	1	1	2
13	Total waste of Money Projects	Bigfeller	31 Mar 2008	1	2	6

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SHAPE THE FUTURE OF OUR CITY

ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
2736	By: GVidal On: 11 Feb 2008	The greening of Hunter Street.	9	3
3526	By: Reformer On: 27 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2736	CAN YOU BE MORE SPECIFIC? WHAT TYPES, WHICH SECTIONS, WHAT TYPES OF GREEN?	1	2
3555	By: dipsy On: 27 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3526	No need to shout Reformer!	2	1
3591	By: Reformer On: 28 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3555	I didn't know that capitals was shouting. sorry dipsy. caps lock was on because i had to type the wobbly green code in capitals and the caps lock stayed on in this and a few other instances. Perhaps BTT could change the wobbles to lower case! now, back to the question what types of green in what sections? my question was not an attack, simply an effort to get a measurable input for the Council Management Plan. I agree with you on more greening, I just cannot find a way of effectively articulating the target "picture".	1	0
3593	By: Reformer On: 28 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3555	I didn't know that capitals was shouting. sorry dipsy. caps lock was on because i had to type the wobbly green code (I JUST FOUND OUT ITS CALLED A "captcha") in capitals and the caps lock stayed on in this and a few other instances. Perhaps BTT could change the wobbles to lower case! now, back to the question what types of green in what sections? my question was not an attack, simply an effort to get a measurable input for the Council Management Plan. I agree with you on more greening, I just cannot find a way of effectively articulating the target "picture".	1	0
2737	By: leta On: 11 Feb 2008	A focus on existing infrastructure improvement such as the many derelict heritage sites. Showing friends from interstate and overseas around has started to become embarrassing. Newcastle Council needs to decide what they want the city to be known for. After halving the tourism budget in 2007 its become very unclear. Stop spending money on consultants and reports, and spend time and money on what we already have on our doorstep.	15	0
2826	By: fred0 On: 16 Feb 2008	I think the revitalisation of Wickham offers potential to bring life to the West of the city. Havent heard much about this for ages. The Honeysuckle areas are going forward but the council control areas seem to lack direction. I know you dont own the land but real vision and reward will bring investment	7	1
2941	By: Samantha On: 26 Feb 2008 In Response To: 2826	Newcastle City Council has recently approved Element 6.8 Wickham for inclusion in the Newcastle Development Control Plan 2005. The new element will set the character and context for urban redevelopment in the Wickham area. Council's vision for Wickham is for new development to reflect the existing character of the area and to ensure appropriate designs for buildings are achieved. The element outlines the type of new developments Council would like to see in the area, including building types, setbacks, parking requirements and land uses. The element also aims to reconnect the suburb to Wickham Park through new pedestrian links, increasing the amount of accessible open space for residents.	3	2
3414	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2941	I hope NCC keeps well clear of Wickham and other nearby suburbs because they area is flourishing. The Census shows a population increase of about 13.5% and an increase in housing by about 650. Newcastle as a whole only had 3.5% population increase and 2077 new houses. Lets hope the Management Plan contains major works on the suburbs drains, roads and basic infrastructure. An overpass at Stewart Ave would also be of great benefit to all.	1	3

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3496	By: Reformer On: 25 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2941	Samantha, You say "Councilâ€™s vision for Wickham is for new development to reflect the existing character of the area" then talk about "building types, setbacks, parking requirements and land uses". How commercially realistic is the Council's plan? Was it drafted by commercially savvy, experienced professionals? How do you propose to "reflect the existing character" and then start prescribing significant changes such as building types and setbacks?	1	3
2859	By: Philip On: 19 Feb 2008	Agreement to terminate the heavy rail line and replace it with suitable efficient transport system east of Wickham Station, and quarantine the liberated land for public use focussed on connecting the old city to the foreshore, or for accommodating this transport system.	3	5
2865	By: dipsy On: 20 Feb 2008 In Response To: 2859	This old chestnut. The city needs its rail line just where it is. With GPT moving in on the mall and the hospital being redeveloped we need the station in the East of the city. By all means make it more crossable and get rid of the ugly fences. We can connect the city with the foreshore without getting rid of the railway. Also not a council issue	3	3
3301	By: Philip On: 12 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2865	The city does not need the heavy rail just where it is. What it needs is a good, reliable, flexible, integrated and efficient public transport system that does a lot more than clumsily lug a handful of passengers just Scott Street. It is not something that the Council can decide alone, but they can exercise their influence on the Government.	2	4
3328	By: dipsy On: 14 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3301	Yes Philip in all our dreams we would like to see a swanky new integrated transport system but that is not going to happen in this state in this century unless the treasury burns down with all the officials and Mr Costa inside - they havent even got them to many areas of Sydney. What I get fed up with is people suggesting that the choice is heavy rail or light rail. It is not. The choice is what we have got now or nothing. The only good thing about the rail debate is that it has become abundantly clear that the rail is to stay - we may have found the limit to the Government's stupidity.	3	3
3527	By: Reformer On: 27 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3328	DIPSY, THE RAIL LINE IS OFF SUBJECT, AS THE NCC HAS ABSOLUTELY NO JURISDICTION OVER THE HEAVY RAIL LINE. IT IS NOT A BUDGET ITEM OR A MANAGEMENT PLAN ISSUE, EXCEPT TO THE EXTENT THAT THE GREENHOUSE-INEFFICIENT HEAVY RAIL IN THE CITY IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE MANAGEMENT PLAN'S ENVIRONMENTAL VISION. BY MY CALCULATIONS, THE GREENHOUSE COST OF HAULING A HANDFUL OF PASSENGERS FROM BROADMEADOW TO NEWCASTLE IN A 200+ TONNE INEFFICIENT ELECTRIC-POWERED VEHICLE HAS NEVER BEEN CALCULATED BY THE GREENS OR SAVE THE RAIL LOBBY. IF YOU HAVE CRUNCHED THE NUMBERS, PLEASE SEND THE WEBSITE REFERENCE! PERSONAL ATTACKS ON MINISTER COSTA ARE ARE SURE SIGN THAT YOU HAVE NO RATIONAL, EVIDENCE-BASE FOR YOUR STANCE.	4	1
3556	By: dipsy On: 27 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3527	Fair point about juristicion. Interesting re GHG. Didnt know I needed an evidence base to give my views!	2	2
3624	By: Bigfeller On: 28 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3556	When people express views or provide information I think it is reasonable for them to be able to back up their comments with facts or more detail. may be the word evidence is a bit strong but we understand the idea.	2	3
3707	By: Bigfeller On: 29 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3624	It worries me if people can say what they like without any base for the comment. I like to learn from listening to peoples reasoning.	2	3

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3573	By: matt On: 28 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3527	MESSAGE FROM ADMIN Hi Reformer. We appreciate your inputs. However, please be aware that use of capitals is often interpreted as shouting and as such comes across as aggressive. We ask that you keep the tone of the conversation civil.	0	0
3234	By: Jonah On: 07 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2859	The Centrum will not get it's people and popularity if it is not opened up and connected to the foreshore. There have been many good ideas for light rail replacing part of railway system. Then people can walk in en out of Hunter street and the harbour side instead of seaching for the two stairway bridges that take them over the railway. Look at other countries what worked for them. People like strolling not climbing; openness not ghettos. Newcastle has so much potential with its wide streets and old buildings(still).	4	2
3254	By: dipsy On: 09 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3234	I'm all for improving access across the line but do not believe that removing the line would provide a silver bullet for our ailing centre. The problem in the city centre is that many blocks are held derelict by large corporates waiting for the market to make their projects viable and maybe for council to allow them. The rail line will increasingly be seen as an asset as the years go by and when we finally have a decent service to Sydney it will be seen as the City's greatest asset. There is no evidence that rip[ping out the line would revitalise the city centre. This is just an agenda of property developers who want to get their hands on the land and grumpy old men who hate waiting for the rail crossing gates.	3	2
3497	By: Reformer On: 25 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3254	Dipsy, you say: "There is no evidence that rip[ping out the line would revitalise the city centre." Then you say: "This is just an agenda of property developers who want to get their hands on the land and grumpy old men who hate waiting for the rail crossing gates." Why would the property developers risk their money in the city that is ailing so? I think they know that when the environmentally unfriendly heavy rail goes, the city will flourish. Like it or not dipsy, this is a town in which most workers NEED cars to get to work.	3	3
3415	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2859	The rail needs some real vision and sound maths. The heavy rail should extend beyond Newcastle station to Stockton, airport and Nelsons Bay. The Nelsons Bay to Central train should be very fast and frequent. Council should include seeding funds in the Management Plan to kick the project off. The project could be paid for by allowing building over the rail line from Hamilton to Newcastle.	0	4
2860	By: Philip On: 19 Feb 2008	Make something actually happen at Surf House. The existing building, regardless of whether it is salvagable or not, is not a representative of Newcastle's surfing heritage. As a building it fails to relate properly to its location, does not make the best of its views, and does not lend itself to current community uses related to the beach. To do these things properly, it would need such significant change that it may as well be demolished and something really good built. To resurrect the existing building would condemn us to always having second-best in this great location.	11	0
2866	By: dipsy On: 20 Feb 2008 In Response To: 2860	We could have a new building that has heritage elements that could reflect culture and actually look good. Philip is right we need this thing sorted out - and give us another coffee shop so we dont have to queue so long!	6	1

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3498	By: Reformer On: 25 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2866	<p>dipsy, you are welcome to put up a proposal to do up and run Surf House the way you think it should be done. Just get a bunch of mates to mortgage their houses to fund it. In other words, put up or stop making dreamy but uninformed comments.</p> <p>Some enthusiastic Councillors have assets to mortgage and none have to my knowledge come forward with a proposal.</p> <p>No professional tenderer to date has been able to stack it up commercially and both front-runners' proposals involve demolition.</p>	2	2
3557	By: dipsy On: 27 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3498	I think you misunderstood my post. I support pulling the thing down. heritage elements mean making the new building have a heritage theme or look - perhaps incorporating some design features of the old building. This need not be expensive. I agree with your vies about people trying to stop the redevelopment.	4	0
2902	By: admin On: 23 Feb 2008	<p>COMMENT FROM CADELL (posted to wrong area)</p> <p>There are a number of observations that characterise the quality of the city and suburbs to the residents and visitors. The following are submitted as needing improvement. 1. Quality of roadway surfaces and traffic road markings - many pothole areas are left until they become a road hazard. Road markings worn so that they are not visible. 2. Garbage collection system that does not leave wheel bins all over the place, and when green waste collections are made, a trail of mess is left behind. 3. City buildings covered in grafitti covered hordings.</p>	5	0
3902	By: kpatsan On: 01 Apr 2008	<p>It's obvious, not only from the comments here but also in the wider community that the opinion of the Council's management fo the city centre in particular is poor.</p> <p>The Council fails to realise that the way to fund all community activities and infrastrcture is to have a solid income base. This could best be boosted by taking a commercial look at all the derelict and vacant buildings it owns on Hunter & King Streets. My proposal is this:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Tear down (yes, TEAR DOWN) all the Council owned derelict and/or vacant old buildings it owns. You would be surprised at how many of them there are. They have trucks and a tip to dipose of the building waste, so the cost is minimal. 2) Replace the vacant blocks with grass to make them look decent. Then stick a sign on every block that says: "Newcaslte City Council - Open For Business. Contact Us For Redevelopment". 3) Have someone with a mediocum of common sense manage the sale and redevelopment of the sites, including advertisig nationally for prime redevelopment opportunities. 4) Encourage developers to erect new buildings and actualy work with them to gain approval along Council guidelines, rather than think of new ways to knock back developments. <p>The advantages of this are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Most of the ugly buildings will go in one fell swoop. This will add immensely to the beautification of the area, as well as be a positive sign of rejuvenation - something we sorely need. 2) It will clearly signal that Newcaslte Council is serious about its CBD as a place to do business. Developers and businesspeople looking to relocate their offices will pick up on this positive sign. 3) New buildings will add a great deal of new revenue to the Council by way of development fees and most importantly vastly increased council rates on new, developed buidings. 4) Success breeds success. Existing building owners will see new buildings around them and they will be encouraged or forced by the market to spruce up or redevelop their builidings. This also means much higher rate revenue to the Council. <p>The end result is that Newcastle Council will greatly increase its revenue base by simply applying common sense to its existing derelict property portfolio, all at little cost. This will then give it much more funds to spend on community facilities.</p> <p>it merely requires the Council to hire someone with good commercial property experience and allow this person to getthe job done.</p>	2	0

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MANAGING THE CITY'S INFRASTRUCTURE

ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
2567	By: blakey On: 06 Feb 2008	More cycleways that are seperated from the traffic. See my comment under the 'favourite facility' topic. These need to connect into the foreshore/honeysuckle cycleway and the Fernleigh track to build a network.	8	2
3503	By: Reformer On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2567	blakey, the first step in getting cycleways and other infrastructure in Newcastle is to identify budget savings for the Council staff and Councillors. go to http://www.ncc.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/29666/Budget_Parameters.pdf and see the budget guidelines and ask other business people whether they think it is correct to simply assume that the Council can raise prices without some fiscal rectitude. Look at some of the spending on http://www.ncc.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0015/25701/Statutory_Annual_Report__2006_2007_-_Final.pdf and compare this with other councils like Lake Macquarie, with a larger population. Then explain to the Council Ways to cut costs (eg Legal Fees) and to spend more money on cycleways. Please post the finding of your research. As a hint, look at the Baths Refurbishment budget of \$2,979,738 on Page 14 of the 2007 annual report and ask why the cost now exceeds \$4.8 million and the job is unfinished. Take a look at the baths and see what I mean.	1	1
2785	By: Philip On: 14 Feb 2008	The Council could make much better use of the available funds if it managed better, cut down on overheads, and focused on doing things rather than planning and talking about them. Countless new staff have been/are being recruited but very few of these have been workers to actually produce infrastructure. They're mostly planners, managers and admin staff.	7	1
3370	By: Reformer On: 19 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2785	Philip, the real problem is that the Council administration (and most of the Local Government Sector) has been out of touch with the outside community for decades. So they don't recognise the problem. Proper reform will only come from a Minister and department willing to confront the issue.	5	1
2818	By: alanm On: 15 Feb 2008	The mall needs a complete rethink but dont just give it to a big developer to build a giant mall there would be traffic chaos and the city needs a real heart,	5	0
3411	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2818	The best developers are the people of Newcastle. Not blow ins who do their project and cart our money away. To encourage development we need people and activity. The first step is to give the joint a bath!!!! The Mall is pure filth, the paving shot, the trees a nightmare and the dirt and grime beyond belief. Step one of getting the CBD of this great city on track is to steam clean the place, remove the damaged buildings, structures and turn on the lights!!!	2	2
2886	By: admin On: 21 Feb 2008	COMMENT BY kotaranana (Posted to wrong area) My children grew up with all the concrete maps of the world in the bottom of the pool and competed to see if they could swim from country to country. I do realise these slabs broke up in the earthquake and had to be removed for safety reasons, but are there any plans to return the pool to it's former glory.	3	0
2933	By: Samantha On: 26 Feb 2008 In Response To: 2886	Unfortunately most of the concrete "map of the world" in the canoe pool next to Newcastle Baths was removed in 1970s for health and safety reasons. Many Novocastrians have fond memories of the unique installation but Council has no plans to restore it as it would be expensive and require much more stringent health and safety conditions.	3	1

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3412	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2933	Well how do you like that answer for total negativity! Step one ,,replace all the "can't do" people in Council with can do people. Step 2 Clean up the site including that wall partly patched by the "cant dos" for about \$5m (when a brand new replica could have been built and in use by now for \$4.6m)and the existing pools and build a new pool complex with the funds wasted by the "cant do,s". Step 3 let the kids play and swim next summer!!!! (afterall it is a canoe pool not the Panama Cannal!)	0	3

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RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
2825	By: freda On: 16 Feb 2008	The kids play area at Dixon Park needs an upgrade, in fact the entire park needs a face lift	5	1
3178	By: sallypatching On: 03 Mar 2008	Moving into the area recently from interstate, there is a lack of playgroups in the Newcastle area. There appears to be many playing fields, but no play equipment in them for younger kids. Please consider a playground in the park at end of Thomas street in Hamilton South. Also a playground facility liek the one Lake Maquarie Council are building in Speers Point would be great in the empty grounds of the foreshore area.	2	2
3405	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008	the biggest recreation are is the foreshore from Queens Wharf to Newcastle Beach including Nobbys. Nobbys is closed, the forshore is closed to parking all night, the all day parking zones are all along the prime foreshore spots and if thats not enough we run carnivals, ammusments and Matara to prevent the foreshore being used. The council has now wasted more money to get a consultants report to install a light and audia part. That report also says the area is for Novacastrians and forget the visitors. Lets have a rethink of our cities real needs and our future.	1	1
3406	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008	A good place to start with our recreational facilities would be the Ocean Baths at Newcastle beach. Get the bulldozer out, clear the total site and build a state of the ark full ocean pool complex. We have now wasted nearly \$5m patching up an old crumbling obsolete wall and it is not even finished. The best beach on the East Coat of the best country in the best hemosphere deserves better than a lean to along a dig out in the rocks! Bring back the map of the world and place our complex firmly on that map!	1	1

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ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND EDUCATION

ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
2628	By: jube On: 08 Feb 2008	I think greater support of educational programs and facilities at Blackbutt with the support of the current Blackbutt Friends group which in the past have run some great Twilight and night walks. I feel they should be encouraged rather than stifled	9	2
2713	By: leta On: 11 Feb 2008	Council should support existing environmental management and education groups to continue to provide environmental education and management for the community across the LGA. The support should be equitable and transparent. The support should be prioritised for community groups first, and there should be a more stringent process for deciding where the funds are spent (ie why is Council funding government run organisations?)	6	3
3401	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2713	"equitable" and "transparent" are the key words. stringent selection is also a key. The end result must be accountability and documentation demonstrating value for money.	2	0
2817	By: alanm On: 15 Feb 2008	A priority should be placed on tidying up the city centre - it is not a good place to be most of the time esp at night	8	0
2867	By: dipsy On: 20 Feb 2008 In Response To: 2817	Start with a midnight pub curfew.	6	0
3263	By: JuliaB On: 10 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2817	The city on Friday and Saturday nights is a scary place - groups of drunk and drugged people, fights, and those looking for one. Walking up to a pub where we hoped to finish a pleasant night after eating at an OK restaurant and seeing a drunk leaving - horizontally with help from Security - was the final straw, we turned around and went straight home and don't go into the city anymore. Hotel curfews are a joke. Pubs keep serving drunks as they spend more and Security can chuck them out when they become a problem, but it doesn't stop the problem starting in the first place.	6	1
3402	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2817	grog prices should double at midnight to fund the army of police, security and medicos necessary to support the "night life"	3	1
2887	By: admin On: 21 Feb 2008	COMMENT BY kotaranana (Posted to wrong area) Since the June storms and floods we have not been allowed to take our green waste to Blackbutt on Saturday mornings. Particularly in my suburb of Kotara most of us try to keep the area as green as possible to protect the environment and it was the norm to head up to Blackbutt first thing on Saturdays to drop off the cuttings. Is there any chance this service will be reopened.	3	2
2895	By: Samantha On: 22 Feb 2008 In Response To: 2887	The greenwaste drop off spot relocated to Ford Oval, Womboin Rd, Lambton following the June storms. At this stage it will remain as the collection spot. I hope you are able to drop off your cuttings there.	3	2
3361	By: Reformer On: 18 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2895	HOW GREEN IS THE DROP-OFF, WHEN FUEL IS TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION? ISN'T IT BETTER FOR HOUSEHOLDERS TO CUT UP WASTE AND STOCKPILE THEN RECYCLE IT AT HOME? HAS COUNCIL DONE A TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE ANALYSIS OF THE "NET GREEN" VALUE OF THIS? WHAT DID IT SHOW, ASSUMING YOU TESTED THIS BEFORE INSTITUTING THE SERVICE.	3	1
3359	By: Reformer On: 18 Mar 2008	If NCC is fair dinkum about the environment they would not buy any gas guzzlers and change cars only after 10 years, including the Lord Mayor's car. Post-GST the economics changed . Check out the age and engine size of all the Councillors cars and use this as the benchmark.	5	0
3383	By: The Mule On: 19 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3359	Reformer I think you will find that replacing vehicles at NCC, and probably pretty much any other organisation that has a large fleet, is based on kms on the odometer and not the actual age, due to the higher resale value of a low km vehicle. Most fleet vehicles are replaced well before they hit 10 years. Rightly or wrongly the decision is based on keeping within a budget and keeping costs down.	2	2

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3397	By: Philip On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3383	I agree that age vs mileage is one consideration. But engine capacity/fuel economy is quite another. There are cheaper vehicles for local fleet use than Commodores. Is Council's vehicle choice compromised to satisfy the interests of officers who have private use or leaseback privileges, which demand family sized vehicles? if so, the tail's wagging the dog!	4	1
3403	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3383	Reformers main point was the gas guzzlers. All cars should be 4 cylinder or less. All should use E10 or diesal. How many cars have been replaced by electric push bikes?	3	1
3583	By: Reformer On: 28 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3383	Hi Mule, This used to be the conventional wisdom at Councils in the pre-GST high inflation days (usually 40,000 KM or 2 Years, whichever comes first). They could at some times(late 80's / early 90's) make money on changeovers, even after a few months, by exploiting loopholes in legislation. This is no longer the case. That myth is now perpetuated by fleet managers and fleet leasing companies who have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo, for selfish reasons. Councillors were provided a lightweight spreadsheet last year in support of a similar contention to yours. It was unsatisfactory and excluded detailed workings. Ask the Greens Councillors, who I understand were keen to pursue the initiative of longer changeovers and smaller engines. Perhaps the Council may respond by placing a detailed worksheet on the website, with a reference to Bang the Table. Ask yourself 4 questions: 1. How many manhours are spent in trading in and changing existing vehicles more frequently than necessary, 2. How have the "KM readings at changeover" changed to reflect better quality vehicles or changes in the auction market, 3. Why have other Govt. organisations (eg Hunter Water) successfully extended their mileages at changeover, closed garages and saved manpower? 4. Who buys the 40K, 2 year vehicles? Answer, mostly private companies keen to get a good deal!	2	1
3768	By: Samantha On: 31 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3359	It may be worth noting that Council won the 2007 Fleet Environmental Award from the Australasian Fleet Management Association. This award was sponsored by the Australian Greenhouse Office. It was awarded to Council for our use of bio-diesel fuel in our diesel vehicles and move to 4 cylinder passenger vehicles.	4	2
3772	By: Reformer On: 31 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3768	Hi Samantha, Will you please arrange to post a copy of NCC's submission on the Website? This is an important means of communicating to the ratepayers, NCC's initiatives in this area. Today would be helpful and there will be no time and effort roadblocks to doing so.	2	4
3794	By: Reformer On: 31 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3772	Hi Samantha, Is this site designed to just let people blow off a little steam but be ignored by the NCC Administration, or is there a genuine desire to properly consult by providing the backup and evidence required to elevate the discussion to a useful level? It seems that whenever we ask for more information from the NCC Administration we are stymied. I apologise if you have already posted the information under a "Bang the Table" section of the website. I have asked one Councillor and there is no recollection of reading the NCC submission. Was it sent to Councillors?	2	2

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4093	By: Reformer On: 07 Apr 2008 In Response To: 3772	Reply please Samantha? At least say yes or no. If no We will ask the Councillors to ask for a copy. Or should the Herald look into the question of how many councils had the time to submit entries to the awards, or a news story headed "council hides controversial report"	0	0
3773	By: Bigfeller On: 31 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3768	If the Council wanted to save some real money in the Man Plan and the environment it would have the total fleet using CNG	1	4
3814	By: Bigfeller On: 31 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3773	Why was my comment at 10.55 31/3/08 removed	1	0
3815	By: admin On: 31 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3814	Hi Bigfeller - it was a duplication of the previous comment.	1	0
3774	By: Bigfeller On: 31 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3768	If the Council wanted to save some real money in the Man Plan and the environment it would have tje total fleet using CNG	0	0
3366	By: Reformer On: 19 Mar 2008	Council spends too much time writing and talking about green issues and too little time doing things. Why? I it's easier to talk than act and there are too many clerks and administrators and not enough physical workers. Stop writing and reading manuals and start planting trees.	4	3
3398	By: Philip On: 20 Mar 2008	What a pity that the Council, claiming to be at the forefront in environmental management, can't get the basics right. Have a look in any street on garbage collection day - bins on the road, on their side, lids open to fill with water on rainy days, spilt garbage not picked up etc. This is a poor and deteriorating service, which gives the appearance of nobody caring. All the self adulation in the world won't substitute for getting out and having a look at what really happens.	4	3
3404	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3398	lets reduce the number of bins and make the total system environmentally friendly. Does anyone know how many bins are emptied into the truck before its full?	3	0
3495	By: Samantha On: 25 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3404	Apparently it usually takes about 1000 - 1100 bins to fill a garbage truck. This figure changes following public holidays (such as Christmas) when there is additional waste. It is also slightly seasonal as during summer there can be a lot more greenwaste deposited into bins.	4	2
3512	By: Reformer On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3495	SAMANTHA, CAN YOU PLEASE POST THE GARBAGE COLLECTION KPI'S? ALSO, DO YOU HAVE STATISTICS ON THE NET TONNAGE RECOVERED FROM THE RECYCLABLES COLLECTION? IE THE NET TONNAGE AND PERCENTAGE RETURNED TO LANDFILL. I ASSUME THESE ARE CRITICAL MEASURES, SO SHOULD BE AVAILABLE INSTANTLY.	1	4
3572	By: matt On: 28 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3512	MESSAGE FROM ADMIN Hi Reformer. We appreciate your inputs. However, please be aware that use of capitals is often interpreted as shouting and as such comes across as aggressive. We ask that you keep the tone of the conversation civil. Yes I know I have used some capitals here!	0	1
3586	By: Reformer On: 28 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3572	matt, the reason fot the capitals is that i had to put the caps lock on to fill in your code, which is all capitals! so it was easier to stay in capitals all the time. I was not aware that caps mean shouting. Your admonition in the form of the phrase "We ask that you keep the tone of the conversation civil" assumes incorrectly that I was deliberately "shouting", which was not the case at all! Is this a demonstration of a personal attack?. IMHO a more polite way of expressing the comment may have been "We ask that all respondents ensure that capitals are used sparingly in recognition of the convention on capitals".	0	0

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ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
3590	By: admin On: 28 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3586	Hi Reformer - I apologise if I have offended you. Nothing intended. For future reference the code is not case sensitive.	3	0
3592	By: admin On: 28 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3512	MESSAGE FROM ADMIN We ask that all respondents ensure that capitals are used sparingly in recognition of the fact that many people interpret this as shouting.	2	1
3609	By: Samantha On: 28 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3512	Reformer, This site has been established to discuss the Management Plan. I suggest you contact Council's Waste Management Services to get the information you are after. They can be contacted on 4974 6000.	4	2
3621	By: Bigfeller On: 28 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3609	Samantha, I feel sorry for you. You have been placed in a role that you seem to have little knowledge about. This is very unfair of your senior officers. Rates, Roads and Rubbish are the core Council activities. The Waste services (or rubbish) are one of the major expenditure areas of the Councils Management Plan and budget. If you examine a Management Plan you will also see that a special fee is set for the collection of waste bins. If you do not feel confident to answer the questions then you should recruit the appropriate officer to prepare a statement for you to post or tell him (her) to log on and do it themselves. Reformer and others should certainly be provided to the answers under this consultation media.	1	4
3813	By: Reformer On: 31 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3609	Hi Samantha, Do you see any link between the question and the Management Plan? If not, I will explain it further on this site. Perhaps you could ring 0407 451 619 and ask for the KPI's used last year, whether they change this year, whether they are input or output focussed and whether they are measurable and show Top Value, best Practice Improvements.	1	2
3513	By: Philip On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3495	Yes, that's about the number. But you'll find it's set by the number a truck can pick up in an 8 hour shift when "working to rules" - nothing to do with the capacity of a truck. in fact they typically would do 2 loads each per shift. Because they're on "job-and-finish" the operators go as fast as possible (hence the poor standard of the service), so they can knock of as early as possible - often by 11am. This is the case with all Garbage collection operations. What makes the difference between a good service and a shoddy job is how much management cares about it and sets the standard. This is what's slipped in Newcastle in recent years.	4	2
3514	By: Philip On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3495	Yes, that's about the number. But you'll find it's set by the number a truck can pick up in an 8 hour shift when "working to rules" - nothing to do with the capacity of a truck. in fact they typically would do 2 loads each per shift. Because they're on "job-and-finish" the operators go as fast as possible (hence the poor standard of the service), so they can knock of as early as possible - often by 11am. This is the case with all Garbage collection operations. What makes the difference between a good service and a shoddy job is how much management cares about it and sets the standard. This is what's slipped in Newcastle in recent years.	3	0
3517	By: Bigfeller On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3495	So how many litres or tonnes (of rubbish) is a garbage truck? Also how much does it cost to operate a garbage truck per load?	1	4

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ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
3869	By: Bigfeller On: 01 Apr 2008 In Response To: 3517	<p>The people who gave me the thumbs down could not be serious about seeking savings in the Management Plan.</p> <p>My question was a very serious question because I want to understand the costs of garbage collection in order to make a meaningful input into the Management Plan.</p> <p>Is this site a serious attempt to involve the community in serious negotiation about the Management Plan or simply a way of blowing \$10,000 to \$15,000 of ratepayers hard earned funds?</p> <p>Samantha it time you and your Council started to answer the questions raised on this site and provide the information requested.</p>	1	1
3963	By: JSM On: 02 Apr 2008 In Response To: 3398	<p>People disagreeing with this must have either never experienced a good quality garbage service, or they've been lulled into accepting a lowest common denominator standard.</p>	2	1
3400	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008	<p>The real test of value is the "user pays test". The items listed above a a real mixture.</p> <p>If Newcastle is the "expert" as claimed in the statement then in the next 18months I would like to see NCC make megga bucks out of their skills. If it is the expert (drip under pressure) then I believe funding should be withdrawn and the money used to fund core business.</p>	3	0
3519	By: Reformer On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3400	<p>Better still bigfella, how about selling the brilliant Enviro Leadership service package for megabucks. Set a net budget revenue of \$1 million, rather than a cost to ratepayers, with the net revenue excluding Government grants and handouts. Take away the biodieselmobile and let the crew sing for their supper.</p>	1	2
3520	By: Reformer On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3400	<p>System Malfunction Matt!</p>	0	0
3521	By: Reformer On: 26 Mar 2008	<p>Samantha, are you fair dinkum saying what you said above, or are you trying to stimulate debate and activate this site?</p> <p>Let's analyse what you say above ...</p> <p>Community greening ... What evidence to support the cointention that Newcastle is at the forefront of Environmental education ... Is this an input or an output indicator? Do you mean superior, World Class environmental awareness in Newcastle compared with other cities? How do we compare with, say, Hamburg or Auckland and who has measured this?</p> <p>Stormwater management ... Are you serious?? Ask the poor Ratepayers what they think? Even the Gaudreys, with over 10 years as local members and Councillors are flooded out of their house at the moment! see proof at http://www.ncc.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/33413/NOM.pdf</p> <p>ClimateCam ... This trinket is only useful if your team can encourage a gaggle of new disciples from other Councils to part with their readies to join the gang. I would auction it off to the highest bidder, to meet the \$1 million per annum income target for that unit.</p> <p>and more.</p> <p>Newcastle has a reputation for being at the forefront of environmental management and education ... Samantha, where's the hard proof? Is this a result of media hype or delusion within NCC administration?</p> <p>Relevance to the Budget?</p> <p>Need to set a net Revenue Target of \$1 million per annum for next 5 years, otherwise face the fact that this exercise is largely fantasy. I know these are harsh words, but someone has to bring it back to reality. I welcome a debate.</p>	2	1

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ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
3523	By: Reformer On: 26 Mar 2008	<p>Samantha, are you fair dinkum saying what you said above, or are you trying to stimulate debate and activate this site?</p> <p>Let's analyse what you say above ...</p> <p>Community greening ... What evidence to support the contention that Newcastle is at the forefront of Community Greening? I have visited piles of cities that are greener and more vibrant than our town. The most significant green effort I have seen in Newcastle in years is the Dune stabilisation by the Landcare volunteers along Merewether to Bar Beach.</p> <p>Environmental education ... Is this an input or an output indicator? Do you mean superior, World Class environmental awareness in Newcastle compared with other cities or production of leaflets and provision of eco-demo houses at great cost to ratepayers?</p> <p>How do we compare with, say, Hamburg or Auckland and who has measured this?</p> <p>The most effective means of conserving scarce resources is user-pays .. eg power bills and water consumption charges. Hunter households and industries lead here, but this happened in the 80's in response to User Pays, not because of a specialist unit of Council.</p> <p>Stormwater management ... Are you serious?? Ask the poor Ratepayers what they think? Even the Gaudreys, with over 10 years as local members and Councillors with all their influence are flooded out of their house at the moment! see proof at http://www.ncc.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/33413/NOM.pdf</p> <p>ClimateCam ... This trinket is only useful if your team can encourage a gaggle of new disciples from other Councils to part with their readies to join the gang. I would auction it off to the highest bidder, to meet the \$1 million per annum income target for that unit.</p> <p>Relevance to the Budget?</p> <p>Need to set a net Revenue Target of \$1 million per annum for next 5 years, otherwise face the fact that this exercise is largely fantasy. I know these are harsh words, but someone has to bring it back to reality. I welcome a debate.</p> <p>for administrator ... soirry Matt, your 10 minute deacline for editing looks like a teething problem!!</p>	0	0
3596	By: admin On: 28 Mar 2008	Reformer has asked that I clarify the comment above was moderated out due to duplication and not for any other reason.	2	0

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CITY ADMINISTRATION

ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
2840	By: JSM On: 17 Feb 2008	All of these things are important, but they are consuming too much of the Council's available funds. These activities need to be reduced to the minimum level, to leave as much money as possible for actually DOING things to make Newcastle better, particularly infrastructure, and particularly the beachfront.	6	0
2885	By: admin On: 21 Feb 2008	COMMENT BY kotaranana (Posted to wrong area) I always grew up to believe that elected Councillors would hold regular meetings with residents in their ward to find out the problems and wishes of the community. I have lived in Kotara for 5 years now and have never had contact with my Councillor. Why should the council staff have to go out and ask the community for ideas when we have elected councillors to do just that	5	0
3410	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2885	Did you attend the management plan workshop at Kotara? Do you attend your local forum meetings (held monthly) do you send submissions to Council, do you write to the paper, have you ever phoned a Councillor, do you search the NCC web site. Our Councillors are only as good as the support and information we give them. I do not think Samantha understands the difference between the role of a councillor and the admin and thats a worry to me. She may like to explain the core functions of each group.	1	0
3511	By: Reformer On: 26 Mar 2008	LESS WAFFLE, LESS "COUNCIL DOING BUSINESS WITH ITSELF", LESS "GROUPTHINK", MORE CONFIDENCE WILL MEAN A NEED FOR A LOT LESS PEOPLE. A HEALTHIER ORGANISATION IS FUNDAMENTAL TO A LEANER, MORE EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION. I RECOMMEND THE HEALTHY ORGANISATION CHECKLIST FROM "MANAGING WITH PEOPLE" BY FORDYCE AND WEIL AS A RELIABLE CHECKLIST http://www.amazon.ca/Managing-People-J-K-Fordyce/dp/020102103X	1	1
3702	By: Bigfeller On: 29 Mar 2008	I would like NCC to take a close look at how Woolworths operate. Lean mean and highly efficient whilst at all times thinking of the customers and the shareholders. They do not operate any non core business, they do not make bad decisions and always have their infrastructure in A1 condition. Their buildings are not covered with graffiti and they have no law and order issues(even for their grog outlets. Woolies manages to do all this with very few admin staff and most employees floor workers.	0	0

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MOST VALUED SERVICE OR FACILITY

ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
2566	By: blakey On: 06 Feb 2008	The cycle network. We do not have enough seperated cycleways (that is not mixed in with the traffic) but those we have are the valuable start of what should become a network the city is proud of. We have a mild climate and a city that is relatively flat in many areas. We should have much more cycling but who would cycle amongst all the hoons on the road, much less let their kids??	8	3
2813	By: alanm On: 15 Feb 2008 In Response To: 2566	Good idea but dont forget the pedestrians	6	0
3518	By: Reformer On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2813	For the benefit of cyclists, pedestrians are the ones to terrorise if they slow you down or get in the way when you are flying along the walkways!	1	0
2627	By: jube On: 08 Feb 2008	I think Blackbutt as it currently is is a great facility that council often overlooks as important to the community and could be at the forefront of environmental education if funded more appropriately rather than being at risk of losing facilities	9	1
2639	By: adam On: 08 Feb 2008	Our beaches are the thing I enjoy the most but the facilities are limited. There are so few kiosks you have to wait ages for a coffee. There must be opportunities for more cafes near the beach	10	1
2814	By: alanm On: 15 Feb 2008 In Response To: 2639	Great beaches, great parking, not too commercial - keep them as they are, not like Bondi!	5	1
2856	By: tantrum On: 19 Feb 2008 In Response To: 2639	you could do with better rubbish facilities and RECYCLING!!!	3	1
2657	By: Mrs Mop On: 09 Feb 2008	I think the Regional Art Gallery is fantastic. We went in today to see the temporary exhibit and William Dobell retrospective - wonderful stuff. I would like to see it stay free entry and have the gallery redeveloped so that more artworks can be displayed with the additional benefit of creating a new focus through retail/commercial/educational space.	8	3
2815	By: alanm On: 15 Feb 2008 In Response To: 2657	Look I like the gallery but is it really a priority next to park maintenance, affordable housing and tidying up the city? Perhaps a charge would be ok for the few users there are?	6	1
3417	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2815	I wonder how popular the gallery would be if it was user pays? It is also interesting to note the quantity of art in the city that is not done by the NRAG. I think all art groups should have to lodge applications for funding and that grants must be matched at least dollar for dollar. That would be fair and just.	2	1
2816	By: alanm On: 15 Feb 2008	Buy Nobbys and make it a public place before it gets ruined!	6	2
3367	By: Reformer On: 19 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2816	The people already own Nobbys. I walk up there frequently and the view is great. Nobody stops you, there are no ferocious guard dogs waiting to eat you. The sign says don't go there but that's really just to protect the Port Corp from being sued.	3	1
3418	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3367	If Peter Garret can go up there we all should. We do not need kiosks, beds and restraunts. Just open the gate and let us all in. Council should budget for the welcome signs in the Management Plan.	2	2
2857	By: tantrum On: 19 Feb 2008	We think the most valued contribution council makes is to children and young people's cultural activities through grants for the arts. As a theatre company running for over 32 years, we have seen the social impact the arts has on the development of young people first hand. We have seen young people develop into well rounded, successful individuals who give back to their community through the recognition of what companies like ours have done for them. The council should continue to get behind companies like TANTRUM to ensure that we continue to provide engaged, relevant and alternative social activities to young people, which will have long term benefits for this region in the future.	5	2

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ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
3368	By: Reformer On: 19 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2857	There is plenty of money to be saved by the Council Administration and reapplied to worthy causes. If Tantrum is fair dinkum, you would dig through the Council's spending and publicly highlight ways of diverting money from waste to good causes. In other words, stop begging for handouts and start encouraging Council to be better managers. Compare NCC and Lake Macquarie spend on legal fees NCC more than 1 million, Lake Macquarie less than \$300,000. Demand to know why!	3	1
3419	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2857	Just because something has been done for 32 years its no reason for it to continue. We have also seen some of our young people turn into drunkards and city vandals every friday and sat nights! In this years Management Plan lets put all the arts and crafts money in one bucket and let the groups seek funding grants based on competitive merrit. If Tantrum is as good as you say then I am sure it would get grant funds and may be even morethan you get now.	2	2
3416	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008	What has this question got to do with the Management Plan? These are questions for the community plan and other strategic documents. The management Plan is about putting dollars to the wish list. What does Samantha see as core services and facilities. Non core items should not even be considered until all core activities are satisfied.	1	3
3506	By: Samantha On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3416	The Management Plan costs (core) services and initiatives identified through: consultation with the community; priorities identified in the Community Plan and other strategy/ policy documents; and/or those required by legislation. The Management Plan is then used to allocate resources bewtween the different proposals.	2	2
3508	By: Reformer On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3506	SAMANTHA, I THINK THE COUNCIL SPENDS TOO MUCH TIME EFFORT AND MONEY ON "PSEUDO CONSULTATION" WITH THE COMMUNITY, AS EVIDENCED BY THE PALTRY NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO THIS SITE AND POOR ATTENDANCES AT MOST WORKSHOPS AND FORUMS. SOMETIMES IT IS NECESSARY TO TAKE GUIDANCE ON SOCIETAL NORMS AND EXPECTATIONS FROM OTHER SOURCES AND JUST FOCUS ON THE CORE BUSINESS. FOR INSTANCE, YOU SURELY DON'T NEED TO CANVASS OPINION OVER THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADITIONAL ROADS, PARKS, FACILITIES AND RUBBISH DO YOU? A LOT OF TIME, MONEY AND EFFORT IS WASTED ON DUPLICATION OF GENERIC PROCESSES AND TO A LARGE EXTENT, THE CONSULTATION PROCESS, WITHOUT ACTION, IS A WASTE. LET'S TEST THIS . I WILL TAKE PHOTOS AND VIDEOS OF GARBAGE TRUCKS IN ACTION THIS WEEK AND NEXT MONTH AND SHOW THE DIFFERENCE IN PERFORMANCE (REFER COMMENT IN OTHER SECTION).	1	2
3554	By: dipsy On: 27 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3508	Reformer are you suggesting council shouldnt consult?? And yet you seem to be appreciating the chance to comment and have done extensively on a number of issues. Would you prefer to be ignored? Im confused! Personally I like having a chance to input.	2	0
3579	By: Reformer On: 28 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3554	Dipsy, I've tried for more than 20 years, on and off, to consult in the normal way. However, with NCC, whenever you start to ask difficult questions they almost always clam up or give answers that are ambiguous or misleading and not straight answers. Also, most of the objection or comment comes from .01 percent of the population anyhow, the the bulk of people either disinterested or incapable of contributing. So there will always be bias in the consultation process, which can be ignored when the results suit the organisation. It's a bit like the Tax Dept. consulting on whether we want to pay more tax. Most will say no, so why ask?	1	2

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ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
3516	By: Bigfeller On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3506	<p>It seems that you as Project Coordinator are not clear about what the Management Plan is. The core services and initiatives are developed over time via strategies outside the Man Plan framework. The Man Plan then identifies the expenditure necessary to achieve those activities or part of the activity and establishes methods of raising the revenue necessary. The DLG web site explains the process.</p> <p>I note my questions were not answered by Samantha. Namely what has the original question got to do with the Man Plan AND what does Samantha consider as core services and facilities?</p>	1	2
3439	By: JSM On: 21 Mar 2008	<p>I think it is precisely because the COuncil tries to provide too many services that it has got itself into a financial mess. And asking the community questions like this is futile, unless they are provided with an understanding of what are Council's statutory responsibilities, what are discretionary, and what are the consequences of NOT giving priority to some of the basic things - like proper infrastructure maintenance.</p>	5	1
3507	By: Reformer On: 26 Mar 2008	<p>PUTRESCIBLE WASTE (OLD STYLE GARBAGE) COLLECTION, FOLLOWED BY POTHOLE-FREE AND FREE-FLOWING ROADS, SAFE FOOTPATHS, GOOD AND SAFE DRAINAGE, CLEAN STREETS, ATTRACTIVE SPORTING AND CULTURAL FACILITIES, GARDENS AND PRESENTATION, THEN LIBRARIES, WITH THE SAME STANDARDS APPLIED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE CITY. FIX THESE AND THE MOST OF THE OTHER THINGS WILL FALL INTO PLACE.</p> <p>I WOULD START BY ENSURING THE GARBOS LEAVE THE BINS UPRIGHT AND CLOSED, NOT OPEN AND ON THEIR SIDES. THIS FUNDAMENTAL KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURE IS IGNORED BY MANAGEMENT AND COUNCILLORS.</p>	5	0

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BETTER QUALITY IN ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
2733	By: GVidal On: 11 Feb 2008	If you have ever been to a Council Meeting you will witness first hand how terribly some of the councillors behave. The meetings seem to be about the personal issues/ grudges/ political pointscoring of some councillors. There is not a sense of governing yet there is a sense of managing, and often managing the most minor details. There is also a lack of confidence in decision making with additional information requests drowning council staff / consultants/ lawyers etc and costing the rate payers a bomb. We desperately need councillors who are responsible, civically minded who can move this city forward. Newcastle has so much potential yet we continue to be held down by a disfunctional council. Unfortunately those who can lift us out of this mire are reluctant to put their hands up. It's time to move out of the retired teachers club and into the future. Please bring forward some good (fresh, educated and innovative) candidates in the next election.	0	0
2735	By: GVidal On: 11 Feb 2008	If you have ever been to a Council Meeting you will witness first hand how terribly some of the councillors behave. The meetings seem to be about the personal issues/ grudges/ political pointscoring of some councillors. There is not a sense of governing yet there is a sense of managing, and often managing the most minor details. There is also a lack of confidence in decision making with additional information requests drowning council staff / consultants/ lawyers etc and costing the rate payers a bomb. We desperately need councillors who are responsible, civically minded who can move this city forward. Newcastle has so much potential yet we continue to be held down by a disfunctional council. Unfortunately those who can lift us out of this mire are reluctant to put their hands up. It's time to move out of the retired teachers club and into the future. Please bring forward some good (fresh, educated and innovative) candidates in the next election.	7	3
2744	By: admin On: 11 Feb 2008	MESSAGE FROM ADMINISTRATOR Whilst we value all your views at Bang the Table, This page is for consultation on the Newcastle City Council Management Plan. We do not want discussion to get sidetracked. We have allowed this discussion thread because the provision of additional training and support for Councillors may be a legitimate issue. However, please note that this page is not a place to make general comments on councillor performance. Such posts are irrelevant to this consultation and as such will be removed.	2	5
3369	By: Reformer On: 19 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2744	Your approach to censorship is possibly one of the reasons why Bang the Table is not going to work and a waste of \$5,00 to \$10,000. Some people use more emotional language than others to express their opinions - especially some Councillors (e.g. Lord Mayor reported as referring to a Councillor as a Donkey). If this site is censored then it must be regarded as nothing more than a propaganda exercise. I welcome your reply.	1	2

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ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
3371	<p>By: admin On: 19 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3369</p>	<p>Hi Reformer</p> <p>Perhaps I should clarify our moderation policy. Moderation is carried out independently by Bang the Table staff. We rule against material that is defamatory, obscene or irrelevant and do so without fear or favour. We do try, where possible, to post comments (like above) to keep the discussion on track rather than deleting postings.</p> <p>Our concern above was the relevance to the discussion on the management plan that we are hosting here. You will see that nothing has actually been removed because people have kept themselves to the subject very well.</p> <p>We do not consider removing irrelevant material as censorship. There is an open forum area of the site where you can talk about anything you care to. However, where we host a consultation for a client we will always seek to keep it relevant - this is no different to facilitation at a public meeting.</p> <p>If you want to discuss this further or have any concerns please email me on admin@bangthetable.com or leave a comment on the Site Related Feedback Page on this site. I don't want NCC's page to be filled with a debate between you and me but I am interested to hear your views.</p>	1	1
3504	<p>By: Reformer On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3371</p>	<p>The issue of Councillor experience and competence is very relevant to the Management Plan, as evidenced by events last year.</p> <p>I don't know how much time you have spent on examining the Councillor workload, and the way in which the Budget is dealt with. I have spent the time and have the evidence. A number of complaints to the Ombudsman also document the concerns. This is fact.</p> <p>You are correct in allowing this discussion thread "because (sic) the provision of additional training and support for Councillors may be a legitimate issue."</p> <p>The key issue is extra SUPPORT for Councillors, rather than extra training. I admire people who put up their hands for election to Council, and accept that many very competent business people are reluctant to do so because political pointscoring often takes precedence over a sound management focus.</p> <p>However, Councillors are seriously deprived of the independent, competent resources available to Company Directors in the discharge of their duties, so they are often starved of the facts required to make balanced decisions.</p> <p>They may not say this publicly. However, a number of Councillors have told me this privately. Perhaps a Councillor or two may like to respond.</p>	1	1

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ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
3505	<p>By: Reformer On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 3371</p>	<p>The issue of Councillor experience and competence is very relevant to the Management Plan, as evidenced by events last year.</p> <p>I don't know how much time you have spent on examining the Councillor workload, and the way in which the Budget is dealt with. I have spent the time and have the evidence. A number of complaints to the Ombudsman also document the concerns. This is fact.</p> <p>You are correct in allowing this discussion thread "becasue (sic)the provision of additional training and support for Councillors may be a legitimate issue."</p> <p>The key issue is extra SUPPORT for Councillors, rather than extra training. I admire people who put up their hands for election to Council, and accept that many very competent business people are reluctant to do so because political pointscoring often takes precedence over a sound management focus.</p> <p>However, Councillors are seriously deprived of the independent, competent resources available to Company Directors in the discharge of their duties, so they are often starved of the facts required to make balanced decisions. Many of the issues facing them in the Management Plan and Budget are complex and need to be investigated independently.</p> <p>For instance (a live example). NCC employee numbers and employee costs have risen significantly in the last decade, as evidenced by one Councillor in last years' Management Plan debate. Employee numbers grew by more than 100 in the last 8 years, despite large real pay increases granted under a series of awards such as http://www.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/sinodisp/au/cases/nsw/NSWIRComm/1998/210.html?query=%22Newcastle%20City%20Council%22</p> <p>These awards talk of KPI's and agreements and need to be scrutinised to see whether the KPI's are correct and being delivered on. Later awards contain less informaion as to KPI's and commitments. Many KPI's are difficult to measure and are most likely focussed on INPUTS rather than ratepayer-beneficial OUTPUTS. The KPI's are not available publicly.</p> <p>NEW INITIATIVES IN 1998 AWARD * Core employment levels will be determined annually by Service Plans. These positions will be filled by permanent employees (Clause 7). * Detailed Performance Improvement Program Flowchart developed to build on Efficiency and Effectiveness Policy (Appendix A). * All Teams to review working arrangements by December 1998 with a view to developing local area work agreements (Clause 10). * Range of Team KPIs expanded to cover a greater number of teams (Clause 11 and Appendix B). * Performance Management and Rewards and Recognition Policies to be developed by December 1998 (Clause 12 & 13) * Incentive payments to be based on cost savings against adopted budgets while maintaining levels of service (Clause 14.2). * All appointments and progression to be in accordance with the new salary system rates and conditions (Clause 15.2). * New employees after award is adopted will have limited salary maintenance (Clause 15.2). * Redeployment scheme principles and guidelines have been developed (Clause 16 and Appendix C). Redundancy scheme principles and benefits package have been developed (Clause 16 and Appendix D).</p> <p>How does the Public (including Mrs. Mop) expect a busy Councillor to do the work required to be satisfied that the budget staffing and strategic staffing direction reflects an achievement of the KPI's? The overall trend numbers point to a problem of too many staff. But ot enter a Public Debate without the benefit of factual research is just asking too much of Councillors.</p> <p>This is a live example of the problem facing Councillors, whatever their background and experience. They may not say this publicly. However, a number of Councillors have told me this privately. Perhaps a Councillor or two may like to respond.</p>	1	0

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ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
		What do you think Mrs. Mop?		
3515	By: Bigfeller On: 26 Mar 2008 In Response To: 2744	I agree that this site should be about the Draft Management Plan. Will you also remove the rest of the items that are not directly part of the Management Plan? This includes some of the discussions logged by Sam as they refer to an 18 month time frame. The Draft management Plan is a four year document with detailed information about the next financial year.	1	1
2771	By: Philip On: 13 Feb 2008	There is certainly reason to be less than satisfied with the performance of the elected Council as a decision making body for our city. But there is just as much fault in the way the administration plays its role in providing Council with the support it needs to do a good job. In the end one of the greatest failures of the elected Council is its failure to insist on better performance from the administration	5	3
2827	By: freda On: 16 Feb 2008	I'd like to hear from the councillors about their vision. I dont know where they stand.	6	0

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THE KEY BUDGET CONSULTATION KPI

ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
3409	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008	only a very small number of people attended the workshops and there was very little discussion about the draft budget. It was all community plan and wish list stuff that should have been the subject of another forum.	1	1

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SPECIAL RATE INCREASE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

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3408	By: Bigfeller On: 20 Mar 2008	I think that is a reasonable question. May be council officers can place a list on this site showing what has been done, what was done with the extra funds and the cost. It would also be interesting to see the funds now required to meet the infrastructure needs. Is it now less than or greater than \$134m?	3	0
3964	By: JSM On: 02 Apr 2008	Where is the response from the Council?	2	1
3970	By: Reformer On: 03 Apr 2008 In Response To: 3964	i suggest you report this to the DG of the Dept Local Government and the Minister. The DLG is keeping a close watch on NCC at the moment. This website is aan example of NCC refusing to consult with the community as required under the Act.	1	2

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ART IN THE LGA

ID	COMMENT DETAILS	COMMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
3448	By: Bigfeller On: 22 Mar 2008	A point to remember before people say I am anty the NRAG is that it seems to be run by a Foundation and a Society. The Society is like an art club with less members than most bowling clubs and an annual fee of about \$25. On the other hand the Public Art in Newcastle is run by a Committee of Council and has nothing to do with the Gallery. Don't forget the Art Gallery is basically a storage shed for \$50m worth of art of which only about 1% is on display. If 1% is rotated it will take 100 years for each item to be displayed!!!!	2	0

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TOTAL WASTE OF MONEY PROJECTS

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3777	By: Bigfeller On: 31 Mar 2008	<p>How is this for a great waste of funds and resources. Why does NCC need to employ a consultant? Does council not have suitably skilled people?</p> <p>Direct from the NCC web site today.</p> <p>"Newcastle City Council will be conducting an audit of residents' kerbside waste bins to see what types of waste are discarded and determine how effective recycling campaigns have been.</p> <p>Waste will be collected from the bins of a small number of randomly selected households across the Council area between 31 March and 4 April 2008.</p> <p>Waste Services Manager ROB CROOK says Newcastle residents are diligent recyclers, but there is always room for improvement.</p> <p>"The audit will help Council get a picture of our residents' disposal behaviour" such as what is not recycled and what is thrown out in their green wheelie bin.</p> <p>"The information will help Council improve its waste services and infrastructure, enable us to test the effectiveness of our recycling service and plan improvement strategies for the future," said Mr Crook.</p> <p>Selected households have not been notified to avoid residents' changing their waste disposal behaviours. Collection will take place from the kerbside on normal waste collection days (but may be outside normal collection hours).</p> <p>"Council has engaged a consultant who will be collecting and bagging waste. Conditions of the project prohibit public reporting of any specific details relating to the waste collected from households. Information collected will only being used in an aggregated form," said Mr Crook."</p>	4	2