

17 REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

17.1 Information report: Cemetery mowing

Responsible Director: Infrastructure and Operations

Report

Following on from a Councillor Notice of Motion concerning mowing and mulching staff commenced pursuing cost saving / alternative methods to augment existing services without requiring additional funding. One such opportunity explored is a potential arrangement with NSW Community Corrections (CC) to undertake supervised community service work on Council's three active cemeteries. Council sometimes receives complaints about the need for mowing and weeding in cemeteries, particularly in the high growth summer months. Every effort is made to ensure cemeteries are well kept within the existing human and financial resources of council.

To that end staff have been discussing possible arrangements / options with CC. This report provides information on this task to Council, noting it is operational and does not require a council decision, but given the union position on the matter there is a clear need for council and the community to be informed and aware. Especially should union action be taken in response to further exploration or implementation.

Two delivery models were outlined at an initial meeting with CC being:

1. an externally supervised model; or
2. A CC supervised model.

Given Council's limited capacity to provide close on-site supervision, the CC supervised option is the more practical model.

Under the supervised model, CC provides assessed workers, supervision, equipment, personal protective equipment, and insurance. Council's role would be limited to identifying suitable tasks, agreeing to service standards, and coordinating scheduling.

Potentially suitable activities discussed included mowing, cemetery maintenance, litter collection, storm clean-up support and graffiti removal works. Chemical spraying is excluded.

The CC workers would not be publicly identified and would generally present in standard high-visibility clothing similar to other maintenance contractors. CC does not seek public-facing recognition unless agreed by Council.

CC advised that Wollongong City Council operated with this model for approximately 30 years without issue, providing a relevant example of long-term implementation.

This proposal is an opportunity to provide meaningful, productive and dignified work for community service participants while also allowing Council to improve the mowing frequency of its cemeteries which are the subject of ongoing community complaints during the high growth seasons. The arrangement would not involve Council employing or funding workers and CC workers cannot be used to replace existing Council positions.

The use of overtime to complete this work by Council staff cannot be considered at this time, as management have put concerted effort into limiting overtime unless

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17.1 Information report: Cemetery mowing (cont)

absolutely necessary and essential services (eg waste collection) and the annual budget for overtime is extremely limited and under weekly monitoring.

The proposed CC service would involve mowing and edging activities of approximately 2 hours per week per cemetery, ie 6 work hours in total. It is imperative to note that the proposal **will not** reduce any Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions within Council but will supplement existing Council parks staff to undertake maintenance in other high-profile areas, ie playgrounds, sports fields etc, and improve the frequency to general mowing schedules without increasing budget costs. This is consistent with the service review outcomes and PIO requirements for operational efficiencies, cost savings and better resource utilisation while maintaining community expectations for services.

Council has been in ongoing consultations with the relevant unions, who have indicated strong opposition to the proposal on the basis that it will result in the reduction of FTE positions within Council and have threatened subsequent industrial action.

Council are currently drafting a Memorandum of Understanding to the union to confirm that use of CC workers will be for cemeteries maintenance and will not result in the reduction of existing FTE parks staff positions.

Communication/Community Engagement

Human Resources and Maintenance and Operations management have met with Community Corrections staff to discuss implementation. A report was presented to the Consultative Committee for information.

Consultation has occurred with parks staff on five occasions, and the United Services Union on four occasions, who are at this stage not in support of this proposal.

Risk implication

Key risk considerations include task suitability, work health and safety controls, public interface risks, industrial implications, and confirmation that proposed activities do not displace existing staff responsibilities.

Enclosures

- 1 Draft - Memorandum of Understanding - USU and KMC [↗](#)

17.2 Information report: Submission to the NSW Government on proposed amendments to the Fines Regulation 2025Responsible Director: Strategies and Communities

Report

The NSW Government is undertaking a review of the on-the-spot parking fine notification requirements introduced on 1 July 2025. Following analysis of data collected since the reforms commenced, the Government has identified concerns regarding the use of existing exceptions that allow parking infringement notices to be issued without a notification being attached to the offending vehicle. In particular, the review has focused on the "unsafe circumstances" exception and whether it is being applied consistently with its original intent.

The consultation draft proposes amendments to the Fines Regulation 2025 that would strengthen the requirement for parking officers to make a genuine attempt to leave a notification on a vehicle before relying on the "vehicle moved" exception. Under the proposed changes, a parking officer would only be able to rely on this exception where they have made a reasonable attempt to attach the notification before the vehicle departs. Where the officer is issuing a penalty notice from within a vehicle, a reasonable attempt would specifically require the officer to exit their vehicle and attempt to place the notification on the offending vehicle.

The draft amendments also seek to narrow and clarify the circumstances in which the "unsafe to attach notification" exception may be used. The proposed provisions make it clear that a vehicle's location should only be considered a valid basis for not leaving a notification where it presents an immediate risk to the officer's safety.

Submissions were due on 12 October 2026. This report presents the submission provided from Council. A copy of the submission is enclosed for the information of Councillors.

Council's submission strongly opposes the proposed amendments on the basis that they may compromise officer safety, conflict with Council's work health and safety obligations and reduce the effectiveness of parking enforcement operations. Council recommends retaining a broader, risk-based safety exception that allows authorised officers to exercise professional judgement when determining whether it is safe to attach a notification to a vehicle.

Communication/Community Engagement

Environment and Compliance

Risk implication

If Council does not make a submission, it may lose the opportunity to influence the final form of the proposed regulations and ensure that operational, resourcing and officer safety considerations relevant to local government parking enforcement are considered by the NSW Government.

Enclosures

- 1 Submission to Minister for Finance - Fines Regulation [⇒](#)

17.3 Information report: Submission to the Local Government Grants Commission on the Financial Assistance Grants methodology reviewResponsible Director: Office of the Chief Executive Officer

Item 17.3

Report

Council prepared and submitted a response to the NSW Local Government Grants Commission's Review of the Financial Assistance Grants Methodology. While Council supports reform aimed at improving horizontal fiscal equalisation and directing greater assistance to councils with demonstrably higher expenditure needs and lower revenue-raising capacity, it does not support the proposed methodology in its current form. Council's submission acknowledges that historical funding allocations should not be maintained simply because they are longstanding but argues that any significant redistribution of grant funding should be based on a comprehensive, transparent and robust assessment of relative financial need.

The submission notes that the indicative outcome for Kiama Municipal Council would reduce its annual Financial Assistance Grant allocation from approximately \$2.558M to \$1.062M, representing a reduction of around 58.5 per cent. Council's concerns extend beyond the magnitude of the reduction itself and focuses on whether the proposed methodology adequately recognises factors such as the municipality's significant visitor economy, minimum service delivery costs faced by smaller councils, infrastructure utilisation, regional service delivery costs and the practical limitations imposed by the NSW rate-pegging framework.

Council also raised concerns regarding the transparency of the proposed model and recommended that additional data, assumptions and modelling outputs be released to enable councils to understand and reproduce their indicative results. Council ultimately recommended further disclosure, testing, refinement and consultation before a revised methodology is adopted.

Council lodged a submission on 9 October 2026 and a copy is enclosed for Councillors' information.

Communication/Community Engagement

Chief Executive Officer

Chief Financial Officer

Executive Manager Organisational Reform

Risk implication

Failure to make a submission would have limited Council's ability to influence the review of a proposed methodology that could reduce Council's annual Financial Assistance Grant allocation by approximately \$1.496 million. It would also have reduced the opportunity to formally raise concerns that Council considers may not be adequately reflected in the current proposal.

Enclosures

- 1 Proposed Financial Assistance Grants Methodology Submission [⇒](#)