GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL

Best Value Report 2017 - 2018

Best Value

**The Best Value model is a key component of the Council’s continuous improvement program. Best Value principles allow the Council to benchmark services, assess their efficiency, and gauge the extent to which they meet community needs. The aim is to improve the responsiveness, quality, efficiency, accessibility and value of the services that Council provides to the community.**

**Best Value aims to ensure local government services are the best available and meet the needs of the community.**

Best Value Framework

**The *Local Government (Best Value Principles) Act 1999* requires the six *Best Value* principles to be applied to all Council services. These are:**

1. **Best quality and value-for-money;**
2. **Responsiveness to community needs;**
3. **Accessibility of services to those who need them;**
4. **Continuous improvement of services;**
5. **Community consultation on all services and activities; and**
6. **Regular community reporting on Council achievements.**

Embedding the Framework

**Glen Eira Council has introduced an organisation wide approach to further embed the Best Value Principles in all that we do and to ensure ongoing success and sustainability in the long term.**

**Council has an ongoing schedule of improvement projects taking into account the Best Value Principles in section 208C of the Local Government Act and ensure services:**

* **Remain relevant and aligned with community needs and wants, now and in the future;**
* **Are effective in achieving planned outcomes that meet the community’s needs and wants;**
* **Operate efficiently and are delivered at an affordable cost to the community. The service reviews aim to optimise the use of Council’s human resources, systems, materials, plant and equipment, infrastructure and facilities; and**
* **Deliver long term sustainable financial viability.**

Best Value Highlights

**Following are highlights from the financial year 2017-18:**

**Town Planning service and process was reviewed against the above principles and a number of efficiencies were introduced. The benefits of these efficiencies have been evident over the last twelve months with improved applicant engagement seeing a reduction in VCAT appeals from 203 in 2016/17 to 79 in 20167/18. Planning applications were made available online including improved back office processing contributing to a 14 day reduction to the planning decision time. (Please refer to** [**Know Your Council**](http://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/councils/glen-eira) **for a full list of service performance measures).**

**Council’s Buildings and Properties department was also reviewed to identify areas for improvements. This is a complex department that looks after all Council owned properties and deals extensively with contract workers. To ensure the work delivered by the contractors was of the highest quality and cost competitive Council tendered for the services required. The review centred on ensuring the tender included specific information to ensure the quality and cost delivered by contractors was trackable and accountable.**

**Infrastructure Capital Works identified fifteen areas for process improvements across the lifecycle of delivering capital works for roads and drains. A new ‘Flood Policy’ has been drafted to improve Council’s approach and the ongoing projects continue to apply benefits for capital works whilst providing a sound infrastructure renewal capability.**

**The amenity of Glen Eira activity centres such as Elsternwick, Bentleigh, Glen Huntly, Carnegie, Caulfield Plaza and Balaclava Junction was enhanced with the introduction of an additional ‘Care Crew’ service that can be seen seven days a week picking up litter, sweeping, high pressure washing, removing minor graffiti and checking and cleaning the gardens beds.**

**Glen Eira Council led the south east metro region introducing food waste recycling ‘Kitchen Caddies’ with an uptake of 9,830 for the year. This will assist in reducing waste going unnecessarily to landfill.**

**The Rates department was reviewed and benchmarked to ensure that our processes were efficient and that Council’s handling of people in hardship was sensitive and appropriate.**

**The following services have also been reviewed to provide improved customer experience, better quality services and more efficient and cost effective processes:**

* **Infrastructure Capital Works**
* **Traffic Engineering**
* **Tender process**
* **Purchasing**
* **Bond refund process**
* **Tree management**
* **Recreation and open space facility hire**
* **Sports ground allocations**
* **Records management**

**For information on some of this year’s benefits please refer to the** [**Annual Report.**](https://annualreport2017-18.gleneira.vic.gov.au/)

**In addition to the schedule of service reviews Council has embarked on a transformation portfolio of projects that has been independently assessed as sector leading because of its genuine end to end approach; in 2017/18 the following projects were completed:**

* **Digital by Default Strategy**
* [**Community Engagement Framework**](https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/Council/Community-engagement?BestBetMatch=community%20engagement|d13b95b2-5146-4b00-9e3e-a80c73739a64|4f05f368-ecaa-4a93-b749-7ad6c4867c1f|en-AU)
* **Customer Service Operating Framework**
* **Social Media Framework**
* **Digital Program Management**
* **Citywatch, a mobile way for people to report issues to Council**
* **Refreshed Customer Experience training**

**The projects above provide a sound foundation for Council’s next round of projects that are currently underway for delivery in 2018/19.**

Website Redevelopment

**The GECC Website will be redeveloped following detailed analysis and user research that identified a need for improvement. The aim of the project is to understand what our community needs and provide an easy, seamless way to deliver services, interact with the community and provide clear transparent information.**

**In 2017/18 the website content was reviewed. This was based on user research and journey maps developed to understand our customer’s experience. Work has commenced to redesign the site to further enhance usability. In 2018/19 the work undertaken will be tested and validated and the new site launched.**

Digitise high priority transactions

**GECC recognises that our customers expect to have access to Council 24/7 online; as such we have identified our most frequently used transactions and are redesigning them with our customers in mind. The following transactions went online in 2017/18:**

* **Change of Address**
* **Hard rubbish request**
* **Derelict vehicle request**
* **Infrastructure permits**
* **Building permits**
* **Skip Bins**
* **Online general enquiry**
* **Town Planning application**
* **Land information certificate request**
* **Illegally parked vehicle request**
* **Dumped Rubbish request**
* **Youth Services Forms**

**As well as providing an online 24/7 option for Council’s customers, the end to end process was improved to deliver a reduction in waiting times, a reduction in paper and printing and improved customer satisfaction.**

**Identification of the next transactions to digitise in 2018/19 is underway.**

Customer Journey Mapping

**We are working with the community to understand our customers’ needs and improve their experience when interacting with Council. To this end we have started a project to ‘map’ three life events:**

1. **Building a property;**
2. **Ageing in Glen Eira (using in home support services); and**
3. **Running a business.**

**By working with our customers we are developing an understanding of what our customers like and don’t like, their expectations and experiences. This will help us design new streamlined and user friendly journeys.**

**In 2017/18 the ‘Building a Property’ journey was mapped and from investigations, a future process designed to be implemented in 2018/19. Work has commenced on the ‘Ageing in Glen Eira’ and ‘Running a Business’ journeys with all three to be completed in 2018/19.**

Reporting to the community

**Regular, transparent reporting on Council’s performance can be found in the** [**Quarterly Service Performance Report**](https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/Council/Our-organisation/Publications-and-reports/Quarterly-Service-Performance-Report) **and further performance and benchmarking information is available on Local Government Victoria’s website** [**Know Your Council**](https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/)**. Council now also** [**Live Streams**](https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/Council/Meetings-and-agendas/Live-Streaming-Council-Meetings) **all Council Ordinary meetings to provide the community with greater access to Council and the decision making process.**

**Council participates in the annual *Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey* to identify and respond to community wants and needs. Glen Eira Council consistently performs higher than the State-wide rating.**