



Council Unions News

Produced for members of the AMWU, APESMA, ASU, BLF, CEPU, CFMEU, ETU, LHMU, NUW, RTBU and TWU

No. 1

Community services and jobs at risk under Operational Review



Unions at Brisbane City Council are uniting to protect jobs and community services following the release of a major Organisational Review by consultants AT Kearney.

The Organisational Review recommends significant change to a raft of council services and units with the aim of cutting \$93 - \$141 million from the budget.

If fully implemented, these cuts would put at risk many important services, and would undermine our hard-won job security.

The Operational Review claims these savings can be made by either:

- “Exiting or stopping” involvement in some activities altogether;
- Making some activities “contestable” - ie: outsourcing and tendering; or
- “Optimising performance” by increasing fees and charges and reducing labour costs.

Uncertain Future:

- City Fleet
- Maintenance of buildings and properties
- Car parks
- Council venues, including City Hall, planetarium, parks, community halls and golf courses
- Operation of bus services
- Roads, paths and drains construction
- Maintenance of water / sewerage pipes and pumping plant
- Maintenance of parks and gardens
- Pest and vegetation services
- Operation of water and waste water treatment plants
- Provision of library services
- Contact Centre services and...?

“ YOUR SAY



Christine Collyer
Customer Service Branch

“Like many of my colleagues, I’m worried about the impact on jobs. But I’m also a ratepayer and a local resident, so I’m also worried about the impact on my community. I don’t want to see things like libraries and other facilities under threat.”



Henrietta Moran
DRS

“Our members have expressed their concern at Council’s emphasis on the bottom line and the lack of focus on its community and social responsibilities.”

Why not tell us what you think on the form overleaf!



How does the Operational Review affect me?

The full impact of the Review remains unknown, because it is unclear which recommendations will be agreed to by Civic Cabinet.

Nonetheless, the experience of other Councils who have implemented similar proposals in Victoria and the United Kingdom has been dire, with job cuts and service reductions widespread.

For this reason, unions at Brisbane City Council are concerned about:

- **Job security:** how many jobs will be shed as a result of Council “exiting or stopping” involvement in some activities and outsourcing others?
- **Wages and employment conditions:** the Review is critical of a growth in “labour expenditure” over the past two years, and of the fact that productivity increases have been shared with workers. In short, unions will resist any attempts to reduce our hard-won wages and conditions through upcoming EBA negotiations and via greater use of outsourcing and contract labour.
- **Community services:** Council plays an important role in providing community services like parks, sporting facilities, halls,

libraries and more. Unfortunately, the Review fails to recognise our social responsibility to provide these services, and instead only concentrates on the bottom line of what these services cost to provide. For example, the Review says “*Despite relatively good patronage for Brisbane libraries, cost to serve is relatively high whilst revenue per visit is low*”. The message seems to be more fees and fewer libraries! Other community services at risk include golf courses, the Planetarium, Riverstage and Hibiscus sport centres. And the push to make facilities and services “maximise efficiencies” could endanger our pools, community halls, bus services, City Cats and more!

What are unions doing about it?

Unions are currently consulting with delegates and members about the key issues for local worksites.

We are also in direct discussion with council decision makers including the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and CEO. Specifically we have raised concern regarding:

- The credibility and accuracy of the financial and other data used to make the recommendations

- The haste with which the process is being implemented
- The impossibly tight timeframes
- Lack of clarity regarding the decision making process
- Council’s commitment to job security, maintaining wages and conditions and fair workloads

We are also working to ensure that Cabinet (the final decision makers) have all of the facts on the table prior to making any decisions, not just what AT Kearny and Council want them to know! We have also insisted that Council undertake a process to thoroughly and independently evaluate all of the recommendations, with input from unions and the work unit’s themselves.

Not yet a union member?

In this uncertainty, it is important to be a member of your union - after all, we’re stronger together.

As a union member you will have access to advice and support, and you will receive regular updates about the campaign to protect job security and community services.

If you want more information about becoming a union member, contact your local Delegate or complete the form below and be sure to tick the “Not a union member” box.

Join the campaign to save our jobs and defend community services

I am willing to:

- Join an email list for regular updates
- Distribute information in my workplace
- Organise meetings to talk about the issues
- Collect signatures on a petition
- Write a letter to my local Councillor
- Participate in a union delegation to meet with Councillors
- Raise this issue with my local community group or sporting association

I am involved in the following community groups and / or sporting associations (please also list any positions held, such as Coach, Treasurer etc):

Your feedback / comments:

Personal Details

Name: _____

Workplace / Job: _____

Contact Phone: _____

Email: _____

- Your Union: AMWU APESMA ASU
 ETU CFMEU PLUMBER’S BLF
 LHMU RTBU NUW TWU
 NOT A UNION MEMBER - Please send me more info

Please fax completed forms back to 3844 4865