

## **Public Forum Question and Response**

**Subject: Former Council Staff acting as representatives of developers and applicants**

**Question from: Vincent De Luca**

**Meeting Date: 22 November 2005**

### **Question:**

- a. I refer to concerns raised verbally with the Internal Ombudsman, Mr John Warburton and Administrator, Dick Persson regarding former senior staff members of Warringah Council representing developers/applicants in the Council area. Could Council please confirm whether a policy has been introduced, to ensure that should an ex-employee or a former Councillor be acting as a developer/applicant's representative communication be restricted so that the respective ex-staff member is only able to deal with a senior officer of Council? If not, could such a policy please be introduced to avoid a perception of a conflict of interest and improper influence on junior staff?
  
- b. Could Council please consider including in senior staff, development approval staff and strategy staff's contract a prohibitive clause or restrictive clause prohibiting former Council staff members from acting in a private capacity in the Warringah Council area as a Town Planner, Legal Representative or development consultant for three years after their leaving Council?

### **Response:**

The Administrator said he shared the sentiments expressed and that the matter has been addressed by Council in several ways. The General Manager had initiated a review of the Independent Hearing and Assessment Panel (IHAP). This has resulted in a clear policy to ensure that members are independent and this change is now in place. While some former staff are working in this area, there are practices in place to address the issue and a policy that they are referred up to senior staff. The matter of inserting a clause in contracts will be seriously considered and will be the subject of a report next year.