

**MM/8: Mayoral Minute Farewell General Manager Veronica Lee**  
**MAYOR: Councillor Peter Abelson**  
**MOSPLAN REF: Leadership and Engagement (Strategy 2)**

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Mayoral Minute be noted.

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## **MAYORAL MINUTE**

Tonight, we say farewell to Veronica Lee, the General Manager of Mosman Council for the last three years.

As all here tonight know, Veronica took over the role of General Manager, Mosman Council, in September 2013 (on 16 September to be precise) following on from Viv May who had been General Manager for a record 27 years. Next week Veronica is taking up the position of Executive Director, Corporate Services, in the NSW Office of Sport.

Taking on the role of General Manager was a challenging assignment. Veronica had to maintain and deal with a long-established organisation and culture at the same time as responding to Councillor desires for various changes in the operations of Council. And over the last two years the General Manager has had to deal with the relentless and thankless demands of the State Government to respond to its "Fit for the Future" program to merge Mosman with a wide variety of other councils.

Veronica brought great energy and enthusiasm to these tasks. She has worked well not only with the three Directors but also with the whole Council staff. The introduction of a regular monthly Executive Bulletin for staff helped to bridge a major communications gap between the senior executives and the rest of the staff. The introduction of quarterly breakfasts (in Council facilities) also facilitated intra-council communications and cooperation. As evidence of the high motivation of staff, StateCover (Council's Workers Compensation Insurer) declared that Mosman Council was the best performing Council in NSW in 2014/15.

Veronica has also successfully overseen some significant organisational changes, notably the introduction of the Compliance section, which also manages the Council Rangers, the introduction of a Communications section along with the redeveloped website, and the major renovation of the Customer Service facility.

A key management success was the overhaul of our finances. The turnaround of our finances from an operating deficit of \$3.0m, in 2011/12 to an operating surplus of \$3.0m in 2014/15 was due in no small part to the General Manager's careful supervision of our operating expenditures.

Veronica has also worked tirelessly to provide an excellent service to Councillors. Agendas were timely and well-informed. Veronica also organised many workshops to ensure that Councillors were well-informed of any major staff or consultant work, including many workshops to discuss responses to the State Government's unrelenting desire to amalgamate us with other councils.

Speaking for myself as Mayor, Veronica always responded to my requests for information or advice expeditiously, reliably and with well-informed and documented advice.

It is unfortunate, though understandable, that Veronica has decided to cut short her work with Mosman Council and take alternative employment. Many General Managers have been thrown out of work by the State Government's forced merger process. We, of course, maintain the hope

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that the Government will, even at this late time, recognise and respond to the democratic wishes of our and other communities and not force merger upon us.

Be that as it may, we thank you, Veronica, for your outstanding work for us over the last three years and wish you well in your next employment.

