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**7.1** OUR LOGAN REVIEW**REPORT OF:** Marketing & Events Manager

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**REPORT OVERVIEW****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To outline the findings of the Our Logan magazine review and to seek approval on the key recommendation to reduce the frequency of the publication in order to meet corporate priorities and deliver substantial recurrent savings.

Criteria: Direction

**CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITY**

Quality Lifestyles

Green and Renewable

**REPORT DETAILS****BACKGROUND**

Council, at its meeting of 31 March 2009, established what was to become the Our Logan magazine as the primary channel for Council's communication with Logan's residents and businesses; refer Minute No 93/2009.

In 2012 the magazine was expanded from quarterly to ten (10) editions of 32 pages per year.

The magazine is now published and distributed to 119,500 residential and business addresses each year.

These costs are slightly offset by unsolicited external annual advertising revenue.

With a changing media and communications landscape, innovations in digital communication platforms and consistent enquiries from the general public with regard to the cost and the environmental impacts, it was timely to review all facets of the Our Logan magazine.

Both external and internal engagement sessions were completed in a variety of channels (face to face, written and electronic). Results of these engagements have been independently assessed.

A number of aspects were canvassed:

- Should the print version of the Our Logan magazine continue in its current format?
- Do our residents read the magazine?
- What would be the financial, business and environmental impacts if the edition numbers were to be increased/decreased?
- Is there an appetite for greater access to a digital format?
- Do Council businesses have positive results through their promotions in Our Logan magazine?

**EXTERNAL CONSULTATION**

A comprehensive independent survey by IRIS (December 2019) of 723 residents found there was strong readership of Our Logan with 77 percent of those surveyed saying they read it.

73 percent of readers say they would prefer a print copy in the mail and 35 percent say they would prefer to receive it online.

56 percent of readers prefer no change to frequency while 34 percent prefer quarterly with respondents aged 18-49 showing a higher preference for quarterly.

50 percent of people who do not read the magazine do not want to receive it in its current form due to the perceived financial and environmental costs.

Approximately 50 complaints about the use of plastic wrap and paper have been received over the last 12 months, despite the plastic being biodegradable and paper sourced from environmentally sustainable forest plantations (which is highlighted on Page 2 of the magazine).

In 2018 a Have Your Say survey was conducted to gauge feedback on perceptions of content, quality, relevance, readability and preferences for future content through a sample of 63 residents.

More than 75 percent of participants rated the magazine ‘good’ or ‘very good’ with 90 percent saying they read at least one or two articles and more than 50 percent saying they read the magazine cover to cover. More than 50 percent of participants also said they ‘often’ or ‘always’ read divisional pages.

**INTERNAL CONSULTATION**

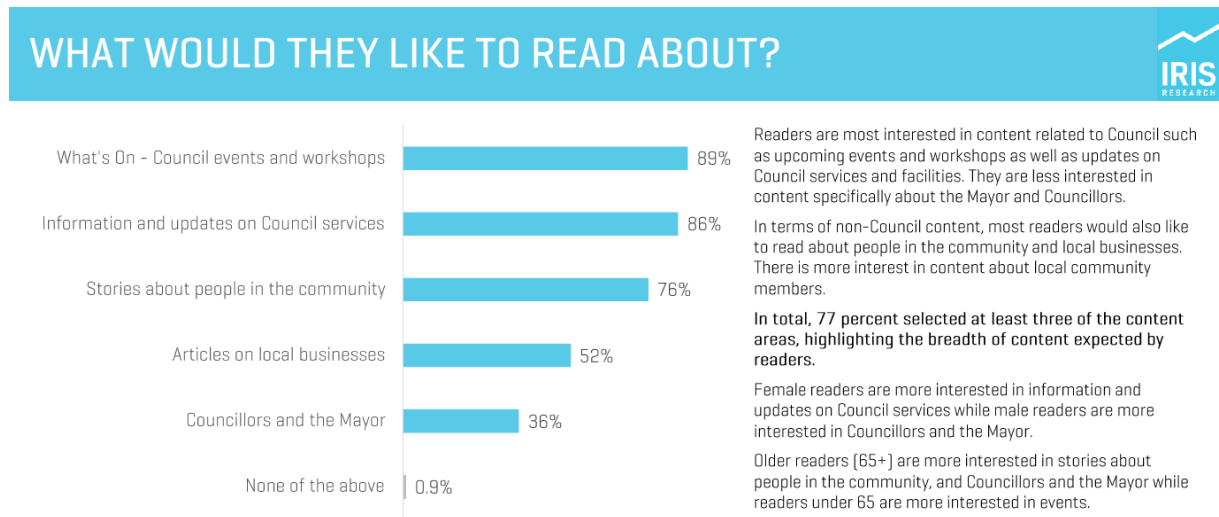
Council branches have found the magazine effective in engaging and informing residents with significant community awareness, bookings and attendances generated through promotion in the magazine.

Branches have also expressed they would like to expand their use of social media, web and video as engagement tools as they have found Our Logan is most effective when used in conjunction with website, social media and video.

**DISCUSSION**

Our research shows there is still a desire for a hard copy printed format of the Our Logan magazine.

Our residents and visitors enjoy the content, learning about activities program and events and gaining an understanding of the critical infrastructure projects Council is working on.



A challenge facing local governments is how to better communicate with all of its residents; providing print media while developing engaging and interactive content on accessible platforms is a viable solution.

Councils across Australia are creating digital platforms to improve communication with their residents. As part of this shift, the appetite for relevant news sharing platforms is also changing.

In assessing the survey results, conducting a detailed financial analysis and considering Council's Carbon Reduction Strategy and Action Plan to avoid and reduce emissions, it feels timely to transition the magazine readership from print to electronic media, where possible.

With those aspects in mind, it is proposed to reduce the number of printed editions from ten (10) to six (6) thereby saving approximately 40% in the 2020/2021 financial year.

Furthermore, it is intended to mirror the format of July-December 2019 editions where the strong content was focussed on community achievements, events programs, local activities and Council updates with less focus on elected members. Given the new concepts planned in the digital space, elected members will be featured across a number of channels going forward.

In line with the proposed reduction of printed editions, it is intended to develop a 3 year business plan to invest these savings in a formalised campaign to allow residents to opt-out of the printed editions and opt-in to a digital communication. At the end of year one, an assessment would be made with regard to the additional cost savings made by the printing of reduced quantities per cycle. Simultaneously, savings would be used to develop online accessible platforms in the form of an online OurLogan.com.au.

With a launch of the revised production schedule, the magazine would undergo a complete redesign. The articles, events and programs would maintain a strong community focus and while featured, there will be less emphasis on the elected members.

## CONCLUSION

Reducing the Our Logan production schedule from ten (10) to six (6) editions per year will result in an immediate 40 percent reduction in carbon emissions and approximate savings of 40%.

It is intended that the Our Logan magazine be printed every other month from the start of 2020/2021 financial year.

Savings from the printing and distribution of the magazine be applied to the creation of:

- an online subscription database with opt-out function for print and electronic subscribers;
- a fully accessible online *Ourlogan.com.au* web site; and
- a campaign to encourage residents to subscribe to receive Council's information via electronic media.

To allow for flexibility in print production, external advertising will cease from July 2021.

Transitioning readership from print to electronic media will be monitored and reviewed every 12 months for three years in order to evaluate ongoing savings through readers' voluntary transition to online media.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### IT IS RECOMMENDED:-

1. That the strategy to reduce the Our Logan production schedule from ten (10) editions to six (6) editions per year commencing at the start of the 2020/2021 financial year, as detailed in the report of the Marketing & Events Manager dated 12 February 2020, be endorsed.
2. That the strategy to utilise savings from the printing and distribution of the Our Logan magazine, as detailed in the report of the Marketing & Events Manager dated 12 February 2020, be endorsed.

3. That the content for the Our Logan magazine 2020/2021 and beyond, maintain a focus on community led features, events, program and activity listings as guided by community feedback with the Marketing and Events Team, to continue to investigate alternative channels to feature Elected Members, as detailed in the report of the Marketing & Events Manager dated 12 February 2020.