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Independent investigation finds proper process followed

25 Mar 2018

All recommendations of a report on the independent investigation into staff recruitment practices by Blue Mountains City Council were adopted at an extraordinary meeting held last week.

The Council initiated the independent investigation into serious allegations made in the media against the Council, and against individual Council officers, in relation to the recruitment of staff and the appointment of consultants.

Mayor, Cr Mark Greenhill, said, "The investigation found that there has been no breach of Council's Code of Conduct, no breach of relevant policies and procedures and no corrupt conduct. The allegations are unsubstantiated.

"Importantly, all named individuals who were the subject of the allegations aired in the media in early November and since, have been cleared of any wrongdoing", he said.

The Mayor said the investigation was independent, frank and fearless, with clear terms of reference to look into specific allegations and to make recommendations to the Council.

"The report, prepared independently of the Council by McCullough Robertson Lawyers, makes findings of fact", he said. "The investigation has allowed us to get to the truth of the matter and the findings are unambiguous and without qualification."

"The Council willingly adopted the recommendations of the report which largely relate to improvements in some organisational policies and procedures to improve clarity and consistency, to code of conduct training, and to building up our Human Resources (HR) management to enhance our employee relations as well as our HR policies, programs, and practices", said the Mayor.

"It is important to acknowledge the impact of the allegations on the professional and personal lives of the individuals who were the subject of the investigation", the Mayor said.

The independent investigation was undertaken in accordance with the Mayoral Minutes passed at the Council meeting on 14 November 2017.

Council's General Manager will now proceed with the development of an Improvement Plan that outlines how the Council will respond to, and report on, the implementation of the recommendations in report, in accordance with the Performance Improvement Order in place with the Minister for Local Government.

The Mayor said, "It is my hope that the outcome of this investigation will reinforce community confidence in Council's performance."

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