

2015/16

# Warrumbungle Shire Council

Annual Report



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*Siding Spring Observatory located in the Warrumbungle National Park*

## Part 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Message from the Mayor



It is tremendous to be able to start my report for the 2015-16 year with my congratulations to the General Manager, Directors and all staff for the most outstanding operating result that Warrumbungle Shire Council has achieved to date; an accrual surplus of around \$6.5 million and a cash surplus of \$1 million. Council undertook and completed a \$15.8 million capital works programme and managed to increase its cash at bank to just under \$16 million. What a great result.

During the early part of the financial year I attended the Sod Turning ceremony with Rural Fire Assistant Commissioner Bruce McDonald to commence the development of the new RFS Control Centre. This \$3 million development will provide a state of the art Emergency Operations Centre in times of crisis and a training facility for all of our emergency service volunteers. Contracts for construction were signed in January and the building had reached locked up stage by the end of June 2016.

In early August 2015 Council was offered funding under the Regional Water and Wastewater Backlog Programme to reduce nutrients entering natural waterways from our Coonabarabran, Coolah and Dunedoo Sewerage Treatment Plants. The total cost of the backlog works is around \$1 million with the NSW Government offering 50% funding.

Under the Fit for the Future programme Council chose the Council Improvement Option where we had to demonstrate strategies to improve our performance. In October we were informed that we were deemed to be “not fit” as IPART did not agree with Council’s assumption around the redistribution of Financial Assistance Grants (FAG’s) from urban to rural Councils. Council’s response was to present cost saving measures and revenue increases through a staff restructure, introduction of a storm water levy and a 10% special rate variation or a corresponding 10% saving due to reduced service levels. In late October, with local school children, we sealed memorabilia into a “time capsule” in Baradine to celebrate its sesquicentenary

In early November I met with NPWS staff and architects involved in designing the new Visitor’s Information Centre for the Warrumbungle National Park that was destroyed in the Wambelong Fire. Construction of the building should commence in 2017.

Also in November I welcomed the Kookaburra March reenactment participants to Dunedoo and opened the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Health Expo in Coonabarabran.

In December State Member for Barwon, Kevin Humphries opened the bulk of the Cobbora Transition Fund Community Projects in Dunedoo and in early 2016 Federal Member Mark Coulton announced another \$2.42 million to add to the \$4.5 million to complete the Three Rivers Regional Retirement Centre.

In March Council met with Department of Planning and Environment staff in Coonabarabran to discuss Cobbora land rezoning and government sponsored infrastructure proposals before the land is sold back to private ownership.

Also in March a community meeting was called to elect a steering committee for “2357 Partnerships” Coonabarabran and environs new community development group. This now means that each town in Warrumbungle Shire has a group searching and applying for grants to help local associations with fund raising.

Crown State Meatworks who purchased, developed and were working the Deringulla Abattoir near Binnaway closed the business and listed it for sale in April.

Whilst in Coolah at the same time the local Volunteer Rescue Association recorded 40 years of service to that community. Federal Member Mark Coulton announced over \$850 thousand for roadworks throughout the Shire under the Black Spots Programme at the end of April and Coonabarabran Men's Shed hosted the Scroll Saw exhibition for 3 days in the Town Hall while Yuluwirri Kids met 5 of the 7 National Quality Standards and received assessments exceeding the Standards in the other two; an absolutely tremendous achievement.

In May the second Building Expo was run in Coonabarabran while in Dunedoo the demolition of the old hospital commenced marking the beginning of the Three Rivers Regional Retirement Centre project, the last of the Cobbora Transition Fund projects.

In June with RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons we opened the Dunedoo RFS Brigade Building and the Yaminbah RFS Brigade Shed north of Coonabarabran. We also awarded long service medals to brigade members in these areas and at the end of June the Warrumbungle National Park was declared as Australia's first Dark Sky Park and a visit by UNESCO geologists raised the possibility of the Park becoming Australia's first and only UNESCO Geopark.

I would like to thank the General Manager for his continued support and encouragement as well as the Directors, Staff and Councillors. This has been another demanding year and we await now for the outcome of a second Upper House Inquiry into evidence given in the initial Wambelong fire inquiry.



*Three Rivers Regional Retirement Centre demolition*

**Peter Shinton**  
Mayor

## 1.2 Message from the General Manager



Warrumbungle Shire Council (WSC) is a challenging geographical community to service and manage. With 6 main towns, 6 swimming pools, 6 depots, 6 libraries, 2 administration offices, 2 workshops, 13 water treatment plants, 4 sewerage treatment plants, over 2,500km of roads, 125,220m of footpaths and curb and gutter, ovals, halls, river foreshores and unrateable natural areas such as National Parks and Forestry, the Warrumbungle region requires the services of highly experienced and well trained staff that are proud to serve the community.

It gives me great pleasure to brag about the most outstanding operating result ever achieved in the history of Warrumbungle Shire Council. 2015/16 returned a \$6.5 million accrual surplus while completing almost \$16 million worth of capital works. Council has been able to move significant money into the bank reserves to further secure our community's future. The NSW Government is now much more confident in the financial and operational management of your Council.

This has been a Councillor /staff team effort. With support of Council, every staff member, no matter what their role, has made a difference in the turn around of Council's performance. There are on average 230 individuals delivering services to the community of WSC. I am sure that all residents will join with me in congratulating the staff. Well done to you all and thank you.

Australia's first Dark Skies Park was established creating the potential to tap into the millions of avid travelling amateur astronomers wandering the globe. Centred around the National Park and Siding Spring Observatory, we expect there to be a net positive impact on our visitor numbers.

In a similar field there are very positive moves afoot to establish Australia's first GeoPark Sponsored by UNESCO and taking into account the geological and land use diversity of our Shire this initiative will also contribute to our visitation.

All of the projects included in the Cobbora Transition Fund except for the Three Rivers Retirement Village have been completed. Have you been through Dunedoo lately? It's looking great and is a favourite stop over for travellers. The retirement village project is well under way and should be completed in the next financial year.

The business partnership with the Roads and Maritime Services continues to grow with significant road upgrades and major patching work.

Council engineers have been installing new bores, studying our water supplies for improvement and planning major upgrades of our sewerage works. New Bridges have been built, footpaths and cycleways have been planned and built.

A new \$3.5 million RFS Fire Control Center has been built by Council to secure the efficient response to the threat of bushfires.

Council has been operating on a Community Strategic Plan that was developed in 2012. It is now time to think to the future. Over the next few months WSC will be refreshing that plan by conducting a comprehensive shire wide community consultation regime. This initiative will explore the long term strategic direction that you wish your Shire to take.

Another very important program being conducted by Council is the Rural Addressing Scheme. Over 10 years ago rural addressing was introduced to the Warrumbungle region. This scheme was a crude introduction but is in urgent need of refinement. This programme is a matter of life and death providing emergency services with the correct address details to assist you in your time of greatest need.

WSC is always striving to better communicate with you. We send out shirewide seasonal newsletters, we are on Facebook, Twitter, in all the papers and regular radio spots. Let us know if we can reach you in a more effective way.

Service NSW has now moved into the Coonabarabran Administration office. Maintaining the vital 22,000 transactions per annum that would have been lost to the district if the RMS left town. The RMS service is still operational in the Coolah Council office 3 days per week.

Of course Council's core business is that of Roads, Rates and Rubbish but there is so much more to be done. Under the provisions of the Fit For the Future direction, Councils are expected to become more corporate and self sufficient. Fresh innovation and constant review are the key drivers to our sustainable future.



Finally, I extend my heartfelt thanks to Mayor Peter Shinton and the Councillors for their continued support. I also thank the staff at Warrumbungle Shire Council for a job well done. The initiatives of the Fit for the Future requirements have underpinned our policies and ensured that we are in better shape to serve you, the community.

I commend my 2015/16 annual report to the community of Warrumbungle Shire.

**Steve Loane**  
**General Manager**



### 1.3 Warrumbungle Profile

<b>Population:</b>	9,588 (2011 Census)
<b>Area:</b>	12,380 square kilometres
<b>Towns:</b>	Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Mendooran
<b>Villages:</b>	Bugaldie, Kenebri, Merrygoen, Neilrex, Leadville, Cobbora, Uarbry, Ulamambri
<b>State Seat:</b>	Barwon
<b>Federal Seat:</b>	Parkes

The Warrumbungle Shire is strategically positioned on the Newell Highway mid-way between Brisbane and Melbourne.

A number of highways and main roads traverse the shire providing links with surrounding regional centres.

The landscape ranges from extensive plains to undulating hills, from the high basaltic plateau of the Coolah Tops in the east to the rugged mountainous peaks of extinct volcanoes in the Warrumbungle National Park, west of Coonabarabran.

The geography, flora and fauna of the Shire is where east meets west. The mountainous terrain of the Great Divide and Coolah Tops National Park gives way to rolling hills then the inland plains.

The flora and fauna of the wide open plains mix with coastal animal and vegetation progressively across the Shire. A striking example of this is on the eastern boundary of the shire we have the large grey kangaroo and on the western boundary of the shire the large red kangaroo.



The shire is also a meeting place for the nations of our traditional owners and custodians of the land.

The northern part of the shire is home to the Gamilaraay people while the southern part of the shire is home to the Wiradjuri people.

Also the nations of the Weilwan and Kawambarai (Werriri) come into the Shire on the western border. Their history, traditions and culture are being recognised as an important part of the Shire's history.

The stunning night skies, formed by a combination of low pollution, very low humidity and limited cloud cover have drawn astronomers and researchers to Coonabarabran in their search for what lies beyond the confines of the visual night sky.

Siding Spring Observatory, located 25kms from Coonabarabran is the site of a number of internationally owned and operated optical telescopes where major research has recorded amazing truths of the universe, supporting Coonabarabran's claim to the name "Astronomy Capital of Australia".

The towns and villages of the shire comprise Coonabarabran, Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Dunedoo and Mendooran; all provide wonderful opportunities to experience real country Australian lifestyles.

Each of the communities has their own special claim to fame.

Bush Poetry Festivals, rivalry over ownership of the name The Black Stump, a Steam Rail Village, The Oldest town on the Castlereagh, The Gateway to the mighty Pilliga or the Astronomy Capital of Australia – each of our villages reflects the personalities of its residents and their lifestyles.

The shire was traditionally built on agricultural pursuits with the early establishment of wool growing and beef cattle production followed by cereal cropping, prime lamb production and today a burgeoning vine growing and horticultural industry.

The communities enjoy the services of quality schools and health services. The shire boasts a broad range of cultural, sporting and recreational activities.

Retailing in each centre provides services to those communities and the provincial centres of Tamworth and Dubbo, located within 2 hours of the centre of the Shire complements local level services.



*Photo David Kirkland*

## 1.4 Council's Vision, Mission and Values

### Vision

**Excellence in Local Government**

### Mission

**Council will provide**

Quality, cost effective services that will enhance our community's lifestyle, environment, opportunity and prosperity.

Infrastructure and services which meet the social and economic needs and aspirations of the community now and in the future.

Effective leadership and good governance, by encouraging teamwork, through a dedicated responsible well trained workforce.

### Values

#### Honesty

Frank and open discussion, taking responsibility for our actions

#### Integrity

Behaving in accordance with our values

#### Fairness

Consideration of the facts and a commitment to two way communication

#### Compassion

Working for the benefit and care of our community and the natural environment

#### Respect

To ourselves, colleagues, the organisation and the community listening actively and responding truthfully

#### Transparency

Open and honest interactions with each other and our community

#### Passion

Achievement of activities with energy, enthusiasm and pride

#### Trust

Striving to be dependable, reliable and delivering outcomes in a spirit of goodwill

#### Opportunity

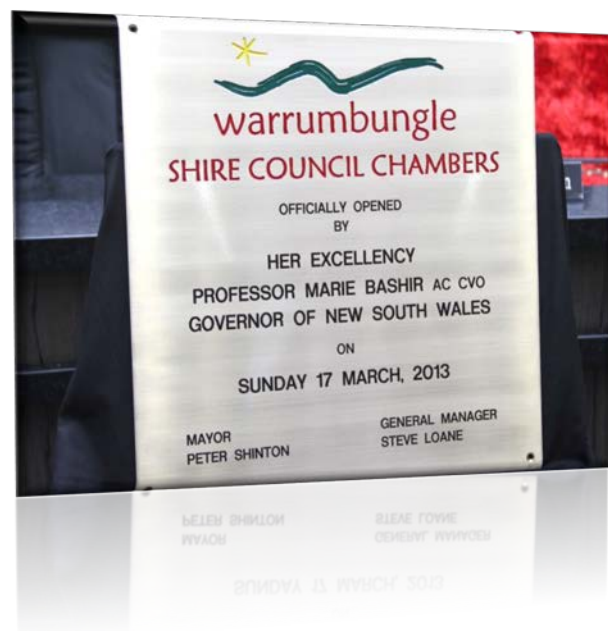
To be an enviable workplace creating pathways for staff development



## 1.5 Council's Charter

Section 8 of the Local Government Act 1993 contains a set of principles that are a guide to Council in carrying out its functions. A copy of this Charter is provided below:

- to provide directly or on behalf of other levels of government, after due consultation, adequate, equitable and appropriate services and facilities for the community and to ensure that those services and facilities are managed efficiently and effectively
- to exercise community leadership
- to exercise its functions in a manner that is consistent with and actively promotes the principles of multiculturalism
- to promote and to provide and plan for the needs of children
- to properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development
- to have regard to the long term and cumulative effects of its decisions
- to bear in mind that it is the custodian and trustee of public assets and to effectively plan for, account for and manage the assets for which it is responsible
- to engage in long-term strategic planning on behalf of the local community
- to exercise its functions in a manner that is consistent with and promotes social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights
- to facilitate the involvement of councillors, members of the public, users of facilities and services and council staff in the development, improvement and co-ordination of local government
- to raise funds for local purposes by the fair imposition of rates, charges and fees, by income earned from investments and, when appropriate, by borrowings and grants
- to keep the local community and the State government (and through it, the wider community) informed about its activities
- to ensure that, in the exercise of its regulatory functions, it acts consistently and without bias, particularly where an activity of the council is affected
- to be a responsible employer.



## 1.6 Councillors

Council has nine Councillors with the Mayor elected annually by his or her peers. Local Government elections were held in September 2012. The current Councillors are listed below:



**Councillor Peter Shinton**  
**Mayor**

Phone (02) 6842 2055  
peter.shinton@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au



**Councillor Murray Coe**  
**Deputy Mayor**

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**Councillor Gary Andrews**

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**Councillor Anne-Louise Capel**

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**Councillor Fred Clancy**

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**Councillor Victor Schmidt**

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**Councillor Chris Sullivan**

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**Councillor Ron Sullivan**

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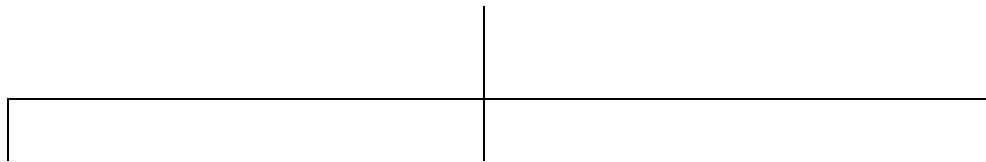
**Councillor Denis Todd**

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## 1.7 Senior Management



**General Manager**  
Steve Loane



**Director Technical Services**  
Kevin Tighe



**Director Corporate and  
Community Services**  
Stefan Murru



**Director Development Services**  
Leeanne Ryan



## Part 2.0 Performance in Review – Executive Management

### 2.1 Overview

The following reports provide an overview of the progress in Council implementing its Delivery Program and Operational Plan. The reports review the progress of each strategy included in the Delivery Program. The following pages provide an overview of the achievements for the principal activities listed below, grouped by Directorate and Branch.

### 2.2 Management and Leadership and Governance

Council's General Manager branch is responsible for all aspects in relation to management and leadership of the organisation together with Governance. The section is populated by the General Manager and Project Manager.

The General Manager is responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the organisation and for ensuring the implementation of decisions of the Council and to assist Council in connection with the development and implementation of the Community Strategic Plan, Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

The General Manager is also accountable for the preparation of Council's Annual Report and State of the Environment Report, the day-to-day management of staff in accordance with the organisational structure and resources approved by the Council. The General Manager is delegated to appoint, direct and dismiss staff and implement Council's Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan. Council's Project Manager is responsible for council's project management function for all major projects.

Our Councillors represent the make-up and varied interests of their communities of the Shire and work effectively together, taking their responsibilities as elected officials seriously. Council provides an appropriate range of services and facilities that are responsive to community needs and Council bases its activities and decision-making on principles of openness, transparency and accountability. Council maintains a visible presence across the Shire through decentralised offices, services and depot facilities, which maintains a strong sense of local identity and sense of place.

### 2.3 Projects

Projects ensure capital projects, which have predominantly been funded through state and federal government programs, are managed professionally to deliver nominated outcomes for Warrumbungle communities. A total of \$16.8 million in capital projects was managed, comprising of \$8.4million in Restart NSW Cobbora Transition Funding and \$7.78 million for Rural Fire Service projects.



This included project managing the construction of the Coonabarabran RFS Fire Control Centre. Warrumbungle Shire Council has also been contracted by Liverpool Plains Shire Council to project manage the Liverpool Plains RFS Fire Control Centre along with the start up of the Deniliquin and Glen Innes RFS Fire Control Centres

Projects involve the preparation and implementation of project management plans, addressing time schedules, budgets, risk, resources and communications. Procurement processes include tendering, initiating and administering contracts, together with auspicings and acquittal of funding programs.

The role engages with external government agencies and the wider community, such as the Three Rivers Regional Retirement Community 355 committee, Infrastructure NSW, Department Federal Infrastructure, Public Works NSW, RFS and other local government organisations.

Projects ensures Warrumbungle Shire Council professionally manages extensive capital projects whilst engaging with external government agencies, the community and other stakeholders to produce the best outcome for the community of the Shire.

## Part 3.0 Performance in Review – Technical Services

### 3.1 Overview

2015/16 was a year of contrasts, or in a sporting analogy, it was a game of two halves. The year commenced with a focus on being fit as possible to provide services now and in the future. But as the year went along, the focus turned to completing the many infrastructure expansion and renewal projects made possible through additional State & Federal Government funding. Provision of road related services is dependent up on the availability of water. For 6 to 8 months of the year the location of road maintenance activities was dependent upon water availability. In contrast, during the last 6 weeks of the year, the focus turned to providing road access as an extraordinary wet winter set in. Regardless of the contrasts, capital expenditure during the year was extraordinary and total works program expenditure in Technical Services of \$28.4m is unlikely to be repeated.

Council's Delivery Program establishes service levels and maintenance activities undertaken by staff in the Technical Services Division. This ensures that assets such as rural roads, town streets, sporting and recreation facilities, water supply, sewerage, aerodromes, provide users with a service that is affordable and sustainable in the long term. The Technical Services Division completed \$10.5m worth of capital renewal and expansion projects, \$3.1m was spent on maintaining rural roads, \$2.8m was spent on maintaining urban infrastructure and \$3.6m was spent on maintaining water and sewerage assets. Expenditure on private works including expenditure on contract works for Roads & Maritime Services amounted to \$2.6m. Council's hardrock quarry operations at Coonabarabran returned a modest profit when product on hand is taken in account. Expenditure on providing fleet services to Council amounted to \$2.6m.

Significant asset renewal and improvement projects in the year include; replacement of timber bridges over Worrigal Creek and Baradine Creek in Baradine, replacement of timber bridge over Baradine Creek near Kenebri, replacement of Ross Crossing Bridge over Talbragar River on Blue Springs Road and completion of a new bridge on Orana Road over Coolaburragundy River. Funding for these projects was made available through loan funds supported by an interest rate subsidy from State Government. Other significant road related projects include; pavement renewal on Neilrex Road, Black Stump Way, Coolah Creek Road and Baradine Road.

There were many capital projects in the urban areas including; road pavement rehabilitation in Booyamurra Street Coolah, new kerb and guttering in Railway Street Binnaway, new canteen at Baradine Oval. New concrete shared path facilities were constructed including, Neate Street, Chappell north of Mary Jane Cain Bridge and under the bridge in Coonabarabran, and extension of the facility along the river bank in Coolah.

Council responded to invitations from State and Federal Government for submissions to fund various infrastructure projects. Council's \$2.0m submission in relation to replacement of Allison Bridge on Black Stump Way was successful. Council received \$1.34m in funding to construct a town water supply back up bore in Coolah, Binnaway and Mendooran. Council was also successful in receiving \$350,000 to replace Ross Crossing Bridge over the Talbragar River on Blue Springs Road. \$280,000 was received under the Active Transport program for construction of new shared path facilities. \$1.07m was received under the Black Spot Program for widening works on the Regional Road network. Council was invited to lodge a final submission to the State Government for funding to upgrade sewage treatment plants in Dunedoo, Coolah and Coonabarabran.



**Photo on right:**  
**Replacement of the bridge on Wangmans Road over Baradine Creek near Kenebri was just one of five bridges replaced with loan funds under the timber bridge replacement program.**



The State Government through the NSW Department of Primary Industries – Water Division requires all Councils that operate a water and sewerage business to have in place a policy on liquid trade waste. This policy affects all commercial businesses that discharge effluent to sewer as a direct result of their commercial operations. Council continued implementation of this policy during the year and appreciates that it is another regulatory burden on commercial property owners. The fees imposed on commercial operators are set so that expenditure incurred is recovered, that is, Council will not receive any additional revenue as a result of implementing the policy.



During the year Council continued to make representations to the State Government about the increasing use of Namoi Street in Coonabarabran from Over Dimension vehicles travelling on the Newell Highway. Trucks wider than 3 metres are not permitted to use John Street and are required to detour via the OD route, which does not have the road pavement strength over the long to carry such vehicles.

*The bridge over Baradine Creek in Baradine was replaced under the timber bridge replacement program*

### 3.2 Rural Roads

Council is responsible for maintaining and making improvements to 2,276km of local rural roads, of which 450km are sealed, and also to 385km of regional main roads. Council also undertakes roadworks under contract to Roads & Maritime Services on 186 km of state roads, including sections of the Golden Highway, Newell Highway and Castlereagh Highway.

The renewal of bitumen seal on local rural roads during the period included 17km bitumen resurfacing at a cost of \$175,000, 0.8km of pavement rehabilitation on Coolah Creek Road at a cost of \$133,000, 1.5km of pavement renewal on Neilrex Road at a cost of \$350,000. There was \$314,000 expended on maintenance activities such as pot hole patching, repair of bitumen edge breaks, shoulder grading and roadside grass slashing.

There was 19km of bitumen resurfacing works undertaken on various regional main roads throughout the Shire at a cost of \$234,100. There was 3.0km of pavement renewal on Black Stump Way at a cost of \$1.15m. Also, on the Black Stump Way, \$370,000 was spent on widening the road in two locations. \$408,000 was spent of widening a section of Baradine Road near Guinema Road.

The renewal of unsealed roads involved 48km of resurfacing at a cost of \$616,000. During the period 648km of maintenance grading was undertaken on unsealed roads across the Shire at a cost of \$1.7m.

### 3.3 Urban Streets

There are six urban areas in the Warrumbungle Shire LGA: Baradine, Coonabarabran, Binnaway, Coolah, Dunedoo, and Mendooran. Within these areas there is a total of 139km of roads. Some of the maintenance activities carried out by Council for these roads include street cleaning, emptying of street bins, street garden and tree maintenance, stormwater infrastructure maintenance and cleaning, and road and footpath maintenance.

Renewal activities of the period include: approximately 9.7km of bitumen re-seals at a cost of \$86,000, rehabilitation of Booyamurra Street Coolah, replacement of approximately 300m<sup>2</sup> of concrete footpath, plus replacement of various footpath sections.

Capital Works projects have also been completed within the Urban Services area which include but are not limited to: installation of 170m of kerb and guttering in Railway Street Binnaway, installation of a new solar powered street light in Yarran Street, and approximately 600m of shared path extensions.



*Photo on right:  
Construction of a shared concrete footpath under the Mary Jane Cain Bridge in Coonabarabran was just one of three major footpaths constructed during the year the Active Transport Program.*

### 3.4 Parks and Gardens

Council owns and maintains 19 park areas, 8 sets of playground equipment in park areas, and 12 amenities blocks within the Warrumbungle Shire LGA. Some of the maintenance activities in these areas include: grass cutting, watering, weeding, tree pruning, amenities cleaning and maintenance, monitoring and maintenance of playground equipment, and general horticultural tasks associated with numerous garden beds. Amenities blocks are cleaned at various times during the week to a total exceeding 70 times per week.

Council's capital works program has seen the installation of a new amenities block at Nandi Park Coonabarabran, and awarded \$5000 each to Binnaway and Baradine Progress Associations for garden beautification and maintenance.

Council was also pleased to work with the Binnaway Progress Association to help with the installation of park fit equipment along the park in Castlereagh Avenue.

### 3.5 Transport and Road Safety

There is a registered aerodrome at Coolah and a registered aerodrome in Coonabarabran and there is an unregistered aerodrome in Baradine. Maintenance tasks undertaken by Council staff include grass slashing, weekly inspections and maintenance of the bitumen runway surface in Coonabarabran. A pleasing outcome during the year was returning the landing lights at the Coolah aerodrome to operation.

Council's Road Safety Officer has been involved in a number of road safety programs throughout the year including; workshops for supervisors of learner drivers, 'Just Slow Down', 'Keeps our Kids Safe', and the award winning program 'Free Cuppa for the Driver'. In addition the RSO is now actively promoting road safety messages through social media and through the local radio station.



### 3.6 Sport and Recreation Facilities

Council takes pride in being able to provide quality sport and recreation facilities that meet expectations of users in the Shire. Council operates and maintains a swimming pool in each of the six towns as well as sporting fields, associated buildings such as grandstands, kiosks and toilet facilities.

Funds from the Cobbora Coal Transition Fund have been used for the completion of works at the concrete netball courts at Robertson Oval. These works included extra seating, perimeter bollards for safety, turf and irrigation. Council's capital works program has seen construction of the Baradine Oval Canteen commence, 2 new shade structures installed at Binnaway pool, new filter media at Dunedoo pool, and renewal of electrical wiring at Baradine pool to ensure suitability and compliance for scheduled lighting installation.

Unsupervised lap swimming continued in Baradine, and commenced in Coonabarabran and Binnaway. Coolah, Dunedoo, and Mendooran pools have all had the appropriate entry systems installed and will proceed with unsupervised lap swimming in the coming season.



*Construction of the Baradine Oval Canteen*

### 3.7 Water and Sewerage

Council provides water services to residents in Baradine, Binnaway, Bugaldie, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Kenebri, Mendooran and Merrygoen. In all there are 3351 service connections. To provide this service, there are four(4) water treatments plants, 11 bores, 3 wells, one(1) dam, 15 town reservoirs and 137 km of water mains. The quality of water delivered to water connections meets requirements of Australian Drinking Water Guidelines and monitoring of the quality is undertaken by the NSW Government through the Department of Health and the Office of Water.

Fluoride dosing is occurring in Coonabarabran and Baradine.

A program of removing 'dead end' water mains continued with the installation of a new water main in Evans Street Dunedoo and in Arnold Street Coonabarabran.

Town reservoirs are a critical control point in the water supply system and they must be fully enclosed to prevent birds and other wildlife entering the reservoir. To this end, the roof on the water reservoir in Bullinda Street Dunedoo was replaced during the year.

The renewal of the clarifier at the Baradine water treatment plant is a major project and investigations continued throughout the year. Council has adopted a recommendation to replace the existing clarifier at an estimated cost of \$1m.

Sewerage services are provided to residents in Baradine, Coolah, Coonabarabran and Dunedoo. In all there are 2570 connections. Infrastructure to support these connections includes four sewage treatment plants, nine pumping stations and 80 km of sewer main.

Relining of underground sewer with a plastic sleeve is now common technology and during the year relining was undertaken on some sections of sewer in Coolah & Coonabarabran at total cost of \$120,000.

After several years of representation by adjoining residents, new technology was utilised to control odour emissions at the Baradine sewage pump house.

Council is now an active member of the Lower Macquarie Water Utilities Alliance, which is an alliance of 12 Council's across the Orana Region. Projects implemented by the Alliance during the period include review of telemetry operations, safety inspection of water treatment plants and sewer treatment plants, assessment of water reservoirs and updating of best practice management plans.



*Installation of a new water main in Evans Street, Dunedoo. This work is being done under the water main extension programme which aims to improve reliability of water quality in the reticulation network*

### 3.8 Fleet Services

To support Council's wide range of services, Council operates a workshop in Coolah and in Coonabarabran. The mechanics in these workshops provide maintenance and support services for a large fleet of vehicles including 86 sedans and utilities, 8 graders, 3 loaders, 3 excavators, 4 backhoes, 7 rollers, 7 tractors, 5 large tippers and 23 medium sized trucks.

Council workshops and mechanics also provide maintenance and registration services to 81 trucks and vehicles used by the Rural Fire Service.

### 3.9 Emergency Services

Council conducted all quarterly LEMC meetings with all meetings well attended by Emergency Agencies and representatives from both Dubbo and Tamworth. The meeting is chaired by Kevin Tighe, Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO)

Contact Lists and Emergency Management Plans are regularly updated.

The new EM Plan (previously called DISPLAN or Disaster Plan) has been commenced and Part A & B completed. Additional to Parts A & B, a set of Consequence Management Guides (CMG's), a template that works through hazards & threats applicable to our shire, has been worked on by the committee and to date we have completed the following; Bush Fire, Hazardous Material, Flooding and Storm & Tempest. The remaining template, Power Failures, of greater than 24 hours, is yet to be completed by the committee.



Council is continuing to support the Baradine Emergency Hub, set up last year. Council has the Hub in its contacts list to provide information of a emergency nature that is applicable for the Baradine area.

The Council's Emergency Services Coordinator has updated the Emergency section of Council's Web Page, again. The ability of the public to reach the Evacuation Page with minimal clicks on the web page should be the Emergency Services Coordinator's, as well as council's, objective.

The Council's Emergency Services Coordinator monitors the costs associated with the provision of services by the NSW Fire & Rescue Service and the State Emergency Service, which are both partly funded by Council. These costs are set by the Minister of Justice who looks after Emergency Services at a State level.



The Council's Emergency Services Coordinator monitors the contribution Council makes to the three VRA Units within the shire. Units remain very active and continue to provide a valuable service to their communities and the shire.

The Council's Emergency Services Coordinator supports the Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC) and continues to chair the BFMC Sub Committee, set up after the Wambelong Fires. The purpose of this committee is the identification and documentation of Fire Trails created during the fires as well as monitoring the

Hazard Reductions conducted by agencies. The committee is continuing in its efforts to have additional fire trails constructed around Needle Mountain Communication Facility, at the owners cost.

The Council's Emergency Services Coordinator continues to support the RFS after the Bushfire Surveillance Remote control cameras at Siding Springs Observatory was struck by lightning. A new camera covered by insurance will be reinstalled pre Bushfire season.

**Kevin Tighe**  
**Director Technical Services**

## Part 4.0 Performance in Review – Development Services

### 4.1 Overview

#### Management Objectives

Effectively manage and promote an efficient Development Services division attuned to the needs of the built and natural environment.

Establish a consistent set of contemporary policies and procedures across the department to ensure a high standard of customer service and legislative compliance.

Ensure all projects are completed in accordance with their outcome objectives and within the allocated budget.



#### Development Management Services

- Review of Waste and Recycling Services for whole of Shire undertaken
- Recycling Crates exchanged for Otto Bins on the Rural Runs to improve safety of staff members
- Secured funding for Local Heritage Grants and Heritage Advisor
- Agreements signed for Derelict Underground Petroleum Storage System Program through the EPA for the removal of old fuel tanks and remediation on Council owned land throughout the Shire
- Compulsory acquisition of Old Dunedoo Hospital Site
- Electronic Housing Code and DA Tracking continue to be used
- Delegation review undertaken
- Solar Panel project completed with Solar Panels placed on Council owned buildings
- Public Land review with draft Plan of Management in progress for Community Land
- Contaminated Lands Policy and Register updated

#### Regulatory Services

- Actively represent Council at Siding Spring Observatory meetings
- Actively participate in Council's Building Expo, provide Development Application, Construction Certificate and Environmental Health information to residents
- Body Cameras purchased to improve the safety of Council Compliance Officers while out in the field

#### Town Planning

- Total of eighty one (81) Development Applications were lodged which had a total value of \$ 8,917,345. This included ten (10) new single storey dwellings and seven (7) installation approvals for manufactured dwellings
- Total of four hundred and fifty nine (459) Section 149 Certificates were issued.
- Development applications received for projects listed under the Cobbora Transition Fund
- Development Applications received for the demolition of Dunedoo War Memorial Hospital and the Erection of the Three Rivers Retirement Village in Dunedoo
- Planning Proposal for land Zoned RU1 that was previously zoned R1 (b) & (c) gazetted in October 2015
- Further Planning Proposal in progress to protect dwelling entitlements residents affected by the January 2013 bushfires

#### Building Services

- Eighteen (18) Complying Development Certificates were issued.
- A total of forty three (43) Construction Certificates and ten (10) Occupation Certificates were issued
- Three (3) 149d Building Certificates were issued
- Seven (7) Section 68 Local Approvals were issued for the installation of a manufactured dwelling
- Assist applicants with completing application forms and obtaining information in regards to plans
- Seven (7) Swimming Pool Compliance Certificates have been issued Septic Inspections and approvals conducted as required

## Environmental Health Services

### Food Premises

- Ninety two (92) food shop inspections were conducted throughout the year.
- Fifty four (54) Intinerant food vendors inspected and twenty six (26) tempoary food stall holder approval to operate were issued to local community groups, three (3) local mobile food vans were provided with approvals to operate.
- Inspections conducted at eight (8) events throughout the year including Local Shows, Rockin at the Racecourse and Bunny Bazar

### OSSMS

- Nine (9) Section 68 Approvals for the Installation of an On-Site Sewer Management System and Approval to Operate an On-Site Sewer Management System were issued.

### Skin Penetration

- Five (5) premises identified as practicing skin penetration procedures
- All premises provided required notification forms to complete prior to inspections
- All premises inspection and all received 100% compliance with *Public Health Act 2010 and Clause 31 of the Public Health Regulation 2012*



### Caravan Parks and Primitive Campgrounds

- Three (3) caravan park Approvals to Operate renewed
- One (1) Primitive Camp Ground Approval to Operate renewed
- Two (2) Primitive Camp Ground applications currently with Council
- One (1) Caravan Park yet to secure their renewal approval

### Public Pools

- Microbial testing undertaken in February and March 2016. Thirteen (13) samples on each occasion taken for testing
- One (1) Non-compliance recorded over the period of testing

### Water Monitoring Program

- Water monitoring program contiunes with Microbial testing undertaken across the Shire on a weekly basis and chemical testing undertaken in May and November
- Program works in collboration with Technical Services Water Team.

### Wood Smoke Reduction Program

- General information program in place in an effort to reduce Wood Smoke pollution across the Shire

### Complaints

- Two (2) Illegal tattooing complaints recevied and resolved
- One (1) Lightng pollution complaint recevied and resolved
- Two (2) Food Business complaints received, both businesses inspected, notices to comply with Food Standard Code issued. Both businesses have improved and remain under quarterly inspection program
- One (1) OSSMS complaint from Council managed public toilet, resolution of compaint ongoing
- Three (3) unoffical Wood Smoke complaints from Coonabarabran residents received

### Compliance Services

- Council Compliance Officers have continued with patrols to identify straying companion animals. In 2015/2016 one hundred and sixty nine (169) dogs and twenty six (26) cats were seized and transferred to the Council Pound fifty eight (58) animals were released to their owners and sixteen (16) cats and seventy (70) dogs were surrendered to Council. Of these companion animals, eighty six (86) were sold, sadly fifty one (51) were euthanized as they were not suitable for re-homing
- Continued cooperation with various organisations throughout NSW for the rehousing of suitable unwanted companion animals

- Focus on Stock on Roads with increased patrols throughout the Shire
- Investigations taking place into illegal dumping of rubbish on public land
- Patrols to identify overgrown blocks throughout the Shire

Pound Data	Cats	Dogs
Seized	26	169
Returned to Owner	2	56
Transferred to Council facility	26	169
Abandoned or Stray	26	99
Surrendered	0	70
Animals transferred from seizure activities	26	169
Released to Owners	2	56
Sold	7	79
Released to RSPCA for re-homing	0	0
Died at Council facility	0	0
Stolen from Council facility	0	0
Escaped from Council facility	0	0
Total euthanized	18	34

#### **Tourism and Economic Development**

- Maintenance of Level 1 Visitor Information Centre Accreditation
- Completions of ArtSpace and Keeping Place and installation of repatriated artefacts
- Implementation of tourism promotional plan that records an increase in visitor numbers to the visitor centre (approximately 36,000 for year)
- Partnered in the Great Western Plains Campaign – a co-operative marketing activity involving several LGA's in Orana region
- Reprint of the Warrumbungle Region Visitor Guide – the official tourism guide for Warrumbungle Shire
- Facilitate the completion of filming of a television series to air in August 2016
- Assistance with grant funding for a number of local initiatives – Stronger Communities Program for DPS landscaping at old cemetery, DDS Volunteers Equipment Grants for Swimming Club, 2357 Partnerships, DPS, Burrabeedee Project, Rotary Scholarship Funding
- Attract additional businesses to the Shire
- Strengthen ties with the SBFC network
- Profile Warrumbungle Shire for Inland Rail Network
- Warrumbungle Shire is recognised as a destination for conferences and events

#### **Property and Risk Management**

- All building maintained and upgraded to keep them to a high standard
- Councils Business Continuity Plan has been updated to fit with Councils changing needs and priorities
- Councils insurance needs have been managed
- Crown Land under Trust has received grants to the value of over \$108,000 across the Shire

#### **Cemetery Services**

- The Memorial Wall at the Old Cemetery in Coonabarabran being done in conjunction with Coonabarabran DPS and History Group in nearly complete with landscaping expected to be completed in September this year
- Ground works to control erosion at the Coonabarabran Cemetery are underway as well as upgrading the gardens there to complement the new Memorial Wall
- The Native Grove Cemetery has commissioned a new mobile shade structure to replace the existing failing unit



### Medical Facilities

- Council has achieved full tenancy with all medical commercial premises throughout the shire
- Mendooran continues to be available for visiting medical practitioner
- Coolah Doctors residence continues to be available visiting medical officer (VMO) as the local hospital continues to lease the building to ensure that it is always available or VMO's for Coolah Hospital

### Halls

- Dunedoo Jubilee Hall grant funding through the Cobborah Transition Fund has seen the hall refurbished and is now ready for hire. New kitchen, air conditioning and bathroom facilities have brought the facilities back to its former glory
- Baradine Memorial Hall has had the new toilets installed creating more storage for the Hall and Development Group and the disabled access is still underway and expected to be completed by the end of year.

## 4.2 Priorities

### Environmental Management Services

- All community-based heritage work within the Shire completed within NSW Heritage Office requirements.
- Continue with implementing the Waste Strategy in line with Council Resolution
- Ensure the Derelict Underground Petroleum Storage System program is completed within timeframe
- Business Continuity Plan approved and implemented
- Plan of Management for Council owned land completed and adopted by Council

### Regulatory Services

#### Town Planning

- Communicate the new Siding Spring Planning controls that come into force during 2016 which include the new controls around controlling light pollution from development
- Information supplied to applicants of the requirements for development on Bush Fire Prone Land
- Communicating the Shire Wide Development Control Plan with community members to ensure compliance when lodging development applications
- Continue with Planning Proposals that have commenced for dwelling entitlements and bushfire affected residents
- Undertake a review of procedures for all Town Planning activities.



*Heritage Funding- Baradine Preschool*

#### Building Services

- Approvals and Building inspections carried out within timeframes to ensure compliance with delivery plan
- Information supplied to applicants undertaking building works within land identified as Bush Fire Prone in relation to the building requirements set out under the Planning for Bushfire Protection 2006
- Undertake a review of all procedures for Building Services.
- Continue with the Swimming Pool Inspection Program for dwellings for sale or lease to ensure all swimming pools comply with the Swimming Pools Act 1992 and the swimming pool regulation and the relevant Australian Standards for swimming pools
- Establish a Public Swimming Pool compliance program in conjunction with Compliance Officers to ensure public safety around swimming pools

#### Environmental Health Services

- State of the Environment Reporting to be completed in accordance with new Integrated Planning and Reporting framework.
- Undertake a review of procedures for all Environmental Health Services activities.
- Engagement with Contamination Central to review contaminated land within the Shire.



### Food Inspections

- Compliance with Council's obligations under the NSW Food Regulation Partnership.
- Food Inspection program to run January 2017 to June 2017
- Program to include B & B's and other accommodation providers to ensure compliance across the Shire
- Working with PAI & H Association's in each township from late 2016 to ensure that all showground kitchens are inspected prior to show date and that all temporary food stall holders are captured under a Temporary Food Stall holder authority to operate



### Water Monitoring

- Water monitoring program to continue
- Liaise with Technical Services Staff the results from the water monitoring program

### Contaminated Lands

- Contaminated Land – Derelict Underground Petroleum Storage System Council Road Reserve Program – Grant funding received from EPA to undertake an Investigation and Removal and Remediation of UPSS in Warrumbungle Shire

### OSSMS

- Inspection program for On-site Sewer Management Systems (OSSMS) in high risk areas to be established.
- Draft Policy for On-Site Sewer Management Systems to be finalized
- Educational sessions to be held with local area plumbers to achieve consistency in system installation and servicing throughout the Shire

### Public Pools

- Microbial testing of all WSC Pools assets to commence monthly in October 2016
- Inspection program to commence in October 2016 of Motel and other accommodation service provider pools that are determined to be public pools. Any microbial testing required will be at pool owner expense in this program

### Wood Smoke Reduction Program

- Program to commence in June 2017, to be reconfigured after program learning from 2016 program

### Compliance Services

- Educating the community on micro-chipping of companion animals before sale of animal, registration of companion animals at 6 months of age and changing of owners details when animal is sold or re-homed.
- Micro-chipping Mondays to be held in each town
- Community awareness to reduce the number of nuisance dog complaints
- Reducing dog attacks by dealing with dangerous dogs and menacing dogs
- Continue relationships with animal shelters to re-home suitable companion animals
- Reduce illegal dumping of rubbish and the number of overgrown blocks with regular patrols
- Review procedures for all Regulatory Services activities
- Stock on Roads to continue to be a focus point for the Compliance Officers while on patrol to ensure safety of motorists



### Tourism and Economic Development

- Implement a tourism and economic development plan that provides positive outcomes
- Distribution of materials to information points throughout the Shire
- Development of a Regional Relocation Strategy with OROC EDO Network members
- Planning for a Showcase to promote the benefits of living, working and investing in the Warrumbungle Shire

- The establishment of 2357 Partnerships – an umbrella organisation for Coonabarabran which draws together the efforts and initiatives of the individual community organisations (some 200) to create a cohesive and responsive organisation that represents the views of the broad community
- Attract additional businesses to the Shire
- Strengthen ties with the SBFC network
- Participate in Inland Rail Network meetings
- Work with conference and event organisers to encourage conference and events to Warrumbungle Shire

### Property and Risk Management

- Council continue its firm commitment to Risk Management
- Ensure that all buildings and property under Councils care are managed appropriately



### Cemetery Services

- All Cemeteries have been maintained within budget
- Extra care is taken to ensure that premises maintained during celebratory times throughout the year e.g. Christmas, Easter, ANZAC Day, Mothers Day and Fathers Day
- Ensure that the sensitive needs of the community are addressed appropriately when arrangements for internments are being made and dealing with Council regarding cemeteries.

### Medical Services

- Ensure continued service to the Community
- Ensure that facilities are available for medical practitioners in the Shire

### Halls

- All halls to be available throughout the year.
- The Town Halls managed by Council are maintained and their standards improved to make them as asset for the community in the years to come.

## 4.3 Waste

Council has reviewed its Waste Management Strategy aiming to set the direction of the waste business for the Warrumbungle Shire for the future years. With the expiry of the contract for the pickup collection of household waste services in the southern section of the Shire the service is now conducted in-house. A continuing improvement is being made for this year with regards to financial viability with the business generating a surplus for the reporting period. Further work on the actions from the Waste Management Strategy will be reviewed and implemented over the next twelve months.

Landfilling of domestic waste continues to be undertaken at the Coonabarabran Landfill. It is envisaged that the site has further potential life with changed landfilling practices. Kerbside recycling was undertaken during the reporting period, with income being received from the sale of recyclables to processors. Council continues to be an active participant in Netwaste, and participated in the following programs associated with Netwaste during the reporting period: Waste Oil Recycling, Scrap Metal Recycling and Household Chemical Clean Out.



DrumMuster continues to be supported by Council with collection centres located at Coolah and Coonabarabran.

#### 4.4 Tourism and Economic Development

Warrumbungle Shire is a region of communities working together to promote the positive values of rural and regional living. The pursuit of recreational experiences is an important contributor to the local economy. The wellbeing of Warrumbungle Shire is measured by its creative and progressive thinking and action, and the Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee (EDTAC) and unit works effectively across those issues which impact on lifestyle and development to ensure a strong image and far reaching sustainability.

The Community Strategic Plan, developed as part of the IP&R process, refers to the values, spirit and resilience, and the environment and local economy. When put in the context of future planning, the document identifies a vision which acknowledges the diversity and unique values of the communities across the shire. When the resources and energies are pooled, the potential to become a strong tourism and economic centre is enhanced. The residents of Warrumbungle Shire deserve nothing less.

Through the Economic Development and Tourism Unit there is continued involvement in a variety of projects for the benefit of the shire and its residents. The Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee (EDTAC), representative of industry and communities from across the Shire meets quarterly to manage a small promotional budget and provide advice to Council and progress elements of the CSP.

While the January 2013 bushfires seem to be a long time ago, the impact on the business community is more far reaching than ever envisaged as the community works to rebuild and reignite confidence in the future.



**Sandstone Caves**

The communities of Warrumbungle Shire continue to display a resilience that reflects positivity and confidence in the future but the Coroners Report of the Inquiry undertaken following the fires and released in 2015 has not provided the expected impetus to local businesses and Coonabarabran and Baradine and the other small communities continue to feel the impact of contracting economies.

Despite this, the changing face of the business community is indicative of a confidence in the future, and the establishment of new businesses and the change in ownership of others reinforces that confidence and wellbeing within the community. There is no question that new businesses across the shire generate an increased economy; something as simple as the opening of a new store can impact positively across the shire with the creation of employment and reducing the need to travel to regional centres for retail purchasing.

Funding from NSW Restart in the form of the Cobborah Transition Fund has seen growth opportunities in the southern part of the shire; the redressing of the long term effects of loss of primary production and farming families and future growth in these communities are yet to be proven.

The Orana Economic Development Officers (EDO) Network continues to meet regularly focussing on projects and partnerships that provide mutual benefit to the participants and profile the region as one which provides a great lifestyle as well as diverse experiences. Building population in our regional communities by relocation has been the focus in the past year and the network has engaged in meaningful discussion and action on attracting families to the region. We all acknowledge that employment opportunities are the major incentive for relocation to our region and Warrumbungle Shire has endeavoured to encourage the establishment of new businesses and enterprises which may redress what is seen as an overall population decline.

Throughout the shire special events have been presented through the Drought Support Programme and these too have generated interest in the lifestyle adopted by residents of the shire. The programmes have benefited individuals and cover a broad spectrum from Mens Health Forums to Hatmaking Workshops and Working Dog Training; each has targeted families impacted by the drought and mental health issues.

The Inland Rail Project has been re-invigorated with an allocation of funds for the planning stages. The proposed line from Melbourne and Brisbane may traverse parts of the western part of Warrumbungle Shire and the Manager has attended Inland Rail meetings to present a case for equitable the land acquisition.

Prospective grant funding applicants have been assisted in their endeavours to attract special funding for community events and development. Funding from the DSS Volunteer Grants, Community Building Partnerships, Stronger Communities Program and the Rotary Foundation have seen the enthusiasm of small community based groups rewarded for their foresight. The Economic Development unit has also assisted with the establishment of a Coonabarabran focussed community organisation – 2357 Partnerships was incorporated in November 2014 and will be the 6<sup>th</sup> such organisation in Warrumbungle Shire, representing the whole of the Coonabarabran community.

The use of the term Tourist as it impacts on local communities is being replaced with the term Visitor; for too long communities have neglected to acknowledge the important part of the local economy that is supported by those residents who have family and friends visit and so the “now term” is Visitor Economy.

Warrumbungle Shire had previously been a member of the Inland NSW Tourism Regional Tourism Organisation (Inland) but worked with a sub group – The Great Western Plains (GWP). Following the deregistering of Inland the GWP Working Group has continued to meet and initiate promotional activities to benefit the region. A shared regional visitor guide has successfully promoted the Warrumbungle Shire and ongoing participation in other initiatives is encouraged.

Events continue to attract visitors and the involvement of volunteer community organisations in the presentation of events that create a better understanding of our lifestyle and attractions is appreciated. The annual NW Schools Equestrian Expo continues to offer new competitions to keep the event dynamic, it is family focused and generates several million dollars into the local economy. This event, coupled with other equestrian events in the shire, reminds us that we are a rural shire that offers excellent facilities for major events. Local shows profile the importance of the primary industries to the shire.

The Back to BurraBeeDee photographic exhibition by Warwick Keen was installed in the ArtSpace and Coonabarabran was the launch site of this well received exhibition. It depicted the story of life on BurrabeeDee Mission with an historical perspective; this exhibition is part of a travelling exhibition and is currently in the Regional Gallery at Armidale.

The annual StarFest (with individual events such as Science in the Pub, Open Day at Siding Spring and the Bok Lecture) makes astronomy more accessible for all people. This event is a small role that Siding Spring Observatory plays in educating the public about science and astronomy and certainly reaffirms Coonabarabran’s claim to be the Astronomy Capital of Australia. The recent declaration of Warrumbungle National Park as Australia’s first Dark Skies Park is indicative of the important role the facility plays in the community and reflective of well thought out plans and policies of Council. The decision to close the SSO Exploratory Centre two days each week has not been without its difficulties as the community grapples with a major attraction not being open the whole of the weekend; it is disappointing that such a decision was made and again the economics of visitor numbers needs to be addressed.



***Siding Spring Observatory Open Day***

Motor vehicle “bashes” see great value in visiting our area and Warrumbungle Shire has benefited from 2 visits from the Variety Club; the Victorian Chapter (40 vehicles plus support teams) and the Australian Chapter (70 vehicles plus support teams) visited the area and as well as overnighing in the shire and accessing a number of services and attractions, also contributed to schools and individuals in need. Other fundraising rides, walks and novelty transport events have also traversed the shire and the local operators have provided FOC

accommodation for teams and individuals. Car club and motor cycle groups visit the shire on a regular basis and their lengths of stay range from a night in Warrumbungle Shire to four nights. Cycling events have grown with challenges across various terrains and the annual road cycling event from Coonabarabran to Gunnedah and beyond, attracts riders and followers from across the state. The annual Tour de Bungles, Tour de Gorge and Tour de Tops are local events gaining significant followings in the cycling community.

The Crooked Mountain Concert is still a popular drawcard for visitors and while the NPWS has capped numbers to protect the environment, interest in the event continues to grow. The service in its restructuring has undertaken a new model of management for the event. The proposed concert for 2016 features a sound mix of highlighted performers with local content valued and presented as well.

Arts and cultural activities are enjoyed by community and visitors alike and the volunteer work of those who present these activities and events should be acknowledged.

The RV Friendly Status of communities across Warrumbungle Shire have been canvassed and the CMCA requirements are not met by all communities, however ongoing discussion is occurring to provide a way to show the caravanning public that they are welcome in our towns.

Across the shire there is a growing respect for the purchase of local products and markets have been instigated in small communities – some regularly presented, while others to coincide with other events.

Coonabarabran has proven itself over the years to be a well appointed, centrally located venue for conferences – and during 2015 the GRDC Update Conferences, NSW Teachers Federation Conference and a number of smaller events have utilised facilities and contributed positively to the local economy. The Australian Scrollsaw Association held its bi-annual event in Coonabarabran over several days which saw an influx of visitors from other parts of Australia – as participants and exhibitors as well as viewers.

Response to the events calendar on the tourism website has been slow and we cannot stress the importance of putting your event “out there” using this free and simple method of promotion enough. Advertising events on this site make advertised events part of a larger network as the site is accessed by people planning to visit the area and also by media looking for quirky stories

The drivers of the Rail Trail program, Coolah District Development Group have been supported in their efforts to have unused rail lines re-open as trails accessible for cyclists, walkers and horseriders. Issues of bio-security and distances between entrances have yet to be resolved as has the funding issue.

The Visitor Guide which was launched in May 2015 has just gone into its second reprint (on schedule) and features a full colour production with a Business Directory insert. Distribution is through other visitor centres, at consumer shows, direct mail and through Gateway Visitor Information Centres. Consumer Show presence is a way to ensure we get our message to those who are planning to holiday in Australia and Warrumbungle Shire has a presence in Sydney at the Penrith SuperShow, the Hunter Valley Caravan & Camping and 4WD Show at Maitland and the Newcastle Caravan and Camping Expo – positive feedback about the shire and quick responses reassure us that these target market sites are valuable in our promotional calendar. Consumer Show promotions are complemented by advertising in publications that reach our target markets.

A sound working partnership with neighbouring shires has always been seen as beneficial for Warrumbungle Shire; the involvement in the bid for the Dark Skies Park was dependent on such relationships with our partners being Gilgandra and Coonamble Shires. Our partnership based on membership of The Newell Highway Promotions Committee reinforces the benefits to the wider community. Currently the Visitor Guide features loops on and off the highway and while we argue we need to provide more experiences and that the traveller doesn't see borders and boundaries, we also need to be sure that the focus of the publication is the towns along the Newell.



There is no question that the lifestyle we enjoy in Warrumbungle Shire is reflective of the impact of visitor spending in our shire. The co-operative partnerships developed can be a sound base for future international claims.

The absorption of [www.warrumbungleregion.com.au](http://www.warrumbungleregion.com.au) into the [www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au) website creates a mobile friendly website which is important when research tells us that more than 85% of travellers are accessing tourism information digitally.

Print media advertising continues to be an important vehicle for sharing our message and advertising is targeted to the markets we know we need to impact on; research and anecdotal evidence shows us that the grey nomads and camping and caravanning are the fastest growing market sector – our task is to stop them longer and encourage spending in our communities and so, we feature heavily in magazines like Caravanning Australia, The Wanderer and Go55's. The family market is also important and again our efforts to promote through print media into family focussed publications is important. Print media has been complemented by television promotion and the recently released television comedy/drama series "Under the Milky Way" which has been released into the Victorian market and currently available for us on YouTube is our alternative to "The Dish". "Under the Milky Way" highlights Siding Spring Observatory as the location for the storyline and also features Coonabarabran.

Tourism is an important economic contributor to the whole of Warrumbungle Shire and Tourism Research Australia (TRA) released figures indicate a steady increase in the local economy, attributed to the tourism industry.

The Coonabarabran VIC has maintained Level 1 Accreditation thanks to the dedication of a small staff and volunteer group who ensure a comprehensive visitor information service. While there is an ever increasing number of people utilizing digital resources for travel and tourism information, research also shows that people still want a brochure when they arrive. These same people are still very dependent on the valuable engagement with a local person for accurate and current information. "There is nothing like a local" we are often told. Staff and volunteers are actively engaged in training and families as opportunities arise. Visitor numbers at the Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre grew on the previous year; this is welcome news and affirms the importance of locals helping visitors. In addition to Visitor Services, the Centre has become an attraction in its own right with the Australian Museum Diprotodon Exhibition, the Keeping Place and the ArtSpace now providing a reason to visit the Centre and stay longer.

Warrumbungle Shire is represented on tourism and development organisations. Local partnerships are equally important and regular contact is maintained with outlying tourism distribution centres in the shire. The effectiveness of these partnerships can only serve to strengthen the place Warrumbungle Shire has in the global community.

### 4.5 Property and Risk

Council's Property and Risk Division is responsible for the administration and maintenance of all property and land that Council owns or has under its care. It is also responsible for risk management and insurance administration for Council.

Property management includes maintenance, cleaning, security and insurance for all structures under Council's control, as well as tenancy, leasing and licencing arrangements. Some of the facilities managed include halls, staff housing in Coolah and Coonabarabran, medical facilities, depots, Council administration offices and any other "bricks and mortar" under Council's care. In addition, Council is responsible for an extensive portfolio of crown lands and is trustee of a number of crown reserves.



The Property and Risk Division provides services to both the public, and the various branches of Council, and ensures that Council is compliant with all property related legislative requirements. This section assists other Directorates with risk management as required to ensure that Council's liability is minimised.

The 2015 - 2016 financial year has seen continued management of Council's assets under the control of Property and Risk including compulsory acquisitions, lot amalgamations and finalisation of the ownership of the Old Dunedoo Hospital site to Council for the Three Rivers Regional Retirement Community project. Council has also repainted the Dunedoo Old Bank building and extended on the space used by the Library with both projects funded by grants.

An extensive solar panel installation project was also undertaken during the reporting period, with solar panels installed on several Council owned buildings. The project aimed to lower Council's electricity costs, and decrease Council's carbon footprint.



*Installing solar panels*

### 4.6 Cemetery Services

Council's Cemetery Services are responsible for the maintenance, internment and strategic planning for the ten (10) operational cemeteries in the shire. There are four (4) closed cemeteries within the Shire, which are an integral part of the local history and as such need to be conserved appropriately. Most cemeteries are Crown Land dedications devolved into the care of councils under Crown Land legislation. Council must also comply with relevant legislation in relation to internment.

A new notification board has been set up in Coonabarabran's Native Grove Cemetery listing names of the interned to be updated every year. The Coonabarabran DPS and History Group in preparing for a Memorial wall at the Coonabarabran Cemetery was finished with landscaping to be completed in the early 2016/17 Financial year with the opening to take place in September 2016.

### 4.7 Medical Facilities

It has been a role of Council to facilitate appropriate accommodation and work premises as an incentive to encourage medical professionals to move to the area. This ensures that residents of Warrumbungle Shire have access to doctors and other medical service providers.

Council is responsible for providing appropriate commercial and domestic facilities to members of the medical fraternity. Services include property management of both houses and commercial premises in Baradine, Coonabarabran, Mendooran, Coolah and Dunedoo.

Council has now achieved full tenancy with all its medical commercial premises and residences throughout the Shire. Mendooran continues to be available for visiting medical practitioners. The Coolah residence continues to have a resident visiting medical officer (VMO) as the tenant with the local hospital leasing the building to ensure that it is always available for VMO's for Coolah Hospital.

### 4.8 Public Halls

Council maintains and is responsible for over 12 public halls that provide opportunities for community gatherings and events. These halls need to be managed and maintained to service the needs of the community. Some halls are overseen by local committees under Council's guidance whilst others are fully administered by Council.



As halls in the Shire are of a varied age, style and use, management plans and maintenance are important. Maintenance and operational programs take into account the legislative requirements relevant to the individual building, should it be Crown Trust, School of Arts or free hold community land.

This year has seen the hall at Binnaway repainted externally. Dunedoo Jubilee Hall grant funded refurbishment with new toilets, internal and external painting, a renovated kitchen and bar now completed. The Baradine Hall has new toilets in place

and will have new disabled access finalised in the 2016/2017 financial year. All halls have been utilised throughout the year.

#### **4.9 Risk Management**

Council has a firm commitment to Risk Management. This year has seen progress towards the updating of the Business Continuity Plan. Councils insurance needs continue to be managed.

**Leeanne Ryan**  
**Director Development Services**



## Part 5.0 Performance in Review – Corporate and Community Services

### 5.1 Overview

The 2015/16 financial year has been a bitter sweet year for the Corporate and Community Services Directorate. On one hand Council reported its most outstanding operating result since amalgamation, with a \$6.5 million accrual surplus and a \$1 million unrestricted cash surplus. Council also completed \$15.8 million worth of capital works for the community which is another record, and has slightly increased cash at bank to just under \$16 million.

On the other hand the 2015/16 financial year also saw Council deemed “not fit” by IPART in the Fit for the Future Review. This finding was due to IPART not agreeing with Council's assumptions around the redistribution of Financial Assistance Grants from urban to rural councils in Council's Fit for the Future submission. Despite the initial result, the Fit for the Future process has been a worthy exercise, with Council's Improvement Action Plan developed as part of the Fit for the Future process now used as a road map for Council to follow to improve its long term financial performance.

The “not fit” verdict also provided the impetus for Council to make several hard decisions in October 2015, and Council has now resolved to introduce a stormwater levy, implement further staff reductions through attrition, and introduce either a 10% special rates variation or corresponding 10% reduction in service levels. Council has now re-submitted its Fit for the Future Proposal to the OLG and is awaiting a final verdict on whether the tough decisions made by Council will be enough for Council to now be deemed “Fit”.

In addition to Council's record financial result, some of the other major achievements for the Corporate and Community Services Directorate in the 2015/16 financial year include the release of Council's Customer Service Charter and Council's budget summary by town booklets, commencement of Council's Property Addressing Scheme which aims to solve addressing issues across the Shire, commencement of a chemical audit of all chemicals across Council facilities, the introduction of electronic rates notices, passing of a balanced budget, improved debt collection, record low levels of staff turnover, and a significant improvement in WHS practices, with Council now ranking above the state average for WHS practices according to the latest Statecover Audit Report.



Council also provided a wide range of community services during the year including aged care through Warrumbungle Community Care, access to libraries, provision of children's services (Yuluwirri Kids, Connect 5, OOSH, Family Day Care) and youth support services, and the provision of community assistance in the form of payments and support to Community Development Co-ordinators. All of Council's aged care, children and youth services are provided at no cost to Council, and provide an invaluable service to the community.

Some achievements to note in the community services sphere in 2015/16 include Yuluwirri Kid's excellent National Quality Standards assessment results, the formation of the 2357 Partnerships development group/progress association in Coonabarabran, completion of the Dunedoo library upgrade, nomination of WSC as one of only 8 out of 87 Council's nominated for the Best Small Council with the Most Outstanding Youth Week Program, and increased utilisation of OOSH, FDC and Connect 5 services during the year.

Unfortunately, Warrumbungle Shire lost a valuable service to the community in February 2016 with the closure of the Westpac Banking Agency at Dunedoo when Westpac pulled funding for this vital service. In stark contrast to the situation in Dunedoo, Council spent the first half of 2016 preparing for the opening of the Coonabarabran Service NSW office at the Council Administration building in Coonabarabran. This means that driver's licences and other services will still be available in Coonabarabran post the closure of the RMS office in September 2016.

Corporate and Community Services once again met all its statutory requirements in the 2015/16 year, including all IP&R Reporting requirements, and submitted its financial statements well within the legislated time frame. All Business Papers were submitted on time by Council's Administration Branch and Admin registered nearly 13,000 documents in its Document Management System, indicating the high workload of Council's back office functions. In light of the current reforms in Local Government we expect the 2016/17 financial year to be another interesting year for Council and the Directorate is looking forward to the challenges ahead.

### 5.2 Administration and Customer Services

During the reporting period, Administration and Customer Services staff met the following targets:

- Annual Report, Agency Information Guide and statutory documentation prepared as required;
- Correspondence and reports prepared as required for internal customers;
- In the report period, 9,329 documents have been registered in InfoXpert, Council's Document, Records and Content Management System;
- Implementation of CRM, a customer service request system to capture all verbal enquiries and allocate these enquiries to the relevant officer, along with the development of reporting tools for CRM, During this report period, 3219 service requests were registered in CRM;
- Business Papers for Council's monthly meeting were prepared and distributed to Councillors in electronic format on Fridays prior to each meeting with copies available for the public on Monday prior to each meeting. Business Papers and Minutes are available on Council's website;
- 340 Resolutions of Council have been recorded during the year as a result of the Council meetings;
- Receipting and counter services provided and clients' requests dealt with in a prompt, courteous, friendly and professional manner, with the number of counter service staff reduced with no impact on the level of service provided to the community;
- The Westpac Banking Agency at Dunedoo was closed in February 2016 when Westpac pulled funding for Interagency in the 2015/16 financial year.



### 5.3 Human Resources

Council's Human Resources Branch is responsible for all recruitment, organisational culture, training, payroll, WH&S and all day to day staffing issues within the organisation.

Over the past twelve months the Human Resources Department has continued to improve processes and introduce new initiatives to ensure provision of the highest level of service to both internal and external customers.

HR has introduced a monthly Human Resources Report, which provides MANEX with a comprehensive report on all HR issues occurring during the month and highlights issues of concern.

Turnover of permanent staff has continued to drop, from 11.5% in 2014/2015 to 7.4% in 2015/2016, there may be several contributing factors in this drop in turnover;

- A downturn in the jobs market, especially in the mining sector.
- Council's willingness to promote to higher level positions from within the ranks for those who have expressed an interest in taking on more responsibility. Council has a large emphasis on learning and development programmes and staff are becoming better equipped and qualified to apply for higher level positions.



Over the past twelve months Council spent a total of \$202,788 on learning and development, this includes legislative requirements and staff development programmes. Four hundred and eighty individual staff training sessions were provided over the year.

Thirty five positions (19 internal and 16 external) were filled either internally or externally over the past financial year. A School Based Traineeship was also offered in fleet services.

Workplace Health & Safety remains an important area for Council. The number of workplace incidents increased to 46 with a reduction in workers compensation claims. The increase in reported incidents has occurred due to improved reporting processes and a change in staff's attitude in reducing risks by reporting of incidents. Council has also improved its overall results in the Annual StateCover Audit with Council's score in the audit increasing from 45% safety compliance in 2012 to 75% safety compliance in 2015.

A large project was undertaken by the Workplace Health & Safety Officer with an audit of all chemicals held by Council on all sites. This was a requirement of new legislation and as a result all areas will be signposted with chemicals stored to meet legislative requirements. Council implemented the ChemAlert software which has allowed an improvement of hazardous chemical reporting and compliance.

Noise testing of high risk positions and also a wider range of tasks which may be undertaken by all outdoor staff was undertaken with improved controls put in place where required. Council also implemented bi-annual testing of staff working in conditions where hearing protection is required to be worn.

### Senior Staff Remuneration

The General Manager is the only designated Senior Staff member (as prescribed by Section 332 of the Act) employed by Warrumbungle Shire Council during the twelve month period.

The Senior Staff member's total remuneration package, which includes all costs associated with employment for the period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015 is as follows:

Particulars	\$
Value of salary component of package	213,877.32
Bonus payments, or other payments not forming part of salary component	0.00
Superannuation(salary sacrifice and employer's contribution)	31,729.69
Non-cash benefits	0.00
Fringe benefits tax for non-cash benefits	6,054.28
<b>Total</b>	<b>251,661.29</b>

## 5.4 Payroll Services

All staff received their pays on time and were also offered the opportunity of accessing salary sacrifice programs with advice provided by an independent expert as to their suitability for the system.

Sick Leave	\$ 411,537.20
Carer's Leave	\$ 120,686.76
Parental Leave	\$ 10,671.07
Maternity Leave	\$ 9,400.87
Health & Wellbeing	\$ 0.00



## 5.5 Financial Services

The 2015/16 financial year was a busy year for Council's finance branch seeing the introduction of electronic Rates notices, Liquid Trade Waste and the Stormwater Levy as well as undertaking an upgrade to the Authority Financial System.

The last twelve months has also seen two new faces join the team with a new Rates Trainee and a new Graduate Accountant and the loss of one with the retirement of the Senior Rates Officer.

Council is set to record a record profit in 2015/16 in no small part due to the efforts of our good people in Technical Services and Development Services who secured record Grant Funding for the Warrumbungle community and completed over \$15m in capital works.

Increased Grant funding has, for the moment, offset the continuing effect of the Federal decision to peg General Rates and the freeze on FAG's.

The ability of Council to offset these types of political changes are limited to increasing revenue from grants, user charges and other services coupled with continued curtailing of expenditure through a combination of efficiencies and service reductions. This type of decision highlights the reliance rural councils have on grant funding and clearly demonstrates that a seemingly minor and unimportant budget decision made far away can have a significant and far reaching impact on small rural councils like ours.

There were some significant achievements made by Council's finance branch in the 2015/16 financial year, including:

- The upgrade of Civica Authority across the whole of Council;
- Completion of Council's 2015/16 financial statements within the required State Government deadline;
- Improved reporting for RMS contracted works;
- Once again passing of a balanced budget and Delivery Program for the next four years, despite the tough operating environment that Council faces;
- Completion of all other IP&R requirements, including the re-casting of Council's Long Term Financial Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Council's Long Term Financial Plan was also included as one of 7 "best practice plans" in the recently released IP&R Manual, with all other best practice plans being from well off Sydney Councils such as Mosman, Waverley, and Warringah.
- Council's improved debt recovery performance continued in the 2015/16 financial year with Council's rates outstanding ratio finishing on 8.55%. This figure now meets the State Government benchmark for rural councils of <10% which is a significant improvement.
- Furthermore there were no WH&S incidents or loss time to injuries in Financial Services during the 2015/16 financial year;
- The introduction of electronic Rates Notices;
- Implementation of Liquid Trade Waste charges;
- Development of a Stormwater Levy.

## 5.6 Communications and IT

Communications, Information Technology (IT) and Geographical Information Systems (Mapping) services are provided by this division as a corporate service to all other divisions of council and the wider community.

To enable all staff access to information technology across a shire that is geographically spread requires a resilient IT network that is accessible. The WSC IT Network comprises of a private cloud structure with a central server and data storage environment located in the communications room of the Coonabarabran office. All sites across the shire link to the Coonabarabran Communications Room via a private internet datalink. The Coolah administration office communications room is the site for a backup datacentre.

Challenges of poor mobile phone coverage and small bandwidth for public internet connections may impact on staff accessibility to information technology. To manage this, the Coolah and Coonabarabran offices have a private 20/20mb fast datalink, with a private point to point Wi-Fi network, linking the majority of Council sites within these two towns with a fast internet service. This includes the Depots, Family Services and Community Care. Remaining sites in Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Mendooran, Binnaway and Baradine remain on the public ADSL infrastructure until telecommunication facilities are improved.



Security for the WSC IT Network incorporates three components – firewall, internet browsing/email security, and USB/external plug-in devices via onsite security hardware. The security software installed onsite supports the WSC IT Network as a stand alone, resilient and cost-effective IT system that supports the Business Continuity Plan.

Tamworth Regional Council are under a contract to provide IT support for hardware/IT network and help desk support, including onsite visits by IT technicians each week and for emergency support.

## 5.7 Geographical Information Systems – Mapping

Geographical Information Systems, or mapping, provides a corporate service to improve efficiencies for staff and provide map information to the community as requested.

Following the GIS strategy, a single source of truth database is being developed in conjunction with enquiry software. IntraMaps enables all staff with a WSC Network login to view and annotate mapping information across the whole shire.

The GIS Officer trains staff on the use of the program, and is working across all divisions of Council to source and collate data into the SQL server database located at Coonabarabran.

Data has been sourced from the existing ArcGIS database, which had previously only been utilised by Technical Services staff within Council, property and rates database, the LEP, Land and Property Information cadastre and other state government agency information where available.

The GIS Officer has been able to prepare map layers by request on specific projects such as the Black Spot Program for road funding, and is working alongside staff from other divisions to capture data to support the WSC Asset Management Plan. Local roads across the shire have now been mapped with accurate data points, with ongoing data capture of footpaths and kerb and gutter continuing.

GIS also oversees the Residential Addressing Program, which requires local government to comply with state government policy on providing an accurate rural roadside and town street residential addressing database. The residential address database is utilised by government agencies, Emergency Services and utility services such as Telstra, and the state government has identified that the current database needs to be updated to improve addressing accuracy.



## 5.8 Communications

External communications has focussed on the use of the WSC website together with social media, all local papers across the shire, local community radio stations WCR FM (Coonabarabran) and Three Rivers FM (Dunedoo/Coolah), ABC Western Plains and Central West Radio, and a quarterly community newsletter distributed to all households across the Warrumbungle shire.

All editions of the *Coonabarabran Times*, *Dunedoo Diary* and *Coolah Diary* each feature a story on a WSC service together with a Notice advert. All editions of the *Mendooran Pride* and the *Binnaway Bush Telegraph* feature Notice advert information and a story if space allows.

The majority of administration and PA staff have been trained in uploading and editing content on the WSC website. This enables each division of council to ensure information is kept up to date and is applicable to the services provided to the community.

A staff working group has contributed towards redesigning the WSC and Warrumbungle Region website, improving the accessibility of information for residents and visitors.

Communications Plans are also prepared on request for strategic and risk management purposes for specific projects.



## 5.9 Children's and Community Services

### 5.9.1 Community Care

Warrumbungle Community Care (WCC) provides a range of services across the Shire to assist the frail aged, people with a disability and carers. Services include Community Transport, Meals on Wheels, Respite, Social Support and Home Maintenance.

These services support people to continue to live independently in their own homes. WCC provides services to almost 800 clients across the Shire. These services are provided by our dedicated team of six (6) staff and a team around 185 volunteers.

In 2015/16 financial year Warrumbungle Community Care provided the following services:

- 8,783 meals
- 4,135 hours of social support
- 1,566 hours of home maintenance
- 601 hours of respite
- 15,582 community transport trips



### 5.9.2 Connect 5

Connect Five Children's Services is externally funded by the NSW Department of Education and Communities. Connect Five Children's Services provides play sessions to families with children not yet attending school in nine (9) communities across three (3) Shires – Warrumbungle, Coonamble and Gilgandra.

In 2015/16 Connect Five Children's Services provided 174 Play Sessions at nine (9) different venues. Attendances per team rose from 378 in Term 3, 2015, up to 562 in Term 2, 2016 with total attendances for 2015/16 numbering 1,930.

As well as providing Play Sessions, Connect Five Children's Services is also a Licensed Service and that also provides Occasional Care for those who wish to attend an appointment, school, shopping or something else.

Some parents also wish to give their child the opportunity to experience a childcare setting on their own for a short period in preparation for starting pre-school. Although this is a very small part of the Service it is greatly valued by those who use it, particularly in places where there is no childcare service.

The other, very popular, part of the Service is the Mobile Toy Library. The Mobile Toy Library provides toys and equipment for enhancing children’s learning and development and may be borrowed at a Play Session or from the Office in Coonabarabran. Other agencies working with young children may also borrow from the Connect Five Children’s Services Toy Library. This is an essential service for isolated and disadvantaged families. In 2015/16 Connect Five Children’s Services successfully applied for \$5,000 worth of funding to upgrade and update the Mobile Toy Library.

In addition to the core services, Connect Five Children’s Services also supports the Mobile Pre-school class run by Yuluwirri Kids. In 2015/16 Monkey Room continued to be run under the Connect Five Children’s Services Licence with attendance levels of over 98%. Connect Five Children’s Services continues to be an essential children’s service across the three (3) Shires it services.

### 5.9.3 Yuluwirri Kids

Yuluwirri Kids is a 57 place Preschool and Long Day Care Centre that opened on 2 February, 2009. The Centre is licensed by NSW Education and Communities for a maximum of 57 children a day.

The Centre operates three (3) classrooms:

- Panda Room for 0-2 year olds. This room can accommodate up to 11 long day care students a day.
- Possum Room for 2-4 year olds. This room can accommodate up to 13 long day care students and 7 preschool students a day.
- Giraffe Room for 3 - 5year olds the year before children commence school. This room can accommodate up to six (6) long day care students and 20 preschool students each day.

A fourth Mobile Preschool classroom operates two days a week on Tuesday’s and Thursday’s at Council’s Robertson Street Campus in Coonabarabran. This Mobile Preschool was established in February 2010, in conjunction with Connect Five Children’s Services, to support Waiting Lists for three (3) to five (5) year olds who want to attend Preschool.



Over the course of the year this means that Yuluwirri Kids offers 14,350 places per annum. This equates to 325 places a week, 49 weeks a year of Long Day Care and 40 weeks a year of Preschool.

In 2015/16 Yuluwirri Kids took part in an Assessment and Rating visit conducted by the NSW Government, Department of Education. Yuluwirri Kids Preschool and Long Day Care Centre had their last Assessment and Rating visit in 2013. For the Assessment and Rating Visit an Authorised Officer completed an assessment of the service against the National Quality Standard (NQS), and the National Law and Regulations. The table below shows the improvements from the 2013 assessment to the 2016 assessment.

#### Comparison – Quality Areas 2013 vs 2016

Quality Area		Rating 2013	Rating 2016
QA1	Educational program and practice	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS
QA2	Children’s health and safety	Meeting NQS	Meeting NQS
QA3	Physical environment	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS
QA4	Staffing arrangements	Meeting NQS	Meeting NQS
QA5	Relationships with children	Meeting NQS	Meeting NQS
QA6	Collaborative partnerships with families and communities	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS
QA7	Leadership and service management	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS

As can be seen from the information in the above table the result of the 2016 Assessment and Rating Visit at Yuluwirri Kids Preschool and Long Day Care Centre is excellent. The service has not only improved in all areas, but has made significant improvements in a number of areas. The overall service rating of Meeting NQS is a significant achievement for all the staff involved in the delivery of the service. The achievement of Exceeding NQS in two (2) Quality Areas is a tremendous achievement and something that the service, and Council, should be very proud of. The result is an accurate reflection of the high quality service provided to Coonabarabran, and surrounding towns, by the team at Yuluwirri Kids Preschool and Long Day Care Centre.

### 5.9.4 Castlereagh Family Day Care

Castlereagh Family Day Care provides education and care to over 90 families, more than 120 children and is the only Family Day Care service located within the three Shires it services, being Warrumbungle Shire (covering the towns of Coonabarabran, Coolah, Baradine, Binnaway, Mendooran and Dunedoo), Coonamble Shire (Coonamble and Gulargambone) and Gilgandra Shire. Castlereagh Family Day Care is an established service and has been operating for 23 years.

Castlereagh Family Day Care currently has 15 Educators in our scheme. Three (3) Educators are based in Coonabarabran, a further three (3) Educators are based in Coolah, two (2) Educators in Coonamble, four (4) Educators in Gilgandra, one (1) Educator in Mendooran and one (1) Educator in Gulargambone.

Educators child care places fill quickly once established and most have families waiting for care. Attendances at Family Day Care in 2015/16 are the highest they have been in recent years.

Some Educators also care for children older than 13 as per special circumstances. With the demand for Family Day Care, we are constantly trying to recruit new Educators to meet the growing needs of our communities.

Parents sometimes choose to wait for Family Day Care places instead of accessing other services, as not all services meet the families or individual children's needs. The Coordination Unit ensures Educators provide high-quality education and care and this is evident with the demand for care shown within our extensive waiting list.

Family Day Care is an essential childcare service for local communities in our Shire and beyond.

### 5.9.5 Coonabarabran After School and Vacation Care

Coonabarabran After School and Vacation Care, also known as Coonabarabran Out of School Hours Care (OOSH), provides after school care for primary aged children in Coonabarabran.

Coonabarabran After School and Vacation Care provides a program of fun and interesting activities for children during the hours of 3:30pm – 5:30pm, during school terms.

In 2015/16 Coonabarabran After School and Vacation Care moved premises from St Lawrence Primary School to the Children's Services Building in Robertson Street. This has been a great move for the Service with children now having their own environments.

In 2016, interest in Coonabarabran After School and Vacation Care has increased which has resulted in an increase in enrolments. Coonabarabran After School and Vacation looks forward to even more enrolments in 2016/17.

### 5.9.6 Youth Services

The Youth Development Program continues to actively engage and empower the youth of our Shire through a variety of programs and initiatives, and through the ongoing support of agencies, organisations and community groups. A major event during the year was National Youth Week which provides the opportunity to celebrate young people's contribution to our Shire.



In 2015/16 Warrumbungle Shire Council was one of only eight (8) out of 87



Council's nominated for a Local Government Youth Week Award in the *Best Small Council with the Most Outstanding Youth Week Program* category. This is a significant achievement for the program, and reflects the excellent program of events and activities during this years National Youth Week.

### 5.9.7 Library Services

Macquarie Regional Library provides library services in Warrumbungle Shire. Library services are provided in each of our local towns – Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Mendooran.

In 2015/16 Warrumbungle Shire Council received almost \$200,000 funding for the refurbishment of the Macquarie Regional Library Branch in Dunedoo. The refurbishment has been completed and the new library is a credit to the Project Team which consisted of Macquarie Regional Library and Warrumbungle Shire Council staff.

In 2015/16 user numbers for Warrumbungle Shire were again strong. Warrumbungle Shire Council libraries recoded strong numbers in relation to:

- Number of registered users
- Proportion of the population who are registered users
- Numbers of items issues
- Number of reference / subject enquiries
- Number of items catalogued
- Number of hours the internet is used
- WiFi Hotspot Log Ins
- Online database access



In addition to regular borrowing and utilisation of the internet and other library facilities, local libraries offer a number of other activities in our local communities. In 2015/16 these once again included:

- Maintenance of a service for housebound members and members who are in aged care facilities.
- Involvement in celebration weeks such as National Youth Week, Law Week, Library and Information Week and NAIDOC Week.
- Promotion of events and activities in local towns.
- School Holidays Programs and activities.
- Engagement with local schools, childcare and other children's services – including storytime and homework sessions.
- Regular reading and craft sessions with disabled members.
- Hosting Story Time sessions for preschoolers.
- Hosting of meetings of local groups including local book clubs, craft groups and gardening groups.
- Hosting of information sessions and other activities for people of all ages.
- Erection of information displays for events including ANZAC Day.

### 5.9.8 Community Development Coordinators

Warrumbungle Shire Council provides funding for the employment of Community Development Coordinators in each of the Shires' towns. The Community Development Coordinators are employed by the local Progress Associations or Development Groups. In the past the role of the Community Development Coordinator in Coonabarabran has been filled by Council's Manager Economic Development and Tourism. In 2015/16 Council decided to allocate specific funding for the employment of a Community Development Coordinator in Coonabarabran. Throughout the year, members of the local Coonabarabran community and surrounds worked hard to establish a local Development Group / Progress Association named 2357 Partnerships. It is envisaged that in the 2016/17 financial year 2357 Partnerships will commence employment of a Community Development Coordinator, meaning that there will be a designated Community Development Coordinator, funded by Council, in each of our local towns.

The role of Community Development Coordinator includes seeking funding on behalf of their Development Group and / or Progress Association and other Community Groups, providing support to locally based community groups and organisations to coordinate and promote local events, and to provide a point of contact for Council in local towns.

In 2015/16 the Community Development Coordinators once again had a highly successful year with a large amount of funding being sourced for programs, activities and infrastructure in our local towns. A highlight of the program is the support provided to other groups in the local communities to help them to source funds. As an example, in 2015/16 the Community Development Coordinator in Baradine supported local organisations to apply for funding through the Volunteer Grants Program. 17 organisations in Baradine were successful in receiving grants through this program. A tremendous achievement for the Baradine Progress Association and local community groups.

### 5.9.9 Warrumbungle Shire Interagency

The Warrumbungle Shire Interagency continued to go from strength to strength in 2015/16. The Warrumbungle Shire Interagency meets monthly throughout the year. The purpose of the Warrumbungle Shire Interagency is to provide a forum:

- which facilitates joint action to effectively address the needs of local communities,
- to consider and discuss emerging issues that affect member organisations and those they provide services to,
- for individuals and organisations to address people who provide services to Warrumbungle Shire communities,
- for open discussion regarding opportunities to work collaboratively,
- which maximises opportunities for partnerships, networking and information sharing,
- to garner support to lobby and advocate for improved services in Warrumbungle Shire, and
- for relevant information affecting a broad range of stakeholders to be distributed to.

Membership of the Warrumbungle Shire Interagency is open to persons and organisations that provide services to the communities within Warrumbungle Shire Council. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Government agencies
- Non-Government agencies
- Other stakeholders who provide services to communities in Warrumbungle Shire

The Interagency has become a key forum for the sharing of information regarding resources and services in our local communities, and it a must attend for any new programs, services and organisations coming to our Shire. The Interagency has around 150 members with between 20-30 people regularly attending the monthly meetings.

### 5.9.10 Community Activities and Events

In 2015/16 Council was pleased to be involved in a large number of community activities and events including, but not limited to:

- Australia Day
- ANZAC Day
- Seniors Week
- National Volunteer Week
- National Youth Week
- Community Consultation Meetings
- Partnership activities with the Coonabarabran Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Children's Week
- NAIDOC Week
- Family Day Care Week
- School Holiday Program
- Health and Community Expo's
- Cobbora Transition Fund Projects



**Stefan Murru**  
**Director Corporate and Community Services**

## Part 6.0 Financial Review

### 6.1 Introduction

The 2015/16 financial year was a record financial year for Council, with Warrumbungle Shire reporting a \$6.5m accrual surplus, and a \$1 million unrestricted cash surplus. Council also completed \$15.8 million worth of capital works for the community and slightly increased cash at bank to just under \$16 million.

Despite this excellent result, the fact remains that there are external influences outside Council's control that impact on Council's financial position. These include:

- The fact that Warrumbungle Shire Council is a sparsely populated rural local government area (LGA) with a large transport infrastructure network and no corresponding economies of scale;
- An ageing and declining population;
- Cost shifting by other levels of government;
- Difficulties recruiting and retaining staff in a competitive market;
- Revenue constraints such as rate pegging; and
- Council's reliance on grant funding.

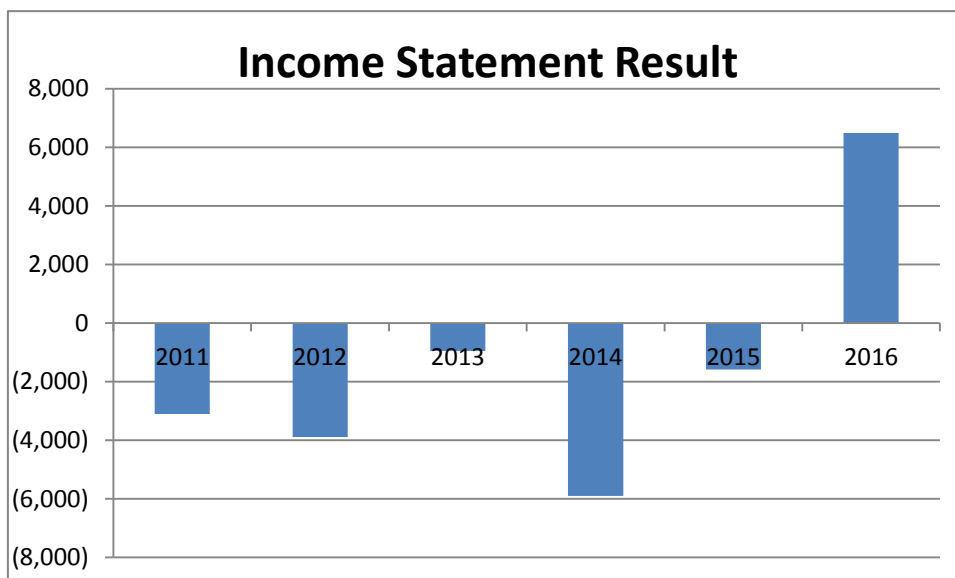
Further details of Council's final result for the 2015/16 financial year can be found below:

#### Income Statement Result

Council posted an accrual surplus (including depreciation and other non-cash items) of \$6.5m for the 2015/16 financial year. This is a significant result for Council, and represents the first accrual surplus recorded by Council in over 8 years. The reason for this surplus was twofold:

- A significant increase in grant funding from other levels of government, including \$7m of capital grants and \$2.1m higher than normal R2R funding;
- Savings of over \$1.5m as a result of Council's Fit for the Future Improvement Action Plan.

Details of Council's income statement result over the last 6 years can be found in the table below:



When compared to the original budgeted surplus of \$13m, this result represents a \$6.5m variance over budget for the 2015/16 financial year. This variance is due mainly to non receipt of approximately \$5.2m of capital grants included in the original budget. Non receipt of these grants was due to the delay in commencement of the TRRRC retirement village in Dunedoo (\$4m), and the delay in receipt of \$2.1m of grants for the construction of Alison Bridge near Coolah. Other significant variances against budget worth noting include:

- Higher than budgeted employee related expenditure due to \$738k of AASB119 adjustments to employee benefit provisions that are also recognised in the P&L as an expense. The reason for this increase was mostly due to a significant fall in the 10 year bond rate used to discount these provisions;
- Increased workers compensation payments (\$140k);
- Higher than budgeted bad and doubtful debts (\$181k);
- Considerably lower than budgeted materials and contracts expenditure (\$1.4m lower than budget) due to a large portion of Council's expenditure for the year being coded to capex.

### Cash Result (recurrent)

Details of Council's cash result against budget can be found in the table below. Figures are from Council's pre-audit Fourth Quarter QBRs:

Line Item	Budget	Actuals	Variance
Revenue	(59,479,282)	(53,700,422)	5,778,860
Expenditure	36,379,482	36,079,816	(299,666)
Capital	25,112,056	15,841,573	(9,270,483)
Loans	763,267	1,350,777	587,510
Movements in RA	(2,794,811)	(578,762)	2,216,049
<b>Total</b>	<b>(19,288)</b>	<b>(1,007,018)</b>	<b>(987,730)</b>

As can be seen from the table above, Council forecast a \$19k surplus with the final result being a surplus of \$1m. A breakdown of the result by fund can be found in the table below (note items in brackets indicate a surplus):

Line Item	Budget	Actuals	Variance
General	(19,288)	(1,007,018)	(987,730)
Water	-	(288,635)	(288,635)
Sewer	-	(128,823)	(128,823)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(19,288)</b>	<b>(1,424,476)</b>	<b>(1,405,188)</b>

It should be noted that as water and sewer funds are in effect restricted in Council's financial statements. As a result only the \$1.007m surplus from general fund is considered when calculating Council's final unrestricted cash balance, and this amount is always reduced by balance sheet movements (e.g. movements in receivables/provisions and payables).

### Capital Expenditure

Council completed a record \$15.8 worth of capital works in the 2015/16 financial year. Significant capital achievements in the 2015/16 financial year included:

- Completion of a significant amount of the Cobbora Transition Fund projects (\$1.7m);
- Near completion of the new RFS Fire Control Centre (\$1.92m)
- A significant spend on Council roads including:
  - \$3.3m on replacing timber bridges and the construction of new bridges at Mow Creek and Orana Crossing;
  - \$2.3m on pavement rehab and blackspots works on regional and local roads
  - \$700k on reseals;
  - \$616k on re-sheeting;
- \$850k on town streets, ovals and parks including over \$200k on the heavy vehicle bypass in Coolah, numerous footpath projects funded under the Active Transport program and K&G and drainage works;
- Purchase of \$2.5m in new Plant & Equipment;
- Water and sewer infrastructure to a total value of \$885k;
- Other minor works totalling over \$1m.

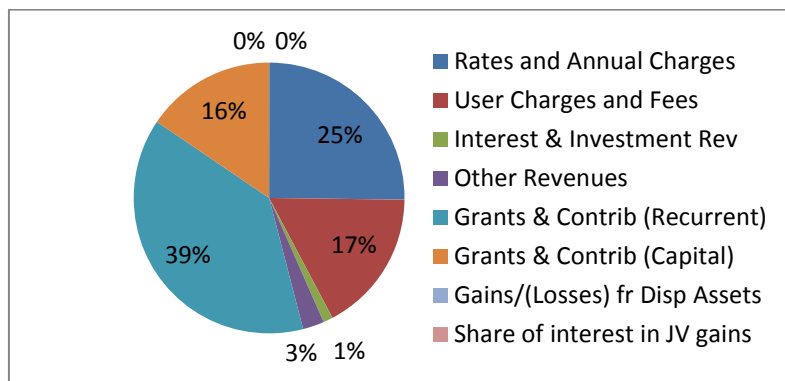
**Movements in Cash**

Cash & Cash Equivalents increased by \$320k to \$15.712m in the 2015/16 financial year, with unrestricted cash increasing by \$770k. This increase in unrestricted cash is smaller than Council’s unrestricted cash surplus due to balance sheet movements that do not go through the P&L.

**6.2 Revenue Breakdown**

Council’s \$45.414m revenue balance consists of rates and annual charges, user charges and fees, grants and contributions, interest and investment revenue and other revenue. A breakdown of Council’s revenue by sources by type is detailed in the chart below.

Revenue Breakdown by Revenue Type (2015/16)

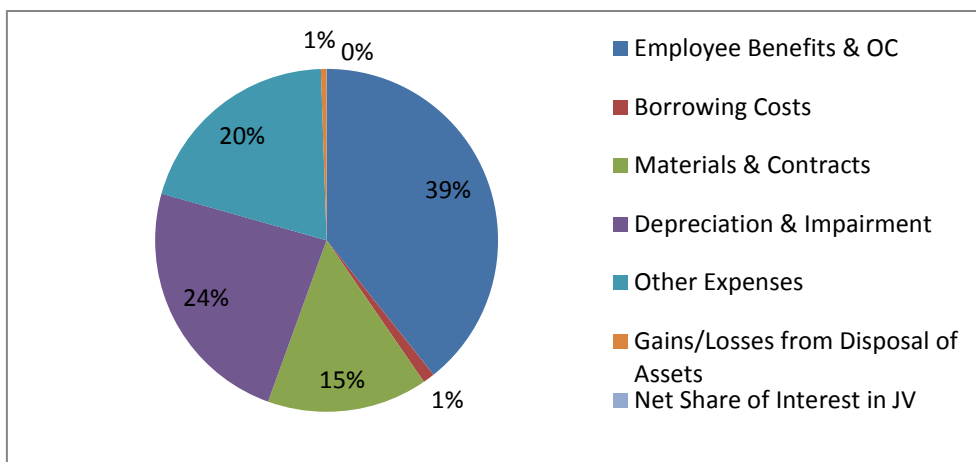


As can be seen from the chart above, Council only receives around 25% of its total revenue from rates and annual charges and is highly dependent on grant funding to finance its operations.

**6.3 Expenditure Breakdown**

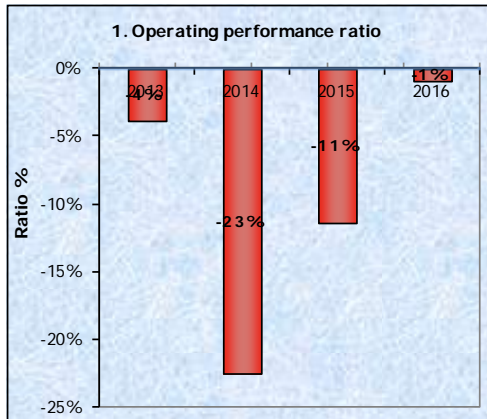
Council spent \$38.925m on the provision of services to the residents of the Shire in the 2015/16 financial year. A breakdown of this expenditure by nature (excluding capital expenditure, but including depreciation expense) can be found below:

Expenditure Breakdown by Expenditure Type (2015/16)



**6.4 Ratios**

The Office of Local Government requires Council to report a number of ratios compared to arbitrary benchmarks regardless of the Councils size or location. Whilst these benchmarks do not reflect the reality for rural councils, the ratios provide an insight to Councils operations and financial position. These ratios can be found below. Council currently satisfies four of the six benchmarks.



Benchmark: — Minimum  $\geq 0.00\%$

Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #24

■ Ratio achieves benchmark  
■ Ratio is outside benchmark

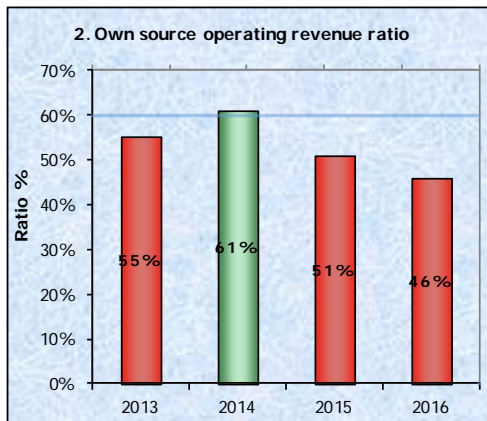
**Purpose of operating performance ratio**

This ratio measures Council's achievement of containing operating expenditure within operating revenue.

**Commentary on 2015/16 result**

**2015/16 ratio -0.92%**

This ratio has improved dramatically this year and if an allowance is made for the high, NON CASH, costs associated with ELE Provisions and Quarry & Pit Ammortisation Council would have met this benchmark



Benchmark: — Minimum  $\geq 60.00\%$

Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #24

■ Ratio achieves benchmark  
■ Ratio is outside benchmark

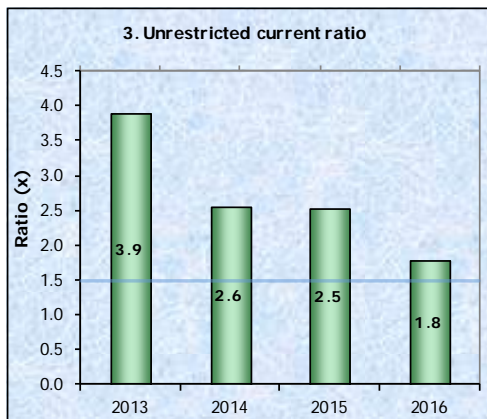
**Purpose of own source operating revenue ratio**

This ratio measures fiscal flexibility. It is the degree of reliance on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions.

**Commentary on 2015/16 result**

**2015/16 ratio 45.94%**

This ratio, whilst important, by its nature will worsen as a council receives more grant monies. Ironically it has been Council's success in attracting Grant monies that is reflected in this result.



Benchmark: — Minimum  $\geq 1.50$

Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #24

■ Ratio achieves benchmark  
■ Ratio is outside benchmark

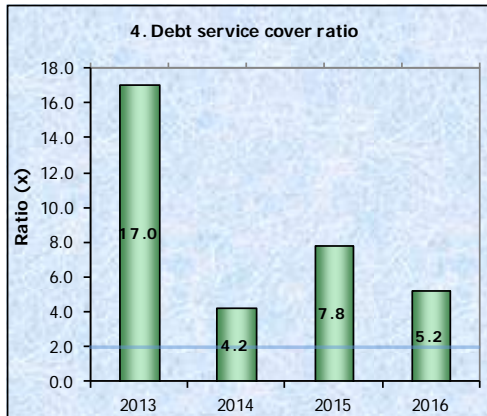
**Purpose of unrestricted current ratio**

To assess the adequacy of working capital and its ability to satisfy obligations in the short term for the unrestricted activities of Council.

**Commentary on 2015/16 result**

**2015/16 ratio 1.78x**

This ratio is still above the benchmark but has worsened due to the backlog of Capital Works coupled with a delayed Plant replacement program which are associated with Restricted Assets.



Benchmark: Minimum  $\geq 2.00$

Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #24

**Purpose of debt service cover ratio**

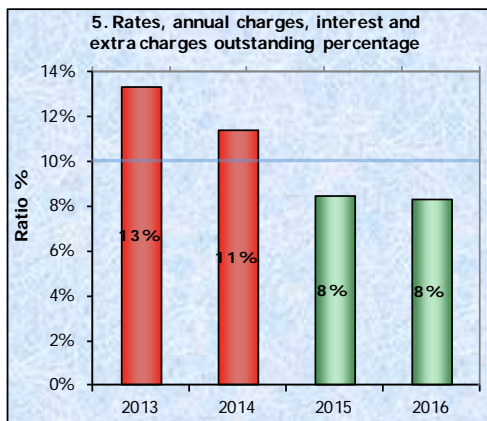
This ratio measures the availability of operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments

**Commentary on 2015/16 result**

**2015/16 ratio 5.24x**

This ratio is well above the OLG benchmark and reflects Council's commitment to use debt as required without a reliance.

Ratio achieves benchmark  
Ratio is outside benchmark



Benchmark: Maximum  $< 10.00\%$

Source for Benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #24

**Purpose of rates and annual charges outstanding ratio**

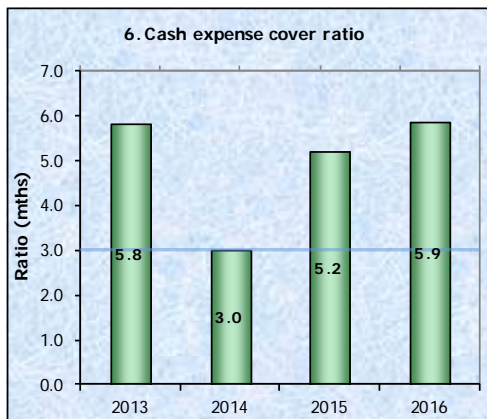
To assess the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on Council's liquidity and the adequacy of recovery efforts.

**Commentary on 2015/16 result**

**2015/16 ratio 8.32%**

Improved Debt collection has seen this ratio fall over the last few years. This improvement is a significant achievement and puts Council below the OLG threshold of 10%.

Ratio is within Benchmark  
Ratio is outside Benchmark



Benchmark: Minimum  $\geq 3.00$

Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #24

**Purpose of cash expense cover ratio**

This liquidity ratio indicates the number of months a Council can continue paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflow.

**Commentary on 2015/16 result**

**2015/16 ratio 5.88 mths**

Council's high cash balance is reflected in the increase in this ratio.

Ratio achieves benchmark  
Ratio is outside benchmark

## Part 7.0 Other Information

### 7.1 Contacting Council

Council's administration building is located at 14-22 John Street, Coonabarabran and is open weekdays from 8.30am to 4.30pm (excluding public holidays).

Council's office located at 59 Binnia Street, Coolah is also open weekdays from 8.30am to 4.30pm (excluding public holidays).

Council can be contacted by telephone on 6849 2000 (Coonabarabran office) or 6378 5000 (Coolah office) or from calls within the shire on 1300 795 099.

Council may also be contacted by facsimile on 6842 1337 or by email at [info@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au)

Correspondence is to be directed to Council at PO Box 191, Coonabarabran NSW 2357.

Visit our website [www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au)

Need to talk to us?  
We're listening....



### 7.2 Ordinary Meetings

Ordinary meetings of Council are typically held each third Thursday of every month, commencing at 10.00 am. Council meetings are convened alternatively at the Coonabarabran and Coolah Chambers. Monthly meetings of Council are advertised and attendance by members of the public is encouraged.

Special meetings are held for consideration of specific issues as required. Both ordinary and special meetings (with the exception of matters which are considered to be of a confidential nature) are open to the public and public attendance at these meetings is invited.

At the commencement of the monthly Council meeting, time is provided for an open forum to allow community members to address Council and senior staff on issues of concern.

The opportunity to speak at these public forums is advertised regularly and participants are advised that they may speak for 5 minutes, in accordance with Council's adopted Meeting Public Forum Policy. This Policy requires interested speakers to register with Council by 4.00pm on the Tuesday prior to the monthly meeting and speakers must complete an Agreement Form on the day of the forum presentation.

Councillors are encouraged to ask questions at the time of the forum presentation and the Mayor accepts written information that may be provided at that time for distribution to each Councillor.

Business papers are available each Monday preceding the monthly meeting from either the Coolah or Coonabarabran administration offices, or alternatively downloaded from Council's website.

[www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au)

### 7.3 Operational and Delivery Plan

In the 2011/12 financial year, Council was for the first time required to operate under the Office of Local Governments (OLG) new reporting framework for NSW local government known as the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP & R) Framework. This new reporting framework replaced the former Management Plan and Social Plan with an integrated framework that includes a Community Strategic Plan, a Delivery Program, an Operational Plan and a Resourcing Strategy.



The IP & R framework recognises that communities do not exist in isolation, and neither should Council's individual plans. The framework encourages councils to draw their various plans together, to understand how they interact and to get the maximum leverage from their efforts by planning holistically for the future.



The IP & R framework also opens the way for councils and their communities to have important discussions about funding priorities, service levels and preserving local identity and to plan in partnership for a more sustainable future.

### 7.3.1 Delivery Program

The Delivery Program is the document where the community's strategic goals are systematically translated into actions. The Delivery Program details the principal activities to be undertaken by the Council to implement the strategies established by the Community Strategic Plan within the resources available under the Resourcing Strategy.

The Delivery Program is a statement of commitment to the community from each newly elected council. In preparing the Delivery Program, Council is accounting for its stewardship of the community's long-term goals, outlining what it intends to do towards achieving these goals during its term of office and what its priorities will be.

The Program is designed as the single point of reference for all principal activities undertaken by Council during its term of office and details all projects and deliverables to be achieved over the following four years (2016/17-2019/20).

The Delivery Program also provides detailed service levels that Council is to meet in this 4 year timeframe.

### 7.3.2 Operational Plan

Supporting the Delivery Program is an annual Operational Plan which details projects and deliverables to be undertaken in the following year to achieve the commitments made in the Delivery Program.

The Operational Plan is in effect Council's budget for the following year (2016/17) and also includes Council's Statement of Fees and Charges for the 2016/17 financial year.



### 7.3.3 Statement of Revenue Policy Requirements

As per the requirements of s405(2) of the Act, the Operational Plan must include a statement of the Council's Revenue Policy for the year covered by the Operational Plan. These include;

- a detailed estimate of Council's income and expenditure,
- each ordinary rate and each special rate proposed to be levied, each charge proposed to be levied,
- the types of fees proposed to be charged by Council
- Council's proposed pricing methodology for determining the prices of goods and the approved fees
- the amounts of any proposed borrowings (other than internal borrowing), the sources
- from which they are proposed to be borrowed and the means by which they are proposed to be secured.

In accordance with s535 and 496 of the Act, a rate or charge must be made by resolution of Council. The proposed rates and charges are as per Council's Statement of Revenue Policy in Council's Operational Plan.

Any submissions from members of the public will be provided to Council prior to the meeting and Councillors comments and feedback is sought for any changes to be made to the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Council must consider community feedback and formally adopt the combined Delivery Program and Operational Plan.



### 7.3.4 Key Features - Operational Plan and Delivery Program

Features of Council's Budget and Delivery Program include:

- An unrestricted cash budget surplus of \$19.08k in the 2016/17 financial year;
- A combined unrestricted cash surplus of \$105.01k over the four years of the Delivery Program, although Council's cash at bank will decrease by \$1.1m over the four years as restricted assets are used to catch up on Council's asset backlog;
- An accrual surplus of \$8.936m in 2016/17 predominately due to the receipt of substantial capital grant monies;
- An ambitious capital program over the four years of \$51.67m;

Despite the continuing challenges that Council faces, Council's four year Delivery Program seeks to achieve the following:

- Progress on the new RFS Fire Control Centre in Coonabarabran estimated cost of \$3.05m;
- Construction of Allison Bridge (\$2.1 m)
- Resealing of approximately 106 km of sealed roads (\$3.2m);
- Re-sheeting of approximately 194 km of unsealed roads (\$3.4m);
- Completion of approximately 12km of pavement re-construction, pavement widening and shoulder widening at a cost of \$2.244 m on Regional Roads;
- Completion of approximately 13.2km of pavement re-construction at a cost of \$2.78m on local roads;
- Construction and rehabilitation of over 23km of water and sewer mains at a total cost of \$2.7m;
- Sewer Mains relining of \$556k
- Water & Sewer Telemetry work \$506k
- Construction and rehabilitation of reservoirs and treatment plants at a total cost of \$1.8m including replacement of water treatment clarifier in Baradine (\$961k);
- Plant replacement of \$11.5m;
- Refurbishment of Mendooran Hall, Goolhi Hall, Coonabarabran Hall and Binnaway Hall as well as Coolah VRA Shed and construction of disabled access in Coolah and Baradine (\$413k);
- Expansion of Coonabarabran Native Grove Cemetery (\$50k);



- Construction and rehabilitation of footpaths at a cost of \$600k within towns across the Shire;
- Rehabilitation of existing K&G at a cost of \$200k within towns across the Shire;
- Construction and rehabilitation of culverts and drainage at a cost of \$354k;
- Flood Levee design and construction (\$80k);
- General rehabilitation of town streets including improving street lights, replacing bins, gardens construction of cycleways and planting of trees;
- Improvements to local ovals, parks and swimming pools (\$923k);
- Construction of shire entrance signs (\$20k).
- New Mechanical Recycling Facility at a cost of \$200k

The capital deliverables above are in addition to Council's normal operations which include:

- Transport services including the management, and maintenance of over 2,600 km of local and regional roads, over 97 bridges and bridge sized culverts, an extensive network of culverts and other drainage assets, kerbs and gutters, footpaths, and quarries;
- Aged care, child care and youth development services, including Warrumbungle Community Care, Yuluwirri Kids, Castlereagh Family Day Care and Connect Five supported play groups;
- The management, and maintenance of a range of buildings and structures from town halls, playgrounds, community facilities, and meeting rooms, to aerodromes all of which provide valuable services to the community;
- Promotion of economic development and tourism within the Shire;
- Provision of water, sewerage and waste services to the residents of the Shire;
- Town planning, regulatory services, town beautification and environmental management;
- Emergency services;
- Library services;
- Road safety programs;
- Management of Public Cemeteries;
- Provision of ovals, and other sport and recreation facilities including pools and parks;
- Health, environmental and emergency bush fire services.

## 7.4 Integrated Planning and Reporting

As part of the NSW Government Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) guidelines, Warrumbungle Shire Council has republished the following;

- a 20 year Community Strategic Plan; with an associated Community Engagement Strategy
- a Resourcing Strategy that includes a Long Term Financial Plan (10 years), a Workforce Management Plan (4 years) and an Asset Management Plan (10 years);
- a 4 year Delivery Program and
- a 1 year Operational Plan.



The new framework recognises that communities do not exist in isolation, and neither should Council's individual plans. The framework encourages councils to draw their various plans together, to understand how they interact and to get the maximum leverage from their efforts by planning holistically for the future.

The new framework also opens the way for councils and their communities to have important discussions about funding priorities, service levels and preserving local identity and to plan in partnership for a more sustainable future.

Councils IP&R plans and strategies are all available on Council's website [www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au)

## 7.5 Community Strategic Plan

Warrumbungle Shire Council had a current Community Strategic Plan (CSP) *'Plan to be There' 2012-2032* however following the election of the new Council in September 2012, and given the freshness of the community consultation it was agreed by Council to undertake a desktop review and make amendments to the existing plan. The reviewed CSP was placed on public exhibition for 28 days as per legislative requirements and then endorsed by Council June 2013. The revised CSP is available on Council's website.

## 7.6 Competitive Neutrality Pricing

All levels of Government are required to apply the principle of competitive neutrality for their business operations. The principle of competitive neutrality is based on the concept of a “level playing field” between persons competing in a market place, particularly between private and public sector competitors.

Essentially, the principle is that government businesses, whether Commonwealth, State or Local, should operate without net competitive advantages over other businesses as a result of their public ownership. Council has determined its business activities as follows:

Council has not implemented Competitive Neutrality Pricing requirements as Council has no identified Category (1) business.

The following Council activities have been confirmed as Category (2) businesses under the principles of Competitive Neutrality:

- Warrumbungle Water
- Warrumbungle Sewerage
- Warrumbungle Quarry

Council has maintained a complaints handling system for Competitive Neutrality Complaints with a register to record and manage all such complaints. Council’s Records Management System is used to record, register and track complaints.

### 7.6.1 Competitive Neutrality Complaints

There were no Competitive Neutrality Complaints received and accordingly there is no outcome to report. There are no outstanding complaints.

## 7.7 Comparison of Stormwater Management

No annual charge was levied by Council for stormwater management services in the 2015/16 financial year. Council will be implementing a Stormwater Management Charge for the 2016/17 financial year.

## 7.8 Special Variation Expenditure

As no special variation was received by Council, there are no outcomes or expenditures to report.

## 7.9 Statement of Revenue Policy Requirements

As per the requirements of s405(2) of the Act, the Operational Plan must include a statement of the Council’s Revenue Policy for the year covered by the Operational Plan. These include;

- a detailed estimate of Council’s income and expenditure,
- each ordinary rate and each special rate proposed to be levied, each charge proposed to be levied,
- the types of fees proposed to be charged by Council
- Council’s proposed pricing methodology for determining the prices of goods and the approved fees



## 7.10 Privacy Statement

The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 and the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 were introduced to provide central safeguards to individual's privacy in relation to a wide variety of personal information collected and/or held by public sector agencies such as Council.

The Acts prescribe that Council may hold personal information concerning individuals for a lawful purpose that is directly related to an activity or function of Council and is necessary for that purpose.

Any information held by Council has been acquired to carry out Council's lawful and proper functions and to keep individuals informed on issues before Council, should the need arise. All such uses will be in accordance with these Acts and Council's associated Privacy Management Plan and Code.

Council's Privacy Management Plan outlines policies and practices to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Act. A copy of the Privacy Management Plan can be accessed on Council's website.

Council also incorporates appropriate information in Council's Staff Induction Manuals.

To date, no applications have been made for information under the Act and accordingly, no review regarding contravention or disclosure was required to be conducted by or on behalf of Warrumbungle Shire Council under Part 5 and the PPIP Act.



Access to personal information held by Council may be obtained by contacting Council's Privacy Officer, Mr Stefan Murru.

Council's Privacy Management Plan outlines policies and practices to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Act. A copy of the Privacy Management Plan can be accessed on Council's website. Council also incorporates appropriate information in Council's Staff Induction Manuals.

To date, no applications have been made for information under the Act and accordingly, no review regarding contravention or disclosure was required to be conducted by or on behalf of Council under Part 5 and the PPIP Act.

## 7.11 Committees

### External Committees

These committees are part of this Council's wider involvement in the region. The majority of these committees have legislative powers creating them or formal agreements between us and other Councils. It is essential that all of these committees have active elected representative involvement.

Committee	Member
Audit and Risk Management	Mayor Peter Shinton
Castlereagh Bushfire Management	Mayor Peter Shinton General Manager Steve Loane
Castlereagh Macquarie County Council	Mayor Peter Shinton Councillor Murray Coe Councillor Denis Todd (alternate)
Castlereagh Zone Liaison	Mayor Peter Shinton General Manager Steve Loane
Central Ranges Natural Gas and Telecommunications Association	Mayor Peter Shinton General Manager Steve Loane
Central West Catchment Liaison	Director Development Services Leeanne Ryan
Liverpool Range Wind Farm Community Consultation	Director Development Services Leeanne Ryan
Local Emergency Management	Director Technical Services Kevin Tighe
Macquarie Regional Library	Councillor Anne-Louise Capel Councillor Chris Sullivan
Newell Highway Task Force	Mayor Peter Shinton Councillor Denis Todd
North West Weight of Loads	Councillor Denis Todd
Orana Arts Incorporated	Councillor Anne-Louise Capel
Orana Regional Organisation of Councils	Mayor Peter Shinton General Manager Steve Loane
The Association of Mining Related Councils	Mayor Peter Shinton General Manager Steve Loane
Traffic Advisory Committee	Mayor Peter Shinton Director Technical Services Kevin Tighe
Warrumbungle Shire Liquor Accord	Councillor Victor Schmidt



Internal Committees

Committee	Member
Finance and Projects	Councillor Ron Sullivan Councillor Fred Clancy Councillor Peter Shinton Councillor Murray Coe
General Manager's Review	Mayor Peter Shinton Councillor Murray Coe Councillor Ron Sullivan Councillor Victor Schmidt
Plant Advisory	Councillor Gary Andrews Councillor Murray Coe Councillor Ron Sullivan Councillor Fred Clancy
Warrumbungle Shire Council Reserve Trust	General Manager Steve Loane Director Corporate and Community Services Stefan Murru Manager Urban Services Manager and Property and Risk

Community Committees

These committees are made up either in part or in full of community members and are set out below.

Committee	Member
Baradine Floodplain Management Advisory	Councillor Gary Andrews Councillor Denis Todd
Baradine Memorial Hall Advisory	Councillor Denis Todd
Coonabarabran Sporting Complex Advisory	Mayor Peter Shinton Councillor Fred Clancy
Robertson Oval Advisory	Councillor Murray Coe Councillor Chris Sullivan
Warrumbungle Mayor's Bushfire Appeal Advisory	Mayor Peter Shinton
Warrumbungle Pedestrian and Mobility Access Advisory	Councillor Fred Clancy
Warrumbungle Social Services Advisory	Mayor Peter Shinton
Warrumbungle Tourism and Economic Development Advisory	Councillor Fred Clancy Councillor Victor Schmidt Councillor Anne-Louise Capel (alternate)
Warrumbungle Shire Youth Council	Councillor Victor Schmidt Councillor Ron Sullivan
Warrumbungle Yuluwirri Kids Advisory	Councillor Victor Schmidt
Warrumbungle Cobbora Transition Fund (dissolved February 2016) <b>replaced with</b> Three Rivers Regional Retirement Community Section 355 Advisory Committee (TRRRC) (April 2016)	Mayor Peter Shinton Councillor Murray Coe Councillor Chris Sullivan Councillor Anne-Louise Capel
Warrumbungle Aerodromes Advisory	Councillor Denis Todd Councillor Gary Andrews
Warrumbungle Bike Plan Advisory	Councillor Anne-Louise Capel Cr Gary Andrews (alternate)



### 7.12 Auditor

Forsyths Chartered Accountants  
Armidale 2350

### 7.13 Solicitor

Clarke and Cunningham  
Coonabarabran 2357

Or specialist legal advisers as required.

### 7.14 Multicultural

Council community services provide cross cultural training to staff where appropriate. Translating and Interpreting services are available through the National Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) as required.

Across the shire there are a large number of cultural, sporting and recreational groups providing for a variety of activities and lifestyle pursuits for the community. The shire has infrastructure and support services which includes an excellent health service, access to top quality primary, secondary and tertiary education, police and emergency services, social and community services and community service organisations.

The shire has much to offer the many professionals, government workers, teachers, trades people and scientists. The nature of the agricultural and business sectors throughout the region's history has provided for a diverse and multicultural community that readily accepts new residents.

### 7.15 Indigenous



*Sculptures in the Scrub*

Warrumbungle Shire encompasses three Aboriginal language areas; the largest being the Gamilaraay, in the northern half of the Shire; Wiradjuri in the south west (Mendooran, Dunedoo area) and to a smaller extent at the very south the Wallay peoples. There are active Local Aboriginal Lands Councils in Baradine and Coonabarabran.

The Aboriginal population is predominately distributed in the northern half of the Shire and in total represents 9% of the Shires population. 3% of the Aboriginal population in the shire is aged 65 years and over, 7% aged between 24 and 64 years of age, 15% are aged between 15 and 24 years of age and 19% are aged 14 years or younger. (ABS Census, 2011).

Council provides an annual financial contribution to support NAIDOC week celebrations. Reconciliation Week was celebrated; and support provided to local organisers of community events. Council maintains communication and liaison with Aboriginal service providers, Elders Group and the local Lands Council.

## 7.16 GIPA

Council received one access application during the reporting period. Details are provided in the table below.

Table B: Number of applications by type of application and outcome\*

	Access Granted in Full	Access Granted in Part	Access Refused in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/Deny whether information is held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Personal information applications*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
% of Total	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		

\* A personal information application is an access application for personal information (as defined in clause 4 of Schedule 4 to the Act) about the applicant (the applicant being an individual).

## 7.17 Elected Member Allowance

Council's adopted policy for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Elected Members is attached to the end of this report as Attachment 1. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that there is accountability and transparency in the reimbursement of expenses incurred or to be incurred by the Councillors.

The Policy also ensures that the facilities provided to assist and support the Councillors to carry out their civic functions are reasonable.

The Policy defines travel expenses and provides for expenses such as accommodation, meals, communication expenses, incidental expenses and attendance at conferences, Australia Day functions and naturalisation ceremonies.

Council delegates attended the following conferences and civic functions:

- Annual Local Government NSW Conference - Attendees: Deputy Mayor Murray Coe, Councillor Ron Sullivan, Councillor Denis Todd and the General Manager
- National Roads Congress: Attendees Mayor Shinton, Councillor Todd and General Manager
- Mining Related Council: Attendees Mayor Shinton, General Manager

- Orana Region of Councils (OROC) Attendees: Mayor Shinton, General Manager
- Australian Citizenship Ceremony Attendees: Mayor Shinton and General Manager
- Australia Day Celebrations Attendees: Mayor Shinton, Councillors, General Manager and Council senior staff
- NAIDOC Celebrations Attendee: Mayor Shinton, General Manager and Council senior staff
- School Prefects Luncheon Attendees: Mayor Shinton, Councillor R Sullivan, Councillor Denis Todd, General Manager and senior staff.

Attendance at conferences is endorsed under Item 2.9 of the Policy for the Payment of Expenses and the Provision of Facilities to Mayors and Councillors.



### 7.18 Overseas Travel

Councillors and Staff were not involved in any overseas travel during the year.

## 7.19 Contracts

Council has awarded the following contracts during the financial year that are required to be reported.

Employment contracts and contracts valued at less than \$150,000.00 are not required to be detailed.

This Register of Contracts details all contracts valued at \$150,000 or more, for projects, goods and services, or the sale, purchase or lease of real property.

Contractor	Contract Details & Purpose	Value/YTD	Start Date	Duration
Stabilised Pavements	Hydrate Lime Stabilisation	190,934	Annual Works	
BMR Quarries	Material Production	384,574	1/07/2015	30/12/2015
Bridging Australia	Baradine Creek Bridge	840,406	13/10/2014	30/06/2016
Bridging Australia	Worrigal Creek Bridge Contract	389,224	13/10/2014	
Bridging Australia	Progress Claim No 3 for Contract No 2016/05 Ross	564,074	17/12/2015	
Coona Fuel & Gas	Diesel & Gas Supplied	866,016	1/07/2015	30/12/2015
Coona Waste Disposal	Refuse Collection & Management	385,178		30/06/2016
Donnelly Mining and Civil	Replacement of Roof on Water Reservoir	173,633	17/09/2015	
Fulton Hogan Australia Pty Ltd	Supply of Bitumen Emulsion	1,488,565	1/07/2015	30/06/2016
JT Fossey Sales Pty Ltd	P9144 Crane Tipper	199,349	Replacement by tender	31/08/2016
JT Fossey Sales Pty Ltd	P9170 Water Truck & Rego Costs	191,673	Replacement by tender	30/09/2016
MAAS Constructions (Dubbo) Pty Limited	Rural Fire Service Control Centre shed in Coonabarabran	2,325,065	17/12/2015	30/06/2017
Murray Constructions	Design and Construction of Orana Road Bridge	990,555	20/08/2015	
Tracserv Dubbo Pty Ltd	Paveline Autopatcher	223,715	Replacement by tender	31/08/2016
Volvo Trucks Australia	P181001 Garbage Truck	382,812	Replacement by tender	30/05/2016
Tamworth Regional Council	IT managed services	326,057	30/06/2016	2013/16
Boral Concrete	Supply products for roads	652,294	2015/16	30/06/2015
Statecover	Workers compensation insurance	736,257	2015/16	Annual Renewal
Origin Energy Electricity	Street lighting power	374,665	2015/16	Ongoing
N & B Egan Pty Ltd	Council Contractor	217,163	2015/16	Annual Renewal
Statewide Mutual	Insurance	802,824	2015/16	Annual Renewal
TP & BF Palmer	Council Contractor	182,578	2015/16	Annual Renewal
Telstra	Telephones, mobiles, Ipads	209,127	2015/16	August 2016
Boral	Quarry lease and royalties	Min. 80,000	2015/16	
Vocus Pty Ltd	Data link	176,549	2015/16	March 2016

## 7.20 Private Works

No subsidised private works were carried out by Council during the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.

## 7.21 Contributions and Donations

Organisation	Amount \$
2WCR FM 99.5	520
3 Rivers Radio Station	520
Art Unlimited - Dunedoo Lions	500
Australasian Conference Association	500
Baradine Central School	70
Baradine Golf Club	1,000
Baradine PA & H Association	50
Baradine School Band	250
Belar Creek War Memorial	500
Binnaway Central School	70
Binnaway Jockey Club	1,000
Binnaway PAH & I Association Inc.	50
Binnaway Preschool Inc.	500
Binnaway Rail Heritage Group	500
Binnaway Showground Management	250
Bugaldie Memorial Hall	500
Catholic Parish of St Michaels	70
Coolah Central School	70
Coolah District Development	1,000
Coolah Lions Club	500
Coolah Sacred Heart Primary	70
Coolah VHF & Community Radio	520
Coonabarabran Amateur Swimming Club	500
Coonabarabran DPS & Family History Group Inc.	500
Coonabarabran Drop In Centre	500
Coonabarabran High School	70
Coonabarabran Jockey Club	1,000
Coonabarabran Junior Rugby	500
Coonabarabran Military & Cartridge Collectors Inc.	500
Coonabarabran Public School	70
Dunedoo & District Dev Group	1,500
Dunedoo Amateur Swimming Club	220
Dunedoo Area Community Group	798
Dunedoo Central School	70
Dunedoo Sports Club	500
Dunedoo TAFE	70
Keep Australia Beautiful (NSW)	470
Local Government NSW – Bathurst Regional Council	638
Mendooran Central School	70
Mendooran PA & H Association Inc.	50
Mendooran Singers Association	220
Mendooran Tennis Club	500

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Organisation	Amount \$
Mendooran Touch Football Association Inc.	500
Mendooran Turf Club	1,000
Mendooran Youth Group	500
Mullaley Gymkhana Association Inc.	500
Neilrex Community Hall	500
Neilrex Tennis Club	700
New England Institute of TAFE	70
Northern Inland Academy Sporty	360
Northwest Equestrian Expo	1,000
Orbital Swing Band	1,000
Rock`N` At The Racecourse Co	1,000
St Johns School	70
St Lawrence's Central School	70
Warrumbungle Arts And Craft	1,000
Warrumbungle Shire Council - Rates	11,933
Wages – Life Education Van	639
Warrumbungle Wheelers Inc.	500





Council is also part of Statewide and State Cover which are Mutual for the provision of public liability, property insurance, fidelity guarantee and workers compensation insurance, fidelity guarantee and workers compensation.

### **7.25 Compliance With Planning Agreements**

Council does not have any planning Agreements in force as per Section 93G(5) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

### **7.26 Agency Information Guide**

Council reviewed and endorsed its Agency Information Guide in June 2016.

A copy of Council's current 2016 Agency Information Guide can be obtained from the Customer Service Desk at the Administration building at 14-22 John Street, Coonabarabran 2357, or at the Coolah office at 59 Binnia Street, Colah NSW 2843, or can be accessed via council's website [www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au) .

The agency information guide is a summary of what an agency does, how it does it and the type of information it holds and generates through the exercise of its functions, with a particular focus on how those functions affect members of the public.



## Appendix 1.0 Payment of Expenses Policy

### PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO MAYORS AND COUNCILLORS

(Pursuant to Sections 12, 23A, 252, 253 and 254 of the Local Government Act and Clauses 217 and 403 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005)

#### **Part 1 - INTRODUCTION**

##### Title and Commencement of the Policy

This Policy shall be cited as the Policy for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors and is effective from 19 November 2015 and replaces the previous policy titled Policy for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors adopted by Council on 20 November 2014.

##### Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that there is accountability and transparency in the reimbursement of expenses incurred or to be incurred by the Councillors. The Policy also ensures that the facilities provided to assist and support the Councillors to carry out their civic functions are reasonable.

##### Objectives and Coverage of the Policy

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- Provide a guide to councillors expenses and facilities
- Outline the process for paying expenses so that they can be properly recorded, reported and audited
- Comply with the guidelines issued by the Office of Local Government.

In this Policy, unless otherwise stated, the expression “Councillor” refers to all Councillors of Warrumbungle Shire Council including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

##### Basis of this Policy

The relevant legislative provisions for this policy are set out below. In this legislation the expression “year” means the period from 1 July to the following 30 June.

#### **Local Government Act 1993**

##### **• 252 Payment of expenses and provision of facilities**

- (1) *Within 5 months after the end of each year, a council must adopt a policy concerning the payment of expenses incurred or to be incurred by, and the provision of facilities to, the mayor, the deputy mayor (if there is one) and the other councillors in relation to discharging the functions of civic office.*
- (2) *The policy may provide for fees payable under this Division to be reduced by an amount representing the private benefit to the mayor or a councillor of a facility provided by the council to the mayor or councillor.*
- (3) *A council must not pay any expenses incurred or to be incurred by, or provide any facilities to, the mayor, the deputy mayor (if there is one) or a councillor otherwise than in accordance with a policy under this section.*
- (4) *A council may from time to time amend a policy under this section.*
- (5) *A policy under this section must comply with the provisions of this Act, the regulations and any relevant guidelines issued under section 23A.*

##### **• 253 Requirements before policy concerning expenses and facilities can be adopted or amended**

- (1) *A council must give public notice of its intention to adopt or amend a policy for the payment of expenses or provision of facilities allowing at least 28 days for the making of public submissions.*
- (2) *Before adopting or amending the policy, the council must consider any submissions made within the time allowed for submissions and make any appropriate changes to the draft policy or amendment.*
- (3) *Despite subsections (1) and (2), a council need not give public notice of a proposed amendment to its policy for the payment of expenses or provision of facilities if the council is of the opinion that the proposed amendment is not substantial.*
- (4) *Within 28 days after adopting a policy or making an amendment to a policy for which public notice is required to be given under this section, a council is to forward to the Director-General:*
  - (a) *a copy of the policy or amendment together with details of all submissions received in accordance with subsection (1), and*

- (b) a statement setting out, for each submission, the council's response to the submission and the reasons for the council's response, and
  - (c) a copy of the notice given under subsection (1).
- (5) A council must comply with this section when proposing to adopt a policy each year in accordance with section 252 (1) even if the council proposes to adopt a policy that is the same as its existing policy.

## **Part 2 - PAYMENT OF EXPENSES**

### **Allowances and expenses**

Council does not provide general expense allowances to Councillors. Councillors are entitled to the expenses set out in this policy provided that they satisfy the stated requirements.

This Policy is intended to cover most situations where a Councillor reasonably incurs expenses in discharging the functions of civic office.

The payment of expenses and reimbursement of expenses under this Policy shall only be in respect of costs directly associated with discharging the functions of civic office.

### **2.1 Establishment of Monetary Limits and Standards**

This policy identifies and publishes monetary limits and standards applicable to the payment of various expenses to Councillors. This allows members of the public to know the expected cost of providing services to Councillors and to make comment during the public consultation phase of making or amending the policy. It also avoids the situation where Councillors incur expenditure that is unforeseen or considered unreasonable by other Councillors and the public.

Monetary limits prescribed in this Policy set out the maximum amount payable in respect of any expense or facility.

Where a Councillor incurs expenses in the course of discharging their civic office responsibilities, such expenses will be reimbursed. Typical examples of such expenses include:

- Course fees
- Fares / parking / tolls
- Accommodation
- Meals
- Incidentals, including telephone or facsimile charges, internet charges, laundry and dry cleaning etc. while attending conferences, seminars etc.

Wherever possible, every effort should be made to minimise the extent of such expenses to a reasonable level. Furthermore, in the majority of cases course/conference fees and accommodation will be pre-booked, negating the need for out-of pocket expenses to be incurred.

For accommodation or meals that Council has not prepaid, and for incidental expenses, Council will reimburse expenses incurred while at attachment conference, seminars or official functions to the limits of the allowances set out in the Australian Tax Office's Taxation Determination TD 2015/14 or such determinations or policies of the Australian Tax Office that supersede it.

The limits will be applied as follows:

- Where Councillors' meals are not prepaid by Council or are not included in the seminar, conference, event or briefing fee, the monetary limits per day for meals are those set out under 'Food and Drink' in Table 3 paragraph 11 of TD 2015/14 (see Appendix A attached) or such determination or policies of the Australian Tax Office that supersede it. (As at July 2015 – Meal Allowance (per day) Breakfast \$33.25; Lunch \$47.00; Dinner \$65.95)
- Where Councillors incur incidental expenses, such as phone call and similar expenses, the monetary limits per day for those expenses are the rates set out under 'Incidentals' in Table 3 of paragraph 11 of TD 2015/14 or such determinations or policies of the Australian Tax Office that supersede it. (As at July 2015 – Incidental Expenses (per day) \$26.80)

- Where Councillors' accommodation expenses are not prepaid by Council or are not included in the seminar, conference, event or briefing fee, the monetary limits per day for those expenses are those set out under 'Accommodation' in Tables 3 and 4 (see Appendix A attached) of paragraph 11 of TD 2015/14 or such determinations or policies of the Australian Tax Office that supersede it.

With the approval of the Mayor and General Manager, a Councillor may expend more than the individual monetary limits per day for meals and incidental expenses, provided that the overall monetary limit per day in that case will be the sum of all of the monetary limits per day for meals and incidental expenses. On completion of a discretionary trip or attendance, Councillors should provide a written report to Council on the aspects of the attendance that are relevant to Council's business and/or the local community. A report is not required for the annual conference of the Local Government and Shires Associations.

Where applicable the standard of any equipment, facility or service to be provided shall be to the maximum standard prescribed in this Policy.

### **2.2 Requirement for receipts**

Council will not reimburse any expenses unless a receipt or tax invoice is produced and the necessary claim forms completed.

### **2.3 Payment of Reimbursed claims**

Councillors are to submit all claims for reimbursement, including all travel expenses, to the General Manager or delegate in a form and manner acceptable to the General Manager in the circumstances to enable full assessment of the claim on a monthly basis and these will be paid with their monthly allowance. Tax invoices and receipts are to be supplied to support claims. All payments to Councillors will be via direct deposit to their nominated bank account. Councillors are to seek reimbursement for their expenses within three (3) months of the expense being incurred.

Should a determination be made that a claim should not be paid, the General Manager shall explain such decision to the Councillor and should the Councillor still believe that the claim should be paid, in part or in full, it shall be considered that a dispute exists.

In the event of a dispute at any time regarding this Policy, the parties to the dispute shall provide a written report on the nature of the dispute. The General Manager shall submit such reports to the next meeting of Council to have the dispute determined by a resolution of Council having regard to this Policy, the Act and any other relevant law. The decision of Council shall be binding on all of the parties.

### **2.4 Accommodation and meal expenses**

Councillors shall be accommodated in the hotel where the conference, seminar, or training course is being held or the nearest hotel to it that is of a similar standard, or as authorised by the host organiser where the conference is not located within the Sydney metropolitan area. Accommodation shall be provided at the rate of a double room.

Such attendance to be confirmed by Council with reimbursement of costs and expenses to be made upon the production of appropriate receipts and/or tax invoices and completion of the required claim forms. Alternatively, accommodation can be booked by Council order form and allowance for incidental expenses as provided under clause (2.5).

### **2.5 Incidental Expenses**

Incidental expenses such as public transport fares, parking fees, phone/fax expenses and expenses incurred as the result of the purchase of refreshments during meetings related to council business or meals not included in the registration fees for conferences or similar functions, will be reimbursed by Council on production by the Councillor of the relevant receipts together with an approved claim form in accordance with Table 3 of paragraph 11 of TD 2015/14 (see clause 2.1).

Council will not meet any expenses for alcohol, cigarettes or personal requirements. Council will not fully fund any activity where the Councillor is not in attendance for at least 90% of the specified activity. Other than in the most exceptional circumstances, where Councillor's expenses have been met by Council but the

Councillor does not attend at least 90% of the activity, that Councillor will be required to show cause why they should not reimburse Council for any costs incurred.

### **2.6 Payment of expenses for spouses, partners and accompanying persons**

In this clause accompanying person means a person who has a close personal relationship with a Councillor and/or provides carer support to the Councillor.

Where the attendee is accompanied at a conference or seminar by his or her spouse or partner or accompanying person, the attendee will be required to meet all costs associated with their spouse or partner or accompanying person's travel expenses, additional accommodation expenses, tours and attendance unless otherwise resolved by Council.

Council will meet the reasonable costs of spouses and partners or an accompanying person for attendance at official council functions that are of a formal and ceremonial nature. Examples would be Australia Day award ceremonies, citizenship ceremonies and civic receptions. Such functions would be those that a Councillor's or General Manager's spouse, partner or accompanying person could be reasonably expected to attend.

By resolution of Council, costs and expenses incurred by the Mayor, Councillors (or General Manager or nominee) for other events or functions on behalf of their spouse, partner or accompanying person shall be reimbursed if the cost or expense relates specifically to the ticket, meal, travel and accommodation and/or direct cost of attending the function.

### **2.7 Payments in advance**

Councillors may request payment in advance in anticipation of expenses to be incurred in attending conferences, seminars and training away from home or for the cost of service associated with a civic duty. Councillors must fully reconcile all expenses against the cost of the advance.

Within one (1) week of incurring the cost and/or returning home the Councillor shall submit the details to the General Manager for verification and pay back to Council any unspent money. The level of the supporting documentation is to be commensurate with the nature of the expenditure. The maximum value of a cash advance is \$563.20.

### **2.8 Approval arrangements**

Approval for discretionary trips and attendance at conferences and the like should be where possible, approved by a full meeting of the Council. If this is not possible then the approval should be given jointly by the Mayor and the General Manager. If the Mayor requires approval to travel outside of council meetings it should be given jointly by the Deputy Mayor or another Councillor and the General Manager.

### **2.9 Attendance at seminars and conferences**

Council has allocated \$31,000 to fund attendance at conferences, investigatory delegations and similar events. However, Council may agree to allocate additional funds in specific cases where it decides that there is a benefit to council from the attendance.

The following seminars, conferences and meetings are endorsed for attendance by council representatives:

- Annual conference of the Local Government NSW (Three (3) Councillors and General Manager)
- Roads Congress (Two (2) Councillors and General Manager)
- OROC meetings
- Country Mayor's Association meetings
- Mining Related Councils (Mayor and General Manager)

After returning from the conference, Councillors or a member of council staff accompanying the councillor/s, should provide a written report to council on the aspects of the conference relevant to council business and/or the local community.

No written report is required for the Annual Conferences of the Local Government and Shires Association. Requests for attendance at other conferences or seminars should be lodged in writing outlining the benefits for Council.

Council will meet the costs of conference / seminar registration fees including the costs of related official lunches and dinners and associated tours where they are relevant to the business and interests of the Council. Council will also meet the reasonable cost of transportation and accommodation associated with attendance at the conference and Council shall meet the cost of breakfast, lunch and dinner for Councillors where any of the meals are not provided as part of the conference, seminar or training course.

### **2.10 Registration fees**

Registration fees for attendance at Council approved conferences and seminars will be paid by Council. These fees will include the costs of related official lunches and dinners and associated tours where they are relevant to the business and interests of the council.

### **2.11 Travel Expenses**

Council will meet all reasonable costs of transportation to and from conferences and seminars when they are not included in the conference fees. Councillors are entitled to use Taxis provided that the cost of a single trip does not exceed \$150 (including GST) unless approval is granted by the General Manager in exceptional circumstances.

All travel by councillors should be undertaken by utilising the most direct route and the most practicable and economical mode of transport subject to any personal medical considerations.

Travel arrangements can include the use of a private vehicle, public transport, taxis, or travel using a council vehicle. Costs associated with parking fees and road tolls will be refunded on production of a receipt. The driver is personally responsible for all traffic or parking fines incurred while travelling in private or council vehicles on council business.

Claims for travelling expenses under this Policy shall include details of:

- Date and place of departure
- Date and place of arrival
- Distance travelled
- Fares and parking fees paid
- Amount claimed as travelling allowances
- Total amount of claim

Travel in a Councillor's own vehicle to Council and Committee meetings, formal or social functions or activities or other meetings involving the community whilst representing Council where attendance is approved by the Mayor and/or General Manager is to be paid at the per kilometre rate payable for claims by staff in the Local Government (State) Award.

Where the approved meeting, function or activity is within the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary, reimbursement shall be on the basis of the distance from the Councillor's principal place of residence (if it is within the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary) to the venue or, if the Councillor resides outside the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary, from the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary to the venue. Where the Councillor uses his/her own vehicle to travel to an approved function that is outside the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary then council's reimbursement will be based on the total distance travelled from residence to venue and return if the Councillor resides within the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary. If the Councillor does not reside within the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary, then Council will reimburse the distance either:

- a) from the Councillor's residence to the venue, or
- b) from the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary closest to the Councillor's residence to the venue, whichever is the lesser.

Claims for the above expenses require the submission of a claim form signed by the claimant detailing date, distance and reason for journey(s) with such claims to be submitted monthly.

Travel associated with authorised conferences, seminars and meetings may be undertaken by Council vehicle (where available) subject to prior approval by the General Manager, with fuel expenses etc. to be met by Council.

Council will meet the cost of return economy air travel or equivalent payment for attendance at authorised conferences/seminars.

Elected members using private vehicles will be paid the kilometre rate to a maximum payment, which is not to exceed economy class air fares to and from the particular destination.

All travel by Councillors that involves an overnight stay of one or two nights must be authorised in advance by the Mayor and General Manager (or in the event that the Mayor requires approval to travel outside of council meetings approval should be given jointly by the deputy mayor or another councillor and the general Manager.)

All travel by Councillors that involves an overnight stay of more than two nights must be authorised in advance by the Council.

Where travel for Council business or approved activities outside of the local government area is to be undertaken – arrangements for both travel and accommodation must be made through the General Manager and will be by the most practical method.

Prior approval of travel should generally be required for interstate travel. The application for approval should include full details of the travel, including itinerary, costs and reasons for the travel.

Overseas travel on behalf of council must be approved by a meeting of the full council prior to a councillor undertaking the trip.

### **2.12 Attendance at dinners and other non-council functions**

The costs of attendance by Councillors at dinners and other non-council functions which provide briefings to councillors from key members of the community, politicians and business will only be met by Council when the function is relevant to the council's interests and authorised by Council in advance.

No payment shall be made by Council for attendance by a councillor at any political fundraising event, for any donation to a political party or candidate's electoral fund, or for some other private benefit. Any expenses to be incurred that would be directed towards such events and activities will not be approved for payment.

### **2.13 Gifts**

Where it is appropriate for councillors **to give** a gift or benefit, these gifts and benefits will be of token value and in accordance with council's Code of Conduct.

### **2.14 Training and Educational expenses**

Council will only meet the costs of training or attendance at an educational course that is directly related to the Councillor's civic functions and responsibilities and is approved by Council prior to undertaking such training or attendance. Council has allocated \$5,000 to fund relevant training and educational courses and attendances at briefings.

### **2.15 Telephone and internet expenses**

Except as otherwise set out in this policy, Council will not reimburse Councillors for telephone expenses incurred in using their private/mobile phones for Council business. Phones are available for Councillors' use at the Coolah and Coonabarabran offices of Council.

### **2.16 Mobile telephone**

Council shall meet the cost of a mobile telephone for the Mayor, for which Council shall pay rental and 100% of metered calls charged against that service, to a limit of \$205 per month for Council business calls and \$20 per month for incidental personal calls, provided that the number is available to be given out for general public information.

### **2.17 iPads**

Council shall meet the cost of providing and maintaining a mobile iPad device costs of communication via computer OR provision of an iPad with internet connectivity.

### **2.18 Insurance Provisions**

Council will maintain adequate insurance against public liability and professional indemnity for matters arising out of Councillors' performance of their civic duties and/or exercise of their council functions.

Council shall pay the insurance policy excess in respect of any claim made against a Councillor arising from Council business where any claim is accepted by Council's insurers, whether defended or not.

### **2.19 Legal Expenses and Obligations**

Council shall, if requested, indemnify or reimburse the reasonable legal expenses to a maximum of \$200,000 of:

- a Councillor defending an action arising from the performance in good faith of a function under the Local Government Act; or
- a Councillor defending an action in defamation provided the statements complained of were made in good faith in the course of exercising a function under the Act, provided that the outcome of the legal proceedings is favourable to the councillor; or
- a Councillor for proceedings before the Local Government Pecuniary Interest and Disciplinary Tribunal or an investigative body provided the subject of the proceedings arises from the performance in good faith of a function under the Act and the matter before investigative or review body has proceeded past any initial assessment phase to a formal investigation or review. In the case of a conduct complaint made against a councillor, legal costs will only be made available where a matter has been referred by the General Manager to a conduct reviewer/conduct review committee to make formal enquiries into that matter in accordance with the procedures in the Code of Conduct. In the case of a pecuniary interest or misbehaviour matter legal costs will only be made available where a formal investigation has been commenced by the Division of Local Government. Legal costs must only be provided where the investigative or review body makes a finding that is not substantially unfavourable to the councillor. This can include circumstances in which a matter does not proceed to a finding.

Legal expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising out of the performance by a Councillor of his or her functions under the Act shall be distinguished from expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising merely from something that a Councillor has done during his or her term in office. For example, expenses arising from an investigation as to whether a Councillor acted corruptly by using knowledge of a proposed rezoning for private gain is not covered by this provision.

Council shall not meet the costs for any legal assistance in respect of legal proceedings initiated by a Councillor in any circumstances.

Council must not meet the legal costs of a councillor seeking advice in respect of possible defamation, or in seeking a non-litigious remedy for possible defamation.

Council shall not meet the costs of any enquiry, investigation or hearing initiated at the request of, or to any legal proceedings taken by, Council itself.

### **2.20 Special requirements of Councillors – Care and Other Related Expenses**

Council shall meet reasonable expenses associated with any special requirements of a Councillor, such as disability and access needs, in order to discharge the functions of civic office.

Council will meet reasonable costs of facilitating access to council premises, functions and activities where, by reason of disability, care-giver role or other special need, a councillor would not otherwise have equity of access with other councillors. Such support will allow the fullest participation reasonably possible. Council will reimburse the reasonable cost of care arrangements, including childcare expenses and the care of elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate family members of councillors to allow councillors to undertake their council business obligations. The total amount paid to a Councillor under this provision shall not exceed \$3,000 per year of term.

## **Part 3 – PROVISION OF FACILITIES**

Councillors shall not generally obtain private benefit from the provision of equipment and facilities. However, incidental personal use of Council equipment and facilities may occur from time to time without requiring reimbursement of the cost by a Councillor. No entitlement under this Policy shall be treated as being a private benefit that requires a reduction in the Mayoral fee or the Councillors fee.

Unless otherwise authorised in this Policy, if a Councillor does obtain a private benefit for the use of a facility

provided by Council the Councillor shall be invoiced for the amount of the private benefit with repayment to be in accordance with Council's normal terms. The value of the private benefit shall be determined by Council in non-confidential session of a Council meeting.

Equipment, facilities and services provided under this Policy shall not be used to produce election material or for any other political purposes.

### **3.1 Mayoral Expenses, Facilities, Equipment and Services**

The Mayor will be entitled to receive the following benefits:-

- a) Provision of a Council vehicle for appropriate use by the Mayor to carry out his duties as Mayor. Council to meet all costs associated with the provision of the vehicle. The Mayor will have no right of private use of this vehicle with the exception that he may use the vehicle for limited private use travel within the Shire only when attending different functions on the same day.
- b) Secretarial services relating to the discharge of his/her civic functions, including use of official stationery, writing pads, pens, diaries, folders and postage of official correspondence.
- c) Administrative assistance associated with civic functions, meetings and the like.
- d) Office refreshments
- e) Supply of Name Badges, Business Cards, Diaries and Attaché Case.

### **3.2 Elected Members – Facilities, Equipment and Services**

The Councillors including the Deputy Mayor are entitled to receive the following benefits:-

- a) Use of Council Chambers, telephone and limited hospitality facilities (tea and coffee) for Council business or functions or community consultation.
- b) Secretarial services relating to the discharge of his/her civic functions, including use of official stationery where authorised by Mayor or General Manager.
- c) Postage of official correspondence dealing with Council business.
- d) Access to facsimile and photocopying facilities for Council related business.
- e) Transport to official functions when deputising for the Mayor (ie) Use of Mayoral vehicle if required.
- f) Supply of Name Badges and Note Books.

### **3.3 Bluetts Handbook**

Provide all Councillors with a copy after their election.

### **3.4 Policies**

Policies are available on Council's website.

## **Part 4 – OTHER MATTERS**

### **4.1 Acquisition and return of equipment and facilities by Councillors**

At the completion of their term of office, during extended leave of absence or cessation of civic duties, Councillors are to return equipment and other facilities to the General Manager.

At the cessation of their duties, the option to purchase at a fair market price or written down value of equipment previously allocated to Councillors will be subject to determination by Council.

### **4.2 Status of the Policy**

This Policy replaces the previous version of the Policy adopted by Council on 20 November 2014 Minute No. 160/1415.

The Policy shall only be amended at a subsequent meeting of Council, subject to compliance with the Act.



Appendix A

<b>Table 3: Employee's annual salary – \$205,301 and above</b>				
<b>Place</b>	<b>Accomm. \$</b>	<b>Food and drink \$ B'fast 33.25 Lunch 47.00 Dinner 65.95</b>	<b>Incidentals \$</b>	<b>Total \$</b>
Adelaide	209	146.20	26.80	382
Brisbane	257	146.20	26.80	430
Canberra	246	146.20	26.80	419
Darwin	287	146.20	26.80	460
Hobart	195	146.20	26.80	368
Melbourne	265	146.20	26.80	438
Perth	299	146.20	26.80	472
Sydney	265	146.20	26.80	438
Country centres	\$195, or the relevant amount in Table 4 if higher	146.20	26.80	Variable – see Table 4 if applicable

**Table 4: High cost country centres – accommodation expenses**

Country centre	\$	Country centre	\$
Albany (WA)	179	Jabiru (NT)	192
Alice Springs (NT)	150	Kalgoorlie (WA)	159
Bordertown (SA)	135	Karratha (WA)	347
Bourke (NSW)	165	Katherine (NT)	134
Bright (VIC)	152	Kingaroy (QLD)	134
Broome (WA)	260	Kununurra (WA)	202
Bunbury (WA)	155	Mackay (QLD)	161
Bumle (TAS)	160	Maitland (NSW)	152
Calms (QLD)	140	Mount Isa (QLD)	160
Carnarvon (WA)	151	Mudgee (NSW)	135
Castlemaine (VIC)	140	Newcastle (NSW)	155
Chinchilla (QLD)	143	Newman (WA)	195
Christmas Island (WA)	180	Norfolk Island (NSW)	329
Cocos (Keeling) Islands (WA)	285	Northam (WA)	163
Colac (VIC)	138	Orange (NSW)	155
Dalby (QLD)	144	Port Hedland (WA)	295
Dampier (WA)	175	Port Lincoln (SA)	170
Derby (WA)	190	Port Macquarie (NSW)	140
Devonport (TAS)	140	Port Pine (SA)	140
Emerald (QLD)	156	Queanbeyan (NSW)	133
Esperance (WA)	135	Roma (QLD)	139
Exmouth (WA)	255	Thursday Island (QLD)	200
Geraldton (WA)	175	Wagga Wagga (NSW)	141
Gladstone (QLD)	187	Welpa (QLD)	138
Gold Coast (QLD)	149	Whyalla (SA)	156
Gosford (NSW)	140	Wilpena-Pound (SA)	167
Halls Creek (WA)	199	Wollongong (NSW)	136
Hervey Bay (QLD)	157	Wonthaggi (VIC)	138
Horn Island (QLD)	200	Yulara (NT)	280

**POLICY DOCUMENT CONTROL:**

Policy		Resolution	Date
Payment of Expenses Policy	Endorsed	233	16 June 2005
Payment of Expenses Policy	Amendment	49	18 August 2005
Payment of Expenses Policy	Amendment	393	18 May 2006
Payment of Expenses Policy	New Policy endorsed	199	17 December 2009
Payment of Expenses Policy	Revised Version	123	21 October 2010
Payment of Expenses Policy	Revised Version	181/1112	24 November 2011
Payment of Expenses Policy	Revised Version – 4	235/1213	21 February 2013
Payment of Expenses Policy	Revised Version – 5	168/1314	21 November 2013
Payment of Expenses Policy	Revised Version – 6	160/1415	20 November 2014
Payment of Expenses Policy	Revised Version – 7	128/1516	19 November 2015