

2016/17

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



The 2016 -17 year started with a meeting of representatives from Gilgandra, Coonamble, Warrumbungle, National Parks and Wildlife, Siding Spring and Regional Development Australia with Patrick McGeever, Geologist from UNESCO. The purpose of this meeting was to progress the Warrumbungle Geopark concept which centres on the Warrumbungle National Park, and covers three Council areas making it the largest Geopark in the world.

The three Councils contributed \$5,000 each and Geoscience Australia and the Geological Society also contributed. At this stage there has been poor acceptance of this ecotourism concept by both the State and Federal Governments.

During the year Council welcomed the Melbourne Cup Tour and received a visit from the President and CEO of LGNSW. We also had meetings with consortiums wishing to buy the Deringulla Abattoir near Binnaway. Council hosted ceremonies to welcome 10 new Australian Citizens, our local day care centre Yuluwirri Kids launched the 'Safe Journey Booklet', written in Coonabarabran and now in every preschool in NSW. Council Elections were held in September with 5 new Councillors elected. The new Deputy Mayor is Denis Todd.

The State Government supported the introduction of a 'Fire and Emergency Services Levy' (FESL) and our Council protested the double dipping exercise where Council contributes \$345,000 of rate payer's money to support the RFS and Emergency Services and now every property owner would also contribute. The State Government abandoned the FESL just before its introduction in a similar vein to the Greyhound Racing legislation which Council also protested.

During the year I chaired several meetings of the Central West Regional Weeds Committee and on 30 June our Strategic Weeds Management Plan was released with the new Biosecurity Act 2015. I was also invited to give a presentation on the 2013 Wambelong Fires to the Environmental Health Association of NSW Conference in Sydney. This conference was examining climate change and its relationship to wildfires.

Thursday 9 February I was contacted by the RFS and advised that catastrophic fire conditions were predicted for Saturday 11 and Sunday 12, in both the Dunedoo and Dapper fire brigade areas. A pre-emptive Section 44 was then declared. On Saturday February 11 at around 1.45pm I received notification that a fire had ignited east of Dunedoo near Sir Ivan Dougherty Drive. Over the next 48 hours the "Sir Ivan Fire", under catastrophic conditions, destroyed 55,000 hectares, 35 homes and 131 outbuildings along with 5,700km of fencing and thousands of head of livestock.

A Mayors Bushfire Fund was again created to help victims of the disaster and the Premier of NSW Gladys Berejiklian together with Local State Member Kevin Humphries, Federal Member Mark Coulton and the Governor of NSW David Hurley all visited the fire ground and met with victims of the disaster.

The new Castlereagh Fire Control Centre is still under construction and probably won't be completed until August this year however, in June 2017 I attended the opening of "The Lodge" on Siding Spring Mountain by Professor Brian Schmidt; this new building replaces the old Lodge destroyed in the Wambelong Fire of 2013 and construction of the new Tourist Information Centre in the Warrumbungle National Park has also commenced and should be complete by December 2017.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the General Manager for his sound leadership of the Directors and staff of the Shire and for their support of me during the year. I would also like to thank the Councillors for their support.

Peter Shinton
Mayor

1.2 Message from the General Manager



I have pleasure in presenting the Warrumbungle Shire Council's Annual Report for the year 2016/2017.

The year has presented many challenges and opportunities for the local residents and communities within our Shire.

In September 2016 Councils across NSW conducted their Local Government elections. We farewelled Ron Sullivan, Murray Coe, Victor Schmidt, Chris Sullivan and Gary Andrews, and welcomed back Peter Shinton, Anne-Louise Capel, Denis Todd and Fred Clancy. Newly elected Councillors included Ray Lewis, Ambrose Doolan, Dr Aniello Iannuzzi, Kodi Brady and Wendy Hill. Peter Shinton was re-elected Mayor and Denis Todd Deputy Mayor.

We are proud of our achievements with Council receiving the NSW Local Government Excellence Awards for Community Partnerships and Collaboration Category for Council's with a population under 15,000 for our Community Development. This category recognises excellence in cross-Council collaboration, community partnerships and partnerships created to provide or improve services that strengthen and enhance the physical or social infrastructure of a region. This award highlights genuine and effective partnerships and collaborations that have resulted in better outcomes for Council, as well as initiatives that demonstrate a commitment to working with the community to achieve positive outcomes.

Devastatingly, we experienced another major natural disaster through the Sir Ivan Fire, destroying homes in and around Uarabry, Dunedoo and Coolah, damaging 5,700kms of fencing, and perishing livestock and domestic animals. In total, the toll from the fire included 35 homes destroyed, 11 homes damaged, 1 church destroyed, 1 community hall destroyed, 131 outbuildings lost and a further 42 damaged. The fire started on Saturday, 11 February 2017 and was declared a natural disaster on February 14 2017. It engulfed grassland and bushland, burning approximately 55,000 hectares of surrounding countryside. The fire lasted for 4 days. The total cost to the community is excessive. During the fire our Shire was visited by various dignitaries including; His Excellency Lieutenant General David Hurley; Shane Fitzsimmons, Commissioner Rural Fire Service and Fergus O'Connor, State Emergency Recovery Controller along with local members for Parkes and Barwon. There were many government departments in attendance helping with everything from health and asbestos issues to recovery and infrastructure assistance. Council participated in many post fire debrief sessions. A Mayors bushfire appeal was established and a Committee formed to manage and oversee the distribution of the collected funds.

The concept of a UNESCO Geopark commenced in partnership with our surrounding Shires of Coonamble and Gilgandra, a committee was formed to pursue the listing of the three shire areas as a Global Geopark.

Regional Platters was launched on 10 March 2017 as an agricultural trail designed to connect producers in our Shire with a range of markets to the group visitor market. We have 5 participating properties listed in the guide.

Bridge replacement programs include renewal of Alison Bridge over Oakey Creek on the Black Stump Way. Construction commenced in February 2017 and is expected to be completed in December 2017.

Green fielding of the site for the Three Rivers Regional Retirement Centre at Dunedoo was finalised and construction of the facility will progress during 2017/2018.

Finalisation of the \$3.5million RFS Fire Control Centre at Coonabarabran has been completed in readiness for natural disaster in the future.

Coonabarabran was also selected for a visit by the Queens Baton Relay. The baton will travel through Coonabarabran on 31 January 2018. Plans are well underway to host this event with residents of our Shire participating in the relay.

Council embarked on an extensive process of community consultation to review our Integrated Planning and Reporting documents. Feedback from the consultation was incorporated into our Community Strategic Plan. At the same time we sought comments on disability access and as a result developed our first Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank staff for their support in this very trying year of change and challenges. My thanks also go to Mayor Peter Shinton and all the councillors and community members for their continued support.

Leeanne Ryan
Acting General Manager



1.3 Warrumbungle Profile

Population	9,384 (2016 Census)
Area	12,380 square kilometres
Towns	Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Mendooran
Villages	Bugaldie, Kenebri, Merrygoen, Neilrex, Leadville, Cobbora, Uarbry, Ulamambri
State Seat	Barwon
Federal Seat	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.



Warrumbungle National Park

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

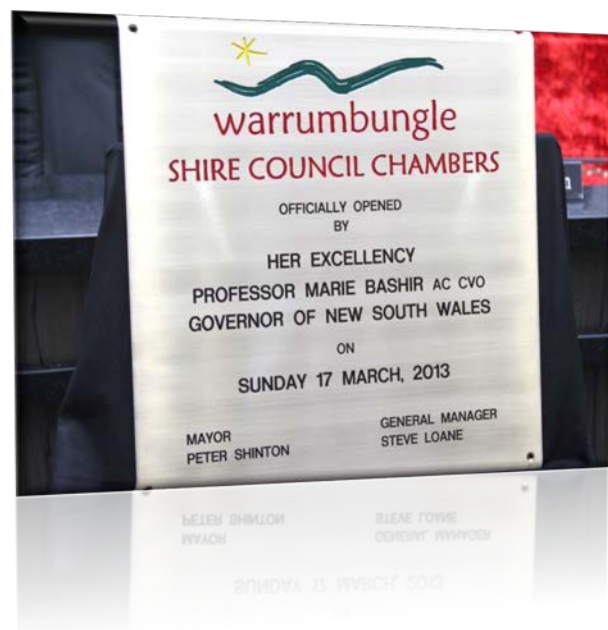
To be an enviable workplace creating pathways for staff development



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 2016.



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Mayor

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Deputy Mayor

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Councillor Wendy Hill

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Councillor Aniello Iannuzzi

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Councillor Ray Lewis

Phone (02)
ray.lewis@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au

1.7 Senior Management



General Manager
Steve Loane

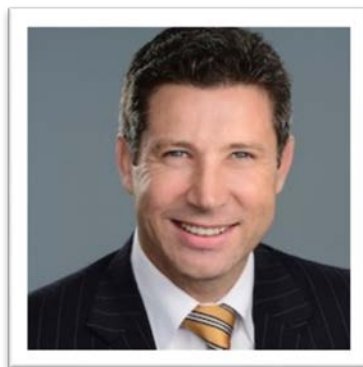
Director Technical Services
Kevin Tighe



**Director Corporate and
Community Services**
Stefan Murru



Director Development Services
Leeanne Ryan



Acting Director Corporate and Community Services

Michael Jones

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, Leadership and Governance

Council's General Manager 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 \$11.75 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 Range RFS Fire Control Centre along with Glen Innes and Moree RFS Fire Control Centres and the start up and continuing quality checks of the Deniliquin RFS Control Centre.

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.

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

It is generally acknowledged that the weather and the consequences of extreme weather conditions have an impact on the provision of civil infrastructure and the provision of services relating to rural roads, town streets, recreational facilities, water and sewerage. The climatic conditions experienced in 2016/17 significantly influenced service delivered by Council and a particular example is the disastrous Sir Ivan Fire event, which occurred on the 11 February 2017.

The Sir Ivan Fire has severely impacted the lives of many farming families and it has impacted the social and economic fabric of the Shire particularly around Dunedoo and Coolah. Council's Technical Services Division took part in fire fighting operations associated with the Sir Ivan Fire and continues to undertake works to restore damaged road infrastructure. Council applied and received funding assistance from the State Government to remove hazardous trees and to restore fire damaged infrastructure.

Back in July, August, September and October of 2016, it was continual wet weather that influenced and interrupted service delivery and delivery of projects. The record breaking rainfall during these months resulted in very favourable conditions for farmers and it also resulted in very favourable conditions for grass growth. It was not an uncommon sight on rural roads throughout the Shire to see a wall of grass on either side the road up to 1.5 metres in height. Many roads throughout the Shire suffered damage due to flooded creeks and flooded roadside drainage systems. Council received funding assistance from the State Government to repair roads and drainage structures that were damaged as a result of flooding.

Despite the contrasting climatic conditions throughout the year, Council continued to deliver a large works program. The total works program expenditure in the Technical Services Division at the end of 2016/17 was just over \$29m. The high level of expenditure comes on the back of additional funding Council received for roads, bridges, footpaths, water and sewerage projects.

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 expended \$5.53m on renewing infrastructure assets during the period and \$1.43m was expended on creation of new infrastructure assets. During the period \$3.92m was spent on maintaining rural and regional roads, \$3.76m was spent on maintaining urban infrastructure including \$0.64m on maintaining and operating swimming pools across the Shire. The cost of maintaining and operating water and sewerage systems across the Shire during 2017 was \$4.03m. Expenditure on private works including expenditure on contract works for Roads & Maritime Services amounted to \$3.26m. Council's hard rock quarry operations at Coonabarabran returned a sound profit, which exceeded budget expectations by 31%. Expenditure on providing fleet services to Council amounted to \$2.79m.

Significant rural road asset renewal and improvement projects in the year include; replacement of Coonagooney timber bridge structure with a concrete structure, renewal of timber bridge over Talbragar River on Lewis Lane, renewal of road pavement on Neilrex Road and on Lawson Park Road, completion of bitumen sealing on Piambra Road, rehabilitation of road pavement on Black Stump Way. Work commenced on replacing the Allison Bridge on Black Stump Way.

Construction of new concrete shared paths again featured in 2016/17 with completion of several projects including; cycleway extension in Coolah to Charles Street, commencement of the Goddard Street project, completion of the path in Chappell Avenue Coonabarabran and commencement of the a path in Edwards Street.

Council responded to invitations from State and Federal Government for submissions to fund various infrastructure projects. Council was successful in receiving \$3.0m from the State Government to upgrade each of the sewage treatment plants in Coolah, Dunedoo and Coonabarabran.

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 term to carry such vehicles.

3.2 Rural Roads

Council is responsible for maintaining and making improvements to 2,276km of local rural roads, of which 450km are sealed. Council is also responsible for 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.

During the year Council's road crews completed several significant projects for Roads & Maritime including, road pavement widening at Mendooran, widening of pipe culverts between Dunedoo and Mendooran and upgrading of the truck parking bay in Dunedoo.

The renewal of bitumen seal on local rural roads during the period included 26km bitumen resurfacing at a cost of \$342,977. There was 28km of bitumen resurfacing works undertaken on various regional main roads throughout the Shire at a cost of \$495,000.

The renewal of unsealed roads involved 15 km of resurfacing at a cost of \$274,185.

During the period 585km of maintenance grading was undertaken on unsealed roads across the Shire at a cost of \$2.14m. The expenditure on maintenance activities associated with sealed local rural roads was \$0.53m and includes activities such as pothole patching, mowing of roadside grass and repair of drainage structures. The mowing of roadside grass was particularly challenging due to good rainfall in the Spring and then the frequency of days where fire danger was too high for slashing.

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 5km of bitumen re-seals at a cost of \$293,000, rehabilitation of a section of Booyamurra Street Coolah, rehabilitation of kerb and gutter sections in John Street Coonabarabran and asphalt replacement at the intersection of John Street and Cassilis Street.

Capital expansion projects have also been completed within the Urban Services area which include but are not limited to new footpath in Edwards Street and Chappell Avenue Coonabarabran, Castlereagh Avenue Binnaway and extension of cycleway in Coolah. Approximately 100 metres on new kerbing and guttering was constructed in Booyamurra Street Coolah. Also, kerbing and guttering was installed in Goddard Street Coolah in preparation for installation of a new footpath.

Council's road construction and concrete crews commenced and completed the construction of roads and drainage systems around the new Rural Fire Service Control Centre in the industrial area of Coonabarabran. This project was complex and required many changes in design before the final product could be achieved.

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 Local Government Area. 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 installation of irrigation at Milling Park (west), renewal of the shade shelter and installation of paths for wheelchair access at Baradine Lions Park, and awarded \$5000 each to Binnaway and Baradine Progress Associations for garden beatification and maintenance.

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.

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', 'Plan B Win a Swag Competition', Bike Week, Child Restraint 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.



A 'kerb blister' was constructed on the corner of John Street and Cassilis Street in Coonabarabran to improve road safety for pedestrians crossing John Street.

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.

Council's capital works program included construction of the Baradine Oval Canteen and renewal of infrastructure at several pools across the Shire. Also, work on the pools included installation of solar heating and new lighting at Coolah Town Pool and installation of hot water for showers at Coonabarabran Town Pool.

Unsupervised early morning lap swimming continued in all towns for season ticket holders, with all reports indicating that this program has been successful.



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 4 water treatments plants, 11 bores, 3 wells, 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.

It was during June 2017 that Council's Drinking Water Management System was implemented when low and inconsistent chlorine readings were detected in the Mendooran town reticulation system. Implementation of the management system included advice to water consumers in Mendooran to boil water and it also included significant renewal and upgrading of plant and equipment at the water treatment plant.

Fluoride dosing ceased in Coonabarabran and Baradine during the year due to operational issues with the dosing equipment

A program of removing 'dead end' water mains continued with the installation of new water main sections in Wellington Street Baradine, Yeubla Street Binnaway, Cliff Lane Coolah, Castlereagh Street Coonabarabran and Newell Highway near the industrial area in Coonabarabran.

Council's program of renewing water mains continued with the replacement of a section of water main in Wargundy Street Dunedoo. The renewal of the clarifier at the Baradine water treatment plant is a major project and investigations continued throughout the year.

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. All reservoirs were inspected during the year and a 2 metre hardened sediment deposit was found in the Baradine reservoir, which was removed by contract divers.

Council received funding under the State Government's drought security program for installation of back up water supplies bores in Mendooran, Binnaway and Coolah. Work commenced on this project and test bores at each site were completed during the year.

Council also received funding to investigate the feasibility of increasing the capacity of Timor Dam by raising the wall. Several studies were commissioned including a catchment yield analysis, geotechnical investigations, seismic study and a dam break study. This project is ongoing and a final report is expected in 2018.

Sewerage services are provided to residents in Baradine, Coolah, Coonabarabran and Dunedoo. In all there are 2570 connections. Infrastructure to support these connections includes 4 sewage treatment plants, 9 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 870m of sewer in Coonabarabran, 400m in Dunedoo and 564m in Coolah.

Projects implemented through the Lower Macquarie Water Utilities Alliance included; a review of telemetry operations across the twelve member Councils, implementation of a drinking water quality management committee, further development of Council's Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan and implementation of a program to assess the condition of pumping equipment across the Alliance.

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, 23 medium sized trucks, two garbage trucks and a street sweeper.

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

Plant items replaced during the year included; backhoe, tractor, six wheel truck, two medium sized trucks, garbage truck, bobcat and three out front mowers. Also, 26 light vehicles such as utes and sedans were replaced during the year.

3.9 Emergency Services

Council's Emergency Services Co-ordinator conducted all quarterly LEMC meetings with all meetings well attended by Emergency Agencies and representatives from both Dubbo and Tamworth. The meetings are chaired by Kevin Tighe, Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO).

Contact lists and emergency Management Plans are regularly updated.

The Emergency Management Plan (previously called DISPLAN or Disaster Plan) has been completed together with the Consequence Management Guides (CMG's), a template that works through hazards and threats applicable to our Shire. These Guides are a check list of likely hazards and provide a prioritised list of actions required to facilitate Operational Agencies in dealing with an event. These events include bush fire, hazardous materials, structural fire, flooding, storm and tempest and power failure.

The Council's Emergency Services Coordinator maintains the emergency section of Council's Website and has also added a number of Emergency Plans to the Staff Intranet, allowing off site storage of these plans and thus complying with the Shires' Business Continuity Plan.

The Council's Emergency Services Coordinator monitors the costs associated with the provision of services by the NSW Fire and 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 active and continue to provide a valuable service to their communities and the shire.



Council will continue its support of the Baradine Emergency Hub, set up after the Wambelong Fire. Council has the Hub in its contacts list to provide information of an emergency nature applicable to the Baradine area.

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.

Sir Ivan Fire

The BFMC Sub Committee will continue its objectives of identifying important fire trails in the Leadville / Uarbry area created after the Sir Ivan Fire, over the next few years.

Council's Emergency Services Coordinator is involved in setting up the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) at the new Fire Control Centre at Coonabarabran. This involves having the EOC room ready to be operational on short notice with equipment, computers and web access available to LEMC staff, as required.

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
- Installation of the MRF at the Coonabarabran Landfill Site
- Funding secured to review Councils Heritage Study
- Secured funding for Local Heritage Grants and Heritage Advisor
- Compulsory acquisition of Old Dunedoo Hospital Site
- DA Tracking continue to be used, the Electronic Housing Code was decommissioned 23 June 2017. Department of Planning is launching a new on-line lodgement service site
- Delegation review undertaken
- Contaminated Lands Policy and Register updated
- Plan of Management for Community Land adopted by Council
- Land Use Strategy funding secured and draft Strategy prepared for Cobbora Holdings land at Dunedoo

Regulatory Services

- Actively represent Council at Siding Spring Observatory meetings
- Body Cameras purchased to improve the safety of Council Compliance Officers while out in the field
- Swimming Pool Compliance Certificates issued by Council Staff which was made up of 14 private inspections and 14 inspections carried out on accommodation facilities

Town Planning

- Total of seventy one (71) Development Applications were approved with a total value of \$5,781,355. This included nine (9) new single storey dwellings and seven (7) installation approvals for manufactured dwellings
- Total of five hundred and one (501) Section 149 Certificates were issued.
- Councils Development Control Plan has been reviewed and adopted in February 2017
- Gateway determination received from NSW Planning and Environment to protect dwelling entitlements for residents affected by the January 2013 bushfires

Building Services

- Seventeen (17) Complying Development Certificates were issued.
- A total of fifty (50) Construction Certificates and thirty (30) Occupation Certificates were issued
- Two (2) 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

Environmental Health Services

- Landcare Funding for the Barking Owl Habitat program secured with work to commence in the new year

Food Premises

- Ninety four (94) food shop inspections were conducted throughout the year.
- temporary food stall holder approvals to operate were issued to local community groups,
- four (4) local mobile food vans were inspected and provided with approvals to operate.
- Inspections conducted at thirteen (13) events throughout the year Local Food Safety Supervisor training held in conjunction with TAFE

OSSMS

- Twenty three (23) 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.
- Other inspections and approvals conducted as requested by the owner

Skin Penetration

- Six (6) premises identified as practicing skin penetration procedures
- All premises provided required notification forms to complete prior to inspections
- Three (3) premises inspection and all received 100% compliance with *Public Health Act 2010 and Clause 31 of the Public Health Regulation 2012*



Contamination

- Environmental sampling as required

Public Pools

- Microbial testing undertaken in March 2017. Thirteen (13) samples on each occasion taken for testing

Water Monitoring Program

- Water monitoring program continues with Microbial testing undertaken across the Shire on a weekly basis and chemical testing undertaken in September 2016 and March 2017
- Program works in collaboration with Technical Services Water Team.
- Improved reporting system and increased integration with Technical Service to ensure water quality meets Australian Drinking Water Guidelines
- Investigation into water quality complaints

Complaints

- One (1) Illegal tattooing complaints received and resolved
- Four (4) Food Business complaints received, all businesses inspected. All businesses have improved and remain under quarterly inspection program
- Two (2) OSSMS complaint from Council managed public toilet, resolution of complaint ongoing

Environmental Health

- Referrals for Development Applications in relation to OSSMS
- Participation in Central West Water Alliance
- Successful grant application for Barking Owl Habitat program
- Council received grant funding to investigate, appropriately decommission, remove and perform site remediation of underground petroleum tanks and their associated infrastructure in Council Road reserves across the shire. The investigation, removal and site remediation of these sites was assisted by the New South Wales Government through the EPA's Contaminated Land Management Program under funding provided by the NSW Environment Trust. Stage 1 investigative works were completed in late 2016 with finalisation of stage 2 decommissioning works completed in early 2017. An ongoing monitoring program was commenced in May 2017 for site 1 (Baradine) and site 4 (Coolah). Warrumbungle Shire Council's Development Services team project managed the works. The removal and remediation process was contracted to Ground Doctor Pty Ltd.

Compliance Services

- Council Compliance Officers have continued with patrols to identify straying companion animals. In 2016/2017 eighty five (85) dogs and seventeen (17) cats were seized and transferred to the Council Pound fifty (50) animals were released to their owners and fifteen (15) cats and forty three (43) dogs were surrendered to Council. Of these companion animals, two (2) were sold, eighty (80) companion animals were rehomed throughout various organisations in NSW, sadly twenty nine (29) were euthanized as they were not suitable for re-homing
- Continued cooperation with various organisations throughout NSW for the rehoming of suitable unwanted companion animals organisations such as Pet Haven, Hound on the Rebound, Australian Working Dog Rescue and All 4 Paws were used in the rehoming of 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
- Dog Audits commenced in Baradine, Binnaway, Coonabarabran, Coolah, Dunedoo and Mendooran to ensure all companion animals are microchipped and registered as per legislative requirements.

Pound Data	Cats	Dogs
Seized	17	85
Returned to Owner	0	0
Transferred to Council facility	17	85
Abandoned or Stray	0	0
Surrendered	15	43
Released to Owners	4	46
Sold	1	1
Released for re-homing	9	71
Died at Council facility	0	0
Stolen from Council facility	0	0
Escaped from Council facility	0	0
Total euthanized	18	11

Tourism and Economic Development

- Maintenance of Level 1 Visitor Information Centre Accreditation
- Installation of repatriated artefacts to the Keeping Place including the breastplate held by Victorian Museum – placed with Local Aboriginal Lands Council “on loan”
- Implementation of tourism promotional plan that recorded an increase in visitors who arrived at the VIC but stayed overnight for one night or more
- Following the disbanding of Inland Tourism NSW in the period, the Central Inland Marketing Group (Warrumbungle, Warren, Narromine, Coonamble, Dubbo, Gilgandra, Lachlan and Bogan Shires) continued to meet and work on projects as Great Western Plains Tourism Marketing Group
- Contributed to a co-operative marketing activity involving several LGA’s in Orana region termed Great Big Adventures of Dubbo and the Great Western Plains; a TV campaign and print media into a new camping and caravanning publication both featured Warrumbungle Shire; Note: Dubbo Regional Council and Western Plains Taronga Zoo were the major financial contributors to this campaign
- Targeted radio advertising into Sydney promoting the southern end of the shire following the Sir Ivan Fires
- Print media campaigns to targeted audiences (Go 55’s, Caravanning Australia etc.)
- Participation in the Central West Lifestyle advertising – publication well received
- Ongoing distribution of the Warrumbungle Region Visitor Guide (the official tourism/visitor guide for Warrumbungle Shire) to visitor centres, shire wide operators and trade shows
- Role of support for the production and airing of television series in August 2016 filmed at Siding Spring Observatory
- Designation of Dark Skies Park status for Warrumbungle National Park; a number of television and print campaigns profiled Astro Tourism aspects of Warrumbungle Shire.
- Successfully completion of funding applications for a number of local initiatives – Stronger Communities Program for DPS landscaping at old cemetery, DDS Volunteers Equipment Grants for Rotary Club, 2357 Partnerships and DPS

- The establishment of the 2357 Partnerships organisation for Coonabarabran
- Warrumbungle Shire is recognised as a destination for conferences and events (NSW Teachers Fed Conference over 2.5 days, GDRC over 2.5 days etc.)
- Active involvement in the UNESCO Global Geoparks designation for the 3 shires
- Regional Platters Project aimed to highlight the opportunities for farm tourism and an agricultural trail guide. Warrumbungle Shire Council was able to profile six tourism market ready operations in the guide.

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
- Purchase of shoring equipment

Cemetery Services

- The Memorial Wall at the Old Cemetery in Coonabarabran has been completed in conjunction with Coonabarabran DPS and History Group and an opening was held in
- Ground works to control erosion at the Coonabarabran Cemetery is completed. The Native Grove Cemetery has a new mobile shade structure



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 Cobbora 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 new toilets installed creating more storage for the Hall and Development Group and the disabled access is complete

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
- Business Continuity Plan approved and implemented
- Heritage Study review completed by May 2018
- Land Use Strategy to continue for Cobbora Holdings Land at Dunedoo

Regulatory Services

Town Planning

- Information supplied to applicants of the requirements for development on Bush Fire Prone Land
- Communicate 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.

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.

Environmental Health Services

- State of the Environment Reporting to be completed in accordance with Integrated Planning and Reporting framework.
- Undertake a review of procedures for all Environmental Health Services activities.
- Engagement with Contamination Central to continually review contaminated land within the Shire.
- Complete actions as per the Central West Environment and Waterway Alliance 5 year program
- Barking Owl Habitat program locations to be established with community partners

Food Inspections

- Compliance with Council's obligations under the NSW Food Regulation Partnership.
- Food Inspection program to run January 2018 to June 2018
- 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 2017 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
- Promote Food Safety training to be held in November 2017



Water Monitoring

- Weekly Water monitoring program to continue
- Liaise with Technical Services Staff the results from the water monitoring program
- Provide Private Water Supply food premise information to NSW Health to ensure private water supplies meet NSW Health Standards.

Contaminated Lands

- Environmental sampling as required

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 finalised
- 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

Wood Smoke Reduction Program

- Program commenced June 2017

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 owner's details when animal is sold or re-homed.
- Half price Micro-chipping days held
- 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 continue to be a focus point for the Compliance Officers while on patrol to ensure safety of motorists



- 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 Compliance Officers to ensure public safety around swimming pools

Tourism and Economic Development

- Work with conference and event organisers to encourage conference and events to Warrumbungle Shire
- Maintenance of Accreditation level for Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre
- Development of a new Strategic Plan for Tourism and Economic Development
- Ongoing targeted marketing campaigns utilising print media etc.
- Ongoing distribution of materials to information points throughout the Shire
- Ongoing partnership with OROC EDO Network on projects to encourage relocation to the region
- Presentation of a Lifestyle Showcase to promote the benefits of living, working and investing in Warrumbungle Shire – with the participation of all communities.
- To partner with community groups on a Shop Local Campaign
- Attract additional businesses to the 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.
- Extension to the burial spaces in the Coonabarabran Native Grove Cemetery will be commencing in 2017

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 is continuing to review its Waste Management Strategy aiming to set the direction of the waste business for the Warrumbungle Shire for future years.

The collection of household waste is now serviced in-house. A roll out of 240 litre Otto bins for recycling, replacing the existing 60 litre crates, are being progressively distributed throughout the Shire. This service has been implemented for all rural runs and is now beginning to be introduced at all residential properties within the town boundaries. Further work on the actions from the Waste Management Strategy will be reviewed and implemented over the next twelve months

A Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) has been installed at the Coonabarabran Landfill site for the purpose of sorting comingled recycling received from the 240lt Otto bins into the individual recycling streams. This is eliminating the need for recycling being sorted at the kerb side thus eliminating potential WHS issues.

The Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) is being introduced in NSW in December this year. Council has expressed a desire to facilitate a CDS collection point for the public at the Coonabarabran Landfill and also hopeful of offering the service at Councils Transfer Stations (still awaiting conformation).

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, E-Waste 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) unit works effectively across those issues which impact on lifestyle and development to ensure a strong image and far reaching sustainability.

Warrumbungle Shire's Community Strategic Plan 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 individual 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 promotional budget (in the budget deliberations for the 2017-18 year was increased to \$100,000) and provide advice to Council and progress elements of the CSP.

The impact of the devastation of bushfires, in the Warrumbungle National Park area in 2013 and then the Sir Ivan Fire in the southern end of the shire in 2017, have affected the lifestyles and economies of communities across the shire. The communities continue to display a resilience that reflects positivity and confidence in the future as they work to rebuild and reignite confidence in the future but this has required additional input from shire through targeted promotional activities to address 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 and the implementation of effective Shop Local Campaigns will boost that resilience. This will in turn create increased employment opportunities and reduce the need to travel to regional centres for retail purchasing; Council's own policy on local procurement will also enhance this strategy.

Funding from NSW Restart in the form of the Cobbora 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 development of a retirement centre is seen to be a positive outcome for the community of Dunedoo and in turn Warrumbungle Shire and will provide additional employment opportunities.

Despite a number of changes in the membership of the Orana Economic Development Officers (EDO) Network, which has come about due to changes in staffing of EDO in shires, the 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 offering 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.



The resilience of the landscape is matched by the resilience of the communities impacted by wild fire.

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. ABS Data indicates a decline of 0.5% between census data 2011 and 2016 and while this is below the state average, the overall loss of population impacts on services within our communities.



To further build population in the region and in the Warrumbungle Shire a Regional Lifestyle Showcase is planned for 2018 with the aim of encouraging people to see the positive aspects of living in a rural shire and focussing on the aspects of lower cost housing and living, reduced commuting time which in turn means more free time, excellent recreational opportunities, the safety aspects and quality services provided. With the emphasis and knowledge that people are wanting to know more about where their food is coming from, the EDO Network sourced funding from the Murray Darling River Basin Program to establish a Regional Platters Project.

The aim of the project was to highlight the opportunities for farm tourism and an agricultural trail guide was designed to connect producers in the central west with a range of markets including the group visitor market, investors and special interest groups. The publication of a colourful and informative brochure coincided with a launch and showcase of product which was well received and Warrumbungle Shire was able to profile six tourism market ready operations in the guide. The Regional Platters brand has created broad interest and a need to register the name.

Throughout the shire special events have been presented and these generate financial gain for the communities but the impact can also increase the level of satisfaction and well being of individuals, sadly the proposed loss of the Crooked Mountain Concert may have a positive aspect and could well be addressed by community. The reinvigoration of the Youth and Drop In Centre will see improved outcomes for the whole community.

It is understood that the Inland Rail Project continues and the route between Parkes and Narrabri-Toowoomba has been determined. Land acquisition is the next stage and, for those living in the western part of Warrumbungle Shire, there is a need to remain vigilant and ensure that fair compensation is sought and provided. The suggestion that small communities will benefit is yet to be proven.

Prospective grant funding applicants have been assisted in their endeavours to attract special funding for community events and development. The final establishment of the 2357 Partnership organisation was completed early in the 2016-17 year and the organisation, despite some teething problems and a second staff appointment, is now functioning as part of the CDC network.

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 “new term” is “Visitor Economy”. Even those staying with family and friends, the VFR sector, leave an indelible mark on the local economy and tourism industry. DestinationNSW has a Visitor Economy Taskforce, whose role is to assist tourism regions to lift the visitor economy across the state.

Following the deregistering of Inland NSW Tourism, the Great Western Plains (GWP) Marketing Group has continued to meet and initiate promotional activities to benefit the region. A TV Campaign (TVC) is seen to be Dubbo centric but it needs to be understood that Taronga Western Plains Zoo and Dubbo Regional Council were the major financial contributors to the TVC but the subsequent Caravan and Camping Project is of more benefit to the partners where camping and caravanning was targeted.

A recent project undertaken included the survey of Caravanners and Campers to determine the amount of expenditure they contribute to local economies. Warrumbungle Shire has participated in the Dubbo and Great Western Plains Visitor Guide to profile our tourism product within a guide that is also linked to a website and has far reaching impacts on increased visitor numbers. Ongoing participation in initiatives of the GWP Marketing Group is encouraged.

Again, in response to the demise of Central Inland (and several other regional tourism groups), the NSW government has readjusted the tourism regional boundaries and Warrumbungle Shire now sits within an incredibly vast region termed Country/Outback that covers from the SA border to the Blue Mountains and from the QLD border to the Murrumbidgee area; a new board has been appointed and the staffed D NSW Office for Country/Outback will be situated in Dubbo.

The designation of the Dark Skies Park, which was driven by Dr Fred Watson of the AAO, has tourism benefits as we promote the importance of the night sky to science and research but we also need to ensure that people understand the benefits to our lifestyle, to the wildlife and to the landscape. The policy of the Orana Region LEP on the importance of a dark night sky has its genesis in the policies of council but in terms of astro tourism the benefits are immeasurable and yet to be exploited.



The repatriation of the King Billy of Bungabar Breastplate from the Victorian Museum, which is housed in the Keeping Place at the Visitor Centre gives visitors an historical perspective of the area.

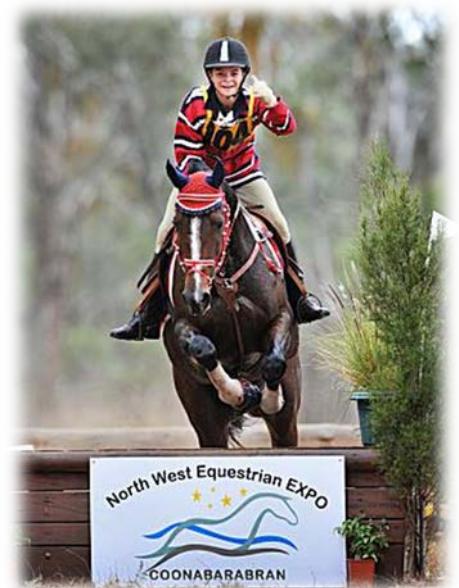
As a shire we are part of an alliance with other shires that border the Warrumbungle National Park (Gilgandra and Coonamble) and working towards the designation of the region as a UNESCO Global Geopark – the first in Australia and if the three shires are part of that Geopark, then it will have the largest surface area of any Global Geopark in the network; there are more than 130 Geoparks worldwide and the opportunity to lever off these other parks is immense.

The Sandstone Caves in the Pilliga Nature Reserve, eroded by weather over thousands of years. The Caves are a traditional Aboriginal site with engravings and groovings. NPWS is able to provide Discovery Ranger walks and interpretation of the area to pre booked groups.

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 always appreciated.

- The annual North West Schools Equestrian Expo continues to introduce new activities to its program 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 book launch held by the DPS Local History Groups was a successful event. The book itself 'More than a Line in the Sand' tells of the connections of our local indigenous people who chose to sign up for service in the Great War and beyond. Funding to assist with the research and publication, which has created a pride in the whole community, has repaid the community several times over.

The Annual North West Equestrian Expo is the largest Pony Club event outside the Sydney Royal Easter Show and grows in numbers and events each year, involving increased numbers of volunteers in the presentation and service of the event.





Open Day at Siding Spring Observatory provides opportunities to engage with staff and see aspects of the observatories not always accessible to the public.

The annual StarFest (with individual events such as Science in the Pub, Open Day at Siding Spring and the Bok Lecture) builds a strong connection and makes astronomy more accessible for all people. The 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 terrain and great off road opportunities in the shire see a number of motor “bashes” pass through the shire each year and the benefits are twofold; the visit of a massed group of vehicles is exciting and creates opportunities for our communities to generate income through catering etc. but the lasting effect is the “gifting” of resources they make to individuals, schools and other services.
- Fundraising rides and walks have traversed the shire and the local operators have provided FOC accommodation for teams and individuals; this generates a positive image of the community.
- 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 several nights.
- Cycling events have grown with challenges across various terrains and the bi-annual road cycling event from Coonabarabran to Gunnedah and beyond, attracts riders and followers from across the state. The Tour de Bungles is a local event with a significant following in the cycling community as is the Tour de Tops.
- The Annual Tour de Gorge grows each year in participant numbers; perhaps a reason for this is that it is a Charity Fundraiser and the benefitting organisation is able to spread the word widely, whatever the reason, the increase in visitor numbers to the shire is beneficial to the shire.

Siding Spring Observatory (SSO) is about to undergo a number of changes following the Federal Government's decision to de-fund the Australian Astronomical Observatory (the AAO) and redistribute those science funds to an international astronomy research project. The AAO has operated Australia's largest optical telescope at Siding Spring Observatory since 1974. The telescope is in great demand by both Australian and international researchers and will be transferred to the ANU for management.

It has been stated that no positions will be lost at SSO as a result of this change, but in many cases there are duplicated positions and it is believed that when incumbents retire, their positions will not be re-filled which will result in less staff on the mountain and living in our community. The recent upgrade to the Exploratory Centre and completion of The Lodge accommodation complex will have ongoing benefits for the visitor, the visiting astronomer and the broader community. The Dome Café is sub let and now open each day with reduced weekend hours which is proving to be a positive attribute for the shire.

The Rickert Family from Barkala Farm/ Pilliga Pottery have recently purchased property in Coonabarabran and are negotiating renovation with the intention of providing new options for visitors.

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. In many cases the volunteer organisations have accessed funding to present their events or to upgrade facilities to ensure a better experience for patrons.

The RV Friendly Status of communities across Warrumbungle Shire have been canvassed and the CMCA requirements are not met by all communities, despite the installations of Dump Ezy's in three towns, however ongoing discussion is occurring to provide a way to show the caravanning public that they are welcome in our towns. The installation of RV's Welcome signs is one way in which we can encourage the positive aspects of low cost camping and caravanning in the whole shire and Warrumbungle Shire has joined the RV's Welcome program on the CCIA.

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 special events.

Coonabarabran has proven itself over the years to be a well appointed, centrally located venue for conferences and a number of smaller events have utilised facilities and contributed positively to the local economy, the Bi Annual NSW Teachers Federation Conference once again returned to Coonabarabran and it is hoped this will occur regularly. Attempts to encourage even larger conferences have not been as favourably received as the competition becomes more sophisticated and the larger provincial centres more attractive.. Better travel services would make the shire more appealing.

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 and have attended forums where discussion has occurred about the ways forward as well as addressing the impediments. The aim is to have unused rail lines re-opened 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 EDT unit has expressed its concerns about the “bleed” of local dollars to other retail centres and is investigating opportunities for Shop Local campaigns in each business community. The Back to Business Workshop held in Coonabarabran was well attended and the theme of eCommerce certainly has people now using those technologies that others have been using for some time; new websites and online shopping opportunities by our own retail operators will have positive outcomes for the local retailer as they move to meet the market.

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 as is the UNESCO Global Geopark bid with our partners being those LGA's that neighbour the Warrumbungle National Park - Gilgandra and Coonamble Shires. Our partnership based on membership of The Newell Highway Promotions Committee reinforces the benefits to the wider community. Currently the Newell 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 maintained as those towns along the Newell. A new brochure is being designed for release late in 2017.

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.



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 where possible within our restricted budget.

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 visitors 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 affirm 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 in the shire.

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.

Photo credits: David Kirkland, SSO-AAO, Anna Tenne Photography, Jaap - Jacob In't Veld. .. Destination NSW .. Brenda Grant



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 the 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 2016-2017 financial year has seen continued management of Council's assets under the control of Property and Risk including compulsory acquisitions, lot amalgamations and preparation for the Three Rivers Regional Retirement Community being released to the public. Council has continued to seek grant funding including \$50,000 towards assisting with Blaze Aide costs after the Sir Ivan Fire in February at Leadville.

4.6 Cemetery Services

Council's Cemetery Services is 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. The Council must also comply with relevant legislation in relation to internment.

The Coonabarabran DPS and History Group Memorial wall at the Coonabarabran Cemetery was finished and opened in September 2016. The Uarbry Cemetery, which was impacted by the Sir Ivan Fire, was surveyed in preparation for new fencing due to be installed in late 2017.

4.7 Medical Facilities

It has been an expectation of Warrumbungle Shire 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.

The Council provides 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 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 10 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 freehold community land.

This year has seen the completion of the installation of new toilets and disabled ramp at Baradine Hall and the finalisation of the refurbishment of the Dunedoo Jubilee Hall. All halls continue to be used throughout the shire



4.9 Risk Management

Council has a firm commitment to Risk Management. This year has seen the Business Continuity Plan updated and desktop testing has been completed. Council's 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 Corporate and Community Services directorate has had a positive year with a lot of challenges thrown in which the team has worked hard to overcome.

On 6 December 2016, Minister for Local Government, the Hon Paul Toole MP, announced Warrumbungle Shire Council was reassessed as “Fit for the Future” following a review of the July 2016 submission. Work continues to ensure Council will remain 'Fit', particularly by committing to implementation of all adopted Improvement Action Plan proposals.



Financially Council's results were down on last year's record profit but strong with a \$4.66 million accrual surplus with increased cash reserves up \$2.6m on last year to a record high of \$18.3m cash at bank. Council also completed \$11.7 million worth of capital works for the community which was down on last year's high of \$15.8m.

The Sir Ivan Fire in February 2017 was devastating for the community. Council was able to mobilise quickly and moved staff and equipment into supporting the fire fighting efforts. Finance and Administration staff also played major roles with recovery services run out of our Coolah office. One other aspect of support was the establishment of the Mayors Bushfire Fund and Advisory Committee which has collected in excess of \$200,000 in donations. The Advisory Committee has allocated to-date over \$150,000 which has been given directly to fire effected people and organisations such as BlazeAid. Council also

worked closely with the ATO to ensure that all donations to the Mayor Fund met the requirements of tax deductibility for donors.

In March and April 2017 Council embarked on a round of community meeting and consultations in reviewing the existing Community Strategic Plan. Council met with over 250 residents across the 6 town and 6 village locations. Feedback from the community supported the existing plan with no material changes made. Feedback from the community engagement aimed Council's development of its inaugural Disability Inclusions Action Plan.

This plan aims to provide a framework for the development of strategies which champion an inclusive, respectful and diverse community where all residents and visitors enjoy a safe and friendly environment. Council now faces the challenge of bring the plan to life with the support and involvement of the community.

Warrumbungle Shire Council's flexible working arrangements were put to the test with the Director of Corporate and Community Services (Stefan Murru) taking a 12 month sabbatical to France with his family. Forward planning enabled recruitment and a proper hand over to take place with the successful commencement of Michael Jones in January 2017. Michael is contracted up until Stefan's return in March 2018.

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, and Family Day Care), youth support services, and the provision of community assistance in the form of payments and support to Community Development Co-ordinators.



CSP Meeting Uarbry

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.

Corporate and Community Services once again met all its statutory requirements in the 2016/17 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 2017/18 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, 9,272 documents have been registered in InfoXpert, Council's Document, Records and Content Management System;
- 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;
- 325 Resolutions of Council have been recorded during the year as a result of the Council meetings;



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 endeavoured to improve processes and introduced initiatives to ensure provision of the highest level of service to both internal and external customers.

HR produces a monthly Human Resources Report, providing MANEX monthly statistics such as salaries and wages, overtime, leave taken, position movements, claims and near miss accidents, improvements, training undertaken, the status of any projects being undertaken and any issues of concern.

Turnover of permanent staff for this year was 9%. This rose slightly from 7.4% in 2015/2016. This slight rise was put down to staff moving out of the area due to family reasons, retirement and career advancement.

Over the past twelve months Council spent a total of \$336,931 on learning and development, this includes legislative requirements and staff development programmes.

Thirty seven positions (18 internal and 19 external) were filled over the past financial year. A School Based Traineeship continued in fleet services as well as traineeships offered in the area of Childcare, Property and Risk, Roads and Water.

A new 5 year Workforce Management Plan was completed in line with the goals and objectives of the Community Strategic Plan.



Workplace Health and Safety remains an important area for Council. The number of workplace incidents reduced to 28 from 46 last year 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 State Cover Audit with Council's score in the audit increasing from 45% safety compliance in 2012 to 75% safety compliance in 2015 and 94% safety compliance in 2017. Noise testing of high risk positions and plant continues to be undertaken and will be ongoing throughout the organisation.

Council's Wellness Programme continued with all staff given the opportunity of Flu Vaccinations, Skin Cancer Checks and access to professional counsellors.

A Draft Emergency Evacuation Management Plan was completed and all wardens trained. Regular drills planned over the coming months.

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 2016 to 30 June 2017 is as follows:

Particulars	\$
Value of salary component of package	\$233,812.79
Bonus payments, or other payments not forming part of salary component	0.00
Superannuation(salary sacrifice and employer's contribution)	\$34,976.18
Non-cash benefits	0.00
Fringe benefits tax for non-cash benefits	\$13,314.00
Total	\$282,102.97

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	\$ 456,079.44
Carer's Leave	\$ 145,613.33
Parental Leave	\$ 12,433.25
Maternity Leave	\$ 13,924.37
Health and Wellbeing	\$ 329.44



5.5 Financial Services

The 2016/17 financial year was a busy year for Council's finance branch working toward the, now postponed, introduction of the FESL levy, the financial arrangements relating to the Sir Ivan Fire and the Auditor General's appointment as External Auditor to Council.

Council is set to record another profit in 2016/17, in no small part due to the efforts of our good people in Technical Services and Development Services who secured excellent grant funding for the Warrumbungle community and completed over \$11m in capital works. This profit was further boosted by the pre payment of the first two quarters of the 2017/18 year being made in 2016/17. It is worthy of note that when the State uses the pre payment made Council's income will be reduced accordingly.

Grant funding has, for the moment, offset the continuing effect of the Federal decision to peg General Rates and the freeze on FAG's. Thankfully the freeze of FAG's has now ceased but this only came into effect in 2017/18.

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 financial year, including:

- A further upgrade of Civica Authority across the whole of Council;
- Completion of Council's 2016/17 financial statements;
- Continued improvement in 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 improved debt recovery performance continued in the 2016/17 financial year with Council's rates outstanding ratio finishing on 7.91%. 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 lost time to injuries in Financial Services during the 2016/17 financial year

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 storm water and water and sewer assets 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.

A working group has been established which is investigating ways in which council can improve its communication across the shire.

Michael Jones
Acting Director
Corporate and Community Services

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 2016/17 financial year Warrumbungle Community Care provided the following services:

- 13,187 meals
- 5,432 hours of social support
- 2,274 hours of home maintenance
- 970 hours of respite
- 16,626 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 2016/17 Connect Five Children’s Services provided 159 Play Sessions at nine (9) different venues. Attendances for 2016/17 were 1,792.

As well 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 addition to the core services, Connect Five Children's Services also supports the Mobile Pre-school class run by Yuluwirri Kids. In 2016/17 Monkey Room continued to be run under the Connect Five Children's Services Licence with attendance levels of over 97%.

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. Attendance rates across the whole year, in 2016/17, were over 80%.

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 11 Educators in our scheme. Three (3) Educators are based in Coonabarabran, a further two (2) Educators are based in Coolah, two (2) Educators in Coonamble, four (3) Educators in Gilgandra, and one (1) Educator in Mendooran.

Educators child care places fill quickly once established and most have families waiting for care. Attendances at Family Day Care in 2016/17 continue to be high.

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 was a great move for the Service. In 2016/17, children attending OOSH have enjoyed developing their own environments and having a place to call their own.

In 2017, enrolments at Coonabarabran After School and Vacation Care has increased to the highest levels ever seen by the Service with both regular and casual enrolments each week

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 2016/17, the Youth Development Program continued to implement programs and activities under the Community Builders Program. The program also supported the implementation of the Living Well Together Project in Baradine

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 2016/17 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
- Wi-Fi 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 2016/17 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 story time and homework sessions.
- Regular reading and craft sessions with disabled members.
- Hosting Story Time sessions for pre-schoolers
- 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.

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 2016/17 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

5.9.9 Warrumbungle Shire Interagency

The Warrumbungle Shire Interagency continued to go from strength to strength in 2016/17. 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 2016/17 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



Michael Jones
Acting Director
Corporate and Community Services

Part 6.0 Financial Review

6.1 Introduction

The 2016/17 financial year was a good financial year for Council, with Warrumbungle Shire reporting a \$4.66m accrual surplus, and a \$469k unrestricted cash deficit. Council also completed \$11.7 million worth of capital works for the community and increased cash at bank significantly from \$15.7 million in 2015/16 to over \$18.3 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.

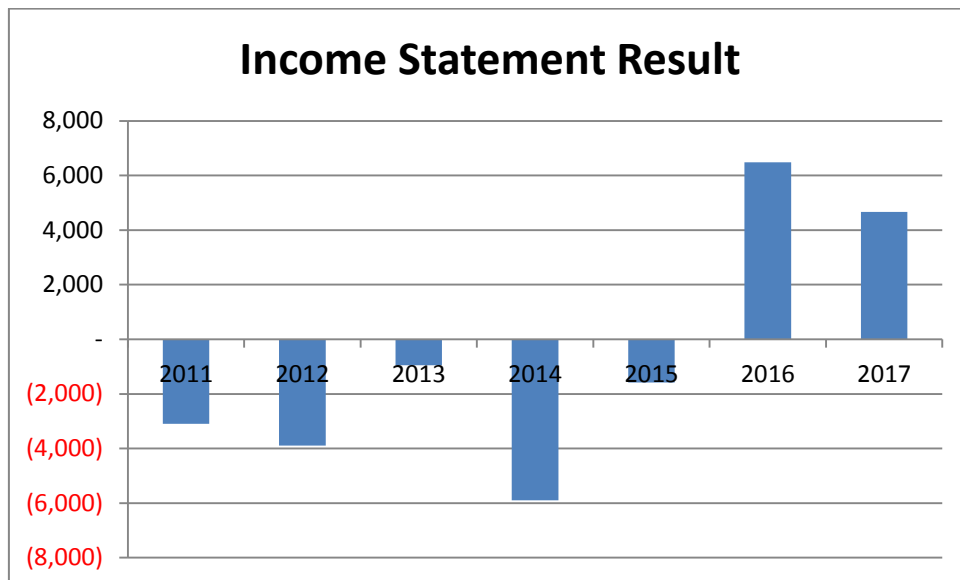
Further details of Council's final result for the 2016/17 financial year can be found below:

Income Statement Result

Council posted an accrual surplus (including depreciation and other non-cash items) of \$4.66m for the 2016/17 financial year. This is a significant result for Council, and represents the second highest 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, with \$20.8m of operational grants including \$3.4m FAGS Grants received in advance;
- An improvement of \$1.1m in User charges and fees thanks to large increases in RMS contracts.

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 \$13.8m, this result represents a \$9.1m variance over budget for the 2016/17 financial year. This variance is due mainly to non receipt of approximately \$9.1m 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 (\$5.5m), and the delay in receipt of \$2m of grants for Water Projects, \$2.6m Transport Grant for regional roads. Other significant variances against budget worth noting include:

- Higher than budgeted materials and contracts expenditure due to increased in State Roads Maintenance Contract & Ordered works and Private work for Coonabarabran RFS Fire Control Centre (offset by higher income);
- Higher than budgeted Depreciation expenditure (\$592k) as the result of Water and Sewer Revaluation;
- Higher than budgeted Net losses from the disposal of assets (\$653k) due to the Non-cash disposal of Roads, Footpaths and K&G (\$848k) for the purpose of Capital Additions.

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	(55,458,702)	(55,822,213)	(363,511)
Expenditure	36,339,098	41,001,225	4,662,127
Capital	19,618,318	11,740,427	(7,877,891)
Loans	787,852	787,835	(17)
Movements in RA	(1,305,650)	3,004,035	4,309,685
Total	(19,084)	711,310	730,394

As can be seen from the table above, Council forecast a \$19k surplus with the final result being a deficit of \$711k. 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	(19,084)	711,310	730,394
Water	939,598	262,725	(676,873)
Sewer	69,540	(104,555)	(174,095)
Total	990,054	869,480	(120,574)

Line Item	Budget	Actuals	Variance
General	(19,084)	711,310	730,394
Water	939,598	262,725	(676,873)
Sewer	69,540	(104,555)	(174,095)
Total	990,054	869,480	(120,574)

It should be noted that as water and sewer funds are in effect restricted in Council's financial statements. As a result only the \$711k deficit 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 \$11.7 worth of capital works in the 2016/17 financial year. Significant capital achievements in the 2016/17 financial year included:

- Completion of the new RFS Fire Control Centre in Coonabarabran (\$1.68m)
- \$599k on Cobbora Transition Fund Projects including the Three Rivers Retirement Village (\$512k) and Jubilee Hall (\$80k);

- A significant spend on Council roads including:
 - \$1.8m on the construction and rehabilitation of the new Alison Bridge, Coonagoony Bridge and Bridge to Caravan Park in Coonabarabran;
 - \$1.96m on pavement rehab and blackspots works on regional and local roads
 - \$1.1m on reseals;
 - \$276k on re-sheeting;
- \$710k on town streets, ovals and parks including over \$172k on the Shared Path on Edward Street in Coonabarabran, numerous footpath projects funded under the Active Transport program and K&G and drainage works;
- Purchase of \$1.73m in new Plant & Equipment;
- Water and sewer infrastructure to a total value of over \$1m;
- Other minor works totalling just under \$1m.

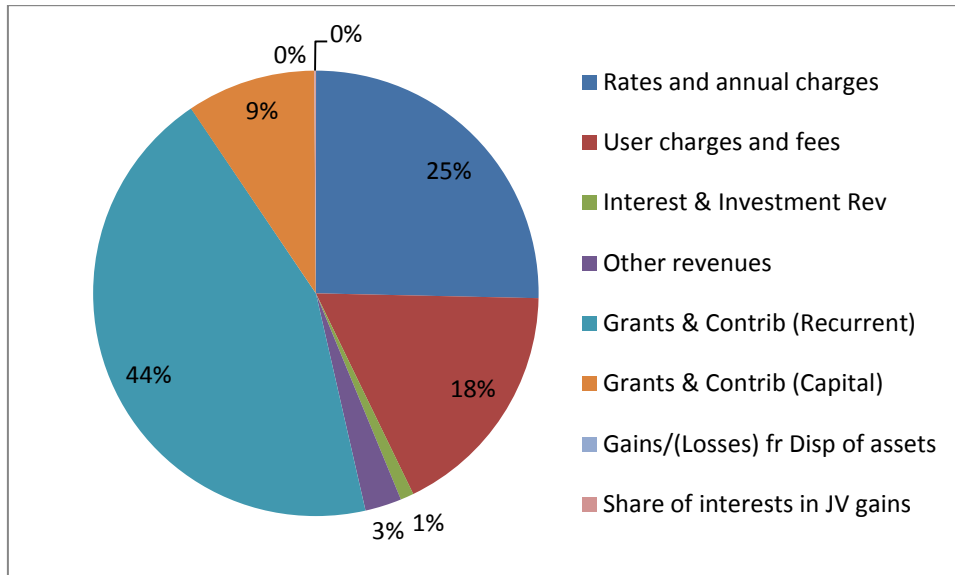
Movements in Cash

Cash & Cash Equivalents increased by \$2.64 to \$18.35m in the 2016/17 financial year, with unrestricted cash decreasing by \$368k. This decrease in unrestricted cash is smaller than Council’s unrestricted cash deficit due to balance sheet movements that do not go through the P&L.

6.2 Revenue Breakdown

Council’s \$47.06m 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 (2016/17)

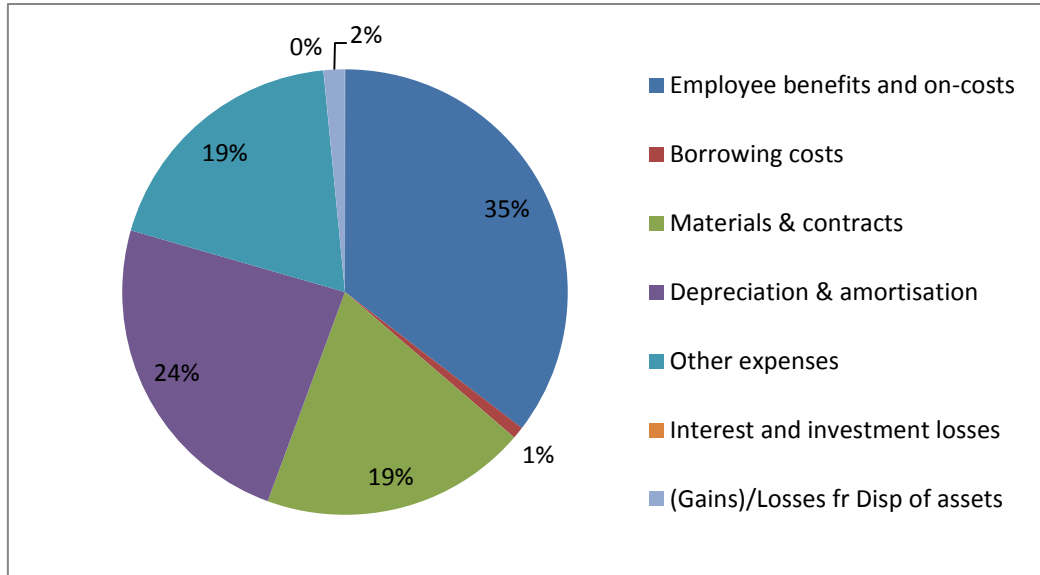


As can be seen from the chart above, Council only receives around 25% of its total revenue from rates and annual charges and is highly dependent on grant funding to finance its operations.

6.3 Expenditure Breakdown

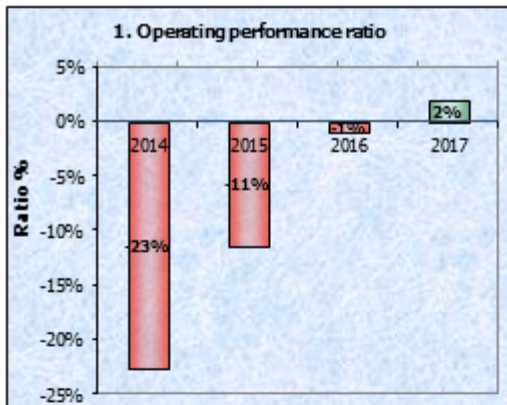
Council spent \$42.398m on the provision of services to the residents of the Shire in the 2016/17 financial year. A breakdown of this expenditure by nature (excluding capital expenditure, but including depreciation expense) can be found below:

Expenditure Breakdown by Expenditure Type (2016/17)



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 five of the six benchmarks.



Benchmark: — Minimum >=0.00%

Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #25

Purpose of operating performance ratio

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

Commentary on 2016/17 result

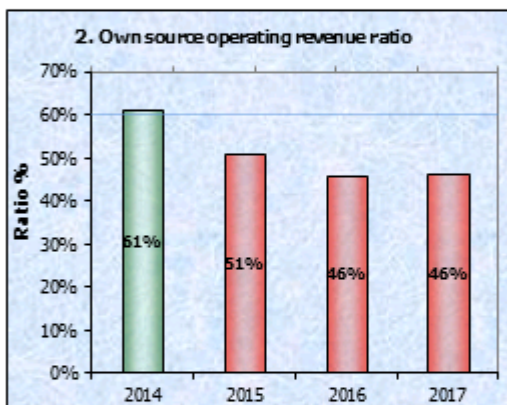
2016/17 ratio 2.04%

This ratio has improved dramatically over the last few years. However the early payment of the FAG's into 2016/17 will unfairly improve this ratio.



Ratio achieves benchmark

Ratio is outside benchmark



Benchmark: — Minimum >=60.00%

Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #25

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 2016/17 result

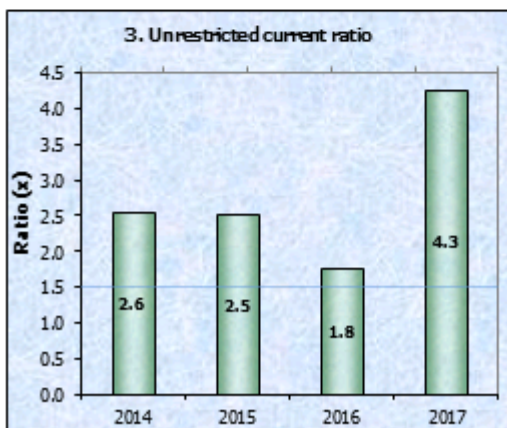
2016/17 ratio 46.46%

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.



Ratio achieves benchmark

Ratio is outside benchmark



Benchmark: — Minimum >=1.50

Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #25

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 2016/17 result

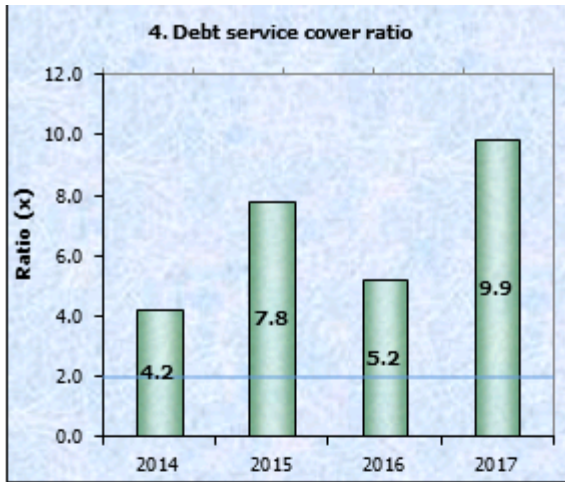
2016/17 ratio 4.27x

This ratio is well above the benchmark.



Ratio achieves benchmark

Ratio is outside benchmark



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 2016/17 result

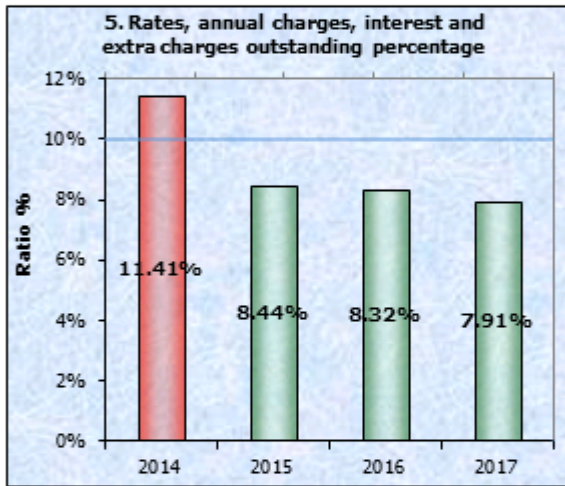
2016/17 ratio 9.87x

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

Benchmark: — Minimum >=2.00

Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #25

Ratio achieves benchmark
 Ratio is outside benchmark



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 2016/17 result

2016/17 ratio 7.91%

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%.

Benchmark: — Maximum <10.00%

Source for Benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #25

Ratio is within Benchmark
 Ratio is outside Benchmark



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 2016/17 result

2016/17 ratio 6.50 mths

Well above the OLG benchmark and a slight improvement on last year. Reporting favorably affected due to the FAG's prepayment.

Benchmark: — Minimum >=3.00

Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #25

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).

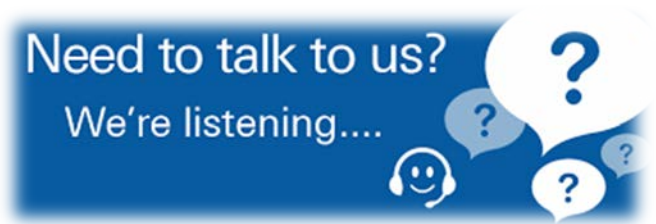
Council's office located at 59 Binnia Street, Coolah is also open weekdays from 8.30am to 4.30pm (excluding public holidays).

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

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

Visit our website www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au



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

7.3 Operational and Delivery Plan

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 (2017/18-2020/21).

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 (2017/18) and also includes Council's Statement of Fees and Charges for the 2017/18 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 deficit of \$37.88k in the 2017/18 financial year;
- A combined unrestricted cash deficit of \$8.48k over the four years of the Delivery Program, and Council's cash at bank will increase by \$741k over the four years;
- An accrual surplus of \$2.5m in 2017/18 due to the receipt of previously unbudgeted capital grant monies, expected increases in fees and charges and operational efficiencies;
- An ambitious capital program over the four years of \$51.75m;

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

- Continued progress on Waste Water Plant renewals in Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Coolah (\$5.4m)
- Resealing of approximately 106 km of sealed roads (\$3.2m);
- Re-sheeting of approximately 205 km of unsealed roads (\$3.6m);
- Completion of approximately 47.8km of pavement reconstruction, pavement widening and shoulder widening at a cost of \$8.94 m on Regional Roads;
- Completion of approximately 16.9km of pavement reconstruction at a cost of \$3.55m on local roads;
- Sewer Mains relining worth \$773k
- Construction and rehabilitation of reservoirs and treatment plants (\$600k);
- Operating Plant replacement of \$11.8m;
- Refurbishment of Goolhi , Coonabarabran and Binnaway Halls (\$295k);
- Further expansion of Coonabarabran Native Grove Cemetery (\$50k);
- Construction and rehabilitation of footpaths within towns across the Shire (\$860k);



- Rehabilitation of existing K&G within towns across the Shire (\$465k);
- Construction and rehabilitation of flood & drainage assets at a cost of \$692k;
- Improvements to local ovals, parks and swimming pools (\$580k);
- Footpath renewal and expansion (\$435k);

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 roads, 128 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;
- General rehabilitation of town streets including improving street lights, replacing bins, gardens construction of cycle ways and planting of trees;
- 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

7.5 Community Strategic Plan

In March and April in 2017 council reviewed its Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2017-2032. In addition council also developed a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).

Consultation meetings for both the CSP and DIAP were held across the shire including the locations of Baradine, Bugaldie, Coonabarabran, Binnaway, Coolah, Goolhi, Purllewaugh, Dunedoo, Mendooran, Cobbora, Leadville and Uarbry.

Both plans were endorsed by council and placed on public display for 28 days before being finalised. Copies of these plans are now found 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

Council implemented a stormwater levy in FY2017 to fund stormwater projects that Council is currently unable to fund, due to funding limitations, from General Fund. This stormwater levy was introduced and is made under Section 496A of the Local Government Act 1993. Land within an urban area rated as either residential or business for rating purposes (except vacant land) will be charged an annual levy for Council to provide a stormwater management service.

Within Warrumbungle Shire Council there are a total of 3,828 assessments rated as residential and 379 assessments rated as business. In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, Section 125AA, the maximum annual charge for stormwater management services levied in respect of a parcel of rateable land is for land categorised as urban residential land at \$25 and for businesses up to \$25 per 350m².

The stormwater levy helps Council’s improve the management of the quality and quantity of stormwater that flows off a parcel of a privately owned land and also includes a service to manage the re-use of stormwater for any purpose. Council will accrue additional revenue of \$105,175 per annum for expenditure for stormwater management (assuming each business and residential assessment is charged a flat \$25 per assessment).

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 Michael Jones.

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
Castlereagh Bushfire Management	Mayor Peter Shinton General Manager Steve Loane
Castlereagh Macquarie County Council	Mayor Peter Shinton Councillor Ray Lewis
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 Environment & Waterways Alliance	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 Aniello Iannuzzi Councillor Wendy Hill
Newell Highway Task Force	Councillor Denis Todd Director Technical Services Kevin Tighe
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 Aniello Iannuzzi
Geopark Steering Committee	Mayor Peter Shinton General Manager Steve Loane Director Development Services Leeanne Ryan



Internal Committees

Committee	Member
Finance and Projects	Councillor Kodi Brady Councillor Anne-Louise Capel Councillor Fred Clancy Councillor Ambrose Doolan Councillor Wendy Hill Councillor Aniello Iannuzzi Councillor Ray Lewis Mayor Peter Shinton Councillor Denis Todd
General Manager's Review	Mayor Peter Shinton Councillor Anne-Louise Capel Councillor Ambrose Doolan Councillor Ray Lewis
Plant Advisory	Councillor Anne-Louise Capel Councillor Ambrose Doolan Councillor Ray Lewis
Warrumbungle Shire Council Reserve Trust	General Manager Steve Loane Director Corporate and Community Services 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 Denis Todd
Coonabarabran Sporting Complex Advisory	Councillor Kodi Brady Councillor Fred Clancy
Robertson Oval Advisory	Councillor Anne-Louise Capel Councillor Wendy Hill
Warrumbungle Mayor's Bushfire Appeal Advisory	Mayor Peter Shinton
Warrumbungle Tourism and Economic Development Advisory	Councillor Kodi Brady Councillor Anne-Louise Capel
Three Rivers Regional Retirement Community 355 Advisory Committee (TRRRC)	Mayor Peter Shinton Councillor Anne-Louise Capel Councillor Wendy Hill
Warrumbungle Aerodromes Advisory	Councillor Ambrose Doolan Councillor Denis Todd

7.12 Auditor

Forsyths Chartered Accountants
Armidale 2350

7.13 Solicitor

Clarke and Cunningham
Coonabarabran 2357

Local Government Legal
Thornton 2322

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



Warrumbungle Shire has a rich Aboriginal cultural heritage. 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. The nations of the Weilwan and Kawambarai (Werriri) people come into the Shire on the Western border. Indigenous history, traditions and culture are an important part of the Shire's history.

In the 2016 Census the Indigenous population was 917 people or 9.8% of the population. The number of people who identify as an Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander person in Warrumbungle Shire increased from 748 in 2006, to 886 in 2011 and 917 in 2016.

Warrumbungle Shire Council has strong links with local Indigenous communities, in particular through the Coonabarabran Local Aboriginal Land Council. There is also an active Land Council in Baradine in the North of the Shire. In 2016/17 Warrumbungle Shire Council once again provided funding to support NAIDOC Week celebrations in Coonabarabran. Staff delivered and took part in numerous activities and events throughout the week.

Sculptures in the Scrub

Council Staff also participated in NAIDOC Week celebrations in Dunedoo and various Council Services held their own NAIDOC Week celebrations. Representatives from Council also took part in the annual Sorry Day March in Coonabarabran. This is a significant annual event for the local community and Council is pleased to be able to support it.

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 Outcome

	Full Access Granted	Part Access Granted	Refused Access in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/Deny Information Held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Personal Information Applications *										
Applications other than personal information	1								1	100
Applications partly personal and partly other										
Total	1								1	
% of Total	100									

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

7.17 Personal Interest Disclosures (PID)

Personal Interest Disclosures (PID) submitted to the Ombudsman for the period 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017.

	by public officials performing their daily functions	under a statutory or other legal obligation	all other public interest disclosures
PID applications by public officials	0	0	0
Access applications other than personal information	0	0	0
PID received, primarily about:			
• Corrupt conduct	0	0	0
• Maladministration	0	0	0
• Serious and substantial waste	0	0	0
• Government information convention	0	0	0
• Local government pecuniary interest convention	0	0	0
PID received since 1 June 2012 and finalised during this reporting period	0	0	0

Have you established an Internal Reporting Policy?

- Yes

Has the head of your public authority taken action in meeting staff awareness obligations?

- Yes

If so, please select how staff has been made aware?

- Training provided to new staff during induction.

7.18 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: Mayor Shinton and Deputy Mayor Todd
- National Roads Congress Attendees: Mayor Shinton, Deputy Mayor Todd and the General Manager
- Mining Related Council Attendees: Mayor Shinton and the General Manager
- Orana Region of Councils (OROC) Attendees: Mayor Shinton and the General Manager
- Australian Citizenship Ceremony Attendees: Mayor Shinton and the General Manager
- Australia Day Celebrations Attendees: Mayor Shinton, General Manager and senior staff
- NAIDOC Celebrations Attendee: Mayor Shinton, General Manager and senior staff
- School Prefects Luncheon Attendees: Mayor Shinton, Deputy Mayor Todd, Councillor Capel, Councillor Hill, Councillor Iannuzzi, 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

7.19 Overseas Travel

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

7.20 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 and Purpose	Value/YTD \$	Start Date	Duration
A J Clarke Enterprises	Plant Hire and Contracting	221,088	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
A1 Tree Service	Tree Maintenance and Removal	212,979	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Barry Williams	RFS Sheds	210,816	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
BMR Quarries	Crushing Services	389,134	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Coona Fuel and Gas	Fuels	821,148	1/06/2016	31/05/2019
Fulton Hogan Australia P L	Bitumen Emulsion	1,511,826	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Fulton Hogan Pty Ltd, SRS Road Services Pty Ltd, RPQ Spray Seal Pty Ltd, Boral Asphalt and Downer EDI Works - Asphalt	Bitumen Services	398,960	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Guy Andrews	Electrical Services	201,171	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Hollis Agricultural	Bulldozer Hire	332,030	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
ICE Demolitions and Removal	Asbestos Removal	355,375	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
ICRB	Council Contractor	228,306	1/07/2016	30/06/2017

Komatsu Australia	Plant Replacement	261,841	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
M and I Plant Hire	Council Contractor	319,277	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
MAAS Constructions	RFS Control Centre	1,056,778	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Macquarie Regional Library	Regional Library Services	476,585	1/07/2013	30/06/2018
Momentum Energy	Energy	126,148	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
N and B Egan Pty Ltd	Council Contractor	191,016	2015/16	Annual
Origin Energy Electricity	Street Light Energy	502,284	2015/16	Ongoing
Precision Drill and Blast	Blasting Services	146,105	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Roads and Maritime	Stabiliser Hire	315,385	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Rollers Australia	Roller Hire	257,736	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Sainsbury Automotive	Plant Replacement	214,430	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Simons Ravden Pty Ltd	Debt Collection	268,001	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Statecover	Insurance	661,632	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Statewide Mutual	Insurance	790,046	2015/16	Annual
Tamworth Regional Council	IT Managed Services	239,485	30/06/2016	2013/16
Telstra	Communication and Hardware	204,562	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
TP and BF Palmer	Council Contractor	153,261	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Tracserv	Plant Replacement	207,501	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Vocus Pty Ltd	Data Link	185,113	1/07/2016	30/06/2017
Waegar Constructions	Bridges	843,364	1/07/2016	30/06/2017

7.21 Private Works

No subsidised private works were carried out by Council during the reporting period.

7.22 Contributions and Donations

Recipient	Amount \$
2357 Partnerships Incorporated	16,000
2WCR FM 99.5	520
3 Rivers Radio Station	520
Art Unlimited, Dunedoo Lions Club	500
Baradine, Anglican Playgroup	500
Baradine Central School	70
Baradine PA & H Association	50
Baradine, Returned Services League of Australia	110
Baradine School Band	250
Binnaway Central School	70
Binnaway Jockey Club	1,000
Binnaway PAH & I Association	550
Binnaway Rail Heritage Group	500
Binnaway Showground Management Committee	500
Coolah Central School	1,070
Coolah Sacred Heart Primary	70
Coolah VHF & Community Radio Group	520
Coolah Youth & Community Centre	500
Coonabarabran Evening Branch CWA	500
Coonabarabran Amateur Swimming Club	500
Coonabarabran Bowling Club	500
Coonabarabran DPS Local & Family History Group Inc.	1,000
Coonabarabran High School	70
Coonabarabran Jockey Club	1,000
Coonabarabran PAI & H Association	500
Coonabarabran Public School	70
Coonabarabran Showground Trust Inc.	500

Coonabarabran Veteran Golf Club	500
Coonabarabran Rotary Club	1,716
Dunedoo & District Development Group-Bush Poetry	500
Dunedoo & District Development Group	500
Dunedoo Amateur Swimming Club Inc.	500
Dunedoo Bowling Club Ltd.	500
Dunedoo Central School	1,020
Dunedoo Men's Shed	1,000
Dunedoo Polocrosse Club Inc.	500
Dunedoo Preschool Kindergarten	500
Dunedoo TAFE	70
Dunedoo Tennis Club	250
Dunedoo Touch Football Club Inc.	500
LGNSW for legal assistance	348
Mendooran Central School	70
Mendooran Rodeo Association	500
Mendooran Singers Association	604
Mendooran Tennis Club	1,000
Mendooran Turf Club	1,000
Mendooran Youth Group	1,000
Mullaley Public School	250
Neilrex Community Hall	500
Neilrex Tennis Club	700
New England Institute of TAFE	70
Northwest Equestrian Expo	1,000
Orbital Swing Band	1,000
St Johns School	70
St Lawrence's Central School	70
St Michael's Primary School	70
S. Wallace (Reptile Rescue)	500
Warrumbungle Arts And Crafts Inc.	1,000
Warrumbungle Domestic Violence Committee	500
Hall Hire fees waived (various community groups)	105,455
Council Rate Rebates	14,652



7.23 External Bodies

Council is required to provide a statement of external bodies that have exercised functions delegated by Council.

During the period in review the following bodies exercised delegated functions on behalf of Council.

Body	Function
Castlereagh Macquarie County Council	Control noxious weeds on public land and waterways
Macquarie Regional Library	Library services

During the report period Council also had a number of Committees that advised Council on specific issues. The advice from these Committees is used to assist in the decision making process of Council.

There are three Committees formed as a requirement of statutory obligations and those Committees report to Council although have no formal link to Council. A Councillor representing on these Committees is appointed for the term of the Council.

Committee	Function
Castlereagh Bushfire Management	Fire Mitigation
Local Emergency Management	Emergency Co-ordination
Traffic Advisory	Traffic Management

Council is also represented on the following Regional Committees:

Committee	Committee
Association of Mining Related Councils	Central Ranges Natural Gas and Telecommunications
Castlereagh Zone Liaison	Liverpool Range Wind Farm Community Consultation
Newell Highway Taskforce	Orana Regional Organisation of Councils
Orana Arts Incorporated	North West Weight of Loads Group
Warrumbungle Shire Liquor Accord	Central West Environment and Waterways Alliance
Geopark Steering	

7.24 Companies

Warrumbungle Shire Council did not hold a controlling interest in any company during the reporting period.

7.25 Partnerships, Cooperatives, Joint Ventures

During this period Council was a joint venture member of the Macquarie Regional Library Service with Dubbo City Council, Wellington Shire Council and Narromine Shire Council. During this period Council was also a joint venture member of the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council.

Council also coordinates the Castlereagh Family Day Care Scheme which services Warrumbungle, Coonamble and Gilgandra local government areas, and Connect Five Children's Services which service Warrumbungle and Gilgandra Local Government Areas.

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.



7.26 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.

7.27 Agency Information Guide

Council reviewed and endorsed its Agency Information Guide in June 2017.

A copy of Council's current 2017 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, Coolah NSW 2843, or can be accessed via council's website 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 Payment of Expenses Policy

PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO MAYORS AND COUNCILLORS

Pursuant to Sections 12, 2 3A, 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 16 February 2017 and replaces the previous policy titled Policy for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors adopted by Council on 19 November 2015.

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 the first 12 months of each term of Council, the 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) *(Repealed)*
- 5) *A council must comply with this section when proposing to adopt a policy 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. whilst 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 attending conferences, seminars or official functions to the limits of the allowances set out in the Australian Tax Office's Taxation Determination TD 2016/13 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 2016/13 (see Appendix A attached) or such determination or policies of the Australian Tax Office that supersede it. (As at July 2016 – Meal Allowance (per day) Breakfast \$34.00; Lunch \$48.00; Dinner \$67.30)
- 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 2016/13 or such determinations or policies of the Australian Tax Office that supersede it. (As at July 2016 – Incidental Expenses (per day) \$27.25)
- 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 2016/13 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 LGNSW annual conference.

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 2016/13 or such determinations or policies of the Australian Tax Office that supersede it. (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)
- ALGA – National General Assembly Local Government (Canberra) (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 Local Government NSW.

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) 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 of the Bluetts Handbook 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 19 November 2015 Minute No. 128/1516.

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

Table 3 – Employee Annual Salary \$205,301 and above

Location	Lodging	*Meals	Incidentals	Total
Adelaide	209.00	152.80	27.65	389.45
Brisbane	257.00	152.80	27.65	437.45
Canberra	246.00	152.80	27.65	426.45
Darwin	287.00	152.80	27.65	467.45
Hobart	195.00	152.80	27.65	375.45
Melbourne	265.00	152.80	27.65	445.45
Perth	265.00	152.80	27.65	445.45
Sydney	265.00	152.80	27.65	445.45
Regional	**195.00	152.80	27.65	***Variable

* Breakfast \$34.75 / Lunch \$49.20 / Dinner \$68.85 ** or See Table 4 *** See Table 4

Table 4 – High Cost Country Centres Accommodation Expenses

Country Centre	\$	Country Centre	\$
Albany WA	179.00	Horsham VIC	142.00
Alice Springs NT	150.00	Jabiru NT	216.00
Bordertown SA	140.00	Kalgoorlie WA	159.00
Bourke NSW	165.00	Karratha WA	250.00
Bright VIC	156.00	Katherine NT	138.00
Broome WA	260.00	Kununurra WA	195.00
Bunbury WA	155.00	Mackay QLD	161.00
Burnie TAS	160.00	Maitland NSW	152.00
Cairns QLD	153.00	Mount Isa QLD	160.00
Carnarvon WA	151.00	Mudgee NSW	135.00
Castlemaine VIC	146.00	Newcastle NSW	165.00
Chinchilla QLD	143.00	Newman WA	195.00
Christmas Island WA	180.00	Norfolk Island NSW	240.00
Cocos Keeling Islands WA	285.00	Northam WA	140.00
Colac VIC	138.00	Orange NSW	155.00
Dalby QLD	150.00	Port Hedland WA	200.00
Dampier WA	175.00	Port Lincoln SA	170.00
Derby WA	190.00	Port Macquarie NSW	152.00
Devonport TAS	145.00	Port Pirie SA	150.00
Emerald QLD	156.00	Roma QLD	139.00
Esperance WA	141.00	Thursday Island QLD	200.00
Exmouth WA	220.00	Townsville LD)	143.00
Geraldton WA	175.00	Wagga Wagga NSW	144.00
Gladstone QLD	155.00	Weipa QLD	138.00
Gold Coast QLD	200.00	Whyalla SA	145.00
Gosford NSW	140.00	Wilpena-Pound SA	181.00
Halls Creek WA	170.00	Wollongong NSW	149.00
Hervey Bay QLD	157.00	Wonthaggi VIC	138.00
Horn Island QLD	200.00	Yulara NT	300.00

Document Control - Payment of Expenses Policy

Date	Resolution	Control
16.06.2005	233	Endorsed
18.08.2005	49	Amendment
18.05.2006	393	Amendment
17.12.2009	199	New Policy Endorsed
21.10.2010	123	Revised Version
24.11.2011	181/1112	Revised Version
21.02.2013	235/1213	Revised Version 4
21.11.2013	168/1314	Revised Version 5
20.11.2014	160/1415	Revised Version 6
19.11.2015	128/1516	Revised Version 7
16.02.2017	176/1617	Revised Version 8