



**Annual Report
2009/2010**

Warrumbungle Shire Council



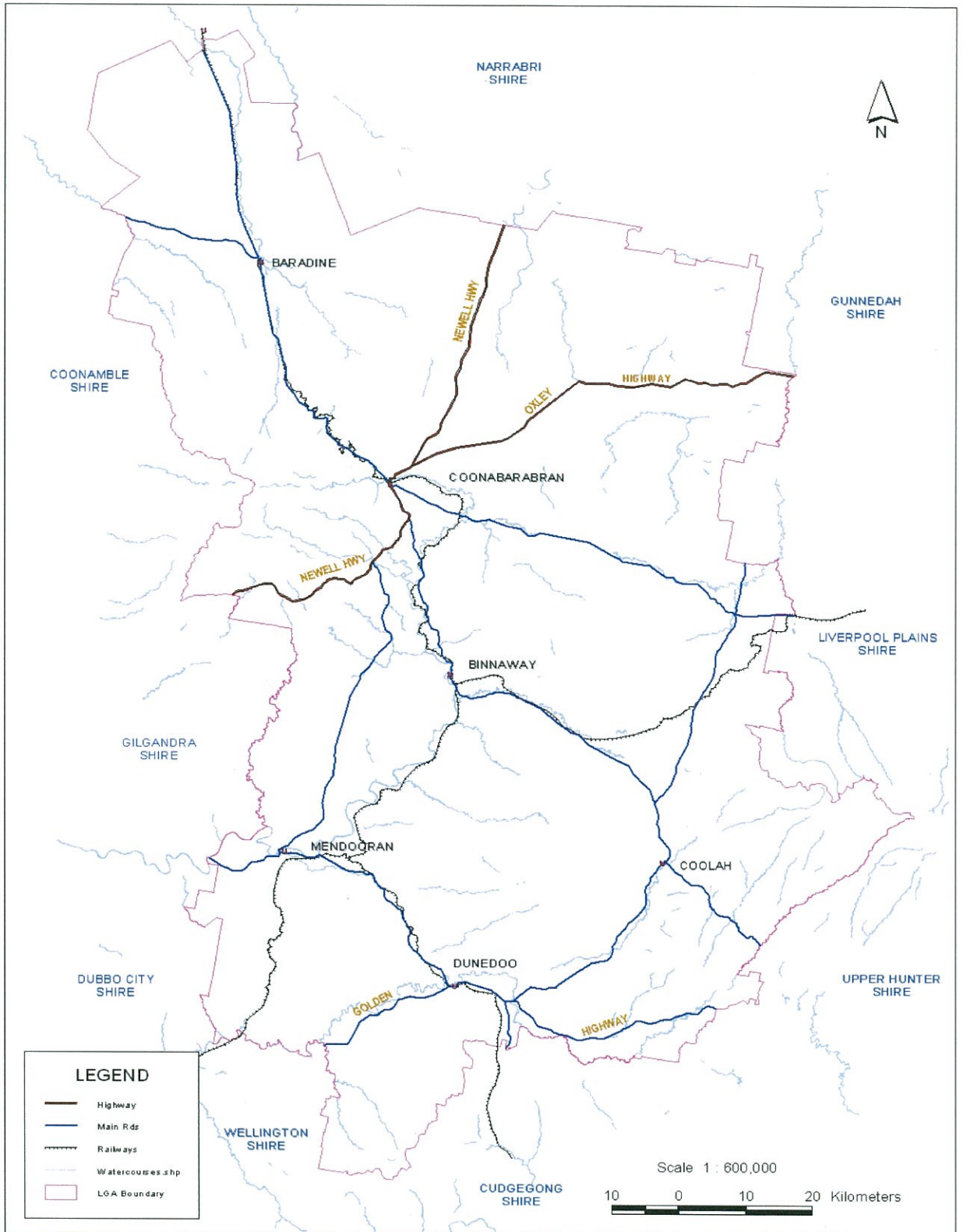
Annual Report

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR.....	5
GENERAL MANAGER'S MESSAGE.....	7
SHIRE PROFILE	9
COUNCILLORS 2009-2010	11
SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM.....	11
PUBLIC MEETINGS	14
COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL.....	14
CONTACTING COUNCIL	16
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.....	16
RATES AND CHARGES WRITTEN OFF.....	16
PERFORMANCE IN REVIEW 2009/2010	17
STATE OF ENVIRONMENT REPORT	50
CONDITION OF PUBLIC WORKS	50
LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.....	51
ELECTED MEMBERS	51
OVERSEAS TRAVEL	52
SENIOR STAFF.....	52
CONTRACTS AWARDED BY COUNCIL.....	53
BUSH FIRE HAZARD REDUCTION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	54
PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DIVERSE CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC BACKGROUNDS.....	56
SERVICES FOR NEEDS OF CHILDREN	56
ACCESS & EQUITY ACTIVITIES FOR RESIDENTS	57

PRIVATE WORKS.....	58
CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS.....	59
STATEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES ACTIVITIES	61
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT EEO MANAGEMENT PLAN	62
EXTERNAL BODIES	62
COMPANIES	63
PARTNERSHIPS, COOPERATIVES, JOINT VENTURES.....	63
COMPETITIVE NEUTRALITY PRICING	64
COMPARISON OF STORMWATER MANAGEMENT.....	64
COMPANION ANIMALS ACT AND REGULATION ACTIVITIES.....	65
REPORT ON SPECIAL VARIATION EXPENDITURE	65
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1989	66
PRIVACY STATEMENT	66
PARTICULARS OF COMPLIANCE WITH PLANNING AGREEMENTS	67
STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS.....	67
ATTACHMENT 1.0 - CONDITION OF PUBLIC WORKS	
ATTACHMENT 2.0 – PAYMENT OF EXPENSES POLICY	
ATTACHMENT 3.0 – STATE OF ENVIRONMENT REPORT	
ATTACHMENT 4.0 – FINANCIAL STATEMENTS	

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Map of Shire

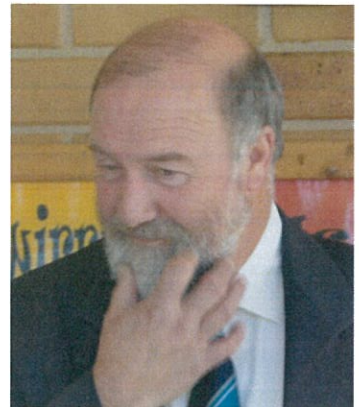


Message from the Mayor

The 2009-2010 year has been full of challenges and rewards for all of our communities within the Shire.

On a Shire wide basis we have embraced the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework that has finally been legislated by the State Government and will be introduced in the Shire by June 30, 2012.

Some of our Directors and Councillors and I have attended workshops and information days and are, I think, willing to embrace and be part of this new evolution in Local Government.



Early in the year the Council decided to undertake an organisation review to find where our new shire council fits with its various communities, the level of service required, the appropriateness of our structure and what is important to Council staff and community after five years of amalgamation. Although Council has not made a decision on this structural review it will be considered in context with a random review of our Council Structure and policies instigated by the Division of Local Government.

During the year the Coonabarabran community celebrated its sesqui- centenary with a street parade containing over 70 floats 3000 spectators attending and many family and school reunions.

Severe drought conditions during the year prompted the Council to write to both the State and Federal local members, the Minister for Agriculture and the National Rural Advisors Council (NRAC) but by December the Council was facing \$2.5 million worth of damage to roads and bridges caused by flooding throughout the whole Shire between Xmas and New Year and during other periods since then.

A number of projects were completed during the year. The water treatment plant at Mendooran has been completed and commissioned but has not yet been officially opened.

Yuluwirri Kids, the long day care and pre-school complex in Coonabarabran was officially opened as were Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Programme (RLCIP) funded projects in Binnaway, Mendooran, Dunedoo and Coolah.

During the year our staff has been investigating the suitability and cost of connecting fluoride dosing equipment to our water treatment plants throughout the Shire. The Department of Health has advised they will completely fund all costs and tender documents have been prepared in close consultation with the Office of Water.

Some milestones were reached with the Anglo-Australian Observatory at Siding Spring with that organisation presenting the Shire and people of Coonabarabran with an Armillary Sundial celebrating 35 years since it was officially opened and commemorating the change of name and source of funding that will occur on the 1st July 2010.

During the year the community became involved in trying to keep the St Lawrence's Central School open. The Bathurst Catholic Bishop was visited and a number of community meetings and protest marches attended but the secondary school eventually closed in December.

Also during the year the Greater Western Area Health Service (GWAHS) attempted to close a ward in the Coonabarabran Hospital, necessitating meetings with the GWAHS CEO and local members of both Parliaments to have the decision overturned.

The Council also protested changes to noxious weed funding through letters to the Minister for Agriculture and met with the Minister for Emergency Services to discuss changes to RFS and SES funding and the non payment of Section 44 claims. A latter meeting with the RFS Commissioner led to the payment of these outstanding claims.

The Warrumbungle Shire Council during the year was invited to join representative associations in the Mining Related Councils and the Australia Wide Rural Roads Group. These two associations add to our new membership last year with the Country Mayors Association and provide Council with valuable information for our ever changing horizons.

The Council was also fortunate to hear that \$227,000 for infrastructure upgrade and replacement was to be granted after the third ACLG summit held in Canberra. A number of eligible projects have been selected throughout the Shire.

Council's auditor pointed out in his report to Council that uncollected rates stood at 14.2% for our Shire against a State average of less than 5%. This necessitated a sale of properties to recover this debt and it will be a regular feature as Council attempts to address this problem.

During the year the General Manager, the Deputy Mayor and I have met with the consortium planning to mine the coal deposit south of Dunedoo/Cobborah on several occasions and as yet there appears to be no miner interested in progressing this development.

With the interest in wind energy power generation in the Coolah area and in the Tooraweenah/Hickeys Falls area one Councillor and I have applied for membership of the Upper Hunter Renewable Energy Precinct but at this stage no decision as to membership has been made.

Earlier in the year I was appointed to the Northern Regional Advisory Committee for the NPWS and have attended three meetings of this worthwhile committee. This is an important position given our association with the NPWS and the high profile of the National Parks and Conservation areas in our Shires tourism promotions.

I would like to thank the General Manager, Directors, Staff and Councillors for their support during the past twelve months.

Peter Shinton
Mayor

General Manager's Message

I have pleasure in presenting the Warrumbungle Shire Council's Annual Report for the year 2009/2010. This report is provided to communicate the achievements that have been made by Council during the year as well as highlighting the major demands confronted during the year. Overall the year has been a mixed one with many positives but also some negatives.

The impact of the Global Financial Crisis still continues to impact on Councils investments. The market has improved, although the European financial uncertainties continue to provide concern. The weak American economy and its inability to rebound seem to point towards less certain times ahead. The Australian economy remains robust but it really has to be acknowledged that this is on the back of the growth of China and India, if they do not continue to prosper then that future for Australia may not be so certain.

A number of our investments have been cashed in during the year. Council early in the year determined to wherever possible liquidate investments and we have been able to cash out \$6m worth. This in itself has not reduced our exposure to the investment write downs it simply has reduce our possible exposure to uncertainty in the future and assist with cash flow issues. With the general overall market improvements the write down value of investments at risk has been reduced from \$2.7m to \$1.2M

An organisation review was undertaken by "Employment Solutions" an arm of the Shires Association in the first half of the year. Their report was delivered to Council in February 2010. There are a series of suggestions related to management, leadership, service levels and staff structure that will need to be closely looked at. The great concern in any change process is firstly is it necessary? and how disruptive it will be? Change can return very positive results for the future but to do so quickly and smoothly needs to be carefully and skilfully management. The outcomes from this report will be manifested over the next year.

The Local Environment Plan development still continues with Council having engaged new consultants during the year. It is hoped that this matter can be eventually finalised to allow time to prepare for the possible energy industry developments that appear on the horizon.

During the year we had yet another major flood event. There was a Natural Disaster Declaration from that which allowed the shire to receive a \$2.8m grant. This of course meant that many of the Councils usual capital works programmes had to be put back. The Technical Services staff have been able and capably to return many damaged roads back to safe conditions promptly.

The long planned treated water supply scheme for Mendooran was concluded during the year, was commissioned and is operational. The project came in on budget at just under \$4M. The quality of water is excellent and there is a noticeable increase in the usage of the treated water. The rate charge has been able to be maintained at the projected level that was anticipated prior to the project commencing. This is a milestone achievement and one that has been under discussion for more than 25 years. **A great outcome!**

The Annual Statements for 2007/08 were submitted during the year while the 2008/09 Annual Statements were submitted by the middle of November, a week late. Every effort has been made to ensure that the 2009/10 Annual Statements are submitted on time. The issues that held up with the previous year's statements have been all addressed. The particular concern of the Bank Reconciliations accuracy has been dealt with and they are now being processed accurately. The valuation of roads, bridges and footpath assets were completed by the middle of May thus meaning all the major target issues are concluded.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff for their commitment and dedication to bringing the ambitions of Council to reality over the last year. I am particularly pleased with the manner that staff have embraced the challenges of change over the last five years. Their dedication to delivering high quality services is impressive. It has always been my belief that Local Government Staff are able to deliver services to a high quality and be cost competitive with private enterprise – the team has delivered that expectation. The Warrumbungle Shire Council relies on the efforts and vision of its people both elected and employed to be successful in its undertakings and this synergy is being achieved.

I encourage residents to read this annual report which outlines many of Council's achievements and services. In depth reports from each division of Council are detailed in this publication and offer a clear overview of Council's performance and future direction. Additionally the regular ordinary meetings of Council are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month and the community is encouraged to attend and keep abreast of issues from within the Shire. The meetings alternate between Coonabarabran and Coolah.

RJ Geraghty
General Manager

Shire Profile

Population:	9,808 (2006 Census)
Area:	12,380 sq kls
Towns:	Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, and Mendooran
Villages:	Bugaldie, Kenebri, Merrygoen, Neilrex, Leadville, Cobbora and Uarbry
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 of the Warrumbungle Range to the west of Coonabarabran.

The geography, flora and fauna of the Shire is where east meets west. The mountainous terrain of the Great Divide gives way to rolling hills then the inland plains. The flora and fauna of the wide open plains mix with coastal animal and vegetation progressively across the Shire. A striking example of this is on the eastern boundary of the shire we have the large grey kangaroo and on the western boundary of the shire the large red kangaroo.

The shire is also a meeting place for the nations of our traditional owners and custodian 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. The 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 Steamrail 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 the lifestyles.

The shire was traditionally built on agricultural pursuits with the early establishment of wool growing and beef cattle production followed by cereal cropping 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.

How We Operate

Warrumbungle Shire Council has approximately 210 staff full and part time delivering services with a budget between \$34M and \$40. Such services as Community Transport, Meals on Wheels, Family Day Care and Libraries all complement the usual array of Local Government services.

Council has five divisional areas to deliver these services and are responsible for the implementation of Council's principal Activities.

The programmes are:

Executive – responsible for Governance, Management, Human Resources and Economic Development and Tourism.

Corporate – responsible for Corporate Management, Financial Services, Administration Services, IT Support, Supply Services and Bush Fire.

Technical – responsible for Design , Road Operations, Urban Services, Fleet Services, Road Contracts, Warrumbungle Waste and Water and Sewerage Services.

Environmental – responsible for Environmental Management, Health Services, Regulatory Services and Building Services.

Community – responsible for Community Care, Emergency Services, Social Services, Family Day Care, Connect Five, Libraries and Information Services.

The following section of the Annual Report provides an overview of the achievements in each of the Principal Activity categories during 2009/2010.

Councillors 2009-2010

Council has nine (9) councillors with the Mayor elected annually by his or her peers. Local Government elections were held in September 2008. The current Councillors are listed below:

**Councillor Peter Shinton
(Mayor)**

Phone: (02) 6842 2055

**Councillor Murray Coe
(Deputy Mayor)**

Phone: (02) 6375 0265

Cr Kerry Campbell
Phone: (02) 6843 1145

Councillor Tilak Dissanayake
Phone: (02) 6377 1002

Councillor Ray Lewis
Phone: (02) 6886 3517

Councillor Mark Powell
Phone: (02) 6377 1676

Councillor Victor Schmidt
Phone: (02) 6842 1500

Councillor Ron Sullivan
Phone: (02) 6842 8226

Councillor Denis Todd
Phone: (02) 6843 1831

Senior Management Team

General Manager
Robert Geraghty

Director Corporate Services
Carolyn Upston

Acting Director Environmental Services
Tony Meppem

Director Technical Services
Kevin Tighe

Director Community Services
Rebecca Ryan

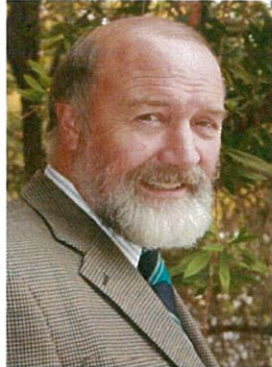
Auditors

Forsyths
Chartered Accountants
Armidale

Solicitors

Clarke & Cunningham
Coonabarabran

Councillors



Cr Peter Shinton
Mayor



Cr Murray Coe
Deputy Mayor



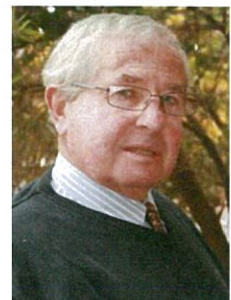
Cr Kerry Campbell



Cr Tilak Dissanayake



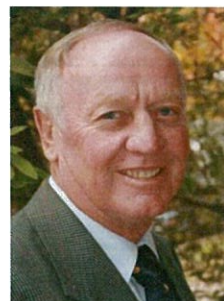
Cr Ray Lewis



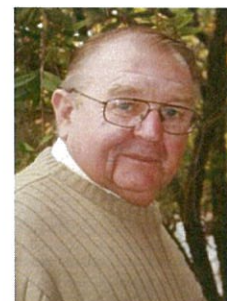
Cr Mark Powell



Cr Victor Schmidt



Cr Ron Sullivan



Cr Denis Todd

Senior Management Team



Robert J Geraghty (Bob)
GENERAL MANAGER



Kevin Tighe
Director Technical Services



Rebecca Ryan
Director Community Services

Senior Management Team



Carolyn Upston
Director Corporate Services



Tony Meppem
Director Environmental Services
(Acting)

Public Meetings

Ordinary meetings of Council are usually held on the third Thursday of each month commencing at 11.00 am. Monthly Council meetings are held at either Coonabarabran or Coolah (on an alternating basis). Monthly meetings of Council are advertised and attendance by members of the public is encouraged.

Special meetings are held for the 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.

An open forum time is provided at the commencement of the monthly meeting 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. 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 on the Tuesday preceding the council meeting from the Administration Centre in Coonabarabran and can be accessed on Council's website at www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au.

Committees of Council

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.

Castlereagh Macquarie County Council Crs Shinton and Coe	Macquarie Regional Library Crs Powell and Campbell	Traffic Advisory Committee Cr Lewis, Council staff, RTA, police representatives and one community member
Warrumbungle Bushfire Management Committee Cr Shinton, Council staff and bushfire personnel	Local Emergency Management Committee Cr Dissanayake and emergency personnel	The North West Weight of Loads Group Cr Todd, Council staff, group transport and farming representatives from area
Warrumbungle Shire Liquor Accord Cr Schmidt	Catchment Management Authorities Councillor Sullivan and Senior staff represent Council	Central West Explorer Country Tourism Committee Councillor Schmidt and a Staff member represents Council

Police Accountability and Consultation Committee Mayor and General Manager represent council	Central Ranges Natural Gas Association Mayor and General Manager represent Council	Orana Regional Organisation of Councils Mayor and General Manager represent Council
Golden Highway Consultative Committee Cr Coe	Inland Rail Committee Cr Todd	Orana Arts Incorporated Director of Community Services
	Wind Energy Precinct Advisory Committee Crs Shinton and Powell	

Internal Committees

Plant Advisory Committee Crs Sullivan, Lewis, Powell and Coe and staff representatives	Occupational Health & Safety Advisory Committee Cr Schmidt and staff representatives	Consultative Advisory Committee Cr Schmidt and staff representatives
General Manager's Review Committee All Councillors	Finance and Works Committee All Councillors	EEO Advisory Committee Cr Sullivan and staff representatives

Community Committees

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

Warrumbungle Aerodromes Advisory Committee Crs Powell and Campbell, Council staff and community members	Roads Review Committee All councillors	Warrumbungle Shire Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Committee Crs Schmidt and Campbell, Council staff and community members
Medical Services Advisory Committee Crs Dissanayake and Todd, Council staff and community members	Warrumbungle Shire Council Yuluwirri Kids Advisory Committee Director of Community Services	Warrumbungle Shire Council Social Services Advisory Committee Councillor Campbell
Binnaway Town Committee Cr Lewis	Baradine Town Committee Cr Campbell	Coolah Town Committee Cr Powell
Dunedoo Town Committee Cr Coe	Mendooran/Merrygoen Town Committee Cr Lewis	Baradine Floodplain Management Advisory Committee Crs Todd, Campbell Council staff and community members

Contacting Council

Council's Administration Centre is located at 20-22 John Street, Coonabarabran and is open weekdays from 9.00am to 4.00pm (excluding public holidays).

Council can be contacted by telephone on 6849 2000 (or from calls within the Shire on 1300 795 099) or by facsimile on 6842 1337. Correspondence is to be directed to Council at P O Box 191, Coonabarabran NSW 2357 or you can email us at info@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au

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

Council's office located at 59 Binnia Street, Coolah is open weekdays from 9.00am to 4.00pm (excluding public holidays).

Media

Council news and information is regularly reported in the local media and council notices are published in the Coonabarabran Times, Coolah District Diary, Dunedoo District Diary and Mendooran, Merrygoen and Neilrex Lions Pride.

Financial Statements

LGA s.428(2)(a)

The Operating Statement and Statement of Financial Position are part of the external reporting requirements on Council and are in a format which meets external reporting requirements under the Local Government Act 1993. These reports are independently audited by Council's Auditors, Forsyths of Armidale. For further details on Council's audited Annual Statements, a copy can be viewed at Council's offices and on the website when available.

(**Note:** Relevant sections of the Statements are attached at the end of this Report as Attachment 4.0)

Rates and Charges written off

(Reg cl. 132)

Set out below are details of Rates and Charges written off during the 2009/2010 rating year.

Rates and charges have been written off in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 and Regulations. Individual details of amounts written off are contained in Registers maintained by Council.

Type	General Fund	Water	Sewerage	Total
Pension Rebates	260,637.89	72,761.99	52,518.95	385,918.83
Postponed Rates	1,269.11	759.73	854.83	2,883.67
Other Write Offs	31,016.95	16,674.56	4,234.00	51,925.51
TOTAL	292,923.95	90,196.28	57,607.78	440,728.01

Performance in Review 2009/2010

LGA s.428(2)(b)

In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1993, reports have been submitted to Council on a quarterly basis as to the extent to which the performance targets set by the 2009/2010 Management Plan have been achieved during the year.

The following pages provide an overview of the achievements for the principal activities listed below:

<i>PROGRAMME</i>	<i>PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES</i>
1 EXECUTIVE	Council General Manager Human Resources Services Economic Development and Tourism
2 TECHNICAL SERVICES	Technical Services Management Asset and Design Projects Road Operations Urban Services Fleet Services Road Contracts Warrumbungle Waste Water & Sewerage Services
3 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	Environmental Management Planning Services Environmental Health Building Control Regulatory Services
4 CORPORATE SERVICES	Corporate Services Management Financial Services Administration Services IT Support Supply Services Bush Fire
5 COMMUNITY SERVICES	Community Services Management Community Care Emergency Services Social Services Family Day Care Connect Five Yuluwirri Kids Libraries Road Safety Aerodromes Ovals Sport and Recreation Community Development

EXECUTIVE SERVICES

The Executive Services component of Council's activities has essentially the umbrella role of establishing the direction and supervising the outcomes for the whole organisation. The direction is set by Councillors through policy and the management plan while the delivery and supervision of outcomes is undertaken by the General Manger. As well, a number of functional activities that Council sees necessary and critical to the welfare of the Council and community are retained in this portfolio and achieved by the direct actions of the General Manager.

This Executive Services section now has four objective areas one relating to Councillor activities, another relating to the General Manager's supervisory activities, the third Human Resources Services and the fourth Economic Development and Tourism. To understand the detailed purpose of the executive functions I have listed the activities within each of these objectives and they are:

Councillor Objective: -

<i>Civic activities</i>	Civic functions, Australia Day functions and donations to organisations
<i>Councillor activities</i>	Councillors fees and travelling, membership of the Shires Association, conferences and Councillor training costs

General Manager Objective: -

<i>Organisation Structure Activities</i>	Staff training, organisation change, resource sharing and implementing changes to the Act
<i>Public Relations Activities</i>	To keep community informed of Council activities through all available avenues
<i>Economic Promotions Activities</i>	To promote and foster at every opportunity the unique advantages of Warrumbungle Shire to potential developers
<i>Management Activities</i>	To ensure that all Council programs are met, subject to available resources. That new management practices are considered to improve efficiency and effectiveness

Within the Executive Services area all the targets set within the Management Plan have been met with several continuing programmes needing to be considered by Council to bring forward. In the donations area the Coolah Development Groups projects (Management Plan \$5,000 and Coolah Art, Historical and Tourism \$918) were not completed. Also the Coonabarabran Sesqui - Centenary Celebration Accounts were not finalised (\$1,200).

As mentioned in my earlier "General Manager's Message" the ongoing impact of the Global Financial Crisis is still affecting the international and local financial markets. The Federal Government has continued to make additional monies available to Councils across Australia as part of an ongoing stimulus package – Warrumbungle Shire Council was fortunate to receive a further \$224,000 over and above that of the \$568,000 for the previous year. That was again a significant amount more than any of our neighbours received. Council decided that it would undertake only one project with these monies – that it is would undertake the construction of a Waste Management Facility at Dunedoo. The total project is estimated at \$271,000.

In June the Prime Minister made an announcement that he would make a third round of the RLCIP grants similar to the last round. We can expect that Warrumbungle Shire Council will get another \$224,000 approximately.

Also again in the latter part of June the Federal Government also brought forward the payment of the first quarter Financial Assistance Grant and while this has to be carried forward into the financial year 2009/10 it was of great assistance in Council managing its short term cash flow.

Overall this part of Council's operations showed a saving (or surplus) against projections of \$18,923.

R J Geraghty
General Manager

Tourism and Economic Development Objective:-

Warrumbungle Shire is a region of communities that work together to promote the positive values of rural and regional living; playing in the region is as important to the economy as living here. Warrumbungle Shire Council is the beating heart and the Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Committee can be likened to the pulse which ensures a strong heart beat. Each of the communities across the shire has its own unique values and when the resources and energies are pooled, the potential to become a strong tourism and economic centre is enhanced. Our shire deserves nothing less.

Through the Tourism and Economic Development Unit there is continued involvement in a variety of projects for the benefit of the shire and its residents. This committee meets quarterly to advise Council and progress elements of the Tourism and Economic Development Strategic Plan within budget.

Economic Development Highlights in 2009-2010:

- After sitting for some years on an area of land to the north of Coonabarabran, the re-classification of this land and subsequent subdivision meant Council was then able to sell part of this land for industrial development. While this land went to auction, it was passed in but the closing bidder entered into negotiations and purchased the block. The successful sale of this parcel of land has created the opportunity for a new development in the estate. This has led to the identification of further land for re-classification and zoning within the industrial area.
- The exchange of contracts on a second parcel of Council land for a major development – noting that this sale is dependent on the re-classification of the land to operational use with the purchaser having paid a deposit and settlement to occur within twelve months of the deposit.
- The attraction of conferences and events to the shire has had economic benefits and the contribution of Council to ensure improved facilities has been beneficial. In June, Coonabarabran hosted the AAO Symposium which coincided with the changeover from Anglo Australian Observatory ownership (which had been a partnership of Australian and British governments) to the Australian Astronomical Observatory (now totally funded by the Australian Federal Govt); the symposium had one hundred international astronomers in Coonabarabran for a week long conference which impacted right across the community and generated a positive economic outcome. Other smaller conferences included Teachers Federation Central Schools Conference, NSW Police, CMA etc.
- The success of Warrumbungle Shire nominee in the Regional Development Australia – Orana – Regional Business Awards – Apprentice of the Year.
- Ongoing consultation with 2 major developers pursuing land and pursuing substantial development in Coonabarabran; both of these operations would address some of the shortfalls in service provision in Coonabarabran and create 20+ positions each with the potential for providing training and apprenticeships.
- The brokering of an agreement between ANU-RSAA and Milroy Observatory for the gifting of the ANU 40" telescope for re-location and establishment as a public access telescope facility; this project has the potential to create a stronger astronomy focus for Coonabarabran and Warrumbungle Shire. Out of this project has grown a suggestion of a Sister City relationship with a Japanese astronomy town which will be further explored in the new financial year.

-
- The raising of awareness of the need to consider alternative energies was canvassed through the year and the Team Leader prepared a discussion paper on solar energy for Council. This was followed by a presentation from an international company interested in future development of this concept. In addition, a solar energy unit wholesaler canvassed the shire for potential installations for residential systems – units will be installed in the future with the clients selling their power back to the grid (Country Energy). This is seen as a source of income that will offset increasing power costs.
 - The staff of the TED Unit had carriage of the Coonabarabran 150th Celebrations held in May 2010; this event was supported by Council and was well attended with a variety of activities to mark the occasion.

Other actions and achievements

- Attendance of Team Leader at a number of Economic Communities Conferences in Cowra, Parkes and Dubbo and the State I & I Conference in Broken Hill with representation from small town community groups in attendance as well.
- Ongoing support for local businesses and the linking of businesses with funding and support agencies (eg: BEC, I & I, AusIndustry). The distribution of funding information to community groups, development co-ordinators and businesses; consultation with prospective business developers for a number of significant business ventures and assistance with submissions for events.
- The provision of services and assistance to local businesses was undertaken with a number of businesses and marketing focussed workshops for the community partly funded by Business NSW, AusIndustry, BEC, Orana Arts and the I & I Travelling Experts Programs.
- Meetings with business related agencies and organisations included: I & I RDA-Orana, Mudgee BEC, Economic Development Officer Forums, Central Ranges Natural Gasline, Aeropelican, and Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services. The Team Leader also regularly attends Chamber of Commerce and Pilliga Forest Discovery Centre Advisory Committee meetings.
- The ongoing work of a cluster project for a Skills Audit and Attraction Strategy to identify gaps and opportunities for employment within the shire – particularly in the light of the proposed mine at Cobborah.
- Promotion of Warrumbungle Shire as a place to live, to invest and develop new businesses has been undertaken utilising several forms of media including:
 - a new brochure on living in the shire was prepared for distribution to the broader community through consumer shows and more particularly through the new mines outside the southern end of the shire. This particular publication highlights the benefits of living in the shire and its proximity to major employment opportunities.
 - the display of our banners at consumer shows and events.
 - the participation of the shire at the Rural and Regional Living Expo (formerly Country Week) at Rose Hill in partnership with RDA-Orana;
 - a series of targeted advertising into eastern suburb newspapers over two periods brought a level of enquiry.
 - A television advertising campaign into Wollongong-Illawarra region.
- A partnership with the Coonabarabran Chamber of Commerce for the presentation of the Warrumbungle Shire Golden Galaxy Business Awards has provided an opportunity to promote the excellent business practices of businesses; 2 businesses were successful finalists in the Orana Regional Awards in 2009.

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- Telstra's proposal to remove several public phone booths across the shire was successfully halted when CDO's and the Team Leader prepared submission to Telstra highlighting the importance of these services to the towns.
 - The Team Leader completed a Local Govt training course on Competency Assessment.

Tourism Highlights:

- The TAO and TPC successfully completed Cert 3 in Tourism Services. They have also attended marketing workshops and participated in seminars on Volunteer Management.
- New attractions, events and activities have an impact across the whole of the tourism industry. The completion of the new tourism attraction Sculptures in the Scrub will provide a sound reason for visitors to extend their stay. It is hoped that the attraction will also build a confidence in the industry and encourage operators to look at the opportunities created from yet another attraction.
- The ongoing success of the Warrumbungle Crooked Mountain Concert, and the Hartwood Campfires and Country Music Festival continue to attract visitors from all eastern states, many of whom stay for an extended period and visit the whole region. These events are not seen to compete as they focus on different music styles and are at different times of the year. The Hartwood event caters to the wanderers market and more particularly the "grey nomads" who enjoy travelling back roads and use vans and mobile homes.
- The successful implementation of a Cluster Marketing Campaign specifically targeting southern Queensland has shown an increase in visitor numbers from that region; the cluster comprises Warrumbungle, Gilgandra, Coonamble and Narrabri Shires and the campaign included direct mail, television advertising, print media and a face to face consumer show. The Cluster continues to work together on initiatives and has recently submitted for funding for an IT project.
- Television coverage has the potential to reach people in their homes and while advertising is sometimes hard to measure, the lifestyle programs have potential to really help us build our place in the market. Sydney Weekender filmed the Sculptures in the Scrub and the response and enquiry following televising of the show was very positive. Following that particular filming, the Better Homes and Gardens crew visited Pilliga Pottery and filmed with the purpose of promoting the various building styles and the location of the pottery. This too had a good response and high level of phone enquiry. These two filming activities indicate the value across the shire of such activity; operators need to understand that it is not always essential to be the subject of the filming to benefit – the VIC uses these enquiries to build the visitor experience and create spin-offs for communities.
- The visit of a team of bird enthusiasts from the USA provided excellent media coverage; the members of Birding USA visited to learn first hand of the opportunities they could offer their members and clients – birding is worth \$12b in the USA and they are looking to offer tours into this part of Australia in their winter season. The Team Leader was interviewed on American radio about birding opportunities in the Pilliga, Warrumbungle and Coolah Tops National Parks but also took the opportunity to promote other experiences.
- For several years there has been agreement that tapping into the group touring market required a new approach. With that in mind the Team Leader prepared a publication that sets out tour itineraries with costings, timing and distances. This publication has been distributed through Trade Travel, a

company that focuses on group travel and Probus Clubs. Membership of Trade Travel provides access to the tour co-ordinators of various groups.

Other actions and achievements in tourism include:

- The success of the Pilliga Forest Discovery Centre in the Inland Tourism Awards – a finalist in its category.
- The billboard in the grounds of the Coonabarabran VIC has been updated with advertisers funding their advertisements and the production of new entrance signs in the grounds as well.
- New information boards were installed in southern shire communities.
- The VIC in Coonabarabran maintains its Level 1 Accreditation and operates within the guidelines as set down – the Centre is open each day except Christmas Day and has a full complement of staff supported by a small group of volunteers. The Level 3 visitor service at Dunedoo has been relinquished but the TED unit is now working with individual communities to develop Level 3 accredited Visitor Services in Coolah and Dunedoo..
- Familiarisation tours have been undertaken to ensure that staff and volunteers at the Visitor Information Centre are aware of the tourism product within the Shire.
- Ongoing accreditation of the Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre and the servicing of information distribution points across the shire ensure a good level of information is available to visitors.
- Promotion of the Shire has included the purchase of advertising in regional and national publications (including Style Magazine, The Wanderer, Port Stephens Times, Illawarra Mercury), the participation in marketing initiatives of Newell Highway Promotions and the Central Tourism NSW, the tourism consumer shows in Sydney, Hunter Valley, Penrith, Melbourne, Adelaide, Canberra and Brisbane. The updated Datatrax unit in the VIC is a means of ensuring afterhours information service delivery. Several media opportunities in major publications have presented to us at no cost. The concept of the World's Largest Virtual Solar System Drive is still considered something of a novelty and has featured in major travel publications at little or no cost to us.
- Social media is an emerging method of communicating messages and while the tourism website is an important means of communication, the use of Facebook was successfully used to promote the Coona' 150th. The Facebook page is now used to promote our events and activities.
- Visitor Centre staff maintain the warrumbungleregion.com.au website as well as the STDW content to ensure currency of information. Staff from the Unit represent on a number of internal council committees as well as regional tourism committees.
- The new Warrumbungle Shire Tourism Brochure was launched in October and the first print run has been exhausted; a second print run will be completed in the new financial year.
- The VIC assisted the Classic Car Rally for their event in September 2009 – they spent 3 days and 2 nights in the shire; the co-operation has won us a second chance to host this event for 2 days in 2010 within the Shire; rallying days will be held in Dunedoo and Baradine areas.

Aileen Bell

Team Leader Economic Development and Tourism

CORPORATE SERVICES

The challenges for Corporate Services this year have been related to the conclusion of financial statements. The 2008/09 statements were lodged a week late but with the agreement of the Department of Local Government. Steps have been taken to engage a consultant early to assist in completing the 2009/10 statements and at the end of June the tasks completed suggest that we will have the statements lodged on time.

A Sale of Land for unpaid rates was undertaken with all land offered being purchased. There was also an increase in the payment of other outstanding rates and fees.

Financial Services

Over the last three years Council has refined its chart of accounts to meet with customer requirements which has offered many challenges. In this year there has been a requirement to revalue all the roads, bridges and transport infrastructure which was completed and the new values contained within Council's Financial Statements.

Finance has had staff vacancies for some time and all but one senior position has been filled which has assisted with performance improvement.

In the next financial period Council will be required to revisit the valuations of the Land and Buildings and this is well in hand.

There will be some hard yards ahead for staff as our rates and debtors section have to bring our outstanding amounts back to acceptable levels. This will be a real challenge.

Over all, the Financial Services have turned the corner with its outcomes. Now with a stable workforce it should continue to meet the ever changing challenges that it is faced with throughout the year.

Administration Services

Administration Services has continued the high standard of service to the community meeting requests for information and provision of both telephone and counter services in a professional, friendly and efficient manner at both the Coolah and Coonabarabran offices.

Correspondence was registered and allocated generally within the two day target however rating periods and staff absences also impact on our ability to achieve this result. Receipt of e-mail messages continues to increase with considerable time involved in registering the messages in the electronic document system and the processing of more general E-mail messages.

Staff also met deadlines in relation to preparation and distribution of Council business papers, committee agendas and minutes relating to those meetings. Copies of the business papers and minutes from ordinary council meetings are

available on the website. The staff also met the needs of the organisation with the preparation of correspondence and reports.

Four hundred and seventy nine (479) resolutions of Council have been recorded during the year as a result of Council meetings together with two hundred and twenty six (226) committee resolutions.

Carolyn Upston
Director Corporate Services

TECHNICAL SERVICES

Director's Report

OVERVIEW

The Technical Services Division had another good year in delivering projects and services across the whole Shire. Several ongoing major projects were completed and services such as roads, water, sewerage, waste, parks were provided with minimal complaints. However, the major feature of the year was the breaking of the drought which was signalled by flooding at the end of December 2009. The weather has a significant impact on services provided by the Division. Prior to December 2009, the dry conditions limited roadwork activity; however, since January 2010 road crews have been busy repairing extensive damage to the road network.

Council was fortunate to receive funding from the Federal Government under the stimulus programme and because of this projects in each town were completed. The Technical Services Division were involved with the following projects; replacement bore at Baradine, footpath rehabilitation in Dunedoo and walkway construction in Binnaway.

Roads and Bridges

During the year bridge construction works were completed on Saltwater Creek No1 (Purlewaugh Road), Ulindah Bridge (Binnaway Road) and Yearinan Creek (Baradine Road), Castlereagh River near Ulamambri, the Talbragar River Bridge (Cassilis Road) and Bomera Creek Bridge Purlewaugh Road). These bridges are all located on regional roads and they will make the overall road network more reliable and safer for all road users.

During the year the project at the old rail bridge site on Baradine Road was completed. The work has significantly improved road safety at this site. Furthermore, the project is a fine piece of roadwork and testament to the expertise and capability of Council staff.

The busiest regional road in the Shire is the Black Stump Way and during 2009/10 work commenced on widening and strengthening another 2.5km section of this road.

Council provides significant road maintenance services to the RTA on several highways across the Shire. Council also undertakes construction works for the RTA and during the year, work was completed on widening a section of the Castlereagh Highway and improvement works were completed at the intersection of Golden Highway and Castlereagh Highway near Craboon.

Many local rural roads were resurfaced with gravel and with bitumen. Also Council undertook capital improvements on a number of roads including: Gentle Annie Road, Cobbora Road, Digilah Road and Old Common Road. Council is working with the Fisheries Division of NSW Industry and Investment on a replacement crossing of the Castlereagh River on Merryula Road.

Town Streets didn't miss out with road improvement works being undertaken in each town, in particular kerbing and guttering works in Dunedoo, a culvert structure

in Baradine, Reservoir Street Coonabarabran, a sundial in Coonabarabran and a cycleway in Coolah.

With the return to 'wet season' conditions in the second half of 2009/10, the condition of roads has significantly deteriorated. Many bitumen sealed roads have developed ruts or deformations in the road base and many potholes have formed. Also, there are many 'wash outs' on the unsealed road network and at times some roads have been closed to traffic. Repairing the damage to the roads as a result of the floods at the end of 2009 is expected to continue well into the next reporting period.

The demands by State Government for better management plans and reporting continue to grow. During the period staff were involved in collecting data on road and drainage assets to enable an up to date valuation of these assets. Council operates gravel pits and throughout the Shire there are over 100 pits. These pits are considered by the State Government to be mines and as such a mine safety management plan must be established for when operations take place in any one of the gravel pits.

Water and Sewerage

Clean clear water started flowing through pipes in Mendooran in March 2010 following completion of the new water treatment plant. A much welcome improvement to quality of life for residents in Mendooran, the treatment plant is the result of many years of planning. Also completed was interior painting of the Cobra Street reservoir and installation of a roof structure.

In June 2009, Council resolved to introduce fluoride into the water supply for each town. The NSW Health Department is funding 100% the cost of constructing specialized fluoride injection equipment. Investigations of each town supply and treatment facility were undertaken and tender documents prepared. Following investigations by NSW Health and the NSW Office of Water the concentration of fluoride in the Dunedoo water supply is above a level that offers expected health benefits and hence Dunedoo is not included in the contract for establishment of dosage plants.

In accordance with State Government Best Practice requirements, Council introduced a user pay sewerage billing system for properties in Coonabarabran, Baradine, Coolah and Dunedoo. The user pay policy establishes a uniform charge for residential properties and charge based on water consumption for non residential properties. During the year, some adjustment was made by Council to how charges for non residential properties were calculated.

Council is also required to demonstrate to the NSW Environment Protection Authority best practice in relation to managing the various sewerage systems. In this regard, several sewer lines in Coonabarabran were relined with latest relining technology to reduce the frequency of blockages.

Several complaints have been received about coloured water in some sections of the urban area of Coonabarabran. As a consequence a programme of mains flushing was initiated in 2009/2010.

In early 2009 Council made submissions to the State Government on their proposal to amalgamate the management of water and sewer services with four adjoining Councils. The State Government is yet to respond to Council's submission and this issue could well dominate throughout the coming financial year.

Parks and Gardens

The parks and gardens staff work within a very limited budget to maintain 28 parks, 14 toilets and keep the roadside grass and gardens throughout each of the six towns to an acceptable standard. To rectify ongoing maintenance issues with Mendooran Park, an irrigation system was installed during 2009/2010. The park in Baradine continues to receive criticism and the problems here were addressed during the period.

The much anticipated toilet block for the Coonabarabran CBD was constructed in the carpark adjacent to Dalgarno Street.

With funding assistance from the Central West Catchment Management Authority, more vegetation rehabilitation works were undertaken in the riparian area on the Castlereagh River in Coonabarabran.

Council staff assisted the Dunedoo Garden Group with establishment of garden beds and sculptures in Milling Park.

Waste

The cost of collecting and processing recyclable and non recyclable waste over the year again exceeded budget expectations. The primary reason for cost over runs is the lack of recycling that is occurring at each of the transfer stations. In particular, the frequency of collection of bulk bins at Baradine and Dunedoo is higher than expected. Operating costs could be reduced if more waste was sorted by users rather than being dumped into the bulk bins. The 'global financial crisis' continued to impact on the waste operations as income from recycled products such as steel, paper & cardboard and plastic all dropped significantly.

Fleet

The budget outcome for in the fleet services section was better than expected, however a number of plant items were not replaced due to low trade in values being offered. New computer systems are being introduced to better manage various aspects of fleet management including fuel consumption, preventative maintenance and repair history.

New State Regulations for monitoring and maintenance of underground fuel tanks came into effect during 2009/10. New monitoring wells in the Coolah depot detected potential contamination of the water table and this situation is being addressed in accordance with the Regulations.

Staffing

Staffing issues were again a major issue for the Technical Services Department in 2009/10. Of particular concern are several vacant positions in the water and sewerage area and the design area and while these positions remain vacant Council's ability to undertake maintenance and construction works is severely constrained. Also, Council said goodbye to a number of long serving employees who resigned during the period

The performance of the various principle activities within Technical Services in terms of budget outcome is reported in Table 1.0, while performance in terms of accomplishment is reported in Table 2.0.

Table 1.0 – Financial Performance of Technical Services in 2009/2010

	Budget	Actual	Difference %
Total Income			
Technical Services Management	\$0	\$0	0
Design Projects	\$13,102	\$15,884	21%
Road Operations	\$4,984,861	\$7,065,802	42%
Road Contracts	\$3,077,568	\$3,261,690	6%
Fleet Services	\$3,994,241	\$4,344,803	9%
Urban Services	\$39,790	\$152,173	282%
Waste Services	\$1,307,703	\$1,556,880	19%
Village Water	\$28,000	\$31,016	11%
Combined Water	\$1,860,356	\$3,310,541	78%
Combined Sewerage	\$1,133,398	\$1,349,001	19%
Totals	\$16,439,019	\$21,087,790	28%
Total Expenditure			
Technical Services Management	\$126,000	\$143,117	14%
Design Projects	\$319,080	\$259,942	-19%
Road Operations	\$7,032,062	\$9,721,064	38%
Road Contracts	\$3,027,260	\$3,073,438	2%
Fleet Services	\$3,900,571	\$3,855,827	-1%
Urban Services	\$1,219,583	\$1,320,906	8%
Waste Services	\$1,367,191	\$1,746,545	28%
Village Water	\$23,500	\$31,016	32%
Combined Water	\$1,938,712	\$2,991,360	54%
Combined Sewerage	\$1,001,966	\$844,528	-16%
Totals	\$19,955,925	\$23,987,743	20%

Table 2.0 – Accomplishment Performance of Technical Services

DESIGN SERVICES

Principal Activity	Objective	Result
Traffic Management	To ensure that adequate facilities are in place for the safe movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.	Recommendations from Local Traffic Committee were implemented as required.
Survey Investigation and Design	Preparation of construction plans and specifications.	Completion of the design program is still around 3 months behind schedule, however a significant improvement on previous year.
Asset Management	To develop and update asset registers and report on asset condition in accordance with statutory requirements.	GIS mapping capability significantly improved with purchase of latest version software.

ROAD OPERATIONS

Principal Activity	Objective	Result
Regional Roads	Undertake maintenance and construction works to ensure safety and reliability of regional road network.	Pavement widening and rehabilitation works undertaken on MR55 (Black Stump Way) south of Coolah. Also, bridgeworks completed on Yearinan Bridge, Castlereagh River Bridge, Bomera Creek Bridge, Ulindah Creek Bridge. Roadworks at site of old railway bridge on Baradine completed.
Rural Roads	Local Undertake maintenance and construction works to ensure safety and reliability of local road network.	Rehabilitation works were undertaken on a section of Coolah Creek Road. Major improvement works undertaken on the following roads; Cobbora Road, Gentle Annie Road, Digilah Road, Coolah Neilrex Road and Old Common Road. Repairs to flood damaged roads continued throughout the year. Maintenance works on sealed and unsealed roads were completed within budget allocations.
Urban Roads (Town Streets)	Local (Town Undertake maintenance and construction works to ensure safety and reliability of urban road networks.	Kerbing and guttering works completed in Dunedoo, drainage structure completed in Walker Street Baradine, Cycleway construction commenced in Coolah, completion of Reservoir Street upgrading in Coonabarabran. Investigation of stormwater drainage in Binnaway continued throughout the year. Town street maintenance works completed within budget expectations
Carparks	Maintain well organized and convenient parking areas that are easily accessible for all users	No significant improvements to carparks. Maintenance works including cleaning undertaken as required.
Private Works	To maximize the use of Council owned plant and labour and provide a profit to Council while servicing the community	Private works undertaken as required.

CONTRACT SERVICES

Principal Activity	Objective	Result
State Roads	To provide competitive services to the RTA in a contract environment.	A major widening project completed on the Castlereagh Highway. Also, safety improvements to the intersection of SH18 and SH27 were completed. The RMCC returned a modest profit to Council
Bitumen resurfacing Program on Regional Roads, Local Rural Roads and Town Streets.	The approved annual bitumen resurfacing program is completed efficiently and effectively.	Specifications developed and annual tenders called. Approved program of sealing completed in accordance with budget allocations.
Major Contracts	Major road and bridge contracts completed in accordance with budget allocations	No new major contracts let during the period

URBAN SERVICES

Principal Activity	Objective	Result
Parks and Gardens	Provision of parks and gardens	Parks and gardens in all areas maintained in accordance with generally accepted standards and within budget allocations.
Street Cleaning	Urban streets cleaned to generally accepted standards	Very few complaints received about cleanliness of urban streets. Street cleaning undertaken in accordance with budget allocations.
Toilets	Clean and maintain public toilets to generally accepted standard	New toilet block in the Coonabarabran CBD completed during the year. Some complaints received about condition of toilets particularly in Baradine.
Waste Services	Provide weekly garbage collection service to urban and rural areas and minimize use of landfill through provision of recycling services	Expenditure on waste services not fully recovered, partly due to downturn in market for recyclable products and partly due to lack of recycling at the transfer stations.

FLEET

Principal Activity	Objective	Result
Depots	Provision of safe, secure and effective work depots in Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Dunedoo, Coonabarabran and Mendooran	Improvements undertaken as programmed.
Plant and Equipment	Provision of a modern and safe plant fleet and downtime is minimized.	Most items of plant replaced as programmed. Plant income higher than expected, however plant expenditure also higher than expected. Overall a better than expected budget result.
Workshop	Provision of an efficient and effective workshop in Coolah and Coonabarabran	Workshops provided repair services in accordance with budget constraints
Radio Communications	Provision of reliable two way radio system with coverage of the whole Shire.	Some problems experienced with radio system, however generally working well.

WATER AND SEWER

Principal Activity	Objective	Result
Water supply and distribution	Provision of a consistent supply of potable water urban areas that meets consumer demand.	The income received in each water supply exceeded budget expectations, due to higher than expected consumption. However, operating expenditure was generally higher than budget allocations due mostly to higher than expected pumping costs and maintenance associated with the reticulation systems. The construction of the new Mendooran water treatment plant was completed.

Sewage collection and treatment

Provision of sewer collection reticulation system and treatment and discharge in accordance with license conditions.

There were non compliance issues with all four sewerage systems, however the issues are being addressed with the assistance of the EPA.

Actual income generally higher than expected, however, some credit adjustments required for non residential properties. Expenditure generally in accordance with budget expectations. Several capital projects not completed due to resource constraints.

Introduction of a user pay sewerage pricing policy was a major feature of the year.

K Tighe
Director Technical Services

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Management Objectives

- To effectively manage and promote an efficient Environmental Services division attuned to the needs of the built and natural environment.
- To establish a consistent set of contemporary policies and procedures across the department to ensure a high standard of customer service and legislative compliance.
- To ensure all projects are completed in accordance with their outcome objectives and within the allocated budget.

Principal Activity Co-coordinator

Mr Anthony Meppem, Acting Director Environmental Services

Achievements in 2009/10

Environmental Management Services

- Completion of the first Draft Land Use Strategy for the Warrumbungle Shire Local Government Area. This will set the strategic development direction for the Shire for the next 15 - 20 years and form the basis of Council's new Principal Local Environmental Plan.
- Council has progressed the amalgamation of all of its Development Control Plans into one document for the whole shire. The work has progressed slowly with the confusion created by the introduction of the Code SEPPs, however, a draft document has been provided and is being reviewed by the Observatory liaison committee.
- All community-based heritage work within the Shire completed within NSW Heritage Office requirements.
- During the year Council has reclassified two parcels of land at Coonabarabran from Community to Operational to allow the sale of the land and the land register has been reviewed and updated.

Town Planning

- A total of one hundred and fifty three (153) Development Applications were approved which had a total value of \$19,253,973. This included twenty five (25) new residential dwellings with a total value of \$4,675,884.
- A total of four hundred and forty nine (449) Section 149 Certificates were issued.
- Worked with stakeholders to ensure compliance with the Regional Environmental Plan (Light Emissions) necessary to safeguard the operations of the Siding Spring Observatory.

Building Services

- A total of fifty one (51) complying development certificates were issued.
- A weekly average of eight (11) critical stage inspections were carried out.
- Efficient transition into the new assessment process for Places of Public Entertainment.

Environmental Health Services

- Completion of the Comprehensive State of the Environment Report for 2009/10. A successful regional reporting framework was established in partnership with the Central West Catchment Management Authority for collating comparative and meaningful data annually. The report uses environmental indicators to assess the main themes of air, biodiversity, land, waste, water and human settlement.
- Lawful removal of fire damaged buildings in urban areas to enhance public amenity and ensure the health and safety of neighbouring dwellings.
- Obligations under the NSW Food Regulation Partnership partly satisfied due to maternity leave and contractor unavailability.
- Establishment of a Shire-wide risk-based food premises inspection register.

Public Cemetery Management

- Public cemetery records maintained in accordance with legislation.
- Cemetery projects undertaken across the Shire in addition to general maintenance.

Completed Projects

- Stage 3 of the erosion control strategic project at the Coonabarabran Old Cemetery.
- The new bay at the Native Grove Cemetery has been completed and available for use.

Public Pools Management

- Public Pools maintained in accordance with health and safety regulations.
- Public Liability audit undertaken this year in which Council scored 80%.
- A full operational review of the Public Pool policies and procedures and manuals was undertaken.
- A series of projects addressing Occupational Health & Safety issues were undertaken in addition to general maintenance.

Completed Projects

- Baradine Pool: Upgrading of the kiosk has been completed along with renovation of the change rooms.
- Coolah Pool: new chemigem installation for toddlers pool completed.
- Coonabarabran Pool: Replaced the vandalized automatic pool vacuum cleaner
- Dunedoo Pool: Replaced non-compliant handrail to disabled ramp and replaced roller door at the side entrance to allow disabled access through the front of the pool
- Mendooran Pool: Repairs to leaking toddlers pool.
- Completion of Council's RLCIP Funded projects at the Coolah, Coonabarabran and Mendooran Pools.

Regulatory Services

- A strategy has been introduced to reduce the cost to Council in the caring of companion animals sent to the pound. If the owner of a companion animal can be readily be located on the day the animal is seized, whether it is permanently identified (microchipped) and unregistered or unregistered and unidentified (microchipped), the companion animal will be returned to the

-
- owner and a fine and notice to register issued. This reduces the cost of sustenance and allows the companion animal to be returned to the owner.
- Council compliance officers have been working with RSPCA inspectors in cases where Council and animal welfare issues coincide. Council continues its cooperation with the RSPCA in the rehousing of unwanted companion animals.
 - In 2009/10 one hundred and fifty six (156) companion animals were seized (being 17 cats and 139 dogs). Eleven (11) animals were surrendered by owners and four (4) animals were euthanized at the owner's request. Fifteen (15) were released to their owners. However, one hundred and forty one (141) were euthanized as they were unable to be rehoused. Seven (7) were successfully rehoused.
 - Provision of stock and companion animals pounds.
 - Incidents of straying stock have been reduced due to Council's efforts in bringing Land owners attention to the need to ensure that fencing is sufficient to ensure stock do not escape.

Priorities for 2010/11

Environmental Management Services

- Completion of the Warrumbungle Shire new Principal Local Environmental Plan.
- DCP Document
- All community-based heritage work within the Shire completed within NSW Heritage Office requirements.
- Completion of the reclassification of Council land parcels from "community" to "operational" in line with Council's Land Use Strategy.

Town Planning

- Delivery of consistent and high quality approvals.
- Ensuring continued compliance with the Regional Environmental Plan (Light Emissions) necessary to safeguard the operations of the Siding Spring Observatory.
- Updating of policies, forms and hand-outs.

Building Services

- Delivery of quality and consistent building inspection service.
- Places of Public Entertainment assessment.
- Continued monitoring of fire-safety compliance.
- Completion of a Shire-wide risk-based Onsite-Sewage Management System inspection register.

Environmental Health Services

- State of the Environment Reporting.
- Lawful removal of abandoned and derelict buildings in urban areas to enhance public amenity and ensure the health and safety of neighbouring dwellings.
- Compliance with Council's obligations under the NSW Food Regulation Partnership.

Public Cemetery Management

- Public cemetery records maintained in accordance with legislation.
- Cemetery projects undertaken across the Shire in addition to general maintenance.

Public Pools Management

- Public Pools maintained in accordance with health and safety regulations.
- Prepare an affordable long term plan for the up-grading of the aquatic facility at Coonabarabran.
- Completion of the capital works program for the pools.
- Review staffing methods to provide greater flexibility to Council to reduce costs without reducing service levels.

Regulatory Services

- Micro-chipping and registration Door-Knocking Project.
- Reduction in nuisance dog complaints.
- Continued promotion of Council's leash-free areas and responsible pet ownership practices.
- Decreased euthanasia numbers through increased co-operation with other government bodies to re-house animals and increased efforts to return animals to their owner where possible.

Planning Agreements

- There were no planning agreements in force this year.

Conclusion

Council's Environmental Services Department has a significant role in a diverse range of activities and services to the community. The department's staff is committed to excellence in these activities which is confirmed by the minimal numbers of complaints received.

The department has met all of its legislative requirements this year, and completed a majority of the capital projects undertaken within the allocated budget and timeframes at a time when the manager responsible for the key area of pool management has been absent on extended leave.

Tony Meppem
Acting Director of Environmental Services

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Director's Report

The Community Services division of Council continued its role of facilitating and coordinating the 'Services to the People' for Warrumbungle shire.

Orana Arts

Orana Arts is a professional Regional Arts organisation funded by both NSW and Local Government working together to connect arts, culture and heritage with local communities.

Orana Arts completed its third and entered its first year of triennial funding from Arts NSW; and is supported by the Regional Development Board's members Warrumbungle, Narromine, Dubbo and Gilgandra Shire Councils. Mid Western Regional Council joined the Orana Arts family in 2010.

Board representation is delegated to the Director of Community Services who attends the quarterly Orana Arts meetings. Orana Arts continued to include towns within the Shire for focussed professional development workshops for community group including; Marketing, Museums Connect, ArtStart – Youth Arts and Skills Program, including; Hip Hop, Face Painting, Circus Skills and the Box o'Tricks school tour and the Moorambilla Music Festival. The publication of the 2009 Cultural Directory includes arts and cultural services, individual artists; with continued assistance and facilitation provided to artists and community groups seeking grants and support.

Indigenous

Warrumbungle local government area encompasses three Aboriginal language areas; the largest being the Gamillaraay, in the northern half of the Shire; Waridjuri in the south west (Mendooran, Dunedoo area) and to a smaller extent at the very south the Wallay peoples. The Aboriginal population is predominately distributed in the northern half of the Shire and in total represents nearly 8% of the Shires population (ABS Census, 2006). There are active Local Aboriginal Lands Councils in Baradine and Coonabarabran; and a Coonabarabran Community Working Party (CWP). The CWP has extended an invitation to Council to attend meetings, and Council continued to administer the support provided by DEEWR for this program.

Council provides an annual financial contribution to support NAIDOC week celebrations; and coordinates the compilation and promotion of the community's event program and facilitation of Council celebrations and official Flag raising ceremonies. Reconciliation Week was also celebrated; and support provided to local organisers of community events.

Aerodromes

Each of the shires three Aerodrome's are maintained to comply to CASR Regulations with both Coolah and Coonabarabran having regular CASR inspections and aerodrome maintenance undertaken according to statutory requirements. Statutory Obstacle Limitation Surveys were completed in November 2009.

A second capital infrastructure project at Baradine Aerodrome funded by the Remote Aerodrome Safety Program Round 3 (RASP) project totalling \$15,000 to upgrade the boundary fencing and installation of a toilet/tank facility was completed.

Library Services

Each of the shire's six libraries are performing to Macquarie Regional Library (MRL) Strategic Management Plan targets. The new four (4) year MRL Member Service Agreement was signed following a review and consultation with member Councils. The base level of library funding from 2011 to 2015 has been increased to \$10 per capita. The annual book vote likewise increased from 10% to 15%. This will result in much needed collection renewals and improve delivery of library services to the region.

The annual MRL inspection of library buildings for OH&S issues was undertaken and where applicable matters have been addressed. Holiday programs were provided at all branches and there are active book clubs which meet at most branches on regular basis. All branches included in MRL service delivery, and involvement in regional activities such as Youth Week, Law Week and book clubs. Yoututor online program continued and was supported with literacy programs, younger reader competitions and talking books. New book votes expended and items distributed to branches.

Westpac Instore

Council is management auspice of the Westpac Instore in Dunedoo and a new three year agreement was entered into in July 2008. The agency is operated according to Westpac management schedule and the service continues to meet 100% operational targets and gains high scores for Mystery Shopper and customer service results. In addition the agency provides rates collection and front counter support to Council operations. The service is meeting the needs of community and supporting Council office functions.

Ovals/Sport and Recreation Facilities

Warrumbungle Shire Council is committed to providing safe and accessible recreational facilities for residents and visitors alike to enjoy healthy and active lifestyles. Ovals are provided free of charge to individuals, local sporting groups and schools for weekly and regional competitions. A number of capital improvement projects were identified during the year which included the Baradine and Binnaway canteen/kiosk's and Council worked with the local sporting committees to complete funding submissions to NSW Sport and Recreation of which Binnaway was successful this time.

The Shire's ovals continue to have good patronage for a range of activities including; football, touch football, training, athletics and recreational use.

A NSW Community Partnerships application was successful for No 1 Oval Grandstand refurbishment project to the total project cost of \$70,000. This completes the upgrade of this facility; and now provides modern, clean and safe amenities and dressing sheds for teams and individuals participating in competition or events in Coonabarabran.

Mendooran Sports Ground NSW Sport and Recreation capital assistance grant application submitted by Trust for installation of irrigation system was successful.

Spraying and mowing by Council has assisted along with the installation of a new synthetic cricket pitch.

Halls

All Halls are licenced with the Phonographic Performance Company of Australia as Public Places of Entertainment (PPE) with Council being licence holder to enable the public use of sound recordings and music videos protected by copyright.

Each of the halls has individual needs and involvement by community groups interested in maintenance and refurbishment programs.

The airconditioning installation project at the Coonabarabran Town Hall with an RLCIP Round 1 project that included refurbishment to the toilets, installation of a disabled toilet and baby change facilities and courtyard flooring has provided the community with a greatly improved function centre facility.

Youth

In addition to Youth Week, support of the Coonabarabran Youth Club operations and committee has continued.

The Youth Club Committee has been addressing the issues of cleaning and user groups concerns. The Facility used for basketball, indoor netball, indoor soccer competition, boxing, gym, karate, squash, youth club and school sports. A Sports Coordinator role has been identified as a need for the Youth Club facility and funding applications were submitted throughout the year.

Development Coordinators

Development Coordinators have collectively facilitated over 30 grant submissions for period July – June grants with external funding received totalling \$51,694. Whilst this is lower than previous years; three (3) of the five (5) positions were vacant for a period of time which does affect the capacity of each community to take advantage of funding opportunities that become available throughout the year.

Each of the community's organised and coordinated Christmas carnivals and events. Coordination and point of contact for many Shire activities; including Australia Day, Town Committee Meetings, Youth Week and Seniors Week. Council provides support to the Development Coordinators and a number of sessions were facilitated that offered training and networking opportunities.

Road Safety Officer Report

Overview

The Road Safety Officer (RSO) Program is jointly funded by the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) and Warrumbungle Shire Council. The objectives of the program are to:

- Increase the priority of road safety within our Local Government Area (LGA)
- Increase the road safety expertise of council road safety officers and other local government personnel
- Improve the coordination of local government road safety initiatives with state and national road safety initiatives including participation in Western Region and Newell Highway initiatives

Facilitate the development and involvement of local level road safety networks and partnerships including working in partnership with neighbouring Councils
Demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of community-based road safety programs

Road Safety Program 2009/2010

Warrumbungle Shire Council has 2972 kilometres of roads. This includes 1270 kilometres of sealed roads and 1702 kilometres of unsealed roads. This extensive network of roads requires a large funding demand for maintenance and construction. A large proportion of the roads in the shire are financially controlled by Warrumbungle Shire Council.

The Shire has 59 bridges and major culverts on local roads and 36 bridges on regional roads to maintain. The Shire has 4 major highways traversing it – Newell Highway, Oxley Highway, Golden Highway and Castlereagh Highway. Consequently a large majority of traffic passing through the shire are heavy vehicles. Many major roads throughout the Warrumbungle Shire are classed as B-Double routes.

The social and environmental issues considered when looking at the factors that influence Road Safety in our shire include:

- A large proportion of Indigenous population compared to the rest of the region
- An aging population
- A higher percentage of people aged under 20 years and aged between 40 – 59 years.
- A major network of State Highways
- A high incidence of speeding and driver fatigue crashes
- A rural agricultural based population
- A high occurrence of Heavy vehicles

An analysis of crash data shows that the priority road safety issues for the Warrumbungle Shire are:

- Addressing speed, alcohol and fatigue for all driver classes
- Passenger safety
- Pedestrian safety (particularly school zones)
- Motorcyclist safety
- Enforcement and deterrence
- Truck Safety
- Awareness of animals on the side of roads

The key road user groups living and working in the Shires that the program targets are:

- Drivers aged 30-59 years
- Young people aged 17 – 25 years of age.
- Motorcyclists
- Drivers and operators of trucks
- Warrumbungle Shire Council staff
- Older drivers and pedestrians (including motorised wheelchairs, commonly known as gophers and scooters)
- Indigenous drivers and pedestrians
- Tourists

Statement of Actions

Establishment of Local Road Safety Steering Committee

The RSO attends Warrumbungle Shire Council monthly Traffic Meetings which involves NSW Roads and Traffic Authority, NSW Police Community and Council representatives. The Road Safety Officer provides this committee a monthly report and contributes to providing behavioural based solutions when issues arise.

The RSO has interacted with NSW Police on a number of projects such as speeding and other Police campaigns throughout the year. The local Police were involved in an urban speed limit campaign to reduce speeding on residential streets by providing focused enforcement throughout the campaign. Newspaper articles promoting the program and the increased enforcement appeared in local media.

The RSO has liaised with schools regarding P&C meetings, driveway safety education, child restraints and outcomes of Traffic Committee findings. Community consultation was sought on variety of road safety issues including local issues affecting their area including problem speeding areas, drink driving issues and older road users.

RSO has partnered with the RTA, Ministry of Transport, NSW Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing, Greater Western Area Health Service, Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care other Local Government Areas to address various issues throughout the year.

Submission of monthly reports and 6 month action plan

Monthly reports have been submitted to Director of Community Services and the RTA along with a 6 month Action Plan.

Participation at RTA Regional meetings

As part of Councils and RTA commitment to the RSO program the RSO attended RTA Quarterly Meeting in Parkes in December, International Road Safety and Policing Conference in Darling Harbour and a various meetings concerning project development took place.

Adoption of Council Road Safety Strategic and Action Plan

Warrumbungle Shire Council Road Safety Strategic Plan 2011/2013 is currently under development to replace the current 2008-2010 plan.

Road Safety behavioural and educational programs sourced and implemented within shire. Regional Road Safety Programs implemented within shire in partnership with RTA and participating LGA's

WSC Road Safety Action Plan 09/10 was developed and projects addressing speeding, young drivers, restraint usage, and cycling were addressed.

You Love Me - Keep Me Safe (Bring the Mob Home Safely) - This project promoted the correct selection and use of child restraint devices and was run quarterly in across the LGA.

Slow Down – 'In My Street' - A 50 km/h urban speed limit campaign and "Dress Your Wheelie Bin" competition was run involving placement of traffic counters, speed trailer and police enforcement in identified problem areas during February, March and April 2010 in Coolah.

Older Road User and Motorised Mobility Aids - This project was a training and awareness program designed to enhance the safety and knowledge of gopher/motorised mobility aids users as well as raise the general public's awareness regarding the use of gophers/motorised mobility aids within the community. This project took place in the six major towns within the Warrumbungle Shire Local Government Area so as to not disadvantage any persons rurally isolated.

Apply for alternative funding for Road Safety behavioural and educational programs sourced and implemented within the Shire.

Additional funding was received to run Bike Week – ‘Community Bike Treasure Hunt’ This successful Bike Week Event was held at Yuluwirri Kids Long Day Care and Preschool in September. Over 50 children participated in the event.

Drinking Kills Driving Skills – ‘What’s the Plan’ - This program aimed to reduce the incidence of alcohol involvement in serious casualty crashes throughout the Warrumbungle Shire via a public awareness campaign showing alternatives to drinking and driving and support the Warrumbungle Shire Local Liquor Accord. A series of meetings held with licensees initiated and coordinated by the RSO established that they have no need for an alternative transport scheme at this time.

Community Development Officer

The Community Development Officer’s position within the Community Services section of Council is externally funded by the NSW Department of Community Services under the Community Services Grants Program.

Community Development seeks to encourage a collaborative, collective action to be taken by local people to enhance the long-term social, economic, and environmental conditions of their community. This is undertaken by involvement and working very closely with stakeholders including Town Development Coordinators, the Community, Youth groups, Community Groups, Development and Progress Groups, Police and Schools together with Council.

Areas of Activity

Analysis and provision of ABS Statistics
Review and compilation of the Community Services Directory
Crime Prevention
Youth Week
Domestic Violence
Interagency
Community Working Party
Events – Youth Week, NAIDOC Week, Sorry Day
Public Liability Insurance for community organisations
Men’s Sheds
Project Management Resources CD
Power House Project - Coonabarabran
Youth Clubs

Youth Week

Youth Week, funded by the NSW Government and Council involved coordination and support being provided to the many volunteer groups. During Youth Week 2010, over 22 separate events were conducted and 775 people attended those activities

The inaugural Grants Expo was held in Coonabarabran in November 2009. There were 75 registrations on the day with one third of those attending coming from within the Shire.

Grants

Funding opportunities that are available are promoted regularly through the Funding Pot article published on regular basis in the Coonabarabran Times newspaper. The Coonabarabran Times newspaper is acknowledged for their assistance that it provides to the community in making this information available.

Following the revision of the Community Development Officer's role, tasks and operation and the concentration on promoting Grants and applying for Grants the results have been encouraging.

Social Services

Overview of Warrumbungle Community Care

Warrumbungle Community Care is a multiservice outlet operating five funded Home and Community Care programs from two offices; Coonabarabran which services the northern end of the Shire and Coolah office services the southern end of the shire. Warrumbungle Community Care has two main funding bodies.

Transport NSW provides recurrent funding for the Community Transport operations across the shire.

Human Services, Ageing Disability and Home Care provides recurrent funding for such programs as Meals Service, Home Maintenance, Respite and Social Support. The target groups for both programs include the frail aged and younger people with disabilities and the carers of both groups. Transport also includes the geographically isolated and transport disadvantaged.

Below provides a summary of funding amounts and client numbers for the year 2009-2010. Note: Most clients receive services from both funding sources.

	Recurrent Funding	Other Income incl. Contributions	Total	Total Client Numbers North	Total Client Numbers South
ADHC	\$399,474	\$75,655	\$475,128		
Community Transport	\$103,777	\$56,885	\$160,662	389	212

Advisory Committees

Warrumbungle Community Care meets with two Advisory Committees each quarter - the Southern Advisory Committee and the Northern Advisory Committee. Each

Advisory Committee consists of a small number of volunteers and clients who are given the opportunity to represent clients and volunteers in general, offer feedback, ask questions and generally discuss issues that may arise.

The Social Services Committee consists of representatives from each Advisory Committee. This Committee meets once a year to overview and make recommendations to Council on various matters. The Committee also overviews the budgets, return of acquittals and program operation in general.

Program Overview

Client and Volunteer Survey

Recommendations outlined in the Consumer Survey Instrument framework for the assessment of quality in Home and Community Care services resulted in the completion of a telephone survey of clients and volunteers. The collated information will provide valuable feedback towards the next Annual Planning Day.

Offices

Both the Coolah and Coonabarabran offices moved to new locations early in July, 2009. Both moves now provide more user friendly surroundings.

A new site has been suggested for the new garage in Coonabarabran. This site is at the old Depot in Essex Street and is quite large meeting Community Care's needs entirely for the present as well as into the future for the housing of vehicles and equipment.

Health and Community Services Expo

In its second year, the Health and Community Services Expo was a huge success. Over 30 Service providers attended and over 200 members of the public visited the Expo.

Community Transport Bus

The new bus schedule is in full operation across the Shire providing the 6 main towns with access to Dubbo by offering 4 trips per month to the funded target group. Several community groups have hired the bus for outings.

Volunteer and Client Events

Several community events were organised by Warrumbungle Community Care.

Seniors Week

Xmas In July

National Volunteers Week and Biggest Morning Tea

The financial year of 2009-2010 reveals that there is has been healthy growth in outputs in some programs whilst other programs were slower in growth.

Respite program has had a good steady growth in outputs over the last 12 months.

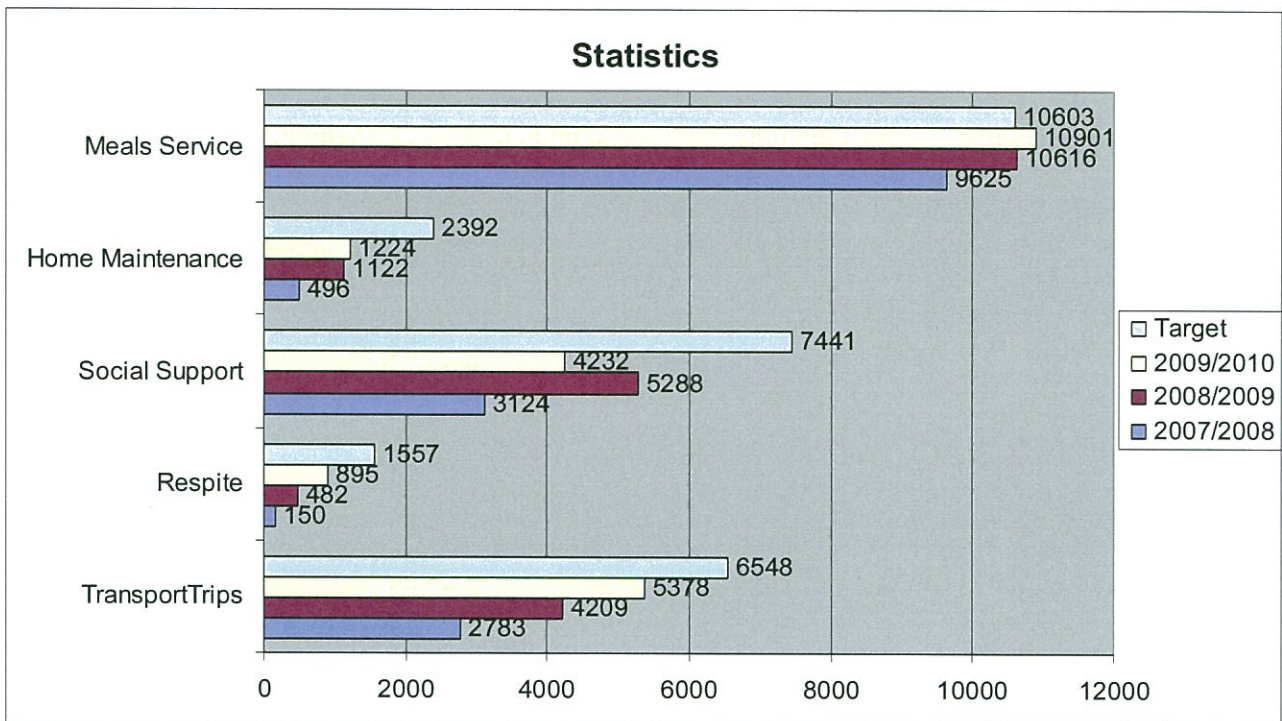
The Home Maintenance program target output has also seen a marginal increase

The Social Support program has slipped backwards slightly due to both offices moving and new staff commencing causing an interruption to normal operations.

Meal Service program is over target. Prioritising eligibility for service is in place.

The Transport Program has increased in outputs. This is attributed to new Bus schedule.

The graph below will demonstrate the activity in the past 12 months across the Shire.



Challenges and Priorities for 2010-2011 Period

In looking back over the challenges set for the 2009/2010 period, it is with much pride that it can be reported those challenges were met head on by the Warrumbungle Community Care team. The building of programs; the question of the new Coonabarabran garage and the implementation of the bus schedule have been realised very successfully. As for the ongoing issue of increasing transport recurrent funding, recent correspondence from NSW Ministry Transport has indicated that this increase may not be too far in the distant future. It is noted that lobbying by Council and unmet needs documentation has been a big factor in this proposed outcome.

The ongoing challenges will be stabilising and building the Community bus transport program and completing the Garage project which commenced in 2008.

Appreciation goes out to all staff, volunteers and Advisory Committees for all the hard work carried out over the past year.

Family Support Services

The relocation and restructure of Family Day Care with Connect 5; in July 2009 created Family Support Services, a new division within Council which has been a great success with teams working well and effectively together. Family Support Services has a full time Manager who is responsible for the activities and programs auspiced by Warrumbungle Shire Council located in the former Coonabarabran Preschool building at 14 Robertson Street.

All staff continue to update skills and attended training in the NSW Keeping them Safe legislation and procedures for Child Protection and Commonwealth Government's Early Years Learning Framework.

Castlereagh Family Day Care

Castlereagh Family Day Care (CFD) coordination unit services the Warrumbungle, Coonamble and Gilgandra shires; and provides carer support, training and administration services from offices in Coonabarabran. Family Day Care is a childcare service which provides quality childcare for children aged 0 –12 years in the private homes of registered Carers. There are 303 children enrolled from 181 families who access the service. Family Day Care offers care covering full time, part time, casual for working / studying parents, respite care, before/after school care, emergency care, extended and flexible hours. Carers are registered to care for up to seven children, but no more than five not attending school (including their own), at one time.

Council employs a full time Coordinator and Administration Officer to provide a family day care service licensed by NSW Community Services (CS) under the NSW Children's Services Regulations (2004) and accredited by the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC). The service is funded by the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) via Child Care Benefit and administration charges from parents and carers.

The Coordination staff and Carers, with parents work together to provide quality childcare in an environment that is safe and friendly, and promotes the health, development and well-being of each child in care. The Coordinator undertook home visits throughout the year to Carers in Coonabarabran Baradine Gilgandra, Coolah, Coonamble, Dunedoo and Mendooran and ongoing phone and email support to all Carers is provided. Visits include routine house checks, new Carer induction; training and facilitated play-sessions. The service participated in the Community Health Services Expo in 2009 and is involved in a Children's Services Interagency in Coonabarabran.

Castlereagh Family Day Care went through the NCAC Accreditation process in December 2009 which was unsuccessful in Quality Area 4 – Health, Hygiene, Nutrition, Safety and Wellbeing.

The validator marked us unsatisfactory in a number of areas in each principal, which lead to an overall unsatisfactory rating in this, Quality Area 4. The unit spent the next six months implementing and refining practises to ensure Quality Area 4 indicators were being met. We did this by firstly building and strengthening carer / staff / family / scheme reports, enlisting the help of a mentor who continues to be mentoring us, staff and carer training and self study and quality improvement plans all in preparation for another Accreditation process in September 2010.

Whilst there is not a current Advisory Committee due to the geographical area that the service covers; all policies, procedures and any service provision issues are canvassed to all Carers and stakeholders for feedback. All policies were reviewed to meet Accreditation and Regulatory requirements. Carer application and induction processes are constantly under review and minor changes have been made and implemented.

A number of Carer changes occurred; with the total number increased from 18 to the current 24 registered Carers, including 2 In Home Carers in Gilgandra. Induction of 3 new Carers is currently in progress and increased enquiries for In Home Care services.

An inclusion support review on the current Service Support Plan was undertaken and continues to accommodate for children with additional needs within the service. The Coordination unit conducted in-service training with Carers who attended workshops on Child Protection and the new Early Years Learning Framework. The Coordinator attended 'Tools of The Trade' conference for new coordinators, the Tri-regional Meeting and both Coordinator and Administration Officer attended regional meetings. The Coordinator and FDC unit have received mentoring from Gunnedah Family Day Care, through Children's Services Central support program.

Out of School Hours/Vacation Care

A survey was conducted in May 2008 to assess the community requirements for the care of primary school children. In response to the results of this survey the Coonabarabran Out Of School Hours (OOSH) and Vacation Care Service were introduced during 2009. Successful programs were implemented in Coonabarabran during the October, January and April School holidays, however numbers of enrolments were unsustainable. Unfortunately the actual use did not match the projected targets and although numbers increased during the year the project was run at a loss. This loss was not sustainable and these services were closed at the end of the financial year. Family Day Care has been able to provide for those children who require care after school and during school holidays.

The classroom and play ground is still regularly used by Playgroup, Breastfeeding and Mother's groups and Connect 5 play sessions. Other services such as Council, TAFE and Banardos have all used FSS building to hold meetings and conduct workshops.

Connect Five Children's Services

Connect Five is a Mobile Children's Service operating in the Shires of Coonamble, Gilgandra and Warrumbungle to assist children 0-5 years to reach their full potential by providing support to them and their families. The service targets groups of children who:

Are isolated geographically and culturally

Are of low socio economic background

Do not currently access (or have limited access to) appropriate services in the community.

Funding is provided from the NSW Government through NSW Human Services, Children's Services rural and remote funding. The service is auspiced by Warrumbungle Shire Council and has operated for 11 years. The Manager Family Support is supported by two Child Development Officers; who facilitate the quality play sessions. Opportunities for networking and professional development have been accessed through the Mobile Children's Services Association.

Play sessions

Play sessions serve many purposes and include the opportunity for children to socialize and learn new skills through play as well as for parents to interact socially and share their own experiences and knowledge with each other.

Play sessions operate out of registered venues that may be a local community hall, a pre-school or the home of a family living on a rural property. Play sessions continued at Baradine, Binnaway, Coonabarabran, Coolah, Dunedoo, Gulargambone, Hollywood lane, Mendooran and Tooraweenah.

Group sizes vary dramatically, the largest groups being at Coolah and Gulargambone who each have average attendances around 20 or more children. Mendooran has improved in numbers this year with the introduction of parent workshops conducted by Barnardos. Tooraweenah has experienced a downturn in numbers. This is not unusual as most groups go through cycles when children go off to school and there is a time lag before more parents come on board. On average 70 children attend a play session each week. There are approximately 187 participating families and 272 children accessed the service during the year.

Resource Library

Use of the toy library has remained fairly steady with 16% of parents using the Toy library. There are now 14 parents actively using the library. The biggest users of the Toy Library are Family Day Carers and 4 other registered professionals.

Yuluwirri Kids

Yuluwirri Kids, Coonabarabran Preschool and Long Day Care Centre is licensed by NSW Human Services, Community Services for 20 birth to under 2 years, 30 two to under three years and 30 three to under six years with a maximum of 57 children a day.

The service is opened 49 weeks a year, with Long Day Care children accessing the service from 7.30am to 5.30pm, and Preschool children accessing the service during school terms from 8.30am to 4pm.

Yuluwirri Kids is auspiced by Warrumbungle Shire Council and funded by Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), NSW Human Services Community Services and User Pay fees. Funding is also obtained through Department of Education and Training for children with special needs.

The Centre has an Advisory Committee that consists of Parents, a Community representative, an Aboriginal Lands Council representative, the Centre Manager and The Director of Community Services. Advisory Committee meetings are held on a regular basis.

The Centre complies with funding agreements, Children Services Regulation (2004) and the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS). The centre has a play based curriculum that links to The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF).

The centre employs 11 full time staff, 5 part time staff and accesses 15 casual staff members. 8 staff are currently studying to obtain industry qualifications. In the past 12 months, staff attended a range of training including Cultural Diversity, Fetal

Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), Preschool Communication, Exploring observation and reflecting on children's learning, Building Bridges: Aboriginal perspectives in children's services, EYLF, Identifying and responding to children at risk of harm and QIAS.

The Centre has had visiting students complete work experience and practicum's from local school's, Tafe and Charles Sturt University.

Yuluwirri Kids has participated in community events including Coonabarabran Show, Harmony week, NAIDOC week, Sorry Day, Family week, Bike and child restraints safety awareness. The has been a number of events and partnership programs implemented throughout the year including the official Yuluwirri Kids opening, Community Services expo, Healthy Harold, Crocodile Encounters , end of year celebrations and Graduation, Macquarie Conservatorium, Excursions, and school transition programs, and sun protection.

The Centre networks with other local Preschools and Long Day Care Centres within the region, Family Support Services, Coonabarabran Local Aboriginal Lands Council, early childhood services and professionals, agencies, training organisations, and community services.

During the 2009/2010 financial year from a total of 165 families, 235 children accessed the service with 43 enrolled as Indigenous, 3 from a Cultural and Linguistic Diverse background (CALD) and 47 from a low social economic demographic. 112 of these were enrolled at Preschool and 103 Long Day Care. 22 children are a combined Long Day Care and Preschool enrolment.

Rebecca Ryan
Director Community Services

State of Environment Report

LGA s.428(2)(c) and Reg cl 217(2) and 218-226

The State of Environment (SoE) Report is an audit on the condition of the environment and natural resources within the Warrumbungle Shire.

The Report has been compiled and a copy is annexed to this report as Attachment 3.0.

Condition of Public Works

LGA s.428(2)(d)(i-iii)

The following schedules in Attachment 1.0 at the end of this report, sourced from Council's financial reports, provide an overview of the total assets under council's management and includes information on:

- the condition of assets
- estimated cost to bring up to a satisfactory condition/standard
- estimate of funds required for annual maintenance
- estimate of funds for programmed maintenance

Legal Proceedings

LGA s.428(2)(e)

Rates and Charges

Council retains a debt recovery service for the recovery of outstanding rates and charges. All charges incurred in using the service is recovered as a charge against the ratepayer.

Legal Action Against Council:

Council incurred costs in relation to a Freedom of Information application which began in 2008. The Administrative Decisions Tribunal handed down its decision on the 20th July 2009. This matter is now complete.

Legal Action By Council:

Expenses relating to legal proceedings taken by the Council during the reporting period relate to the purchase / resumption of land for road purposes (relating to land at Morrisseys Road, Stannix Park and Timor Road) and for the recovery of outstanding rates and charges.

Elected Members

LGA s.428(2)(f) and REG 217(1)(a1)

Councillors are not paid a salary they are however paid an allowance in accordance with figures set by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.

Council's adopted policy for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Elected Members is attached at the end of the report as Attachment 2.0.

Councillors' annual fees for 2009/2010 were set at \$9,290 per annum and an additional fee of \$20,280 was set for the Mayoral allowance. Total expenses for Councillors' fees, expenses and facilities for the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 was made up of the following: -

	Expenses
Mayoral and Deputy Mayor allowance	20,280.12
Mayoral car expenses	14,082.85
Telephone – Mobile Mayor	377.03
Councillors' Allowances	83,608.20
Councillors' Training and skill development	115.00
Councillors' internet communication contribution	5,400.00
Travelling Expenses – Councillors	15,941.74
Administrative Expenses (including dedicated office use and equipment)	855.54
Delegates Expenses – Conferences and seminars	15,190.61
Council Elections	0.00
Council meetings catering	1,665.91
Civic Functions	1,789.98
Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a councillor	0.00
Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member of a councillors	0.00
TOTAL	<u>\$159,306.98</u>

Overseas Travel

LGA s.428(2)(r) and REG 217(1)(a)

Councillors and Staff were not involved in any exchanges or projects necessitating overseas travel in 2009/2010.

Senior Staff

LGA s.428(2)(g)

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 his employment is as follows:

Position	Total Remuneration Package for period 1/7/2009 to 30/6/2010
General Manager	
Total Value of salary component of package	\$155,443.11
Total amount of any bonus payments, performance or other payments not forming part of salary component	0.00
Total payable superannuation (salary sacrifice and employers contribution)	25,000
Total value non-cash benefits	1,485.79
Total payable fringe benefits tax for non-cash benefits	10,736.76
TOTAL COSTS	\$192,665.66

Contracts Awarded by Council

LGA s.428(2)(h)

Council has awarded the following contracts during the financial year that are required to be reported. (Note: Employment contracts and contracts valued at less than \$150,000.00 are not required to be detailed).

Purchased from	Description	Amount
Boral Resources	Supply and delivery of Pre-coated aggregate and crusher fines	\$250,997.57
Pioneer Road Services Pty Ltd	Supply and spray of bitumen	\$1,332,778.10
Tracserv Dubbo	Purchase of Paveline Bitumen Road Patching Unit (Tar Patcher)	\$345,626.45
Tracserv Pty Ltd	Purchase of 6 x 4 gravel truck (Plant 150)	\$174,381.00
WesTrac Dubbo	Purchase of Caterpillar 12M Motor Grader (Plant 101)	\$335,500.00
WesTrac Dubbo	Purchase of Caterpillar 12M Motor Grader (Plant 103)	\$341,500.00
BT Equipment Pty Ltd	Purchase of Smooth Drum Roller (Plant 114)	\$186,700.00
West Orange Motors Pty Ltd	Purchase of Water Cart (Plant 171)	\$214,553.64
Coona Waste Disposal	Kerbside collection of domestic and non domestic non recyclable waste	Approx \$150,000
Downer EDI	Supply and delivery of bitumen emulsion	Approx \$150,000

Bush Fire Hazard Reduction and Community Engagement

Bush Fire Hazard Reduction (LGA s.428(2)(i1))

Scheduled hazard reduction for 2009-10 year was severely reduced by wet conditions experienced late December 2009 to June 2010. Only 353 hectares was completed in Yaminbah, Saltwater, Leadville and Timor brigade areas. Outstanding hazard planned reduction burns have been rescheduled for the 2010-11 period. The Dept. of Environment Climate Change & Water (National Parks) has carried out small hazard reduction works on Ukerbarley Reserve and the neighbouring property.

The Bush Fire Risk Management Plan

The Castlereagh Bush Fire Management Committee of which Council is a member has undertaken to review the existing Castlereagh Bush Fire Risk Management Plan (BFRMP). Public consultation meetings have been held over the LGA and risk assessment of vulnerable assets is in progress. It is planned that this plan will be on public display early to mid 2011 for public comment.

The aim of the plan is to minimise the risk of adverse impact of bush fire on life, property and the environment. The objectives of the BFRMP are to :

- Reduce the number of induced bush fire ignitions that cause damage to life property and the environment;
- Manage fuel to reduce the rate of spread and intensity of bush fires while minimising environmental/ecological impacts;
- Reduce the community's vulnerability to bush fires by improving its preparedness; and
- Effectively contain fires with the potential to cause damage to life, property or the environment.

Community Engagement

The Rural Fire Service has an ongoing commitment to protect, educate and advise the community in a sustainable way. Members of brigades and RFS staff visited primary and preschools through the shire engaging with children on a range of topics from playing with matches to home evacuation, how to prepare for a bush fire event and calling "000" if they have an emergency.

Brigade members and RFS staff also undertook property inspections, local agricultural shows and gave advice on local community radio and in community newsletters. Programs such as the dissemination of Bush Fire Survival Plan booklets and SWS (Static Water Supply) were continued to be rolled out. These programs encourage property owners and householders to "Prepare. Act. Survive" where much more emphasis is placed on preparing to survive in the face of severe bush fires.

More information can be found on:

Web: <http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/>,

Emailing: community.engagement@rfs.nsw.gov.au or

Phone: your local NSW Rural Fire Control Centre 02 6842 2645.

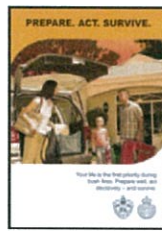
PREPARE – having a Bush Fire Survival Plan

ACT – knowing the Bush Fire Danger Ratings and what you need to do at each

SURVIVE – knowing the Alert Levels which are used during a fire



Fire Danger Rating



PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.



A guide to **Leave Early**



A guide to **Stay and Defend**

Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC)

The Warrumbungle Shire Council conducted all quarterly LEMC meetings with all meeting well attended by Emergency Agencies and representatives from Dubbo and Tamworth.

Contact Lists and Emergency Management Plans have been updated. Disaster, Flood and Bushfire Plans have been added to Council Web page.

Road side Slashing

Council conducts road side slashing on all sealed local and main roads throughout the Shire at least once per year.

Warrumbungle Shire Council is a member of the Warrumbungle Bushfire Management Committee.

As part of the Service Agreement between Council and the NSW Rural Fire Service, the RFS inspected reported fire hazards on Council's behalf.

Programs to promote services for People with Diverse Cultural and Linguistic Backgrounds

LGA s.428(2)(j)

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.

There are many active sporting organisations in Warrumbungle Shire to suit any resident or visitor. 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.

Services for Needs of Children

LGA s.428(2)(r) and Reg cl 217(1)(c)

Council provides significant support for children's services, particularly through the provision of community buildings for community based Preschools in Dunedoo, Coolah, Binnaway and Coonabarabran.

Library Services and meeting rooms that are available for children's groups include the Family Support Services building and Youth Club in Coonabarabran. The library service, which is part of the Macquarie Regional Library Service, maintains branches or services in each of the six (6) communities. There are dedicated children's section providing a range of children's fiction and picture story books, audio cassettes and posters and weekly story time for children. Schools, children's services and community groups can arrange class visits.

A Toy Library provides a range of children's educational and interactive toys available for loan.

Connect Five Mobile children's service, provides play sessions, toy library and parent education across the Warrumbungle and Gilgandra Local Government Areas.

Castlereagh Family Day Care provides coordination and support across the Warrumbungle, Coonamble and Gilgandra LGA's. Family Day Care is a registered child care service that operates in the private homes of registered carers for 0-12 year olds.

Further information regarding services for Children are in individual sections within this Report.

Access & Equity Activities for Residents

LGA s.428(2)(r) and Reg cl 217(1)(d)(i)

The Local Government (General) Amendment (Community and Social Plans) was introduced in 1998 to help local Government to promote a more inclusive community by ensuring that government services are responsive to community needs and diversity.

Council's current Social/Cultural Community Plan was completed in 2008. In the Identified Needs, Gaps and Issues section of the Plan, the known needs, gaps and issues for each target group of the Warrumbungle LGA are identified as well as other local issues for each group.

The Social/Community Plan was developed to ensure that:

- Fairness is considered in the distribution of resources
- The community is consulted in decisions that affect their daily lives
- People have fairer access to economic resources and services essential to meeting their daily needs

Individual focus groups continue to update the needs and gaps, issues and concerns of residents; be that through Warrumbungle Community Care, Family Day Care, Connect 5 Mobile or Community Development. Consultations were also held with local service providers, government agencies, community organisations and interested local people.

The Community Development Officer provides a community development, advocacy, and support role for services for all target groups. This position is funded by Department of Community Services and auspiced by Warrumbungle Shire Council. The Community Development Officer also provides support in sourcing and applying for funding opportunities that could benefit all target groups in the Warrumbungle LGA.

Warrumbungle Community Care, managed by Social Services unit of Council provides Home and Community Care services to older people in the area, including people with a disability according to the National HACC program guidelines. This includes; Meals on Wheels, Neighbour Aid, Handyperson Service, Social Support, Respite for Carers program and Community Transport. This unit has various funding bodies including; the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care, NSW Department Health and Ministry of Transport. An active Interagency group in Coonabarabran provides valuable networking and consultation between the many service providers and provides a forum for the identified needs and gaps, issues and concerns for each of the target groups in the Warrumbungle Shire in the Social/Community Plan.

Warrumbungle Shire Council funds five (5) Community Development Coordinator positions by a direct grant of \$15,000 per annum to each of the following organisations:

- Coolah District Development Group
- Dunedoo and District Development Group
- Mendooran District Development Group

-
- Binnaway Progress Association
 - Baradine Progress Association

The role of the Community Development Coordinators is to provide support in sourcing and applying for funding opportunities that benefit the individual communities. The coordinators have established a network with each other, and are key communication channels between Council and the Community.

The Community Services Department is responsible for the planning and development of services for all target groups living in the Warrumbungle LGA and for the development and implementation of the Warrumbungle Shire's Community Social/Cultural Plan.

The Environmental Services Department is responsible for the regulations that affect developments and services accessed by all target groups living in the Warrumbungle LGA.

The Technical Services Department is responsible for the planning, development and construction of roads, footpaths and town streets that are used and affect all target groups living in the Warrumbungle LGA.

The Community Services Department are an advocate for residents and services of the Warrumbungle LGA.

Warrumbungle Shire Council coordinates projects, services, activities and special events of interests and relevance to the various target groups in the Warrumbungle LGA including Bike Week, Child Protection Week, Youth Week, NAIDOC Week, Seniors Week and International Women's Day celebrations.

Private Works

LGA s.428(2)(k)

No subsidised private work was carried out by Council during the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.

Contributions and Donations

LGA s.428(2)(l)

Rates Contributions 2009/2010

Group	Contribution \$
Coonabarabran CWA	1,019.26
Baradine CWA	432.83
Masonic Lodge Timor	1,473.08
Baradine Masonic Lodge	432.83
Coonabarabran Boy Scouts	198.00
St Vincent De Paul – Dalgarno St	198.00
Coonabarabran Girl Guides	198.00
Binnaway Showground	198.00
Catholic Church – Baradine Tennis Courts	145.50
Baradine Anglican Church	393.50
Baradine Uniting Church	278.11
Baradine Catholic Church	145.50
Binnaway Anglican Church	198.90
Binnaway Roman Catholic Church	198.90
Coonabarabran Jehovah's Witnesses	198.00
Coonabarabran New Life Centre (Assemblies of God)	198.00
Coonabarabran Roman Catholic Church	198.00
Coolah St Andrew's Anglican Church	360.00
Coolah St James Presbyterian Church	338.00
Coolah Sacred Heart Catholic Church	338.00
Dunedoo All Saints Anglican Church	303.91
Dunedoo St David's Presbyterian Church	303.91
Dunedoo St Michael's Catholic Church	367.00
Dunedoo Uniting Church	303.91
Mendooran St Chad's Anglican Church	361.50
Mendooran St Mary's Catholic Church	361.50
Leadville Memorial Hall (to assist with rates)	225.00
Uarbry Hall Committee (to assist with rates)	169.00
Leadville Fire Shed (to assist with rates)	238.65
Coolah Youth Centre (to assist with garbage charges)	238.65
Total Contributions – Rates & Charges	\$10,014.31

Donations 2009/2010

	\$'s
School Prize Nights (Northern)	420.00
Anzac Day (Southern)	350.00
Coonabarabran Arts Acquisitive Prize	800.00
Coonabarabran Shire Orbital Swing Band	1,000.00
Coonabarabran 2WRCFM	520.00
Coonabarabran DPS Local & Family History Group Inc	500.00
Coonabarabran Jockey Club	1,000.00
Coonabarabran – Warrumbungle Art Expo	1,000.00
Binnaway Jockey Club	1,000.00
Baradine School Band	250.00
Coolah Radio Station	8,212.61
Coolah Jazz in the Tops	1,000.00
Dunedoo Bush Poetry	500.00
Dunedoo Lions – Acquisitive Art Prize	500.00
Dunedoo Three Rivers Radio	520.00
Dunedoo TAFE	50.00
Mendooran Jockey Club	1,000.00
Neilrex Hall	500.00
Neilrex Tennis Club	700.00
Other Donations	2624.07
Northern Inland Academy of Sport	327.27
Keep Australia Beautiful	450.00
Warrumbungle Staff Christmas Party	3000.00
Coonabarabran 100 Year Celebrations	3,751.73
Coonabarabran Girl Guides	4,565.00
Coonabarabran Field Cemetery	2,109.00
Leadville Hall Upgrade	6,000.00
Legal costs for other Councils	509.24
Total of donations	43,158.92
TOTAL OF CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS	<u>53,173.23</u>

Statement of Human Resources Activities

LGA s.428(2)(m)

Human Resource Management

During 09/10 HR worked with management on issues of staff welfare, succession planning, changes to organisational structure, staff grading and industrial relations we also offered assistance to all supervisors and staff in payroll, staff shortages, recruitment and training. We endeavoured to improve processes and systems in order to supply information to management, staff and the Department of Local Government. Consultative Committee meetings were held each quarter to discuss staff matters. This year an interactive computerised Warrumbungle Shire Induction process was introduced for new staff undertaking their induction and this now enables HR to document new staff's understanding of Council's policies and procedures.

OH&S/Risk Management

During the year a number of workers compensations claims occurred, these claims impacted on work gangs with disruptions to staff numbers within those work crews. All staff returned to pre injury duties by the end of the 09/10 financial year following successful completion of rehabilitation.

Council's Workplace Safety Officer continued to work with all supervisors and staff to ensure safe work practices were followed and new policies and procedures implemented. OH&S Committee continued to meet quarterly with safety inspections and investigations into reported incidents and safety concerns undertaken by members of the Committee.

Staff Recruitment Services

There have been considerable staff changes over the past twelve months with several long term employees retiring and several leaving due to ill health. There still remain some long term vacancies of indoor positions unfilled in Technical Services and HR is still unable to attract suitably qualified and experienced staff with the advertised remuneration unable to be matched to that offered by other larger Councils. HR continued to plan for more retirements in the coming year.

Performance Management

The majority of 2009 competency assessments were undertaken within the allocated timeframe, several were not completed within the timeframe for various reasons. The new framework of Competency Standards and Principles established last year was used to complete the revision of all the organisation's Competencies.

Staff Training Activities

The allocated training budget was used to undertake numerous courses. Besides the legislative requirements to renew RTA tickets, staff undertook various training courses some of which were Assessor training, Chainsaw Certificate 1 & II, Gov Info (Public Access) Act, Accident Investigation, Height Training Cultural Diversity, Elevated Work Platform, How to motivate people, Elevated Work Platform, Sharps collection and disposal, Cert IV OH&S as well as numerous staff completing their Certificate 111 traineeships and several staff commencing Diplomas.

There have been difficulties keeping track of training requirements and staff qualifications due to a lack of specific training and development software.

Statement of Activities to implement EEO Management Plan

LGA s.428(2)(n)

OTHER LEGISLATION – Section 428(2) (r)

Review of Council's EEO Management Plan was undertaken by the Human Resource Department. The EEO Management Plan aims to ensure fair practices and conditions in the workplace and ensure the absence of discrimination when undertaking employment processes. The policy also ensures opportunities are offered to staff with career paths and access to attend training courses.

All staff understands Equal Employment Opportunity principles and their responsibilities in the workplace. All recruitment processes were closely scrutinized. Training and development policies and practices were followed.

CHILD PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES ACT 1999–Section 428(2)(n)

All staff who work alone or in close contact with children, as do staff with Yuluwirri Kids, Connect Five and Family Support Services, undertake a Working with Children Check as a condition of employment. These checks are a pre requisite to any employment offers being made and in line with Council's employment policies and procedures.

External Bodies

LGA s.428(2)(o)

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 of Noxious Weeds on public land and waterways in its area
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 which are formed as a requirement of statutory obligations and those committees report to Council but have no formal link to Council. The Councillor representatives on these committees are appointed for the term of the Council.

Body	Function
Traffic Committees	Traffic Management
Bush Fire Management Committee	Fire mitigation
Local Emergency Management Committee	Emergency co-ordination

Council is also represented on the following Regional committees:

The North West Weight of Loads Group	Police Accountability and Consultation
Orana Arts Incorporated Committee	Central West and Namoi Catchment Management Authorities
Central Ranges Natural Gas Association	Orana Regional Organisation of Councils
Golden Highway Consultative Committee	Inland Rail Committee
Wind Energy Precinct Advisory Committee	Central West Explorer Country Tourism
Warrumbungle Shire Liquor Accord	

Companies

LGA s.428(2)(p)

Warrumbungle Shire Council did not hold a controlling interest in any company during the period 2009/2010.

Partnerships, Cooperatives, Joint Ventures

LGA s.428(2)(q)

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 and Gilgandra Shires, and Connect Five Children's Services which services Warrumbungle, Gilgandra, Coonamble and Narromine Councils.

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

Competitive Neutrality Pricing

LGA s.428(2)(r) and Reg cl 217(1)(d)

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:

It is confirmed that Council does not have any Category (1) business activities.

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.

Baradine Water Supply
 Baradine Sewerage Services
 Binnaway Water Supply
Coolah Water Supply
Coolah Sewerage Services
Coonabarabran Water Supply
 Coonabarabran Sewerage Services
Dunedoo Water Supply
Dunedoo Sewerage Services
 Village Water Supplies (Bugaldie/Kenebri/Merrygoen)

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.

Competitive Neutrality Complaints 2009/2010

There were no Competitive Neutrality Complaints received in 2009/2010 and accordingly there is no outcome to report. There are no outstanding complaints.

Comparison of stormwater management

Reg cl 217(1)(e)

No annual charge has been levied by Council for stormwater management services.

Companion Animals Act and Regulation Activities

Reg c1217 (1) (f)

Lodgement of pound data collection returns with the department	Yes – annual data supplied to electronic data base
Lodgement of data relating to dog attacks with the Division	There were six (6) reported dog attacks during the period. All were recorded as per legislation on the Companion Animal Register
Amount of funding spent relating to companion animal management and activities	\$63,499
Companion animal community education programs carried out	Yes –Council Rangers carry out regular Community Education and Council's website is frequently used.
Strategies Council has in place to promote and assist the desexing of dogs and cats	Information provided to owners and discounted registration. The RSPCA has also provided financial assistance to low income pet owners for the cost of desexing their animals
Strategies in place to comply with the requirements under section 64 (Companion Animals Act) to seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals	Suitable dogs given to RSPCA. Suitable, registered and unwanted dogs, are given free of charge to residents.
Off leash areas provided in the Council area.	Yes. The community is consulted on a regular basis in the use and possible expansion of these areas.
Detailed financial information on the use of Companion Animals Fund money for management and control of companion animals in the area.	Received \$16,552 - which was spent in salaries of Rangers controlling Companion Animals

Report on special variation expenditure

S508(2)

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

Freedom of Information Act 1989

s.68 and cl 10

Council is required to include in its Annual Report, statistics in relation to applications received for access to its records under the Freedom of Information Act. In the period 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, five (5) applications for information were received. Three of these applications related to information sought regarding motor vehicle insurance claims and one application related to a public liability insurance claim. These applications were referred for legal advice and the appropriate information subsequently provided.

The remaining FOI application related to information sought regarding fluoridation of town water supplies and the information sought was subsequently provided within 21 days.

Also during the period under review, a decision by the Administrative Decisions Tribunal in relation to an Application from February 2009 was handed down on the 20th July 2009.

That decision upheld Council's decision not to release the information requested. Council made available to the applicant the personal information sought and as directed by the Administrative Decisions Tribunal.

Privacy Statement

s.33

The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 was 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 Act prescribes 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 this Act and its associated Management Plan and Code.

Council reviewed and updated its Privacy Management Plan in November 2009. This Plan outlines policies and practices to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Act. Council also incorporates appropriate information in Council's Staff Induction Manuals dealing with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act.

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 Robert Geraghty.

Particulars of compliance with Planning Agreements

s.93G (5)

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

Statement of Affairs

A copy of Council's 2009 Statement of Affairs can be obtained from the Administration Desk at the Administration Centre at 20 John Street, Coonabarabran 2357 or accessed via council's website – www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au

With the introduction and commencement of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA) in July 2010, Council is required to develop and adopt a Publication Guide within six months of the introduction of the Act. The Publication Guide replaces the requirement for agencies to produce a summary of affairs and statement of affairs under the Freedom of Information Act 1989.

The publication 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. Agencies have until 31 December 2010 to finalise and adopt their publication guides.

Attachment 1.0 - Condition of Public Works

Attachment 2.0 – Payment of Expenses Policy

Policy for the Payment of Expenses and the Provision of Facilities to Mayors and Councillors (endorsed by Council 17 December 2009)

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

Part 1 - INTRODUCTION

Title and Commencement of the Policy

1.1 This Policy shall be cited as the Policy for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors and is effective from 17 December 2009.

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

Purpose of the Policy

1.2 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

1.3 The objective of this Policy is to describe those expenses incurred or to be incurred by, and the facilities provided to, the Councillors the cost of which shall be met by Council.

This Policy aims to uphold and demonstrate the following key principles:

- **Conduct.** Councillors must act lawfully, honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence in carrying out their functions under the *Local Government Act 1993* ("the Act") or any other Act.
- **Participation, equity and access.** The provisions of the Policy are to be non-discriminatory and used in an equitable manner to enable the full participation by Councillors from different walks of life. The provisions of the Policy shall also be at an appropriate level to encourage members of the community, particularly under-represented groups such as those in primary caregiver roles, to seek election to Council by ensuring that they would not be financially or otherwise disadvantaged in undertaking the civic functions of a Councillor.
- **Accountability and transparency.** The details and range of benefits provided to the Councillors are to be clearly stated and be fully transparent and acceptable to the local community.
- **Reasonable expenses.** Councillors shall only be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of their role as a Councillor.

Only those entitlements specifically described in this Policy shall be provided by Council.

Basis of this Policy

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

Local Government Act 1993

252 Payment of expenses and provision of facilities

- (1) Within 5 months after the end of each year, a council must adopt a policy concerning the payment of expenses incurred or to be incurred by, and the provision of facilities to, the mayor, the deputy mayor (if there is one) and the other councillors in relation to discharging the functions of civic office.

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- (2) The policy may provide for fees payable under this Division to be reduced by an amount representing the private benefit to the mayor or a councillor of a facility provided by the council to the mayor or councillor.
 - (3) A council must not pay any expenses incurred or to be incurred by, or provide any facilities to, the mayor, the deputy mayor (if there is one) or a councillor otherwise than in accordance with a policy under this section.
 - (4) A council may from time to time amend a policy under this section.
 - (5) A policy under this section must comply with the provisions of this Act, the regulations and any relevant guidelines issued under section 23A.

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

- (1) A council must give public notice of its intention to adopt or amend a policy for the payment of expenses or provision of facilities allowing at least 28 days for the making of public submissions.
- (2) Before adopting or amending the policy, the council must consider any submissions made within the time allowed for submissions and make any appropriate changes to the draft policy or amendment.
- (3) Despite subsections (1) and (2), a council need not give public notice of a proposed amendment to its policy for the payment of expenses or provision of facilities if the council is of the opinion that the proposed amendment is not substantial.
- (4) Within 28 days after adopting a policy or making an amendment to a policy for which public notice is required to be given under this section, a council is to forward to the Director-General:
 - (a) a copy of the policy or amendment together with details of all submissions received in accordance with subsection (1), and
 - (b) a statement setting out, for each submission, the council's response to the submission and the reasons for the council's response, and
 - (c) a copy of the notice given under subsection (1).
- (5) A council must comply with this section when proposing to adopt a policy each year in accordance with section 252 (1) even if the council proposes to adopt a policy that is the same as its existing policy.

254 Decision to be made in open meeting

The council or a council committee all the members of which are councillors must not close to the public that part of its meeting at which a policy for the payment of expenses or provision of facilities is adopted or amended, or at which any proposal concerning those matters is discussed or considered.....

428(pt) Annual reports

- (1) Within 5 months after the end of each year, a council must prepare a report as to its achievements with respect to the objectives and performance targets set out in its management plan for that year.
- (2) A report must contain the following:
 - (f) the total amount of money expended during the year on mayoral fees and councillor fees, the council's policy on the provision of facilities for use by councillors and the payment of councillors' expenses, together with a statement of the total amount of money expended during that year on the provision of such facilities and the payment of such expenses,

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

217(pt) Additional information for inclusion in annual reports

- (1) For the purposes of section 428(2)(r) of the Act, an annual report of a council is to include the following information:

-
- (a) details (including the purpose) of overseas visits undertaken during the year by councillors, council staff or other persons representing the council (including visits sponsored by other organisations),
- (a1) details of the total cost during the year of the payment of the expenses of, and the provision of facilities to, councillors in relation to their civic functions (as paid by the council, reimbursed to the councillor or reconciled with the councillor), including separate details on the total cost of each of the following:
- (i) the provision during the year of dedicated office equipment allocated to councillors on a personal basis, such as laptop computers, mobile telephones and landline telephones and facsimile machines installed in councillors' homes (including equipment and line rental costs and internet access costs but not including call costs),
 - (ii) telephone calls made by councillors, including calls made from mobile telephones provided by the council and from landline telephones and facsimile services installed in councillors' homes,
 - (iii) the attendance of councillors at conferences and seminars,
 - (iv) the training of councillors and the provision of skill development for councillors,
 - (v) interstate visits undertaken during the year by councillors while representing the council, including the cost of transport, the cost of accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses,
 - (vi) overseas visits undertaken during the year by councillors while representing the council, including the cost of transport, the cost of accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses,
 - (vii) the expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a councillor in the performance of his or her civic functions, being expenses payable in accordance with the Guidelines for the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities for Mayors and Councillors for Local Councils in NSW prepared by the Director-General from time to time,
 - (viii) expenses involved in the provision of care for a child of, or an immediate family member of, a councillor, to allow the councillor to undertake his or her civic functions,

403 Payment of expenses and provision of facilities

A policy under section 252 of the Act must not include any provision enabling a council:

- (a) to pay any councillor an allowance in the nature of a general expense allowance, or
- (b) to make a motor vehicle owned or leased by the council available for the exclusive or primary use or disposition of a particular councillor other than a mayor.

Also, under Section 248A of the Act Council must not, unless otherwise permitted, pay an annual fee to a Councillor for any period during which the Councillor is suspended from civic office or the right to be paid any fee is suspended.

Under Section 254A of the Act Council may resolve that an annual fee not be paid to a Councillor or the amount reduced if the Councillor is absent, with or without leave, from meetings of the Council for a period not more than 3 months or in any circumstances prescribed by regulation. A fee must not be paid if the period of absence exceeds 3 months.

Under clause 404 of the Regulation a prescribed circumstance for non-payment or reduction of a Councillor's annual fee is where payment would adversely affect the

Councillor's entitlement to a pension, benefit or allowance and the Councillor is agreeable to the non-payment or reduction.

A Councillor may elect not to accept any entitlement under this Policy, except that the Mayor and every Councillor must be paid the appropriate minimum fees determined by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal (unless the provisions of Section 254A of the Act apply). Payment of the appropriate minimum fees determined by the Remuneration Tribunal is a requirement of Sections 248 (4) and 249 (4) of the Act.

Other Government Policy Provisions

1.5 This Policy has been prepared with reference to other Government and Council Policy provisions as follows:

- DLG *Guidelines for the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities to Mayors and Councillors, Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW* and Circulars to Councils
- Department of Local Government Circular No. 08-03, 18 January 2008, *Findings from Review of Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policies*
- Department of Local Government Circular No. 07-22, 28 May 2007 *Updated Guidelines for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Mayors and Councillors*
- Department of Local Government Circular No. 06-57, 5 September 2006 *Guidelines for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Mayors and Councillors*
- Department of Local Government Circular No. 05/08, 9 March 2005 *Legal Assistance for Councillors and Council Employees*
- Department of Local Government Circular No. 02/34, 18 July 2002 *Legal Assistance for Councillors and Council Employees*
- ICAC Publications
- Warrumbungle Shire Council's *Code of Conduct*.

Part 2 - PAYMENT OF EXPENSES

This Policy is intended to cover most situations where a Councillor reasonably incurs expenses in discharging the functions of civic office. The annual fee paid to each Councillor is generally not intended to offset those costs.

The payment of allowances 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 Councillors' Fees

Councillors will be paid an annual fee in accordance with the recommended maximum as advised by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. The fees payable by Council are payable by monthly instalments in arrears for each month (or part of a month) for which the Councillor holds office. Councillors annual fees do not fall within the scope of councillor expenses and facilities.

2.2 Establishment of Monetary Limits and Standards

Monetary limits prescribed in this Policy set out the maximum amount payable in respect of any facility or expense. Any additional cost incurred by a Councillor in excess of any limit set shall be considered a personal expense that is the responsibility of the Councillor. All monetary amounts stated are exclusive of GST.

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

2.3 Requirement for receipts

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

2.4 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.

2.5 Accommodation and meal expenses

Council will provide reasonable expenses for each night of authorised attendance by elected members and/or the General Manager at conferences or seminars on behalf of Council, or as participants or on authorised Council business.

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 (2.6).

2.6 Incidental Expenses

Incidental expenses such as taxi or 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.

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.

2.7 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. (There is provision for spouses, partner or accompanying person to attend the Local Government and Shires Association conference

with limiting of expenses of spouses etc to the cost of registration and official conference dinner.)

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. Such functions would be those that a Councillor's or General Manager's spouse, partner or accompanying person could be reasonably expected to attend. Examples would be Australia Day award ceremonies, citizenship ceremonies and civic receptions.

Costs and expenses incurred by the Mayor (or General Manager or nominee) on behalf of their spouse, partner or accompanying person shall be reimbursed if the cost or expense relates specifically to the ticket, meal and/or direct cost of attending the function. Each Councillor is entitled to a maximum of \$410 per year of term for external payments in respect of these types of expenses.

2.8 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 \$512.

2.9 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.

2.10 Attendance at seminars and conferences

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

- C Division Conference (Any Councillors and General Manager)
- Annual conference of the Local Government and Shires Association (Three (3) Councillors and General Manager)
- Roads Congress (Two (2) Councillors and General Manager)
- OROC meetings
- Country Mayor's Association meetings

After returning from the conference, Councillors or a member of council staff accompanying the councillor/s, should provide a written report to council on the aspects of the conference relevant to council business and/or the local community. No written report is required for the Annual Conferences of the Local Government and Shires Association.

Requests for attendance at other conferences or seminars should be lodged in writing outlining the benefits for Council.

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

2.11 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.

2.12 Travel Expenses

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

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

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

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

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

Where the approved meeting, function or activity is within the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary, reimbursement shall be on the basis of the distance from the Councillor's principal place of residence (if it is within the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary) to the venue or, if the Councillor resides outside the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary, from the Warrumbungle Shire Council boundary to the venue.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.13 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.

2.14 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.

2.15 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.

2.16 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.

2.17 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.

2.18 Internet

Council shall meet the cost of providing and maintaining an internet connection at the residence of the Councillor by an allowance of \$50.00 per month to cover Councillors' costs of communication via computer OR provision of a facsimile machine.

2.19 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.

2.20 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.

2.21 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 \$500 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) Mayoral allowance –the maximum fee as determined by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal (less \$500.00 as set out below), to be paid monthly in arrears.

Where the Deputy Mayor demonstrably acts in the role of the Mayor, an amount of Five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per annum of the Mayoral allowance is to be paid to the Deputy Mayor with the total sum of \$500.00 being paid by monthly payments in arrears. Payment of this annual allowance totalling \$500.00 to the Deputy Mayor is only to be done at the direction of the Mayor.

- b) Payment of annual fees in accordance with Section 248 and 249 of the Act.
- c) 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.
- d) 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.
- e) Administrative assistance associated with civic functions, meetings and the like.
- f) Office refreshments
- g) Supply of Name Badges, Business Cards, Diaries and Attache Case.

3.2 Elected Members – Facilities, Equipment and Services

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

- a) Payment of annual fees in accordance with Section 248 and 249 of the Act.
- b) Deputy Mayoral allowance (where the Deputy Mayor demonstrably acts in the role of the Mayor) – an amount of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) being part of the Mayoral allowance is to be provided annually to the Deputy Mayor paid by monthly payments in arrears.
- c) Use of Council Chambers, telephone and limited hospitality facilities (tea and coffee) for Council business or functions or community consultation.
- d) Secretarial services relating to the discharge of his/her civic functions, including use of official stationery where authorised by Mayor or General Manager.
- e) Postage of official correspondence dealing with Council business.
- f) Access to facsimile and photocopying facilities for Council related business.
- g) Transport to official functions when deputising for the Mayor. (ie) Use of Mayoral vehicle if required.
- h) Supply of Name Badges and Note Books.

3.3 Bluetts Handbook

Provide all Councillors with a copy after their election.

3.4 Policies

Provide all Councillors with a full and up to date copy of policies and manuals.

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 was prepared having regard to Department of Local Government Circular No. 07-22 dated 28 May 2007 “Updated Guidelines for the Payment of Expenses and the Provision of Facilities to Mayors and Councillors” and Department of Local Government Circular No. 09-36 dated 7 October 2009. This is the first version of the Policy to be based on Circular No. 07-22 and Circular No. 09-36. This Policy replaces the previous version of the Policy adopted by Council on 18 May 2006, Minute No. 393.

This Policy was adopted by Warrumbungle Shire Council at its meeting held on 17 December 2009, Minute No. 199. The Policy shall only be amended at a subsequent meeting of Council, subject to compliance with the Act.