

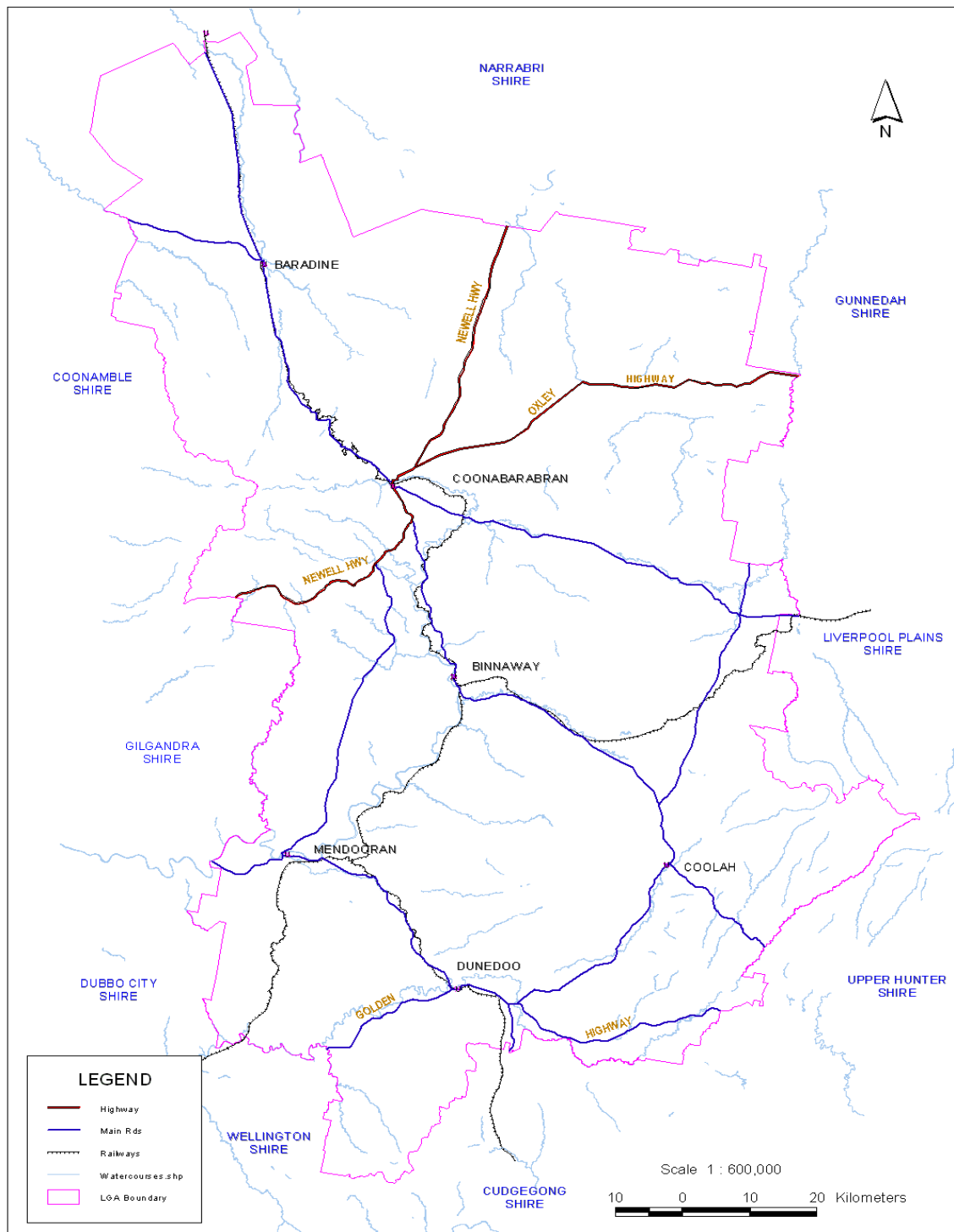
# Annual Report

2013 / 2014



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# Warrumbungle Shire and Surrounds



The 2013-2014 year has been a year of recovery, rewards and losses. Issues with the Wambelong Fire have been ongoing; the "Future Direction of NSW Local Government" paper has involved several meetings and a submission; the Cobbora Coal Mine has involved a large amount of time for not only the General Manager and many staff but for some Councillors and citizens of Dunedoo. The drought conditions experienced in the northern half of the Shire also required fact finding missions by myself and Council staff before submissions were made.

The effects of the Wambelong Fire that occurred on 13 January 2013 are ongoing with not just the \$2.68m hit on Councils budget but the ongoing angst and psychological problems that such disasters create. The Mayors Bushfire Appeal was able to contribute towards the costs of attracting the services of Rob Gordon, Australia's foremost disaster recovery psychologist to address both the victims of the fire and the fire fighters and emergency service staff and also was used to provide a farewell function for the BlazeAid volunteers when they left Coonabarabran in August. At this event the coordinator Lawrie Dawson was presented with the "Freedom of the Shire Award" to acknowledge our appreciation for the groups voluntary work in not only replacing fencing on the fire ground but also lending a kind ear.

The fund also contributed to the "12 Months on BBQ" on the 13 January 2014 where over 300 people attended to talk about their ongoing experiences since the disaster. Another issue relating to the fire was the germination of the toxic native legume, Darling Pea which caused the deaths of hundreds of livestock that had survived the fire.

In October as a result of the fires that occurred in the Blue Mountains area with the loss of 210 houses our shire sent our recovery centre staff to help setup and man their facility in Springwood.

Over the past 12 months the Bushfire Management Committee has formed a Fire Trails Sub Committee to examine the existing trail network and perhaps the need for new trails as well as planning maintenance and upgrades. Broadcast Australia the owners of the Mt Cenn Cruaich major transmitting complex on the southern edge of the National Park have also been encouraged to upgrade their fire plans and to start clearing the bush land around their facility.

During the year the General Manager, Steve Loane and I met with representatives from the Cobbora Holding Company (CHC) to discuss the Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA); no agreement was reached with CHC and Council determined unanimously that we would not accept the VPA offered. We also met with the Planning Assessment Commission to discuss our concerns with the lack of a VPA and the socio economic downturn in the Dunedoo region. The Cobbora Mining proposal was mothballed and the site and the approved mining plan offered for sale. The State Government then offered a competitive stimulation package of \$20 million as compensation for the delay. Our Council formed the Cobbora Transition Fund Committee consisting of Council staff, Councillors and local citizens to suggest projects to stimulate the Dunedoo economy into the future. \$1 million was initially granted to each of the four Councils (Dubbo, Mid-Western, Wellington and Warrumbungle), who were determined to be affected by the sale of the project and the remaining \$16 million offered for stimulus projects. Discussions with CHC, the Planning Department and Treasury are ongoing.

Throughout the year the General Manager and I attended several workshops and information sessions regarding the “Future Direction of NSW Local Government” resulting in submissions from our Council, OROC and Country Mayors. Basically of the 65 recommendations, 57 are broadly supported by the sector with a further 8 causing widespread debate. Some of the new initiatives suggested in the final report were to redistribute the Financial Assistance Grants (FAG’s); the creation of a Local Government Financing Authority and a reappraisal of the whole rating system. The new Local Government Minister Paul Toole on a visit to Coonabarabran assured us that his government’s recommendations should be released in September 2014.

Also during the year the Council proposed a seven bridge replacement program under the Local Infrastructure Replacement Scheme (LIRS-2); we received a report on a Waste Management Strategy and have begun to contact local businesses regarding Liquid Trade Waste Disposal.

The Council also received a “Positivity Award” in September last year for our efforts during the Wambelong Fire and we welcomed five new Australian Citizens through Citizenship Ceremonies during the year.

The ongoing severe drought that plagued the northern half of the shire during 2013 continued into early 2014. Letters informing both the State and Federal agriculture Ministers were written and information collected by Council staff was submitted and indicated that not only stock feed was limited but that stock water was dwindling rapidly.

The area was visited by the Rural Assistance Authority Commission (RAAC) and a meeting with them occurred in Bugaldie followed a few weeks later by a meeting in Baradine with the Federal Agriculture Minister, Barnaby Joyce and local member Mark Coulton. Federal and State Government drought assistance flowed into our area over the next few months and thankfully drought conditions have eased.

Also during the year Council accepted a tender for levee construction to address the Baradine Flood Risk Mitigation Programme and we attended the opening of the new Baradine Pre School.

We also attended meetings with scientific staff from Siding Spring Observatory to discuss construction of new European and Japanese facilities on the mountain. On the agriculture front we learned about new invasive cactus species *Harrisia* and Hudson Pear that are infesting our northern and western boundaries and held discussions with three separate consortiums interested in opening the Derringulla Abattoir complex near Binnaway.

The Council hosted meetings during the year in our new council chambers with Local Land Services, the NSW Grants Commission, Castlereagh Macquarie County Council, Orana Region of Councils and Local Government NSW.

I would like to thank the General Manager for his continued support and encouragement as well as the Directors, Staff and Councillors. This has been another demanding year and with the effects and the recovery from the Wambelong Fire taking far longer to occur than anticipated it will probably go on for several more years.

**Peter Shinton**  
**Mayor**

As the world of local government becomes more technically compounded by bureaucracy, the challenge to communicate the Council message to the community becomes more intricate. Regular spots in the local newspapers, bi annual rounds of community meetings, interviews on both main stream and community radio and website media, it seems, are not quite keeping pace with the community expectation for information. Council is always keen to hear how you want to learn about the happenings in your shire.

Apart from the core businesses of roads, rates and rubbish, Council have been engaged in many new and some long term ongoing projects.

The Cobbora Coal development proposed for a site in the south of the shire, approximately 22 kilometres west of Dunedoo, continues to occupy a large part of council resources. Negotiations with the Cobbora Holding Company (CHC) in regards to a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) are on going and are subject to significant discussion centred around the Socio-Economic Impact of the buy up of approximately 47,000 hectares of productive farming land. Further negotiations are required to establish a funding contributions regime to assist with the development of infrastructure that will be required to support an eventual influx of people living in and around Dunedoo.

As a result of representations by Council to the State Government a Cobbora Transition Fund (CTF) was established. A pool of \$20 million was made available by the Treasurer in an attempt to offset the impact of the buy up. Warrumbungle Shire secured approximately \$8 million for various community enhancement restart projects in and around Dunedoo.

On the subject of large projects, Australia's largest wind farm, 288 turbines, total value of approximately \$1.7 billion has been proposed for the Liverpool range to the east of Coolah. This project is in the early stages and Council has met with the proponents on three occasions. The project will require upwards of 1000 workers for two years during construction and will produce 850 megawatts of power. Community enhancement for this project will also be high on Council's agenda.

The Coonabarabran district is bouncing back after the devastating bushfires and the recovery continues. The Mayors Bushfire appeal continues to support those most affected with fifteen development applications being lodged and approved for rebuilding. Council has waived the development application fees for these applications and the Mayors fund is supporting various other costs such as design and water provision.

In March this year Ms Leeanne Ryan took up her seat as Director of Development Services. Leeanne replaces Tony Meppem who moved on last year. Leeanne is a very experienced local government practitioner and we are fortunate to have secured her services. Coincidentally Leeanne was a local girl who was schooled here in Coonabarabran. The new shire Local Environment Plan (LEP) has now come into play. Council is negotiating with the Department of Planning to reinstate existing holding that were taken out by the department.

In 2012 the State Government set up a Local Government Independent Review Panel. This panel was tasked with reviewing and recommending major structural reform to Local Government in NSW. The findings and recommendations of this panel have now been handed down. I am pleased to report that Warrumbungle Shire Council is set to be a stand alone and as such will not be the subject of further amalgamation discussions, at least in the short term. Warrumbungle Shire along with the other 151 councils in NSW is now tasked with developing a "road map" to prove that we are 'Fit For the Future'. This road map is due to be with the Minister for Local Government by 30 June 2015.

Another subject that has come back across my desk is that of the abattoir at Derringulla. Council has had intensive discussions with three proponents wishing to revitalise the site. Should this project proceed, it will provide up to 30 direct and 50 indirect jobs to the shire. I wish the operators well with their proposal and remain ready to assist their progress where we can.

The completion of the bridge over Saltwater Creek is a somewhat historic event. This bridge provides the final link to the sealing of all roads to Coonabarabran. It is probably ironic that the construction met with its own challenges with difficult base and alignment. The road is increasingly being chosen by heavy transports for the movement of commodities to the port of Newcastle and beyond. It is with great pride that your shire can boast that the bridge is now complete. Council also completed the construction of three bridges over creeks; Grandchester bridge over Tarragrinn Creek, Bugaldie Creek Bridge and Tongy Bridge over Talbragar River.

The Mayor and I regularly attend the Orana Regional Organisation of Councils (OROC), Association of Mining Related Councils (AMRC), NSW Country Mayors Association, Castlereagh Zone Liaison Committee and Castlereagh Bushfire Management Committee. Council also attends the annual Roads Congress, where the vital Roads to Recovery (R2R) funding is discussed and the Federal Government is lobbied for ongoing support of the rural roads network.

The Warrumbungle Quarry continues to operate successfully showing approximately \$300,000 profit since taking up the lease. This figure does not include the savings on transport to Council business from outside the area if the quarry was to close.

Finally I extend my heartfelt thanks to Mayor Peter Shinton and the Councillors for their continued support. I also thank the staff at Warrumbungle Shire Council for a job well done. We are in better shape to serve you, the community, year on year.

I commend my 2013/2014 annual report to the community of Warrumbungle Shire.

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

<b>Population:</b>	9,808 (2006 Census)
<b>Area:</b>	12,380 square kilometres
<b>Towns:</b>	Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Mendooran
<b>Villages:</b>	Bugaldie, Kenebri, Merrygoen, Neilrex, Leadville, Cobbora, Uarbry
<b>State Seat:</b>	Barwon
<b>Federal Seat:</b>	Parkes

The Warrumbungle Shire is strategically positioned on the Newell Highway mid-way between Brisbane and Melbourne. A number of highways and main roads traverse the shire providing links with surrounding regional centres.

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

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



Photo Anna Tenne



**COUNCILLOR DETAILS**

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

**Councillor Peter Shinton  
Mayor**

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

**Councillor Murray Coe  
Deputy Mayor**

Phone: (02) 6375 0265  
murray.coe@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au

**Councillor Gary Andrews**

Phone: (02) 6844 1893  
gary.andrews@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au

**Councillor Anne-Louise Capel**

Phone: (02) 6377 4620  
anne-louise.capel@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au

**Councillor Fred Clancy**

Phone: 0429 030 400  
fred.clancy@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au

**Councillor Victor Schmidt**

Phone: (02) 6842 1500  
victor.schmidt@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au

**Councillor Chris Sullivan**

Phone: (02) 6375 1461  
chris.sullivan@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au

**Councillor Ron Sullivan**

Phone: (02) 6842 8226  
ron.sullivan@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au

**Councillor Denis Todd**

Phone: (02) 6843 1831  
denis.todd@warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au

**SENIOR MANAGEMENT DETAILS**

**General Manager**

Steve Loane

**Director Corporate Services**

Rebecca Ryan

**Director Environmental and Community Services**

Leeanne Ryan

**Director Technical Services**

Kevin Tighe

**Auditor**

Forsyths Chartered Accountants  
Armidale

**Local Solicitor**

Clarke and Cunningham  
Coonabarabran

**COUNCILLOR PHOTOS**



Cr Peter Shinton  
Mayor



Cr Murray Coe  
Deputy Mayor



Cr Gary Andrews



Cr Anne-Louise Capel



Cr Fred Clancy



Cr Victor Schmidt



Cr Chris Sullivan



Cr Ron Sullivan



Cr Denis Todd



**Steve Loane**  
General Manager



**Kevin Tighe**  
Director Technical Services



**Rebecca Ryan**  
Director Corporate Services



**Leeanne Ryan**  
Director Environmental and  
Community Services

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

Ordinary meetings of Council are usually held on the third Thursday of each month commencing at 9.00 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.

At the commencement of the monthly meeting, time is provided for an open forum to allow community members to address Council and senior staff on issues of concern. The opportunity to speak at these public forums is advertised regularly and participants are advised that they may speak for 5 minutes. 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 Monday preceding the council meeting from the Administration Centre in Coonabarabran and can be accessed on Council's website at [www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au](http://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.

Committee	Member
Castlereagh Macquarie County Council	Councillor Murray Coe Councillor Peter Shinton Councillor Denis Todd (Alternate)
Macquarie Regional Library (MRL) Service Committee	Councillor Anne-Louise Capel Councillor Chris Sullivan
Castlereagh Zone Liaison Committee	Mayor Peter Shinton General Manager
Castlereagh Bushfire Management Committee	Mayor Peter Shinton General Manager

External Committees cont...

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Member</b>
Regional Consultative Committee	General Manager
Local Emergency Management Committee	Director Technical Services
North West Weight of Loads Group	Councillor Denis Todd
Central Ranges Natural Gas and Telecommunications Association	Mayor Peter Shinton General Manager
Orana Regional Organisation of Councils	Mayor Peter Shinton General Manager
Warrumbungle Shire Liquor Accord	Councillor Victor Schmidt
Audit and Risk Management Committee	Mayor Peter Shinton
Newell Highway Task Force	Mayor Peter Shinton Councillor Denis Todd
Orana Arts Incorporated	Councillor Anne-Louise Capel
Central West Catchment Liaison Committee	Director Development Services
The Association of Mining Related Councils	Mayor Peter Shinton General Manager
Liverpool Range Wind Farm Community Consultation Committee	Director Development Services
Local Traffic Committee	Councillor Fred Clancy
Inland Rail	Councillor Denis Todd

## Internal Committees

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Member</b>
Plant Advisory Committee	Councillor Gary Andrews Councillor Murray Coe Councillor Ron Sullivan Councillor Fred Clancy
General Manager's Review Committee	Mayor Peter Shinton Councillor Murray Coe Councillor Ron Sullivan Councillor Victor Schmidt
Finance and Projects Committee	Councillor Ron Sullivan Councillor Fred Clancy Councillor Peter Shinton Councillor Murray Coe
Technical Services Works Committee	Councillor Ron Sullivan Councillor Fred Clancy Councillor Peter Shinton Councillor Murray Coe
Waste Facilities Advisory Committee	Councillor Fred Clancy Councillor Denis Todd Councillor Chris Sullivan Councillor Anne-Louise Capel
Administration Building Project Committee	Councillor Peter Shinton Councillor Ron Sullivan Councillor Murray Coe

## Community Committees

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

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Member</b>
Warrumbungle Shire Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Committee	Councillor Fred Clancy Councillor Victor Schmidt
Warrumbungle Shire Council Social Services Advisory Committee	Councillor Peter Shinton
Warrumbungle Shire Council Yuluwirri Kids Advisory Committee	Councillor Victor Schmidt
Baradine Floodplain Management Advisory Committee	Councillor Denis Todd Councillor Gary Andrews
Robertson Oval Committee	Councillor Murray Coe Councillor Chris Sullivan
Baradine Memorial Hall Committee	Councillor Denis Todd
Warrumbungle Shire Youth Council	Councillor Victor Schmidt Councillor Ron Sullivan
Medical Services Advisory Committee	Councillor Chris Sullivan Councillor Denis Todd Councillor Fred Clancy Councillor Anne-Louise Capel
Warrumbungle Pedestrian and Mobility Access Advisory Committee	Councillor Fred Clancy
Warrumbungle Shire Mayors Bushfire Appeal Advisory Committee	Mayor Peter Shinton

## CONTACTING COUNCIL

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 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, Mendooran Pride and Binnaway Bush Telegraph.

## 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.

### Rates and Charges Written Off

(Reg cl. 132)

Set out below are details of Rates and Charges written off during the past 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 / Domestic Waste	Water	Sewerage	Interest / Legal	Total
Pension Rebates	275,517.09	74,034.36	54,550.27	-	404,101.72
Postponed Rates	4,648.97	-	-	86.95	4,735.92
Other Write Offs	18,951.11	10,139.38	7,499.72	12,361.76	48,951.97
<b>Totals</b>	<b>299,117.17</b>	<b>84,173.74</b>	<b>62,049.99</b>	<b>12,448.71</b>	<b>457,789.61</b>



## **PERFORMANCE IN REVIEW**

LGA s.428(2)(b)

The following reports provide an overview of the progress in Council implementing its Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

The reports review the progress of each strategy included in the Delivery Program.

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

<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY</b>
EXECUTIVE SERVICES	Council General Manager Human Resource Services
TECHNICAL SERVICES	Technical Services Management Asset Design Services Road Operations Urban Services Fleet Services Road Contracts and Private Works Water and Sewerage Services
ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES	Environmental Management Regulatory Services Warrumbungle Community Care Family Support Services Environmental Innovations Yuluwirri Kids
CORPORATE SERVICES	Corporate Services Management Financial Services Administration and Customer Services Communications and IT Economic Development and Tourism Property and Risk

## Financial Services

The 2013/14 financial year was a big year for Council's finance branch due to Council updating its finance system from Practical Plus to Civica Authority. This has been a significant project for Council's finance branch and Council went live with the new system on 1 July 2014. The new system has provided Council with a much improved reporting capability, and there are many efficiency gains that are starting to be noticed now that the system is operational.

Council recorded a large deficit in the 2013/14 due to the Federal Government's decision to not bring forward the 2 quarters of FAGs grants (total impact of this decision - \$3.1m). This decision highlights the reliance rural councils have on grant funding from other levels of government, and clearly demonstrates that a budget decision made far away at the federal level can have a large impact on small rural councils like ours.

Despite the Federal Government's decision, there were some significant achievements made by Council's finance branch in the 2013/2014 financial year, including:

- The implementation of Civica Authority across the whole of Council;
- Completion of Council's 2013/14 financial statements well within the required State Government deadline;
- Successful application for funding under the Cobbora Transition Fund;
- Once again passing of a balanced budget and Delivery Program for the next four years, despite the tough operating environment that Council faces;
- Completion of all other IP&R requirements, including the re-casting of Council's Long Term Financial Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Council's Long Term Financial Plan was also included as one of 7 "best practice plans" in the recently released IP&R Manual, with all other best practice plans being from well off Sydney Councils such as Mosman, Waverley, and Warringah.
- Council's debt recovery performance also continued to improve in the 2013/14 financial year with Council's rates outstanding ratio decreasing from 13.30% in 2012/13 to 11.41% In 2013/14. However, this figure is still higher than the State Government benchmark of 10% for rural councils.
- There were also no WH&S incidents and loss time to injuries in Financial Services during the 2013/14 financial year.

# Financial Performance in the 2013/14 Financial Year

## Introduction

Council earned revenue of \$33.211m in the 2013/2014 financial year and incurred expenses (excluding capital expenditure) of \$39.070m, resulting in a net operating loss of \$5.859m. This operating loss was as a result of:

- The Federal Government's decision to not bring forward the Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs Grants). This decision resulted in a \$3.1m increase in Council's accrual deficit, and a \$3.1m reduction in Council's cash at bank balance (see details below).
- The other major reason for Council's accrual deficit was the quantum of depreciation expense incurred by Council on its \$443m worth of infrastructure assets.

Assuming the FAGs grants were brought forward Council would have recorded an accrual deficit of \$2.759m (predominantly due to depreciation on Council's infrastructure assets) which is \$137k less than budget.

Significant points to note in regard to Council's 2013/14 financial performance are detailed below.

### Federal Government Decision to not bring forward two (2) quarters of FAGs grants

The single most important factor to note when analysing Council's financial performance in the 2013/14 financial year is the Federal Government's decision to not bring forward the Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs Grants). This decision resulted in a \$3.1m increase in Council's accrual deficit, and a \$3.1m reduction in Council's cash at bank balance.

The Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs grants) are federal untied grants (i.e. can be spent on whatever Council wants) that form roughly 17 to 20% of Council's funding. They are also one of the two major sources of unrestricted funding for Council's operations (the other being rates).

In the 2008/09 financial year the Federal government brought forward one quarter of FAGs grants resulting in a roughly \$1.55m increase in revenue and cash at bank for that financial year.

Another quarter was brought forward in 2010/11 resulting in a further increase of roughly \$1.55m in the 2011/12 financial year (note: figures are in 2013/14 dollars).

These brought forward funds improved Council's financial performance in these two years and also propped up Council's cash balance by \$3.1m post the 2011/12 financial year. It was inevitable that the FAGs grants would eventually not be brought forward, resulting in the previous improved financial performance being reversed out in one year. This happened in the 2013/14 financial year, and Council has reported a deficit that is \$3.1m higher than it should be due to the Federal Government's decision to not bring forward these grants.

### Cash Result (recurrent)

- Assuming the FAGs grants were brought forward, Council's recurrent cash revenue would have been \$43.236m (\$1.271m, 3% over budget);
- Council's recurrent cash expenditure was \$34.941m (\$953k, 3% over budget).
- This means that Council's net recurrent revenue and expenditure cash result would have been \$318k under budget if the FAGs grants were brought forward (a positive result);
- Unfortunately, the Federal Government held back the FAGs grants meaning Council's final recurrent revenue/expenditure was \$2.782m worse than budget.

### Capital Expenditure

- Council completed \$10.93m worth of capital works in the 2013/14 financial year;
- Completed works in 2013/14 included \$2.7m that had been revoted (brought forward) from prior years (\$1.7m worth of infrastructure and land and buildings expenditure and \$1.066m worth of fleet expenditure). This expenditure was funded from restricted assets and resulted in Council catching up on a significant portion of delayed works with the use of these restricted assets.
- Significant capital achievements in the 2013/14 financial year include:
  - Completion of the majority of the new Saltwater Creek bridge meaning all Council's regional roads are now sealed (\$1.227m in 2013/14);
  - Finalisation of final upgrades to the Administration Building in Coonabarabran (\$93k in 2013/14 - \$50k under budget);
  - Construction of four bridges under LIRS 1 (Baby Creek, Tongy Lane, Bugaldie Creek and Grandchester Bridge) - \$629k in 2013/14;
  - Completion of close to \$1.4m (est. 48km) worth of resealing, including bringing forward \$360k worth of resealing from 2014/15;
  - Completion of \$770k of re-sheeting (roughly 43km);
  - Replacement of \$3.7m worth of fleet equipment, including catching up on \$1.066m worth of delayed purchases from prior years;
  - Completion of the majority of the MR55 Widening and Rehabilitation project (\$640k in 2013/14);
  - Commencement of the Dunedoo backup bore project (\$224k in 2013/14);
  - Completion of the rehabilitation of pavement on MR129 Coonabarabran - Baradine (\$193k);
  - Completion of the Newell Highway Cycleway (\$131k);
  - Upgrade of Council's finance system to Civica Authority (\$130k).

### Movements in Cash

Assuming the FAGs grants were brought forward, and Council had not brought forward \$359k worth of reseals, Council would have reported a small surplus in unrestricted cash of \$43k (water, sewer and general fund combined). Unfortunately the FAGs grants weren't brought forward and Council's cash and investments balance actually decreased by \$5.919m.

The reduction in Council's cash balance was due to:

- The Federal Government's decision not to bring forward the FAGs grants (\$3.1m).
- Council's use of restricted cash assets to catch up on its capital backlog/revoted capital works (\$2.7m);
- Council bringing forward \$359k worth of reseals from the 2014/15 Financial Year;

These items were offset by a positive recurrent cash result of \$318k.

The bringing forward of the FAGs grants propped up Council's cash at bank post 2011/12 by the \$3.1m prepaid amount. Technically Council has not been short changed of funds as the only issue is the actual timing of the grant, and Council instead of getting \$3.1m on 30 June, will get the \$3.1m post July 2014.

However, from a cash basis, the grants were actually already paid to Council back in 2009 and 2012, and unless the Federal Government decides to bring forward another two quarters, Council's cash at bank balance will not recover to the previous balance, as the \$3.1m has already been committed to other expenditure in the 2014/15 financial year (unless Council decides to amend the current 2014/15 budget).

A table showing the adjusted cash balance if the FAGs grants were not prepaid is provided below:

<b>Cash and Investments Balance</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,238	6,318	8,468	10,796	14,171	8,017
Investments (Current)	-	3,181	-	3,317	-	1,551
Investments (Non-Current)	12,328	5,993	6,247	2,520	2,760	1,444
<b>Cash Balance Post FAGS impact</b>	<b>14,566</b>	<b>15,492</b>	<b>14,715</b>	<b>16,633</b>	<b>16,931</b>	<b>11,012</b>
Back out FAGs prepayment	(1,550)	(1,550)	(1,550)	(3,100)	(3,100)	-
<b>Cash Balance assuming no prepayment</b>	<b>13,016</b>	<b>13,942</b>	<b>13,165</b>	<b>13,533</b>	<b>13,831</b>	<b>11,012</b>

It should be noted that the cash balance of the water and sewer fund increased by roughly \$900k due to the receipt of a \$324k capital grant for water and underspends in water/sewer related capital, while the General Fund cash balance declined by roughly the same amount, partially due to the delay in the LIRS loan which was to fund capital works in the 2013/14 financial year.

Council's general fund balance increases in years where there are natural disasters as significant resources are redirected to flood or other works which are fully funded by other levels of government, and then will decrease in years without natural disasters as Council catches up on maintenance and other works from general fund monies. Council experienced significant flood events in 2009/10 which involved flood damage repair works that lasted well into 2011/12. 2012/13 was also a natural disaster year with the S44 Wambelong fires.

### Delay in the drawdown of the LIRS Loan

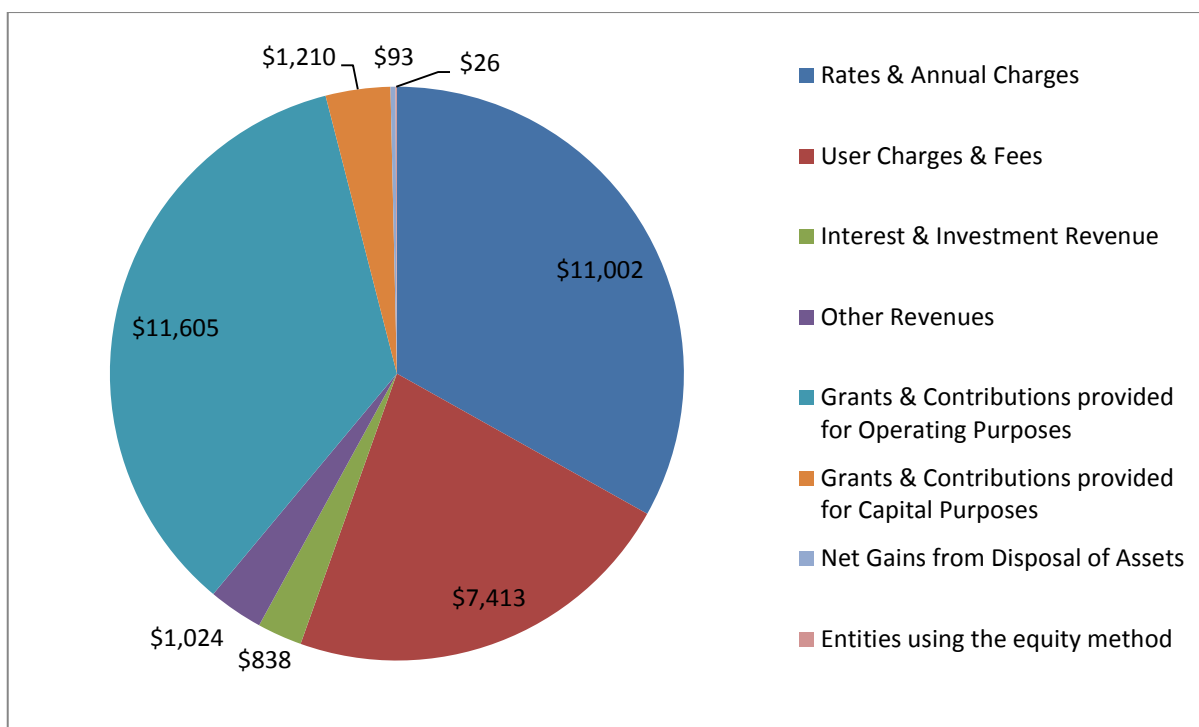
As a result of the Federal and State Budget announcements of further funding for infrastructure, Council delayed the draw down of its \$3.1m LIRS 2 loan in order to seek grant funding for the construction of the LIRS 2 bridges, possibly in conjunction with the LIRS loan as the majority of these funding opportunities are 50/50 funding. This has resulted in some savings in loan repayments and interest, but meant that Council has spent some monies that should have been funded by loan funding with the loan not being drawn down.

## Revenue Breakdown

Council's \$33.211m revenue in the 2013/2014 financial year consists of rates and annual charges, user charges and fees, grants and contributions, interest and investment revenue and other revenue.

A breakdown of Council's revenue by source is detailed in the chart below. Note: figures are in thousands.

**Chart 1: Revenue Breakdown by Revenue Type (2013/2014)**

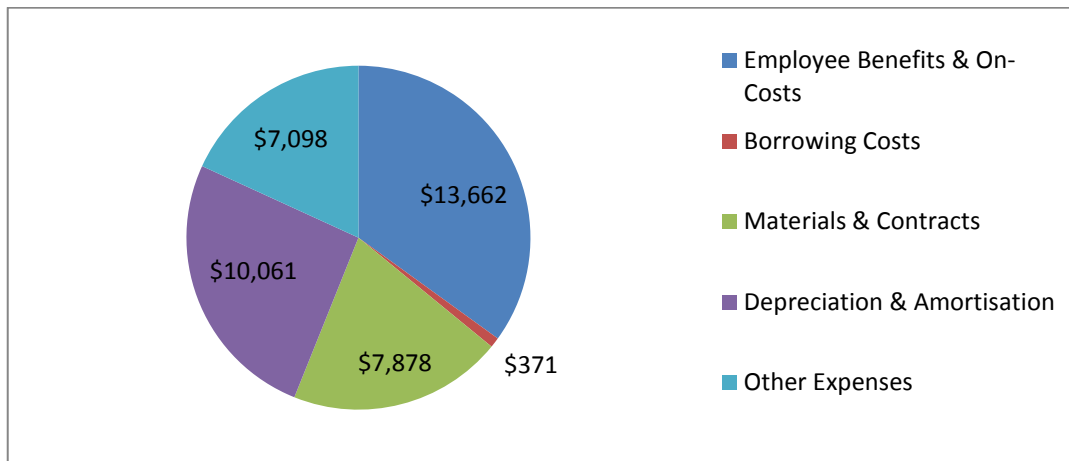


As can be seen from the chart above, Council only receives just under 30% of its total revenue from rates and annual charges and is highly dependent on grant funding to finance its operations. Council's revenue in 2013/14 was considerably lower than in previous years due to the non-receipt of \$3.1m worth of FAGs grants.

## Expenditure Breakdown

Council spent \$39.070m on the provision of services to the residents of the Shire in the 2013/2014 financial year. A breakdown of this expenditure by nature (excluding capital expenditure, but including depreciation expense) can be found below. Note: figures are in thousands.

**Chart 2: Expenditure Breakdown by Expenditure Type (2013/2014)**



## Income Statement

	Revised Budget	Actuals 30-Jun
<b>Income From Continuing Operations</b>		
Rates and Annual Charges	11,122	11,002
User Charges and Fees	6,294	7,413
Interest and Investment Revenue	1,154	838
Other Revenues	934	1,024
Grants and Contributions (total)	15,540	12,815
Net Gains from the Disposal of Assets	59	93
Net Share in JV Entities using the equity method	-	26
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>35,103</b>	<b>33,211</b>
Employee Benefits and On-Costs	13,717	13,662
Borrowing Costs	504	371
Materials and Contracts	8,442	7,878
Depreciation and Amortisation	10,275	10,061
Other Expenses	5,024	7,098
Net Losses from the Disposal of Assets	-	-
Net Share in JV Entities using the equity method	37	-
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>37,999</b>	<b>39,070</b>
<b>Net Operating Result for the year</b>	<b>(2,896)</b>	<b>(5,859)</b>
Add: FAGs grants not brought forward	-	3,100
<b>Net Operating Result for the year</b>	<b>(2,896)</b>	<b>(2,759)</b>

## Council's Performance by Function

In addition to the Income Statement which reports Council's performance by the nature of expenditure/revenue, Council also reports its performance on a quarterly basis by function.

This function view of Council's performance includes capital expenditure and excludes two major non-cash items (depreciation and the write off of infrastructure assets). This view is a hybrid cash view (as it excludes a majority but not all non-cash items) and is the way that Council reports internally including reporting against budget. Council's performance by function against budget (including capital and recurrent expenditure) is summarised in the table below. Further details of Council's performance by function can be found in Council's June QBRS available on Council's website.

Reconciliation of operating result to function view	Revised Budget	Actuals 30-Jun
<b>Net Operating Result for the year (per PandL)</b>	<b>(2,896)</b>	<b>(5,859)</b>
Add:		
Capital Expenditure	(13,828)	(10,928)
Movements in Loans and Finance Leases	2,466	(395)
Movements from Restricted Assets	3,488	2,711
Depreciation Expense	10,275	10,061
Non-cash items (WDV of assets etc)	599	994
<b>Total Operating Result – Function View</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>(3,416)</b>
Add:		
FAGs grants not brought forward	-	3,100
Reseals fast tracked from 2014/15	-	359
<b>Total Operating Result (Adjusted for FAGs grants)</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>43</b>



## Ratios

Details of Council's recent performance against a group of key performance indicators can be found in the following table:

Ratio	Purpose	Notes																					
<p><b>Cash Balance</b></p> <table border="1"> <caption>Cash Balance Data (Estimated)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Cash and Cash Equivalents</th> <th>Investments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>\$2,000</td> <td>\$12,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>\$6,000</td> <td>\$9,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>\$8,000</td> <td>\$7,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>\$10,500</td> <td>\$6,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>\$14,000</td> <td>\$3,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>\$8,000</td> <td>\$3,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Cash and Cash Equivalents	Investments	2009	\$2,000	\$12,000	2010	\$6,000	\$9,000	2011	\$8,000	\$7,000	2012	\$10,500	\$6,000	2013	\$14,000	\$3,000	2014	\$8,000	\$3,000	<p>The blue section of the bar represents cash and cash equivalents, and the red section represents investments (currently all CFNs).</p>	<p>Decrease due predominantly to the Federal Government's decision to not bring forward \$3.1m worth of FAGs grants. Final figure would have been \$14.2m if grants were brought forward. Remaining decrease due to Council using restricted assets to catch up on \$2.7m worth of capital works delayed from prior years.</p>
Year	Cash and Cash Equivalents	Investments																					
2009	\$2,000	\$12,000																					
2010	\$6,000	\$9,000																					
2011	\$8,000	\$7,000																					
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<p><b>Operating Deficit</b></p> <table border="1"> <caption>Operating Deficit Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Operating Deficit</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2007</td> <td>(285)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2008</td> <td>(1,765)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>3,967</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>1,371</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>(3,137)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>(2,357)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>(929)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>(5,859)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Operating Deficit	2007	(285)	2008	(1,765)	2009	3,967	2010	1,371	2011	(3,137)	2012	(2,357)	2013	(929)	2014	(5,859)	<p>To measure Council's operating surplus or deficit. A negative number indicates a deficit.</p>	<p>Decrease due predominantly to the Federal Government's decision to not bring forward \$3.1m worth of FAGs grants. Final deficit would have been \$2.759m if grants were brought forward, due predominantly to significant depreciation on Council's \$443m worth of infrastructure assets</p>			
Year	Operating Deficit																						
2007	(285)																						
2008	(1,765)																						
2009	3,967																						
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<p><b>Unrestricted Current Ratio</b></p> <table border="1"> <caption>Unrestricted Current Ratio Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Unrestricted Current Ratio</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>1.36</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>4.08</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>7.62</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>4.62</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>4.04</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>2.55</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Unrestricted Current Ratio	2009	1.36	2010	4.08	2011	7.62	2012	4.62	2013	4.04	2014	2.55	<p>To assess the adequacy of working capital and its ability to satisfy obligations in the short term for the unrestricted activities of Council. DLG considers a ratio of less than 1.5 as unsatisfactory, and &gt; 2 as good</p>	<p>Decrease due predominantly to the Federal Government's decision to not bring forward \$3.1m worth of FAGs grants, affecting Council's unrestricted current assets. If these grants were brought forward the final figure would have been 3.4.</p>							
Year	Unrestricted Current Ratio																						
2009	1.36																						
2010	4.08																						
2011	7.62																						
2012	4.62																						
2013	4.04																						
2014	2.55																						

Ratio	Purpose	Notes														
<b>Debt Service Ratio</b>																
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Ratio</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>1.34%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>2.09%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>1.84%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>1.32%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>1.73%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>2.32%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Ratio	2009	1.34%	2010	2.09%	2011	1.84%	2012	1.32%	2013	1.73%	2014	2.32%	<p>To assess the degree of Council's dependence upon revenue from rates and annual charges and to assess the security of Council's income.</p>	<p>This ratio has increased slightly due to a higher average loan balance over the year than in prior years.</p>
Year	Ratio															
2009	1.34%															
2010	2.09%															
2011	1.84%															
2012	1.32%															
2013	1.73%															
2014	2.32%															
<b>Rates and Annual Charges Outstanding Ratio</b>																
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Ratio</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>9.03%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>11.09%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>15.13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>13.62%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>13.30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>11.41%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Ratio	2009	9.03%	2010	11.09%	2011	15.13%	2012	13.62%	2013	13.30%	2014	11.41%	<p>To assess the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on Council's liquidity and the adequacy of recovery efforts. The DLG considers a ratio of less than 10% for rural Councils as acceptable.</p>	<p>The ratio has improved due to improved debt collection efforts by Council staff.</p>
Year	Ratio															
2009	9.03%															
2010	11.09%															
2011	15.13%															
2012	13.62%															
2013	13.30%															
2014	11.41%															
<b>Rates and Annual Charges Coverage Ratio</b>																
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Ratio</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>26.83%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>29.24%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>28.63%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>29.26%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>29.02%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>31.68%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Ratio	2009	26.83%	2010	29.24%	2011	28.63%	2012	29.26%	2013	29.02%	2014	31.68%	<p>To assess the degree of Council's dependence upon revenue from rates and annual charges and to assess the security of Council's income.</p>	<p>The coverage ratio has improved due to the reduction in Council's total revenue as a result of the non-payment of the 2 quarters FAGs grants.</p>
Year	Ratio															
2009	26.83%															
2010	29.24%															
2011	28.63%															
2012	29.26%															
2013	29.02%															
2014	31.68%															
<b>Building and Infrastructure Renewals Ratio</b>																
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Ratio</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>155.51%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>18.11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>41.41%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>44.38%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013</td> <td>63.28%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014</td> <td>59.75%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Ratio	2009	155.51%	2010	18.11%	2011	41.41%	2012	44.38%	2013	63.28%	2014	59.75%	<p>To assess the rate at which these assets are being renewed relative to the rate at which they are depreciating. A ratio of less than 100% is unsatisfactory, although the NSW mean ranged between 56% and 84% over the last 3 years.</p>	<p>Ratio is roughly per prior year, but quite low given the quantum of total capital expenditure. The reason for the lower figure was due to Council spending a significant amount on capital expansion projects (\$2.2m) and plant (\$4m) which do not form part of this ratio.</p>
Year	Ratio															
2009	155.51%															
2010	18.11%															
2011	41.41%															
2012	44.38%															
2013	63.28%															
2014	59.75%															

## Communication & Information Technology

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

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

Challenges of poor mobile phone coverage and small bandwidth for public internet connections may impact on staff accessibility to information technology. To manage this, the Coolah and Coonabarabran offices have a private 20/20mb fast datalink, with commencement of installation of a private point to point wifi network in June 2014, linking the majority of Council sites within these two towns with a fast internet service. This includes the Depots, Family Services and Community Care. Remaining sites in Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Mendooran, Binnaway and Baradine remain on the public ADSL infrastructure until telecommunication facilities are improved.

The WSC IT Network is designed to ensure all staff activities on the network are confidential and resilient, with storage backup and a disaster recovery solution as per the Business Continuity Plan. A new HP Server was installed in February 2014 to increase data storage and server capacity, and to be relocated as the disaster recovery hardware in the Coolah office Communications Room when the current data/server hardware is replaced as per the three year rental contract agreement in November 2014.

Security for the WSC IT Network incorporates three components – firewall and internet browsing/email security via managed service contracts, and USB/external plug-in devices via recently installed onsite security hardware. This has been installed with the expectation that following expiry of the current managed service contracts in the next financial year, the hardware can be expanded to encompass these functions, thereby ensuring the WSC IT Network has a stand alone, resilient and cost-effective IT security system.

With the expiry of IT Support contracts with Andor Systems Pty Ltd, a pilot trial period for 3 months was undertaken with Tamworth Regional Council (TRC) for IT Helpdesk support, leading to a 6 month contract from January to June 2014 with TRC for both Helpdesk and Server support. It was recommended to continue with TRC into the next financial year. In March the WSC printer network was replaced with a five year managed contract, improving printer services to staff, reducing printing costs and enabling monitoring of staff printer use.

### **Geographical Information Systems (GIS) – Mapping**

Geographical Information Systems, or mapping, has been established in the financial year period as a corporate service to improve efficiencies for staff and provide map information to the community as requested. A GIS strategy was developed, with the installation of the map enquiry software IntraMaps in September 2013 for a pilot trial, followed by the full version installation in February 2014. IntraMaps enables all staff with a WSC Network login to view and annotate mapping information across the whole shire.

The GIS Officer has trained staff on the use of the program, and is working across all divisions of Council to source and collate data into the SQL server database located at Coonabarabran. Data has been sourced from the existing ArcGIS database, which had previously only been utilised by Technical Services staff within Council, the Practical property and rates database, the LEP, Land and Property Information cadastre and other state government agency information where available. The GIS Officer has been able to prepare map layers by request on specific projects such as the land buyout by Cobbora Holding Company in the southern end of the shire, and is working alongside staff from other divisions to capture data to support the WSC Asset Management Plan. Notably, all local roads across the shire have now been mapped with accurate data points.

### **Communications**

External communications has focussed on the use of the WSC website, all local papers across the shire, local community radio stations WCR FM (Coonabarabran) and Three Rivers FM (Dunedoo/Coolah), ABC Western Plains and Central West Radio and a quarterly community newsletter. All editions of the *Coonabarabran Times*, *Dunedoo Diary* and *Coolah Diary* each feature a story on a WSC service together with a Notice advert. All editions of the Mendooran Pride and the Binnaway Bush Telegraph feature Notice advert information and a story if space allows.

The majority of administration and PA staff have been trained in uploading and editing content on the WSC website. This enables each division of council to ensure information is kept up to date and is applicable to the services provided to the community. A staff working group have commenced with redesigning the website for implementation in the next financial year together with the use of social media as a communications tool.

### **Administration and Customer Services**

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

- Annual Report, Agency Information Guide and statutory documentation prepared as required;
- Correspondence and reports prepared as required for internal customers;
- In the report period, 12,657 documents have been registered in InfoXpert, Council's Document, Records and Content Management System. In addition, 986 service requests have been registered in InfoXpert during this period.
- Business Papers for Council's monthly meeting were prepared and distributed to Councillors in electronic format on Fridays prior to each meeting with copies available for the public on Monday prior to each meeting. Business Papers and Minutes are available on Council's website;
- 405 resolutions of Council have been recorded during the year as a result of the Council meetings;
- Receipting and counter services provided and clients' requests dealt with in a prompt, courteous, friendly and professional manner.

## **DIVERSE CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC BACKGROUNDS**

LGA s.428(2)(j)

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

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

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

## **SERVICES FOR NEEDS OF CHILDREN**

LGA s428(2)(r) and Reg cl 217(1)(c)

Council auspice three children's services including:

- Connect Five Mobile Children's service, provides play sessions and parent education across the Warrumbungle and Gilgandra Local Government Areas. A Toy Library provides a range of children's educational and interactive toys available for loan.
- 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
- Yuluwirri Kids provides Long Day Care and Pre-school services

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 are also available for children's groups, including 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 communities. There are dedicated children's sections 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.

## **ACCESS AND EQUITY ACTIVITIES FOR RESIDENTS**

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

The Environmental and Community Services Department is responsible for the planning and development of services for all residents of the Warrumbungle shire and for the development and implementation of the Warrumbungle Shire's Community Social/Cultural Plan and Community Strategic Plan. The Community Services Department supports the development and maintenance of community and government services and advocates for residents of Warrumbungle Shire. The Community Services, Environmental Services and Technical Services Departments work together to ensure access and equity issues for residents are addressed in development and infrastructure planning.

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 undertakes regular consultations with residents to identify ongoing needs, service gaps, issues and concerns of residents. Consultation is undertaken through services such as Warrumbungle Community Care, Family Day Care, Connect5 Mobile or through Town Meetings, Interagency meetings and Community Development activities.

Warrumbungle Shire Council coordinates a number of projects, activities and special events across the shire including Bike Week, Child Protection Week, Youth Week, NAIDOC Week, Seniors Week and International Women's Day celebrations.

Warrumbungle Community Care to provide services for the frail aged and people with disabilities. Its programs include; Meals on Wheels, Social Support, Home Maintenance, Support for Carers and Community Transport. These programs are funded through Ageing, Disability and Home Care and NSW Health and Transport for NSW and is an auspice of Council. Council also auspice children's services: Yuluwirri Kids, Castlereagh Family Day Care and Connect 5. These services take a proactive approach to access and equity.

Council employs a Youth Officer and funds five Community Development Coordinator positions based in towns across the shire. These positions source and apply for State and Federal funding and provide community development, advocacy, and support for communities. This community development approach ensures engagement with local communities and awareness of their needs across the whole shire. It also ensures equitable access to resources and services throughout the shire where possible, and supports the development and maintenance of community infrastructure.

### **Indigenous Community**

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

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

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

**Rebecca Ryan**  
**Director Corporate Services**

### Overview

There were many significant infrastructure projects completed during the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014, and there are many projects initiated that either improve the level of service or ensure that service levels are maintained. Council's Delivery Program establishes service levels and maintenance activities undertaken by staff in the Technical Services Division. This ensures that assets such as rural roads, town streets, sporting and recreation facilities, water supply, sewerage, aerodromes, provide users with a service that is affordable and sustainable in the long term.

Asset renewal and improvement projects were undertaken in the infrastructure categories of transport, urban streets, parks and gardens, sport and recreation, water and sewerage. In particular a number of significant bridge projects were completed during the period including replacement of timber bridges including; Tongy bridge over the Talbragar River, Bugaldie Creek Bridge on Goorianawa Road and Grandchester Road bridge. The construction of a new bridge over Saltwater Creek on Purlewaugh Road and the construction of a new bridge over Garrawilla Creek on Wyuna Road were also completed during the period.



New bridge over Saltwater Creek No2 on the Purlewaugh Road

Significant asset renewal and improvement projects undertaken during the period in the urban areas include; cycle ways, rehabilitation of kerbing and guttering, footpaths, traffic management facilities, streetscape beautification, irrigation of ovals and repairs and painting of oval grandstands.

Warrumbungle Quarry is a new business for Council and during the year the first 'drill and blast' operation was undertaken and around 50,000 tonnes of product was produced and sold. The product includes sealing aggregates, aggregates for concrete production and road base.



Production of aggregates and road base products underway at Warrumbungle Quarry

Over the Summer period, Council staff provided assistance to the Rural Fire Service in combating a number of bushfires, most notably the Oxley Fire and the 'Jam Tin Flats' fire.

The State Government through the NSW Office of Water requires all Councils that operate a water and sewerage business, to have in place a policy on liquid trade waste. This policy affects all commercial businesses that discharge effluent as a direct result of their commercial operations to sewer. Council commenced implementation of this policy during the year and appreciates that it is another regulatory burden on commercial property owners. There are fees associated with implementation which only cover costs of implementation, that is, Council will not receive any additional revenue. Council has resolved to implement the policy over a two year period.

An emerging issue in the town of Coonabarabran is the increasing use of the over dimension route. Trucks wider than 3 metres are not permitted use John Street and are required to detour via the over dimension route, which takes in Edwards Street, Namoi Street and Saleyards Road. The number of trucks on the Newell Highway is constantly increasing and there is an increasing number of trucks that are over dimension. Council has raised concerns about the long term sustainability of using the over dimension route in Coonabarabran with the Newell Highway Taskforce and the NSW Government.



## **Rural Roads**

Council is responsible for maintaining and making improvements to 2,276km of local rural roads, of which 450km are sealed, and also to 399km of regional main roads. Council also undertakes road works under contract to Roads and Maritime Services on 186 km of state roads, including sections of the Golden Highway, Newell Highway and Castlereagh Highway.

The renewal of bitumen seal on local rural roads during the period included 20km bitumen resurfacing at a cost of \$663,000 and 1km of pavement rehabilitation on Coolah Creek Road at a cost of \$134,000. There was \$433,000 expended on maintenance activities such as pot hole patching, repair of bitumen edge breaks, shoulder grading and roadside grass slashing. Council's program of extending the network of sealed roads was suspended for five years or until appropriate levels of funding for such capital expansion works becomes available.

There was 24km of bitumen resurfacing works undertaken on various regional main roads throughout the Shire at a cost of \$522,000. Also, 3km of pavement rehabilitation or renewal on the Black Stump Way, near Kurrajong Park was completed at a cost of \$800,000.

The renewal of unsealed roads involved resurfacing of 93km at a cost of \$768,000. During the period 860km of maintenance grading was undertaken of roads across the Shire at a cost of \$1.8m.

There are of course many challenges associated with maintaining a network of roads in a condition acceptable to all types of users. Funding pressures mean that renewal and maintenance activities required to maintain road conditions, such as resurfacing and maintenance grading, are constantly under threat. As previously reported it is of particular concern that the crossing of Coolaburragundy River on Orana Road is closed to traffic, which means adjoining farming operations and their families are required to travel an additional 20km.

## **Urban Streets**

There are six urban areas in the Shire; Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Mendooran. There is a total of 139km of roads in the urban areas. Maintenance activities in town streets include; street cleaning, emptying of street bins, maintenance of street gardens and street trees and cleaning stormwater drains.

Renewal activities during the period include; 8.5km of bitumen resurfacing, replacement of 120 metres of concrete kerbing and guttering in Coonabarabran and replacement of around 150 metres of concrete footpath across the Shire.

Significant expansion and upgrade projects undertaken during the period in urban streets include; completion of the culvert extension in Dalgarno Street Coonabarabran, construction of 500metres of cycleway in Coonabarabran, kerb blisters and gutter reconstruction in Coolah, intersection treatment in Coolah, kerb and guttering construction in Baradine, and construction of a concrete dish drain in Dunedoo.



Intersection treatment Campbell Street Coolah which has changed the location of Give Way signs

There is 29km of concrete footpath in urban areas across the Shire. Council is now working with community members through the Pedestrian Access Mobility Advisory Committee to identify sections of footpath that restrict access for mobility impaired pedestrians. Also, the Committee is working to prepare a plan of streets where renewal of existing footpath is required and where new concrete footpaths are required.

### **Parks and Gardens**

There are 19 park areas in the Shire and maintenance activities include; grass cutting, watering, weeding, tree pruning and general horticulture task associated with numerous garden beds. Council was pleased to work with Coonabarabran Rotary to install outdoor fitness equipment in the new park area upstream of the Mary Jane Cain Bridge.

There are eight (8) sets of playground equipment in park areas across the Shire. During the period, the playground area in Milling Park Dunedoo was upgraded with new playground equipment.



New play equipment in Milling Park, Dunedoo

Across the Shire there are 12 toilet blocks maintained and renewed by Council. The toilets are cleaned at different times during the week, however at a minimum staff undertake toilet cleaning 70 times each week.

#### **Transport and Road Safety**

There is a registered aerodrome at Coolah and a registered aerodrome in Coonabarabran and there is an unregistered aerodrome in Baradine. Maintenance tasks undertaken by Council staff include grass slashing, weekly inspections and maintenance of the bitumen runway surface in Coonabarabran. A particular issue being investigated is the repair of runway lights at the Coolah aerodrome.

Council's Road Safety Officer has been involved in a number of road safety programs throughout the year including; workshops for supervisors of learner drivers, 'Just Slow Down', 'Keep our Kids Safe', and the award winning program 'Free Cuppa for the Driver'.



Warrumbungle Council combined with other Council's to promote the 'Free Cuppa' road safety campaign on the Newell Highway.

The Road Safety Officer (RSO) Program is jointly funded by Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) and the Warrumbungle Shire Council.

Objectives of LGRSP as listed in the Road Safety Strategic Plan are:

- Integrate road safety into the different divisions of Council planning.
- Increase road safety awareness, direction and ownership through Council staff and shire residents.
- Improve road safety through engineering and transport planning measures.
- Continue to encourage effective communication and assistance between community stakeholders, NSW Police, Council and Roads and Maritime Services (RMS).
- Contribute to safe; people, speed, roads and roadside, and vehicles.
- To implement projects to target the reduction in road crashes with community support.

An analysis of RMS crash data and traffic surveys establish that the priority road safety issues for the Warrumbungle Shire are speed, and fatigue.

The latest available crash statistics are for 2008 to 2012. The stats indicate 191 casualty crashes in our shire during that 5 years. Of these 62 crashes or 33 per cent were speeding related. The format of RMS crash data has changed and now only provides detail on casualty crashes. These include crashes where someone is killed or injured.

#### Road Crashes during 2008 to 2012 in the Warrumbungle Shire Council Area

Factor *	Casualty Crashes	% Casualty Crashes	Factor *	Casualty Crashes	% Casualty Crashes
Speed	62	33	Fine Weather	159	83
Fatigue	39	20	Dry Road	165	86
Alcohol	17	9	Daylight	131	69
Single Vehicle	156	82	Light Vehicle	160	83

#### Casualty Crashes during 2008 to 2012 in the Warrumbungle Shire Council Area

Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Crashes	28	48	48	38	29
Casualties	36	71	71	50	35

Statistics provided by RMS

\*Note: each crash may have more than one proven factor.

## Statement of Actions

- Breakdown, an RMS program supported. Glove box guide distributed through various businesses within the Shire.
- Participated in Expos at Coonabarabran and Dunedoo.
- Three Graduated Licensing Scheme Workshops organised only one completed. No participants at Coolah or Dunedoo, and 6 participated in Coonabarabran.
- RMS's "Test your tired self" was supported with posters and a media release.
- Kids on scooter and bicycle safety promoted in all towns in the Shire.
- Kids left in a hot car ws promoted with a media release.
- Keep Our Kids Safe program at Dunedoo completed. A program to inform drivers about kids walking to and from school and catching the school bus.
- Low Risk Driving program developed and trialled this year at Council and Seniors.
- Supported Government Open Day at Coolah and Coonabarabran.
- Pedestrian including Gopher Users at Coolah and Coonabarabran.
- Plan B program supported with promotional gear distributed to liquor outlets in the Shire.
- Road Rule Week supported with posters and distribution of 10 Most Understood Road Rule brochure.
- Distraction program completed with media releases and adverts promoting, "Get Your Hand Off It" mobile phone program.
- Council's Speed Advisory Trailer failed to operate in June 2013 and has since been replaced. A loan speed trailer from RMS was used for 57-days 2013-14.
- The RSO has supported the NSW Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing and Warrumbungle Liquor Accord throughout the year by providing Secretariat. The LA has developed a Terms document that has been agreed by all licensees and OLGR.
- Reduce speed programs were completed on all local road within the Shire.
- "Free Cuppa for the Driver" targeting travellers was conducted from March to May 2014 in conjunction with 12 other Council's.
- RSO represented Council at this years RYDA program by presenting "Hazards, Risks and Distractions" of the educational modules for the Coonabarabran Rotary Club.
- Local Police have participated in all Road Safety programs throughout the year.
- Newspaper articles and local community radio have promoted the programs and advised community of the increased enforcement activity.
- Attended monthly Traffic Committee meetings.
- Submission of monthly reports, quarterly report and yearly action plan
- Attend RMS Regional meetings

Road Safety educational and behavioural programs have been planned for 2014-15. The major programs target issues such as speed on local roads, speed in school zones and the driver fatigue program.

## **Sport and Recreation Facilities**

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

Council worked closely with the Bowen Oval Committee in Coolah to construct a new 'mod size' football field during the year. The new field was 'officially commissioned' by NSW Governor Professor Marie Bashir on the 6 May 2014. Also at the Bowen Oval complex and new turf wicket was installed to replace the concrete wicket on the main oval.

The irrigation system at Robertson Oval in Dunedoo was upgraded during the period and this work included installation of a new bore and tank. The Robertson Oval advisory committee worked throughout the year on a master plan for future development at the complex.

Pool leakage problems are slowly being addressed and in particular, leak prevention work was undertaken at the Baradine pool. The concrete concourse area around the Coonabarabran pool was upgraded with a new surface of concrete. A pool cover was purchased for the Coolah pool.

## **Water and Sewerage**

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

New water mains were installed in Yeubla Street Binnaway and in Coonabarabran between Robertson Street and John Street and also in Namoi Street Baradine. The project to install a second bore in Dunedoo was completed during the period.

The renewal of the clarifier at the Baradine water treatment plant is a major project and investigations commenced during the period.

Sewerage services are provided to residents in Baradine, Coolah, Coonabarabran and Dunedoo. In all there are 3109 connections. Infrastructure to support these connections includes four sewage treatment plants, nine pumping stations and 80 km of sewer main. A significant project during 2013/14 is investigation of methods to eliminate odour problems at the Baradine pump station.

## **Fleet Services**

To support Council's wide range of services, Council operates a workshop in Coolah and in Coonabarabran. The mechanics in these workshops provide maintenance and support services for a large fleet of vehicles including 86 sedans and utilities, 8 graders, 2 loaders, 3 excavators, 4 backhoes, 7 rollers, 7 tractors, 5 large tippers and 23 medium sized trucks.

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

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

### Management Objectives

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

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

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

### Principal Activity Co-coordinator

Mrs Leeanne Ryan, Director Development Services

### Development Management Services

- Warrumbungle LEP 2013 gazettal on 29 November 2013 which includes provisions relating to agricultural land, including minimum rural lot sizes of 500 and 600 hectares.
- All community-based heritage work within the Shire completed to NSW Heritage Office requirements and Round 3 of the Local Heritage Fund has been completed which assists owners of heritage buildings and items to maintain these sites.

### Town Planning

- Total of eighty three (83) Development Applications were approved which had a total value of \$7,193,487. This included eleven (11) new residential dwellings.
- Total of four hundred and twenty (420) Section 149 Certificates were issued.
- Development Applications continued to be lodged for residents effected by the Wambelong fires.

### Building Services

- Eleven (11) Complying Development Certificates were issued.
- Weekly average of ten (10) critical stage inspections have been carried out.
- A total of sixty (60) Construction Certificates and nineteen (19) Occupation Certificates were issued.
- Total of eight (8) 149d Building Certificates were issued.
- Nine (9) Section 68 Local Approvals were issued for manufactured houses.

### Environmental Health Services

- High and medium risk Food Premises inspected in accordance with Council's agreement with the NSW Food Authority.
- Funding achieved for Roadside Vegetation Management from the Salinity and Water Quality Alliance.
- Funding received for an Urban Waterway Rain-garden in Robertson Street.
- Nine (9) Section 68 Local Approvals were issued for On-Site Sewer Management Systems.

## **Regulatory Services**

- Council continued its cooperation with the RSPCA in the rehousing of unwanted companion animals.
- Council Compliance Officers have continued with night patrols to identify straying dogs at night. In 2013/2014 eighty three (83) dogs were seized with five (5) being returned to their owner before being transferred to the pound. Twenty three (23) cats and thirty one (31) dogs were surrendered to Council. Of these companion animals forty seven (47) were released back to their owners, five (5) were sold and eleven (11) were sent to the RSPCA for re-housing.
- Wildlife monitoring cameras have been used for pound security with two (2) dogs stolen from the pound yard.
- Additional emphasis was placed on illegal dumping enforcement utilising motion sensor cameras.

## **PRIORITIES FOR 2014/2015**

### **Environmental Management Services**

- All community-based heritage work within the Shire completed within NSW Heritage Office requirements.
- Council's Waste Management Strategy
- Amendment of the Warrumbungle LEP
- Implementation of Swimming Pools Inspection Program

### **Town Planning**

- Ensuring continued compliance with the Orana Regional Environmental Plan No 1 – Siding Spring, necessary to safeguard the operations of the Siding Spring Observatory; as well as providing Council input into the proposed revision of this plan.
- Review of Council's standard conditions for development consent and development forms.
- Education for applicants of bushfire requirements for bushfire prone land as relates to town planning.
- Update procedures for all town planning activities.
- Developing and introducing a Development Control Plan for the Shire.

### **Building Services**

- Delivery of quality and consistent building inspection services.
- Education for applicants of bushfire requirements for bushfire prone land as relates to building services.
- Update procedures for all building services activities.
- Implement a swimming pools inspection program.

### **Environmental Health Services**

- State of the Environment Reporting to be completed in accordance with new Integrated Planning and Reporting framework.
- Compliance with Council's obligations under the NSW Food Regulation Partnership.
- Update procedures for all environmental health services activities.
- Development of inspection program of onsite sewerage waste services in high risk areas.
- Development of Contaminated Lands Register for Shire.



## Regulatory Services

- Micro-chipping and registration of companion animals.
- Reduction in nuisance dog complaints.
- Reducing dog attacks and dealing with dangerous dogs and menacing dogs.
- Reduce illegal dumping of rubbish and the number of overgrown blocks with regular patrols.
- Increase community education programs for companion animal owners.
- Update procedures for all regulatory services activities.

## Waste

- During August 2013, Council adopted its Waste Management Strategy aiming to set the direction of the waste business for the Warrumbungle Shire for the future years. An improvement was made this year with regards to financial viability with the business generating a small surplus for the reporting period. Further work on the actions from the Waste Management Strategy will be reviewed and implemented over the next twelve (12) months.
- Landfilling of domestic waste continues to be undertaken at the Coonabarabran Landfill. It is envisaged that the site has further potential life with changed landfilling practices.
- Kerbside recycling was undertaken during the reporting period, with income being received from the sale of recyclables to processors. Council continues to be an active participant in Netwaste, and participated in the following programs associated with Netwaste during the reporting period; E-waste collection, Waste Oil Recycling, Scrap metal Recycling.
- DrumMuster continues to be supported by Council with collection centres located at Coolah and Coonabarabran.
- The clean up of fire damaged buildings from the Wambelong bushfires still continues to have an impact on Council's landfill with debris from fire damaged buildings being disposed of at the site.

## Companion Animals Act and Regulations Activities

Reg c1217 (1) (f)

- Lodgement of pound data collection returns with the Department, lodged annually on the electronic database.
- Lodgement of pound data collection returns with the Department, lodged annually on the electronic database.

SUMMARY OF POUND DATA	CATS	DOGS
Seized	-	83
Returned to Owner	-	5
Transferred to Council facility	-	78
Abandoned or Stray	-	29
Surrendered	23	31
Animals transferred from seizure activities	-	78
Released to Owners	-	47
Sold	-	5
Released to RPSCA for re-homing	-	11
Died at Council facility	-	1
Stolen from Council facility	-	2
Escaped from Council facility	1	-
Total euthanized	22	72

## Other Data

Lodgement of data relating to dog attacks with the Division	There were 20 reported dog attacks during the period. All were recorded as per legislation on the Companion Animal Register
Companion animal community education programs carried out	1 – Micro-chip Program in conjunction with the Vets
Strategies Council has in place to promote and assist the de-sexing of dogs and cats	Looking into obtaining a grant to promote and assist with the de-sexing of dogs and cats.
Strategies in place to comply with the requirements under section 64 (Companion Animals Act) to seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals	Council works with the RSPCA to rehouse dogs and cats. During 2013/2014 11 were rehoused.
Off leash areas provided in the Council area	Yes. There is an off leash area in six towns in the Shire.
Funding received Urban Waterway for Rain-garden in Robertson Street, Coonabarabran	\$16,000

## Conclusion

Council's Development Services Department plays a significant role in the provision of services and activities to the local community. The past twelve months have been a busy time for Development Services, and has been further challenged with a number of staff changes including the Directors role. Focus over the next twelve months will aim to improve customer service and provide better services to our communities and residents.

**Economic Development and Tourism Objective**

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

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

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

**2013-2014**

The impact of the January 2013 bushfires on the local tourism industry and in turn local businesses was more far reaching than envisaged. It should be noted, that at a time when small communities are feeling the impact of contracting economies, the communities of Warrumbungle Shire continue to display a resilience that reflects positivity and confidence in the future.

The prospect of a coal mine at Cobbora polarized communities and the conflicting decisions about the proposal has created further unrest and diminishing confidence in the decision making of governments. Communities have submitted funding applications for the Cobbora Transition Fund and the announcement of the successful application of Dunedoo for \$1m will provide an opportunity to address some of the impact of the loss of families and primary production.

The Orana Economic Development Officers (EDO) Network continues to meet regularly focussing on projects and partnerships that provide mutual benefit to the participants and profile the region as one which provides a great lifestyle as well as diverse experiences. Workforce Planning and Development continues to remain high on the agenda of this group and the capacity to capture useful information utilizing economic modelling programs has been pursued by individual councils and RDA-Orana. A proposal to investigate the best ways to promote relocation to the region is underway and employment opportunities explored.

Throughout the year a number of events have been presented. The Equestrian Expo continues to grow and brings families to the region, and, this coupled with other equestrian events in the shire, reminds us that we are a rural shire that offers excellent facilities for major events. Local shows profile the importance of primary industries to the shire.

Cycling events have grown with challenges across various terrains and the annual road cycling event from Coonabarabran to Gunnedah and beyond, attracts riders and followers from across the state. Motocross events were also held by private operators.

The Crooked Mountain Concert has a reputation for presenting high profile entertainers and while the numbers have been capped to protect the environment, the interest in each event continues to grow. NPWS is considering a new model of management for this event but the benefits to the shire are still palpable. Arts and cultural activities are enjoyed by community and visitors alike and the volunteer work of those who present these activities and events should be acknowledged.

A major event for 2013 was the Festival of the Stars which became a shire wide event with Baradine and Coolah picking up on the astronomy theme and establishing new events. Star Fest at Siding Spring was well supported and in 2014, when Siding Spring Observatory celebrates 50 years as the premier astronomy site in Australia and 40 years of the AAO, the program will re-affirm that Coonabarabran is indeed the Astronomy Capital of Australia. During the year the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) installed new software so that event organisers could load individual events live to the website. The inaugural Warrumbungle Food Festival was held in April 2014 and while small in attendance, the commitment was amazing and the team are working to present a bigger and better program in 2015. The attraction of conferences has had positive outcomes with GRDC, NSW Teachers Federation each committing to future conferences in the shire.

Council determined on the installation of new shire boundary signs and the first signs were designed based on the shire logo as part of a three year program. Street banner poles have been installed in Coonabarabran and banners feature the whole of Warrumbungle Shire and the message of positivity.

Following the bushfires it was necessary to re-align our promotional opportunities and objectives and the EDTAC embraced the opportunities as they arose; an interim tourism brochure was produced and circulated, a profiling of the Festival of the Stars as a shire wide event, promotion at Consumer Shows that were aligned to the target markets were all part of the tourism strategy put in place to minimize the impact of the fires and negative media. Venturing into new tourism markets has been valuable and the statistics at the VIC indicate a rise in visitor numbers to the area following the re-opening of the Warrumbungle National Park.

Partnering with neighbouring shires and new marketing groups has also benefited our local tourism industry. The Destination Management Plan for Central Inland was completed and our participation ensured that Warrumbungle Shire is profiled and acknowledged as a destination in our own right. There is a clear understanding that we also need to partner with centres with high volume visitor numbers to capitalize on the changing face of tourism.

In identifying significant target and marketing opportunities, the camping and caravan industry has rated highly; advertising has been purchased in industry related publications. An understanding of the needs of our target markets has seen the installation of waste points for travellers in caravans and RV's in both Coonabarabran and Baradine, with Dunedoo and Coolah to follow in this financial year.

Media is important in the promotion of our shire; social media in addition to websites and print media as well as television means we cover all, or almost all, bases. Journalists from NZ Travel Guides, the Travel Tart (one of many who blogs his way around the world), Outback Magazine, Wall Street Journal and a number of documentary makers have seized on the shire's attributes; their passion for stories and landscapes has been to our advantage.

Travel Oz filmed a Newell Highway promotional exercise and aired an hour long program featuring the Warrumbungle Region on national and international television channels. Negotiations have been successful to find a script writer who could present a storyline set against the backdrop of the shire; filming of a television series at Siding Spring Observatory will commence in early 2015.

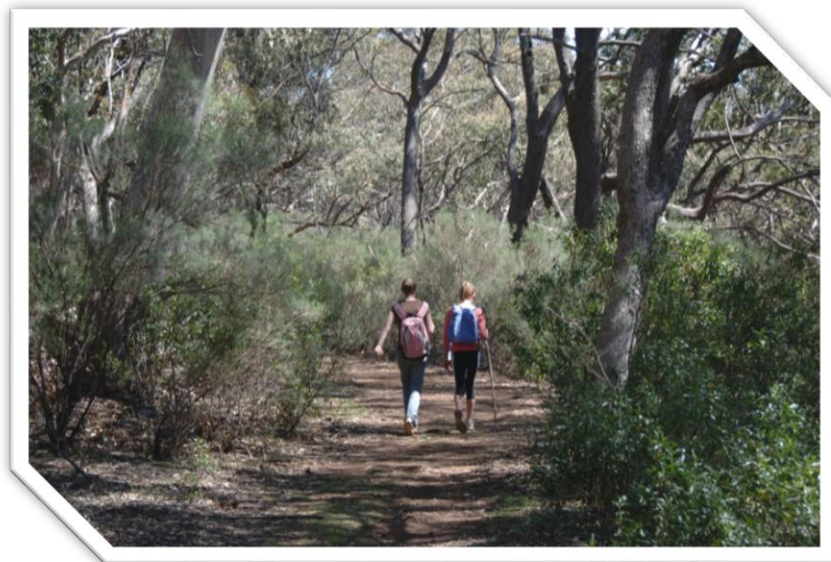
Businesses across the shire have taken the opportunity to enhance their understandings and utilized the Small Business Bus and the Regional Business Enterprise Officer. Community organisations have successfully sought funding for community driven initiatives which serve to enhance their communities and the way in which we all participate in community life.

Tourism is an important economic contributor to the whole of Warrumbungle Shire. Tourism Research Australia (TRA) released figures which conservatively indicate that tourism generates some \$37m to the shire each year; an increase of \$1m over the previous year and when one considers the dramatic impacts of the bushfires, it could be said this increase was more than admirable.

The Coonabarabran VIC has maintained Level 1 Accreditation thanks to the dedication of a small staff and even smaller volunteer group who ensure a comprehensive visitor information service. While there is an ever increasing number of people utilizing digital resources for travel and tourism information, research shows that people still want a brochure when they arrive. These same people are still very dependent on the valuable engagement with a local person for accurate and current information. "There is nothing like a local" we are often told.

Staff and volunteers are actively engaged in training as opportunities arise.

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



**Leeanne Ryan**  
**Director Environmental and Community**

## HUMAN RESOURCE ACTIVITIES

### LGA s.428(2)(g)

#### Senior Staff Remuneration

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

The Senior Staff member's total remuneration package, which includes all costs associated with employment for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 is as follows:

	\$
Value of salary component of package	196,761.63
Bonus payments, performance or other payments not forming part of the salary component	0.00
Superannuation(salary sacrifice and employer's contribution)	18,195.62
Non-cash benefits	0.00
Fringe benefits tax for non-cash benefits	6,074.47
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>221,031.72</b>

#### Human Resource Management

LGA s.428 (2) (m)

Over the last year Human Resource (HR) has been extremely busy ensuring the requirements of current staff, recruitment, training and development and workplace health and safety were all met in an efficient and effective manner.

HR continued to work on changes to the organisational structure, adopted by Council in November 2013, with recruitment of new positions and changes to current positions a priority and close to completion by the end of June 2014.

Council had a turnover of staff in all areas due to natural attrition, retirement and changes to their positions within Council. Council made a commitment to staff to offer opportunities for career development and this has been reflected this year in the number of staff who have applied for and been offered higher duty positions on a permanent basis or temporary basis when filling for staff on leave.

During the year the Staff Achievement Award proved again to be a success with four quarterly winners being chosen for outstanding work ethics and commitment to the organisation. The annual winner was announced in December and this staff member received an additional week's annual leave. It was decided that there would also be an opportunity for Crews to be nominated for the quarterly Award with the annual winners of the Crews able to nominate their favourite charity to receive an amount of money given by Council. This has been well received.

Council participated in the Job Seeker Work Experience Scheme where two participants worked two days a week for a period of six months, supervised by a Council staff member, cleaned up the river area in Coonabarabran. This gave an opportunity for a Council staff member to gain valuable experience in supervision and provided skills to two long term unemployed in the area of urban services. This scheme was very successful.

Council provided to staff in the area of Training and Development with 57 workshops with 970 staff attending those workshops. Staff have undertaken 28 traineeships this year and 9 staff currently undertaking courses by correspondence.

Training Plans were undertaken for all staff following their competency and performance reviews which commenced in August. These reviews were used to create a training and development budget for the upcoming three years.

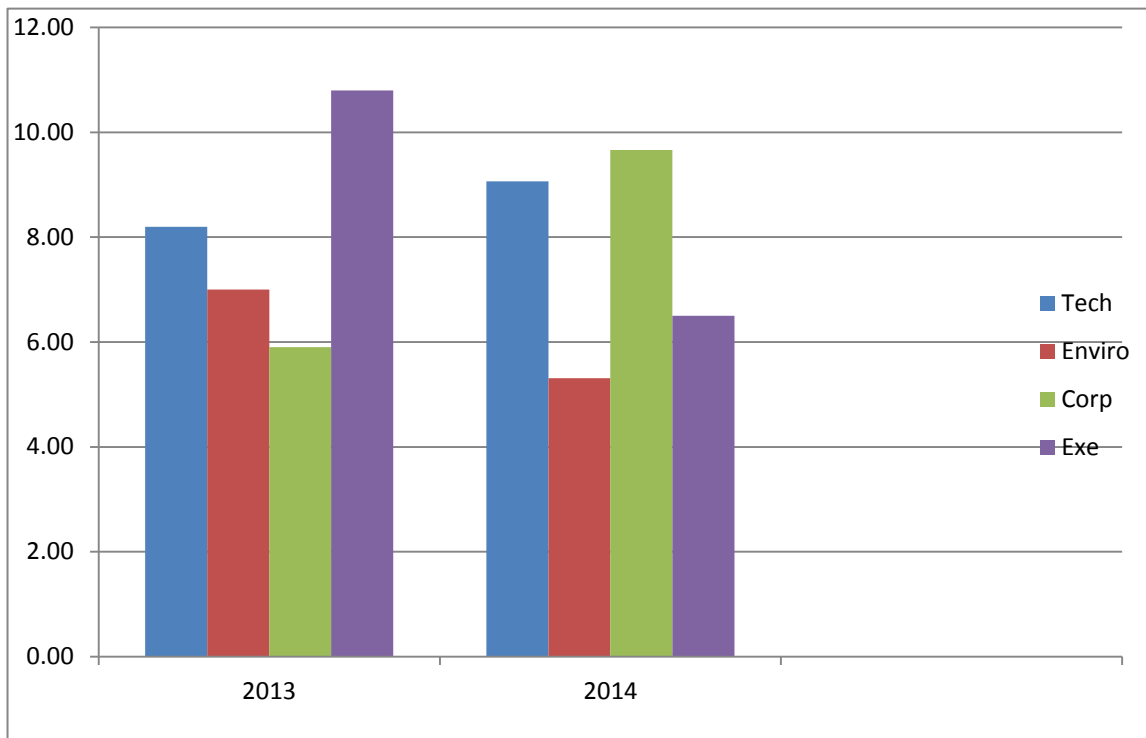
This year there has been a rise in employee sick leave

- Average days for outdoor employees is 9.03 days (2012/2013 6.8 days)
- Average days for indoor employees is 8.35 days (2012/2013 6.15 days)

All figures were based on full time employee calculations from the organisational structure (not per capita) and positions vacant for the year were not included in the calculations.

Cost of sick leave for 2013/2014	\$271057.95
Cost of carers leave for 2013/2014	\$95452.71
Cost of parental leave 2013/2014	\$9870.91

### Average Sick Leave Taken 2013/2014



In May the Dust Diseases Board visited to conduct health monitoring for high risk workers. This was seen as a health initiative as part of a wellness program and also to comply with legislative requirements. Over 60 staff were screened and the feedback from staff was very positive. The attending Doctor was pleased with results and general fitness of the staff screened and the organisation of the visit.

Workplace Health and Safety has taken a high priority within the organisation with accident and near miss investigations being undertaken by the safety officer and members of the Safety Committee. New policies and procedures have been implemented and all staff made aware of their responsibilities.

Incidents of lost time workers compensation claims has reduced significantly this year due to staff being made more aware of their responsibilities to undertake risk assessments and safe work method statements.

## **Statement of Activities to Implement EEO Management Plan**

### **Other Legislation**

S428(2) (r)

HR again reviewed the organisation's EEO Management Plan ensuring all requirements to legislation were covered within the policy. Code of Conduct training was provided to all staff to ensure the requirements of Equal Employment Opportunity principles were understood and the whole organisation again made aware of Anti Bullying principles through training and newsletters. Council currently employs a high number of indigenous staff including a two year traineeship in child care. The ratio of indigenous staff makes up approximately 8% of our workforce.

### **Child Protection**

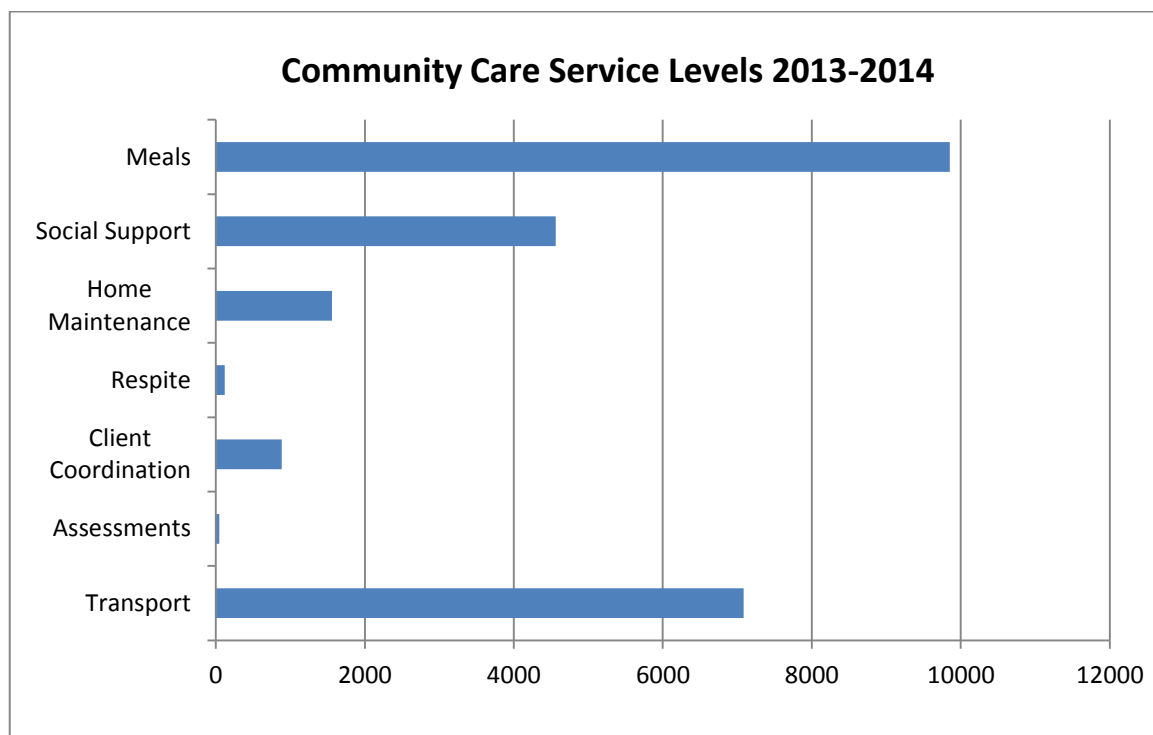
It is a requirement of Council that all staff applying for positions in the child services areas must have proof that they have applied and been verified by the Office of the Children's Guardian to work with children. All current staff have all applied and received their new Working with Children clearance under the new requirements.

**Val Kearnes**  
**Manager Human Resources**



## WARRUMBUNGLE COMMUNITY CARE

Warrumbungle Community Care (WCC) provides a range of services across the shire to assist the frail aged, people with a disability and carers. Services include Community Transport, Meals on Wheels, Respite, Social Support and Home Maintenance. These services support people to continue to live independently in their own homes. WCC provides services to 765 clients across the shire and has 185 volunteers.



WCC receives recurrent funding from Department of Social Services (DoSS), Transport for NSW, and Department of Family and Community Services (Ageing, Disability and Home Care) and NSW Health. WCC also receives income from client contributions, Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) reimbursements for transport costs, and one off grants for specific projects or purchases. Transport for NSW increased their funding under the Community Transport Program by \$16 000. This additional recurrent funding will increase the provision of transport services to non HACC eligible Transport isolated residents to include the Northern end of the Shire.

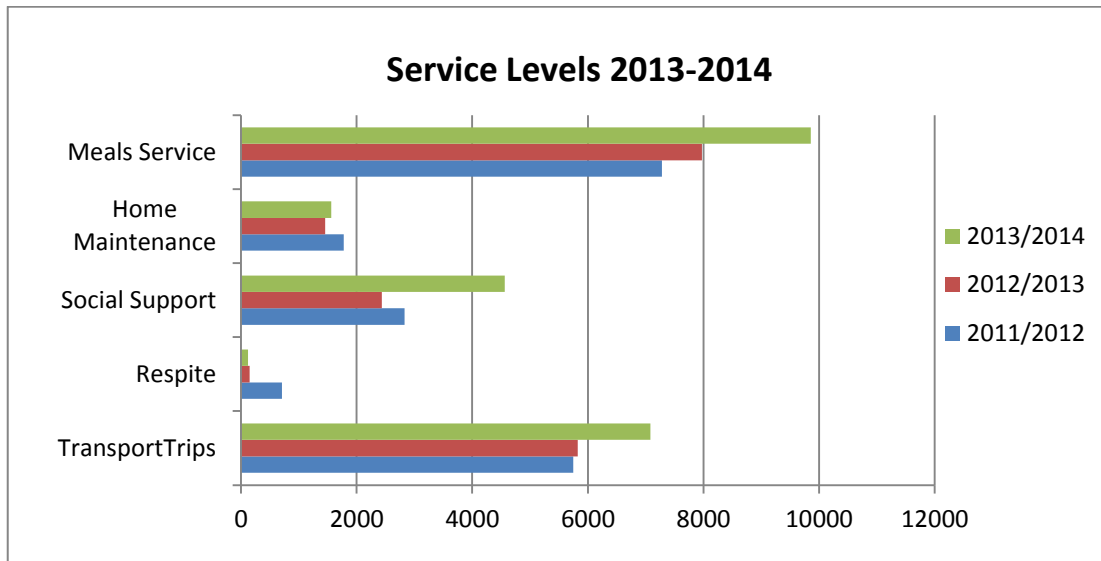
DoSS	ADHC	Transport for NSW	NSW Health	Client Contributions and DVA reimbursements	Total
<b>\$489,003</b>	<b>\$78,322</b>	<b>\$184,751</b>	<b>\$8,800</b>	<b>\$151,064</b>	<b>\$911,940</b>

### **Governance**

Warrumbungle Shire Council holds service agreements with the funding bodies and auspices WCC. WCC provides regular reports to Council and funding bodies on service activity and statistics. Two Advisory Committees (one in the northern and one in the southern end of the shire) represent volunteers and clients and meet quarterly to provide consultation, information and a forum for discussion of issues arising.

## Achievements

Services: The chart below indicates the targets and level of service provision provided by WCC in 2013-2014. The home maintenance service has remained stable while a significant increase in Meals provided, moderate increase in number of Transport Trips and Social Support services, and a drop in respite services has occurred during this three year period.

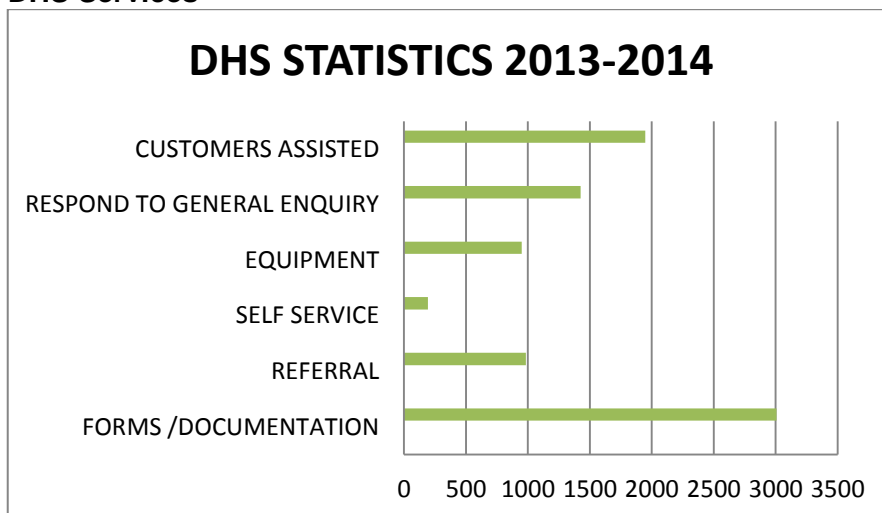


Volunteer and Client Events in 2013-2014 included the Dunedoo Health and Community Services Expo, Coonabarabran Health and Community Services Expo, Volunteers Week celebrations, Seniors Week entertainment, Social bus trips, Volunteer Information Days, Volunteers Workshops along with morning tea and lunches across the shire.

## DEPARTMENT HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) AGENCY

The DHS Agency provided face to face services in the Warrumbungle Community Care building. Clients were able to access phone, fax and DHS services on a self serve basis. The chart below indicates the level of service use by Centrelink customers in 2013/2014.

### DHS Services



**Management**

Connect Five Children's Services is externally funded by the NSW Department of Education and Communities. Funding increases have been inadequate for a number of years. In 2014 the increase of .25% did not even cover the increase in staff salaries which increase by 3.2% each year. Over the years there has been some belt tightening and in 2013 fees and charges were introduced however there was an overall deficit of 5%. Factors not budgeted for include FBT and an IT cost increase of 70% over the initial IT budget. On the positive side; in our first year of charging fees we have received almost 20% more than anticipated, which indicates the value of the service to the community. The deficit is covered for the meantime by a healthy balance in restricted asset from previous years. However, in the long term, with no surplus for provision of a vehicle, it is anticipated there will be no funds for renewal of the Connect Five Vehicle after 2018.

The Mobile Pre-school class, Monkey Room, under the Connect Five Licence has continued for another year. The Monkey Room operates two days a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12 Robertson Street, attached to the Family Support Services Office. Yuluwirri Kids provides the day to day management of the Monkey room and it was decided to appoint Linda Miler as a second Nominated supervisor for Connect Five in recognition of the role she was performing and making the system smoother. The provision of two nominated supervisors for Connect Five also enables for smooth running when either person is absent. The Monkey Room is funded by Human Services under the PIRP reform program in which the government aims to provide 15 hours pre-school for each child in the year prior to starting school. The Monkey Room operated for a second year with an enrolment of 98% capacity (20 children). More details of the Monkey Room appear in the Annual Report for Yuluwirri.

Coonabarabran After School (Out of School Hours/OOSH) Care entered its third year of operation in 2014 with a weekly booking of 50 children.. Operating at St. Lawrence's School the service has built up over the years and is now financially stable. (See Coonabarabran After School and Vacation Care Annual Report 2013.14) Under the new management structure this service will be managed along with Family Day Care by the Nominated Supervisor FDC/OOSH.

**Staff**

There are three permanent staff for the Connect Five Mobile (the Child Development Officer being a job share position) with no changes to staff this year. Competency documents have been reviewed and completed for all staff.

All staff are up to date with First Aid training.

Opportunities for networking and professional development have been accessed through the Mobile Children's Services Association. Staff participated in regional gatherings of Mobile Services as well as the Annual Mobile Meet, an annual conference conducted by the MCSA and attended by representatives from all over NSW.

**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.

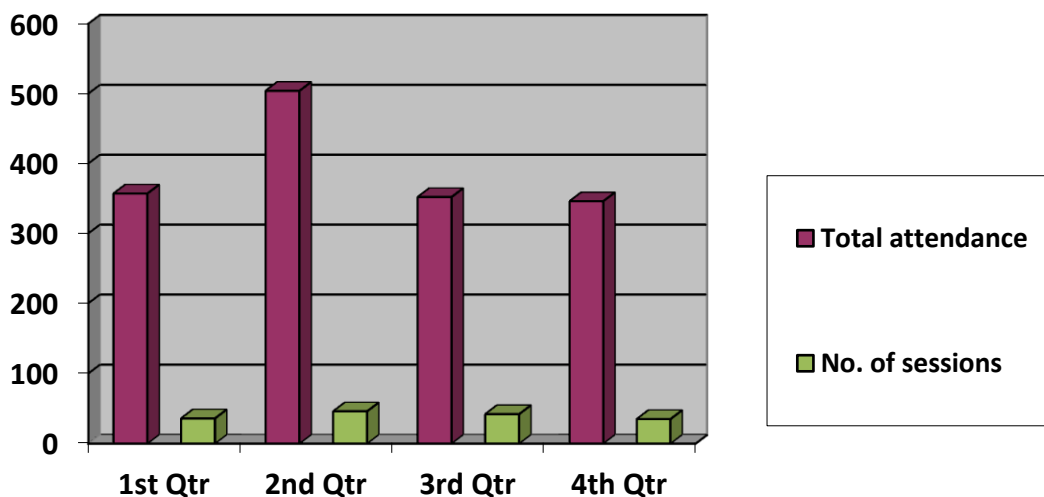
The Mobile operates on a fortnightly cycle with one day a fortnight being allocated for cleaning, programming and administration.

Play sessions operate out of registered venues that may be a local community hall or pre-school. Unregistered Play sessions also occur in the homes of families living on rural properties. In 2013/14 Play sessions continued at Baradine, Binnaway, Coonabarabran, Coolah, Dunedoo, Gulargambone, Hollywood Lane, Mendooran and Tooraweenah.

Group sizes vary dramatically. The average attendance is 12 children. There are approximately 110 participating families at any one time. The largest groups this year were Coonabarabran and Gulargambone who each have average attendances around 16 children. Family Day Care Educators also bring children to Connect Five Play sessions. Baradine and Mendooran are our smallest groups and these are usually staffed with only one person. Most groups go through cycles when children go off to school and there is a time lag before more new parents come on board. Changes to Pre-school (such as funding for 2 days prior to starting school and the acceptance of 2 year olds at Pre-school) have impacted on the numbers attending Connect Five.

The bulk of children attending Connect Five are in the 2-3 years age group when children are getting ready to start Pre-school.

### Connect Five Play Sessions 12.13



### Resource Library

Under the new paid membership scheme the Toy Library is available to all members and this has seen an increase in borrowing. Apart from enrolled families, the biggest users of the Toy Library are our Family Day Care Educators.

### Interagency Participation

Connect Five is committed to working with other agencies to deliver the best possible services to the community using all the resources available.

**Overview**

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

The centre operates three classrooms - the Panda room for 0-2 year olds which takes eleven long day care students a day; the Possum room for 2-4 year olds which takes thirteen long day care students and seven preschool students a day; the Giraffe room for 3 - 5year olds (the year before children commence school) which takes six long day care students and twenty preschool students a day.

A fourth mobile preschool classroom operates two days a week (Tuesday and Thursday) for three to 5 year olds was opened in February 2010 in conjunction with Connect Five Children's Service (to support waiting lists.)

Yuluwirri Kids is auspice by Warrumbungle Shire Council and funded by Department of Education and communities (DEC), Department of Education, and user pay fees. Funding is also obtained through Department of Education and communities, Carewest for children with additional needs. The service is open 49 weeks a year, with long day care students accessing the service from 7.30am to 5.30pm, and preschool students accessing the service during school terms from 8.30am to 4pm.

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 Corporate Services. Advisory Committee meetings are held on a regular basis.

The centre complies with funding agreements, Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 under the Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW) 2010 and the National Quality Standard. The centre achieved High Quality Accreditation in September 2010 under NCAC and working towards in April 2013 under the new National Quality Standards. The centre has a play based curriculum that links to The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF).

**2013/2014**

The centre employs nine full time staff, ten part time staff, three casual staff and accesses twenty five on call casual staff members. Fourteen staff continued studying to obtain industry qualifications. Staff attended a range of training including: Being an Educational Leader, Nutrition and Menu Planning, Safe Food Handling, Storm Birds Growing Through Natural Disaster, Munch and Move, 2013 Annual ECS Conference "Advocacy, Activism, Transformation", Mobile Meet 2013 "Mobiles – Our Journey to Equality", Dr Gordon (clinical psychologist) "Communities recovering from bushfires", Key Word Sign, Incident Investigation Training, Manual Handling, InfoXpert familiarization, Compliance and Enforcement, Encouraging Receptive Language, Chairing Effective Meetings, Enriching Toddler Programs and Practices, Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, Selection Skills for Local Government Managers and Enriching Pre-schooler Programs and Practices.

The centre has had visiting students complete work experience and practicum's from local schools, TAFE, New England University and Charles Sturt University.

In 2013/2014, the centre participated in community and centre events including NAIDOC celebrations, Book week and Keep Australia beautiful week, Police visit, Ambulance visit, Energy Awareness Month; Yarn up in the park, End of year celebration. Giraffe/ Monkey school transition visits to CPS, Going to big school graduation, End of year celebration, Yoga sessions in the Giraffe room with Kira Alexander, entries at Coonabarabran Show, school photos, Grandparents Morning tea and play, Mark Stewart Drum Beat, Purple day – Epilepsy awareness, jump heart for rope, sharing cultures Gwenda Stanley, Sorry Day, Red Nose day

The centre networks with local preschools and long day care centres, family support services, Coonabarabran Aboriginal Lands Council, Speech Pathologist Eliza Webster and Marilyn Neville IST Hearing AP (visits Monday and Wednesday's), Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Coonabarabran Community Services, early childhood services and other professionals, agencies, training organizations, and community services.

During the 2013/2014 financial year education sessions attended were as follows:

- 6797 Long Day Care sessions with an average of 65.86 individual children a week
- 249 Long Day Care Holiday sessions with an average of 4.03 individual children taking holidays a week
- 1291 Preschool sessions, with an average of 30.7 individual children a week; this includes a break up of:

Fee Type	Monkey Pre 1 <sup>st</sup> Day	Monkey Preschool YBS funding	Yuluwirri Pre 1 <sup>st</sup> Day	Yuluwirri Preschool YBS funding
<b>Number of sessions</b>	189	203	506	393
<b>Average Individual Children</b>	4.3	9.67	11.50	18.71

- 715 Preschool second day subsidy Sessions with an average of 17.8 individual children a week; this includes a break up of:

Fee Type	Monkey Pre 2 <sup>nd</sup> Day	Monkey Preschool 2 <sup>nd</sup> day YBS funding	Yuluwirri Pre 2 <sup>nd</sup> Day	Yuluwirri Preschool 2 <sup>nd</sup> day YBS funding
<b>Number of sessions</b>	96	81	224	314
<b>Average Individual Children</b>	5.05	5.57	11.79	14.95

- 1813 preschool health care subsidy sessions with an average of 25.88 individual Children a week; this includes a break up of:

Fee Type	Monkey Health care card (HCC)	Monkey HCC YBS funding	Yuluwirri Health care card (HCC)	Yuluwirri HCC YBS funding
<b>Number of sessions</b>	299	172	734	608
<b>Average Individual Children</b>	3.90	4.76	11.05	16.05

- 1861 Indigenous Preschool sessions with an average of 27.43 individual children a week; this includes a break up of:

Fee Type	Monkey Indigenous	Indigenous YBS funding	Yuluwirri Indigenous	Yuluwirri Indigenous YBS funding
Number of sessions	214	184	763	703
Average Individual Children	2.85	6.76	11.25	18.62

- 125 Unfunded Preschool sessions with a average of 3.79 individual children



Comparison of Financial Year's - Sessions held per fee type

Figure 1 Fee type sessions; Financial year comparison

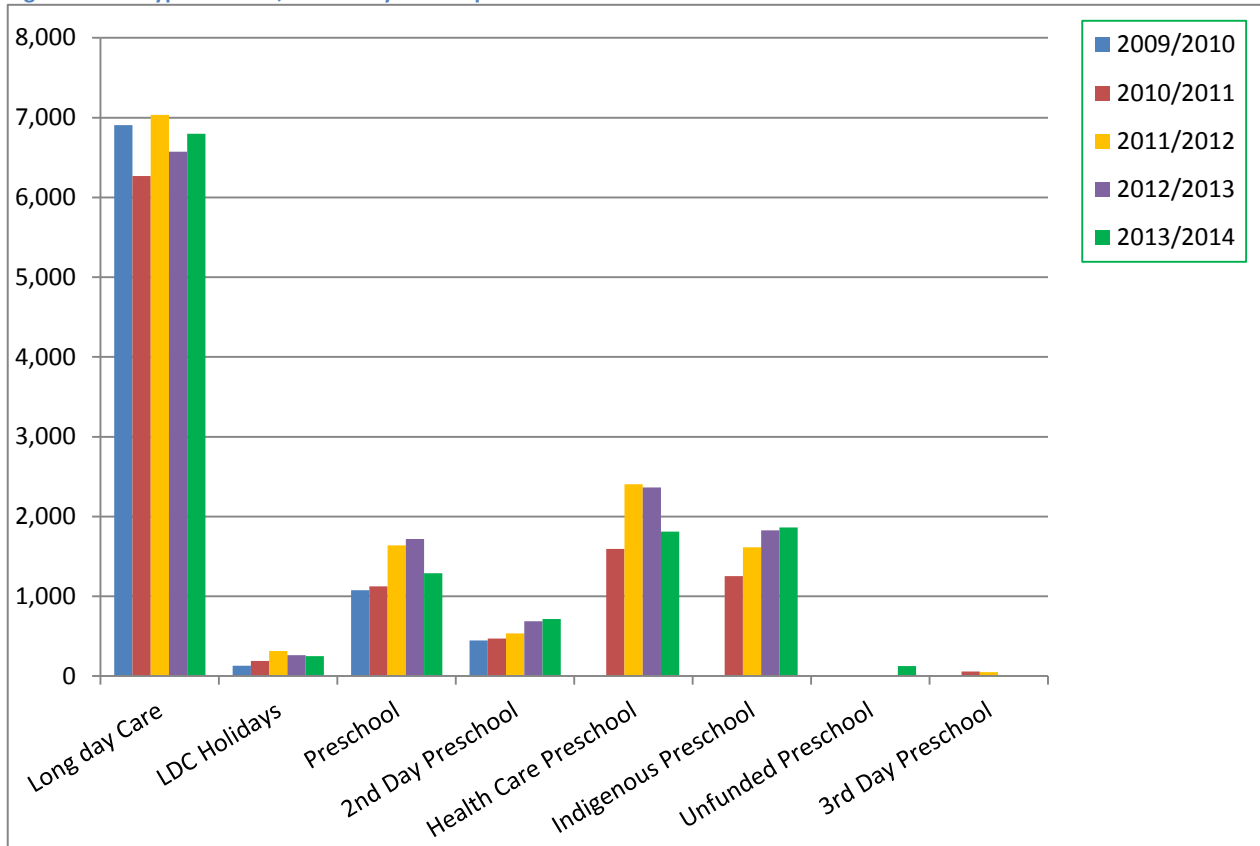
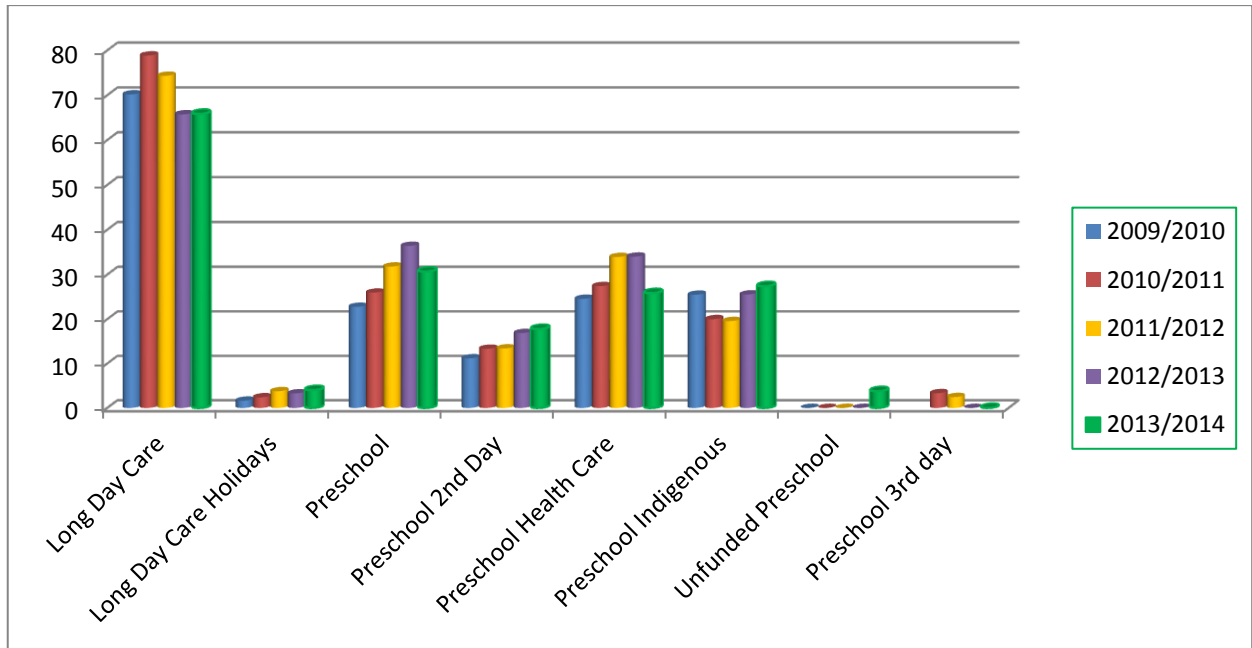


Figure 2

Comparison of Financial Years – Average of Individual children attending per care type





Castlereagh Family Day Care (CFDC) coordination unit services the Warrumbungle, Coonamble and Gilgandra local government area's (LGA's); and provides educator 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 educators.

Currently there are 156 children enrolled from 99 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. Educators are registered to care for up to seven children but no more than five not attending school (including their own), at any one time.

Council employs a part-time Nominated Supervisor FDC and OOSH (30 hours/week), a part-time Educational Leader (15 hours/week, currently vacant) and an Administration Officer (22.5 hours/week), to provide a family day care and in-home care service. On 1 January 2012 the National Quality Framework (NQF) was implemented across Australia. All children's services are required to comply with *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and *Children (Education and Care Services Nation Law Application) Bill 2010*. Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACEAQA) guide and oversee the implementation, with NSW's regulatory body being the Department of Education and Communities (DEC). This also includes adhering to National Quality Standards (NQS) and putting into practice a national curriculum comprising the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and My Time Our Place (MTOU).

The service is funded by the Federal Department of Education via Child Care Benefit (CCB), Community Support Programme (CSP) funding and administration levy charges from parents and educators administered by CFDC coordination unit.

The coordination unit staff and educators, in consultation 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 individual child in care. The coordinator and educational leader undertook home visits throughout the year to educators in Coonabarabran, Gilgandra, Coolah, Coonamble, Mendooran and Gulargambone, with ongoing phone and email support. Visits include routine house checks, annual re-registration of all educators; new educator induction; training and facilitated play-sessions. Visits and play-sessions alternate on a monthly basis, i.e. all educators will be seen during one month and the following month play-sessions are conducted in each town.

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 Educators and stakeholders for feedback in the form of survey's, phone calls, emails and mail outs.

Educator application and induction processes are constantly under review and modifications have been made and implemented where necessary. In June 2012 a New Educator Induction Manual was released by NSW FDC for all schemes, to ensure consistency for Educator Inductions across the board. We have used and found this to be an excellent tool and new Educators have all found it a valuable process.

The number of educators change frequently from year to year, and they tend to leave the scheme for varying reasons. As at 1 January 2014 it is a requirement for all educators to attain or work towards attaining their Certificate III in Children Services. In addition, the Education and Care Services National Regulations 124 was amended so that the educator to child ratio of children who are preschool age or under changed from 1:5 to 1:4. This has effectively reduced educator and schemes income by 20% and makes a Family Day Care business less viable for educators with their own children who are preschool age or under. Therefore, as at 30 June 2014 we have 19 registered educators including 6 In Home Educators based in Coonabarabran, Gilgandra, Gulargambone and Warren.

The service continues to promote Family Day Care and the recruitment of new educators in the 3 LGA areas covered, especially where there are waiting lists of children needing care. An inclusion support review previously conducted on the Service Support Plan ensures that CFDC continues to accommodate children with additional needs within the service.

A service Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was completed in April 2012 and is continually reviewed to ensure it is a living document. CFDC policies and procedures are continually reviewed, updated and endorsed as required, ensuring they met all NQF National Regulations and Standards requirements.

CFDC continue to work with all educators, assisting them in the many changes that have come in to play with the implementation of the NQF, including a number of workshop opportunities.

The Coordination unit continued to facilitate Certificate III and Diploma training for educators – 100% of educators now have or are working towards a Certificate III, with one educator diploma trained.

Coordination Unit staff also attended a number of professional development and networking opportunities including the Annual Family Day Care conference, regional meetings, Educational Leader training and more. Continued networking with a number of other FDC schemes in the region continues to provide CFDC with support and mentoring where/whenever needed.



Exploring texture, sensory and measurement .

All ages using and exploring their artistic skills

Exploring Aboriginal stories as we celebrate NAIDOC Week

The Youth Development Program continues to actively engage and empower the youth of our Shire through a variety of programs and initiatives, and through the ongoing support of agencies, organisations and community groups. Key organisations the Youth Development Program engages with include: Coonabarabran Youth Club Committee, Coolah Youth and Community Club Committee, NSW Police, local schools and various other Youth Service providers.

Working collaboratively, the Youth Development Program has initiated National Youth Week activities and Shire wide School Holiday Programs. The focus of these programs is to develop and facilitate activities that centre on social inclusion and the development of the social, physical, emotional and life skills of the participants.

Through the continued promotion and engagement of young people in Council's Youth Action Group Governance Development Program, we have seen an increase in access to training and opportunities that are not always available to youth in our Shire.

In addition to these activities the Youth Development Officer continues to be involved with a number of community-based committees. These include: Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, NAIDOC Week Committee and Mendooran Links. Membership of these groups enables Council to promote their Youth Development Program, as well as providing support to other agencies to assist with the development and promotion of their initiatives and programs.



**Louise Johnson**  
**Manager Community and Children's Services**

**Coonabarabran Branch Library**

Number of registered borrowers	3,303
Number of visitations	30,138
Number of loans	25,440
Number of information requests	4,121
Number of items held	13,295

**Library Refurbishment**

In 2013/14 Coonabarabran branch completed a major refurbishment which included new shelving, a new circulation desk installed and the installation of new children's furniture and Young Adult furniture. The library now has a contemporary feel with much more display area and greater flexibility as much of the new shelving is on castors. The great assistance and support provided by Warrumbungle Shire Council is acknowledged.

As an activity complementary to the refurbishment, Coonabarabran branch weeded all of its collections in order to highlight the many new items added to the collections. To promote further these new items, the library purchased a large number of display shelves among the new furniture items.

**Young People's Services**

The BreakThru disability services group visited the library on the second Tuesday of each month to borrow items for an hour of reading and craft/artwork.

A significant innovation was an increase in the frequency of children's story time – from once per week to twice per week. This was a direct response to the great popularity of the service.

Two outreach story time events, to celebrate Library Week and Book Week, were held at Binnaway preschool.

Law Week featured a database/LIAC workshop to the Year 11 Legal Studies students.

Book Week was celebrated with hundreds of kids visiting the library for book reading and library tours with their classes. This program resulted in a significant number of new registrations. School holiday activities were held twice per week during the holidays. These events were very well attended. Summer Reading Club saw a small increase in number of participants.

**Community Services**

The introduction of a simplified WiFi service has been warmly welcomed by the community, with young people and travellers the more obvious beneficiaries of the WiFi hotspot. WiFi together with the introduction of e-books and e-magazines, has placed the library at the forefront of information technology.

The Home Library Service has changed with fewer deliveries to individual housebound borrowers and more items delivered centrally to Cooina Nursing home for distribution to an increased number of clients. The staff collects and prepares books and spoken word titles for Cooina nursing home once every three weeks and then the Cooina staff distribute the items to their residents.

Various community displays – to support the Horse Expo, Pony Club, schools – were mounted in the library. These displays take up little staff time to coordinate but add greatly to the value of the library. At the same time, the library has placed greater emphasis on using the display area to highlight its own collections and services.

2013/14 saw the continued diversification of the use of the library by the community. Various groups used the library for their meetings on a regular basis, and new technologies changed the way people used the library and the way they accessed services. A knitting group, CSU student support services, a sewing circle, the garden club and the Flix in the Stix committee all used the library as a convenient place to hold their meetings

Warrumbungles Book Club met each month at the library for afternoon tea and a book discussion. We attract around 12 people at each meeting, with other people, who are unable to attend all the meetings, also reading the selected books. The book club increases the visibility of the library's social functions. It has now been operating successfully for ten years.

Library Week was promoted with displays and a workshop conducted by Lindy Allan and Lisa Orth, to assist people to access MRL's e-collections.

The Christmas holiday and July school holiday book sales were again popular and raised over \$900.

### **Baradine Service Point**

Number of registered borrowers	386
Number of visitations	1,377
Number of loans	1,678
Number of information requests	292
Number of items held	4,452

During the past twelve months the Baradine Service Point has maintained its popularity in the community and held a variety of events and activities. There was an increase in attendance at the library's holiday reading program, with the pleasing attendances for school holiday activities. The library was popular with local seniors as we celebrated 2014 Seniors Week. Baradine Preschool continued to visit the library regularly for story time and craft activities. In addition, classes from Saint John's Primary School visit the library on a regular basis. Library events are promoted in school newsletters and on the town notice board; reports on Baradine library activities have also been featured in the *Coonabarabran Times*. Photographs of library events have been taken and uploaded onto the Macquarie Regional Library Facebook page.

Baradine, Binnaway and Mendooran Service Points received some of the furniture surplus to Coonabarabran Library's needs, augmenting the areas for book display.

Collection development continues to be a major focus at Baradine Service Point and weeding of old and damaged stock continued to be a priority. Constant displays of school work and event promotions in the library window continue to make the library a visually vibrant community hub.

## **Binnaway Service Point**

Number of registered borrowers	141
Number of visitations	1,292
Number of loans	2,119
Number of information requests	199
Number of items held	2,215

Collection development and reader advisory were two main areas of focus at Binnaway Library. The collections at Binnaway are now in very good condition with an adequate range of new, attractive general stock for most patrons. However, space constraints restrict further development of the collections.

Binnaway Service Point has developed its client base with new memberships and more regular patterns of use: a pleasing outcome that reflects the commitment of Sue Lavender to customer service at this small branch.

The provision of access to Spydus and the MRL website – via a laptop with wireless connectivity – has proved a great benefit at Binnaway Branch, allowing greater service in a timely manner. The community has appreciated the expanded opportunities to access the MRL collection through this connectivity. The library is promoted monthly in the local Binnaway community newsletter.

Afternoon opening hours now encourage school children to visit and borrow. Due to this, customer visits and new borrowers have increased. Repositioning of circulation desk and provision of a children's corner has now enabled an improvement of flow in the library the customer.

## **Mendooran Service Point**

Number of registered borrowers	198
Number of visitations	584
Number of loans	897
Number of information requests	274
Number of items held	2,356

In 2013/2014 the focus has been on customer service. The library offers the small community a reliable service linked to all the branches of Macquarie Regional Library through Spydus and the MRL website. Mendooran is now included in the regular transfer of items between branches. To keep the collection current, older books were withdrawn and the periodic addition of new DVD and popular fiction titles has been welcomed by the library's clientele. The library is promoted monthly in the local Mendooran community newsletter. This keeps local borrowers up to date with events at the library.

## **Coolah Branch Library**

Number of registered borrowers	1,004
Number of visitations	17,727
Number of loans	9,932
Number of information requests	749
Number of items held	11,559

### **Library events and activities**

The library celebrated many events throughout the year with several talks, movie nights, morning teas, displays, competitions and visits by local schools. These events provided a range of programs for all ages and were well attended. Regular Story time, Book Club and Home Library Services were implemented. Local schools attended Children's Book Week during the week of 19-22 August 2013. Kindergarten classes from both local schools attended National Simultaneous Story time on 21 May 2014. The Preschool visited the library during May 2014. Coolah Central School Year 11 students visited the library and were given demonstrations of the HSC resources available on the website. Law Week, History Week and Seniors Week were celebrated with talks, morning tea and displays of relevant items. Several workshops were held in conjunction with the ABC Open project.

### **Young People's Services activities**

School Holiday activities during the year included themes of *Pets; Investigation; EXPERIMENTAL - Science Fun*. Attendances at the activities were excellent, with children enjoying books and activities. An Art competition was held in September 2013. A Photobooth for each theme created a lot of fun. *Investigation* was the theme for the Summer Reading Club; children enjoyed solving mystery hunts, creating disguises, undertaking 'secret' missions and navigating an obstacle course using the 'super sleuth' skills they had explored. An 'I Spy' guessing jar competition was also held which generated a lot of interest. Story time was held every week during school term with increased numbers at each session. A Saturday afternoon movie, *The Spy Next Door* was held on 12 April 2014 to celebrate Youth Week, with pizza and drink being enjoyed.

### **Special events/activities**

A movie night was held during Seniors Week in March 2014, *The Great Gatsby* was shown with attendees getting into the spirit by dressing up in 1920's style. Other events celebrated in the library were NAIDOC Week, with a movie night being held in July 2013; a basket making display in September 2013; a talk on the explorer Ludwig Leichhardt by local historian, Roy Cameron OAM during History Week in September 2013; a Library Lover's Day display and competition in February 2014; a Drug Action Week display in June 2014; Wrap with Love was supported in June and July 2014; the library continues to be a popular location for the community for meetings and private tutoring.

### **Dunedoo Branch Library**

Number of registered borrowers	673
Number of visitations	15,251
Number of loans	6,838
Number of information requests	1,698
Number of items held	6,583

During 2013/2014 the Dunedoo Branch has continued to be a busy and happy branch library that is used very well by the community. Children visit regularly after school to use the internet and resources for study and games. The availability of WiFi access at Dunedoo has seen different users using the library space to access the internet on their own devices. This has been very beneficial to the branch and it has also relieved the waiting time on the public access computers.

### **Library events and activities**

The Dunedoo branch Book Club is going very well with a wonderful attendance each month. The book club members read the same book with lots of discussion that is very involved at each meeting. During law week the branch held an information session with the local Police Officer, Constable Chris Wallis, who gave a talk about driver safety. This information session was valuable information that will make driving in our community safer.

Library and Information Week in May, community members bring along their Smartphone, tablet or eReader and learnt how to enjoy downloading and reading eBooks and eAudio.

Library Lovers' Day - On 14 February a morning tea was provided and everyone had a great time chatting about their favourite books.

### **Library events and activities**

Author Visit - The highlight of the year would have to be the author visit (Ditz) who entertained 49 eager and very excited community members. Dawko and Ditz wrote "The Bum Book" and Ditz had each person drawing a bum and everyone was amused by the author reading sections from "The Bum Book".

Seniors Week - The Dunedoo Branch held free internet training. There were two activities held on the same day and the seniors enjoyed the morning learning how to be tech savvy.

### **Young People's Services and Activities**

Dunedoo branch held one school holiday activities each week of the school holidays. The children always have so much fun. The best holiday activity was during July with 38 children attending an activity.

The Summer Reading Club - once again proved to be popular at the branch. Dunedoo had lots of eager participants.

## **WESTPAC INSTORE**

Under the terms of an Instore Banking Agreement with Westpac Banking Corporation, Council manages the Westpac Instore in Dunedoo. This agency is operated according to Westpac management schedules and the service continues to meet operational targets and the needs of the community. During the year Banking staff have achieved positive results in the Mystery Shop and Operational Performance Management Customer Measures.

Instore Staff provide support to Council through the provision of rates collection and front counter support to Council operations.



## LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

LGA s.428(2)(e)

### Number of access applications received (clause 7(b) – GIPA Regulation)

During the reporting period, council received a total of 9 formal access applications. No application was refused during the reporting period with information provided in relation to each application received (Schedule 1 information (clause 7(c) - GIPA Regulation)

	Access granted in full	Access granted In part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with application	Refuse to confirm/deny info held	Application withdrawn
Media								
Members of Parliament								
Private Business								
Not for profit or community groups								
Members of the public (legal rep)	3							1
Members of the public (other)	4	1						

## ELECTED MEMBERS

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

Councillors' annual fees for were set at \$10,480 per annum and an additional fee of \$22,870 was set for the Mayoral allowance. These fees were endorsed at Council's meeting held 20 June 2013 for the following year. Total expenses for Councillors' fees, expenses and facilities for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 was made up of the following:

	Expense \$
Mayoral and Deputy Mayor allowance	23,370
Mayoral Car expenses	13,571
Telephone - Mobile Mayor	2,254
Councillors' Allowances	94,320
Councillors' Training and Skill development	-
Councillors' Internet communication contribution	4,592
Travelling Expenses – Councillors	20,366
Administrative expenses for Mayor	-
Delegates Expenses - Conferences and Seminars	39,897
Council Elections	-
Council Meeting Catering	6,250
Civic Functions	690
Council memberships and subscriptions	37,103
Mayoral Sundry	2,071
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 244,484</b>

Travel Expenses for each Councillor was as follows. Council's policy for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Elected Members defines travel expenses.

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Expense \$</b>
Mayor Shinton	-
Cr Coe	3,311
Cr Andrews	2,210
Cr Clancy	1,557
Cr Capel	6,101
Cr Schmidt	266
Cr C Sullivan	2,097
Cr R Sullivan	1,416
Cr D Todd	3,408
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 20,366</b>

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 1.0. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that there is accountability and transparency in the reimbursement of expenses incurred or to be incurred by the Councillors.

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

The policy defines travel expenses and provides for expenses such as accommodation, meals, internet communication expenses, incidental expenses and attendance at conferences, Australia Day functions and naturalisation ceremonies. Council's policy provides \$50 per month to each Councillor to cover internet expenses.

Council delegates attended the following conferences and civic functions:

- Annual Local Government NSW Conference;  
Attendees: Mayor Shinton, Councillor C Sullivan, Councillor A Capel, General Manager
- Country Mayor's Conference: Attendees Mayor Shinton, General Manager
- National Roads Congress: Attendees Mayor Shinton, Councillor Todd, General Manager
- Mining Related Council: Attendees Mayor Shinton, General Manager
- Orana Region of Councils (OROC) Attendees: Mayor Shinton, General Manager
- Australian Citizenship Ceremony Attendees: Councillor R Sullivan, Councillor A Capel, General Manager
- Australia Day Celebrations Attendees: Mayor Shinton, Deputy Mayor Coe, Councillor C Sullivan, Councillor A Capel
- NAIDOC Celebrations Attendee: Mayor Shinton
- School Prefects Luncheon: Attendees Councillor R Sullivan General Manager

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

## **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.

## 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).

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

<b>Register of Government Contracts</b>						
<b>Contracts valued at \$150,000 or more</b>						
<b>Year</b>	<b>Contractor</b>	<b>Contract Description</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Contract Value</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Resolution</b>
2013	Coona Fuel and Glass	Delivery Bulk Fuels to Councils Depots	Deliver to 30/6/2015	\$1,000,000 approximately annually	May 2013	426/1213
2013	BMR Quarries	Drilling, Blasting, Screening and Crushing Services at Council's Quarry	To completion of construction	\$1,598,400	July 2013	48/1314
2013	C D J Equipment	Volvo Wheeled Loader	Delivery October	\$315,000	Sept 2013	91/1314
2013	MacDonald Johnston	VS651 Road Sweeper	Delivery November	\$305,076	Sept 2013	91/1314
2013	Westrac P/L	Caterpillar 928HZ Wheel Loader	Prompt	\$209,500	Nov 2013	163/1314
2013	JT Fossey Tamworth	Volvo FM 13-500 Truck and Dog Trailer	Within 5 months	\$298,447	Nov 2013	163/1314
2013	Peel Valley Machinery	John Deere 5105M	Prompt	\$224,236	Nov 2013	163/1314
2013	Tamworth Regional Council	IT Managed Services	Continuing	\$227,100 pa	Dec 2013	234/1314
2014	Conplant P/L	2 Amman ASC 150D Smooth Drum Rollers		\$299,500	Feb 2014	244/1314
2014	Conplant P/L	Amman AP240T3 Tyred Roller		\$151,750	Feb 2014	244/1314

## **BUSH FIRE HAZARD REDUCTION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

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

A full Report from the RFS Community Safety Officer was unavailable as he has been on sick leave for an extended period of time.

Summary of Bush Fire Risk Management Committee (BFMC) and Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC)

### **Bush Fire Risk Management Committee**

The Castlereagh Bush Fire Management Committee has a Bush Fire Risk Management Plan. (BFRMP)

The aim of the BFRMP is to minimize the risk of adverse impact of bush fire on life, property and the environment. The plan has a life of five years.

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.

The Castlereagh Bush Fire Management Committee, last year decided to allow the formation of a sub-committee that was based on Coonabarabran and the main role was to address issues raised by the Wambelong Fire with respect to Fire Trails and Hazard Reduction.

The Sub Committee has spent a great deal of time identifying Trails and Fire breaks put down during the fire and with the co-operation of Land Holders, Fire Captains and the RFS, mapped these trails for future use. The formal process includes travelling the route with a GPS, mapping and naming the trail and then formally registering the trail. This will allow future funding that will allow maintenance and signage on these trails.

The Castlereagh Bush Fire Management Committee through its agencies have conducted numerous Hazard Reduction burns during the winter months.

The public has been very proactive in identifying the areas requiring for Hazard Reduction and many areas around Coonabarabran have had burns completed.

Many Private Agricultural Permit burns have also occurred over the last few months

## Have you prepared Your Home for a Bush Fire



### Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC)

Council conducted all quarterly LEMC meetings with all meetings well attended by Emergency Agencies and representatives from Dubbo and Tamworth. Contact Lists and Emergency Management Plans are regularly updated, with all Emergency Management Plans being up to date.

Council is supporting efforts of the Baradine Community in establishing an information Centre to be used for distributing information in the event of another fire or a flood, where Evacuations are considered.

The LEMC has revisited its Evacuation Plans with emphasis on various centre that will be used. All Towns and Villages have various Evacuation Centre that have been audited, thus allowing the correct centre to be chosen for a particular threat, in an Evacuation.

### Roadside Slashing

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

**PRIVATE WORKS**

LGA s.428(2)(k)

No subsidised private work was carried out by Council during the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.

**CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS**

LGA s.428(2)(l)

Name	Total \$
2WCR FM 99.5	520.00
3 Rivers Radio Station	520.00
Art Unlimited Dunedoo Lions Club	500.00
Badhii Aboriginal Grandmothers Group Inc	500.00
Baradine Aged Care Association	400.00
Baradine Central School	70.00
Baradine Golf Club	500.00
Baradine PAI and H Association	750.00
Baradine Preschool Inc	500.00
Baradine School Band	250.00
Baradine SES	1,230.00
Binnaway Central School	70.00
Binnaway Jockey Club	1,000.00
Binnaway Lions Club	500.00
Binnaway Men's Shed Inc	500.00
Binnaway PAI and H Association	50.00
Binnaway Progress Association	500.00
Binnaway Rail Heritage Group	500.00
Bugaldie Memorial Hall	500.00
Coolah and District Historical Society	500.00
Coolah Ambulance Social Club	500.00
Coolah Central School	70.00
Coolah District Development Group Inc	1,000.00
Coolah Lions Club	500.00
Coolah Sacred Heart Primary	70.00
Coolah VHF and Community Radio Group	520.00
Coolah Volunteer Rescue Squad	398.00
Coolah Youth and Community Centre	500.00
Coonabarabran Evening Branch CWA	500.00
Coonabarabran and District Greyhound	500.00
Coonabarabran DPS and Family History	989.00
Coonabarabran Drop in Centre	500.00
Coonabarabran Girl Guides - Driver Reviver	1,000.00
Coonabarabran High School	70.00
Coonabarabran Jockey Club	1,000.00

Name	Total \$
Coonabarabran Public School	70.00
Coonabarabran Rescue Squad	500.00
Coonabarabran Rotary Club	1,000.00
CWA of NSW Coona Day Branch	500.00
Dunedoo and District Development	500.00
Dunedoo Central School	70.00
Dunedoo Polocrosse Club Inc	500.00
Friendship Meetings (Coinda Complex)	200.00
Keep Australia Beautiful NSW	470.00
Mendooran Central School	70.00
Mendooran Old Time Dancers	113.00
Mendooran PAI and H Association	200.00
Mendooran Singers Association (Sub Branch)	300.00
Mendooran Tennis Club	500.00
Mendooran Turf Club	1,000.00
Mendooran Youth Group	500.00
Mullaley Gymkhana Association	500.00
Neilrex Community Hall	500.00
Neilrex Tennis Club	700.00
New England Institute of TAFE	70.00
Northern inland Academy Sport	360.00
Northwest Equestrian Expo	1,000.00
Orbital Swing Band	1,000.00
Rock'N at the Racecourse Committee	1,000.00
St Johns School	70.00
St Lawrences Central School	70.00
St Michael's Primary School	70.00
TAFE	70.00
Ulamambri Memorial Hall Trust	500.00
United Hospital Auxiliary Coolah	500.00
Warrumbungle Arts and Crafts	1,000.00
Warrumbungle Arts and Crafts (Hall Hire)	700.00
Coonabarabran Rotary Club (DA fees)	790.00
Coonabarabran PAI and H Association	374.03
BMCC Mayoral Relief Fund	1,955.00
Southern End Social Club Staff Retirement - Ian Jenkins	1,908.35
LGSANSW – Canterbury City Council Resolution 285/1314	294.43
LGSANSW – Mid Western Council Resolution 25/1314	2,780.41
Rates	14,276.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>54,958.64</b>

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

Body	Function
Traffic Committee	Traffic Management
Castlereagh Bushfire 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	Warrumbungle Shire Liquor Accord
Orana Arts Incorporated Committee	Inland Rail Committee
Central West Local Land Services	Orana Regional Organisation of Councils
Newell Highway Task Force	
The Association of Mining Related Councils	
Audit and Risk Management Committee	



## **Companies**

LGA s.428(2)(p)

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

## **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, Coonamble and Gilgandra local government areas, and Connect Five Children's Services which services Warrumbungle and Gilgandra Local Government Areas. Council is also part of Statewide and State Cover which are Mutual for the provision of public liability, property insurance, fidelity guarantee and workers compensation

## **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:

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

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

- Warrumbungle Water
- Warrumbungle Sewerage
- Warrumbungle Quarry

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

### **Competitive Neutrality Complaints 2013/2014**

There were no Competitive Neutrality Complaints received 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.

## SPECIAL VARIATION EXPENDITURE

S508(2)

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

## INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING

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

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



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

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

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

## COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

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

## DELIVERY PROGRAM AND OPERATIONAL PLAN

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

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

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

Two key documents in the IP&R framework are the Operational Plan and Delivery Program. An explanation of what a Delivery Program and Operational Plan aim to achieve is provided below:

### **Delivery Program**

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

The Delivery Program is a statement of commitment to the community from each newly elected council. In preparing the Delivery Program, Council is accounting for its stewardship of the community's long-term goals, outlining what it intends to do towards achieving these goals during its term of office and what its priorities will be. It is designed as the single point of reference for all principal activities undertaken by Council during its term of office and details all projects and deliverables to be achieved over the following four years (2014/15 – 2017/18). The Delivery Program also provides detailed service levels that Council is to meet in this four year time frame.

## **Operational Plan**

Supporting the Delivery Program is an annual Operational Plan which details projects and deliverables to be undertaken in the following year to achieve the commitments made in the Delivery Program. The Operational Plan is in effect Council's budget for the following year (2014/15) and also includes Council's Statement of Fees and Charges for the 2014/15 financial year.

## **Statement of Revenue Policy Requirements**

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

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

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

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

## **Key features of Council's Operational Plan and Delivery Program**

Features of Council's 2014/15 Operational Plan and Delivery Program include:

- A surplus cash budget of \$8k in the 2014/15 financial year;
- A combined cash surplus of \$445k over the four years of the Delivery Program, although Council's cash at bank will decrease by \$196k over the four years as restricted assets are used to catch up on Council's asset backlog;
- An accrual deficit of \$0.672m in 2014/15 predominantly due to the quantum of depreciation on Council's extensive asset network. This accrual deficit will stay relatively constant over the four years of the Delivery Program;
- An ambitious capital program over the four years of \$37.67m;
- Full cost recovery in the business arms of Council as required by legislation;
- Effective utilisation of LIRS funding to complete capital works (replacement of the remaining timber bridges over the following two financial years) at an effective interest rate of between 1.8% and 2.8%.

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

- Construction of four (4) bridges on local roads to replace old timber bridges (\$920k);
- Construction of a bridge at Mow Creek (\$1m);
- Resealing of approximately 105 km of sealed roads (\$4.381m);
- Re-sheeting of approximately 130 km of unsealed roads (\$3.242m);
- Completion of the Yuluwirri Kids building extension (assuming the availability of grant funding (\$870k);
- Construction of the new RFS Fire Control Centre in Coonabarabran (assuming approval from the State Government) – estimated cost of \$3.15m;
- Completion of a crossing at Orana Road which is currently impassable (\$165k);
- Completion of approximately 23km of pavement re-construction and pavement widening at a cost of \$3.34m on Regional Roads;
- Completion of approximately 4.4km of pavement re-construction at a cost of \$884k on local roads;
- Construction of 11.1km and rehabilitation of 19.6km water and sewer mains at a total cost of \$2.761million;
- Construction and rehabilitation of reservoirs and treatment plants at a total cost of \$958m;
- Repair of the Timor Dam Fence and construction of access tracks at a cost of \$230k;
- Plant replacement of \$11.56m;
- Refurbishment of Baradine hall toilets as well as construction of disabled access at Coolah and in Baradine (\$89k);
- Construction of a memorial wall at Coonabarabran Cemetery and expansion of Coonabarabran Native Grove Cemetery;
- Construction of 1 km of new footpaths at a cost of \$130k and rehabilitation of 2.5km of existing footpaths at a cost of \$300k within towns across the Shire;
- Construction of 3.3 km of new KandG at a cost of \$500k and rehabilitation of 2.7km of existing KandG at a cost of \$400k within towns across the Shire;
- Construction and rehabilitation of culverts and drainage at a cost of \$639k;
- General rehabilitation of town streets including improving street lights, replacing bins, gardens construction of cycle ways and planting of trees;
- Completion of a Council premises security audit (\$100k);
- Improvements to local ovals, parks and swimming pools (\$602k);
- Construction of shire entrance signs totaling \$60k.

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

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

## PRIVACY STATEMENT

s.33

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

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

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

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

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

Access to personal information held by Council may be obtained by contacting Council's Privacy Officer, Mrs Rebecca Ryan.

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

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

Access to personal information held by Council may be obtained by contacting Council's Privacy Officer, Mrs Rebecca Ryan.

## 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 and Assessment Act 1979.

### Agency Information Guide

Council reviewed and endorsed its Agency Information Guide in May 2014.

A copy of Council's current 2014 Agency Information Guide can be obtained from the Customer Service Desk at the Administration building at 14-22 John Street, Coonabarabran 2357 or can be accessed via council's website [www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au).

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



Sculptures in the Scrub Dandry Gorge

## Attachment 1.0 – Payment of Expenses Policy

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

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

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

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

##### Title and Commencement of the Policy

This Policy shall be cited as the Policy for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors and is effective from 21 November 2013 and replaces the previous policy titled Policy for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors adopted by Council on 21 February 2013.

##### Purpose of the Policy

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

##### Objectives and Coverage of the Policy

The objectives of this Policy are to:

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

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

##### Basis of this Policy

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

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

- **252 Payment of expenses and provision of facilities**

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



- (2) *The policy may provide for fees payable under this Division to be reduced by an amount representing the private benefit to the mayor or a councillor of a facility provided by the council to the mayor or councillor.*
  - (3) *A council must not pay any expenses incurred or to be incurred by, or provide any facilities to, the mayor, the deputy mayor (if there is one) or a councillor otherwise than in accordance with a policy under this section.*
  - (4) *A council may from time to time amend a policy under this section.*
  - (5) *A policy under this section must comply with the provisions of this Act, the regulations and any relevant guidelines issued under section 23A.*
- **253 Requirements before policy concerning expenses and facilities can be adopted or amended**
    - (1) *A council must give public notice of its intention to adopt or amend a policy for the payment of expenses or provision of facilities allowing at least 28 days for the making of public submissions.*
    - (2) *Before adopting or amending the policy, the council must consider any submissions made within the time allowed for submissions and make any appropriate changes to the draft policy or amendment.*
    - (3) *Despite subsections (1) and (2), a council need not give public notice of a proposed amendment to its policy for the payment of expenses or provision of facilities if the council is of the opinion that the proposed amendment is not substantial.*
    - (4) *Within 28 days after adopting a policy or making an amendment to a policy for which public notice is required to be given under this section, a council is to forward to the Director-General:*
      - (a) *a copy of the policy or amendment together with details of all submissions received in accordance with subsection (1), and*
      - (b) *a statement setting out, for each submission, the council's response to the submission and the reasons for the council's response, and*
      - (c) *a copy of the notice given under subsection (1).*
    - (5) *A council must comply with this section when proposing to adopt a policy each year in accordance with section 252 (1) even if the council proposes to adopt a policy that is the same as its existing policy.*

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

### **Allowances and expenses**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

For accommodation or meals that Council has not prepaid, and for incidental expenses, Council will reimburse expenses incurred while at conference, seminars or official functions to the limits of the allowances set out in the Australian Tax Office's Taxation Determination TD 2013/16 or such determinations or policies of the Australian Tax Office that supersede it.

The limits will be applied as follows:

- Where Councillors' meals are not prepaid by Council or are not included in the seminar, conference, event or briefing fee, the monetary limits per day for meals are those set out under 'Food and Drink' in Table 3 paragraph 11 of TD 2013/16 (see Appendix A attached) or such determination or policies of the Australian Tax Office that supersede it. (As at October 2013 – Meal Allowance (per day) Breakfast \$32.00; Lunch \$45.25; Dinner \$63.40)

- Where Councillors incur incidental expenses, such as phone call and similar expenses, the monetary limits per day for those expenses are the rates set out under 'Incidentals' in Table 3 of paragraph 11 of TD 2013/16 or such determinations or policies of the Australian Tax Office that supersede it. (As at October 2013 – Incidental Expenses (per day) \$26.05)
- Where Councillors' accommodation expenses are not prepaid by Council or are not included in the seminar, conference, event or briefing fee, the monetary limits per day for those expenses are those set out under 'Accommodation' in Tables 3 and 4 (see Appendix A attached) of paragraph 11 of TD 2013/16 or such determinations or policies of the Australian Tax Office that supersede it.

With the approval of the Mayor and General Manager, a Councillor may expend more than the individual monetary limits per day for meals and incidental expenses, provided that the overall monetary limit per day in that case will be the sum of all of the monetary limits per day for meals and incidental expenses.

On completion of a discretionary trip or attendance, Councillors should provide a written report to Council on the aspects of the attendance that are relevant to Council's business and/or the local community. A report is not required for the annual conference of the Local Government and Shires Associations.

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

## **2.2 Requirement for receipts**

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

## **2.3 Payment of Reimbursed claims**

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

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

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

## **2.4 Accommodation and meal expenses**

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

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

## **2.5 Incidental Expenses**

Incidental expenses such as public transport fares, parking fees, phone/fax expenses and expenses incurred as the result of the purchase of refreshments during meetings related to council business or meals not included in the registration fees for conferences or similar functions, will be reimbursed by Council on production by the Councillor of the relevant receipts together with an approved claim form in accordance with Table 3 of paragraph 11 of TD 2013/16 (see clause 2.1).

Council will not meet any expenses for alcohol, cigarettes or personal requirements. Council will not fully fund any activity where the Councillor is not in attendance for at least 90% of the specified activity. Other than in the most exceptional circumstances, where Councillor's expenses have been met by Council but the Councillor does not attend at least 90% of the activity, that Councillor will be required to show cause why they should not reimburse Council for any costs incurred.

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

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

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

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

By resolution of Council, costs and expenses incurred by the Mayor, Councillors (or General Manager or nominee) for other events or functions on behalf of their spouse, partner or accompanying person shall be reimbursed if the cost or expense relates specifically to the ticket, meal, travel and accommodation and/or direct cost of attending the function. A total pool of \$4,510 per year per term is available for this purpose.

## **2.7 Payments in advance**

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

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

## **2.8 Approval arrangements**

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

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

Council will allocate up to \$24,000 per year (including GST) to fund attendance at conferences, investigatory delegations and similar events. However, Council may agree to allocate additional funds in specific cases where it decides that there is a benefit to council from the attendance.

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

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

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

No written report is required for the Annual Conferences of the Local Government and Shires Association.

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

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

## **2.10 Registration fees**

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

## **2.11 Travel Expenses**

Council will meet all reasonable costs of transportation to and from conferences and seminars when they are not included in the conference fees. Councillors are entitled to use Taxis provided that the cost of a single trip does not exceed \$100 (including GST) unless approval is granted by the General Manager in exceptional circumstances.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **2.13 Gifts**

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

## **2.14 Training and Educational expenses**

Council will only meet the costs of training or attendance at an educational course that is directly related to the Councillor's civic functions and responsibilities and is approved by Council prior to undertaking such training or attendance. Council will allocate up to \$1,500 per year per councillor (including GST) to fund relevant training and educational courses and attendances at briefings.

## **2.15 Telephone and internet expenses**

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

## **2.16 Mobile telephone**

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

## **2.17 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 an ipad with internet connectivity.

## **2.18 Insurance Provisions**

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

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



## **2.19 Legal Expenses and Obligations**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Council will meet reasonable costs of facilitating access to council premises, functions and activities where, by reason of disability, care-giver role or other special need, a councillor would not otherwise have equity of access with other councillors. Such support will allow the fullest participation reasonably possible. Council will reimburse the reasonable cost of care arrangements, including childcare expenses and the care of elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate family members of councillors to allow councillors to undertake their council business obligations.

The total amount paid to a Councillor under this provision shall not exceed \$800 per year of term.

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

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

Unless otherwise authorised in this Policy, if a Councillor does obtain a private benefit for the use of a facility provided by Council the Councillor shall be invoiced for the amount of the private benefit with repayment to be in accordance with Council's normal terms. The value of the private benefit shall be determined by Council in non-confidential session of a Council meeting.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **3.3 Bluetts Handbook**

Provide all Councillors with a copy after their election.

### 3.4 Policies

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 replaces the previous version of the Policy adopted by Council on 21 February 2013 Minute No. 235/1213.

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

## **Appendix A**

<b>Table 3: Employee's annual salary – \$193,521 and above</b>				
<b>Place</b>	<b>Accomm. \$</b>	<b>Food and drink \$ B'fast 32.00 Lunch 45.25 Dinner 63.40</b>	<b>Incidentals \$</b>	<b>Total \$</b>
Adelaide	209	140.65	26.05	375.70
Brisbane	252	140.65	26.05	418.70
Canberra	246	140.65	26.05	412.70
Darwin	284	140.65	26.05	450.70
Hobart	195	140.65	26.05	361.70
Melbourne	265	140.65	26.05	431.70
Perth	326	140.65	26.05	492.70
Sydney	265	140.65	26.05	431.70
Country centres	\$190, or the relevant amount in Table 4 if higher	140.65	26.05	Variable – see Table 4 if applicable

<b>Country centre</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>Country centre</b>	<b>\$</b>
Alice Springs (NT)	150	Horn Island (QLD)	180
Albany (WA)	179	Jabiru (NT)	192
Bourke (NSW)	165	Kalgoorlie (WA)	159
Bright (VIC)	136	Karratha (WA)	347
Broome (WA)	233	Katherine (NT)	134
Bunbury (WA)	155	Kingaroy (QLD)	134
Burnie (TAS)	135	Kununurra (WA)	202
Cairns (QLD)	140	Mackay (QLD)	152
Carnarvon (WA)	151	Mount Isa (QLD)	160
Castlemaine (VIC)	133	Mudgee (NSW)	135
Chinchilla (QLD)	143	Newcastle (NSW)	143
Christmas Island (WA)	150	Newman (WA)	195
Cocos (Keeling) Islands (WA)	285	Norfolk Island	329
Dalby (QLD)	144	Northam (WA)	163
Dampier (WA)	175	Port Hedland (WA)	259
Derby (WA)	182	Port Pirie (SA)	140
Devonport (TAS)	135	Thursday Island (QLD)	200
Emerald (QLD)	156	Wagga Wagga (NSW)	141
Exmouth (WA)	255	Weipa (QLD)	138
Geraldton (WA)	175	Whyalla (SA)	145
Gladstone (QLD)	187	Wilpena-Pound (SA)	167
Gold Coast (QLD)	149	Wollongong (NSW)	136
Halls Creek (WA)	199	Wonthaggi (VIC)	138
Hervey Bay (QLD)	157	Yulara (NT)	244

**POLICY DOCUMENT CONTROL:**

<b>Policy</b>		<b>Resolution</b>	<b>Date</b>
Payment of Expenses Policy	Endorsed	233	16 June 2005
Payment of Expenses Policy	Amendment	49	18 August 2005
Payment of Expenses Policy	Amendment	393	18 May 2006
Payment of Expenses Policy	New Policy endorsed	199	17 December 2009
Payment of Expenses Policy	Revised Version	123	21 October 2010
Payment of Expenses Policy	Revised Version	181/1112	24 November 2011
Payment of Expenses Policy	Revised Version – 4	235/1213	21 February 2013
Payment of Expenses Policy	Revised Version – 5	168/1314	21 November 2013