



# Warrumbungle Shire Council

## End of Term Report 2016/2021

Tabled November 2021





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### **THIS DOCUMENT**

The *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) requires that at the last meeting of an outgoing council a report be tabled that outlines how the council has worked towards implementing its Community Strategic Plan.

This End of Term Report details how the Warrumbungle Shire community's objectives contained in the Community Strategic Plan 2017-2032 (CSP) have been achieved over the term of Council that commenced after the general local government election in September 2016.

Unusually, this document covers a five-year term due to the postponement of the local government elections in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This report will become an adopted attachment to the Annual Report 2020/21 in November 2021.



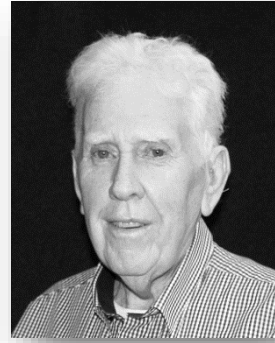
## COUNCILLORS



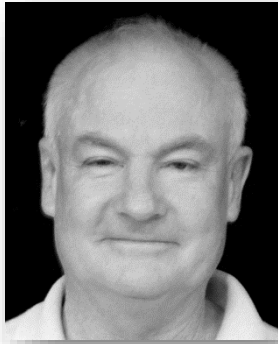
**Councillor  
Kodi Brady**



**Councillor  
Anne-Louise  
Capel**



**Councillor  
Fred Clancy**



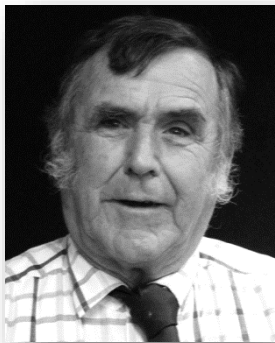
**Councillor  
Ambrose Doolan**



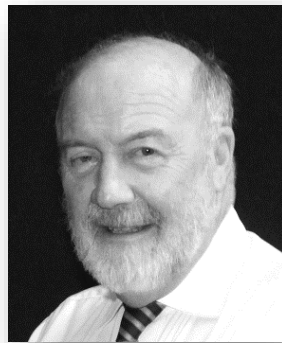
**Councillor  
Wendy Hill**



**Councillor  
Aniello Iannuzzi**



**Councillor  
Ray Lewis**



**Councillor  
Peter Shinton**



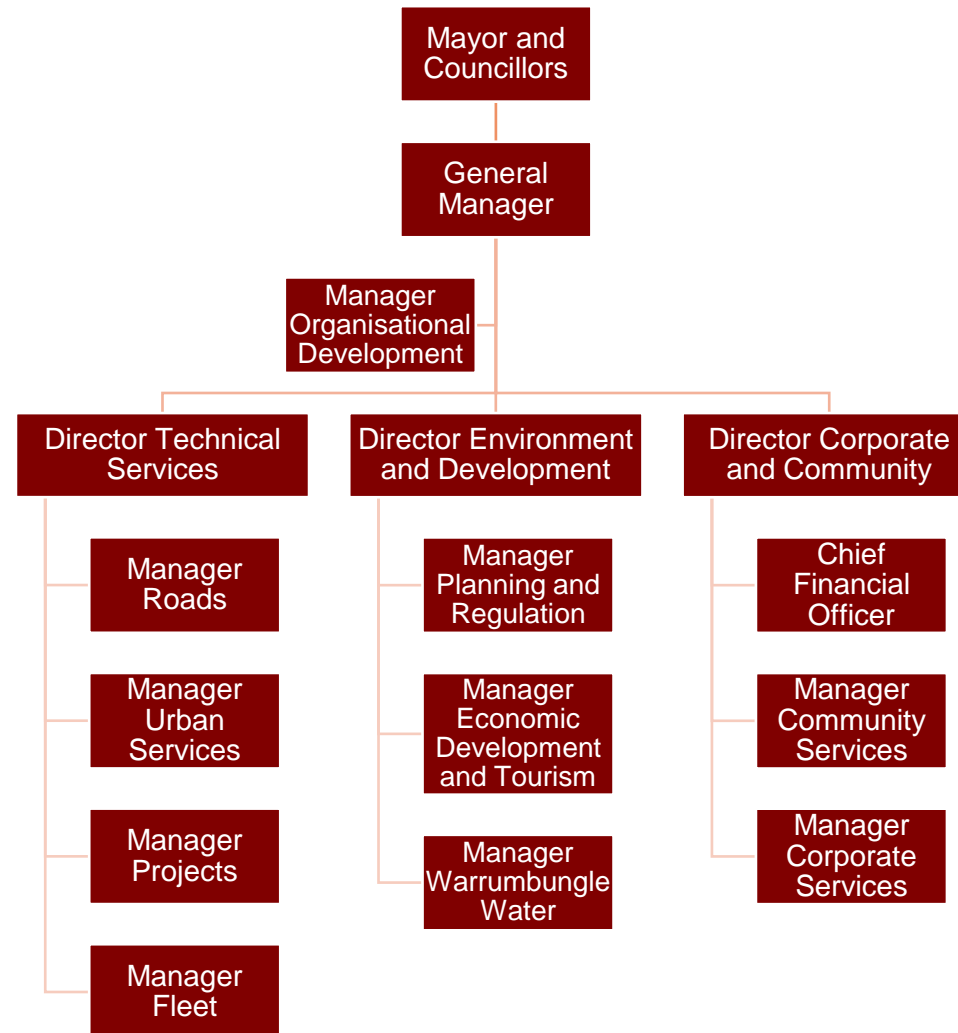
**Councillor  
Denis Todd**

Cr Peter Shinton was Mayor 2016-2018  
Cr Denis Todd was Deputy Mayor 2016-2018  
Cr Denis Todd was Mayor 2018-2020  
Cr Ambrose Doolan was Mayor 2020-2021  
Cr Aniello Iannuzzi was Deputy Mayor 2018-2021



## COUNCIL STRUCTURE

Warrumbungle Shire Council is managed by a General Manager with three Directorates. The organisation structure as at the end of this term of Council is shown below.





## COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The strategic, corporate and organisational planning framework used by Warrumbungle Shire Council (Council) has been developed in accordance with the NSW Office of Local Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework.

The Integrated Planning and Reporting framework includes a series of long- and short-term strategies and plans that:

1. Define the council's priorities and goals in providing infrastructure, services and leadership to the community and other stakeholders in the Warrumbungle local government area.
2. Comprehensively describe the range of ongoing activities, projects and initiatives to be undertaken by the council to achieve the targets and goals described in each strategy and plan.

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) sits at the top of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework as the strategic document that informs the development of a council's priorities over the coming term. All projects and programs undertaken are linked back to the goals of the CSP and all are undertaken to implement the aims of the CSP. The End of Term Report outlines the progress made towards achieving the strategic vision during the term of office 2016-2021.

The CSP is developed only after extensive community engagement. The community engagement for the next CSP has already commenced with the Building Our Warrumbungle Communities workshops held Shire wide in May 2021, and a professional customer satisfaction survey completed during June 2021. This engagement aims to ensure we have best identified the things that our communities need and want to live, work and enjoy in the Warrumbungle Shire local government area.

## COMMUNITY VISION

What is most important to us is our sense of community spirit, our children and our homes. Our plan for the future will support the growth, resilience and health of our people, our neighbourhoods, the environment and local economy.

The overarching vision for our communities has been broken down into seven (7) categories:

- **Natural Environment** – to ensure the good health of our natural environment and biodiversity is preserved and enhanced.
- **Local Economy** – to ensure our economy is strong and sustainable, providing our communities with localised employment opportunities and ease of access to markets, goods and services.
- **Community and Culture** – to ensure the communities of our Shire are safe, harmonious and supportive and are bound by vibrant social and cultural interaction and a strong local identity.
- **Rural and Urban Development** – to ensure our Shire is characterised by its peaceful rural landscape, its thriving towns and villages and diverse agricultural activities.
- **Recreation and Open Spaces** – to ensure the communities of our Shire have abundant opportunities to participate in sporting and recreational interests of their choice.
- **Public Infrastructure and Services** – to ensure our communities are provided with safe, functional and well-maintained infrastructure and comprehensive range of services.
- **Local Governance and Finance** – ensure Warrumbungle Shire Council is recognised for its strong community leadership, sound financial and asset management, and ethical, accountable and responsive local government.



### **DELIVERY PROGRAM AND OPERATIONAL PLAN**

Council has amalgamated the four (4) year Delivery Program with the one (1) year Operational Plan to better illustrate the link between the vision of the community and the strategies proposed by the current term of Council along with the annual tasks to be undertaken.

### **LONG-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

The Community Strategic Plan informs the Delivery/Operational Plan and the Long-Term Financial Plan.

### **KEY COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (QBL)**

The application of the Quadruple Bottom Line (QBL) framework allows projects to be assessed in terms of their total economic, social, environment and governance impacts. In the Community Strategic Plan, the criteria are documented in the seven (7) categories.



## COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

### 2016/17 Highlights

- The Barking Owl Habitat program was implemented, with funding from Landcare.
- Upgrades to Baradine Hall and refurbishment of Dunedoo's Jubilee Hall.
- Implementation of the Living Well Together Project at Baradine, part of the Community Builders Program delivered by Council's youth services.
- Installation of irrigation at Milling Park (Dunedoo); renewal of shade shelter and installation of wheelchair accessible paths at Baradine Lions Park.
- New footpaths in Castlereagh Avenue Binnaway, Edwards Street and Chappell Avenue Coonabarabran, and extension of the cycleway at Coolah.
- New kerbing and guttering in Booyamurra Street and Goddard Street Coolah in preparation for installation of new footpath.
- Council achieved Fit for the Future status from the NSW Government.



### 2017/18 Highlights

- Water supply security was improved with projects to sink and equip new bores, with backup bores now in place at Mendooran, Binnaway, Coolah and Coonabarabran; and improvements made to water treatment plants. \$1,717,500 was received in emergency drought funding to increase water security.
- Council plumber recognised in the NSW Training Awards as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year.
- Upgrades to the Mendooran Mechanics Institute Hall.
- Around 4.8km of bitumen reseals, rehabilitation of Booyamurra Street Coolah and of kerb and guttering in John Street Coonabarabran, asphalt replacement at the intersection of John Street and Cassilis Street Coonabarabran.
- Completion of the new Allison Bridge.





## 2018/19 Highlights

- Upgrades to all halls across the local government area.
- Playground soft fall replacement at Milling Park (Dunedoo) and Len Guy Park (Binnaway); swing set replacement at Milling Park (Dunedoo); irrigation upgrade at Mendooran Park; installation of shade at Coonabarabran skate park; installation of roof structure and two picnic shelters at Neilson Park (Coonabarabran).
- New street lighting installed at Coolah and Baradine, new kerb and guttering at Binnaway, construction of new shared paths at Coolah and Mendooran, renewal of kerb and guttering at Coonabarabran.
- Construction of new stormwater drainage at Belar Street Coonabarabran.
- Completion of multipurpose courts at the Coonabarabran Sporting Complex.
- Upgrades to aerodromes including installation of new windsock with pilot-activated lights at Coonabarabran Aerodrome, and installation of feral-rated fences at Baradine and Coonabarabran Aerodromes which have successfully reduced kangaroo access onto the runway at both aerodromes.
- Warrumbungle Shire Community Based Heritage Study report completed.
- Commencement of the School-Based Trainee program, supporting local youth.



## 2019/20 Highlights

- Warrumbungle Region received recognition, being named as 'best camping' 'best place to view stars' by renowned travel organisations such as Urban List.
- Connect Five Children's Services developed the PADLET Remote Learning Hub to provide services to families isolated by COVID-19 restrictions.
- Yuluwirri Kids recognised as a nominee for the National Local Government Safety Award for their Road Safety book initiative.
- Warrumbungle Community Care recognised as winner of Meals on Wheels NSW Innovation Awards for their 'Voucher System and Food Partnership' which supported local businesses with vouchers for local meals, promotion and equipment.
- Community hubs established in each town as part of the Targeted Early Intervention Youth Services activities.
- Construction of new shared pathway in Cowper Street and Cassilis Street Coonabarabran, and of a new median island in Binnia Street Coolah.
- Construction of underground stormwater drainage system at Dunedoo, and stormwater drainage works in Cobra Street Mendooran.
- New skate park at Baradine.
- New timetable for pools across the local government area increasing the combined availability of pools by over 4,000 hours each year.

- Renewal works at aerodromes including resurfacing of runways at Coonabarabran and Baradine.
- Completion of two new bridges over Billy Kings Creek at Coonabarabran.
- Upgrades to the Baradine sewer reticulation system.
- Introduction of Community e-Newsletter.
- Installation of free wi-fi in each town.



#### 2020/21

- Instrumental in establishing the Wings n Things event at Coonabarabran Aerodrome, bringing 1,500 people together to celebrate an exciting new event in the region and giving support for the event to be run again in 2022.
- Yuluwirri Kids Aboriginal Trainee recognised as co-winner of the Cr Pat Dixon Memorial Scholarship, and finalist in the NSW TAFE Trainee of the Year.
- Yuluwirri Kids Dhali Breakfast program for indigenous preschool children commenced.
- Playground expansion at Mendooran Park; installation of shade over the playground at Milling Park (Dunedoo); funding received for construction of accessible Stop and Play project at Neilson Park (Coonabarabran) and for the Jump the Stump skate park at Coolah.
- Funding received for groundwater pipeline at Coonabarabran, further improving water security for the town.
- Castlereagh River restocked with native fish under the Dollar for Dollar funding program.
- Funding was received to build a new state of the art amenities building at Robertson Oval Dunedoo
- Drought funding was secured for 15 projects across the Shire. Projects included Building Local Pathway working groups in each town, upgrades to sporting and recreation facilities, upgrades to town halls and funding to assist with local community shows.





## OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

We value our pristine, healthy, natural environment with clean water resources and diverse flora and fauna. We enjoy the close proximity to National Parks and large areas of forest and bushland. We love that we are surrounded by wide open spaces and spectacular mountain landscapes. We enjoy the peace and quiet, our temperate climate with four distinct seasons, the fresh, unpolluted air and clear night skies.

*“The good health of our natural environment and biodiversity is preserved and enhanced.”*

| Long term outcomes for our natural environment |  | Strategies to achieve these outcomes |  |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| NE1  | The impacts of climate change on our region are well managed and minimised.  | NE1.1                                | Involve appropriate agencies in addressing the local impacts of climate change.  |
|  |  | NE1.2                                | Encourage local communities to embrace practices in sustainable living.  |
|  |  | NE1.3                                | Provide opportunities for communities in the shire to participate in maintaining and enhancing the health of our natural environment.  |
| NE2  | The extraction of natural resources from our council area, including coal and coal seam gas, has minimal negative impact on our natural environment. | NE2.1                                | Monitor local mining and extractive activities to ensure that negative environmental impacts are identified and mitigated.   |
|  |  | NE2.2                                | Collaborate with neighbouring councils and state agencies to ensure effective environmental oversight of local mining and extractive activities.                                   |
| NE3  | Local bushlands and forests are host to a healthy diversity of flora and fauna.  | NE3.1                                | Work with private and public landholders to build and maintain awareness of their responsibilities and requirements regarding environmental, land and natural resource management. |
|  |  | NE3.2                                | Ensure development assessments and all reviews of environmental factors are completed with the aim of minimising damage to the environment.  |

## **WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED THIS TERM IN OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

### **Environmental Health Services**

The Environmental Compliance Officer assists other branches within the organisation to achieve best practice environmental outcomes. Advice is given as required.

The Environmental Compliance Officer provided information for the Regional State of the Environment Report Snapshot. This project was in conjunction with a number of regional councils in the area. Council reported on a number of items including office consumables, fuel usage, development and roadworks.

Actions from the strategic plan of the Central West Councils Salinity and Water Quality Alliance are implemented. Council is a member of the Alliance and implements what it can in line with Council's projects.

Food shop inspections have been regularly carried out throughout the term with extra compliance to follow throughout COVID-19.

Landcare Funding for the Barking Owl Habitat program was secured in 2016-17.

### **Noxious Weeds**

Membership of the Macquarie County Council was maintained, which undertakes inspections and weed spraying on behalf of Council.







## OUR LOCAL ECONOMY

Our solid local tourism industry is based on local attractions including three National Parks, Siding Spring Observatory and a range of tailored facilities and amenities. The contribution of our diverse agricultural industry is highly valued, made possible by good climate and rainfall, productive soils, clean water supplies and ready access to markets.

We benefit from good transport links within the Shire and to external markets and customers and from an abundance of natural resources which provide our Shire with opportunities for local economic growth. We have diverse local employment and business opportunities and we have access to a wide range of trades, services and businesses that are locally owned and operated, providing personalised customer service.

*“Our economy is strong and sustainable, providing our communities with localised employment opportunities and ease of access to markets, goods and services.”*

| Long term outcomes for our local economy |  | Strategies to achieve these outcomes |   |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| LE1                                      | Agricultural activities continue to be recognised and supported as a foundation of our local economy.  | LE1.1                                | Local agencies, peak bodies and agricultural enterprises work together to ensure the long-term viability of our farming sector.                 |
|  |  | LE1.2                                | Council's road priority strategy supports the ability of productive land owners to get produce to markets.                                      |
| LE2                                      | Our communities have access to diverse local employment opportunities and our workforce is inclusive of people of all ages and skill levels. | LE2.1                                | Encourage and support local business and industry in creating local employment and training opportunities.                                      |
| LE3                                      | Tourism opportunities and initiatives across the shire are identified, developed and well-coordinated.                                       | LE3.1                                | Appropriate public and private sector agencies collaborate to develop a local Tourism and Economic Development Strategy for Warrumbungle Shire. |
| LE4                                      | There are diverse products and services locally available and minimal economic leakage to larger regional centres.                           | LE4.1                                | Work with local business and industry to foster local economic development, innovation and expansion.   |
|  |  | LE4.2                                | Encourage a 'buy local' and 'sell local' approach to business activity.   |
|  |  | LE4.3                                | Enhance the attractiveness and amenity of our main streets.   |



## WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED THIS TERM IN OUR LOCAL ECONOMY

### Governance

Developing strategic relationships with other levels of government is a Council objective in an effort to ensure that the Shire receives an equitable allocation of resources. Relationships with all levels of government have continued to be developed and maintained. We are proactive in communication with various State and Federal Ministers and Members of Parliament, and we regularly cooperate with other councils.

In January 2019 the NSW Premier visited the Shire to engage with councillors and the General Manager about the impact of the ongoing drought, and the NSW Government has funded a total of \$1,717,500 for emergency water supply works. Over \$2 million have been received after the drought to ensure water security across the Shire.

A voluntary planning agreement with wind farm developers was successfully negotiated and entered into in conjunction with the neighbouring Liverpool Plains Shire Council.

The community has expressed that an important function of Council is to encourage and support local business and industry in creating local employment, and to advocate for long-term creation and retention of high-quality services. We are active in advocacy of local business and industry. In particular, Council has been involved with the Inland Rail project, which will pass through the northern end of the Shire. Support is also given to small business through engagement with the NSW Government Small Business Commissioner, hosting small business workshops and other events like the touring Small Business Bus, and meeting with various industry representatives.

### Private Works

Council staff possess a range of skills and are able to offer services to customers on a commercial basis. These services or private works are undertaken on an agreed fee for service basis and in accordance with rates published in the Fees and Charges section of the operational plan. The types of private works undertaken by staff include roadworks, slashing, mowing and minor concrete works.

Throughout this term, Council has received \$596,210 of income from private works.

### Tourism and Economic Development

The Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee holds meetings every two months to discuss and put in place strategic regional initiatives.

Council has worked with Pandora Gallery, Coolah to further strengthen and support Coolah's valuable Visitor Information Service at Pandora Gallery, and is looking at Visitor Information initiatives in Dunedoo.

Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre (VIC) supplies and disseminates brochures and visitor's information to operators throughout the Shire and to neighbouring local government areas. Coonabarabran VIC has an extensive range of retail products, some of which are sourced locally. The staff and volunteers at both the Coonabarabran and Coolah VIC's record visitors to the centres. This data is used to analyse the visitor economy to the region.

During 2019-20, Warrumbungle Region received recognition and publicity being named as 'best camping' 'best place to view stars' by renowned travel organisations such as Urban List.

### Tourism and Economic Promotion

During the term local tourism campaigns and economic promotions have included:

- Astro tourism - Capture the Cosmos competition
- Geo-trails app development
- Installation of Shire boundary signs
- Installation of banner poles – shop local promotions
- Council nominated 'small business friendly'
- Facilitated 'Upskilling Local Businesses' including workshops, webinars and consultation.
- Eat Out to Help Out
- Wings N Things

VIC staff also attended the Caravan and Camping shows in New South Wales to promote the Warrumbungle region and its tourist attractions.

Community economic development is supported by Council along with the members of the Economic Development and Tourism Advisory Committee, the local community coordinators, Chambers of Commerce, Local Progress Associations, and their associated sub committees.

Manager of Economic Development and Tourism has established a strong network of government and business agencies to facilitate business development including Destination NSW, Business Connect business advisors, Regional Development Australia (Orana) and Service NSW. Manager of Economic Development and Tourism updates the advisory committee each meeting on the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy action plan progress.

#### **Warrumbungle Quarry**

A hard rock quarry was operated near Coonabarabran under a lease agreement with Boral until the financial year 2019-20. The quarry produced aggregates for road sealing and local concrete production, and supplied manufactured sand for the local building industry and road base for road pavement construction. Due to falling demand and a significant increase in the cost of production, the quarry was operating at a loss and the decision was taken to cease operations at the quarry on 30 June 2020.







## COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

Our communities are strong, resilient and inclusive and provide support and assistance to those in need. Local volunteers contribute greatly to our community wellbeing and we enjoy the freedoms that are afforded through our safe, friendly and caring community. Our Shire is a great place to raise a family and we value the contributions and participation of our younger people who are provided opportunities to support their development. Relationships between our indigenous and non-indigenous communities are harmonious and respectful and our diverse community is reflected through a wide range of arts and cultural activities, festivals and events.

*“The communities of our Shire are safe, harmonious and supportive and are bound by vibrant social and cultural interaction and a strong local identity.”*

| Long term outcomes for our community and culture  | Strategies to achieve these outcomes  |
|---|---|
| <p>CC1 Opportunities and support mechanisms are developed to ensure that communities across the shire attract and retain young people and families.</p> | <p>CC1.1 Encourage apprenticeship programs amongst employers throughout the shire and ensure higher education facilities remain.</p> <p>CC1.2 Provide appropriate services to ensure that young people and families have access to appropriate support services such as childcare.</p> <p>CC1.3 Ensure that Council is an employer of choice in the region, helping to retain residents within the shire.</p> |
| <p>CC2 Issues arising from social isolation in communities across the shire are identified and the causes effectively addressed.</p>                    | <p>CC2.1 Identify and resolve constraints in service provision and create partnerships that address those gaps across all demographic and special needs groups in the shire.</p>  |
| <p>CC3 Our shire is home to vibrant arts and cultural life of the shire is promoted and supported as an essential aspect of community well-being.</p>   | <p>CC3.1 Work with local communities to develop and expand local arts and cultural activities, programs and events.</p>   |
| <p>CC4 There is a high degree of public involvement in community activities including volunteerism.</p>   | <p>CC4.1 Create support mechanisms to build community resilience and self-reliance.</p>   |



|     |   |       |  |
|-----|---|-------|--|
| CC5 | Smaller communities across the shire remain sustainable.  | CC5.1 | Work regionally and across all levels of government to identify and address the long term needs of smaller rural communities.  |
| CC6 | The causes and effects of economic and social disadvantage in communities across the shire are identified and addressed.                | CC6.1 | Social needs assessments are periodically conducted to map and measure areas of disadvantage within our communities.   |
| CC6 |   | CC6.2 | Develop partnerships with government and non-government agencies to effectively address local social and economic disadvantage.  |
| CC7 | Communities and organisations across the shire collaborate to raise awareness of and respect for local indigenous heritage and culture. | CC7.1 | Work with local indigenous communities to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land and raise community awareness of and involvement in local indigenous culture. |

## WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED THIS TERM IN OUR COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

### Children's Services – Connect Five Children's Service

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

Throughout this term, Connect Five Children's Services have provided over 550 Play Sessions with more than 6,000 people attending across nine (9) different venues.

In 2019/20, due to the impacts of COVID-19 interrupting face to face delivery, staff developed the PADLET Remote Learning Hub and provided over 60 Family Activity Packs sent out by mail during COVID-19.

As well as providing play sessions, Connect Five Children's Services is also a Licensed Service and that provides Occasional Care for those who wish to attend an appointment, school, shopping or something else. The other, very popular, part of the Service is the Mobile Toy Library providing toys and equipment to enhance children's learning and development.

### Children's Services – OOSH, Vacation Care

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

Coonabarabran After School Care provides a program of fun and interesting activities for children during the hours of 3:30pm – 5:30pm, during school terms. Vacation Care operates from 8:00am – 5:30pm weekdays during the school holidays.

The number of enrolments throughout this term have on average remained within the target of 50 places per week set in the Delivery Program.

### **Children's Services – Yuluwirri Kids Preschool and Long Day Care**

Yuluwirri Kids is a 57-place licensed Preschool and Long Day Care Centre that opened on 2 February 2009. The Centre is funded by NSW Education and Communities for a maximum of 57 children a day. The Centre operates three (3) classrooms:

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

A fourth Mobile Preschool classroom (Monkey Room) operates two (2) days a week on Wednesday and Thursday at the Robertson Street Campus in Coonabarabran. This Mobile Preschool was established in February 2010, in conjunction with Connect Five Children's Services license, to support Yuluwirri Kids waiting lists for three (3) to five (5) year old children who want to attend Preschool. During 2020-21 a funding agreement entered into for the extension of funding for the Mobile Preschool (Monkey Room) for 12 months.

Over the course of the year the combined total offers 14,350 places. This equates to 325 places a week, 49 weeks a year of Long Day Care and 40 weeks a year of Preschool.

The Yuluwirri Road Safety book initiative has been worked on over many years with members of staff being a driving force for this initiative. This early childhood innovation was nominated for the National Local Government Safety Award in 2020.

Yuluwirri Kids Aboriginal Trainee completed Certificate 3 in Early Childhood in June 2020 and was a co-winner of the Cr Pat Dixon Memorial Scholarship. This trainee was also a finalist in the NSW TAFE Trainee of the Year.

Community Connections Solutions Australia (CCSA) has been facilitating an assessment on access to preschool services with a view of establishing a business sustainability model to be implemented by Children Services in 2021/2022 so we can focus upon providing sustainable quality services to children.

During 2020-21 the coordination of Yuluwirri's Dhali Breakfast program for indigenous preschool children commenced.

### **Community Care**

Warrumbungle Community Care (WCC) provides a range of services across the Shire to assist the frail aged, people with a disability, and their carers. Services include Community Transport, Meals on Wheels, Respite, Social Support and Home Maintenance. Service delivery is informed by the Quality Standards. Domain One: Dignity, respect, choice and complaints; Domain Two: Care planning and personal and clinical care; Domain Three: Lifestyle and service environment; and, Domain Four: Governance and Human Resources. WCC is now an Approved Home Care Package provider, and is a Registered Authorised NDIS provider.

The range of service supports people to continue to live independently in their own homes. Services are provided to almost 800 clients across the Shire.



Throughout the term Warrumbungle Community Care have provided the following services, on average per year:

- 13,000 Meals
- 7,500 hours of Social Support
- 2,000 hours of Home Maintenance
- 650 hours of respite
- 14,500 community transport trips
- 10,800 Taxi Vouchers

Warrumbungle Community Care has introduced a school-based trainee position to the Coonabarabran office for one day a week to provide a community based administrative development opportunity.

During the financial year 2019/2020, Warrumbungle Community Care was the winner of the Meals on Wheels NSW Innovative Awards with their innovative “*Voucher System and Food Partnership*” during COVID-19. This initiative saw 18 food business partnerships developed across the Shire with a strong focus on supporting local business. During COVID-19 over \$45,000 was spent using meal vouchers on local meals and promotion and equipment.

### **Community Development**

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

Throughout the term the Community Development Coordinators have sourced funding for programs, activities and infrastructure in our local towns.

A highlight of the Community Development program is the value-added support provided to other groups in each of their local communities to help them to also source funding to implement a range of activities, infrastructure or service delivery.

### **Compliance Services**

Alcohol Free Zones are maintained throughout the urban areas of the Shire. Compliance Officers undertake regular inspections to ensure the Alcohol-Free Zone signage is current and in the correct position. Signs are replaced if they are old or unreadable.

The Business Use of Footpaths Policy was amended to better support smaller, not for profit organisations. This was adopted during 2021.

An outdoor dining policy is being finalised.

### **Libraries**

Macquarie Regional Library (MRL) provides a range of services and collections to the communities across the Warrumbungle local government area. The library provides services and collections at each of the three (3) libraries of Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, and limited services to Baradine, Binnaway and Mendooran.

In addition to regular borrowing and utilisation of the internet and other library facilities, local libraries offer a number of other activities in our local communities.

### **Public Halls**

Public halls are owned in Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Goolhi, Mendooran, and Purlewaugh. The Coonabarabran Sport and Recreation building is also categorised as a hall for reporting purposes.

The halls are available for hire and activities. The halls in Coolah, Baradine and Purlewaugh are managed by volunteer groups.

During 2016-17 achievements included the completion of the installation of new toilets and disabled ramp at Baradine Hall and the finalisation of the refurbishment of the Dunedoo Jubilee Hall.

During 2017-18 a grant for the installation of toilet block and covered walkway at Mendooran Mechanics Institute was successful through the Stronger Country Communities Fund.

Multiple grants were successful in 2018-19 for a number of upgrades to all halls including new stages, blinds and flooring upgrades.

### **Youth Services**

The Youth Development Program continued to actively engage and empower the youth of our Shire through a variety of programs, activities and initiatives under the Department of Justice and Communities Community Builders Program, (previously Department of Family and Community Services).

The Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) Program has successfully transitioned to replace the former Youth Development Program. This TEI Program is directed at improving connections across the Shire and through a variety of service providers utilising the Community Hub structures now established in each town on a fortnightly basis.

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

2017-18 saw strong partnerships and collaborations continue through the ongoing support of local agencies, organisations, schools and community groups ensuring 77 community events and activities were provided across the Shire for around 1,850 young people.

The Targeted Early Intervention Youth Services activities in 2019/20 consisted of: the establishment of community hubs in each of the six towns across the Shire; the establishment of the innovative Goose Chase as an interactive IT partnership with Dark Skies and the skatepark mural work in Coonabarabran at the Peter Crystal Park as a collaborative partnership of the Coonabarabran Interagency groups YARN (Youth Suicide Prevention), McKillop and Centacare Services and Rotary.







## RURAL AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Our Shire is centrally located in NSW, within close proximity to regional centres and cities and we offer a range of affordable housing options. We enjoy a relaxed pace of life with low traffic volumes, no overcrowding and our urban centres are enhanced by the surrounding rural landscape and atmosphere. Our local history and heritage are visible in our towns and villages which are clean, tidy and well-presented.

*“Our Shire is characterised by its peaceful rural landscape, its thriving towns and villages and diverse agricultural activities.”*

| Long term outcomes for our rural and urban development  | Strategies to achieve these outcomes  |
|---|---|
| <p>RU1 Land use planning across the shire acknowledges the rural character of the area whilst encouraging ecologically sustainable development.</p> | <p>RU1.1 Council conducts periodic reviews of its planning instruments to ensure that land use planning supports the long-term sustainability of our local communities and our economy.</p> <p>RU1.2 Development activity is monitored and controlled to prevent fragmentation of rural lands.</p>  |
| <p>RU2 The availability of a range of housing options across the shire, including aged and affordable housing, needs to be expanded.</p>            | <p>RU2.1 Identify opportunities to expand the availability of a range of housing options based on lifestyle choices and affordability.</p>  |
| <p>RU3 Land needs to be allocated to ensure that there are opportunities for the establishment of light industries within the shire.</p>            | <p>RU3.1 Ensure that council maintains an approach to land use planning that will support the growth of light industrial activity in appropriate locations within the shire.</p>  |
| <p>RU4 Our towns and villages are characterised by their attractiveness, appearance, safety and amenity.</p>  | <p>RU4.1 Work with local communities to develop and implement improvement plans for our streetscapes, main streets and town entrances.</p> <p>RU4.2 Take enforcement action against owners of properties with unsafe, dangerous or unhealthy conditions.</p> <p>RU4.3 Ensure that town streets and landscapes are kept clean and tidy through regular street and amenities cleaning, as well as maintenance and upgrades to current facilities.</p> |



## WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED THIS TERM IN RURAL AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

### Building Control

Building and Plumbing inspections were carried out by Council's Building Certifier and Contract Building Certifier throughout the term ensuring that the current standard and legislative requirements have been met. Building Certifiers inspect buildings to certify that all building works meet the requirements of the National Construction Code.

### Compliance Services

Compliance Officers responded to a number of nuisance complaints relating to animals including cattle, horses and roosters being kept in urban areas. Officers also responded to complaints about neglected or wandering goats, horses and cattle. Correspondence and Penalty Infringement Notices are issued on an as-needed basis.

In 2016-17 body cameras were purchased to improve safety of Compliance Officers while in the field.

Inspections on swimming pool barriers for houses that are for sale or rent have been continuous. Any pool barriers that fail inspections are required to have works completed before a compliance certificate could be issued.

Routine checks of overgrown properties are carried out to ensure the health and safety of all residents. Officers respond to complaints regarding overgrown private land in urban areas and issue correspondence and notices when needed. More frequent inspections are carried out after rain events and heading into fire season to ensure that grass is kept low to reduce the risk of fire.

Regular educational media has been released to the public throughout the term to ensure the community is aware of issues arising.

### Horticulture

Nineteen park areas are owned and maintained throughout the Shire and there are eight (8) sets of playground equipment. Some of the maintenance activities in these areas include: grass cutting, watering, weeding, tree pruning, amenities cleaning and maintenance, monitoring and maintenance of playground equipment, and general horticultural tasks associated with numerous garden beds.

In 2016-17 the capital works program saw the installation of irrigation at Milling Park (west), renewal of the shade shelter and installation of paths for wheelchair access at Baradine Lions Park, and awarded \$5000 each to Binnaway and Baradine Progress Associations for garden beautification and maintenance.

During 2018-19 playground soft fall was replaced in Milling Park and Len Guy Park. A swing set was replaced in Milling Park and the irrigation system in Mendooran Park was connected to town water. Funding received under NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund enabled installation of shade over the skate park in Coonabarabran. Funding under the Australian Government's Drought Communities Programme - Extension enabled replacement of a roof structure in Neilson Park and installation of two (2) picnic shelters.

During 2021 new playground/play parks were established thanks to various funding received. A playground expansion was installed in Mendooran, Coonabarabran saw the funding for the Stop and Play Project in Neilson Park, Milling Park Dunedoo received shade over the existing playground and Coolah will see Jump the Stump Skatepark come to life.

### **Public Amenities**

There are 12 public toilets located throughout the Shire. The toilets generally open at dawn and close at dusk, however there are some toilets that are opened 24 hours 7 days a week. The toilets are cleaned at various times a total of 70 times each week.

### **Street Cleaning**

A street sweeper operates in each of the six towns within the Shire. Working on a three-week cycle, gutters are swept in accordance with the following schedule: Coonabarabran 3 days a week, 0.5 days per week in Coolah and Dunedoo and 0.3 days per week in Baradine, Binnaway and Mendooran.

### **Town Planning**

This term the Warrumbungle Shire Local Environmental Plan was reviewed, which will incorporate new land zonings and the proposed bypass corridor. We are currently undertaking a review of the Section 94A (7.12) Contribution Plan which includes the schedule of works throughout the Shire for money received from the Contribution Plan.

Development applications (DAs) went online through the NSW Planning Portal and funding was received to place two kiosks in Council's Administration Buildings at Coolah and Coonabarabran to assist with the transition. From 1 July 2021, hard copy DAs are no longer accepted, in line with a State Government direction to go online only.

This term a total of 359 Development Applications and 2,336 Planning Certificates were processed. During the previous term, the figures were 319 Development Applications and 1743 Planning Certificates.

### **Town Streets**

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

In 2016-17 Capital expansion projects have been completed within the urban areas which include, but are not limited to, new footpaths in Castlereagh Avenue Binnaway, Edwards Street and Chappell Avenue Coonabarabran, and extension of cycleway in Coolah. Approximately 100m of new kerbing and guttering was constructed in Booyamurra Street Coolah. Also, kerbing and guttering was installed in Goddard Street Coolah in preparation for installation of a new footpath.

In 2017-18 renewal activities included approximately 4.8km of bitumen re-seals at a cost of \$183,812, rehabilitation of a section of Booyamurra Street Coolah, rehabilitation of kerb and gutter sections in John Street Coonabarabran and asphalt replacement at the intersection of John Street and Cassilis Street, Coonabarabran.

In 2018-19, some of the projects undertaken on town streets included new street lights in Coolah and Baradine, new kerb and guttering in two streets in Binnaway, construction of new concrete shared paths in Coolah and Mendooran, renewal of kerb and guttering in Coonabarabran, and construction of stormwater drainage pipe in Belar Street Coonabarabran. There was approximately 4.2km of bitumen resealing undertaken at a cost of \$0.19m.

In 2019-20 the total cost of these maintenance activities was \$0.80m. Projects associated with new works in town streets included: construction of a concrete shared pathway in Cowper Street and Cassilis Street in Coonabarabran; construction of an underground



stormwater drainage system in Dunedoo; stormwater drainage works in Cobra Street Mendooran and construction of small median island in Binnia Street, Coolah.

**Village Streets**

Budget allocation has been consistent throughout the term to allow for mowing, maintenance grading and tree maintenance was undertaken in the streets of villages across the Shire including Bugaldie, Kenebri, Merrygoen, Neilrex, and Ulamambri.





## RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES

People within the Shire have opportunities to participate in a diverse range of locally based sports catering for people of all ages, activity levels and interests. Our rural setting provides children with opportunities to play in and explore their natural environment and our communities have easy access to a wide range of active and passive recreational pursuits through close proximity to National Parks and other open spaces. Organised sporting and recreational activities within the Shire are coordinated by an array of active clubs and volunteer organisations and Council provides communities across the Shire with well-maintained sporting facilities, parks and gardens.

*“The communities of our Shire have abundant opportunities to participate in sporting and recreational interests of their choice.”*

| Long term outcomes for our recreation and open space   | Strategies to achieve these outcomes   |
|--|--|
| <p>RO1 The planning and provision of local sports and recreation facilities and parklands reflect community needs and anticipated demographic changes.</p> | <p>RO1.1 Identify opportunities for innovative adaptation and/or sharing of open space and infrastructure for recreational purposes.</p> <p>RO1.2 Carry out regular maintenance and upkeep of parks, reserves, swimming pools and other recreational assets to ensure availability of such assets to residents of the shire.</p> |
| <p>RO2 National parks and reserves in and around the shire need to be well-maintained and accessible in the long term for recreational activities.</p>     | <p>RO2.1 Agencies work together to ensure National Parks and Reserves, waterways and public spaces are appropriately equipped and accessible for recreation activities.</p>  |
| <p>RO3 The benefits of sporting and recreational activities in contributing to community health and wellbeing are well promoted throughout the shire.</p>  | <p>RO3.1 Programs are developed to encourage broad community involvement in local sports and recreation activities.</p> <p>RO3.2 Encourage the development of local sports and recreation programs and activities that are inclusive of diverse ages, abilities and interests.</p>   |

## WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED THIS TERM IN RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES

### Ovals and other Sporting Facilities

Across the Shire there is an oval complex in each town and there are tennis courts in Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, and Mendooran. The predominant maintenance activities at each oval include irrigation, mowing, line marking and cleaning up after football events.

There were significant renewal and improvement projects throughout this term with the following projects being completed, some with funding assistance:

- New oval lighting at Baradine and Binnaway
- New skate park at Baradine
- New shade shelter over Coonabarabran skate park
- Replacement of perimeter fence at Coonabarabran
- Construction of the Baradine Oval Canteen
- Mendooran Oval Fence
- Lighting upgrade Bowen Oval, Dunedoo
- Jump the Stump Skate Park Coolah
- Refurbishment of old Basketball Courts, Coonabarabran
- Robertson oval amenities Dunedoo

### Pools

Public pool complexes are owned and operated in each of the six towns within the Shire.

All of the pools except for Coolah and Mendooran are over 50 years old and they are experiencing chronic maintenance issues particularly in relation to pumps, filter equipment and water leakage. Renewal works during the year included leak repair at Baradine Pool, removal of trees at Coonabarabran Pool, and installation of shade shelters at Baradine, Coonabarabran and Dunedoo Pools. The installation of a new electronic key access system was undertaken in the off season.

Throughout the term funding was received and Council contributed to many projects to improve swimming pools across the Shire. These included:

- Renewal of infrastructure throughout the Shire
- Installation of solar heating in Binnaway, Coolah, and Dunedoo
- New lighting in Coolah
- Hot water shower installed in Coonabarabran
- New awning in Dunedoo
- Chemical dosing equipment for Mendooran
- Replacement of filters in Coolah
- Replacement of pumps in Dunedoo
- New shade structures in Baradine, Coonabarabran and Dunedoo
- Installation of electronic key access system Shire wide

With the aim of increasing opening times and availability of the pools to users, a new timetable was trialled in Baradine, Binnaway and Mendooran. Council adopted the revised timetable for the 2019/20 season which will see availability of all pools combined increase by more than 4000 hours each year.







## PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

We have a range of essential local services and facilities supporting the health, medical and aged care needs of our communities and we benefit from the local presence of State and Federal agencies and non-government organisations that provide a range of essential services. Local children and young people benefit from provision of high-quality educational services and facilities. We have an array of public infrastructure, such as parks, libraries, community halls, swimming pools, sporting facilities and tourism amenities that are important for the prosperity and well-being of our communities.

Our towns benefit from the secure supply of potable water and our villages and rural areas have access to water from rainfall, rivers and artesian systems. Our Shire accommodates major road transport links that are of national importance for the movement of people and freight and Council maintains three aerodromes and an extensive network of roads and bridges that provide connections within the Shire and to other regional centres. We are also supported by volunteer emergency services that are critical in providing immediate accident and disaster response.

*“Our communities are provided with safe, functional, and well-maintained infrastructure and a comprehensive range of services.”*

| Long term outcomes for our public infrastructure and services |  | Strategies to achieve these outcomes |  |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| PI1   | Public transport alternatives including bus and rail services connect local towns and villages and provide links with other regional centres.  | PI1.1                                | Work with appropriate government agencies and transport providers to establish a range of local and regional public transport options. |
| PI2   | The long-term wellbeing of our communities is supported by ongoing provision of high-quality health and aged care, education, policing and public safety, child, youth and family support, environmental protection and land management. | PI2.1                                | Ensure the long-term provision and retention of high-quality services for our communities.   |
|   |  | PI2.2                                | Ensure that local emergency services are equipped, trained and prepared to manage natural disasters and critical incidents.            |
| PI3   | Roads throughout the shire are safe, well-maintained and appropriately funded.   | PI3.1                                | All levels of government work together to ensure our roads are safe and functional.  |
| PI4   | Local communities, businesses and public organisations need access to comprehensive telecommunications infrastructure including mobile telephone and high-speed internet services.   | PI5.1                                | Maximise the coverage and availability of telecommunications infrastructure across the shire.  |



|     |  |       |   |
|-----|--|-------|---|
| PI5 | Council manages its assets and infrastructure to meet the agreed service levels.                                       | PI5.1 | Asset Management Plans for all of Councils assets include levels of service with forecasts identified for operations, maintenance renewals/upgrades and depreciation. |
| PI6 | Alternate routes and truck-stops are established to minimise the movement of heavy vehicles through local urban areas. | PI6.1 | Lobby governments to design and construct a serviced alternate route for heavy and wide load vehicles in Coonabarabran and to keep access to existing freight lines.  |
| PI7 | Communities across the shire are supported by the secure, long term supply of energy and clean water.                  | PI7.1 | The future requirements for water and power are identified and adequately planned for by service providers.   |
| PI8 | Local communities have access to effective and efficient waste and recycling services.                                 | PI8.1 | Options are explored and identified for the improvement of local waste and recycling services.  |

## WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED THIS TERM IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

### Aerodromes

There are registered aerodromes at Coolah and Coonabarabran, and an unregistered aerodrome at Baradine. Maintenance tasks include grass slashing, weekly inspections and maintenance of the bitumen surface on the runway at Coonabarabran.

During 2018-19 a new windsock was installed at Coonabarabran that incorporates lights that are pilot activated. Through funding provided by the Australian Government's Drought Communities Program - Extension, the perimeter fences at both Baradine and Coonabarabran aerodromes were replaced. These new feral-rated fences have been very successful in reducing kangaroo access onto the runway at both aerodromes.

Significant renewal works were undertaken during 2019/20 at Coonabarabran aerodrome with the resurfacing of the bitumen runway and aprons at a cost of \$316,000. At Baradine, the unsealed runway was resurfaced at a cost of \$45,000, and the turning area on the eastern end of the Aerodrome was bitumen sealed at a cost of \$15,000.

### Emergency Services Management

The Local Emergency Management Committee meets throughout the year. The meetings were well attended with representatives from NSW Police, Fire & Rescue NSW, Rural Fire Service, Ambulance, State Emergency Service, Volunteer Rescue Authority and from the Regional Emergency Management Committee.

Council participates in the Bush Fire Management Committee which prepares plans for managing bush fire risks. The Committee also documents fire-trails within the Shire, which assists agencies in applying for funding to maintain fire-trails within the National Parks and also State Forest areas.

### **Environmental Health Services**

Assessment and inspections are carried out on all new applications for on-site sewage management systems (OSSMS). Existing OSSMS are inspected as required on an ad-hoc basis.

### **Local Roads and Infrastructure**

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

Throughout this term improvements to the road network were undertaken through the following roadwork projects:

- New bridges over Billy Kings Creek 1 and Billy Kings Creek 2
- New bitumen seal on Munns Road.
- Road Pavement widening in Mendooran
- Widening pipe culverts between Dunedoo and Mendooran
- Upgrading truck bay in Dunedoo
- Bridge construction on Todds Crossing Bridge
- Bridge construction on Allison Bridge
- Shoulder reconstruction and pavement widening on: Black Stump Way; Digilah Road; Timor Road; Baradine Road; Purlewaugh Road; Warrumbungles Way; and Vinegaroy Road
- Gravel resheeting on: Munns Road, Newbank Lane; Bourke and Halls Road; Wingabutta Road; Hawkins Road; Wardens Road; Mt Hope Road; Sandy Creek Road; Dandry Road; Carmel Lane; Becketts Road; Angus Road; Bingie Grumble Road; Digilah Road; and Boltons Creek Road
- Concrete causeways on Mia Mia Road and Napier Lane
- Sealed pavement renewal on Turee Vale Road and Black Stump Way
- Sealed pavement renewal on Coolah Creek Road, Neilrex Road and Black Stump Way.
- Renewal of unsealed roads through gravel resheeting on: Berdeen Road, Cumbil Road, Gowang Road, Hollymount Road, Leaders Road, Maranoa Road, Uphills Road, Coybil Road, Wardens Road and Boltons Creek Road.
- Shoulder reconstruction and pavement widening works on: Purlewaugh Road, Black Stump Way and Forest Road

### **Medical Facilities**

Buildings are owned in Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Mendooran that are leased for provision of medical services. These premises were maintained and met the professional service level expected by the medical practitioners operating in each of the buildings.

### **Warrumbungle Waste**

There is a landfill site at Coonabarabran, with transfer stations located in Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Dunedoo, Mendooran and Ulamambri. Warrumbungle Waste continued the weekly general waste collection and fortnightly recycling collection for residents throughout the Shire who pay for the collection.

Commercial recycling has changed from woolpacks to yellow lidded wheelie bins and the option for commercial businesses to purchase a 360L bin is now available.

Recent changes include infrastructure being installed at Ulamambri Transfer Station for residents to dispose of rubbish and the reduction in opening hours.

Coonabarabran Landfill and Dunedoo Transfer Station are both Container Deposit Stations with people travelling from other shires to deposit containers for the 10c refund. Council is currently ranked second in the state for the number of containers deposited, which means less plastic and glass is being disposed of into landfill.

### **Warrumbungle Water and Sewer**

Potable water services are supplied to residents in Baradine, Binnaway, Bugaldie, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Kenebri and Mendooran; non-potable services to residents in Merrygoen and along the raw water feed main in Timor Road, Coonabarabran. In all there are 3,319 service connections. To provide these services, there are 23 groundwater bores, 4 river wells, 1 dam, 1 weir, 4 water treatment plants, 23 reservoirs including treatment plant clear water tanks and 169 km of water mains including head works, transfer and reticulation mains.

To improve water security and safety there has been many projects which have been funded both by the Government and Council. Throughout this term, completed projects are:

- Reservoirs at Kenebri were replaced
- Martin Street reservoir in Coolah has been refurbished
- Timor Dam and Poundyard Weir in Coonabarabran were dredged
- 800 water meters were replaced Shire wide
- Water Supply Systems Automation Upgrade Scoping Study Shire wide
- Mendooran Water Supply Upgrade Concept Design
- Old water mains were replaced
- New water mains were installed
- Dead ends in the reticulation systems were removed
- Old bores were capped
- Integrity reservoirs were restored through repair works
- Filter control at the Coonabarabran Water Treatment Plan has been upgraded
- Feasibility study for the raising of the Timor Dam wall
- Baradine Water Treatment Plant Upgrade
- SCADA and Telemetry Network Upgrade
- Improvements to the water meter reading operation
- Council's Drinking Water Management System implemented
- Back up bores installed in Mendooran, Binnaway and Coolah
- 7 back up bores in Coonabarabran
- Old water mains have been replaced
- New water mains have been installed.
- Reservoirs were inspected and cleaned
- Water Treatment Plants were equipped with new laboratory instrumentation
- Chemical dosing systems at water treatment plants were renewed
- Underground pipeline for Coonabarabran

Sewage services are provided to residents in Baradine, Coolah, Coonabarabran and Dunedoo. In all, there are 1418 connections. Infrastructure to support these connections includes 9 pumping stations, 4 sewage treatment plants and 83 km of sewer main.

Upgrades have taken place Shire wide for the sewer network many of these projects have been funded by Government agencies. These projects included:

- 75 vacuum pots in Baradine were refurbished by replacing the internal valves and controllers
- Vacuum pump at the Baradine sewage pump station was replaced
- Manhole junctions were repaired and sealed in Coonabarabran



- Pump station inspections were performed resulting in several pump removals for repair and replacement Shire wide
- Dunedoo and Coonabarabran Sewage Treatment Plant Upgrade Concept Designs started
- Relining underground sewer
- Sewer main refurbished through relining and 165 boundary shafts were repaired
- Studies in Mendooran and continued in Binnaway to install sewerage services in these currently un-sewered township







## LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

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

Council is the major employer within the Shire, providing a wide range of local training and employment opportunities and Council's staff members are friendly and approachable and are an integral part of the communities of the Shire. Council is proactive in providing financial, staff and other resources to develop programs and services that support the well-being of its communities.

*“Warrumbungle Shire Council is recognised for its strong community leadership, sound financial and asset management, and ethical, accountable and responsive local government.”*

| Long term outcomes for our local governance and finance   | Strategies to achieve these outcomes   |
|---|--|
| <p>GF1</p> <p>There are minimal burdens on council arising from cost shifting and withdrawal of services from state and federal government.</p> | <p>GF1.1</p> <p>Develop strategic relationships across all levels of government to ensure that the shire receives an equitable allocation of resources.</p> <p>GF1.2</p> <p>Consider potential cost shifting as part of evaluating future service partnerships with governments.</p>   |
| <p>GF2</p> <p>The demographic makeup of the community is well-represented in local activities, service delivery and decision-making.</p>        | <p>GF2.1</p> <p>Ensure that all communities within the shire have opportunities to be informed about and involved in Council's activities and decision making.</p> <p>GF2.2</p> <p>Engage with Aboriginal Elders, Local Aboriginal Lands Councils and Indigenous groups to foster support, gather feedback and consult with about Council services and activities.</p> |

## WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED THIS TERM IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

### Administration and Customer Service

During the reporting period, Administration and Customer Service staff met the following targets set out in the Delivery Program and in line with the Community Strategic Plan:

- Annual Report, Agency Information Guide and statutory documentation prepared as required.
- Correspondence and reports prepared as required.
- On average throughout this term, 13,500 documents were registered in Council's electronic records management system per year.

A school-based trainee was introduced into Customer Service at the Coonabarabran office, expanding on opportunities previously provided to young people in the community.

### Cemetery Services

Twelve cemeteries are owned and maintained across the Shire. Activities include management of a database of interments, liaison with Funeral Directors, excavation of burial sites, maintenance of grounds and fences at each cemetery.

Upgrades have taken place at the cemeteries across the Shire, some projects are:

- Coonabarabran DPS and History Group Memorial wall at the Coonabarabran Cemetery
- New fencing at the Uarbry Cemetery
- Native Grove Cemetery underwent an upgrade with 144 new plots being created
- Installation of a new toilet facility at Native Grove
- Bomera Cemetery on Black Stump Way received funding to replace the aging fence

### Communications and IT

Communications released regarding Council achievements and activities has increased significantly over this term, with over 70 media releases now being released each year and nearly 3000 followers on social media. At the beginning of this term media releases were only being released for emergencies and there was no Council social media presence.

The Community e-Newsletter was launched in September 2019 and has 249 subscribers.

Council relies on a robust IT network to allow staff access across a large geographical area. IT capital projects have included:

- Installation of free wi-fi to towns throughout the local government area
- Software licensing
- Roll out of a new operating environment, the Remote Desktop Server
- Roll out of new hardware across the organisation
- New smart board to improve connectivity
- Online streaming of Council Meetings

### Design Services Management

The design team investigates, designs and prepares drawings for roadworks, drainage works, kerbing and guttering and footpath works. The team also provides rural road addressing services across the Shire and Geographic Information System (GIS) services to the organisation. The design team is active in preparing funding submissions for road projects, particularly projects under the State Government's Fixing Country Roads program, Safer Roads Program and Active Transport Program.



### **Environment and Development Management**

A review of the Local Environmental Plan is underway to confirm that zoning is correct and reflects the needs of the community and surrounding agricultural land to ensure fragmentation of agricultural plan does not occur.

A Heritage Study was funded and completed for the Warrumbungle Shire LGA.

Mediation and legal proceeding are still going ahead in relation to Three Rivers Regional Retirement Community (TRRRC) in Dunedoo.

### **Financial Services**

From 2016-21 the Financial Services team have been kept busy, working through changes in structure, processes and taking on new responsibilities. As well as this, the team has provided extended support for the interim and external audits.

Council received an incredible amount of funding over this term, some of which was due to natural disasters and the COVID-19 Pandemic. This funding has allowed for a lot of projects to go ahead. During the term Council has received over \$71 million worth of operational funding and over \$21 million worth of capital funding.

Whilst the Fit for the Future assessment by the Office of Local Government is officially over, Council is still measured against those benchmarks.

Financial Services are reviewing the Long-Term Financial Plan ahead of the adoption of a new 10-year plan by the next term of Council.

### **Fleet Services**

To support Council's wide range of services, workshops are operated at Coolah and Coonabarabran. The mechanics in these workshops provide maintenance and support services for a fleet of around 200 vehicles.

Over the last term Council's fleet has increased now including 86 sedans and utilities, eight (8) graders, three (3) loaders, three (3) excavators, four (4) backhoes, seven (7) rollers, seven (7) tractors, five (5) large tippers, 23 medium sized trucks, two (2) garbage trucks and one (1) street sweeper.

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

The fleet replacement program was extensive with the following items being replaced: 18 vehicles in the light vehicle fleet, backhoe, 4-tonne excavator, grader, two (2) rollers, front end loader, 5-tonne truck, four (4) ten-tonne trucks, two (2) dog trailers, street sweeper, tractor, and out-front mower.

### **Organisation Development**

The organisation's turnover remained steady at an average during the term of 12.27% per annum. This has decreased from the average turn over during the previous term, being 12.70% per annum.

All recruitment is now online with internal processes and approval also moving online with the implementation of Scout online program.

COVID-19 impacted a range of operations in the year 2020/21, with a number of new procedures and processes introduced to assist in managing the risks associated with the

pandemic. The uncertainties surrounding the impacts of COVID-19 also affected recruitment in the latter half of the financial year, delaying the recruitment of some positions.

The first stage of implementing a new online WHS incident and management reporting system (Vault) was brought forward as part of the COVID-19 measures, to allow staff to report incidents and observations online in a timely manner and also eliminating the paper handling that was previously required.

Council commenced a three-year Employee Engagement Program in early 2019/2020. The program includes an annual staff survey, followed by quarterly action plans being prepared and actioned by each department based on feedback from staff. Some early actions included purchasing equipment that allowed staff to achieve better outcomes, and a direction for more time in the field by management to improve internal communication. COVID-19 prevented planned staff events during April however these were rescheduled for later in 2020.

Council continues to support local youth through its apprentice and traineeship programs, appointing two (2) School-Based trainees (SBT) in Community Services and Corporate Services at Coonabarabran in early 2020, in addition to the remaining three SBTs who commenced in 2019. Council also employs two (2) trainees in Children's Services and one (1) trainee in Warrumbungle Water, and has Apprentice Plumber positions at Coonabarabran and Coolah.

### **Property Management**

Council's property portfolio, excluding public halls and medical centres, includes; two (2) administration offices, nine (9) residential houses, three (3) preschools and a range of community buildings.

### **Risk Management**

Risk mitigation throughout the term included membership of StateWide Mutual, providing access to regional insurance and risk management support. Programs undertaken were the Continuous Improvement Pathways workbooks and Enterprise Risk Management workshops. Regionally, Council participates in the Orana Risk and Safety Management Group.

The organisation's Business Continuity Plan was enacted in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.



## FINANCIAL REPORTING

The nature of Council, being a geographically large rural area with low population density, presents significant challenges for financial sustainability, including:

- A small population;
- Lack of economies of scale in operations and distance from major centres;
- A high reliance on grant funding;
- A significant infrastructure network of around 2,600km of roads, 6 pools, 6 libraries, over 100 bridges and bridge-sized culverts, and over 400 buildings and structures;
- Recruiting and retaining staff in a competitive market;
- Revenue restraints such as rate pegging;
- Cost shifting by other levels of government.

While Council's overall financial position has declined over the term of Council, the 2019/20 result was a significant improvement on 2018/19. The Financial Statements for 2020/21 were not yet available at the time of drafting this report, and will be included in the 2020/21 Annual Report.

### Profit and Loss Statement

| Income Statement                                  | 2016/17<br>(\$,000) | 2017/18<br>(\$,000) | 2018/19<br>(\$,000) | 2019/20<br>(\$,000) |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Income from Continuing Operations</b>          |                     |                     |                     |                     |
| Rates and annual charges                          | 11,928              | 12,076              | 13,015              | 13,844              |
| User charges and fees                             | 8,218               | 8,357               | 5,642               | 6,066               |
| Interest and investment revenue                   | 458                 | 423                 | 461                 | 460                 |
| Other revenues                                    | 1,237               | 1,214               | 1,073               | 2,137               |
| Grants and contributions (operational)            | 20,772              | 18,206              | 16,424              | 16,121              |
| Grants and contributions (capital)                | 4,397               | 6,285               | 5,886               | 3,775               |
| Gains from disposal of assets                     | -                   | -                   | 999                 | 599                 |
| Share of interest in Joint Venture gains          | 50                  | 41                  | 15                  | 44                  |
| <b>Total Income</b>                               | <b>47,060</b>       | <b>46,602</b>       | <b>43,515</b>       | <b>43,046</b>       |
| <b>Expenses from Continuing Operations</b>        |                     |                     |                     |                     |
| Employee benefits and on-costs                    | 15,025              | 16,080              | 14,484              | 14,929              |
| Borrowing costs                                   | 361                 | 335                 | 327                 | 307                 |
| Material and contracts                            | 8,205               | 7,186               | 10,024              | 7,185               |
| Depreciation and impairment                       | 10,099              | 11,421              | 12,531              | 12,970              |
| Other expenses                                    | 8,055               | 8,516               | 5,511               | 5,395               |
| Losses from disposal of assets                    | 653                 | 1,201               | -                   | -                   |
| <b>Total Expenditure</b>                          | <b>42,398</b>       | <b>44,739</b>       | <b>42,877</b>       | <b>40,786</b>       |
| <b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>                          | <b>4,662</b>        | <b>1,863</b>        | <b>638</b>          | <b>2,260</b>        |
| <b>Net result before grants and contributions</b> | <b>265</b>          | <b>(4,422)</b>      | <b>(5,248)</b>      | <b>(1,515)</b>      |



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