

Warrumbungle Shire Council

STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS – July 2007

INTRODUCTION

This document has been issued in accordance with the requirements of Section 14 of the New South Wales Freedom of Information Act 1989, No. 5. It forms the Warrumbungle Shire Council Statement of Affairs. The information provided in this Statement of Affairs is intended to increase public awareness and access to documents held by Council. The Statement of Affairs is required to describe the following:

- a description of Council's structure and functions
- a description of the way in which the functions affect members of the public
- a description of any arrangements that exist to enable members of the public to participate in the formulation of policy and the exercise of Council's various functions
- a description of the various kinds of documents which Council holds; and
- how members of the public may access and amend Council documents.

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

Warrumbungle Shire Council was formed by Proclamation on 25th August 2004 following an amalgamation of the former Coolah and Coonabarabran Shire Councils. Warrumbungle Shire Council is located in North Western NSW and is the gateway to the Warrumbungle Mountains, Siding Spring Observatory and Coolah Tops.

The Shire has a population of 10,576 and the Council provides services covering an area of 12,380 square kilometres.

Coonabarabran is the administration centre within the Council area, with council chambers also located at Coolah. Services are provided to the districts of Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Mendooran.

Structure

Warrumbungle Shire Council is governed by a nine member Council. The elected members comprise the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and seven Councillors. The senior Management team consists of the General Manager and four divisional heads: the Director Technical Services, Director Environmental Services, Director Corporate Services and Community Services Director.

The current elected members (elected March 2005) are:

Mayor

Councillor Peter **Shinton**

“Oxley”

Oxley Highway
COONABARABRAN NSW 2357

Telephone: (02) 68 422 055

Fax: (02) 68 422 169

Deputy Mayor

Councillor Garry Connelly

“Delawong”

COOLAH NSW 2843

Telephone: (02) 68 446 236

Fax: (02) 68 446 288

Councillors

Councillor Murray **Coe**

“Ewendale”

DUNEDOO NSW 2844

Telephone: (02) 63 750 265

Councillor Carol **Dawson**

17 Nandi Street

COONABARABRAN NSW 2357

Telephone: (02) 68 422 002

Fax:

Councillor Robert (Col) **Egan**

4 Castlereagh Avenue

BINNAWAY NSW 2395

Telephone: (02) 68 441 034

Fax: (02) 68 441 654

Councillor Wendy **Hill**

35 Yarrow Street

DUNEDOO NSW 2844

Telephone: (02) 63 751 948

Councillor Ray **Lewis**

Post Office Resident

NEILREX NSW 2831

Telephone: (02) 68 863 517

Councillor Ron **Sullivan**

“Bingo”

COONABARABRAN NSW 2357

Telephone: (02) 68 428 226

Fax: (02) 68 428 226

Councillor Denis **Todd**

“Wheatfields”

BARADINE NSW 2396

Telephone: (02) 68 431 831

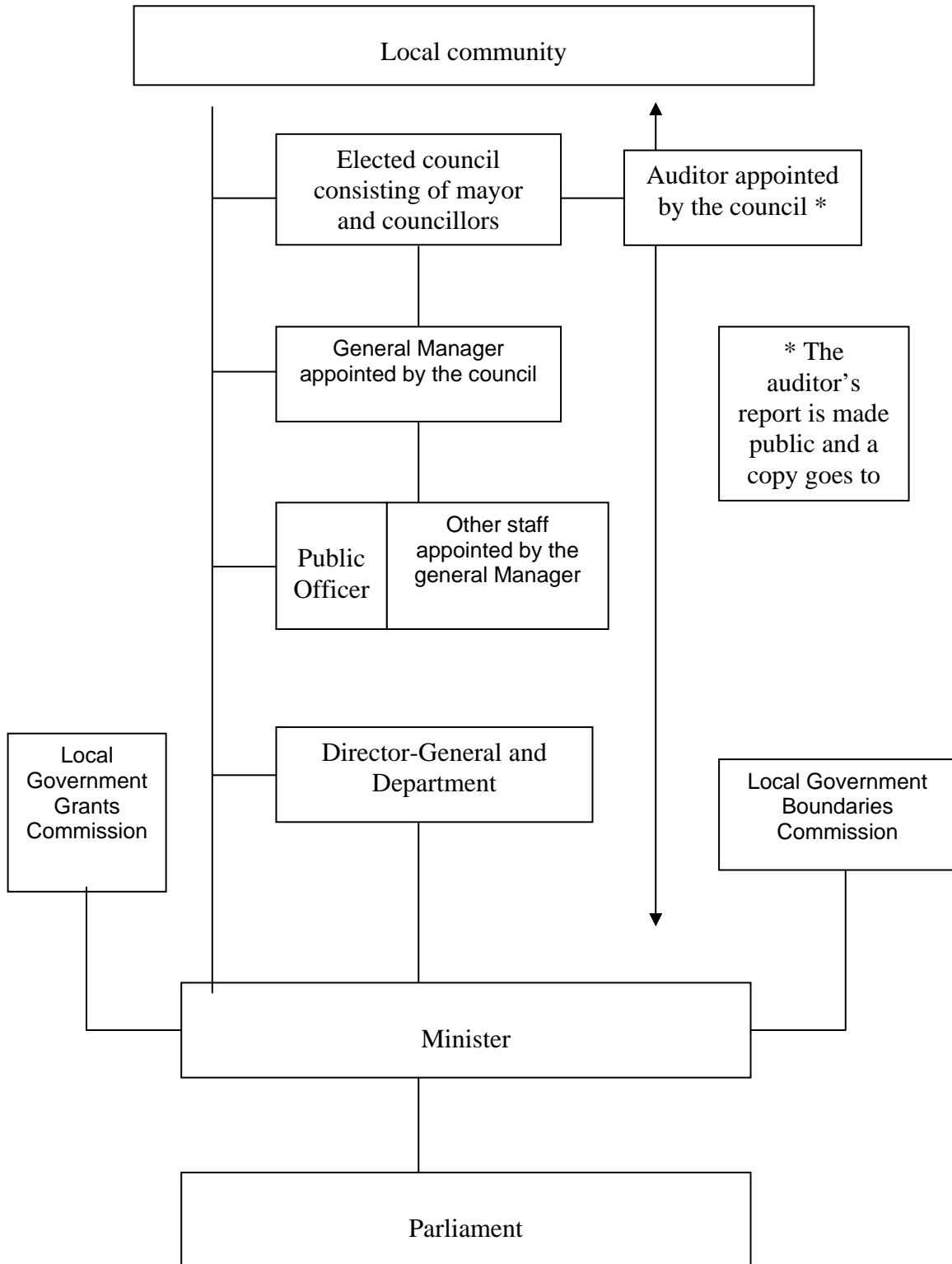
Fax: (02) 68 431 118

Council's current senior staff are:

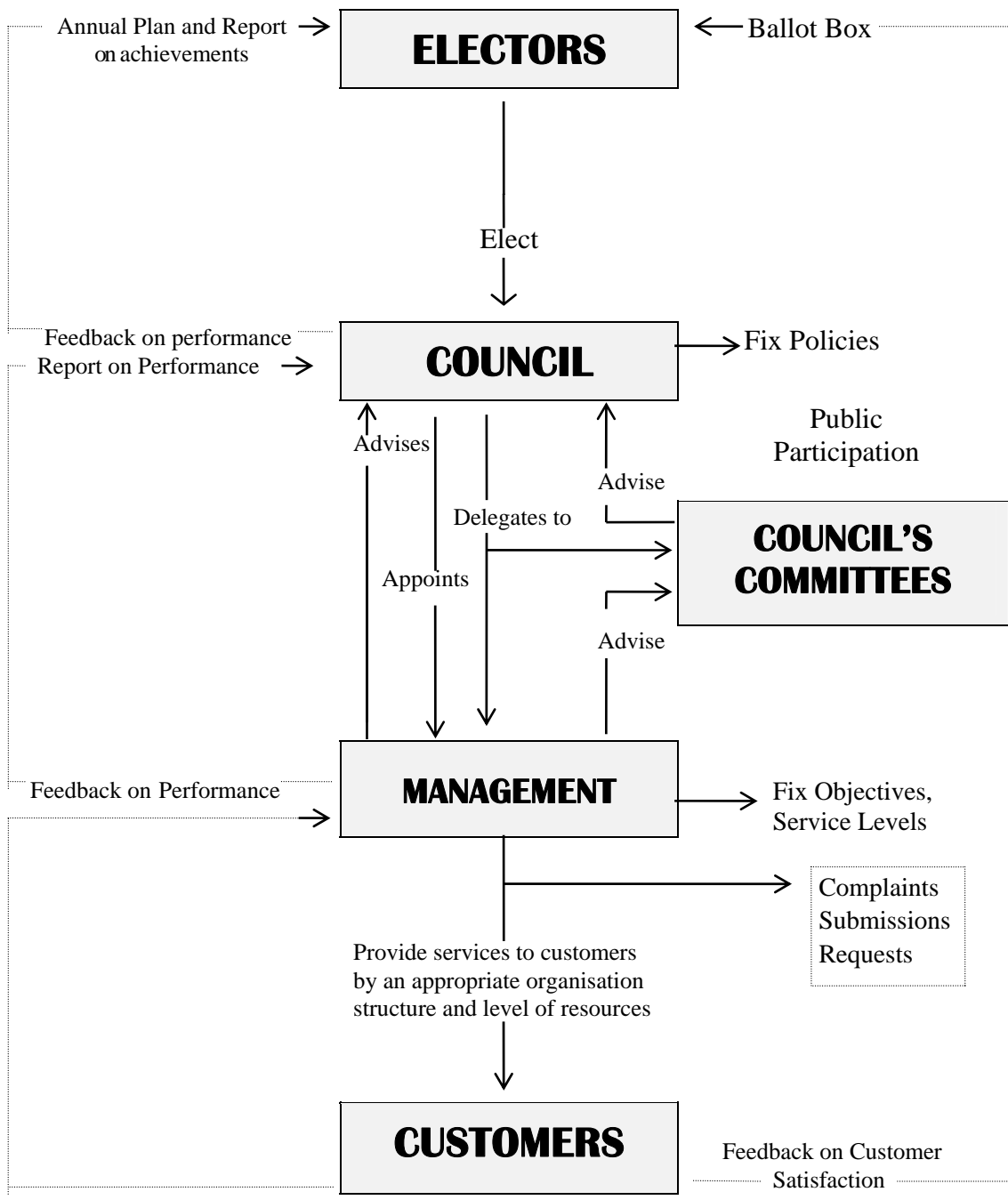
Mr Robert Geraghty
Mrs Elizabeth White
Mr Kevin Tighe
Mr Ron VanKatwyk
Mrs Rebecca Ryan

General Manager
Director of Corporate Services
Director of Technical Services
Director of Environmental Services
Director of Community Services

The system of Local Government



How your Council works



What this Chart Indicates:

This chart shows you as both an elector and as a customer of Council. It demonstrates the teamwork between Council and management who provide advice for policy development and then implement the policies and objectives decided by the Council. Channels for feedback and responses appear in dotted outlined.

LIST OF PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

PROGRAMME

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

1 EXECUTIVE

Council
General Manager
Human Resources Services
Economic Development and Tourism

2 TECHNICAL SERVICES

Design Projects
Road Operations
Urban Services
Fleet Services
Road Contracts
Warrumbungle Waste
Water & Sewerage Services

3 ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Environmental Management
Health Services
Regulatory Services
Building Services

4 CORPORATE SERVICES

Corporate Services Management
Financial Services
Administration Services
IT Support
Supply Services
Bush Fire

5 COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community Care
Emergency Services
Social Services
Family Day Care
Connect Five
Libraries
Information Services

Major Functions

Warrumbungle Shire Council is responsible for the management of the following principal activities and services provided by Council:

a) **Executive Services**

The General Manager is responsible for the day to day care, control and management of all functions of the Organisation, and the outcomes achieved by the divisions, plus:

- Governance
- Corporate Affairs
- Corporation Image and Government Relations
- Management and Leadership
- Marketing
- Community Consultation
- Public Relations
- Legal Services
- Organisation Structure and Development
- Policies, Codes and Delegations
- Public Relations (Annual Report, ceremonies/functions, advertising, promotions)

- **Human Resources Services**
 - Human Resource Management
 - O H & S Risk Management
 - Staff Recruitment Services
 - Performance Management
 - Salary System Management

- **Economic Development and Tourism**
 - Tourism and Information Services
 - Economic Development, Tourism and Information

b) **Technical Services**

Public Works/Infrastructure

- **Technical Services Management**
 - Management Control and Support
- **Design Projects**
 - Design Projects Management
 - Survey Investigation and Design services
 - Traffic Management
 - Regional and State Roads
 - Local Roads
 - Town Streets
 - Asset Management
 - Street Lighting
 - Quarries

- **Road Operations**
 - Road Operations Management
 - Construction of drainage, roads and bridges
 - Maintenance of roads and bridges
 - Private Works
 - Construction and maintenance of footpaths
- **Urban Services**
 - Parks and Gardens Construction and Maintenance
 - Street Cleaning
 - Public Toilet maintenance
- **Waste Management**
 - Waste Management
- **Fleet Services**
 - Fleet Services Management
 - Plant and Equipment
 - Depot Management
- **Road Contracts**
 - RTA Single Invitation Contract Management
 - RTA Works
 - Gravel Pits
 - Road and Bridge Contract Documentation
- **Water & Sewerage Services**
 - Water and sewerage strategic planning
 - Water and sewerage operations

c) **Environmental Services**

- Environmental Management
- Health Services
- Regulatory Services
 - Dog Control
 - Stock Impounding
 - Enforcement Services
 - Stock and Dog/Cat Pounds
- Building Services

d) **Corporate Services**

- **Corporate Services Management**
 - Organisation Development
 - Council Offices
 - Property Management
 - Council Chambers
 - Caravan Park
 - Medical Centre
 - Other land and Buildings

Risk Management - Insurances
IT Strategic Management Services

Programmes:

- **Financial Services**
 - Management
 - Systems, standards and controls
 - Statutory Accounting
 - Cash Management
 - Rating
 - Debtor Management
 - Creditor Management
 - Payroll Management

- **Administration Services**
 - Management
 - Secretarial
 - Secretariat
 - Records Management
 - Corporate Services to the community
 - Switchboard/Reception
 - Council's Business Papers and Minutes
 - Statutory requirement
 - Annual Reports
 - Management Reports

- **IT Support Services**
 - Management
 - Support Services

- **Supply Services**
 - Supply Services
 - Stores Operation – warehousing and inventory services

- **Bushfire & Emergency Services**
 - Bushfire Services
 - Fire Control/Suppression
 - Vehicle Equipment
 - Emergency Services

d) **Community Services**

- Community Care
- Information Services
- Emergency Services
- Social Services
- Family Day Care
- Connect Five
- Libraries

EFFECT OF FUNCTIONS ON THE PUBLIC

Most of Council's functions have a direct impact on members of the public. This impact is summarised below:

- ◇ Council currently employs in excess of 200 people. Our employees are members of the local communities and support local businesses.
- ◇ Council processes a large number of applications dealing with a variety of requests. Applications dealing with land (subdivision and development) and the use of buildings are a large component of Council's activities. Council also receives requests for the opening and/or closure of roads, permission to hold special events and applications to use public facilities.
- ◇ Council is responsible for the monitoring and enforcement of any conditions imposed under its role as a Consent Authority together with enforcement of regulatory conditions which extend to Bush Fire control, animal control and any activities involving public property.
- ◇ Council is responsible for ensuring that the infrastructure and land use zonings are capable of accommodating future growth needs.
- ◇ Council is also responsible for the licensing of public halls, food outlets, caravan parks and companion animals. Monitoring of the approvals to ensure compliance with the licence conditions is an ongoing activity.
- ◇ Libraries, public halls, parks, cemeteries, reserves and swimming pools are some of a wide range of facilities provided by Council.
- ◇ Council is involved in the development of land and is currently undertaking development of land for industrial use.
- ◇ Council is actively seeking to promote economic development with the employment of staff in this area and is actively involved with tourism through the Visitor Information Centre and tourism committee.
- ◇ The provision of waste management, water supply and sewerage services is a major component of Council's budget and these activities have a direct impact on all properties serviced by the various schemes. This year waste management has been extended to the southern end of the Shire.
- ◇ Council provides a range of welfare facilities including Family Day Care Services, Connect 5 Children's Services, Meals on Wheels, Neighbour Aid and Home and Community Care.(HACC). Family Day Care co-ordinates a scheme for the Shires of Warrumbungle and Gilgandra and attends to Childcare needs and carer performance, training and support. Connect 5 Children's Services provides a service for 0-5 yrs children who are unable to access other children's services over the five areas of Coonamble, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Gilgandra and Narromine. HACC co-ordinates, promotes and provides an affordable community transport programme and through the Coolah program provides respite care and a handy person service.

- ◇ Council's Community Development Officer and Community Agency Officer provide information, referral and assistance to the community through distribution of information and service provision to encourage self help and diversification for the community to improve and promote social development initiatives established by Council and the community.
- ◇ Warrumbungle Shire Council has developed a close working relationship with the two State Members represented within our Shire (Mr George Souris and Mr Ian Slack-Smith) and with the Federal Member for Gwydir, Mr John Anderson. This working relationship has assisted Council in representations on behalf of the community to both State and Federal Governments with some positive outcomes for the Shire flowing from those representations.

Public Participation in Council's Policy Development

Monthly meetings of Council are advertised and attendance by members of the public is encouraged. An open forum time is provided at the commencement of each monthly meeting to allow community members to address Council and senior staff on issues of concern. The opportunity to speak at these public forums is advertised regularly and participants are advised that they may speak for 5 minutes. Councillors are encouraged to ask questions at the time of the forum presentation and the Mayor accepts written information that may be provided at that time for distribution to each Councillor.

The Council considers matters referred to it by and through the General Manager from division heads, other organisations (public and private) and constituents of the area. Input from community members in any area of Council's operations is invited and welcomed. Copies of the draft Management Plan incorporating budget proposals for the ensuing year are placed in each of the libraries for community input and copies are forwarded by mail to community bodies (eg. progress associations) in outlying areas for public comment and seeking further community consultation. A variety of community groups are also contacted with a request that they make submissions on behalf of their community/group for consideration by Council during the budget preparation period.

The following committees have community representation and act as advisory bodies to Council:

- ◇ Coonabarabran Town Beautification Advisory Committee
- ◇ Warrumbungle Shire Tourism Advisory Committee
- ◇ Warrumbungle Shire Economic Development Advisory Committee
- ◇ Shire Halls Advisory Committee
- ◇ Medical Services Advisory Committee
- ◇ Warrumbungle Aerodromes Advisory Committee
- ◇ Warrumbungle Shire Council Social Services Advisory Committee
- ◇ Urban Creeks Steering Committee
- ◇ Coolah Town Committee

- ◇ Dunedoo Town Committee
- ◇ Mendooran/Merrygoen Town Committee
- ◇ Binnaway Town Committee
- ◇ Baradine Town Committee
- ◇ Multi Service Outlet Committee

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 Council Chambers with meetings held annually at Goolhi. Any change of venue and time is advertised in the local papers and contact made with local community groups advising of the forthcoming meeting in their area.

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.

Town Committee meetings are held at Baradine, Binnaway, Dunedoo, Mendooran and Coolah to enable easier access by those community members to bring relevant issues before Council through their progress associations or development groups.

Any community member or group wishing to address Council at a meeting is asked to contact the General Manager or Administration Manager to make arrangements for such a deputation.

Items of correspondence can be delivered to the Council Chambers in John Street Coonabarabran or Council Chambers, Coolah or addressed to Council's Administration Centre - The General Manager, Warrumbungle Shire Council, P O Box 191, Coonabarabran 2357.

DOCUMENTS HELD BY COUNCIL

The purpose of this section is to describe the various kinds of documents that are held by Council. These documents have been categorised as follows:

Policy Documents

These documents are detailed in the attached copy of the June 2007 Summary of Affairs.

Registers

To satisfy statutory requirements, a large number of registers are kept by Council and examples of these are:

Development Applications
Disclosures Register
Land Register
Register of Investments
Cemetery
Legal Documents
Section 94 Register

Hard copy files

Council processes incoming and outgoing mail through an electronic Document Management System (Bluepoint). Copies of relevant incoming/outgoing correspondence are now kept electronically with hard copies retained in correspondence folders, which are archived and dealt with under the provisions of the Local Government Records General Disposal Authority (GDA10).

Hard copy files have continued to be maintained for all matters relating to properties, plant and equipment, personnel, roads, financial and some general business of Council.

Computerised Data

Computer records are maintained for many of Council's activities and access by individual members of staff and the public is restricted due to the confidential or private nature of some of the information. The major systems are

- Accounting
- Correspondence / Work Requests
- Council Business / Resolutions
- Creditors
- Dogs / Companion Animals
- Debtors
- Payroll
- Property
- Rating
- Miscellaneous - Word Processing, computerised diary etc.

Staff access in some of these areas is restricted, enabling staff to deal only with enquiries in the areas directly involved with their duties.

Legal Documents

Council retains a variety of legal documents within the strong room. Examples are:

- Certificates of Title (property owned by Council)
- Contracts
- Agreements
- Deeds
- Loan documents
- Lease Agreements
- Funding Agreements

Accounting Records

Detailed accounting records are maintained for a minimum of seven (7) years and are destroyed (subject to requirements of the General Disposal Schedule) after approval has been received from Council's Auditor. The types of documents in this category are:

- Bank statements/reconciliations
- Debtor notices
- General Ledger records/reports
- Payroll records
- Receipts for payments to Council's cashiers
- Staff time sheets
- Vouchers for accounts paid by Council

Rating Records

Records relating to property ownership, valuation, property descriptions and land transfers are maintained in the Council offices and also stored in archive boxes at the Depot. Information from these records is occasionally sought from members of the public. Examples of some records maintained are:

- Notices of Transfer
- Rate levy calculations
- Valuations issued by the Valuer General's Office

Plans

Council holds a number of plans amongst its records and examples are:

- Deposited plans for property subdivisions
- Development Control Plans
- Parish Portions
- Easement
- Sewer lines
- Water lines

Reports

Council staff continuously prepare reports and examples of these are:

- Business Papers for Council meetings
- Minutes recording Resolutions from Council meetings
- Minutes of Committee meetings
- Financial Statements
- Annual reports
- Community Service and Business Service Directories
- State of the Environment Report
- Developer Contributions Plan
- Sewage Management System Installation Local Policy
- Plan of Management - Community Land
- Management Plans (incorporating budget)

OTHER RECORDS KEPT BY COUNCIL

Other records of Council are also available to the public for inspection on request. If access to any record is refused, application for their release can be applied for under the Freedom of Information (F.O.I.) Act as explained below.

Copies of Council's Policy Documents and many other documents of Council are available from Council's Public Officer, Mr Robert Geraghty, by arrangement, during office hours. Some of these copies are free while others are reproduced for a small fee.

Privacy Management Plan

Council's endorsed Privacy Management Plan under the terms of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 ("PPIPA") provides for the protection of personal information and for the protection of the privacy of individuals.

Local Government councils are required to collect personal information but must ensure the privacy rights of individuals is not infringed. Council is bound by the terms of this Act and has established procedures to ensure that the provision of information sought from Council meets the requirements of the Act.

APPLICATIONS FOR ACCESS TO COUNCIL'S RECORDS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (F.O.I.) ACT

If you ask for records or documents and you are not able to obtain them, you can apply for them, under the F.O.I. Act by:

1. Completing an F.O.I. application form. These forms are available at Council's offices or you may apply in writing, supplying all the details required under the F.O.I. Act.
2. Present the form or letter, the appropriate fee and where necessary, identification to either of the Council's offices. Details of procedures, fees and reductions in certain cases can be obtained from Council's office.

Access Arrangements

In most instances, access will be provided to documents that are available to members of the public without the need to apply in writing, under the Freedom of Information Act. Access can be obtained by contacting enquiry staff from the relevant division at either Council Chambers.

Enquiries relating to matters of a confidential nature, court proceedings, private affairs or of a legal professional privilege, will be referred to the Public Officer. It may then be necessary to lodge an application under the Freedom of Information Act and the necessary forms will be provided to you.

It should be noted however that 'personal information' relating to individuals may be protected under the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act, 1998 and may not be able to be made available without the consent of the person concerned.

An initial application fee of \$34.00 is required and dependent on processing time involved, extra charges may also be payable (Internal review \$46.00 and Processing Fee \$35.00). If the application is refused, reasons will be given and the appropriate form to appeal the decision forwarded to you.

Enquiries should be directed to:

The General Manager
Warrumbungle Shire Council
20-22 John Street
COONABARABRAN NSW 2357

Postal Address: P O Box 191
COONABARABRAN NSW 2357

Telephone: 02 68 49 2000

Facsimile: 02 68 42 1337

Office hours for public access: 9.00 am to 4.00 pm Monday to Friday
(Excluding public holidays)

Work Hours: 8.15 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Friday
(Excluding public holidays)