



Warrumbungle Shire Council

2022/23 Annual Report

Released November 2023



MAYOR'S MESSAGE



The road to recovery has been a prominent theme for the Warrumbungle Shire Local Government Area throughout 2022/23. Over the past few years it has seemed that we have faced battle after battle with natural disasters, which has been out of Council's control. However, moving forward and delivering positive outcomes for our communities is what has been the focus.

With high motivation to achieve progress, Council has been on the road to recovery, in particular after another extraordinary event hit our Shire with the La Nina weather pattern sweeping across New South Wales causing extensive damage to roads and infrastructure right across the Warrumbungle Shire.

Nonetheless, with funding from government bodies great progress has been made throughout 2022/23 and while still facing a long road to recovery Council has pulled together and managed some incredible achievements this term.

Major repairs to the vast road network has been the primary focus for 2022/23 however works on upgrading sporting facilities, swimming pools and community assets has been evident right across the Shire this year. But it is not always the big million-dollar project. It is also about the everyday business of running the region and creating opportunities and supporting communities, which has happened while these big projects are rolling out. Warrumbungle Shire has worked closely with our neighbouring Councils to roll out an amazing region wide Real Country economic campaign drawing people to come and visit our region and see the amazing prospects on offer and giving our local communities a chance to have their say in what they would like to see for our region moving forward. There has been a major increase in events right across the region this year bringing communities together and supporting our local economy, which has been wonderful to see.

Funding has been coming into the region at an extraordinary pace again this financial year, with both federal and state governments supporting us while we have navigated through these unique events.

All of this incredible work, while embracing challenges, is a credit to the committed staff at Warrumbungle Shire Council.

While this Annual Report details the year we have had, the exciting prospect is that we have more to come. The future is bright.

AMBROSE DOOLAN
MAYOR

GENERAL MANAGER'S MESSAGE



2022/23 has been a year of both achievements and challenges for Warrumbungle Shire Council. Major investments have been made in the Warrumbungle communities through Council's capital works program and funded projects, however the year has been dominated by the impacts of damaging major weather events affecting infrastructure right across the Shire.

A number of major projects have been delivered in 2022/23. With the generous support of the Australian Government, over \$3 million has been invested into various local roads and community infrastructure projects through the Australian Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program Phase 3. The projects are in full swing and have allowed various projects across multiple

towns across the Shire to commence, improving road networks and community infrastructure, benefiting our community members.

The NSW Government has also made a number of grant funding opportunities available. In particular, Council was successful in obtaining nearly \$1 million through the Stronger Country Communities Program to complete much needed upgrades to sporting facilities and outdoor pools across the Shire and \$1.5 million through Resources for Regions for upgrades and expansions to the sporting ovals in Coolah, Coonabarabran and Mendooran, and investigation into the redevelopment of Coonabarabran Public Swimming Pool. This funding aims to boost the wellbeing of communities in regional areas by providing new or upgraded social and sporting infrastructure, or community programs that have strong local support.

These projects have been delivered while dealing with the largest Natural Disaster claims that Council has ever submitted to the NSW Government for funding assistance with the repair of roads and infrastructure damage across the Shire, after major natural disaster flooding events. The estimated costs of repairs have resulted in massive claims for assistance with road repairs of over \$13 million. The claim packages were put together in geographical order, and works are being tackled in priority order. Works have been progressing well throughout 2022/23, with the repairs being evident Shire wide.

Looking towards the future, Council secured funding to prepare a Disaster Resilience Strategy which will be led by community input assisting Council moving forward with works programs and funding applications to address these issues immediately affecting our communities in a Natural Disaster.

It has been a privilege working in partnership with the Mayor, councillors, the Executive Leadership Team and staff of the Warrumbungle Shire Council to produce some wonderful outcomes, projects and strategies for our local communities. I am pleased to present the 2022/23 Annual Report.

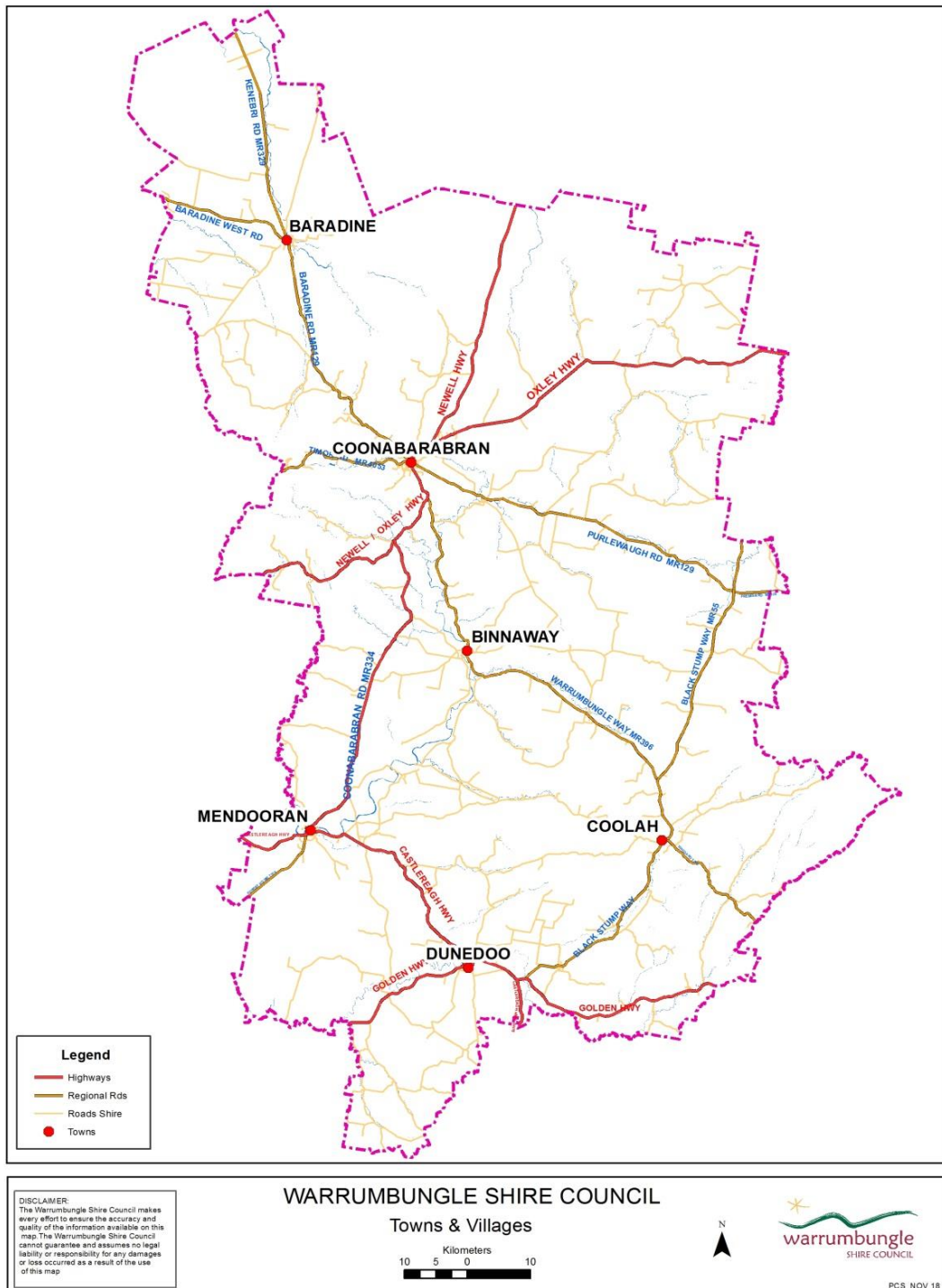
ROGER BAILEY
GENERAL MANAGER

CONTENTS

Mayor’s Message	2
General Manager’s Message	2
Our Community	5
Community Snapshot	6
Councillors	7
Organisation	8
Vision, Mission And Values	9
Guiding Principles	10
Integrated Planning And Reporting Framework	11
Community Priorities	12
Council Highlights	14
Financial Snapshot	39
Statutory Reporting	40
Delivery Program Implementation	41
Audited Financial Reports	41
Rates And Charges Written Off	41
Overseas Visits	41
Payment Of Expenses And Provision Of Facilities To Councillors	42
Professional Development	43
Contracts Awarded	44
Legal Proceedings	45
Labour Statistics Reporting	45
Inspections Of Private Swimming Pools	46
Private Works	46
Contributions	47
External Bodies	48
Controlling Interests	49
Joint Ventures	49
Equal Employment Opportunity	49
Remuneration – Senior Staff	50
Stormwater Management Services	51
Special Variations	51
Companion Animals Act And Regulation	52
Government Information (Public Access)	53
Planning Agreements	55
Public Interest Disclosures	55
Disability Inclusion Action Plan	56
Attachments	59

OUR COMMUNITY

The Warrumbungle Shire local government area is positioned mid-way between Brisbane and Melbourne on the Newell Highway. Taking in the towns of Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Mendooran, our local government area is shown below.



COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT



9,225

TOTAL POPULATION

Baradine 586
Binnaway 399
Coolah 722
Coonabarabran 2,387
Dunedoo 725
Mendooran 275



985

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POPULATION



55.9%

EMPLOYED FULL TIME

31.7%

EMPLOYED PART TIME



50

MEDIAN AGE



5,920

RATED PROPERTIES

2,601 designated farmland or rural

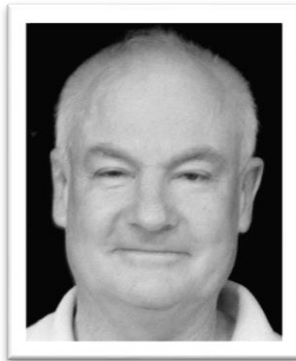


\$559

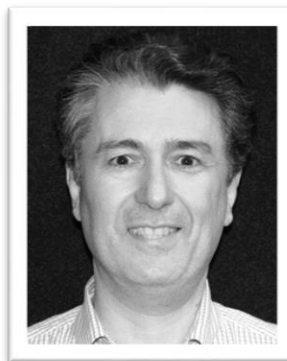
MEDIAN WEEKLY INCOME

*** Sourced from 2021 Census data.*

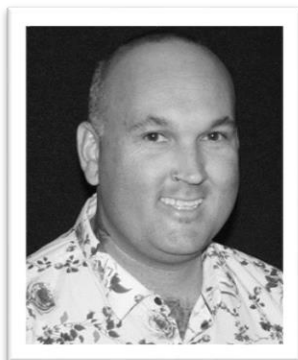
COUNCILLORS



**Mayor
Ambrose Doolan**



**Deputy Mayor
Aniello Iannuzzi**



Kodi Brady



Dale Hogden



Zoe Holcombe



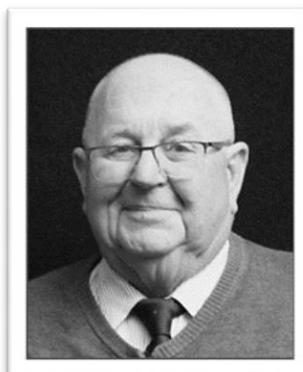
Carlton Kopke



Jason Newton



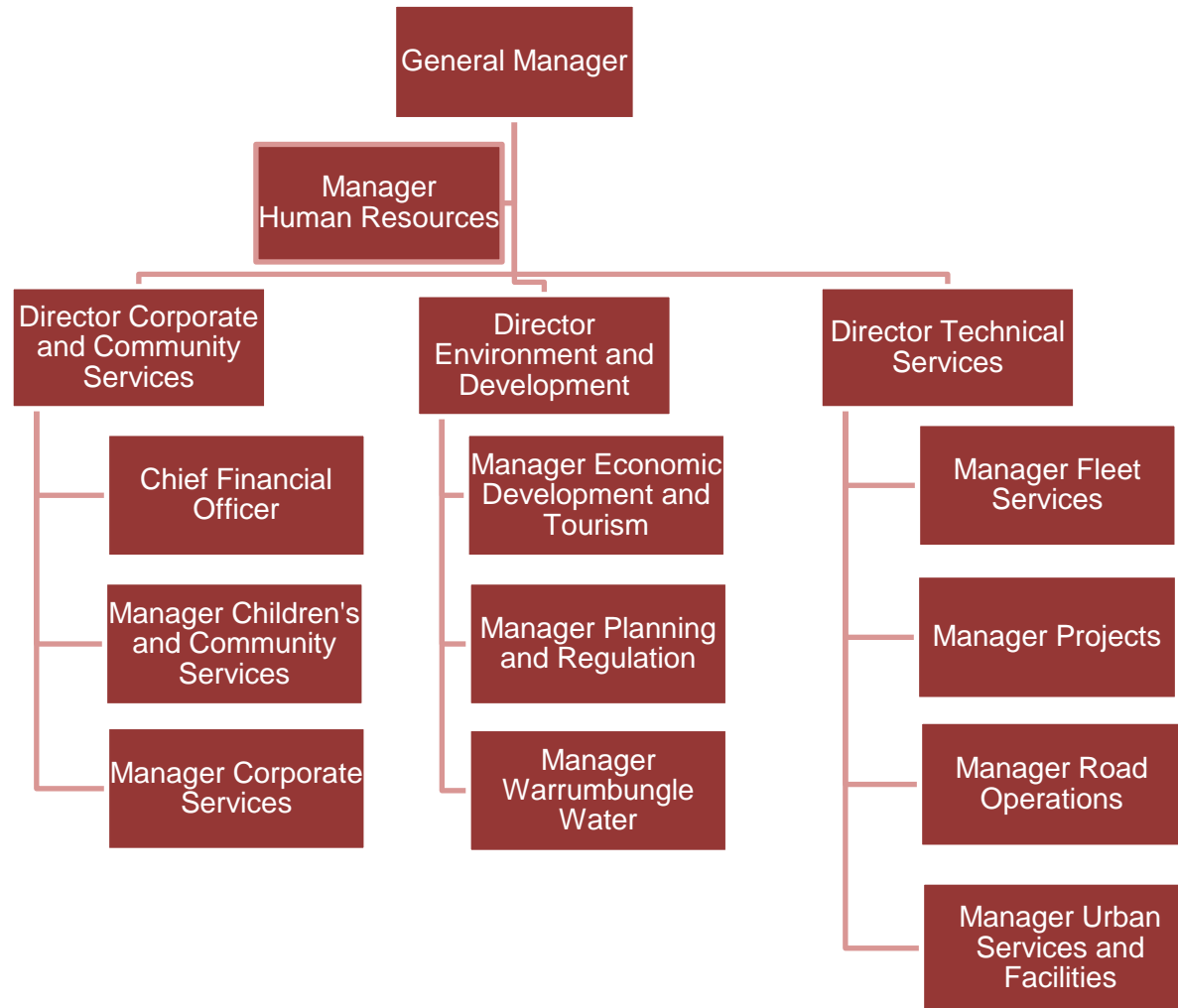
Kathryn Rindfleish



Denis Todd

ORGANISATION

Warrumbungle Shire Council is managed by a General Manager with three Directorates. Council's organisation structure is shown below.



VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

VISION

Excellence in Local Government

MISSION

Council will provide

- Quality, cost effective services that will enhance our community's lifestyle, environment, opportunity and prosperity;
- Infrastructure and services which meet the social and economic needs and aspirations of the community now and in the future;
- Effective leadership and good governance, by encouraging teamwork, through a dedicated responsible well-trained workforce.

VALUES

✓ **Honesty**

Frank and open discussion, taking responsibility for our actions

✓ **Integrity**

Behaving in accordance with our values

✓ **Fairness**

Consideration of the facts and a commitment to two-way communication

✓ **Compassion**

Working for the benefit and care of our community and the natural environment

✓ **Respect**

To ourselves, colleagues, the organisation and the community listening actively and responding truthfully

✓ **Transparency**

Open and honest interactions with each other and our community

✓ **Passion**

Achievement of activities with energy, enthusiasm and pride

✓ **Trust**

Striving to be dependable, reliable and delivering outcomes in a spirit of goodwill

✓ **Opportunity**

To be an enviable workplace creating pathways for staff development

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Council is guided by section 8 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW), which contains a set of principles to provide guidance to enable councils to carry out their functions in a way that facilitates local communities that are strong, healthy and prosperous.

Local Government Act 1993, section 8A 'Guiding principles for councils':

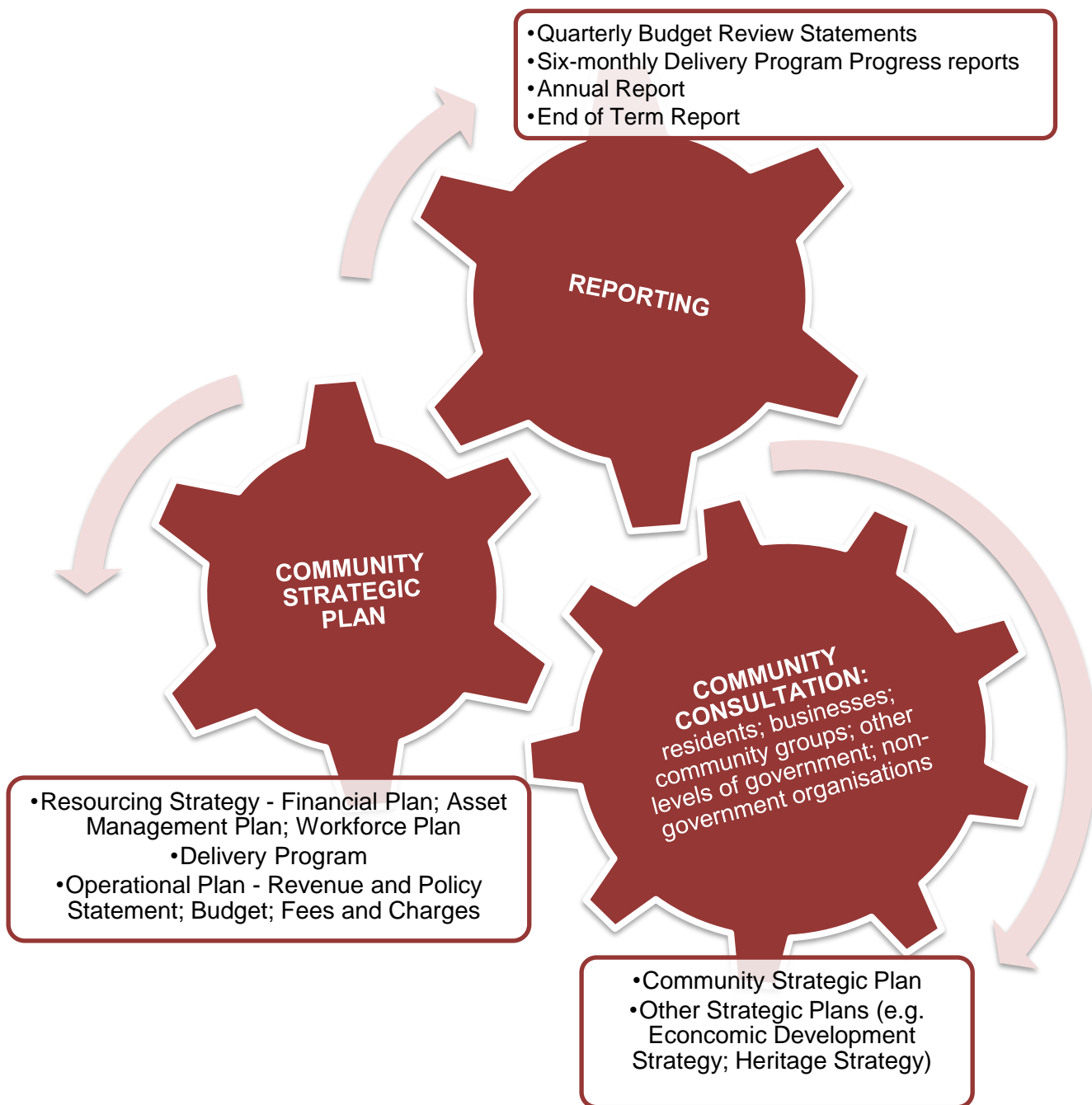
- (1) Exercise of functions generally. The following general principles apply to the exercise of functions by councils:
 - (i) Councils should provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making.
 - (ii) Councils should carry out functions in a way that provides the best possible value for residents and ratepayers.
 - (iii) Councils should plan strategically, using the integrated planning and reporting framework, for the provision of effective and efficient services and regulation to meet the diverse needs of the local community.
 - (iv) Councils should apply the integrated planning and reporting framework in carrying out functions so as to achieve desired outcomes and continuous improvements.
 - (v) Councils should work cooperatively with other councils and the State government to achieve desired outcomes for the local community.
 - (vi) Councils should manage lands and other assets so that current and future local community needs can be met in an affordable way.
 - (vii) Councils should work with others to secure appropriate services for local community needs.
 - (viii) Councils should act fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the local community.
 - (ix) Councils should be responsible employers and provide a consultative and supporting working environment for staff.

- (2) Decision-making. The following principles apply to decision-making by councils (subject to any other applicable law):
 - (a) Councils should recognise diverse local community needs and interests.
 - (b) Councils should consider social justice principles.
 - (c) Councils should consider the long term and cumulative effects of actions on future generations.
 - (d) Councils should consider the principles of ecologically sustainable development.
 - (e) Council decision-making should be transparent and decision-makers are to be accountable for decisions and omissions.

- (3) Community participation. Councils should actively engage with their local communities through the use of the integrated planning and reporting framework and other measures.

INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

All councils in NSW are required to operate within the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework. This framework aims to facilitate a strong and sustainable local government system by ensuring all councils have in place strategic plans, underpinned by community priorities and supported by appropriate resources. Warrumbungle Shire Council's IP&R is illustrated below.



COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

The Warrumbungle Shire Community Strategic Plan 2022-2037 (the Plan) was developed following community engagement. The Plan's vision describes the importance of our sense of community spirit, our children and our homes. The community's plan for the future will support the growth, resilience and health of our people, our neighbourhoods, the environment and local economy.

The Plan identifies four key areas of interest to the community's needs and aspirations:

1 CARING FOR THE 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.

GOAL: the good health of our natural environment and biodiversity is preserved and enhanced.



2 CIVIC LEADERSHIP

To look after the Warrumbungle community, a great deal of work happens behind the scenes to ensure there are planned, resourced, efficient and transparent systems in place to enable our community to function and prosper.

The community expects responsible and transparent decision-making with a focus on public conversations and ownership.

GOAL: Leadership will foster collaborative approaches to the governance of our area across all levels of government, to focus on delivering results against our agreed strategic outcomes in the most cost-effective way. The community will be at the heart of decision-making and service delivery.

3 STRENGTHENING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Our community has access to positive choices for investment, employment and study. This includes supporting our predominantly agricultural economy while also strengthening and diversifying the economy by targeting new and innovative industries.

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 varied agricultural industry is highly valued, made possible by good climate and rainfall, productive soils, clean water supplies and ready access to markets.

GOAL: A strong and sustainable economy provides our community with localised employment opportunities and ease of access to markets, goods and services.



4 SUPPORTING COMMUNITY LIFE

Our communities are strong, resilient and inclusive, and provide support and assistance to those in need. We enjoy the freedoms that are afforded through our safe, friendly and caring community. Our local government area 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. Our diverse community is reflected through a wide range of arts and cultural activities, festivals and events.

People within the local government area 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.

GOAL: To maintain a community where people are welcomed, healthy and connected, with opportunities to prosper in their individual pursuits. Active community participation is supported by cultural and recreational facilities and inclusive services that cater to all residents.



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Warrumbungle Shire Council's implementation of its Delivery Program through the 2022/23 Operational Plan included the following highlights.

CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Compliance Services

Council's Compliance Officers hosted free microchipping days throughout June across the Shire. This free service ensures that all companion animals can be identified and returned to their owners if they become lost.

Council staff are on-call for stock on roads and serious dog attacks. Throughout the year staff attended 12 dog attacks and 24 calls for stock on roads. Staff contacted the suspected owner of the stock and advised that the stock was on the road and instructed the owners to check fences to ensure that stock cannot escape as they are a danger to road users.

Staff have been kept busy with overgrown block complaints being received as well as the routine patrols which are used to identify overgrown blocks. Letters were written to the owners of the land as a number of the owners do not reside within the Shire and only visit on occasions.

Council's Building Certifier undertakes inspections to ensure private swimming pools meet the requirements of pool safety legislation. Inspections are carried out upon request and compliance certificate are issued for complying barrier fences.

Noxious Weeds

Council continues to maintain its membership with Castlereagh Macquarie County Council with all weed control matters being handled on Council behalf by the County Council.

Environmental Health Services

74 inspections were carried out on food premises and mobile food vans throughout the Shire to ensure food safety requirements are in place and food is safe to consume.

Weekly or fortnightly water sampling is undertaken on all town supplies to ensure water is safe for consumption. Chemistry sampling was also undertaken every six months.

Council maintains Alcohol Free Zones throughout the urban areas of the Shire. Council staff undertake regular inspections to ensure the Alcohol-Free Zone signage is current and in the correct position.

Warrumbungle Waste

Council's landfill site at Coonabarabran and the transfer stations located at Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Dunedoo, Mendooran and Ulamambri remain operational. The transfer stations are opened over various days throughout the week to ensure residents have access for the disposal of household waste and recycling.

Council undertakes a weekly general waste collection and fortnightly recycling collection for residents who pay for the collection service.

The Container Deposit Scheme over the counter collection points at Coonabarabran and Dunedoo provide residents with the opportunity to cash in their used containers through the Return and Earn program. This program is designed to reduce the number of containers

going into landfill with 2,367,879 containers being cashed in over the 2022/2023 financial year helping to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

An environmental risk assessment was undertaken on the Coonabarabran Landfill, a number of risk priorities were highlighted through the E-RAMP Report and staff will be working on ensuring that risks at the Coonabarabran Landfill site are mitigated.

Warrumbungle Water and Sewer

Potable water is supplied to residents in Baradine, Binnaway, Bugaldie, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Kenebri and Mendooran; non-potable services are supplied to residents in Merrygoen and along the raw water feed main on Timor Road, Coonabarabran.

Across Warrumbungle Water's 10 water supply schemes there are around 3,300 service connections. To provide these services, there are 23 groundwater bores, four river wells, one dam, one weir, eight water treatment plants, 23 reservoirs including treatment plant clear water tanks and 169 km of water mains including head works, transfer and reticulation mains.

Council supplied 930ML of water across the 10 water supply schemes. Of this 910ML were treated by Council's water treatment infrastructure and supplied as potable water to customers through reticulation networks across the local government area. Council also replaced a total of 390 water meters to continue accurate charging for customers. In total Council expended \$2.55 million on the maintenance and operation of the 10 water supply schemes operated by Warrumbungle Water.

To improve water quality Council commissioned the new telemetry system, the system facilitates online supervision and monitoring of water infrastructure. Council also completed eight water mains replacement projects replacing a total of 2km of existing water mains with new water mains across operational areas. These projects were strategically targeted to improve the quality of reticulated water to connected customers. Council also conducted planning and design works to deliver upgrades to both the Binnaway and Baradine Water Supply Schemes to further improve water quality in these schemes. A bore condition assessment of Council's 23 water bores was finalised with strategic plans developed to refurbish selected assets to further improve water quality and water security. Council also delivered upgrades to the water disinfection systems in both Coolah and Dunedoo converting both systems from liquid chlorine to chlorine gas to further improve water quality. In total Council invested \$1.8 million in capital upgrades to the Warrumbungle Water network.

Sewage services are provided to residents in Baradine, Coolah, Coonabarabran and Dunedoo. In all, there are 2,357 connections. Infrastructure to support these connections includes nine pumping stations, four sewage treatment plants and 83 km of sewer main.

Council collected and treated 411ML of wastewater before discharge to the environment. Council continued to conduct preventative maintenance on all assets inclusive of sewerage treatment plants, reticulation mains and pumping stations to ensure continuous and effective performance of the four sewerage schemes. Council expended a total of \$1.3 million on operational and maintenance activities to continue to supply public sanitation and environmental protection services.

Council delivered upgrades to pump stations in Coonabarabran, upgrading existing pumps to ensure the continuous and effective transport of sewerage within the scheme. The Mendooran Sewerage Scheme Options Study was finalised and completed. Planning works progressed towards delivering upgrades to Dunedoo, Coolah and Coonabarabran Sewerage Treatment Plants with planning works for the Dunedoo and Coonabarabran Sewerage

Treatment Plants nearing completion. Planning works continued towards the delivery of a concept design and business case for the Binnaway Sewerage Scheme. A new inlet works was also constructed at the Baradine Sewerage Treatment Plant to improve treatment capabilities at the facility. The Telemetry network was also commissioned which provides online monitoring and supervisory control of sewerage assets within the Warrumbungle Sewer network.





CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Financial Services

The 2022/23 financial year was extremely busy, with many challenges, including staff shortages in key areas, especially around statutory reporting. Having said this, the 2022/23 Annual Financial Statements were prepared by 21 September 2022, an improvement on 2021/22 year.

Council's result is pleasing with a \$6.848M net operating surplus before grants and contributions. This compares favourably to the 2021/22 result of \$3.045M surplus before grants and contributions.

There were some significant achievements made by Council's Finance team in the 2022/23 financial year, including:

- Completion of Council's 2022/23 financial statements by 21 September 2023;
- No lost time injuries or WHS incidents within the Finance team in 2022/23;
- Completion of IP & R requirements.

Governance

Developing strategic relationships with other levels of government is a community objective for Council in an effort to ensure that the Warrumbungle local government area receives an equitable allocation of resources. Relationships with all levels of government have continued to be developed and maintained. Council is proactive in communication with various Federal and State Ministers and Members of Parliament, as well as with other councils. Membership and participation in State and regional bodies such as Local Government NSW, the Australian Local Government Association and Mining and Energy Related Councils is maintained, reinforcing strong connections and networking opportunities.

The community has identified 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. Council is active in advocacy of local business and industry. In particular during the reporting period, Council has been involved in a range of stakeholder forums on developments in the Renewable Energy Zones that impact the Warrumbungle LGA, and has continued to be involved with the Inland Rail project, which will pass through the northern end of the local government area. Support is also given to small businesses 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.

Community involvement in the decision-making process is promoted through Community Consultation Meetings, advisory committees and public forums. Combined, these represented at least 65 opportunities for community participation in the reporting period.

Customer Service

The Customer Service team continued to deliver on their commitment that Council customers will receive efficient and responsive service. The front counter teams are regularly recognised for their professional and friendly service.



Cemetery Services

Council manages and maintains 12 cemeteries. Activities include management of a database of interments, liaison with funeral directors, excavation of burial sites, maintenance of grounds and fences at each cemetery.

Native Grove Cemetery entry and internal roads were upgraded this year and a number of dangerous trees were removed.

Communications and IT

The Communications area was impacted by staffing shortage in key areas; however, the communications released to inform people of Council activities averaged over 85 items per month. A variety of media methods are used and Council's social media presence continues to increase, with reach and audience increasing around 293% on last year.

This year the IT server storage was significantly upgraded, including two new servers and moving the old server from Coonabarabran to Coolah, which improves redundancy in the case of business interruption. Additionally, a telecommunications upgrade was completed.

Design Services Management

The design team investigates, designs and prepares drawings for roadworks, drainage, kerbing and guttering and footpath works. They also provide rural road addressing services across the Shire and GIS services to the organisation.

The team also provides project management services for grant funded projects. Two projects that were delivered this year include the Stop and Play Park at Neilson Park Coonabarabran and the Jump the Stump skate park at Bowen Oval Coolah.



Environment and Development Management

The Environment and Development Services Directorate this year has had a recurrent budget variance of negative 27% due to savings from staff vacancies with Warrumbungle Waste operating in a cost-effective manner with an increase in the waste services costs in line with CPI in the reporting period.

Many capital and key projects have been completed on time and within budget during the reporting period. Some projects have been delayed due to vacant positions.

Council was actively involved in meetings with developers associated with the Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone, and has prepared a number of submissions in response to draft SEARs and Environmental Impact Statements for a variety of wind farms and solar farms. These are available to the community to view on the Warrumbungle Shire Council website.

Discussions with Inland Rail representatives has occurred during the reporting period, with regular update meetings being held between ARTC/Inland Rail and Council representatives. Council continues to advocate for local benefits, seeking a construction camp for Baradine and legacy infrastructure as a result of the rail line.

Council continued to run a local heritage program, with funding received from NSW Heritage Office to undertake a heritage adviser service, and provide a local heritage fund. Both services have proven to be beneficial for owners of heritage items across the Shire, with heritage advice being regularly sought, as well as seven successful small heritage grants being allocated during the reporting period.

Human Resources

Council's voluntary turnover decreased slightly to 13.59% in 2022/2023 compared to 14.59% in 2021/2022, with an average total turnover of 13.76% for the previous five years. Council staff had an average tenure of 9.77 years (calculated at 30 June 2023), compared to the average tenure of 10.35 years in the previous year.

The number of lost time injury claims (LTI) remained steady in 2022/2023 compared to the previous year, and the LTI days for 2023 are currently the lowest in the previous four years. Claims from 2019/2020 had the most LTI days of recent years and continued to impact Council's workers compensation premium until the end of 2022/2023.

Learning and development recovered from most of the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic which had impacted the previous two years, and a wide variety of training was delivered to staff across the organisation. All staff completed Cyber Security Awareness training in June 2023. In addition, all staff have now been provided with access to Council's learning management system, GO1, which allows them access to online courses for personal and professional development.



In continuing Council's commitment to support local youth through apprenticeship and traineeship programs, three School-Based Trainees were appointed in early 2023, in Horticulture, Tourism and Automotive Services. This was in addition to the two School-Based Traineeships that commenced in early 2022, one in Business Administration and Finance. During the year Council also hosted:

- one trainee in Children's Services
- one trainee in Warrumbungle Water
- two Apprentice Plumbers
- one Civil Construction Apprentice

Council also continues to provide work experience placements for local students when possible.

Council participated in the inaugural Careers Expo conducted by Centacare in September 2022 as well as providing a recruitment presentation to students attending the 2022 Prefects Luncheon.

Property Management

Council's property portfolio, excluding public halls and medical centres, includes two administration offices, seven residential properties, three preschools and a range of community buildings. Council has management responsibility for 75 Crown Reserves. The development of a formal Plan of Management for each Crown Reserve continued throughout 2022/23 with the draft Crown Reserves Generic Plan of Management lodged with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Crown Lands on 29 May 2023.

Risk Management

Risk mitigation throughout the year includes membership of Statewide Mutual, providing access to regional insurance and risk management support. Regionally, Council participates in the Orana Risk and Safety Management Group.

Fleet Services

Fleet Services has 799 plant items distributed across six works depots. Some of the items are 76 light vehicles, 38 trucks, 56 road plant (graders, loaders, backhoes, excavators, rollers etc), 46 self-propelled mowers and 64 trailers. In addition, there are 92 RFS vehicles for which we provide maintenance and registration services. Our capital expenditure was lower this year than planned due to supply delays. The fleet replacement program in 2022/23 was \$1.26M and significant plant purchased this year included a new gravel truck and backhoe loader, two medium sized trucks and 17 light vehicles.



Light vehicle purchases have been hybrid where available as these provide a reduced operational cost (low fuel cost and high resale). In total there are eight hybrids in the fleet.

Where the operating conditions allow, battery operated small plant is also being rolled out. Feedback from staff and the wider community has been positive, particularly with the reduced operating noise.

Workshops

There are workshops located in Coolah and Coonabarabran which support the fleet across all depots. Each workshop is also equipped with a truck configured to cover mobile servicing and breakdowns.

Building Control

Council's Building Certifier issued 16 Construction Certificates and 2 Complying Development Certificates in the 2022/2023 financial year. Council also undertook a number of Critical Stage Inspections and Plumbing Inspections for dwellings and sheds being constructed throughout the shire. These inspections ensure that all building and plumbing works meet the current requirement of the National Construction Code and the Australian Standards and the structure is being built in line with the approved plans.

Assessment and inspection are carried out on all new applications for OSSMS by Council's Building Certifier.

Council's Building Certifier is an Authorised Officer to undertake Swimming Pool Inspections on a yearly basis for tourist and visitor accommodation and for any property being sold or rented.

Town Planning

Council staff assessed 43 Development Applications worth \$10,521,431 throughout the Shire in the 2022/2023 financial year. Council staff processed 632 Planning Certificates; a requirement for sale of property and other legal matters, all certificates were dispatched within the required timeframes.

A review of the Development Control Plan (DCP) was undertaken to ensure that the plan is current to any planning legislation requirements and any new guidelines that have been released. New sections were added into the plan to ensure that Planning for Bushfire Protection matters are taken into consideration when applying for development within bushfire prone land. Changes to agritourism were also included in the plan to reflect the requirements for location such as vegetation and landscaping, water supply, hazards, waste management, biosecurity, traffic and access, signage and ongoing operations. A new

section for Farm Stay Accommodation and Farm Gate and Farm Experience Premises was also included to outline the requirements for any of these types of development. The DCP is a guide to be used when applying for development approval and to provide the applicant with information of what is required when applying for development consent.

Compliance Services - Alcohol-Free Zones

Council maintains Alcohol Free Zones 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.

Compliance Services – Compliance Certificates

Building Certifiers undertake inspections to ensure private pools meet the requirements of pool safety legislation. Inspections are carried out upon request and compliance certificates are issued for complying barrier fences.

Emergency Services Management

The Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) met on four occasions throughout the year with meetings well attended by representatives from: NSW Police; Fire and 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.





STRENGTHENING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Tourism and Economic Development

During 2022/2023 the Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre (VIC) successfully maintained its Level 1 accreditation as part of the Accredited VIC Network (AVIC). This achievement underscores the VIC's commitment to providing exemplary services and information to visitors and local residents alike.

Infrastructure at the VIC has received noteworthy improvements, including the modernisation of its retail space to better showcase local produce and souvenirs. Additionally, the facility added a specialised water dispensing unit, specifically tailored to meet the needs of caravanners and travellers.

The VIC takes great pride in supporting local businesses. It currently features an extensive selection of 90 products sourced from 14 businesses located within the Warrumbungle Region. This initiative not only enhances the visitor experience but also injects economic vitality into the local community.

In terms of disseminating information, the VIC has been proactive. A total of 91 mail-outs were executed during this period, in addition to fulfilling monthly brochure orders for business operators in the area. Tailored promotional packs have been distributed at events and conferences to spotlight the region's attractions and to disseminate visitor information.

The VIC welcomed approximately 21,606 visitors. Furthermore, its bathroom facilities were utilised a remarkable 77,197 times, indicating the centre's importance as a community and traveller resource.

The Inland Rail Interface Improvement Program was finalised during the reporting period with the Business Case finalised and adopted by Council. This program sees the incorporation of a rail siding on the rail line to assist with the movement of grain and commodities to market

In the 2022/23 the Town Entrance Signage Project was commenced with the goal of rejuvenating outdated or damaged town signs across the Warrumbungle Shire. The Economic Development and Tourism (EDT) Advisory Committee has been instrumental in providing advice on the design, materials, and textual content for the new entrance signs. Ongoing consultations have been carried out to refine the project details. The towns benefiting from this initiative include Baradine, Coonabarabran, Binnaway, Mendooran, Coolah, and Dunedoo.

Warrumbungle Shire Council hosted a series of BizHQ workshops in March 2023, primarily conducted in Coonabarabran and Coolah. These workshops were designed to empower local businesses by enhancing their online presence. Focusing on equipping participants with a comprehensive understanding of essential online tools, the initiative aimed to provide actionable insights for navigating the digital landscape.

In partnership with the Gilgandra Shire Council, the Warrumbungle Shire Council has commenced preparing a Regional Drought Resilience Plan. This initiative is jointly funded by the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and the NSW Government. The plan will be finalised over the next financial year.

Tourism and Economic Promotion

The Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre (VIC) experienced growth in visitor engagement. A total of 21,606 visits were recorded, representing a 37.82% increase

compared to 15,669 visits in the previous year. This surge is indicative of the centre's effectiveness in promoting regional attractions and offering valuable resources to tourists and local residents alike and surge coming out COVID19 lockdowns.

The 'Real Country' tourism initiative, a collaborative effort involving the Warrumbungle, Gilgandra, and Coonamble Local Government Areas, commenced during the reporting period and will see development of a Business Case and Strategy to promote the region.

Council actively promotes the region through media, both online and in print. Specific target audiences include the caravanning community and older travellers. As well as those who visit the region to experience our National Parks, Siding Springs Observatory and other attractions.





SUPPORTING COMMUNITY LIFE

Horticulture

Council owns and maintains 19 park areas throughout the Shire and there are eight 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.

The annual cost of parks and gardens maintenance activities in 2022/23 was \$0.86m.



Street Cleaning

Council owns and operates a street sweeper that sweeps gutters in each of the six towns within the Shire. Working on a three-week schedule, 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. The cost of street cleaning in 2022/23 was \$0.22m.

Public Amenities

Council staff maintain 18 public toilet blocks across the Shire and cleans 15 of them. Three are serviced by volunteers and/or contractors. The toilets generally opened at dawn and closed at dusk, however there are some toilets that are opened 24 hours 7 days a week. The toilets are cleaned at various times during the week, a total of 70 times each week. The cost to clean and maintain these toilets in 2022/23 was \$0.32m.

Town and Village 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 by Council for these roads include emptying of street bins, street garden and tree maintenance, stormwater infrastructure maintenance and cleaning, and road and footpath maintenance.

The total cost of these maintenance activities in 2022/23 was \$0.96m.

Resealing of a number of town streets in Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo was completed this year.

Village Streets

Mowing, maintenance grading and tree maintenance was undertaken in the streets of villages across the Shire including; Kenebri, Bugaldie, Ulamambri, Merrygoen, Neilrex, Uarbry and Leadville.



Community Care

Warrumbungle Community Care (WCC) provides a range of programs across the Shire to assist the frail aged, people with a disability and their carers. Programs include: Community Transport (vehicles and wheelchair accessible bus), Meals on Wheels, In-home Respite, Social Support and Home Maintenance. WCC is also an Approved Home Care Package provider (HCP), allowing WCC staff to provide in-home domestic and personal care individually tailored to client needs.

The range of services support people to continue to live independently in their own homes with WCC providing services to over 900 clients across the Shire. These services are provided by a dedicated and passionate team of six permanent staff, five part-time/casual staff and a team of approximately 190 volunteers.

In 2022/23 financial year Warrumbungle Community Care provided the following services:

Service	Outputs
Meals on Wheels	14,703 meals
Social Support	4,575 hours
Respite	301 hours
Home Maintenance	1,720 hours
CHSP transport	4,387 trips
NDIS transport	32 trips
CTP transport	2,347 trips
HRT (Health Related Transport)	86 trips
DVA Transport	43 trips
Taxi Vouchers (Coonabarabran)	4,433 vouchers



WCC is a multi-award-winning service, who proudly won the 2022 NSW Local Government Award for Excellence (pop: under 150,000) for their Meal Voucher Program.

WCC also host and coordinate the Warrumbungle Community Services EXPOs held in both ends of the Shire, and regular “Information Days” in all towns across the Shire, in partnership with several services.

WCC have “pop-up” offices fortnightly in Dunedoo and Baradine Libraries to assist clients and the local community.

The Meals on Wheels program has branched out into selling frozen meals to the General Public which is a great advertising and promotional tool for this service.



Community Development

Community Development Coordinators (CDCs) provide a point of contact for Council in the local towns, seek funding on behalf of their district Development Group or Progress Association, and help coordinate and promote local events.

In 2022/2023, the Community Development Coordinators held regular meetings with each other allowing for a sharing of ideas and projects across the Shire. A highlight included the “Connected” project allowing students from all 11 schools in Warrumbungle Shire to connect through youth workshops led by facilitator Az Hamilton from “Just Motivation” and play the “World’s Largest Game of TAG You’re It!” by looking for ways to be generous in their community, undertaking ‘TAGs’ (Timely Acts of Generosity).

Children’s Services

Warrumbungle Children’s Services help support community life through the delivery of Early Childhood Education and Care and Out of School Hours (OOSH) Care with a number of services including Preschool, Long Day Care and Mobile Services.

Covid-19 restrictions lifting in 2023 enabled Children’s Services to resume many of their community programs and hold a number of events including the Active Lorikeets Program with Community Health, Healthy Harold visits, the PALS program with Centacare, a Book Fair and Parade, Transition to School programs and National Simultaneous Storytime. Highlights have included Family Information Nights, and excursions to the Crystal Kingdom, Sorry Day March, Little People Fun Day and the puppet show, “A Little Bit of Blue”.

In 2022/2023, six new early childhood professionals joined the Children’s Services team with diverse and extensive experience in education, which has supported quality uplift across the services. The National partnership agreements on Universal Access to early childhood education has enabled more funding opportunities to support children’s access to preschool programs with new fee relief payments also assisting families.



Connect Five Children's Services

Connect Five Children's Services is externally funded by the NSW Department of Education under Start Strong Pathways. The Start Strong Pathways program helps provide educational support for young children prior to preschool enrolment and helps promote the importance of early childhood education to parents. Connect Five Children's Services delivers this program through play sessions and licensed care to families in nine communities across four Shires – Warrumbungle, Coonamble, Walgett and Gilgandra.

In 2022/2023 Connect Five planned 45 Play Sessions a term at nine different venues with 620 attendances. During 2023, Connect Five increased play sessions at Coonabarabran from 3 hours to 6 hours, and moved Hollywood farm-based venues to the community of Come by Chance. Connect Five also offers a mobile Toy Library providing toys and equipment for enhancing children's learning and is an essential service for isolated and disadvantaged families.



Yuluwirri Kids/Connect Five – Monkey Room

This Mobile Preschool, in conjunction with Connect Five Children's Services supports Yuluwirri Kids waiting lists for children aged 3-5 years who want to attend Preschool. This is funded by NSW Government Mobile Preschool Funding for children enrolled in mobile preschools in regional and remote NSW. Monkey Room operates from the Robertson St venue at Coonabarabran. In 2022 Monkey Room changed its operating days to Monday and Friday in line with community demand and had attendance levels of over 93%.

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 offers 27 preschool places and 30 Long Day Care places a day. NSW Department of Education Start Strong Preschool funding supports families with the delivery of free preschool for 600 hours in the two years before school.

Yuluwirri operates an indoor/outdoor pedagogy with age group programming and learning spaces following the National Early Years Learning Framework. The age group programming allows the centre to meet the changing age numbers each year. In 2022/2023, Preschool utilisation was 3,544 sessions and Long Day Care utilisation was 6,207 sessions, equating to 66% utilisation for Preschool and 85% for Long Day Care.

Coonabarabran After School and Vacation Care (Coonabarabran OOSH)

The Out of School Hours (OOSH) service provides After School Care during school terms and Vacation Care during School Holidays. Coonabarabran After School Care operates five days a week from 3.00pm to 5.30pm caring for children who are attending school in years K – 6 and implementing a play-based program in line with the National Framework for School Aged Care in Australia. After School Care had 1,146 bookings during the year. Vacation Care provides kindergarten and primary school children with fun, varied and engaging recreation-based activities during school holidays. Vacation Care operates for at least 35 days a year and had 274 bookings.

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 libraries of Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, and limited services to Baradine, Binnaway and Mendooran.

In 2022/2023 MRL services once again included:

- Maintenance of a service for housebound members and members in aged care.
- Involvement in celebration weeks such as Simultaneous Storytime, National Youth Week, Law Week, Library and Information Week.
- Promotion of events and activities in local towns.
- School Holidays Programs and activities.
- Engagement with local schools, childcare, story time and homework sessions.
- Regular reading and craft sessions.
- Hosting meetings of local groups including local book clubs, craft groups and gardening groups.
- Hosting information sessions and other activities for people of all ages.

With the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, MRL has seen significant increases for library usage with a 72% increase in new memberships and a 50% increase in visits. Highlights also included the early literacy programs, “1000 Books Before School” and the “Dolly Parton Imagination Library”.

Youth Services and Community Connections

Throughout 2022/2023 the Targeted Earlier Invention (TEI) Community Connections Program administered by the Community Services Connections Officer (CSCO) continued to collaborate and co-ordinate with stakeholders across the Shire to develop and deliver opportunities for young people. The TEI program comprises of Community Sector planning and coordination, community outreach, social participation and community support and advocacy.

Ongoing support and information sharing were coordinated by the CSCO through the Warrumbungle Interagency Committee and other networks including the Warrumbungle Domestic Violence Committee; School Holiday Planning Groups; Coona Yarn, Support, Connect, Suicide Prevention Network; and the Warrumbungle Local Drug Action Team (LDAT).

Highlights included community campaigns, events and activities such as Pride in the Park, NAIDOC Week, Little People Fun Day and Mental Health and Wellbeing Awareness campaigns.

School Holiday activities continued in collaboration with other service providers including Centacare, MacKillop, Barnardos and Mission Australia. Primary and High School craft and game activities were offered at the Coonabarabran Sport & Recreation Centre and Base Zero Mobile Rock-Climbing events in Mendooran, Dunedoo, Coolah, Binnaway and Baradine. 2022 Youth Week activities were held in April with crafts, cooking, library events and Colour Runs in each town, and the annual Mendooran Youth vs Police vs Teachers Touch Football Gala.



Public Halls

Council owns public halls in Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Goolhi, Mendooran and Purlawaugh. The Coonabarabran Sport and Recreation building is also categorised as a hall for reporting purposes.

Use of Binnaway and Purlawaugh was low this period due to a lack of volunteer management committees to assist with bookings.



Ovals and other Sporting Facilities

There are sporting ovals in each town and netball courts in Coolah, Coonabarabran and Dunedoo.

The completion of the new modern amenities building at Robertson Oval in Dunedoo was welcomed by the Dunedoo community and user groups this period. The project was started in September 2021 and was completed in August 2022, with the entire project valued at \$1,716,550. \$1,591,954 was provided by the Australian Government, with Warrumbungle Shire Council contributing \$124,596 from general funds.



Public Swimming Pools

Council operates six outdoor seasonal swimming pools that are located at Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Mendooran. The swimming season traditionally runs from October to April each year.

Opening dates for the pools varied from mid-October to late November and all pools closed the day before Good Friday. From time to time operational hours and the daily timetable was disrupted due to staff shortages.

Recorded attendances and subsequent revenue dropped substantially in the 2022/23 season compared to previous years. The revenue from entry fees was \$57,471 and the operating expenditure was \$578,576 which included wages, chemicals, utilities as well as minor repairs and maintenance.

Council received grant funding of \$511,476 to complete Shire-wide swimming pool upgrades. Works include installation of continuous disinfectant dosing systems at Baradine, Binnaway and Coonabarabran Pools.



Aerodromes

There are aerodromes at Baradine, Coolah and Coonabarabran. Coonabarabran is the only Civil Aviation and Safety Authority (CASA) certified aerodrome of the three. Maintenance tasks undertaken by Council include grass slashing, weekly inspections and maintenance of the bitumen surface on the runway at Coonabarabran.

The annual cost of aerodrome maintenance in 2022/23 was \$0.12M

Local Roads and Infrastructure

Council has an extensive road network of 2,518km of which 1,543km is unsealed. Council also undertakes roadworks under contract for TfNSW on 186km of state roads, including sections of the Golden Highway, Newell Highway (urban areas only) and Castlereagh Highway.

In November and December 2021, storms and significant rainfall caused extensive damage to the road network and a natural disaster was declared. Over 1,780 defects were identified with the value of the restoration work estimated to be over \$12 million. Restoration works include grading 440km of unsealed roads, pavement and surface repair of 500km of sealed roads, bulk filling of gravel and rock at 43 locations, reshaping of 6.5km of table drains and repair of 12 major causeways, culverts and bridges. Council submitted nine works packages that have been assessed and \$10,568,493 approved including emergency and immediate restoration (emergent) for the November 2021 event. \$1,261,741 has been submitted for the September 2022 event. These funds must be expended by 30 June 2025.

Over \$2.3 million of natural disaster emergent and restoration works on more than 90 regional, local and urban roads has been completed.

Despite the Natural Disaster events and subsequent rain events, Council was still able to achieve a number of works, including:

- 433km of maintenance grading on 60 unsealed roads incorporating 197km that was flood damaged
- 5,150 potholes repaired on local and urban roads
- Resealed 12km of regional roads including Purlewaugh Road, Warrumbungles Way, Vinegaroy Road and Black Stump Way.

Delivered \$4.6 million of Road Maintenance Council Contracts (RMCC) works for the NSW Government including:

- Heavy Patching Program on Golden Highway, Castlereagh Highway and Coonabarabran Road including Natural Disaster Recovery and Reseal preparation
- Maintenance on the Newell Highway, Castlereagh Highway, Golden Highway and Coonabarabran Road.
- Heavy Patching on the Newell Highway Coonabarabran
- Line marking Sullivan Street, Dunedoo Level Crossing

Replaced 5 concrete causeways:

- Cobborah Road
- Avonside Road
- Napier Lane
- Wyuna Road
- Flags Rockedgiel Road

Replaced one timber bridge with a concrete bridge on Warkton Road, Coonabarabran – ‘John Knight Bridge’.

Rehabilitated 1.2km of regional roads on the Black Stump Way.

Medical Facilities

Council owns buildings in Coonabarabran, Mendooran and Dunedoo 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

Council’s landfill site at Coonabarabran and the transfer stations located at Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Dunedoo, Mendooran and Ulamambri remain operational. The transfer stations are opened over various days throughout the week to ensure residents have access for the disposal of household waste and recycling.

Council undertakes a weekly general waste collection and fortnightly recycling collection for residents who pay for the collection service.

The Container Deposit Scheme over the counter collection points at Coonabarabran and Dunedoo provide residents with the opportunity to cash in their used containers through the Return and Earn program. This program is designed to reduce the number of containers going into landfill with 2,367,879 containers being cashed in over the 2022/2023 financial year helping reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

An Environmental Risk Assessment was undertaken on the Coonabarabran landfill, a number of risk priorities were highlighted through the E-RAMP Report and staff will be working on ensuring that risks at the Coonabarabran landfill site are mitigated.



Environmental Health Services

Assessment and inspections are carried out on all new applications for OSSMS. Council's Building Certifier has undergone training to ensure that the assessment and inspections are carried out in accordance with the current standards. Existing on-site sewage management systems are inspected as required on an ad-hoc basis.

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Original unaudited budget 2023 \$ '000		Actual 2023 \$ '000	Actual 2022 \$ '000
	Income from continuing operations		
15,105	Rates and annual charges	15,156	14,722
6,207	User charges and fees	9,323	6,411
959	Other revenues	2,155	2,894
15,795	Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	25,765	18,080
13,967	Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	6,680	9,499
196	Interest and investment income	1,047	267
-	Other income	18	46
856	Net gain from the disposal of assets	-	412
53,085	Total income from continuing operations	60,144	52,331
	Expenses from continuing operations		
15,934	Employee benefits and on-costs	15,921	14,086
6,930	Materials and services	14,317	13,181
58	Borrowing costs	248	120
13,344	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	11,337	10,990
5,507	Other expenses	1,748	1,410
600	Net loss from the disposal of assets	3,045	-
42,373	Total expenses from continuing operations	46,616	39,787
10,712	Operating result from continuing operations	13,528	12,544
10,712	Net operating result for the year attributable to Council	13,528	12,544
(3,255)	Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	6,848	3,045

STATUTORY REPORTING

CONTENTS

Statutory Reporting	40
Delivery Program Implementation	41
Audited Financial Reports	41
Rates And Charges Written Off	41
Overseas Visits	41
Payment Of Expenses And Provision Of Facilities To Councillors.....	42
Professional Development	43
Contracts Awarded	44
Legal Proceedings	45
Labour Statistics Reporting	45
Inspections Of Private Swimming Pools	46
Private Works.....	46
Contributions.....	47
External Bodies.....	48
Controlling Interests	49
Joint Ventures.....	49
Equal Employment Opportunity.....	49
Remuneration – Senior Staff.....	50
Stormwater Management Services	51
Special Variations	51
Companion Animals Act And Regulation.....	52
Government Information (Public Access)	53
Planning Agreements.....	55
Public Interest Disclosures.....	55
Disability Inclusion Action Plan.....	56
Attachments.....	59

DELIVERY PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Within 5 months after the end of each year, a council must prepare a report (its “**annual report**”) for that year reporting as to its achievements in implementing its delivery program and the effectiveness of the principal activities undertaken in achieving the objectives at which those principal activities are directed.

Council’s achievements in implementing its *Delivery Program 2022/23* are detailed above at ‘Council Highlights’.

AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORTS

A copy of the council’s audited financial reports prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting* published by the Department, as in force from time to time.

Copies of Council’s financial statements are provided as attachments to this Annual Report (Attachments 1-3).

RATES AND CHARGES WRITTEN OFF

The Council’s Annual Report must include the amount of rates and charges written off during the year.

Rates and charges written off by Warrumbungle Shire Council in 2022/23:

Description	Amount (\$)
Rates	\$205.96

OVERSEAS VISITS

Details (including the purpose) of overseas visits undertaken during the year by councillors, council staff or other persons while representing the council (including visits sponsored by other organisations).

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

PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO COUNCILLORS

Details of the total cost during the year of the payment of the expenses of, and the provision of facilities to, councillors in relation to their civic functions (as paid by the council, reimbursed to the councillor or reconciled with the councillor), including separate details on the total cost of each of the following:

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

Councillor Fees

Description	Amount (\$)
Election expenses	\$0
Mayor	\$14,088
Councillors (8)	\$140,412.56

Councillor Allowances

Description	Amount (\$)
Travel and accommodation	\$6,500
Meal allowance	\$1,596.57
Provision of dedicated office equipment	\$20
Attendance at conferences and seminars	\$13,435
Training and provision of skill development	\$420
Interstate visits, including transport, accommodation and other out of pocket travelling expenses	\$0
Overseas visits, including transport, accommodation and other out of pocket travelling expenses	\$0
Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a Councillor	\$0
Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member	\$0
Other allowances – subscriptions and publications	\$13,465.02

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For the purposes of section 428(4)(b) of the Act, an annual report of a council must include the following information--

- (a) the names of any mayors or councillors who completed any induction training course, induction refresher course or supplementary induction course under this Part during the year,
- (b) the names of any mayors or councillors who participated in any ongoing professional development program under this Part during the year,
- (c) the number of seminars, circulars and other activities delivered as part of the ongoing professional development program in accordance with this Part during the year.

Throughout the year 2022/23 Councillors attended a Pool Operations Strategic Direction Workshop on 28 July 2022, a Grant Workshop on 22 August 2022 and General Managers Performance Review training on 6 September 2022. Councillor Rindfleish attended Understanding LG Finances for Councillors Course on 25 November 2022.

Throughout the 2022/23 financial year 24 circulars were delivered to councillors as part of their ongoing professional development.

CONTRACTS AWARDED

Details of each contract awarded by the council during that year (whether as a result of tender or otherwise) other than:

- (i) employment contracts (that is, contracts of service but not contracts for services), and
- (ii) contracts for less than \$150,000 or such other amount as may be prescribed by the regulations,

including the name of the contractor, the nature of the goods or services supplied by the contractor and the total amount payable to the contractor under the contract.

Council engaged in five contracts exceeding \$150,000 during 2022/23 totalling \$2,145,736.03.

Contract ID	Name of contractor	Nature of goods or services supplied	Value (\$)
344/2122	Tamworth Regional Council	Managed Services – support and maintenance, IT end user support	296,130.00
26/2223	Hunter H2O Holdings Pty Ltd t/a Beca HunterH2O	Provision of project management services for Coonabarabran and Dunedoo sewerage treatment plant upgrades.	417,604.00
283/2223	People, Place and Partnership	'Real Country' tourism and experience strategy and infrastructure business case – in partnership with Coonamble Shire Council and Gilgandra Shire Council.	391,450.00
304/2223	Murray Constructions	Construction of a new bridge on Leaders Road 4.9km south of Binnaway.	747,901.00
308/2223	Interflow Pty Ltd	Provision of sewer relining services for Coolah, Dunedoo and Coonabarabran	292,651.03

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

A summary of the amounts incurred by the council during the year in relation to legal proceedings taken by or against the council (including amounts, costs and expenses paid or received by way of out of court settlements, other than those the terms of which are not to be disclosed) and a summary of the state of progress of each legal proceeding and (if it has been finalised) the result.

Matter and Court	Court	Amount incurred 22/23 (\$)	Status – Progress or Outcome
Boulus Constructions P/L v WSC Supreme Court of NSW (Proceedings No. 2018/00340246)	Supreme Court of NSW (Proceedings No. 2018/00340246)	1,012,476.22	Settled

LABOUR STATISTICS REPORTING

Section 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation) has been amended to require councils to report on their employment practices in their annual reports.

Councils will be required to publish information in their annual reports, starting with the 2022/23 annual report, on the total number of persons who performed paid work for them on a "relevant day" to be fixed by the Secretary of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (Secretary DPIE) each year.

On 23 November 2022 there were:

178	persons directly employed by Council
1	person employed by the Council who is "senior staff" for the purposes of the LG Act 1993
3	persons engaged by council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, that is wholly or principally for the labour of the person

INSPECTIONS OF PRIVATE SWIMMING POOLS

For the purposes of section 22F (2) of the Act, a local authority that is a council must include in its annual report under section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 the number of inspections that it carried out under Division 5 of Part 2 of the Act that--

- (a) were of tourist and visitor accommodation, or
- (b) were of premises on which there were more than 2 dwellings, or
- (c) resulted in the council issuing the following--
 - (i) a certificate of compliance under section 22D of the Act,
 - (ii) a certificate of non-compliance under clause 21 of this Regulation.

Inspections of private swimming pools throughout Warrumbungle LGA	
a) were of tourist and visitor accommodation, or	5
b) were of premises on which there are more than two dwellings, or	0
c) resulted in the council issuing the following:	
i) a certificate of compliance under section 22D of the act,	3
ii) a certificate of non-compliance under section 21 of this Regulation	2

PRIVATE WORKS

Details or a summary (as required by section 67(3) of the Act) of resolutions made during that year under section 67 of the Act concerning work carried out on private land and details or a summary of such work if the cost of the work has been fully or partly subsidised by the council, together with a statement of the total amount by which the council has subsidised any such work during that year.

There were no resolutions made in relation to Private Works, as required under Section 67 and there no private works fully or partly subsidised by Council during 2022/23.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The total amount contributed or otherwise granted under section 356 of the Act.

Organisation Name	Total Value (\$)
Active Farmers	1,000.00
Baradine Bowling Sporting Club	460.00
Baradine Country Women's Association	618.28
Baradine PA&H Association	400.00
Baradine Preschool	800.00
Baradine Rusty Club and Men's Shed	669.64
Binnaway Bombshells	460.00
Binnaway Jockey Club	1,000.00
Binnaway PAH&I Association	450.00
Binnaway Progress Association	400.00
Binnaway Tennis Club	860.00
Black Stump Craft Shop Inc.	1,094.23
Borah Creek Land Managers	400.00
Brothers United	400.00
Caring for Coolah Inc.	460.00
Centacare	460.00
Coolah and District Historical Society	860.00
Coolah Crafts	400.00
Coolah District Development Group	460.00
Coolah Junior Sports Club	400.00
Coolah Landcare	1,000.00
Coolah Lions Club	400.00
Coolah Pony Club	460.00
Coolah Presbyterian Church	343.50
Coolah Seniors Recreational Group	460.00
Coolah Swimming Club	400.00
Coolah Tennis Club	460.00
Coolah Volunteer Rescue Squad	460.00
Coolah Youth and Community Centre	1,013.04
Coonabarabran Anglican Church	343.50
Coonabarabran Bowling Club	460.00
Coonabarabran Country Women's Association	2,090.22
Coonabarabran Jockey Club	1,000.00
Coonabarabran High School	1,000.00
Coonabarabran Highland Pipes and Drums (Coonabarabran Celtic Club)	860.00
Coonabarabran Local Aboriginal Land Council	343.50
Coonabarabran Swimming Club	900.00
Dunedoo and District Development Group	400.00

Dunedoo and District Historical Society and Museum	850.00
Dunedoo Area Community Group	343.50
Dunedoo Bowling Club	964.83
Dunedoo Central School	803.50
Dunedoo Community Coordinator	460.00
Dunedoo Junior Rugby League and Football	460.00
Dunedoo Lions Club Art Unlimited	1,000.00
Dunedoo Polocrosse Club	1,460.00
Dunedoo Presbyterian Church	343.50
Dunedoo Sports Club	500.00
Dunedoo Tennis Club	400.00
Mendooran and District History Group Inc.	400.00
Mendooran Country Women's Association	491.00
Mendooran PA&H Association	400.00
Mendooran Preschool	491.00
Mendooran Turf Club	1,000.00
North West Equestrian Expo	1,000.00
Pandora Gallery	400.00
Riding for the Disabled	500.00
St Lawrence's Primary School	400.00
Schools – whole LGA (11 schools)	770.00
Tunes on the Turf	400.00
Uarbry Hall	1,354.29
Warrumbungle Domestic Violence Committee	400.00
Warrumbungle Eventing	1,000.00
Warrumbungle Shire Council (for waiver of hall hire)	240.50
Yarn Support Connect	460.00
Total	41,738.03

EXTERNAL BODIES

A statement of all external bodies that during the year exercised functions delegated by the council.

External Body	Function
Castlereagh Macquarie County Council	Control noxious weeds on public land and waterways
Macquarie Regional Library	Library services
Committee	Function
Castlereagh Bushfire Management	Fire mitigation
Local Emergency Management	Emergency co-ordination
Traffic Advisory	Traffic management
North West Weight of Loads Group	Heavy vehicle regulation

CONTROLLING INTERESTS

A statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which the council (whether alone or in conjunction with other councils) held a controlling interest during that year.

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

JOINT VENTURES

A statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which the council participated that year.

During 2022/23 Council was a joint venture member of the Macquarie Regional Library service with Dubbo Regional Council and Narromine Shire Council. During the period Council was also a joint member of the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council. Council coordinated the Connect Five Children's Services which serviced Warrumbungle, Coonamble and Gilgandra local government areas.

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

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

A statement of the activities undertaken by the council during that year to implement its equal employment opportunity management plan.

In relation to Council's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Plan:

- Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy was reviewed and updated to ensure ongoing compliance with EEO and merit selection principles and practices.
- Council utilises online recruitment software which provides increased transparency of decision making.
- Council's statement of being an EEO employer is included in all job advertisements.
- Council conducts ongoing reviews of Council's policies, procedures and practice to ensure they are compliant with EEO principles and practices.

REMUNERATION – SENIOR STAFF

A statement of the total remuneration comprised in the remuneration package of the general manager during the year that is to include the following:

- (i) the total value of the salary component of the package;
- (ii) the total amount of any bonus payments, performance payments or other payments made to the general manager that do not form part of the salary component of the general manager;
- (iii) the total amount payable by the council by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the general manager may be a contributor;
- (iv) the total value of any non-cash benefits for which the general manager may elect under the package;
- (v) the total amount payable by the council by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits.

A statement of the total remuneration comprised in the remuneration packages of all senior staff members (other than the general manager) employed during the year, expressed as the total remuneration of all the senior staff members concerned (not of the individual senior staff members) and including total of each of the following:

- (i) the total values of the salary component of their packages;
- (ii) the total amount of any bonus payments, performance payments or other payments made to them that do not form part of the salary components of their packages;
- (iii) the total amount payable by the council by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which any of them may be a contributor;
- (iv) the total value of any non-cash benefits for which any of them may elect under the package;
- (v) the total amount payable by the council by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits.

The General Manager is Council's only designated Senior Staff member as prescribed by section 332 of the Act. The General Manager's total remuneration package was:

Component	Amount (\$)
Salary	265,625.84
Bonus payments, performance payments or other payments not forming part of salary component	0
Employer's contribution to salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the General Manager is a contributor	27,890.79
Non-cash benefits	0
Fringe Benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits	13,704.32

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SERVICES

If the council has levied an annual charge for stormwater management services - a statement detailing the stormwater management services provided by the council during that year.

Council implemented a stormwater levy in 2017/18 to fund stormwater projects that Council is currently unable to fund, due to funding limitations, from General Fund. This stormwater levy was introduced and is made under section 496A of the Local Government Act 1993. Land within an urban area rated as either residential or business for rating purposes (except vacant land) will be charged an annual levy for Council to provide a stormwater management service.

Within the local government area there are a total of 3,828 assessments rated as residential and 379 assessments rated as business. In accordance with section 125AA of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, the maximum annual charge for stormwater management services levied in respect of a parcel of rateable land is for land categorised as urban residential land at \$25 and for businesses up to \$25 per 350m².

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

Council levied a stormwater charge in 2022/23 and the funds were allocated to the Cowper Street drainage project in Coonabarabran. This project was not able to commence owing to access issues and weather-related delays.

SPECIAL VARIATIONS

A report on special variation expenditure if required to do so by the instrument made by the Minister.

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

COMPANION ANIMALS ACT AND REGULATION

A detailed statement, prepared in accordance with such guidelines as may be issued by the Director-General from time to time, of the council's activities during the year in relation to enforcing, and ensuring compliance with, the provisions of the *Companion Animals Act 1998* and the regulations under that Act.

Statement of enforcement and ensuring compliance with the provisions of the *Companion Animals Act 1988* (CA Act) and the *Companion Animal Regulation 2018*, including:

Lodgement of pound data collection returns with the Office of Local Government (survey of Council seizures of cats and dogs)	Survey completed and submitted.
Lodgement of data about dog attacks with the Office of Local Government	Yes – data lodged through the NSW Companion Animals Register
Amount of funding spent on companion animal management and activities	No funding received during the reporting period.
Community education programs carried out and strategies the Council has in place to promote and assist the de-sexing of dogs and cats	No programs currently in place. This program is carried out locally by Veterinarians.
Strategies in place for complying with the requirements under s64 of the CA Act to seek alternatives to euthanasia of unclaimed animals	Rehoming program in place as per OLG requirements. Rehoming facilities emailed before euthanising of any companion animals.
Off leash areas provided in the Council area	Off leash area provided in all towns.
Detailed information on fund money used for managing and controlling companion animals in its area	No funding received during the reporting period.

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS)

Each agency (other than a Minister) must, within 4 months after the end of each reporting year, prepare an annual report on the agency's obligations under this Act for submission to the Minister responsible for the agency. A copy of the report is to be provided to the Information Commissioner.

The annual report of an agency (other than a Minister) required to be prepared under section 125 of the Act must include the following:

(Note: An agency's report under section 125 of the Act can be included in the agency's annual report required to be prepared under the annual reporting legislation – see section 6 of the *Annual Reports (Departments) Act 1985* or section 5A of the *Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984* [as the case requires].)

- (a) details of the review carried out by the agency under section 7(3) of the Act during the reporting year and the details of any information made publicly available by the agency as a result of that review;
- (b) the total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year (including withdrawn applications but not including invalid applications);
- (c) the total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year that the agency refused, either wholly or partly, because the application was for the disclosure of information referred to in Schedule 1 to the Act (Information for which there is conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure).

(Note: Table D in Schedule 2 also requires information relating to access applications in respect of which there is a conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure.)

- (d) information, as set out in the form required by the tables in Schedule 2, relating to the access applications (if any) made to the agency during the reporting year.

Council has received 48 requests for information during the reporting period. Details are provided on the table over.

Number of Applications by Type of Application Outcome

	Full Access Granted	Part Access Granted	Refused Access in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/ Deny Information Held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Personal Information Applications	15		1	2					18	56.25
Applications other than personal information	3	1			1	1			6	18.75
Applications partly personal and partly other		8							8	25
Total	18	9	1	2	1	1	0	0		
% of total	56.25	28.125	3.125	6.25	3.125	3.125	0	0		

Note: A personal information application is an access application for personal information (as defined in clause 4 of schedule 4 to the Act) about the application (the applicant being an individual).

PLANNING AGREEMENTS

A planning authority that has entered into one or more planning agreements must, while any such planning agreements remain in force, include in its annual report particulars of compliance with and the effect of the planning agreements during the year to which the report relates.

Council entered into a Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) with TILT Renewables for the Liverpool Range Wind Farm during 2019/20 financial year. This VPA remains in force.

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES

Information required to be provided in accordance with s2 of the *Public Disclosures Regulation 2011* is included herewith:

Public Interest Disclosures (PID) submitted to the Ombudsman in 2022/21 are outlined in the table below.

	By public officials performing their daily functions	Under a statutory or other legal obligation	All other interest disclosures
PID applications by public officials	0	0	0
Access applications other than personal information	0	0	0
PID received, primarily about:			
Corrupt conduct	0	0	0
Maladministration	0	0	0
Serious and substantial waste	0	0	0
Government information convention	0	0	0
Local government pecuniary interest convention	0	0	0

DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

According to the *Disability Inclusion Act 2013* section 13(1), a public authority that is a government department or local council must, as soon as practicable after preparing its annual report, give the Minister a copy of the part of the annual report relating to the department's or council's report on the implementation of its disability inclusion action plan.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) is a four-year plan that outlines Council's commitment to creating an inclusive community for people with disability. During 2022/2023 Council completed a new DIAP for 2022-2026. First, the 2017-2021 DIAP was reviewed and then community consultation from 2021 was incorporated. Community feedback for each town in the LGA was summarised and then key priorities that were common themes across all four focus areas of the DIAP were identified.

From these priorities, strategies and actions were created for each focus area and Council Managers were consulted on their specific actions and timeframes to ensure they were realistic and fit within delivery programs and budgets. Community members who contributed to the consultation meetings were contacted, where possible, to ensure they were happy to have their feedback included and to provide further feedback on the updated DIAP. The Community Development Coordinators in each town also reviewed a draft of the updated DIAP and provided feedback. In July 2023, the updated DIAP went to Council for endorsement and to be placed on public exhibition.

Much has been achieved from DIAP 2017-2021 including:

- Design and production of a new tourism brochure for the Warrumbungle region including accessibility information
- Extension and completion of shared pathways in Coolah and Coonabarabran
- The HR team facilitated an Employee Engagement Survey to seek feedback from staff as to how Council can support them in the workplace and sought recommendations for improved inclusive practices.
- Hearing loop available in Coonabarabran Council Chambers
- Council meetings are live-streamed on Facebook and the recordings of each meeting uploaded to the Council website
- Access Ramp at Coolah Council Office completed
- Installation of automatic doors at Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre
- Stop & Play Playground at Coonabarabran opened including a Liberty Swing with MLAK Key
- Community Services Expo held in Coonabarabran and Mendooran
- Inclusive Sports Day held in Baradine during Youth Week
- Libraries developed new inclusive resources for the collection and purchased assistive technology for the computers.

Next steps

In the next year, Council will focus on the following key actions:

- Adopting the updated DIAP 2022-2026
- Disability Awareness training for relevant Council staff
- Survey residents of the LGA about access and inclusion
- Continue to upgrade Council assets to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and relevant Australian Standards
- Review the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP)
- Investigate strategies for online engagement and community-led consultation

Council is committed to creating an inclusive community for people with disability. The DIAP is a key tool in achieving this goal. Council will continue to work with people with disability, their families and carers, and other stakeholders to implement the DIAP and make the community more inclusive for everyone.

CARERS RECOGNITION ACT

Councils considered to be 'human service agencies' under the *Carers Recognition Act 2010* (CR Act) (provide services directed at carers and/or people being cared for by carers) must report on compliance with the CR Act for the reporting period.

Warrumbungle Community Care (WCC) supports people being cared for by carers and the carers themselves by raising awareness and promoting the care relationship principles. The care relationship principles are used for assessing, planning, delivering, managing and reviewing support services, programs and policies. All staff are aware of and understand the NSW Carers Charter through training and information days and regular consultation takes place with carers and the people they care for.

Warrumbungle Community Care (WCC) supports carers through the provision of the following:

- Information days in the community with relevant service providers to promote relationships, and support the community in receiving information.
- Training days with both staff and volunteers (carers)
- Community Services EXPOs held north and south of the Shire annually
- Dementia Friendly (training)
- Seniors Rights advocacy groups
- Interagency meetings bi-monthly
- Volunteer Palliative Care group
- In-home flexible Respite program
- Partnerships with relevant like-minded services such as Carer Gateway
- The Carer Gateway is a federally funded service that provides emotional, practical and financial support for carers (<https://www.carergateway.gov.au/>). The Carer Gateway has many services that help with daily challenges, emotional and financial stresses that a carer may experience.
- Carer Gateway provides many services, including:
 - Coaching
 - Counselling
 - Respite care
 - Connection with other carers
 - Online courses
 - Financial support

MODERN SLAVERY ACT

Must contain a statement of steps taken to ensure that goods and services procured by and for the council during the year were not the product of modern slavery within the meaning of the Modern Slavery Act 2018

Warrumbungle Shire Council is a local government organisation. The elected body comprises nine councillors. The organisation structure includes one general manager and three departmental directors. The local government area is located in NSW, taking in the towns of Baradine, Binnaway, Coolah, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo and Mendooran.

The council's primary suppliers are predominantly Australian-based companies supplying goods and services needed across Council operations including, but not necessarily limited to:

- Cemetery maintenance
- Civil engineering
- Companion animals, including compliance
- Construction
- Consultancy
- Design
- Environmental compliance
- Horticulture
- Information Technology
- Motor vehicle fleet and plant
- Property management and maintenance
- Road maintenance
- Sporting facility maintenance
- Tourism management and promotion
- Town planning including building certification
- Urban street maintenance
- Waste management
- Water and waste water management

Council operations are directly undertaken by Council employees and covered by internal processes. Potential risks exist in the supply chain, including:

- Supplier sector and industry risks – particularly in sourcing ICT, electronics, cleaning and agriculture
 - Informal or unregulated sector
 - Little visibility over lower tier suppliers
- Supply chain model – particularly sourcing construction needs
 - Larger and more complex supply chains that are difficult to monitor
 - Sub-contracting and use of labour recruiters

To ensure goods and services are not the product of modern slavery, Warrumbungle Shire Council:

- Enforces policies that are intended to promote ethical and legally compliant business conduct, including Code of Conduct, internal reporting (Public Interest Disclosures), and Procurement (including local preference);
- Training of staff involved in procurement, and their managers and senior managers;
- Supply chain communications, including the introduction of a supplier questionnaire identifying modern slavery risks.

Council enquiries in preparation of the annual report revealed full compliance with modern slavery requirements.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments 1-3: 2022/23 Audited Financial Statements will be published when they become available.