

MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL

**2007/08
ANNUAL REPORT**

INTRODUCTION

It is with a great deal of pleasure that we present the Annual Report of the Mid-Western Regional Council for the financial year ending on 30 June 2008. This has been a very positive year for the Council, with a substantial increase in the amount of capital works undertaken as well as increased maintenance. Not only are we focussing on improving our roads but also on ensuring our community facilities are maintained at a very high standard to provide a lot of enjoyment for both the community and visitors. In particular the parks, gardens and associated playgrounds around the region are of a very high standard.

When Council adopted the Management Plan budget for the 07/08 financial year, it agreed on a \$2.4 million savings so we could put more emphasis into physical works. This allowed us to spend in excess of \$2 million additional on our roads through the year ending 30 June 2008. But that is not the end – we are still not proud of the state of our roading network, so we have a five year strategy in place to get all our roads to a standard that you as a community and the travelling public can be proud of and travel over with comfort and ease.

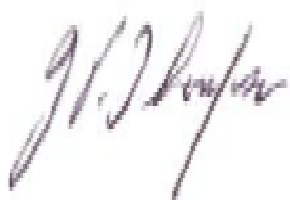
We put a number of initiatives in motion during this financial year. Among the most important was initiating the formulation of the Draft Land Use Strategy, which focuses on how our region will develop and grow over the next 25 years. Although we did not finish that document prior to the end of the financial year, we have made considerable progress. When this is placed on public exhibition in 2009 we encourage you to read it and make your suggestions about what it should contain because we want you to be involved in how your community will grow and develop.

Another key initiative was beginning the process of developing a new regional library facility on Cudgegong Southbank site, formerly the TAFE site. This innovative project is going to offer many opportunities for community interaction as opposed to just coming in and borrowing a library book. More details will become available as the process of selecting a final design for this exciting project narrows to completion.

Council has also put in place a 10 year Strategic Plan, looking at all activities of the Council with the huge emphasis on delivering services expected by the community while retaining our present financial sustainability and sound investment policies into the future.

During the year we put a lot of emphasis on staff culture. Without doubt staff are our organisation's most important resource and we want to develop pride, integrity and honesty as our core values. We are very proud to say this Council can boast a committed group of staff who work hard for the community to ensure we can deliver the best possible service at the least cost.

This Annual Report reviews the Council work program for this financial year. We live in exciting and changing times and it is important that an organisation like ours is responsive to community needs and expectations and delivers good quality services. Please enjoy the read.

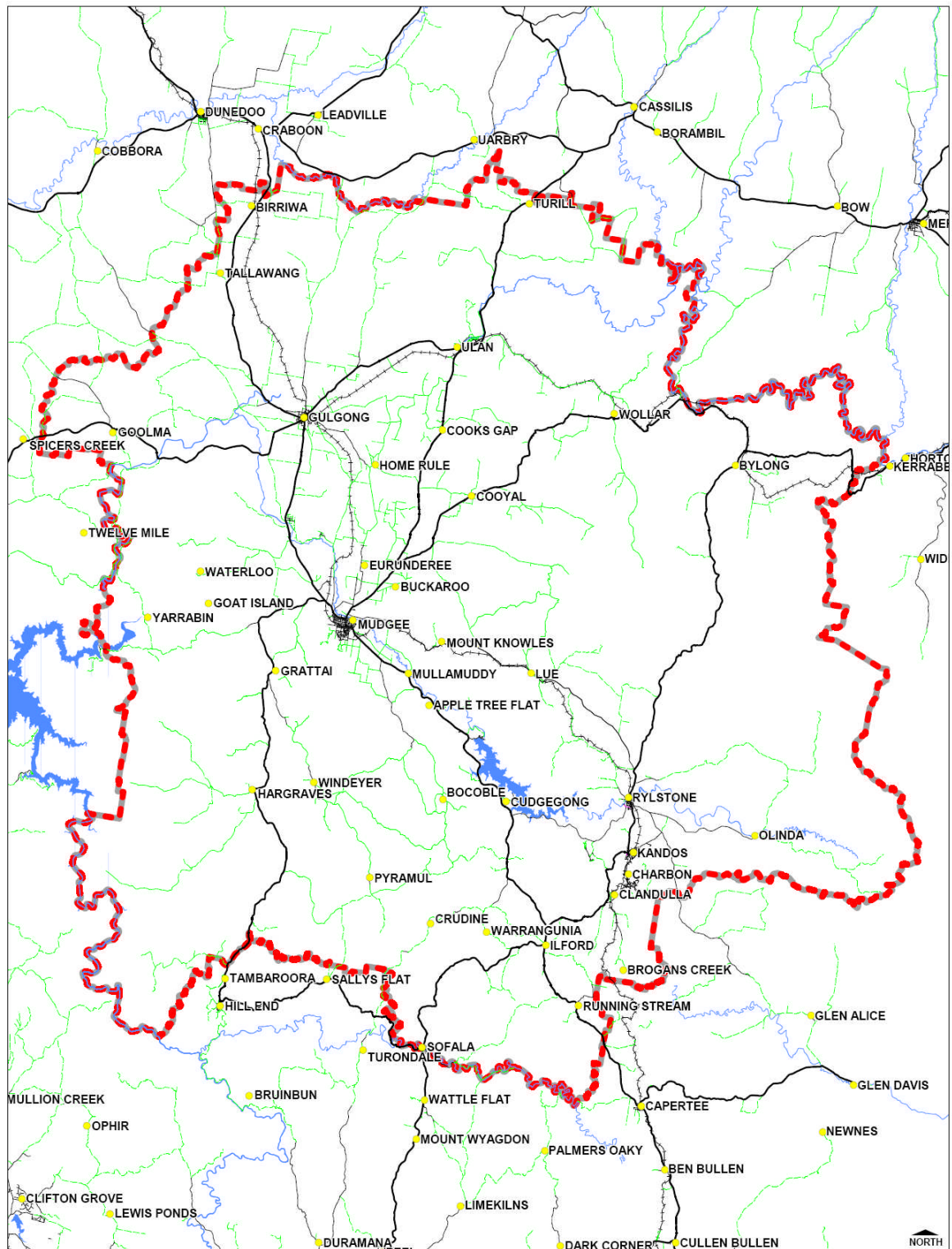


CR JAMES (PERCY) THOMPSON
MAYOR



WARWICK L BENNETT
GENERAL MANAGER

Mid-Western Regional Local Government Area



MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08

Management Plan Performance Reporting

For the quarter ended 30 June 2008

\$'000	Original Budget	Adopted Variations	Proposed Variations	Revised Budget	Actuals YTD
ROADS & BRIDGES					
OPERATIONAL					
State Roads					
INCOME	(3,219)	(4,178)	0	(7,397)	(7,091)
EXPENDITURE	3,019	3,818	0	6,837	6,348
Total State Roads	(200)	(360)	0	(560)	(743)
Regional Roads					
INCOME	(2,045)	(47)	0	(2,092)	(2,081)
EXPENDITURE	1,565	(604)	0	961	1,032
DEPRECIATION	1,489	0	0	1,489	1,046
Total Regional Roads	1,009	(651)	0	358	(3)
Council Roads					
INCOME	(1,589)	(96)	0	(1,684)	(1,637)
EXPENDITURE	3,424	830	0	4,253	4,128
DEPRECIATION	2,225	0	0	2,225	1,845
Total Council Roads	4,060	734	0	4,794	4,336
CAPITAL					
Roads & Bridges Capital					
INCOME	(2,917)	266	0	(2,652)	(2,646)
EXPENDITURE	5,882	20	0	5,902	5,775
Total Roads & Bridges Capital	2,964	286	0	3,250	3,129
CARPARKING, CYCLEWAYS, STREETSCAPING					
OPERATIONAL					
Car Parking, Cycleways, Streetscaping					
INCOME	0	0	0	0	0
EXPENDITURE	469	(48)	0	421	425
DEPRECIATION	88	0	0	88	75
Total Car Parking, Cycleways, Streetscaping	557	(48)	0	508	501
CAPITAL					
Car Parking, Cycleways, Streetscaping					
INCOME	0	0	0	0	(20)
EXPENDITURE	1,331	(558)	0	773	801
Total Car Parking, Cycleways, Streetscaping	1,331	(558)	0	773	781

ACHIEVEMENTS

ROADS AND BRIDGES

- Road Strategic Asset Management Plan updated and adopted in October 2007
- Seal Extension including Mud Hut Creek Road, Queens Pinch Road, Pyramul Road, Mebul Road and Hill End Road.
- Bylong Valley Way – Completed 15 km of the sealing of Bylong Valley Way.
- Major rehabilitation works on Lue Road, Cudgegong Road, Short Street (Mudgee) and Henry Lawson Drive.
- Commenced replacement of the Louisa Creek Bridge,
- Major upgrading of Ulan Road to manage the heavy traffic generated from the coal mines. This is part of the ongoing annual program and will continue for as long as the coal mines are in operation as part of ongoing funding agreements with the mines.
- Kerb and Gutter in Mellon Street, Rylstone.
- Major rehabilitation of Castlereagh Highway, Tabrabucca.
- Market Street rehabilitation from Duoro to Bell Street
- Overtaking lane on Castlereagh Highway from Saleyards Road intersection north for about 1.7 km.
- Gravel re-sheeting of 60 km.
- Maintenance grading of over 870 km.
- Reseal / rehabilitated 114 km of sealed roads
- Ilford Road – Sealing to Waste Transfer Station. This project will be completed over three years.

CARPARKING, CYCLEWAYS, STREETSCAPING

- Pathways Strategic Asset Management Plan updated and adopted in December 2007
- Constructed a new car park at Rylstone Hospital.
- Purchase land for off street car parking in Gulgong.
- Commenced major upgrade of Mortimer Street landscaping (between Church and Perry Streets) including pedestrian crossing.
- Kandos Car Park – adjacent to the radio station and the public library in Angus Avenue, Kandos.
- 1495m of new footpath constructed
- Stage 1 of the streetscaping of Angus Avenue, Kandos upgraded to ensure that the streetscape there is of a much better quality.
- Streetscaping Initiatives – Region wide – Council has made an allocation of \$30,000 for improving streetscaping initiatives in the smaller rural villages. This is an opportunity for the rural village communities to list their priorities.
 - Seating on bike track on Ulan Road
 - Picnic table and fencing in the park at Hargraves
 - Picnic table and gate at Bylong Sports Ground
 - Planting of trees in Windeyer
 - Tree planting and picnic table at Ilford rest area
- Street Lighting – Council commenced its program to put street lighting between Mudgee Township and the Racecourse with installation of lights between the Cudgegong River and Lue Road.

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Management Plan Performance Reporting

For the quarter ended 30 June 2008

\$'000	Original Budget	Adopted Variations	Proposed Variations	Revised Budget	Actuals YTD
WATER SUPPLY					
OPERATIONAL					
Water Supply					
INCOME	(4,708)	(30)	0	(4,738)	(4,512)
EXPENDITURE	2,892	128	0	3,021	3,112
DEPRECIATION	1,104	0	0	1,104	948
Total Water Supply	(712)	99	0	(613)	(452)
CAPITAL					
Water Supply Capital					
INCOME	(763)	713	0	(50)	0
EXPENDITURE	4,245	(2,461)	0	1,784	1,602
Total Water Supply Capital	3,483	(1,748)	0	1,734	1,602
SEWERAGE					
OPERATIONAL					
Sewerage					
INCOME	(3,292)	(97)	0	(3,390)	(3,423)
EXPENDITURE	2,068	23	0	2,092	2,042
DEPRECIATION	743	0	0	743	994
Total Sewerage	(480)	(74)	0	(555)	(386)
CAPITAL					
Sewerage Capital					
INCOME	(750)	750	0	0	0
EXPENDITURE	3,405	(2,605)	0	800	803
Total Sewerage Capital	2,655	(1,855)	0	800	803

ACHIEVEMENTS

WATER SUPPLY

- Design continued on Redbank Dam – Project involves lowering the dam by approximately three metres and create a lake and reserve that will be great for public recreation. Significant delays in obtaining approvals from the Dam Safety Committee have delayed finalisation of this project
- The concrete reservoir on Flirtation Hill and in Church Street, Mudgee were refurbished to extend their useful life.
- Commenced investigation of security of water supply for Rylstone, Kandos, Charbon and Clandulla that will minimise future water restrictions to which the rest of the Region is not subject.
- Finalised draft Water Strategic Business Plan which was placed on public exhibition prior to end of June
- Mains replacements and extensions
 - Tonbong Street Rylstone
 - Bryon Place
 - Perry Street Mudgee
 - Mudgee Airport
 - Mortimer Street Mudgee
 - Market Street Mudgee
 - Nicholson Street Mudgee
 - First Street Mudgee
 - Lewis Street Mudgee
 - Gulgong Lawn Cemetery
- Fluoridation commenced in Mudgee & Gulgong
- Section 64 Developer Charges updated and adopted by Council
- Installed PAC plant at Mudgee

SEWERAGE

- Mudgee Sewer Scheme – It is Council's proposal over the next two financial years to establish a new sewer treatment works off Hill End Road adjacent to the existing Mudgee Waste Facility. Council has already purchased this land and commenced the design of the new facility in January 2008. Part of the work to be undertaken will include whether or not the treated water will be used for irrigation or reused elsewhere.
- Mains and pump station upgrading works. Council has an ongoing mains replacement and pump upgrading program each year to ensure that the assets remain of a high quality.
 - Short Street Mudgee
 - Bryon Place
 - Mortimer Street Mudgee
 - Perry Street Mudgee
 - Industrial Ave Mudgee
 - Wyaldra Street Gulgong
- Finalised draft Sewer Strategic Business Plan which was placed on public exhibition prior to end of June
- Section 64 Developer Charges updated and adopted by Council

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Management Plan Performance Reporting

For the quarter ended 30 June 2008

\$'000	Original Budget	Adopted Variations	Proposed Variations	Revised Budget	Actuals YTD
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT					
OPERATIONAL					
Solid Waste Management					
INCOME	(3,143)	(1,254)	0	(4,397)	(4,437)
EXPENDITURE	2,436	1,196	0	3,633	3,872
DEPRECIATION	42	0	0	42	228
Total Solid Waste Management	(665)	(58)	0	(723)	(337)

CAPITAL

Solid Waste Management Capital

INCOME	(100)	100	0	0	0
EXPENDITURE	880	(250)	0	630	600
Total Solid Waste Management Capital	780	(150)	0	630	600

STORMWATER

OPERATIONAL

Stormwater

INCOME	0	0	0	0	0
EXPENDITURE	240	0	0	240	236
DEPRECIATION	87	0	0	87	86
Total Stormwater	327	0	0	327	322

CAPITAL

Stormwater Capital

INCOME	(145)	0	0	(145)	(85)
EXPENDITURE	475	80	0	555	402
Total Stormwater Capital	330	80	0	410	317

ACHIEVEMENTS

WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Recycling – In the current domestic refuse collection areas, Council proposes to upgrade its recycling service. The current black bins will be replaced with two wheelie bins of the same size of the green wheelie bins. These new bins will be colour coded, one being for paper, cardboard and the other being for cans, plastic and glass. There are many benefits to this proposed new system the main one being that the bins can be easily picked up by one person driving the appropriate vehicle without having a number of staff running across streets in dangerous traffic areas.
- Bylong Waste Transfer Station –Waste Transfer Station constructed at Bylong to replace the existing tip.
- Capital Works Mudgee – Capital works at the Mudgee Waste Facility this year included negotiations for land purchase as Council does not own the access road (this is Crown road).
- Gulgong Waste Transfer Station – New bins were purchased at this facility which allow a more efficient operation.
- Kandos and Ilford Waste Transfer Stations – Continued the conversion of this tip site to a Waste Transfer Stations including ongoing rehabilitation works and sealed the road.

STORMWATER

- Stormwater Quality Improvement Device installed at the end of Perry Street, Mudgee and Lawson Park, Mudgee.

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\$'000	Original Budget	Adopted Variations	Proposed Variations	Revised Budget	Actuals YTD
AIRPORT					
OPERATIONAL					
Airport					
INCOME	(107)	0	0	(107)	(122)
EXPENDITURE	165	0	0	165	163
DEPRECIATION	11	0	0	11	7
Total Airport	69	0	0	69	48
CAPITAL					
Airport Capital					
INCOME	(50)	46	0	(4)	(4)
EXPENDITURE	100	(32)	0	68	67
Total Airport Capital	50	14	0	64	63
CEMETERIES					
OPERATIONAL					
Cemeteries					
INCOME	(176)	0	0	(176)	(190)
EXPENDITURE	215	0	0	215	221
DEPRECIATION	9	0	0	9	8
Total Cemeteries	48	0	0	48	39
CAPITAL					
Cemeteries Capital					
INCOME	0	0	0	0	0
EXPENDITURE	281	(48)	0	233	163
Total Cemeteries Capital	281	(48)	0	233	163

ACHIEVEMENTS

AIRPORT

- Full time staffing at this facility was achieved to cater for the increased traffic and Federal aviation requirements.
- Commenced fencing with completion of the first stage – It is proposed that the full circumference of the Mudgee Airport be fenced over the next few years. Council had hoped to be able to gain some form of government grant to assist with these works which would have enabled completion of the works within three years, no funding was made available. The security fencing that is required will also be of such a height that it will prevent the inundation of kangaroos into the airport facility.

CEMETERIES

- Gulgong Lawn Cemetery – Council constructed a lawn cemetery at Gulgong
- Mudgee Lawn Cemetery – A new concrete extension was constructed at the Mudgee Lawn Cemetery.
- Rylstone Cemetery – Additional land purchased at the Rylstone Cemetery to cater for additional plots and fencing was upgraded to encompass the new site

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\$'000	Original Budget	Adopted Variations	Proposed Variations	Revised Budget	Actuals YTD
CORPORATE BUILDING & MAINTENANCE					
OPERATIONAL					
Corporate & Community Buildings					
INCOME	(116)	(5)	0	(121)	(141)
EXPENDITURE	775	80	0	854	686
DEPRECIATION	172	0	0	172	234
Total Corporate & Community Buildings	831	74	0	905	779
CAPITAL					
Corporate & Community Buildings Capital					
INCOME	(50)	50	0	0	0
EXPENDITURE	2,567	(2,088)	0	479	477
Total Corporate & Community Buildings Capital	2,517	(2,038)	0	479	477
SWIMMING POOLS					
OPERATIONAL					
Swimming Pools					
INCOME	(121)	0	0	(121)	(136)
EXPENDITURE	528	15	0	543	600
DEPRECIATION	77	0	0	77	69
Total Swimming Pools	485	15	0	500	533
CAPITAL					
Swimming Pools Capital					
INCOME	(30)	30	0	0	0
EXPENDITURE	295	38	0	333	296
Total Swimming Pools Capital	265	68	0	333	296

ACHIEVEMENTS

CORPORATE BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE

Corporate Buildings

- Mudgee Office Extensions – Council's commenced extension of the existing Mudgee Office including a upgrade of the existing facilities.
- Rylstone Office Upgraded – works completed included recarpeting, painting and removal of internal walls to improve natural lighting so that this facility remains appropriate for the ongoing use as a Service Centre.
- Depots – Fuel bunds were installed at both Mudgee and Rylstone Depots.

Community Buildings

- Council had purchased the old TAFE site in Short Street, Mudgee and completed removal of the old buildings. Council has been working with the community to determine the future use of this site.
- Rylstone Hall Upgrade – Council upgraded the kitchen facilities and switchboard at Rylstone Hall.
- Rylstone/Kandos Hall Furniture – Council purchased additional furniture including approximately 500 chairs and 10 tables.
- Kandos Hall Upgrade – Works included installation of gas heating, repainting of the interior, and repair of the stage.
- Ilford Hall Upgrade – Council funded the Ilford Community to upgrade the interior linings of the hall.
- Gulgong Memorial Hall – Council installed gas heating into the Gulgong Memorial Hall to ensure the pleasant use of that facility during winter months, as well as installing fans, blinds, upgrading the switchboard and undertaking improvements to the stage.
- Rural Halls – A number of community hall progress associations received a portion of the \$30,000 allocated. Works predominately were focused on safety issues such as electrical upgrades, kitchen upgrades and access improvements.

Mudgee Showground

- Council commenced investigations into the future use of the Mudgee Showground. In its current state the Mudgee Showground does not meet OH&S and public safety standards and Council needs to determine with community consultation the best alternative for upgrading of the Showground for the future. As a result of these discussions a consultant was engaged to develop a master plan to meet the community's requirements.

SWIMMING POOLS

- Gulgong Pool – Heating was installed as well as pool blankets to improve their efficiency. A new disabled chair access was installed to facilitate use of this facility by persons with disabilities. Security lighting was installed.
- Kandos Pool – An electrical upgrade was completed at the Kiosk and commenced installation a new disabled amenities block.
- Upgrading of amenities was undertaken at Gulgong improving the electrical wiring in the change rooms and installed new hot water services in all three pools.

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\$'000	Original Budget	Adopted Variations	Proposed Variations	Revised Budget	Actuals YTD
PARKS & RESERVES					
OPERATIONAL					
Parks & Reserves					
INCOME	(12)	(13)	0	(25)	(78)
EXPENDITURE	1,250	0	0	1,250	1,472
DEPRECIATION	209	0	0	209	174
Total Parks & Reserves	1,448	(13)	0	1,435	1,568
CAPITAL					
Parks & Reserves Capital					
INCOME	0	(104)	0	(104)	(116)
EXPENDITURE	510	224	0	734	698
Total Parks & Reserves Capital	510	120	0	630	582
DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL					
OPERATIONAL					
Development & Environmental Control					
INCOME	(871)	151	0	(719)	(661)
EXPENDITURE	1,692	(122)	0	1,570	1,409
DEPRECIATION	9	0	0	9	11
Total Development & Environmental Control	830	30	0	860	759
STRATEGIC PLANNING					
OPERATIONAL					
Strategic Planning					
INCOME	(4)	0	0	(4)	(4)
EXPENDITURE	255	26	0	281	275
DEPRECIATION	5	0	0	5	7
Total Strategic Planning	256	26	0	282	279

ACHIEVEMENTS

PARKS AND RESERVES

Public Toilets

- Public Toilet Upgrades – Council installed new toilets at Goolma, Bylong and Lawson Park with the inclusion of disabled facilities.
- Rylstone Disabled Toilet – Council commenced construction of a new disabled toilet at the Rylstone Showground after consultation with the local community.

Playgrounds

- Lawson Park - Stage 2 of the Lawson Park Playground extension completed
- Robertson Park – Upgraded playground installed.

Passive Reserves

- Flirtation Hill, Gulgong – Council worked with the 2852 Committee to continue landscaping of Flirtation Hill.
- Red Hill, Gulgong – Council continued to work with community groups for the upgrading of the Red Hill facility in Gulgong with the purpose of this becoming a significant tourist attraction.
- Theresa Lane Park, Gulgong – This park is strategically located on the entrance to Gulgong. It is was upgraded to include landscaping, pathways and seating
- Seating – Council installed a number of seats adjacent to pathways and in reserves.
 - Pathway on Ulan Road
 - JH Stahl Park, Gulgong
 - Dewhurst Reserve, Mudgee
 - Coomber Park, Kandos
 - Pioneers Park, Rylstone
- The Drip – Council continued to work with appropriate Crown departments to ensure that weed control measures are undertaken at this iconic reserve.
- Gulgong Skate Park – To ensure that vandalism is minimised at the Gulgong Skate Park Council improved lighting.

Active Parks / Sports Grounds

- Billy Dunn Oval, Gulgong – Council installed a synthetic cricket pitch at Billy Dunn Oval as well as security lighting.
- Glen Willow Reserve, Mudgee – Council is working with the 355 Garden Committee on the continuous landscaping opportunities at Glen Willow Reserve.

DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

- Over 100 restaurant operators and food handlers attended a Food Hygiene Course funded and organised by Council.
- Implementation of a salinity monitoring network to enable the continued expansion of urban areas in accordance with the Local Environmental Plan whilst promoting best practice for development in saline environments.
- Increase the availability of heritage advice through the Local Heritage Advisor.
- Extension of environmental community education programs.
- Council installed solar energy panel on two Council facilities to promote self sufficiency in term of energy and assist in public education.
- Council worked with Landcare to treat willows along Lawson Creek.
- Council undertook a program of subsidising water tank installation for home owners.
- Undertook restoration of the historic Hargraves Courthouse in association with the Heritage Office and the Hargraves Courthouse Advisory Committee.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

- Formulation of the Mid-Western Strategic Plan.
- Gazettal of the Interim Local Environmental Plan.
- Council commenced the formulation of the Comprehensive Land Use Strategy for the Region and the new comprehensive Local Environmental Plan.
- Formulate and implement the Residential Development Control Plan.

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\$'000	Original Budget	Adopted Variations	Proposed Variations	Revised Budget	Actuals YTD
LIBRARY					
OPERATIONAL					
Library					
INCOME	(101)	(0)	0	(101)	(115)
EXPENDITURE	636	(7)	0	629	659
DEPRECIATION	138	0	0	138	126
Total Library	673	(8)	0	666	670
CAPITAL					
Library Capital					
INCOME	0	0	0	0	0
EXPENDITURE	77	0	0	77	80
Total Library Capital	77	0	0	77	80
REGULATORY CONTROL					
OPERATIONAL					
Regulatory Control					
INCOME	(175)	(19)	0	(195)	(197)
EXPENDITURE	557	0	0	557	553
DEPRECIATION	1	0	0	1	5
Total Regulatory Control	382	(19)	0	363	361
COMMUNITY SERVICES					
OPERATIONAL					
Community Services					
INCOME	(2,181)	(108)	0	(2,289)	(2,209)
EXPENDITURE	2,316	121	0	2,436	2,520
DEPRECIATION	18	2	0	20	11
Total Community Services	153	15	0	168	322
CAPITAL					
Community Services Capital					
INCOME	(6)	6	0	0	0
EXPENDITURE	27	(19)	0	7	0
Total Community Services Capital	21	(13)	0	7	0

ACHIEVEMENTS

LIBRARY

- Council continues to increase the services provided to children, particularly in the area of early literacy development. This has included the planning and delivery of programs such as Grade Ones at the Library (GOAL) and resources for HSC and High School students (Headspace).
- Council has extended services for senior citizens including the support of book groups and the Friends of the Library. There has also been collaboration with U3A over the past 12 months to provide more understanding of the services and resources offered by the library, particularly in the areas of local and family history.
- Council has extended the opening hours of the libraries at Christmas times by providing additional days when the libraries are open during the Council shutdown period.
- The library catalogue is now available on the Internet for the community to access.
- The library space at the Gulgong branch has been increased in size and upgraded.

REGULATORY CONTROL

- A review of parking control activities was carried out to determine whether there is a need to be expand or compress times allocated for parking. This was discussed with the Mudgee Business Association (MBA) and the outcome was that the current parking hours and controls are satisfactory.
- A comprehensive review of pound facilities was carried out. The outcome was a) improvements to the Mudgee Pound, b) a temporary facility to be installed at Rylstone in 2008/09 subject to budget availability and c) the relocation and construction of a new pound facility at Mudgee be investigated.
- A review of the possible expansion of weeds inspectorial functions be carried out. An additional resource was approved in the 2008/09 budget.
- Council has allocated an additional \$60,000 for management of weeds on Council's road reserves. This program was fully carried out.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

- Council is working with the community on a number of Social and Cultural Plan initiatives – this includes cultural, community and youth programs and events.
- Council has become a member of Arts OutWest. Council's membership will be subject to negotiations on how Arts OutWest deliver added value service to the community.
- The Cultural Development Committee has been developing a regional cultural project – Reading the Rivers. This project will look to examine the region's relationship with water and seeks to work with the children of our community to explore these shared experiences.
- The Mid-Western Regional Youth Council has been established and has been providing advice to Council on issues of relevance to youth, with a particular focus on the delivery of entertainment events for young people and the improvements of facilities such as skate parks.

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For the quarter ended 30 June 2008

\$'000	Original Budget	Adopted Variations	Proposed Variations	Revised Budget	Actuals YTD
ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT SERVICES					
OPERATIONAL					
Administration & Management Services					
INCOME	(28,211)	(691)	0	(28,903)	(30,086)
EXPENDITURE	16,189	747	0	16,936	17,004
DEPRECIATION	1,587	0	0	1,587	1,240
Total Administration & Management Services	(10,436)	56	0	(10,381)	(11,843)
CAPITAL					
Administration & Management Services Cap					
INCOME	(1,474)	303	0	(1,171)	(1,056)
EXPENDITURE	3,626	316	0	3,942	3,465
Total Administration & Management Services Cap	2,152	619	0	2,771	2,409
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT					
OPERATIONAL					
Economic Development					
INCOME	(1,358)	272	0	(1,086)	(1,041)
EXPENDITURE	1,161	(17)	0	1,144	1,155
DEPRECIATION	94	0	0	94	72
Total Economic Development	(103)	255	0	152	187
CAPITAL					
Economic Development Capital					
INCOME	0	0	0	0	0
EXPENDITURE	1,288	(1,072)	0	216	146
Total Economic Development Capital	1,288	(1,072)	0	216	146
GOVERNANCE					
OPERATIONAL					
Governance					
INCOME	(64)	0	0	(64)	(64)
EXPENDITURE	372	28	0	401	381
DEPRECIATION	5	0	0	5	4
Total Governance	313	28	0	342	321

ACHIEVEMENTS

ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES

- Council improved the computer links to its Rylstone and Gulgong Service Centres.
- Council installed a new asset system and upgraded its financial management system so as to ensure that it will have good quality information on the state of all Council assets.
- Council has commenced a two year program of protecting all archive material. The 2007/08 program was completed which resulted in the digital scanning and disposal of some records.
- Council constructed a new SES and VRA building on Council land in Depot Road. This project was funded from government grants and money available from the SES and VRA.
- Rural Fire Services purchased new water tanks, fire engines. 90% of the costs of these projects are funded by government grants.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Increase funding to Mudgee Regional Tourism Inc up to \$340,000 to allow a complete facilitation of tourism services to the Mid-Western Region including the weekend opening of visitors centres in Gulgong and Rylstone. The full payment to Mudgee Region Tourism Inc will be dependent upon them achieving their Key Performance Indicators as set by Council.
- Development of the Economic Development Strategy.
- Land sales in 2007/08 included:
 - Land in Clare Court, Mudgee; and
 - 5 Vacant allotments in Kandos not needed by Council.

GOVERNANCE

- Undertake a telephone customer survey on the services provided by Council and seek feedback as to whether those services are still appropriate, affordable and effective. A survey was conducted by the Western Research Institute in July 2007 and a report was presented to Council. Overall, the public response was good, but resources have been allocated to improving Councils ability to respond to customer complaints more promptly. A new Customer Request system is being installed and a Call Centre is being established to handle the majority of incoming calls.
- Develop at least six newsletters to ratepayers per year to keep them informed of projects of Council, upcoming events and seeking community feedback. This project was further expanded to the development of a Community News publication which is distributed to all ratepayers 23 times per year.

State of the Environment Report 2007/08

The 2007/08 State of the Environment Report has been undertaken on regional basis in cooperation with the Central West Catchment Authority and is separately attached.

Legal Proceedings

Council expended \$195,000 on legal costs during the period.

Of that amount, \$72,608 related to the cost of obtaining legal advice/opinion in relation to various matters and not in relation to legal proceedings taken by or against the Council.

In addition, Council expended \$131,000 during the period in recovering outstanding rates and charges. These costs are debited as a charge against individual rate assessments. Council recovered \$130,000 of such costs during the period.

Summarised below are details of legal proceedings in which the Council was involved, together with the results of those proceedings and the nature and amount of legal costs incurred:

MATTER	NATURE OF EXPENSE	EXPENSE AMOUNT	OUTCOME
Stockland Development Appeal in Land & Environment Court	Cost involved in defending case	\$122,392	Development Consent issued.

Mayoral and Councillor Fees

The Mayoral Fee for the period was set at \$19,035.00 while the Councillor Fee was set at \$8,715.00. A total amount of \$78,435.00 was paid in Councillor Fees while an amount of \$19,035.00 was paid in Mayoral Fees.

Councillor Expenses and Facilities

The Council has an adopted policy on the provision of facilities and the payment of Councillors expenses and a copy of the policy (which is currently subject to review) is appended.

An amount of \$189,165.06 was expended on supporting the elected Council through the provision of these facilities and the payment of these expenses. This figure includes, but is not limited to, specific amounts expended on the following:

Provision of Office Equipment	\$15,461.07
Telephone Calls made by Councillors	\$5,089.05
Conferences and Seminars	\$27,793.87
Training and Skill Development	Nil
Interstate Visits	\$1,122.27
Overseas Visits	Nil
Spouse, partner or accompanying person	Nil
Child Care	Nil

Overseas Visits

During the year there were no overseas visits undertaken.

Senior Staff

Council effectively had one senior staff position during the year, that being the General Manager.

The total amount paid in respect of the employment of senior staff during the year (including salary, performance bonus payments, fringe benefits tax, housing assistance, private use of a Council motor vehicle and employer's superannuation contributions) was \$228,542.85.

The total remuneration comprised in the remuneration package of the General Manager was \$228,000.

Contracts Awarded During the Year

The following contracts were awarded by Council during the year:

Contractor	Goods/Services Provider	Amount (Inc. GST)
Donnelly Mining & Civil	Flirtation Hill Reservoir Refurbishment	\$489,730
GHD	Design and documentation of a new sewage treatment facility and associated infrastructure	\$535,691
Prominent	Mudgee Water Treatment Plant Powdered Activated Carbon dosing Facility	\$151,487
Sydney Truck Sales	One front loading garbage truck	\$362,803
Sydney Truck Sales	One side loading garbage truck	\$309,685
Westrac Pty Ltd	Two road graders	\$838,805
Rosmech Sales and Service	One street sweeper	\$293,754
Volvo Truck and Bus	Three tipping trucks	\$732,943

Bush Fire Hazard Reduction

There has been a large increase in Hazard Reduction both by council and land managers on the Bushfire Management Committee. This has seen large scale Hazard Reduction in the Rylstone area, along with a number of village hazard reductions, as per the program between Council and the Rural Fire Service. A number of targeted Community Education events have also been undertaken to better prepare residents for the onset of fire.

It is expected that there will be further increases in Hazard Reduction over the next 12 months by Council, NSW Rural Fire Service and National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Private Works

There were no resolutions passed during the year in accordance with the provisions of Section 67(2)(b) of the Local Government Act 1993 relating to Council subsidising the cost of any works carried out on private lands.

Council completed 74 private works projects ranging from grading of gravel drive ways to maintenance grading of the Ulan/Wollar Road for Wilpinjong Coal.

Grants

During this period, Council made contributions/donations amounting to \$118,710.84.

Human Resources Activities

Learning and Development

The following Learning and Development activities were completed by Council employees during the year:

Activated Sludge	Drains
Advanced Grader	Emergency Management
Apprenticeship – Electrical	FBT Workshop
Apprenticeship – Mechanical	First Aid
Bachelor of Environmental Engineering	Graduate Diploma - Early Childhood
Cert II Asset Maintenance (Waste Management)	Graduate Diploma – Management
Cert II Water Industry Operations	Gravesafe
Cert III Asset Maintenance (Waste Management)	JetPatcher Training
Cert III Water Industry Operations	Local Government Management Challenge
Cert IV Civil Engineering	Masters in Business Administration
Cert IV Community Recreation	Masters in Local Government and Environmental
Cert IV Disability and Welfare	Law
Cert IV Frontline Management	McDonald Johnstone - various Plant
Cert IV Local Government Administration	Performance Development Appraisal Training
Cert IV Ranger	Playground Inspection
Cert IV Training and Assessment	Pool Lifeguard
Certified Practising Planner	Pumping Fundamentals
Chartered Practising Accountant	Records - State Act and Disposal
Chemical Application	Report Writing
Ci Training	Senior First Aid
Confined Space Refresher	Serck Controls
Consultative Committee	Taxation Update
Crystal Report Writing	Traffic Control - Design/Audit
Dam Safety	Traffic Control - Select/Modify
DEUS Trickling Filter	Traffic Control - Stop/Slow
Diploma of Accounting	Water Treatment Operator
Diploma Property Management	

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy

Council is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer committed to providing a work environment free from discrimination, harassment, victimisation or vilification, where each employee has the opportunity to progress to the extent of their abilities. Council's EEO objectives are to provide:

- Fair practices in the workplace;
- Management decisions without bias;
- Recognition of and respect for the social and cultural backgrounds of all employees, Councillors and customers;
- Employment practices which create employee satisfaction and commitment.

To achieve these objectives, Council undertook to:

- Incorporate the EEO principle into all relevant policies and procedures;
- Base all selection decisions on merit and the individual's ability to meet the requirements of the position;
- Provide learning and development that is linked to the employee, Council and customer needs;
- Provide an efficient workplace free from bullying, harassment and discrimination;
- Promote EEO throughout Council to ensure that every employee is aware of and understands Council's policies on EEO related matters.

Services That Promoted Access for People with Diverse Cultural and Linguistic Backgrounds

Demographic statistics from the 2006 Census indicate that approximately 2.7% of the population speak a language other than English at home and 2.7% of the population state that they are from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

Programs undertaken or supported by Council include:

- Council's Social Plan includes sections on Culturally and Linguistically Diverse members of the community and Aboriginal members of the community.
- All Council's Home and Community Care Services funded through the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care have special policy statements on services for people with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- Mid-Western Regional Family Day Care Service has an Indigenous carer and another carer who is working with the Barnardos Better Futures Program that caters for Aboriginal children.
- Council's Community Services Centre offers, on an annual basis, meeting room facilities for people from diverse backgrounds to meet with representatives from the Department of Immigration.
- Mudgee Child Care Centre promotes inclusive practice and currently has children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal backgrounds enrolled at the Centre.
- Mid-Western Regional Council Library provides access to the collections of the State Library of New South Wales and enables members of the community to loan boxes of non-English language books.

Services to Cater for the Needs of Children and Young People

The following services were provided by Council for children and young people in the local government area in 2007/08:

- Formation of the inaugural Mid-Western Regional Youth Council
- Youth Week program delivered with activities in Mudgee, Gulgong, Rylstone/Kandos, Goolma and Wollar including the major YouthFest day in Mudgee
- Support for the establishment of the Kandos Youth Activity Centre
- Mudgee Child Centre offers quality, programmed care and activities for children 0-5 years
- Family Day Care services offering quality child care for children aged 6 weeks to 12 years of age, in the private homes of registered Family Day Carers.
- A full range of library services through branch libraries in Gulgong, Kandos and Mudgee
- Mobile library service to all village schools in the region, including Bylong Upper, Goolma, Hargraves, Ilford, Lue, Ulan, Windeyer and Wollar
- Bookworms story-telling and craft activities programs for pre-schoolers delivered through the Gulgong, Kandos and Mudgee branches
- A range of storytelling and craft activities for children during school holidays
- Born to Read lap-sit program for babies and toddlers
- Establishment of the GOAL program (Grade Ones at the Library)
- Summer Reading Program delivered throughout the Region with over 600 participants

Access and Equity

The following provides a list of the activities that Council completed in 2007/08 that promoted services and access to services for people with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and to those with other access needs:

- Mid-Western Regional Council now has two established Access Committees (one covering the Mudgee and Gulgong areas; the other covering the Rylstone and Kandos areas) that provide advice to Council on access issues
- Council's Community Services facilitates space for the transcribing of the Mudgee Guardian on to tapes for the vision impaired
- Mobile Library Service assists housebound library patrons to access materials as well as providing a library service to village communities
- The Mid-Western Regional Council Library provides access to large print books and talking books that can be of assistance to the visually impaired
- The library has also established a collection of Navigators (hand-held devices that store talking books for the sight-impaired)
- The library now has an online catalogue available all the time for patrons to search or place reservations on items from the comfort of their own home
- Council auspices a range of HACC funded services such as Host Family Respite Care, Meals on Wheels and Home Modification & Maintenance
- Community Transport enables the elderly or those with a disability to have comfortable access to medical or social appointments
- Children are currently involved in supported Special Needs programs at the Mudgee Child Care Centre.
- Council supports a range of special events and community services such as NAIDOC Week
- The Social Plan, adopted in November 2006, contains a range of recommendations that specifically focus on different demographic groups in our community and the best way for Council to assist them
- A range of working parties and groups exist in our community with support and advocacy from Council, including Interagency, Youth Network, Aged Services, Disability Services, Children and Family and People Against Violence

Equity in Council's Services

Evidence of Council's commitment to equitably providing services to all residents is provided in the following programs delivered in 2007/08:

- Youth Week events were arranged in various locations throughout the region, including village communities. Transport was also available to travel to events
- Seniors Week events were celebrated throughout the Region
- Community email bulleting is distributed to recipients throughout the Council area
- Mid-Western Regional Council Library offers free library membership to all people living in the local government area through its branches at Gulgong, Kandos and Mudgee
- A Mobile Library Service travels to a number of villages in the Region.
- The Mobile Library also offers a housebound service to the frail-aged who are unable to visit the library branches
- The library now has an online catalogue available for searching over the Internet
- The library offers free Internet access to the Internet at its three branches at Gulgong, Kandos and Mudgee

Delegated Functions

There were no functions delegated by Council to external bodies during the period.

Commercial Interests and Competitive Neutrality

Council did not hold the controlling interest in any one enterprise, nor was it party to any partnerships, co-operatives or other joint ventures during the year.

Council was involved in the following organisations:

Organisation/Contractor	Purpose	Amount
Statecover Mutual Limited	Council holds a partly paid share in Statecover Mutual Ltd, a company providing workers compensation cover for Council. Council has a contingent liability to contribute further equity in the event of either the erosion of the capital base of the company or increases in the prudential requirements of APRA.	N/A

Council operates the following businesses:

Category 1:

- Water Supply
- Sewer Service

Category 2:

- Private Works
- Livestock Selling Centre (Saleyards)
- Mudgee Child Care Centre

Council has complied with the principles of competitive neutrality in relation to pricing structures, taxation equivalents, Council rates and charges, loan debt guarantees fees and corporate taxation equivalents. Council had not received any competitive neutrality complaints. Council has adopted a complaints handling policy that incorporates a mechanism for dealing with competitive neutrality complaints.

For financial information regarding Council's business activities please refer to the Special Purpose Financial Reports attached.

Freedom of Information (FOI) and Privacy

Council is committed to the principles of open government and makes every effort to provide access by members of the public to the Council's decision making process by way of Section 12 of the Local Government Act, 1993. Wherever possible, documents are provided to applicants without charge.

As a result of this approach, two FOI applications were received during the period. This compares favourably to the 1998/99 period, during which Council only received one formal FOI application, the 1999/00 and 2000/01 periods, during which no applications were received, the 2001/02 period where only one application was received, the 2002/03 period where no applications were received, the 2003/04 period where one application was received, the 2004/05 period where three applications were received and the 2005/06 period where no applications were received and the 2006/07 period where one application was received.

Council has adopted a Privacy Management Plan and complies with the Privacy Code of Practice for Local Government and any Directions issued by the Privacy Commissioner.

**MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08**

Planning Agreements

Mid-Western Regional Council had two Voluntary Planning Agreements in force during the 2008 financial year. A summary of the agreements follows:

Company	Effective	Purpose	Amount	Due Date	Paid
Wilpinjong Coal Pty Ltd	March 2006	Lump Sum - Coal Shipment	\$ 450,000	Payable prior to the first shipment of coal from the land	Yes
		Annual Contribution - Community Infrastructure	\$ 800,000	\$40,000 per annum for 20 years, with the first instalment due on the anniversary of the first loading and dispatch of coal.	1 of 20
		Annual Contribution - Road Maintenance	\$30,000 per annum	\$30,000 per annum for the life of the mining operation, with the first instalment due on the anniversary of the first loading and dispatch of coal.	1 of
Moolarben Coal Pty Ltd	February 2008	Lump Sum - Open Cut Coal	\$1,000,000	Payable in three equal annual instalments, with the first payment due within 7 days of first loading and dispatch of coal produced from the open cut operation.	No
		Lump Sum - Underground Coal	\$ 300,000	Payable within 7 days of first loading and dispatch of coal produced from the underground operation.	No
		Lump Sum - Road Maintenance	\$1,000,000	Payable in three equal annual instalments, with the first payment due within 7 days of the commencement of construction.	No
		Annual Contribution - Road Maintenance	\$1,250,000	\$62,500 per annum for 20 years, with the first instalment due on the anniversary of the first loading and dispatch of coal.	No
		Annual Contribution - Community Infrastructure	\$1,000,000	\$100,000 per annum for 10 years, with the first instalment due on the anniversary of the first loading and dispatch of coal.	No
Stocklands	February 2007	Lump Sum - Contribution	\$ 250,000	Due within 10 days of issue of Construction Certificate in respect of proposed development.	No
		Lump Sum - Roundabout Contribution	\$ 250,000	Due within 10 days of receipt by the Developer of written confirmation from Council that the roundabout has been completed.	No

Stormwater Management Services

Council has not levied an annual charge for stormwater management services during the year.

Companion Animals Act

Council employs one officer full time to enforce the provisions of the Companion Animal legislation. This officer also attends to after-hours stock impounding.

During the year, Pound Data Collection Returns and Data relating to Dog Attacks were lodged with the Department of Local Government.

During the year, Council held Discount Dog Days as a means of encouraging persons to have their dogs and cats microchipped. In addition, staff are working with the local branch of the RSPCA regarding foster care and advertising of impounded animals.

Council has three (3) off-leash areas, located at Pitts Lane, Mudgee, Peoples Park, Gulgong and the Rylstone Show Ground.

The Department of Local Government provided \$9,344 for Animal Management Services to Council. Additionally, \$2626 was received from stock impounding fees, animal release fees, fines, animal sales and other revenue associated with the management of companion animals. These funds contributed to the management and control of companion animals in the area as follows:

Expenditure

Salaries, overtime, allowances, etc	\$50,288
Materials and consumables	17,995
Plant operating costs	24,494
Telephones, Electricity & Energy, Contractors,	5,786
Printing & Stationary, Waste tipping expenses,	
Water usage	
Employee and Creditors overheads	18,876
Total	<u>\$117,439</u>

Financial Statements, Condition of Public Works & Financial Indicators

Please refer to the General Purpose Financial Report, Special Purpose Financial Reports and Special Schedules attached.

MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL

Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors

OUTCOME:	Communications and Governance
MAJOR PROGRAMME:	Executive Support
PROGRAMME MANAGER:	Manager Governance
LEGISLATION:	Local Government Act 1993 Local Government (General) Regulation 2005
FILE REFERENCE:	A0110001

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

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

OBJECTIVES AND COVERAGE

The objective of this policy is to provide a guide to Councillor's expenses and facilities, and the process for paying expenses in a way that can be properly recorded, reported and audited.

The policy applies to all Councillors. The Mayor is entitled to specific additional facilities.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

This policy will be included in the Council's Annual Report. In addition, the total amount of money spent during the relevant financial year through the application of this policy will be reported to the Council quarterly and in the Annual Report.

LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Local Government Act 1993

The relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 are set out below:

Section 252 Payment of expenses and provision of facilities

- (1) Within 5 months after the end of each year, a council must adopt a policy concerning the payment of expenses incurred or to be incurred by, and the provision of facilities to, the mayor, the deputy mayor (if there is one) and the other councillors in relation to discharging the functions of civic office.
- (2) The policy may provide for fees payable under this Division to be reduced by an amount representing the private benefit to the mayor or a councillor of a facility provided by the council to the mayor or councillor.
- (3) A council must not pay any expenses incurred or to be incurred by, or provide any facilities to, the mayor, the deputy mayor (if there is one) or a councillor otherwise than in accordance with a policy under this section.
- (4) A council may from time to time amend a policy under this section.
- (5) A policy under this section must comply with the provisions of this Act, the regulations and any relevant guidelines issued under section 23A.

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

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

Section 254 Decision to be made in open meeting

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

Section 12 (What information is publicly available) provides that the public is able to inspect during office hours at the council, and at no charge, the current version and the immediately preceding version of the council's expenses and facilities policy. The public are also entitled to a copy of the policy either free of charge or on payment of a reasonable copying charge.

Section 23A (Director General's guidelines) makes provision for the Director-General of the Department of Local Government to prepare, adopt or vary guidelines that relate to the exercise by a council of any of its functions. It also requires that a council must take the relevant guidelines into consideration before exercising any of its functions.

Section 428(2)(f) (Annual Reports) requires a council to include in its annual report: The total amount of money expended during the year on mayoral fees and councillor fees, the council's policy on the provision of facilities for use by councillors and the payment of councillors' expenses, together with a statement of the total amount of money expended during the year on the provision of such facilities and the payment of such expenses.

In addition **Section 428(r)** requires that councils must report on any other information required by the regulations.

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

The relevant provisions of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 are set out below:

Clause 217 (Additional information for inclusion in annual reports) states in part:

- (1) For the purposes of section 428(2)(r) of the Act, an annual report of a council is to include the following information:
 - (a) details (including the purpose) of overseas visits undertaken during the year by councillors, council staff or other persons representing the council (including visits sponsored by other organisations).

Clause 403 (Payment of expenses and provision of facilities) states:

A policy under section 252 of the Local Government Act 1993 must not include any provision enabling a council:

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

OTHER GOVERNMENT POLICY PROVISIONS

DLG guidelines for payment of expenses and provision of facilities

This policy takes into account the following Circulars:

- Circular 05108 - Legal assistance for councillors and council employees.
- Circular 02134 - Unauthorised use of council resources.

These guidelines replace Circular 04160 Policy on payment of facilities to the mayor, deputy mayor and other councillors.

Model Code of Conduct

This is consistent with the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW, Department of Local Government, December 2004 and Council's Code of Conduct which implements the Model Code.

The part of the Model Code headed 'Use of Council resources' (pp 23-24) is particularly relevant to s252 policies, and is implemented by the Council's Code of Conduct.

ICAC publications

Councillors should also be aware of and take account of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) publication No Excuse for Misuse, preventing the misuse of council resources (Guidelines 2), November 2002.

This publication is available on the ICAC website at www.icac.nsw.gov.au.

APPROVAL ARRANGEMENTS

Approval for attendance at conferences, seminars and the like under this policy will, subject to other decisions of Council, where possible, be approved by Council. On those occasions where this is not possible the approval will be given jointly by the Mayor and General Manager (in cases where this relates to the Mayor, the approval will be given jointly by the Deputy Mayor and General Manager) – following which a report will be presented to the next Council Meeting to confirm the action taken.

PART 2: PAYMENT OF EXPENSES

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Payment of expenses generally

Allowances and expenses

Council does not provide general allowances to councillors.

Councillors are entitled to the expenses set out in this policy provided that they satisfy the stated requirements.

Reimbursement and reconciliation of expenses

Before Council will pay for an expense under this policy, Councillors must seek reimbursement in a formal written claim lodged not later than six (6) months after the expense was incurred.

Each claim must include original receipts, or tax invoices (where GST applies), to be considered for reimbursement.

Payment in advance

Council will not generally make advance payments to Councillors.

Spouse and partner expenses

Payment of expenses incurred by a Councillor's spouse or partner who may be accompanying the Councillor is dealt with in the respective sections of the policy.

SPECIFIC EXPENSES FOR MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

Civic Business within the LGA

a) Scope

Expenses will be paid for Councillors to attend:

- Meetings of the Council and Committees;
- Meetings of other committees, bodies, organisations or groups to which those Councillors are Council delegates or representatives;
- Other meetings or inspections which are authorised by the Council, the Mayor or the General Manager; and
- Training courses, seminars or conferences authorised by the Council, the Mayor or the General Manager;

provided that the claim is made not later than six (6) months after the expenses were incurred.

Note: Any claims submitted later than six (6) months after the expenses were incurred will not be eligible for reimbursement.

b) Categories of Payment / Reimbursement

Council and Committee Meetings

(i) Travel

Councillors are entitled to be reimbursed for the use of their private vehicle for travel to and from meetings.

Payment will be based on the relevant kilometre rate in the staff award.

The allowable distance claimed will be for travel, by the most practicable route from the Councillor's usual place of residence or other place where the Councillor might be (whichever is the lesser), immediately prior to the meeting.

(ii) Meals

Arrangements will be made for a meal to be provided at the conclusion of the meeting at a venue, in proximity to where the meeting is held, of which Councillors and staff in attendance may partake.

Meetings of other committees, bodies, organisations or groups to which those Councillors are Council delegates or representatives or other authorised meetings or inspections

(i) Travel

Where Council vehicles are unavailable, Councillors may use their private motor vehicle. Councillors should check with the Executive Secretary to ascertain whether a Council vehicle is available and should make arrangements to collect the vehicle (vehicles will not generally be delivered to Councillors).

Where a private motor vehicle is used, Councillors are entitled to be reimbursed for this use.

Payment will be based on the relevant kilometre rate in the staff award.

The allowable distance claimed will be for travel, by the most practicable route from the Councillor's usual place of residence or other place where the Councillor might be (whichever is the lesser), immediately prior to the meeting or inspection.

(ii) Out-of Pocket Expenses

Reasonable out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed for costs associated with attendance, including entertainment, but excluding expenses of a normal personal nature.

Training Courses, Seminars or Conferences

(i) Registration

Includes registration fees for attendance at conferences, seminars etc as well as associated official luncheons, dinners and tours.

(ii) Travel

Where Council vehicles are unavailable Councillors may use their private motor vehicle. Councillors should check with the Executive Secretary in the first instance to ascertain whether a Council vehicle is available and should make arrangements to collect the vehicle (vehicles will not generally be delivered to Councillors).

Where a private motor vehicle is used, Councillors are entitled to be reimbursed for this use.

Payment will be based on the relevant kilometre rate in the staff award.

The allowable distance claimed will be for travel, by the most practicable route from the Councillor's usual place of residence or other place where the Councillor might be (whichever is the lesser), immediately prior to the meeting or inspection.

(iii) Out-of-Pocket Expenses

Reasonable out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed for costs associated with attendance, including entertainment, but excluding expenses of a normal private nature.

(iv) Spouses/Partners

In those cases where the function is of such a nature that the Councillor's spouse/partner would normally be expected to accompany the Councillor, any costs associated with the attendance of the spouse/partner will be met by Council.

Civic Business outside the LGA

a) Scope

Expenses will be paid for Councillors to attend:

- Conferences, seminars and training courses at which attendance has been authorised by the Council or the Mayor;
- Meetings of other Councils while representing and as authorised by Council or the Mayor;
- Meetings of other committees, bodies, organisations or groups to which those Councillors are Council delegates or representatives; and
- Other meetings or inspections which are authorised by the Council, the Mayor or the General Manager.

provided that the claim is made not later than six (6) months after the expenses were incurred.

Note: Any claims submitted later than six (6) months after the expenses were incurred will not be eligible for reimbursement.

b) Categories of Payment/Reimbursement

(i) Registration

Includes registration fees for attendance at conferences, seminars etc as well as associated official luncheons, dinners and tours.

(ii) Travel

Council will either pay or reimburse Councillors for travel by air, private motor vehicle, rail or taxi/hire car, as appropriate and as set out below: (With all travel arrangements, due consideration is to be given to the physical capacity of the Councillor and any variation to the arrangements below will be with the approval of the Mayor).

(A) Air

Where travel is undertaken by air, this will be by economy class subject to any flight longer than three (3) hours being by business class. All bookings for travel will generally be made by Council staff.

(B) Private Motor Vehicle

Where Council vehicles are unavailable Councillors may use their private motor vehicle. Councillors should check with the Executive Secretary in the first instance to ascertain whether a Council vehicle is available and make arrangements to collect the vehicle (vehicles will not generally be delivered to Councillors).

Where a private motor vehicle is used, Councillors are entitled to be reimbursed for this use.

Payment will be based on the relevant kilometre rate in the staff award.

The allowable distance claimed will be for travel, by the most practicable route from the Councillor's usual place of residence or other place where the Councillor might be (whichever is the lesser), immediately prior to the meeting, function, training course, seminar or conference.

This claim will be subject to the cost not exceeding the economy class airfare as applicable.

Note: Sharing of travel arrangements for Councillors of any gender doing business outside the LGA be at the mutual agreement of the Councillors involved.

(C) Rail

Where travel is undertaken by train, Council will meet the cost of first class ticket, or equivalent, including sleeping berths where necessary.

(D) Taxi/Hire Car

Where travel is undertaken by taxi/hire car, Council will reimburse fares paid upon presentation of relevant receipts.

(iii) Accommodation

Council will meet reasonable costs (including sustenance and telephone charges) including the night before and after the conference where necessary. Accommodation will generally be booked by Council staff.

Note: Sharing of accommodation for Councillors of any gender doing business outside the LGA be at the mutual agreement of the Councillors involved.

(iv) Out-of-Pocket Expenses

Reasonable out-of-pocket expenses will be reimbursed for costs associated with attendance, including entertainment, but excluding expenses of a normal private nature.

(v) Spouses/Partners

Where a Councillor is accompanied by his/her spouse/partner, accommodation (shared basis) will be met by Council. All other costs will be the responsibility of the spouse/partner.

In exceptional circumstances Council may, by resolution, pay expenses incurred by the spouse/partner of the Councillor incurred whilst they are travelling on Council business.

Care and other related expenses

Councillors can claim up to \$100 per month for reimbursement of carer expenses that were incurred while attending Council business. This may include childcare expenses and the care of immediate family members of Councillors who are elderly, have a disability and/or are sick. Reimbursement of childcare expenses will be made for children under 16 years of age only.

Expenses will be paid on production of receipts.

Communications expenses

Telephone

Subject to the wishes of individual Councillors:

- Council will install a dedicated duet/additional line at a location designated by the Councillor and will meet the installation costs of a combined Telephone/Facsimile/Answering Machine. Council will maintain the machine and will meet the cost of line rental and network charges as well as providing consumables for official purposes; or
- Alternatively, a Councillor may use his/or her own equipment (including mobile). In this instance Council will meet the line rental costs and network charges and will provide consumables for official purposes.

Internet

Subject to the wishes of individual Councillors:

- Council will provide Broadband internet access (with unlimited download limit) in accordance with Council's current internet plan; or
- Alternatively, a Councillor may use his/her own internet facilities and Council will reimburse an amount equivalent to Council's current internet plan.

Ongoing costs

Council will meet the cost of official calls and usage.

Provision for payment and monetary limits

Council will only pay claims for reimbursement of communications expenses upon production of original receipts or tax invoices and completion of Council's claim form which is to be lodged not later than six (6) months after the expense was incurred.

In respect of official calls and usage, subject to the provision of the relevant receipts or invoices, Council will reimburse Councillors up to a maximum of \$100 per month or \$200 per month in the case of the Mayor.

Councillors will be responsible for all expenses above this amount.

Exceptional circumstances

Should a situation arise where the strict application of this section of the policy would adversely affect and/or cause undue hardship to a Councillor, the Council may, by resolution, increase the maximum quantum available to that Councillor.

Insurance Expenses and obligations

Councillors will receive the benefit of insurance cover for:

- Personal injury while on Council business. The cover does not include medical expenses for illness in Australia.
- Professional indemnity for matters arising out of Councillors' performance of civic duties or exercise of their functions as Councillors provided the performance or exercise of the relevant civic duty is, in the opinion of Council, in good faith or proper. This is subject to any limitations or conditions set out in the policy of insurance that is taken out from time to time.
- Public liability for matters arising out of Councillors' performance of civic duties or exercise of their functions under the Local Government Act. This is subject to any limitations or conditions set out in the policy of insurance that is taken out from time to time.
- Councillors and Officers liability. This policy provides protection in respect of actions against the individual Councillors in addition to legal costs incurred by them in defending an allegation of a wrongful act made in the course of their duties as Councillors. This is subject to any limitations or conditions set out in the policy of insurance that is taken out from time to time.

Legal expenses and obligations

Council may by resolution indemnify or reimburse the reasonable legal expenses of:

- A Councillor defending an action arising from the performance in good faith of a function under the Local Government Act 1993; or
- A Councillor defending an action in defamation provided the statements complained of were made in good faith while exercising a function under the Local Government Act 1993; or
- A Councillor for proceedings before the Local Government Pecuniary Interest and Disciplinary Tribunal, or an investigative body, provided the subject of the proceedings arises from the performance in good faith of a function under the Local Government Act 1993 and the Tribunal or investigative body makes no adverse finding against the Councillor.

Council will not:

- Meet expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising merely from something that a Councillor has done during his or her term of office; or
- Meet the costs of an action in defamation taken by a Councillor as plaintiff in any circumstances; or
- Meet the costs of a Councillor seeking advice in respect of possible defamation, or in seeking a non-litigious remedy for possible defamation.

PART 3: PROVISION OF FACILITIES

Councillors

The Councillors are to receive the benefit of the following Council facilities:-

- a) Meeting Meals and Refreshments - provision of meals and refreshments associated with Council, Committee and Working Parties/Special Committee meetings.
- b) Transportation - provision of Council motor vehicle transportation (when available) for travel to conferences, seminars, etc when on official Council business.

Where a Council vehicle is provided to a Councillor for use on official business, the vehicle may:

- With the consent of the Councillor, be driven by the Councillor's spouse or partner as long as that person is legally licensed to drive the Council vehicle; or
 - Provided the Councillor is in the vehicle at the time, be driven by any other fully licensed driver.
- c) Meeting Rooms - Provision of meeting facilities in the Mudgee Administration Building for the purpose of Council, Committee and Working Parties/Special Committee meetings, and for meeting with constituents.
- d) Photocopiers - provision of photocopying facilities generally for official purposes.
- e) Combined Telephone/Facsimile/Answering Machine – for official purposes.
- f) At the discretion of the individual Councillor, Personal desktop or laptop computer with access to the internet and appropriate Council software to a maximum value of \$5,000 – for official purposes. Council will provide associated training and software support.
- g) Where practicable, provision of a Councillors room, incorporating meeting facilities, computer workstation, telephone, etc.
- h) Provision of an Email address for Councillors, as requested, to facilitate access to Council's electronic mail.
- i) Business Cards for his/her role as an elected representative.
- j) A suitable name badge.
- k) Protective apparel, including (where appropriate), hard hat, safety vest, safety footwear and sunscreen for on-site inspections.

Mayor

In addition to those facilities provided to the Councillors, the Mayor is to receive the benefit of:

- a) Council Vehicle - (Ford Fairlane Ghia or equivalent) for official purposes. The vehicle to be used at the discretion of the Mayor for Mayoral, Councillor or Council purposes. A fuel card will be provided for use only with the Mayoral vehicle.

When the Mayor or another Councillor is using the Mayoral vehicle on official business, the vehicle may:

- With the consent of the Mayor or Councillor, be driven by the spouse or partner of the Mayor or Councillor as long as that person is legally licensed to drive the Council vehicle; or
- Provided the Mayor or Councillor is in the vehicle at the time, be driven by any other fully licensed driver.

b) Mobile Telephone with a car kit - for official Council purposes.

Council will meet the costs of service charges and official usage costs, with the Mayor to reimburse Council in respect of any private expenses incurred.

c) Corporate Credit Card, to facilitate payment of official Council business expenses.

d) Official stationary incorporating Mayoral letterhead for official Council correspondence issued under the hand of the Mayor.

e) Business Cards for his/her role as Mayor.

f) Secretarial Services - word-processing and administrative support provided by the Executive Secretary.

g) Administrative Support - assistance with functions, organisations, meetings, and the like.

h) Office Refreshments - as provided in the Mayoral Office for entertainment purposes.

i) Where practicable, provision of an appropriate office, suitable for interviews and small civic receptions.

j) Use of ceremonial clothing including Mayoral Robes and chains of office.

k) A suitable name badge.

Deputy Mayor

In addition to those facilities provided to the Councillors, the Deputy Mayor is to receive the benefits of the Mayor when acting in the Office of Mayor.

COUNCILLORS WITH DISABILITIES

In addition to other clauses on this policy regarding the provision of facilities to Councillors, in the event of a Councillor having a disability that would prevent them from performing their civic duties without the provision of additional facilities, where necessary, and with the agreement of the Mayor and General Manager, additional appropriate facilities will be made available to that Councillor.

PART 4: OTHER MATTERS

ACQUISITION AND RETURNING OF FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT BY COUNCILLORS

All equipment issued to Councillors remains the property of Council and shall be returned on a Councillor ceasing to hold office.

However, on ceasing to be a Councillor or in the event of Council deciding to dispose of the equipment, a Councillor may request the purchase of such equipment. The General Manager shall consider each request and, where appropriate any leasing arrangements of such equipment. If the equipment is available to be sold, the General Manager will determine an "appropriate purchase price" based on fair market value and as suggested by the leasing company or the general market

CLAIMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

Expenses claim forms to facilitate claims for reimbursement of travel, meals, registration, accommodation and out-of-pocket expenses and the communications reimbursement claims will be provided to Councillors at each Council meeting.

Completed and signed claim forms will be processed by staff in accordance with this policy and will be submitted monthly to the General Manager for approval.

Endorsed by Policy Review Committee: 12/2/07, 3/10/07

Adopted by Council (Policies Only): 13/12/93

Re-Affirmed\Amended: Res F.44 C'ttee Mtg 3/6/96, Res F.128 C'ttee Mtg 2/12/96, Min 209 Ord Mtg 9/8/99, Min 154 Ord Mtg 13/6/00, Min 263 Ord Mtg 18/9/00, Res F 50 & F51 C'ttee Mtg 02/04/01. Rec F.5802 C'ttee Mtg 01/07/02, Min 201/02 Ord Mtg 9/9/02, Min 43/06 Ord Mtg 15/3/06, Min 72/07 Ord Mtg 18/4/07, Min 409/07 Ord Mtg 19/12/07.

Review Date: July 2008

