

END OF TERM REPORT 2021

MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL

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MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL

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MAYOR	Cr Des Kennedy
GENERAL MANAGER	Brad Cam

Introduction

READING THIS REPORT

Councils across NSW are coming to the end of their second full term under the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework. This requires councils to undertake a review of the relevant documents under the framework and assess the progress made towards the vision and goals of the Community Plan over the last five years.

This End of Term report is an account of Mid-Western Regional Council's progress in implementing the Community Plan in its current term from September 2016 to September 2021. This progress can be measured against the delivery of actions under Council's Delivery Program over the same period.

RESOURCING STRATEGY 2016–22

(assets, people and funds required)



Community Strategic Plan

The Towards 2030 Community Plan sets out the community vision for the future – where we are, where we want to be, how we will get there and how we know that we are there.

The plan represents an opportunity for Council and the community to strategically create and foster sustainable communities that reflect local values and aspirations. It allows the community to define and reconcile the economic, social, cultural and environmental priorities for the region.

The Towards 2030 Community Plan was developed following an extensive consultation process in which over 2,500 residents participated in varying forms. The key strategies and priorities identified are outlined here.



LOOKING AFTER OUR COMMUNITY

- 1.1 A safe and healthy community
- 1.2 Vibrant towns and villages
- 1.3 Effective and efficient delivery of infrastructure
- 1.4 Meet the diverse needs of the community and create a sense of belonging



PROTECTING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 2.1 Protect and enhance our natural environment
- 2.2 Provide total water cycle management
- 2.3 Live in a clean and environmentally sustainable way



BUILDING A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY

- 3.1 A prosperous and diversified economy
- 3.2 An attractive business and economic environment
- 3.3 A range of rewarding and fulfilling career opportunities to attract and retain residents



CONNECTING OUR REGION

- 4.1 High quality road network that is safe and efficient
- 4.2 Efficient connection of the region to major towns and cities
- 4.3 An active travel network within the region



GOOD GOVERNMENT

- 5.1 Strong civic leadership
- 5.2 Good communications and engagement
- 5.3 An effective and efficient organisation



Your Council

Mid-Western Regional Council is represented by nine Councillors including a Mayor elected every two years from within.

Councillors are elected to a four year term, with the most recent elections occurring in September 2016. That election saw 34 candidates nominated to serve the Mid-Western Region, with Councillors Paul Cavalier, Des Kennedy, Esme Martens, Peter Shelley, Percy Thompson, Alex Karavas, Sam Paine, Russell Holden and John O'Neill elected.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the 2020 Local Council elections being postponed to 4 September 2021, which will see this current term of Council proceeding for a five year term.

The five year term of the outgoing Council will conclude in September 2021, with Local Government elections to be held on Saturday 4 September 2021. The last meeting for the outgoing Council is 4 August 2021.



Councillor
Des Kennedy
MAYOR



Councillor
Sam Paine
DEPUTY MAYOR



Councillor
Paul Cavalier



Councillor
Russell Holden



Councillor
Alex Karavas



Councillor
Esme Martens



Councillor
John O'Neill



Councillor
Peter Shelley



Councillor
Percy Thompson

Looking After Our Community

Key achievements, major works and initiatives

Mudgee Arts Precinct

The NSW Government transferred ownership of the former Cudgegong Shire Building at 90 Market Street, Mudgee to Council in 2018 for use as the future location of a dedicated Arts and Cultural Centre.

Council secured more than \$8 million in State and Federal Government grant funding to construct the building that was officially opened in August 2021.

The Mudgee Arts Precinct includes gallery spaces, tourism office, sculpture garden, café, and artist workshop spaces. A regional gallery ranked in the top five most important projects for 52 per cent of residents during consultation for the Mid-Western Region Towards 2030 Community Plan.

Glen Willow Stage 2

Glen Willow Regional Sporting Complex has been expanded to include two junior rugby league playing fields, two rugby union fields, two multi-purpose fields, a junior rugby league amenities building, rugby union amenities building as well as infrastructure including car parking facilities, roads, lighting and fencing. Since construction of Stage 1 in 2012, more than 160,000 spectators have attended major sporting events through to local games at Glen Willow, with a further 8,000 locals participating in sport at the venue every year. More than 4,000 additional games and training sessions can be played each year as a result of the expansion. The nearly \$18 million project was jointly funded by the NSW and Australian Governments. The majority of major works are complete with the project due to open in 2022.

Mudgee Water Park

Located at Mudgee Pool, the Mudgee Water Park caters for children of all ages with a dedicated rock pool for small children, and slide and water bucket for primary aged children and teenagers. Council secured \$800,000 in grant funding to build the all new facility through the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund. A water park was identified as one of the top three priority projects by residents during consultation for the Mid-Western Region Towards 2030 Community Plan.

Mudgee Hospital

The new Mudgee Hospital opened in 2020. Fast tracked by the NSW Government due to the COVID-19 pandemic, construction of the \$70.7 million hospital commenced in July 2018 after campaigning by various elements of the community including Council. The new hospital now has all services under one roof, including Community Health, emergency department and ambulatory care, a maternity unit, general medical and surgical units, a peri-operative service, as well as oral health, renal dialysis and oncology services plus the addition of the first ever CT scanner.

Gulgong Adventure Playground

The purpose-built Gulgong Adventure Playground was completed in November 2019. Jointly funded by Council and the NSW Government, the playground completes a recreational precinct in Gulgong within walking distance of the Gulgong Pool, Billy Dunn Oval and the Gulgong Skate Park. The playground design was selected following community consultation.

Rylstone-Kandos Preschool

A major extension of the Rylstone-Kandos Preschool was completed in 2020 after Council secured NSW Government grant funding in addition to money raised by the pre-school. The preschool can now accommodate ten additional children each day and an extra staff member, improving the quality of community service.

Hall Upgrades

Gulgong and Rylstone Memorial Halls underwent essential upgrades after Council secured NSW Government grant funding. The region's halls are important spaces for our community for social functions, events, exhibitions, shows and weddings.

Mobile Library Van

In 2018, Council unveiled its new state-of-the-art Mobile Library Van that will continue to deliver a longstanding valuable service to residents in rural and remote villages. Proudly sponsored by Glencore Coal, the new van delivers reading and audio-visual material to 270 people across the Mid-Western Region.

Skate Park Upgrades

In 2019, Mudgee Skate Park underwent an extension and upgrade following a complete redevelopment of Gulgong Skate Park. Both projects involved extensive community consultation.

Playground and Park Upgrades

In the last five years Council continued with its shade sail installation and upgrades across the region's 36 playgrounds. In 2016 new play equipment was installed at Moufarrige and Interact Parks, and a children's miniature bike path at Gilbey Park.

In 2017 a new playground was installed at Waratah Park and in 2019 improvements were made to Rocket Park in Mudgee and Goolma Playground.

Council worked closely with local volunteers to help preserve the historically significant Camping Tree Reserve, installing picnic tables and seating, fencing and bollards. A new jumping pillow and shade sail was also installed at the Cudgegong Waters Caravan Park. In 2020 a Liberty Swing was installed in Robertson Park, Mudgee for children and adults in wheelchairs, while White Circle Playground was rebuilt after being destroyed by fire in 2019.

Swimming Pool Upgrades

As part of Council's wider aim to improve access for all residents at its facilities, the Kandos Pool was refurbished with new tiles laid throughout the pool for greater comfort to users. In addition, the construction of a disabled ramp at the Gulgong Pool was delivered for the summer season of 2016/17.

Public Art Program

In the last five years more than 17 sculptures have been installed along the Lawson Park Sculpture Walk through Council partnerships with community events such as Sculptures in the Garden and Rylstone Wood Symposium. The annual installations are part of Council's commitment to support public art across the region through its public art policy.



LOOKING AFTER OUR COMMUNITY

Street Light Upgrades

More than 1600 streetlights in Mudgee and Gulgong were upgraded to LED technology as part of a major project to improve energy efficiency. Jointly funded by Council and the NSW Government, the project will deliver energy savings of approximately \$141,000 each year in maintenance and electricity costs.

Sports Ground Upgrades

In the last five years Council has continued to improve the amenity of the region's 11 local sports grounds. In 2017/18 a new turf cricket wicket was installed at Glen Willow and Billy Dunn Oval netball courts were resurfaced, enabling more local games to be played at these facilities and attracting more games from outside the region. New irrigation was installed at Waratah Park, Kandos and new lighting installed at Victoria Park, Gulgong.

Defibrillators in Sports Grounds

Permanently based defibrillators were installed at the majority of sporting facilities. Council has defibrillators at 16 other sites throughout the region including its pools, libraries, administration buildings and works departments.

Restoration of War Memorials

Rylstone's Boer War Memorial was returned to its former glory following restoration works in 2017/18. Council secured \$2500 through the NSW Government's Community War Memorials Fund to complete cleaning and repairs of the marble obelisk.

Youth Programs Delivered

Council has delivered a range of youth-led activities and events over the last five years. Events are often held during Youth Week and during school holidays, with Council hosting events such as trivia and art competitions, workshops and outdoor activities. These events were spread across the region and, wherever possible, transport provided to assist those who would otherwise be unable to attend.

Local Strategic Planning Statement

Council developed and adopted the Mid-Western Regional Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) in 2020. The LSPS outlines the vision for land use planning in the Mid-Western Region and details Planning Priorities along with Land Use Actions to achieve the Planning Priorities. The Land Use Actions outline where Council will focus its strategic land use planning project work in the future.

Respiratory Clinic Partnership

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Council partnered with local GPs to establish the Mudgee Respiratory and Fever Clinic at Mudgee Showground with funding provided by the Federal Government. In addition to being seen by a doctor, patients are tested for COVID-19. The clinic is intended to relieve pressure from local health services.

Bushfire Liaison Officer

In response to the 2019/20 Bushfire Emergency in the Mid-Western Region and the subsequent Recovery Operation, Council appointed a Bushfire Liaison Officer to be the central point of contact for those requiring assistance.



Mudgee Water Park

Protecting Our Natural Environment

Key achievements, major works and initiatives

Food and Garden Waste Collection

Following an audit of waste collection in the region, it was discovered that at the time of collection the average garbage bin in the Mid-Western Region is only 80% full and of that 60% is organic material. To make use of this valuable resource and divert waste away from landfill, Council introduced a Food and Garden Waste Collection service in 2018. The weekly organics collection is transported to Dubbo where it is transformed into compost available for purchase in the region.

Smart Water Meters

Council delivered rollout of the hardware for a Smart Water Meter Network that will relay data on an hourly basis to Council, allowing Water Teams to detect leakages and breaks promptly. Residents can also manage their water usage by accessing a customer portal that displays real time data on water they are using. The Smart Water Meter Network will provide an estimated \$445,000 annual cost saving to ratepayers and was partially funded by the Federal Government.

Turbidity Monitors Installed

Advanced turbidity monitors were installed in Mudgee, Gulgong and Rylstone catchments as a preventative measure to help avoid future Boil Water Alerts. The devices monitor changes in water quality, particularly additional sediment and run-off caused by storms, alerting treatment plant operators to cease collection until water quality improves.

Liquid Trade Waste Policy

A Liquid Trade Waste policy was established that sets out how Council regulates sewerage and trade waste discharges to its sewerage system. The policy is concerned with the approval, monitoring and enforcement process for liquid trade wastes discharged to Council's sewerage system and the levying of commercial sewerage and liquid trade waste fees and charges.

Solar Power at Gulgong Sewage Treatment Plant

A new 60 kilowatt solar power system was installed at Gulgong Sewage Treatment Plant. The ground mounted system includes 220 solar panels that deliver the plant's electricity requirements during daylight hours.

Riverbed and Wetland Regeneration

Four bare detention basins were transformed into artificial retention basin wetlands and planted with native rushes and trees at Bellevue Estate as part of a major waterway restoration project in 2016. During the following year almost a hectare of weeds were removed from the Cudgong River at Glen Willow.

Putta Bucca Wetlands Extension

The horseshoe lagoon, formerly a Sewer Treatment Clarifying Pond, was reshaped into a circular wetland with a central island as part of the stage one Putta Bucca Wetlands Extension. Thousands of trees were planted providing critical habitat and 50% more pathways constructed.

Roadside Vegetation Extension

Weed control was undertaken in high volume habitat roadside areas to eradicate pest species and promote native growth in 2017/18. As part of the project, a number of grants were provided to adjacent landholders to conduct commensurate planting to increase the size of the habitat corridor.

Sewer Main Relining

Over the past five years Council has continued the long-term rehabilitation of the region's sewer network, undertaking regular scheduled maintenance including Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) inspections of main sewer pipes; cleaning of sewer pipes; relining of sewer pipes; and some excavation work.

Drone Technology Utilised

Council's Weeds Team successfully introduced drone technology to undertake inspections in remote and dangerous locations in 2018.

Environmental Education and Events

Over the past five years Council delivered a number of education campaigns about waste and recycling including the *Keep It Simple* initiative as well as a number of events including *Plastic Free July*, *Green Day*, *Putta Bucca Carp Muster*, and *National Tree Day*.

Town Water Disinfection System

Council commissioned a new town water disinfection system across the region in July 2019. The upgraded system will allow better control of the disinfection of drinking water and substantially reduce the possibility of pathogens in the water supply, which cause unsafe drinking water.

Charbon Sewer Network

Council expanded its reticulated sewer network to incorporate the Charbon residential area in 2019/20. Historically, Charbon households have been connected to Onsite Sewer Management Systems (Septic Systems). The condition of these systems in Charbon was variable with a significant number not performing to health standards. This infrastructure project was partially funded by the NSW Government.

Charbon Reservoir Upgrades

Upgrades to the Charbon Reservoir were completed including reservoir infrastructure and site security to improve water quality.



PROTECTING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Fact Sheet Development

Council published a number of environmental Facts Sheets to further improve community understanding around a number of areas including invasive and problematic weeds, waste services, water restrictions and drinking water.



Food and garden organics collection

Building a Strong Local Economy

Key achievements, major works and initiatives

Major Events at Glen Willow

Glen Willow Regional Sporting Complex has continued to attract and host a range of major events, professional sporting fixtures and carnivals each year generating millions in visitor spend for the local economy. The long list of events includes: Rugby Sevens (2016-18), Mudgee Rugby League 9s Tournament (2016-18), Football NSW State Titles (2016), PSSA (2016, 2018, 2019), Super Rugby Trial Match: NSW Waratahs v Brumbies (2017), NRL Country v City Origin (2017), Football NSW State Titles (2016-17), NRL Charity Shield St George Illawarra Dragons v South Sydney Rabbitohs (2018-21), NRL Round 11 St George Illawarra Dragons v Canberra Raiders (2018), A-League Western Sydney Wanderers v Brisbane Roar (2018), Country Eagles Classic (2018), NRL Round 10 St George Illawarra Dragons v Newcastle Knights (2019), Shute Shield (2019, 2021), CRL (2019), Balloon Night Glow (2019) and NRL Round 6 Manly Warringah Sea Eagles v Gold Coast Titans (2021).

Flavours of Mudgee

Flavours of Mudgee has grown to become the largest food and wine event in the region. Usually held on the last Saturday in September in the Mudgee CBD, the event brings together local winemakers and food producers to showcase the best produce on offer in the Mid-Western Region. In 2019, 12,133 people attended the eighth annual event – the largest crowd ever recorded. Data captured on the night shows 45% of Flavours attendees were visitors to the region, injecting an estimated \$2.265 million into the local economy. The event has been held every year since 2012 but was unfortunately postponed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

New Business Growth

The region saw continued steady growth in the number of new businesses registered over the past five years across a broad range of industries from agriculture and construction through to food and accommodation, administration and support services. This strong new business growth demonstrates both business and

resident confidence and Council's focus on supporting the local economy and promoting economic diversity.

Developing Local Events

In the past five years Council has delivered a range of small and large events including the Live and Local Music Festival and Live and Local Pop Up Music Festival (2018), the Justice Crew Special Youth Performance (2018), tour of the Emirates Melbourne Cup (2018), Biz HQ workshops (2018-19) and the inaugural Fermenta Festival (2021).

Young Entrepreneurs Summit

Council successfully hosted the inaugural Central West Young Entrepreneurs Summit in 2019 with the keynote address from entrepreneur and founder of Samantha Wills Jewellery, Samantha Wills. More than 121 Central West business owners attended the event and heard from some of Australia's most successful entrepreneurs. The event moved online in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic with 45 local and regional businesses watching the live-stream.

Festival of Snags

Mudgee secured the most votes in a national competition by online travel site Wotif to gift a regional town with a festival. With the support of Council, Wotif delivered the day-long Festival of Snags at Mudgee Showground in 2019 attracting a crowd of more than 5000.

Tourism Promotion

Council continues to invest in tourism activities and promotion, including provision of marketing under contract with Mudgee Region Tourism. Over 690,000 tourists visit the Mudgee Region each year with an average stay of three nights. The tourism industry employs 7% of the region's workforce and contributes \$154.1m to the gross regional output.

Mudgee Airport Upgrade

Mudgee Regional Airport was upgraded in 2018 with a taxiway extension, complete terminal fit-out and improvements to water and sewerage services after Council

secured NSW Government grant funding.

In 2021, upgrades were also completed on the airport's runway, taxiways and aircraft parking areas through Australian Government grant funding. The upgrades ensure Mudgee Airport is a regional facility providing modern infrastructure and facilities to support a commercial airline and attract further aviation investment.

Marketing Activations

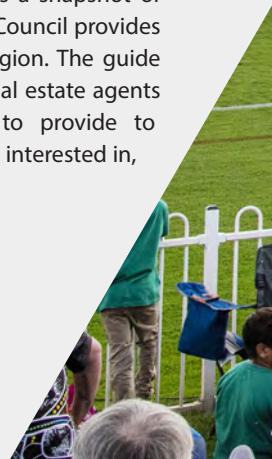
Council's Economic Development Team travelled to a number of events and promotional activities throughout Sydney as part of marketing activities to attract new residents and investment to the region. Staff engaged in hundreds of face-to-face conversations encouraging people to 'Live, Work, Invest and Visit' in the Mid-Western Region at Balmoral Mudgee Wine and Food Festival (2018), Parramatta Mudgee Food and Wine Weekend (2018), activations at Bondi Junction (2018) and Miranda Westfield complexes (2019).

Mudgee Region Business Site Launched

As part of its COVID-19 Business Recovery Strategy, Council developed and launched mudgeeregionbusiness.com.au in 2020. Local businesses can create a listing to increase their visibility through the site, network with other businesses, access business only events and find new customers and suppliers, completely free of charge.

New Residents Guide

Council published its 32 page introduction to the region for new residents in 2020. *The New Residents Guide* is a snapshot of the facilities and services Council provides to residents across the region. The guide has been distributed to real estate agents throughout the region to provide to prospective new residents interested in, or moving to the region.





BUILDING A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY

Business and Economic Profile

Council's Business and Economic Profile is published every year, providing an overview of relevant economic and business data which is useful for new and existing businesses to understand the local economic environment.

Filming Prospectus

To attract large scale feature films and television productions to the region Council developed and published its *Filming in the Mid-Western Region Prospectus* in 2021. Following success of the Channel Nine *Doctor Doctor* franchise and Hollywood remake of Stephen King's *Children of the Corn*, Council is working hard to create further filming opportunities in the region.



Glen Willow: Charity Shield 2019

Connecting Our Region

Key achievements, major works and initiatives

Ulan Road Upgrade

Council completed an \$18.7 million upgrade of Ulan Road in 2018. The project was delivered with \$9.5 million in NSW Government grant funding, with the remaining \$9.2 million provided by Ulan Coal, Moolarben Coal and Wilpinjong Coal operations. As part of the four year project, the road has been widened, new overtaking lanes and turning bays constructed and significant drainage installed to bring it up to national standard. Approximately 3000 vehicle trips are undertaken on the northern end of the road each day and 7000 trips closer to Mudgee.

Cope Road Upgrade

The two-year Cope Road upgrade was completed in 2017 after Council secured \$6.7 million in NSW Government grant funding to rehabilitate and widen 26 kilometres of roadway between the Castlereagh Highway in Gulgong to Ulan Road, Ulan.

Fairydale and Saleyards Lane Upgrades

The consecutive upgrades to Fairydale and Saleyards Lanes improved connectivity between residential areas and major link roads into Mudgee including the Castlereagh Highway. The roadways were upgraded in 2016 and 2019 after Council secured \$2.6 million from the Cobbora Transition Fund.

Angus Avenue Rehabilitation

The main street of Kandos CBD, Angus Avenue, underwent a major renewal that was completed in 2018. The \$450,000 rehabilitation project involved the excavation of pavement and concrete slab that was replaced with quality road pavement, water main replacement and upgrade to services connecting nearby businesses, new kerb, gutter and associated footpaths to compliment previously completed street beautification.

Holyoake Footbridge

Holyoake Footbridge was completed in 2018 providing the final link in a pedestrian/cyclist loop from Lawson

Park in the Mudgee CBD to Glen Willow Regional Sporting Complex. The 2.6 metre wide footbridge will provide a safer and faster alternative for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the river at Ulan Road. The project was jointly funded by Council and the NSW Government.

Hill End Road Upgrades

In 2018, Council completed a \$1.28 million upgrade of Hill End Road to improve an 8 kilometre section between Blain Road (entrance to the Mudgee Waste Facility) and Yarrabin Road that has been the location of several accidents over recent years. This project was grant funded by the Australian Government.

Safety improvements were completed on Hill End Road at the approach to Hargraves. Works included improvements to road shoulders, pavement widening, guardrail, and a bitumen seal designed to provide improved contact friction. Council secured \$4.97 million funding through the NSW Government to complete upgrades to 42 kilometres of Hill End Road. Further works are scheduled for 2022.

Second Henry Lawson Drive Bridge

A second bridge over Pipeclay Creek on Henry Lawson Drive was constructed in 2018, allowing vehicles to travel in both directions. The bridge is a duplication of the previous single lane bridge and now allows north and southbound traffic to pass over the creek simultaneously. The additional bridge was identified as a priority by the community during consultation activities and will provide improved traffic safety.

Kandos Rylstone Shared Pathway

The Kandos Rylstone shared pathway was opened to cyclists and pedestrians in 2019 following a complete upgrade. The 6.8 kilometre shared roadside pathway connects Rylstone and Kandos. The \$50,000 project was jointly funded by the NSW and Australian Governments.

Wollar Road Upgrade Connecting Bylong Valley Way

Council completed the major upgrade of Wollar Road, providing a completely sealed

link to the Hunter Valley via the Bylong Valley. Council secured \$14 million in grant funding from the NSW Government whilst Council contributed \$1 million towards the project. The three year project was completed in 2019 and included 25 kilometres of works including widening, sealing and realigning.

Wollar Road Upgrade, Munghorn Gap National Park

A three year Wollar Road upgrade through the Munghorn Gap National Park was completed, including road widening, pavement upgrades and further safety improvements to Wollar Road between Cooyal and Cumbo within the Munghorn Gap National Park. Council secured \$3.5 million in NSW Government grant funding for the project.

Rylstone Footbridge

The Rylstone Footbridge alignment was constructed in 2020, providing safe access for pedestrians and cyclists over the Cudgegong River, connecting east and west Rylstone. The footbridge ranked as the highest priority project among Rylstone, Kandos and Lue residents surveyed as part of Council Community Engagement in 2018. Council secured NSW Government grant funding for the project.

Pitts Lane Lighting

Three hundred metres of lighting was installed along Pitts Lane leading to Glen Willow. The project is intended to improve pedestrian safety all year round as well as during major events at the stadium.

Goolma Road Safety Improvements

Goolma Road received a series of upgrades near the township of Goolma including \$350,000 in safety improvements on behalf of the NSW Government.

The improvements include a new safety barrier on the northern side of the road, widened road shoulders, new signs and the removal of trees on the northern side of the road to improve sight distances.



CONNECTING OUR REGION

Bylong Valley Way Safety Improvements

Safety improvements and sealing works have been undertaken at Braithwaites Corner on the Bylong Valley Way. The section of road has tragically been the site of traffic accidents, including motorcycle fatalities. This project was delivered through NSW Government grant funding.

Footbridge Improvements

Council has undertaken improvements to the Ulan Road timber footbridge adjacent to Mudgee Racecourse. The bridge forms part of an 8 kilometre walking loop currently under construction from Mudgee CBD to Glen Willow and Putta Bucca Wetlands returning via Ulan Road.

Castlereagh Highway Upgrades

In 2020, Council completed 1.5 kilometres of safety improvements to the Castlereagh Highway and Guntawang Road intersection. Road shoulders were widened and sealed as part of the upgrade, trees removed from the sides of the road, along with new edge barriers and signs to warn motorists of upcoming curves. The project was funded by the NSW Government.



Wollar Road, Munghorn Gap upgrade

Good Government

Key achievements, major works and initiatives

Community Engagement

Over the past five years, Council has undertaken a variety of community engagement activities. Over 10% of the region's population participated in community engagement activities conducted by Council during the review of the Community Plan in 2016. Council continually utilises a broad range of communication-focused initiatives to support high levels of engagement and participation in Council activities. This includes the use of social media, targeted outreach media activities, online surveys, focus group sessions and continued use of traditional channels such as print and broadcast media.

Candidate Information Sessions

Prior to the 2016 and 2021 Local Government Elections, Council undertook a series of Candidate Information Sessions for members of the community interested in learning about Council and the role and responsibilities of its elected members.

Community News Innovations

Council's monthly newsletter *Community News* was reproduced into a video format in 2018.

The new publishing format allows Council to reach more residents than ever before on social media platforms and video streaming sites such as YouTube.

Community News is now available in four formats – print, electronic direct mail, audio (for the visually impaired) and video.

People and Performance

Mid-Western Regional Council continues to be promoted as an award winning organisation offering a range of career opportunities in areas such as admin, planning and development, water supply, parks and gardens, libraries, operations and community services. As one of the largest employers in the Mid-Western Region, Council has continued to support the attraction and retention of staff with the ongoing development and implementation of a range of employee policies and programs.

These initiatives continue to recognise and value diversity and the provision of equal employment opportunities.

RH Dougherty Award

Council's monthly Community News Bulletin was recognised at the 2019 Local Government NSW Awards. The Bulletin was named winner in the Reporting To Your Community (Division A – population less than 30,000) category of Local Government NSW's respected RH Dougherty Awards. The Community News Bulletin is a 2-3 minute video on Council related news items that affect residents in the Mid-Western Region and is published monthly on Facebook, YouTube and Council's website.

Community Engagement Site Launch

Council's dedicated Community Engagement Site, *Your Say Mid-Western*, was launched in 2018. The site is a space for residents and visitors to provide ideas and input into current Council projects and initiatives, and provides access to documents on exhibition.

Code of Conduct Adopted

Council adopted a new Code of Conduct based on the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW. The Model Code of Conduct sets the minimum standards of conduct for council officials. It is prescribed by regulation to assist council officials to: understand and comply with the standards of conduct that are expected of them; enable them to fulfil their statutory duty to act honestly and exercise a reasonable degree of care and diligence; act in a way that enhances public confidence in local government.

Community Engagement Van

Council's Community Engagement and Outreach Van was launched in 2018 and since then has travelled to events and promotional activities throughout Sydney as part of marketing activities to attract new residents and investment to the region. Economic Development staff have engaged in hundreds of face-to-

face conversations encouraging people to 'Live, Work, Invest and Visit' in the Mid-Western Region.

Locally, the van has been used in the co-ordination of major events and community engagement.

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

Council's Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) held its first meeting in 2019. The committee was established to review Council's risk management processes and internal controls, as well as identifying opportunities to increase efficiency or service outcomes. Since the Committee's inception there has been seven internal audits undertaken including asset management, legislative compliance, procurement and cybersecurity.

COVID-19 Rate Relief and Business Booster program

Council launched a raft of measures to assist individuals and businesses directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Council's Business Booster Program offered \$1000 to eligible businesses to provide immediate financial support to businesses that were struggling to meet their operating costs. Residents experiencing financial hardship due to the pandemic were offered a payment extension on their May and August rates in 2020.

Mudgee Valley Park

Council continues to pursue revenue growth through commercial property activities and in 2019 purchased the Mudgee Valley Park, a caravan and camping park in Bell Street, Mudgee.

This facility adds to a commercial property portfolio managed by Council. Council's property portfolio includes preschools, caravan parks and retail assets.



GOOD GOVERNMENT

Plant Purchases

Council continues to upgrade its fleet to ensure delivery of quality infrastructure and services. These vehicles are used in the maintenance of unsealed roads within Council's rural network and construction of new roads.

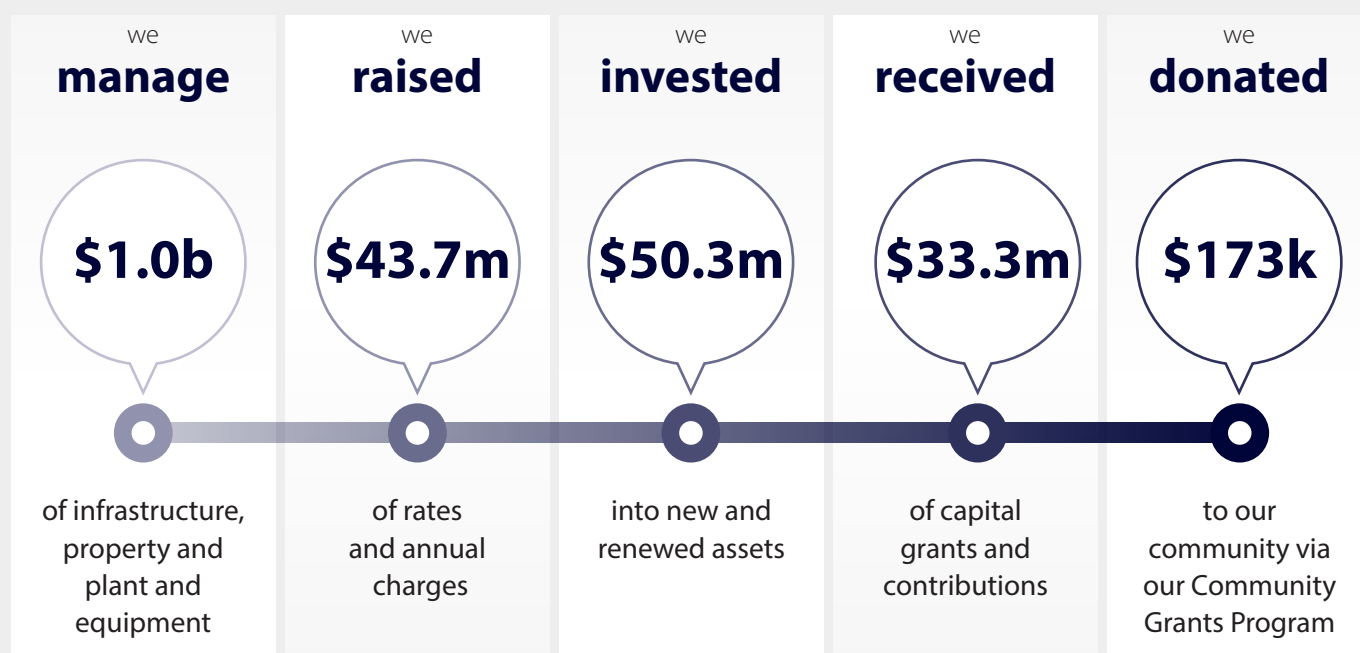
Bushfire Rates Relief Program

Council provided more than \$90,000 in rate relief to all property owners affected by the 2019/20 Black Summer Bushfires. This rate relief was an extension of the NSW Government initiative to provide rate relief to property, farm or business owners who had their property deemed damaged beyond repair by the Rural Fire Service (RFS) and/or Emergency Information Coordination Unit (EICU).








Community Engagement Van

Progress on the Operational Plan and Delivery Program over five years



PROGRESS AGAINST DELIVERY PROGRAM TARGETS

	No. of actions	100% complete	%
	66	63	98%
	42	37	93%
	20	19	100%
	22	22	100%
	66	63	92%
TOTAL PROGRESS	216	204	94%

A detailed review of the actions included in the Delivery Program for the 2020/21 year is provided on pages 19–50.

Progress against Community Plan

The following table provides a summary of the outgoing Council's progress towards the Community Strategic Plan over its five year term.

DELIVERY PROGRAM ACTIONS COMPLETED

	Year 1 (2016-17)	Year 2 (2017-18)	Year 3 (2018-19)	Year 4 (2019-20)	Year 5 (2020-21)
1. LOOKING AFTER OUR COMMUNITY					
1.1 A safe and healthy community	97%	100%	96%	96%	96%
1.2 Vibrant towns and villages	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
1.3 Effective and efficient delivery of infrastructure	93%	100%	100%	100%	85%
1.4 Meet the diverse needs of the community and create a sense of belonging	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2. PROTECTING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT					
2.1 Protect and enhance our natural environment	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2.2 Provide total water cycle management	90%	70%	55%	95%	78%
2.3 Live in a clean and environmentally sustainable way	82%	80%	90%	80%	90%
3. BUILDING A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY					
3.1 A prosperous and diversified economy	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
3.2 An attractive business and economic environment	80%	100%	100%	100%	83%
3.3 A range of rewarding and fulfilling career opportunities to attract and retain residents	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%
4. CONNECTING OUR REGION					
4.1 High quality road network that is safe and efficient	100%	93%	93%	100%	100%
4.2 Efficient connection of the region to major towns and cities	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
4.3 An active travel network within the region	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
5. GOOD GOVERNMENT					
5.1 Strong civic leadership	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
5.2 Good communications and engagement	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
5.3 An effective and efficient organisation	89%	89%	89%	89%	93%
TOTAL	94	94	92	95	94

1. Looking After Our Community



OUTCOME

Vibrant towns and villages with a rich history, a safe and healthy community, and a strong sense of community pride – a great place for families.

Goal 1.1

A safe and healthy community

Strategy 1.1.1

Maintain the provision of high quality, accessible community services that meet the needs of our community.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Provide comprehensive community support programs and services that embrace social justice, access and equity	Provide Meals on Wheels service	Council continues to auspice its Mudgee Meals on Wheels service which saw a fluctuation in clients throughout the COVID-19 lockdown period. The service has also worked hard to maintain appropriate volunteer numbers to service client requests, given the vast majority of volunteers were at times declared vulnerable and encouraged to stay at home themselves.
	Provide Community Transport service	Council continues to promote Community Transport as an option for eligible participants without access to suitable and affordable public transport options. The service also continues to promote that it is not restricted to transportation for medical appointments in accordance with the goals of the Commonwealth Home Support Program, which is to keep people living in their own homes for longer. The service would not be possible without the dedication of a strong team of volunteer drivers. During the year, the service has been subject to various restrictions imposed by the Commonwealth Government (through Transport for NSW) in attempts to mitigate the risks of COVID-19. This has had some impact on service outputs which funding bodies acknowledge are understandable in the circumstances.
	Provide financial and in-kind support to MWRC Youth Council to deliver a range of youth oriented initiatives	Council continues to deliver youth initiatives across the region and in accordance with COVID-19 restrictions (where and when applicable). Youth Services Officers work to deliver a range of programs throughout school terms and holidays to engage with local youth and provide them with access to a broad range of activities, such as book and gaming clubs, craft projects, and outdoor sporting opportunities. Youth Services Officers continue to provide support in terms of encouraging furthering education and employment opportunities for local youth. Online activities have increased in the last 12 months as an appropriate method of audience engagement due to COVID-19.
	Provide Family Day Care service	Council coordinates, monitors and supervises Family Day Care services across the region, as well as in Wellington. The services provide personalised, affordable in-home care for 0-4 year olds, as well as before and after school care to older children, to assist families access and maintain employment and other opportunities. Family Day Care remains one of the preferred and more affordable child care options for local families due to flexibility of charged hours and the option for weekend and overnight care.
Provide customer focused library and information services	Deliver high quality, modern library services at Mudgee, Kandos, Rylstone and Gulgong	The Library continues to provide residents with a comprehensive, current, visually inviting and accessible library service, enabling them to meet their information, recreation, education and cultural needs. The Library is administered through 4 library branches and a Mobile Library, and serviced through the provision of extensive print and online collections, which are freely available. The Library also runs a varied and interesting range of programs and events, designed to encourage community interaction with the Library and lifelong learning.



STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Provide customer focused library and information services	Provide Mobile Library service	The Mobile Library continues to be an integral part of the Library's Outreach Service, visiting small schools, outlying communities, and housebound customers in their own homes or care facilities. The Mobile Library travels across the region on a 3-week rotation, extending the Library's reach within the community, through the loan of physical items, and by promoting the use of the Library's online resources.
	Deliver children and youth library programs including pre-school Bookworms and school holiday reading program	The Library continues to encourage a lifelong love of books and reading through its literacy programs for children and youth (Born to Read, Toddler Tales, Bookworms, Bigger Bookworms, Junior Book Bouncers, and Book Bouncers), as well as hosting a wide range of storytelling and activity workshops during school holidays. There is a continuous high demand for the Library's Children's and Youth Services programs, including the annual special events (Dad's Night In, Bookweek, National Simultaneous Storytime, Australia Reads, and the Summer Reading Program).
	Maintain an up to date library collection in accordance with Collection Policy	The Library continues to purchase items in line with the Collection Development Strategy. Items purchased include audio books, magazines, fiction and non-fiction for adults and children in both print and electronic formats, and DVDs.

Strategy 1.1.2

Work with key partners and the community to lobby for effective health services in our region.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Explore funding opportunities for improved health services and work in partnership with Western Local Area Health Network to promote health projects	Lobby government and industry for funding including potential upgrade of Mudgee Hospital	Council representatives continue to participate in the working group for the redevelopment of Mudgee Hospital. The Mudgee Hospital was opened to the public on 27 May 2020.
	Liaise with Western NSW Local Health District and work with local Medical Services Organisations through interagency meetings	Representatives from the Western NSW Local Health District attend and provide input into both the Mudgee/Gulgong and Kandos/Rylstone Interagency meetings from time to time.
	Provide accommodation assistance for doctors in the region	Council continues to set aside funds to assist in providing appropriate accommodation for medical practitioners in the region as and when needed.



Strategy 1.1.3

Support networks, programs and facilities which promote health and well-being and encourage healthy lifestyles.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Provide financial assistance in accordance with Council's Community Grants Program Policy	Provide financial assistance for local and regional bodies in accordance with Community Grants Program Policy	All planned reports to Council have been completed. Community grants totalling \$178,805 were approved in 2020/21.
Promote and support programs aimed at increasing community health and wellbeing	Provide funding for Healthy Communities initiatives	Council provides funding for a range of affordable exercise programs across Gulgong, Mudgee and Rylstone. All programs have adjusted to meet COVID-19 restrictions from time to time as required. All activities are patronised relatively consistently and Council receives regular positive feedback regarding the programs.

Strategy 1.1.4

Work with key partners and the community to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and improve community health and safety.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Support and implement programs which aim to reduce anti-social behaviour	Maintain effective working relationship with NSW Police	Council continues to work closely with NSW Police on matters of community concern.
	Participate in the Liquor Accord as required	Council maintains contact with the Liquor Accord and provides advice and feedback when requested. There were no meetings held in the period.
	Maintain Alcohol Free Zones in town centres	There were no applications for the temporary suspension of Alcohol Free Zones (AFZs) in town centres during the year. Current signage for recognised AFZs across the LGA remain valid until 18 April 2023.
	Increase lighting and other safety initiatives in parks and gardens as per Capital Works Program 2020/21	New light poles have been installed from Ulan Road underpass along Pitts Lane at the Glen Willow Regional Sport Complex. Delivery of light fittings has been delayed due to COVID-19, with final works expected by August 2021.
	Investigate options for CCTV cameras in town centres	Additional surveillance cameras have been installed to protect Council assets including at playgrounds, buildings and waste transfer stations.



STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Maintain clean and attractive streets and public spaces where people feel safe	Regular street cleaning and litter collection in town centres	Council's street sweeping and town litter cleaning programs are progressing as scheduled.
Work effectively with State Agency partners to maintain and enhance public safety	Participate in review of Emergency Plan as required	A review and update of the Emergency Management Plan was completed. Regular Local Emergency Management Committee meetings held throughout the year.
Effective public health regulation and continuing education	Work in partnership with the NSW Food Authority to address matters such as food premises inspections, safe food handling and food borne illness investigations	The 2020/21 food inspection program was completed by Council staff in partnership with the NSW Food Authority. 120 out of 126 fixed food premises were inspected which equates to 95.2%. 6 premises were re-inspected before June 30. Council staff investigated 8 formal complaints involving food premises. In light of COVID-19 challenges faced by food businesses, zero improvement notices were issued. Council staff took an educational approach to breaches under the Food Act by working with the business operators in order to achieve a satisfactory and safe outcome.
	Continued support and promotion of Scores on Doors initiative	Council staff continue to promote the Scores on Doors initiative with fixed food premises. Educational and support information with regard to the safe handling of food during COVID-19 has continued to be provided to the community and food businesses, in order to remind them of their obligations under the Food Act 2003 where selling food direct to the public. 110 business participated in the Scores on Doors with 30 rated 5 star, 50 rated 4 star and 30 rated 3 star.
	Onsite sewerage management registration and inspections	Council staff continue to assess and inspect both new and existing OSSM systems as part of their daily functions. During 2020/21, a total of 95 applications were approved for septic systems with subsequent inspections. This is a 28% increase on the number approved in 2019/20.
Effective animal control regulation	Utilise website to actively re-home animals	Council's website links interested residents to the Friends of Mudgee Pound Facebook site which promotes the adoption of companion animals from the pound.
	Encourage registration of dogs through Council media channels	Council continues to promote the need for the registration of companion animals within the LGA in local media. Rangers conduct free micro-chipping programs and follow up with pet owners to ensure pets are registered.
	Provide off leash dog areas	Council continues to provide access to well maintained off leash facilities for companion animal owners in Rylstone, Mudgee and Gulgong.



Goal 1.2

Vibrant towns and villages

Strategy 1.2.1

Respect and enhance the historic character of our region and heritage value of our towns and villages.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Review of Development Control Plan	Conduct annual review of Development Control Plan	Council continues to monitor the Development Control Plan and make relevant amendments as required.
Heritage advisory services and Heritage conservation	Access to heritage funding through Local Assistance Program	Council continues to provide access to heritage funding through the Local Assistance Program. Three Local Heritage Grants were allocated in 2020/21, with all projects completed and funding allocated.
Support and assist preservation of important historical sites in the region	Maintain historical sites within the region, for example Red Hill Reserve	Historical sites within the region were maintained to ensure their preservation and to enhance the historic character of our towns and villages via the capital works program and maintenance works as required.

Strategy 1.2.2

Manage the impacts of mining operations in the region.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Monitor employment and population growth	Provide updated population estimates based on building statistics and employment growth	Council continues to monitor relevant statistics and update documentation in conjunction with government agencies.
Meet regularly with mining companies	Hold quarterly meetings with mine managers	Quarterly meetings held with representatives of local mines.



Strategy 1.2.3

Make available diverse, sustainable, adaptable and affordable housing options through effective land use planning.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Ongoing monitoring of land release and development	Review and release land for development as required	Council utilises a Land and Housing Monitor to track building approvals, subdivision approvals, construction and subdivision certificates against Council's Urban Release Strategy.
Implement the Land Use Actions in the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)	Deliver annual strategic planning works program in accordance with the LSPS	Council has commenced work on implementing the short term Land Use Actions outlined in the LSPS.
Promote affordable housing options within the region	Provide funding to lease emergency housing for women and children leaving family violence	Council has worked in partnership with Barnardos and Housing Plus to provide emergency accommodation, particularly for women and young children seeking emergency accommodation due to experiencing episodes of domestic violence.

Strategy 1.2.4

Maintain and promote the aesthetic appeal of the towns and villages within the region.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Maintain and beautify civic open space and street access areas within towns and villages in the region	Implement program of street beautification and tree planting	Tree removal and stage replacement of trees along Lewis St Mudgee was carried out whilst succession plantings along the Gulgong Road town approach into Mudgee was completed. Targeted avenue tree replacement program throughout Rylstone, Kandos and Caerleon Estate completed.
	Work in partnership with local groups to apply for grants to buy and install sculptures across the region	Council, in partnership with Sculptures in the Garden, acquired one large work of art from the 2020 event which is intended to be installed within the grounds of the new Mudgee Arts Precinct. A further two pieces were acquired through Moolarben Coal and Friends of Sculptures in the Garden, which have been installed at sites along the Lawson Park Sculpture Walk. Council has also been gifted a large statement piece for installation at the main entrance to the Mudgee Arts Precinct.
Application of appropriate building and development controls to protect and enhance the natural and built environment in the region	Deliver planning functions and building regulation in accordance with relevant legislation and adopted planning instruments	Council continues to undertake planning and building regulatory functions. Monthly reports are provided to Council on the number of applications determined and processing.



Goal 1.3

Effective and efficient delivery of infrastructure

Strategy 1.3.1

Provide infrastructure and services to cater for the current and future needs of our community.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Review asset management plans and underpin with financial strategy	Review, update and develop asset management plans for each major category of infrastructure in accordance with AMP review schedule	A review of the Transport Asset Management Plan has been delayed awaiting recruitment of staff.
Manage and maintain sports grounds, parks, reserves and playgrounds across the region	Review and update Parks Management Plans	A review of the Plan of Management has been undertaken, with feedback currently being sought on a final draft version.
	Maintain and operate public open space in accordance with agreed service levels	Despite the challenging extended 'growth' season experienced in open space areas due to weather conditions, Council has continued to maintain desired service levels. Public feedback validates that agreed service levels are being achieved.
	Passive parks and facilities upgrades as per Capital Works Program 2020/21	Passive parks were maintained to desired service levels and complying with industry standards. The 2020/21 capital works program was completed including facility improvements at Flirtation Hill Mudgee, pathway upgrades at Robertson Park Mudgee, front fence installation at Gulgong Adventure Playground and annual garden bed display at Coronation Park Gulgong.
	Public toilet construction and refurbishment as per Capital Works Program 2020/21	Council has continued with the construction and refurbishment of public toilets in accordance with the approved capital works program.
	Playground installations and upgrades as per Capital Works Program 2020/21	Works were completed on the replacement of a playground at Robinson St/ Fishers St in Gulgong. Shade sail replacement was completed at Robertson park Mudgee and Apex park Gulgong. A shade sail was also installed over liberty swing in Mudgee.
	Active parks and facilities upgrades as per Capital Works Program 2020/21	Council continues to maintain the region's sporting facilities to a high standard. The 2020/21 capital works program was completed on time and within budget. Completed projects include full coverage lighting at Victoria Park Gulgong, relocation of Mudgee dog park, upgrades to car parks and internal roads at Billy Dunn Oval Gulgong. The synthetic pitches at Victoria Park Mudgee cricket nets were replaced and the Rylstone Showground received upgrades to the Show Society building kitchen and installation of compliant ramp access.
Manage and maintain cemeteries throughout the region	Maintain and operate town and rural cemeteries in accordance with adopted service levels and policy requirements	Funeral services and maintenance of the cemeteries are operating in accordance with service levels and policy requirements.



STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Manage and maintain cemeteries throughout the region	GPS mapping of town cemeteries	Council's cemeteries are being maintained to desired service standards and operating to industry standards. GPS plotting of Mudgee Cemeteries Catholic and Anglican denomination has been completed.
	Upgrades and extensions of cemeteries as per 2020/21 Capital Works Program	The 2020/21 capital works program for cemeteries was completed. Projects included wayfinding signage enhancements to assist with plot locations, road upgrades at Rylstone and Mudgee, avenue tree plantings at Gulgong, and drainage and storage shed installation at Rylstone. At Mudgee cemetery internal roads and perimeter fencing were upgraded, with GPS mapping of Anglican and Catholic denomination completed.
Manage, plan and maintain buildings and other assets across the region	Building upgrades and refurbishments as per Capital Works Program 2020/21	Capital works have been completed in accordance with the capital works program and allocated budgets.
Maintain and operate swimming pool centres across the region	Maintain and operate swimming pool facilities at Mudgee, Gulgong and Kandos in accordance with adopted service levels	Council public swimming pools are being maintained and are operating to industry standards. To date there has been no extensive down time of any facilities. Audits conducted by the NSW Health departments have validated meeting desired service levels and industry compliance. 95,552 patrons entered Council swimming pool facilities during the 2020/21 pool season.
	Undertake capital upgrades and renewals to swimming pool facilities as per Capital Works Program 2020/21	The 2020/21 capital works program for swimming pools was completed on-time and within budget. Projects completed include upgrades to the pool heaters and pool blankets at Kandos pool. The Gulgong pool had the entire pool repainted, a 40 metre shade structure installed along the side of the pool and an additional storage shed installed. Both the Mudgee and Kandos pools had routine filter replacements completed to the pool filtration system.

Goal 1.4

Meet the diverse needs of the community and create a sense of belonging

Strategy 1.4.1

Support programs which strengthen the relationships between the range of community groups.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Provide youth representation through the Youth Council	Provide secretarial support for Youth Council	Council's Youth Services Officers provide secretarial support to the regular Youth Council meetings which includes the drafting of agendas, recording and circulating minutes. The Youth Officers also facilitate the recruitment of new Youth Councillors, the twice yearly overseeing election of office bearers and mentoring same as to the operations of Youth Council itself, including meeting practices and Council's Codes of Conduct.
	Provide funding for delivery of youth oriented initiatives	Council's Youth Services Officers facilitate a range of youth-focused activities and events across the year and across the region. This year, 88 events and activities were rolled out for the local youth. Given the current COVID climate, some of these events were conducted online.



STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Provide meaningful employment to members of the disabled community	Maintain policies that support employment for people with disabilities at MWRC	Council continues its support for the employment of people with disabilities, including through the Ironed Out and Recycling facilities.
	Continued operations of Mudgee Recycling and Ironed Out	Ironed Out and Mudgee Recycling continue to provide high levels of employment and service to Council's supported workforce.
Work with lead agencies to ensure adequate provision of a range of services	Attend interagency meetings	Council Community Development Officers continue to facilitate and provide secretarial support to both the Mudgee/Gulgong and Rylstone/Kandos interagency groups, which comprise a range of local and regional community service organisations. During the year, a mixture of online and in-person meetings were held with discussion topics including community resilience in the wake of emergencies, and the availability of crucial mental health services.
Promote volunteering through the community	Run community services programs that encourage volunteering	Council utilises the assistance of volunteers to facilitate a range of services, including Community Transport, Meals on Wheels and Rotary Clubs of Mudgee for monthly movies in the Town Hall Cinema. It would not be possible for these services to be rolled out across the community without the dedication and assistance of volunteers.

Strategy 1.4.2

Support arts and cultural development across the region.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Arts and cultural events promotion	Provide financial and in-kind support to events in accordance with Events Assistance Policy	18 local events were supported through Events Assistance in the last 12 months. 4 events were cancelled due to COVID-19.
	Promote the use of Council facilities for significant events	Many planned events for 2020/2021 were cancelled due to COVID-19. However, significant major events such as NRL Charity Shield and NRL Premiership Matches were able to be delivered. The Showground was utilised for the Next Exit festival as a new event held in the region. Council continues to promote local venues for future events and conferences.
Provision of meeting and exhibition space	Promote the use of community buildings and make available at reasonable cost	Council continues to promote the use of community buildings. The 2021/22 Fees and Charges were reviewed to ensure hire fees are inline with community expectation, and remain at a reasonable cost to all sectors, including businesses, not for profit groups and other community organisations.



STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Provision of meeting and exhibition space	Promote the use of exhibition space provided at Mudgee Library	The Mudgee Library has previously been promoted as an exhibition space and used to host the WS Tatlow Collection for a number of years. The future focus will shift to promoting the soon to be opened Mudgee Arts Precinct as an exhibition space, including the Community Room available for community hire.
Coordinate and facilitate cultural and arts projects throughout the region	Liaise with Cultural Development Committee, Orana Arts and local arts and cultural groups to develop cultural and artistic projects within the region	Council continues to work closely with the Cultural Development Committee on the development of the Mudgee Arts Precinct. Members have worked with Council staff on draft strategies for the new facility and expansion of the public art collection, particularly along the Cudgegong River at Lawson Park. Council recently elected to resign from Orana Arts membership and commence membership with Arts OutWest which is expected to provide increased opportunities for the local arts community.
	Support arts events and programs in the region	Council works with a number of arts organisations to support events and programs throughout the region, including but not limited to Fermenta in Kandos, and Waste to Art and Sculptures in the Garden in Mudgee. Council has provided financial assistance to the Gulgong Arts Council to assist in the establishment of a Youth and Community Creative Hub. It has also financially supported the Kandos CWA to facilitate mobile theatre events.

Strategy 1.4.3

Provide equitable access to a range of places and spaces for all in the community.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Public facilities to be accessible	Continue to monitor existing buildings	Council continues to monitor its public buildings and upgrade through the 30 year asset maintenance plan and the works request system. All maintenance and upgrades were undertaken in accordance with current accessibility standards.
	Deliver actions developed in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan	Council continues to work on increasing opportunities and awareness of disability, through events inclusiveness, for example. The Mid-Western Regional Council Access Committee also meets on a regular basis to provide advice to Council on matters relating to access and inclusion for visitors and residents across the region. Work has already commenced on community consultation regarding the next reiteration of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan which is due by 30 June 2022.
Coordinate the provision of local community centres and halls for community use	A variety of community facilities available for use	Council continues to provide a range of facilities for community use. There has been further development of the new facility booking software 'Bookable', with the final stages to be completed allowing direct public booking access. The system is in full use for all facility bookings and currently they are received and processed by Council staff.

2. Protecting Our Natural Environment



OUTCOME

Conserving and promoting the natural beauty of our region.

Goal 2.1

Protect and enhance our natural environment

Strategy 2.1.1

Ensure land use planning and management enhances and protects biodiversity and natural heritage.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Include biodiversity and heritage as key components in the development application process	Implement Development Control Plan (DCP) through the development assessment process	The Development Control Plan is considered during the assessment of development applications.
Manage environmental and cultural factors impacted by physical works on Council lands	Prepare Review of Environmental Factors for MWRC works	REF work is ongoing during the year. All current REFs have been completed and work will continue as required.
	Work with local Aboriginal groups to effectively plan works involving sites of cultural significance	Due diligence assessment being completed with REFs as required.

Strategy 2.1.2

Minimise the impact of mining and other development on the environment, both natural and built.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Work with the community and government agencies to identify and address the issues and mitigate impacts associated with mining	Raise any issues as part of State Significant Development process	Council is actively engaged in the planning process for State Significant Development. This includes meeting with IPC representatives, making submissions and working with proponents to manage local impacts for the Wollar Solar Farm, Crudine Ridge Wind Farm, Bowdens Silver Mine, Liverpool Wind Farm, Valley of the Winds Wind Farm, Stubbo Solar Farm, Ungula Wind Farm, Burrendong Wind Farm and St Matt's High School projects.
	Represent MWRC on Community Consultative Committees	Councillors are represented on Community Consultative Committees for local State Significant Developments.



Strategy 2.1.3 **Raise community awareness of environmental and biodiversity issues.**

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Deliver projects which work towards protecting biodiversity and regeneration of native environment	Pursue grant funding for environmental projects	Council continues to seek new grant opportunities. A successful application for improvements at Putta Bucca Wetlands has been announced.
Support National Tree Day	Facilitate National Tree Day activities	National Tree Day was unable to be delivered due to COVID-19. Funds were diverted to assist with a joint Landcare Project to provide trees to bushfire affected landholders.
Work with schools to promote environmental awareness amongst students	Support Green Day	Green Day was cancelled by Landcare due to COVID-19.

Strategy 2.1.4 **Control invasive plant and animal species.**

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Effective weeds management	Effective monitoring and management of noxious weeds across region	Council's weeds inspection program continues to meet targets, with 797 inspections and 231 reinspections during the year.
	Ongoing community education on noxious weeds	Education continues as part of the inspection program. In addition, roadside signage on serrated tussock has been installed. New rural property owner information packs are being sent out to new property owners and information packs are being sent to landholders in areas with problem weeds prior to the control period to remind them of the obligations and provide information on control. Additional brochures for sticky nightshade were developed.
	Undertake weed control on roadsides and MWRC land	Council's roadside spraying program was completed with over 2400kms sprayed.
Collaborate with agencies to manage feral animals	Support relevant agencies with community education and awareness programs	Council's Biosecurity Weeds program provided both inspectorate and advisory services to landholders during the reporting period.



Goal 2.2

Provide total water cycle management

Strategy 2.2.1

Identify and implement innovative water conservation and sustainable water usage management practices.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Encourage reduced water consumption through Best Practice Pricing	Maintain Best Practice water supply, sewerage and trade waste tariffs	Best practice water pricing structure is being maintained. The implementation of liquid trade waste charges was completed this financial year.
Implement water conservation and reuse programs	Ongoing community education on water conservation	Community education via media channels continued throughout the year including following removal of water restrictions across the LGA.
Work to secure water for agriculture and urban use	Work with State Government to secure domestic water supply	Council maintains ongoing dialogue with the State Government regarding water security.
Play an active role in the Cudgegong Valley and Macquarie Valley User Group	Represent community at Customer Service Committee meetings for the Cudgegong Valley and Macquarie Valley User Groups	Council continues to represent community interests at meetings.

Strategy 2.2.2

Maintain and manage water quantity and quality.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Achieve NSW Government Best Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage	Implement an Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy	In 2021, DPIE entered a 2 year period of reform in which the IWCM Framework will be reviewed. Whilst it is currently not possible to receive concurrence from DPIE on a IWCM Strategy, work continued during the year on priority areas of strategic planning, including water supply network modelling and options assessment for Rylstone, Kandos, Charbon and Clandulla sewerage augmentation.
	Ongoing implementation and review of the Drinking Water Management System	Management System implemented. Continual review and improvement undertaken in 2020/21. Annual report on Drinking Water Management System provided to Council, NSW Health and published on Council website.
STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Identify and plan future maintenance, renewals and upgrades for Council's water supply infrastructure	Water Supply infrastructure renewals and new works undertaken as per Capital Works Program 2020/21	89% of budgeted expenditure for the capital works program was completed. 12 of the 13 planned water main renewal projects were completed, with one water main renewal project postponed to 2022 following resourcing of incident management and resulting reactive capital works at Mudgee Sewerage Treatment Plant in early 2021.



Strategy 2.2.3 Protect and improve catchments across the region by supporting relevant agencies.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Support relevant agencies with implementation of regional plans	Represent MWRC interests as appropriate	Council is an active participant in the Central Tablelands Environment and Waterways Alliance including having access to regionally based programs and funding opportunities.
Continue riparian rehabilitation program along waterways	Continue riverbed regeneration	Spraying works delayed by contractor.
	Maintenance and promotion of Putta Bucca Wetlands	All scheduled maintenance has been completed at Putta Bucca Wetlands, including mowing and weed control.
Provide education to the community of the importance of waterways	Ongoing community education on protecting waterways	Carp Muster was not held this year due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Strategy 2.2.4 Maintain and manage waste water quality to meet Environmental Protection Agency standards.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Identify and plan future maintenance, renewals and upgrades for Council's sewerage treatment infrastructure	Sewer infrastructure renewals and new works undertaken as per Capital Works Program 2020/21	The majority of the capital works program was completed with the exception of sewer lining final works postponed as a result of contractors impacted by COVID-19 stay at home orders, and road sealing postponed due to wet weather to restore access following the Mudgee Sewerage Treatment Plant pipe failure emergency works.
Improve and develop treatment options to ensure quality of waste water meets EPA standards	Continue to improve outgoing water quality at all sewerage treatment plants across the region	Council continued to manage treated effluent water quality at sewage treatment plants to meet EPL requirements. Capital improvement works were undertaken at Mudgee Sewerage Treatment Plant to improve treated effluent water quality. Council engaged with the EPA during 2021 in regards to progressing Rylstone, Kandos and Villages Sewerage Augmentation to improve treated effluent quality at Rylstone and Kandos.
Achieve NSW Government Best Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage	Implement Liquid Trade Waste Policy and Pricing as per 4 year rollout program	The program is now in the operational phase.



Strategy 2.2.5

Provide a water and sewer network that balances asset conditions with available resources and community needs.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Identify and plan future maintenance, renewals and upgrades for Council's stormwater assets	Drainage renewal and new works undertaken as per Capital Works Program 2020/21	The planned capital works for drainage renewal and new works were completed under budget.
	Effectively maintain existing drainage network including built infrastructure and overland drainage reserves	Council continues to monitor and action Works Requests related to drainage issues. Visual inspections undertaken of known assets to identify any necessary and significant works requirements.
	Identify and undertake culvert replacement and causeway improvement program	Two causeways have been replaced in 2020/21. Numerous stormwater culverts have been replaced throughout the year based on defects identified.
	Update Mudgee Flood Study and Flood Management Plan	Council adopted the Mudgee Flood Study in March 2021. The Flood Management Plan will follow in 2021/22.

Goal 2.3

Live in a clean and environmentally sustainable way

Strategy 2.3.1

Educate, promote and support the community in implementing waste minimisation strategies.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Promote a philosophy of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle	Provide education on waste minimisation	Waste minimisation education is provided in conjunction with Dubbo Regional Council and Narromine Council. This includes production of TV commercials, a schools waste education program, brochures and short clips for social media. In 2020, 83% of schools in the LGA participated in the recycling education program funded by Council, with 2344 students attending workshops. In 2021, 100% of schools in the LGA have registered for workshops.
Provide a domestic recycling and waste services for all residents through kerbside collection and rural waste transfer stations	Provide kerbside services and local recycling facilities	A domestic waste and recycling service is provided to urban residents through kerbside collections and to rural residents through the waste transfer station drop off facilities.
Promote home composting initiatives for green waste	Provide education on managing green waste	Recycling education is provided in conjunction with Dubbo Regional Council and Narromine Council. This includes production of TV commercials, a schools waste education program, brochures and short clips for social media. In 2020, 83% of schools in the LGA participated in the recycling education program funded by Council, with 2344 students attending workshops. In 2021, 100% of schools in the LGA have registered for workshops.



Strategy 2.3.2

Work regionally and collaboratively to implement strategies that will enhance environmental outcomes in regard to waste management and minimisation.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Participate in regional procurement contracts for waste services that provided added value	Provide regional scrap steel, green waste processing, used motor oil, household chemical collection and e-waste services	Council participates in regional contracts and tenders that provide best value and service to the region.
Participate in regional investigations for collaborative solutions to problem wastes types	Participate in NetWaste steering committee for strategic direction of the group	Quarterly regional meetings were attended, and ongoing input provided into regional waste plan and strategies.
Apply for available grants under the NSW Government 'Waste Less Recycle More' package	Apply for grants to upgrade or introduce services to the community that reduce landfill tonnes and CO2 emissions	There were no relevant grants available during the period. Education on waste management and waste minimisation continues to be delivered by the three Council group (Mid-Western, Dubbo and Narromine). This group was formed when the three Councils received grant funding for FOGO collection.

Strategy 2.3.3

Support programs that create environmental awareness and promote sustainable living.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Build community awareness through environmental education	Provide education to the community on environmental issues	Council partnered with Lifeskills Plus to make and distribute reusable shopping bags as part of "Plastic Free July". Council continues to provide community education on waste and recycling, including through the schools education program.
	Facilitate and promote community garden programs	No action currently due to lack of community requests for program.

Strategy 2.3.4

Consider technologies in Council's facilities, infrastructure and service delivery to reduce ecological footprint.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Implement alternative energy and sustainable technologies in physical works and service delivery	Consider opportunities for alternative energy and sustainable technologies (such as green energy programs or solar panel installation) as part of the capital works program	Council has implemented a new rooftop solar installation into the Mudgee Arts Precinct construction. Council continues to work on a 5MW solar array project to assist in ongoing Council electricity costs and reducing the environmental footprint.
	Work with Essential Energy to obtain funds for LED Street Lighting Retrofit	Council continues to work with Essential Energy to upgrade LED lighting in the Mudgee and Gulgong areas. Upgrades have progressed as planned, and are due for completion in July 2021. At the end of 2020/21, 80% of the planned upgrades to LED have been installed.

3. Building a Strong Local Economy



OUTCOME

A prosperous and diversified economy delivering lifestyle benefits to the community through employment, income and sustainable economic growth.

Goal 3.1

A prosperous and diversified economy

Strategy 3.1.1

Support the attraction and retention of a diverse range of businesses and industries.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Promote the region to target businesses that complement key local industries	Conduct 2-3 marketing activities, conferences or events where the region can be promoted	Council undertook a number of marketing initiatives to promote the region to live, work, invest and visit including TV advertising, PR, digital marketing campaigns and social media marketing. Marketing activities were not held in person outside of the region due to COVID-19, however digital marketing activities reached an audience of over 750,000 people. Further advertising was undertaken on TV both nationally (Fox Sports and SkyNews) and regionally into Wollongong, Newcastle and Canberra promoting the region as a place to live, work and invest.
Work with business and industry groups to facilitate business development workshops for existing businesses in the region	Support the business chambers and industry groups by attendance at meetings as required	Council representatives participated in meetings as required and continue to support initiatives of local business chambers.
Establish a process of capturing and monitoring relevant economic data to identify opportunities, trends and needs of local businesses	Produce annual update to Economic and Business Profile booklet	Economic and Business Profile annual update was completed in June 2021.
Work with the community to identify economic development opportunities	Be aware of new business investors coming to the region and work with them to promote benefits	Council utilises ABR data to track new businesses opening in the region and continues to provide information to encourage new investment including updating data in Economic and Business Profile. Welcome to region postcards are sent to all new businesses on a quarterly basis.
	Conduct annual think tank forum to encourage business leaders to participate in local economic development	The Annual Economic Think Tank was delivered engaging a range of business leaders.
	Identify opportunities to invest in infrastructure which attracts new business investors to the region	Regular meetings undertaken with industry groups and annual Economic Think Tank held in August 2020.



STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Work with Mudgee Region Tourism Inc (MRTI) to identify target markets and promote the region	Work with MRTI to identify visitor trends and marketing initiatives	MRTI has a contract with Council to undertake tourism marketing on behalf of the region. Council staff meet with MRTI on a quarterly basis to ensure alignment between organisational objectives. Additional meetings are held to discuss joint activities and new plans and activities.
Develop existing events in the region and attract new event proponents to hold major events and festivals in the region	Submit bids for new events and conferences and support event proponents holding or seeking to hold events in the region	Submitted 13 bids for conferences and events in the region through 2020/21.
	Deliver Flavours of Mudgee in September 2020	Flavours of Mudgee 2020 event was cancelled due to COVID-19. An alternative activity was undertaken to promote local businesses and encourage residents and visitors to shop local, utilising Flavours of Mudgee glasses as an incentive.

Strategy 3.1.2

Encourage the development of a skilled and flexible workforce to satisfy local industry and business requirements.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Work with business and industry groups to identify the main skills shortage areas	Encourage business leaders to provide feedback on skills issues	Regular meetings undertaken with industry groups and annual Economic Think Tank held in August 2020.
Encourage workers to move to the region for employment opportunities where skills shortages exist	Conduct 2-3 marketing activities, conferences or events where the region can be promoted	Council undertook a number of marketing initiatives to promote the region to live, work, invest and visit including TV advertising, PR, digital marketing campaigns and social media marketing. Marketing activities were not held in person outside of the region due to COVID-19, however digital marketing activities reached an audience of over 750,000 people. Further advertising was undertaken on TV both nationally (Fox Sports and SkyNews) and regionally into Wollongong, Newcastle and Canberra promoting the region as a place to live, work and invest.



Goal 3.2

An attractive business and economic environment

Strategy 3.2.1

Promote the region as a great place to live, work, invest and visit.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Provide brand leadership, market the region's competitive advantages and targeted marketing of investment opportunities	Conduct 2-3 marketing activities, conferences or events where the region can be promoted	Council undertook a number of marketing initiatives to promote the region to live, work, invest and visit including TV advertising, PR, digital marketing campaigns and social media marketing. Marketing activities were not held in person outside of the region due to COVID-19, however digital marketing activities reached an audience of over 750,000 people. Further advertising was undertaken on TV both nationally (Fox Sports and SkyNews) and regionally into Wollongong, Newcastle and Canberra promoting the region as a place to live, work and invest.

Strategy 3.2.2

Provide leadership on economic development initiatives and identify resources and infrastructure required to drive investment and economic growth in the region.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Promote the development of infrastructure at the Mudgee Airport as an opportunity for business expansion in the aviation industry	Deliver infrastructure upgrades at Mudgee Airport Precinct in accordance with Restart NSW funding	The Mudgee Airport Precinct project has been completed.
	Review airport development strategy and promotional opportunities in the future	The Mudgee Airport Master Plan was adopted in 2015. Council continues to pursue opportunities in accordance with the plan.
Lobby State and Federal Government on infrastructure needs of local businesses including transport and communications linkages	Lobby government agencies and departments on the provision of infrastructure to meet community needs	Council continues to identify issues with local MPs and relevant government ministers.

Strategy 3.2.3

Support the expansion of essential infrastructure and services to match business and industry development in the region.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Lobby State and Federal Government for expanded health and education services	Lobby government agencies and departments on the provision of infrastructure to meet community needs	Council continues to identify and raise issues with local MPs and relevant government ministers.



Strategy 3.2.4

Develop tools that simplify development processes and encourage high quality commercial and residential development.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Provide information to assist potential investors understand local development controls and assessment processes	Provide an overview of local development controls and assessment processes in a fact sheet	Work has commenced on the development of a fact sheet.

Goal 3.3

A range of rewarding and fulfilling career opportunities to attract and retain residents

Strategy 3.3.1

Support projects that create new jobs in the region and help to build a diverse and multi-skilled workforce.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Work with lead agencies for employment to identify trends and discuss issues impacting employment	Work with major employers to identify trends and develop strategies to create employment opportunities across the region	Regular meetings undertaken with industry groups and annual Economic Think Tank held in August 2020. Council continues to review trends and report statistics through the Economic and Business Profile booklet. Council receives data from Service NSW in regards to Job Keeper and Job Seeker data.

Strategy 3.3.2

Build strong linkages with institutions providing education, training and employment pathways in the region.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Work with lead agencies for education in the region to identify opportunities for economic growth	Pursue opportunities to develop a university outreach campus with offerings aligned to local industries	Council continues to explore the opportunity to introduce a Country University Centre campus in Mudgee. Ongoing engagement with universities continues.
	Work with education providers on the provision of services to meet community needs	Council continues to work with education providers across the region including TAFE NSW, Skillset and local schools.

4. Connecting Our Region



OUTCOME

Linking our towns and villages and connecting our region to the rest of NSW.

Goal 4.1

High quality road network that is safe and efficient

Strategy 4.1.1

Provide traffic management solutions that promote safer local roads and minimise traffic congestion.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Work with the RMS to improve road safety	Liaise with the RMS on road safety matters	Council continues to raise road safety issues with RMS through regular meetings including the Local Traffic Committee. A road safety officer has been jointly funded to further improve this.
Regulate effective and appropriate user activities on the road network	Provide local assessments to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator as required	Council continues to assess applications received through the NHVR for the movement of oversize and overmass vehicles through the LGA on the local and regional road network. Applications are reviewed as received.
	Review speed limits and traffic management	Speed and traffic management reviews are undertaken by Council in conjunction with RMS as required.
Participate in relevant regional transport committees and working parties	Facilitate the Local Traffic Committee	Regular Traffic Committee meetings held throughout the year and attended by NSW Police, Transport for NSW, Councillor Karavas and Community representatives. Recommendations for traffic improvements are reported and adopted by Council.

Strategy 4.1.2

Provide a road network that balances asset conditions with available resources and community needs.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Review the Roads Asset Management Plan	Update data for Asset Management Plans in line with Fair Value reporting requirements	Asset data continues to be updated and reviewed to ensure the most accurate information is available. Fair Value for Roads due in 2025 financial year.
Implement the works program in accordance with the Roads Asset Management Plan	Manage State Roads in accordance with RMS contracts	Council continues to maintain the state road network under the Council Routine Maintenance Contract with RMS. Council completed road widening projects on Goolma Road under an ordered works arrangement.
	Ongoing maintenance and upgrades of Regional Roads network	The Hill End Road project is complete incorporating 1.3km of road widening and rehabilitation at Grattai. The Bylong Valley Way rehabilitation work is also complete incorporating approximately 5km of road widening and rehabilitation. The 2nd stage of Wollar Road upgrade at the Munghorn has also been completed. General maintenance also completed throughout the year.



STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Implement the works program in accordance with the Roads Asset Management Plan	Maintain local road network in accordance with established levels of service	General maintenance has been performed across the sealed and unsealed local network. Maintenance grading and significant gravel re-sheeting has been completed on the unsealed local road network in line with the program. Reseals of the sealed network have occurred as per the program.
	Upgrade, renewal and extension of local roads in accordance with Capital Works Program 2020/21	The rural and urban reseals were completed as planned. Cudgegong Rd and Barneys Reef Rd rehabilitations have been completed successfully providing a widened and strengthened pavement. Pyramul Rd, Coxs Creek Rd and Aarons Pass Rd seal extensions were also completed successfully, with Mebul Rd Seal extension progressing well.
	Upgrade and renewal of local bridges in accordance with Capital Works Program 2020/21	Goulburn River Bridge replacement is currently under contract for construction to be completed by December 2021. Maintenance and inspections continue throughout the year. Preliminary work for Dixons Long Point Bridge is ongoing.
	Upgrade to Wollar Road in accordance with Restart NSW funding agreement	The Wollar Road upgrade project was completed in May 2020.
	Implementation of the Ulan Road Strategy	The major upgrade works for Ulan Road are complete. Other works including shoulder widening at various locations and reseal were completed with some ongoing works.
Pursue additional funding for upgrading of roads infrastructure	Lobby for additional funding for roads	Council continues to identify and pursue new funding for additional road projects.
	Ensure major developers contribute to local road upgrades for the impact of additional development	Funding committed through Ulan Road Strategy and Resources for Regions program.



Goal 4.2

Efficient connection of the region to major towns and cities

Strategy 4.2.1

Develop a regional network in partnership with government agencies, that grows with the needs of residents and businesses.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Support the continuation of commercial passenger services at Mudgee Airport	Work with operator to maintain regular passenger services to and from Sydney	FlyPelican commenced services in June 2015. In response to the significant impact of COVID-19 on the aviation sector, Council has provided a regional aviation support subsidy to support the continuation of the FlyPelican service. The service remained operational at 30 June 2021.
	Operation and maintenance of Mudgee Airport in accordance with agreed service levels	Mudgee Airport meets current safety and security requirements.
Lobby for improved highway linkages along the Great Western Highway and Bells Line	Lobby for improved access to Western NSW from Sydney	Council continues to participate in transport infrastructure planning groups and meetings with relevant government agencies.

Strategy 4.2.2

Create a communication network that services the needs of our residents and businesses.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Pursue improved broadband and mobile coverage with Government and major service providers	Lobby for improved internet speeds and mobile coverage throughout the region	Council continues to pursue grant opportunities and lobby for improved mobile coverage and internet speeds. Council receives regular updates and raises issues relating to NBN rollout and coverage.



Goal 4.3

An active travel network within the region

Strategy 4.3.1

Develop and enhance walking and cycling networks across the region.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Implement the Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan	Upgrade and renewal of footpaths and cycleways in accordance with Capital Works Program 2020/21	Council has renewed numerous footpaths that were in poor condition and extended the footpath/cycle-way network in all four town centres during the year utilising both Council allocated funds and significant grant funding received.
	Maintain existing footpath and cycleway network in accordance with established levels of service	Council has renewed numerous footpaths that were in poor condition as well as extended the footpath/cycle-way network in all four of the major centres throughout the year utilising both Council allocated funds and significant grant funding received. This included works identified in the PAMP.
	Extension of Cudgegong River shared pathway to Glen Willow/Putta Bucca	Council continues to develop the shared pathway.

Strategy 4.3.2

Support viable public transport options across the region.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Examine opportunities to develop viable public transport options	Investigate the demand for public transport with the community	Transport for NSW undertook a trial for public transport between Mudgee, Gulgong and Dubbo. Results demonstrated this service was under-utilised. Ongoing discussions continue regarding public transport options across the region.

5. Good Government



OUTCOME

A strong Council that is representative of our community and effective in meeting the needs of the community.

Goal 5.1

Strong civic leadership

Strategy 5.1.1

Provide clear strategic direction through the Community Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Ensure actions of the Operational Plan and Delivery Program are completed on time, on budget and meets performance criteria	Successful delivery of 2020/21 Operational Plan	94% of all actions identified in the 2020/21 Operational Plan were completed.
	Six monthly progress reporting against Delivery Program and comprehensive Quarterly Budget Reviews against Operational Plan	Six monthly progress reported to February Council meeting.

Strategy 5.1.2

Provide accountable and transparent decision making for the community.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Ongoing review and enhancement of governance framework	Continue to hold <i>Open Day</i> prior to Council Meetings	Council has continued to hold Open Day (now referred to as Public Forums) prior to Council meetings as permitted by Public Health Orders during COVID-19 restrictions. The Public Forums provide the opportunity for residents to address Council on any subject and are promoted prior to each meeting.
	Promotion of upcoming Council meetings	During 2020/21, Public Health Orders significantly impacted the regular conduct of Council meetings. The advertising of meetings continued in local media and all meetings continued to be webcast live via Council's website.
	Webcast of Council Meetings	Both live webcasting of Council meetings and access to webcasts of past meetings is available to the public via Council's website.
Provide professional development opportunities to support elected members in fulfilling their obligations as Councillors	Provide access to professional development programs for elected members	Access to professional development opportunities for Councillors were presented during the year for consideration.



STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Hold awareness sessions for potential candidates in the six months leading up to each Council election and ensure information packages are available	Develop program for candidate awareness sessions (next election due in 2021, or in case of a by-election)	Three candidate awareness sessions presented by Local Government NSW were held. All sessions were well attended, including a women's only session. Council has promoted the NSW Electoral Commission webinars for candidates in local media.

Strategy 5.1.3 Provide strong representation for the community at Regional, State and Federal levels.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Continue to lobby State and Federal Government on all matters that are of relevance to the region	Work with the Mayor to access Local Members and Ministers on relevant issues	Regular meetings held with local members and access provided to various ministers for specific issues.
	Strengthen relationships with local State and Federal members	Regular meetings held with local members and access provided to various ministers for specific issues.
	Engage with Regional Directors of State Government agencies	Regular meetings held with Regional Directors to discuss regional priorities.

Goal 5.2 Good communications and engagement

Strategy 5.2.1 Improve communications between Council and the community and create awareness of Council's roles and responsibilities.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Publish monthly editions of Community News	Community News distributed monthly to every household in the region	Community News has been delivered monthly in print, EDM and video format.
Provide an up to date and functional web interface	Ensure web content is kept up to date and relevant	Council's website continues to be maintained regularly to ensure accurate and updated information is available to the public. A project to redesign the existing website continues, with the launch of the new site targeted by the end of 2021.
Regularly report to the community in a variety of interesting ways	Increased use of all media avenues including social media, radio and television to communicate Council initiatives	In 2020/21, social media engagement increased by 33% (from 25,607 to 34,091) with Facebook reach increasing 16% to 315,998 for the year. More than 32,200 minutes of Council produced video content was viewed by the community and Facebook fans (followers) grew to 7,500 up 26%. Council undertook a number of campaigns and educational projects throughout the year to ensure the community is well informed across a range of issues.



STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Operate and maintain a community works request system that provides timely and accurate information and responses	Maintain works request system and produce regular reporting on response times	Council continues to monitor and report on overdue work requests on a monthly basis. Any trends or concerns with delays to completing work requests are communicated back to relevant areas for action. 7,651 customer work requests were received in 2020/21, with 84.6% completed within 14 days.
	Promote use of works request system for community to submit works requests	Council continues to maintain a website to support online works requests. Development of a new Council website will improve the customer experience and provide an easy to use platform for the community to lodge works requests for Council action. The new website is scheduled for launch in December 2021.
Ensure the community has clear information about who to contact in Council	Provide a customer focused website	Council continues to maintain a customer focused website. Council is also undertaking a complete redesign of the current Council website and subsites, including the staff intranet site. The project is targeted for completion by the end of 2021. Once completed it will provide a greatly improved user experience with easy search functionality, new and simpler content and logical website architecture.
Educate the community on Council's roles and responsibilities	Provide access to Council's corporate documents both through the website and Administration Centres	Council continues to ensure all required open access Council documents are updated and available in person in the administration centres or on Council's website.

Strategy 5.2.2

Encourage community access and participation in Council decision making.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Seek feedback on policy development and local issues	Ensure policies, strategies and proposals impacting the community are placed on exhibition for public comment	Utilised <i>yoursay.midwestern.nsw.gov.au</i> as a dedicated platform for community engagement across a range of issues and strategies, including the annual Operational Plan and Budget submission process.
	Utilise a range of formal and informal engagement tools to seek community feedback on a broad range of issues	Council continues to promote opportunities for the community to contribute to Council's decision making process through a range of platforms including <i>yoursay.midwestern.nsw.gov.au</i> , Council's website forms, social media and face to face contribution and feedback sessions.
Provide opportunities and make it easy for the community to participate in and influence decision making	Encourage attendance at Council Meetings in person and via webcast	Public Health Orders in relation to COVID-19 significantly impacted public attendance at Council meetings and Public Forums in the last 12 months. Council continues to webcast all Council meetings.
	Investigate and consult with the community on high priority projects as defined in the community consultation report for the Community Strategic Plan	Council continues to promote opportunities for the community to contribute to Council's planning and budgeting process through a range of platforms including <i>yoursay.midwestern.nsw.gov.au</i> , Council's website forms, PR and advertising, social media and face to face contribution and feedback.



Goal 5.3

An effective and efficient organisation

Strategy 5.3.1

Pursue excellence in service delivery.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Benchmark Council's service delivery against relevant organisations	Provide planning and building statistics to Department of Planning	Reports are completed and submitted to the NSW Department of Planning Industry and Environment as required.
	Participate in NSW LGPA, LGNSW, JO and other industry body surveys and benchmarking exercises	Staff continue to participate in relevant activities.
	Desktop analysis of annual financial results against other NSW councils	Desktop analysis of Council's financial results for the 2018/19 year has commenced through 2019/20 Annual Financial Statements assessment (including Note 27 Financial Review) and historical analysis of Council's performance through 2021/22 Operational Plan workshops.
	Report on OLG group comparative data	Comparative Group 4 Council reporting was planned to be analysed and presented in the second half of the year. This has been deferred due to additional administrative burden of COVID-19 impacts and staff shortages. Further work will be completed in 2021/22. Some ad hoc assessments have been completed, as relevant.
Conduct biennial community surveys	Undertake community surveys in 2018/19 and 2020/21	A community wide telephone survey was completed in June 2021. The survey measures community satisfaction levels across all Council's services and will be used to inform the upcoming review of the Community Plan.
Monitor community expectations regarding service delivery	Engage with the community on desired levels of service across Council functions	Continued use of <i>yoursay</i> communications tool to support community engagement activities and provide a forum to receive community feedback.
	Develop program of internal service reviews	The Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee has completed reviews of Council's Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Plans and legislative compliance functions.
Provide a responsive customer service function	Reply to all correspondence within 14 days	Council continues to monitor and report on all ELO tasks overdue on a weekly basis. Reports are filtered by department and user to identify trends or performance concerns that require attention. There were 40 ELO tasks overdue at 30 June 2021.
	Review Customer Service Charter and deliver positive, informative, and professional front-of-house and phone customer service function	Staff are currently reviewing existing Service Level Agreements between customer service and relevant departments connected with service delivery and administrative functions. The development of a Customer Service Charter is targeted for completion in the first quarter of 2020/21.



Strategy 5.3.2

Provide a positive and supportive working environment for employees.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Attract, retain and develop a skilled workforce	Implement a Leadership program that includes merit based recruitment, performance management and legal responsibilities	Leadership development training was undertaken during the year with internal and external training providers covering topics such as merit based selection, corruption prevention, creating high performing teams and tender evaluation.
	Develop a Learning and Development program targeted towards achievement of Delivery Program and areas of risk identified in Workforce Plan	The Learning and Development Program was implemented focussing on individual and group training opportunities and targeted towards professional and regulatory training and addressing skill shortages in the Workforce Strategy.
	Provide a Leadership Capability Framework to develop current and future leaders which is linked to Learning and Development Plans	A Leadership Development Framework has been developed that links to position descriptions, performance appraisals and learning and development.
	Ensure all employees have clearly articulated accountabilities against which they will be assessed annually	All employees have position descriptions which detail key accountabilities. Performance reviews for employees were undertaken in September 2020.
Provide a safe, healthy and non-discriminatory working environment	Establish a culture of workplace safety which includes daily pre-start meetings for outdoor staff and monthly Safety Toolbox Talks	Daily pre-start meetings form part of the daily risk assessment process for outdoor workers. Monthly safety talks are forwarded to managers and supervisors for inclusion at department meetings.
	Implement and embed a WHS Management System that reflects AS4801 requirements	Council's WHS Management System continues to be reviewed and updated where required to reflect Australian Standard requirements.
	Align workplace behaviour with core values of Respect, Integrity and Recognition	Behaviours aligned to core values are included in Position Descriptions, Induction and Orientation, and measured during annual performance reviews. Values are promoted and reinforced via staff update meetings, department meetings and the fortnightly GM newsletters.
	Implement and review the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan	The Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan was reviewed and a new plan in place for 2020/21. Implementation of the plan was completed.



STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Conduct biennial employee opinion survey	Seek staff feedback via Employee Opinion Survey 2018/19 and 2020/21	The Employee Opinion Survey was undertaken this year and Council will continue to develop strategies focused on improving employee engagement.
	Identify and implement improvement strategies based on feedback from Employee Opinion Survey	Improvement strategies are being developed and implemented following the Employee Opinion Survey completed in March 2021.

Strategy 5.3.3

Prudently manage risks associated with all Council activities.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Monitor and review Council's policies and strategies	Provide up to date Policy Register	The status of all Council policies is routinely reported to the Executive including a schedule of review dates. Responsible Managers are also notified of current and future policy review obligations.
	Identify and resolve existing policy gaps	Council's policy framework is regularly reviewed by Council's Executive team to identify policy gaps.
	Education program to ensure staff understand policy requirements	Council continues to review the status of all Council policies and update as required. Policies are made available and easily accessible to residents on Council's website.
Monitor and review Council's risks	Develop an enterprise risk management (ERM) framework relevant to Council's activities	Council adopted an Enterprise Risk Management Framework in June 2020.
Provide long term financial sustainability through sound financial management	Examine opportunities to raise additional revenue	Council is pursuing commercial property and development opportunities to raise additional revenue, and implementing an improvement plan for the management of these functions. Council continues to ensure Fees and Charges are appropriate for all services and reviews Fees and Charges annually.
	Explore a special rate variation with the community	A material increase in rating revenue was achieved through revised land valuations, especially in the mining category. A special rate variation is no longer required.
	Identify opportunities to increase revenue from property related investments	Council continues to identify and investigate commercial opportunities to support revenue growth.



STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Provide long term financial sustainability through sound financial management	Update Long Term Financial Plan	The Long Term Financial Plan for 2020/2030 was adopted on 21 October 2020.
	Monthly reporting against budget and schedule for major works programs/ strategic projects	All monthly budget reports were prepared for Council in accordance with the schedule.
	Comprehensive Quarterly Budget Review reporting	All Quarterly Budget Review Statements were completed within schedule and in accordance with the Office of Local Government Guidelines.
	Development of Rating Strategy to support LTFP	At the May 2017 Council meeting a Supplementary Motion concerning a proposal to adopt a Rating Strategy for the term of Council was put and lost.
Comply with relevant accounting standards, taxation legislation and other financial reporting obligations	Integration of long term impacts on financial sustainability indicators incorporated into Council decision making process	A reporting template was introduced in August 2017 which includes Fit For The Future sustainability ratio impacts of Council recommendations and options, with Long Term Financial Planning and Asset Management impacts included.
	To achieve a high standard of financial management	Council received an unqualified audit report for the financial year ended 30 June 2020.
	All rating, taxation, statutory, and grant reporting obligations satisfied in an accurate and timely manner	All statutory reporting obligations have been completed on time this financial year.

Strategy 5.3.4

Pursue efficiencies and ongoing business improvement.

STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Provide effective and efficient internal support functions	Conduct quarterly Council Staff Updates across all work sites	Quarterly staff update meetings were held.
	Effective capture and management of corporate records	A successful upgrade to ELO Version 12 has been completed which provides an improved user experience and greater functionality. Council staff continue to monitor and revise records processes and systems to ensure compliance with State Records Act and other related regulations.
	Ongoing enhancements to Council procurement including Roadmap Best Practice Procurement project	The Procurement Framework and Contract Management Framework are being implemented including continuous improvement strategies to ensure 'best practice procurement' is maintained.
	Provide effective Workshop services for Council fleet	Council continues to ensure that Council fleet meets the requirements of the RMS and that servicing and maintenance is maintained for all fleet. Risk management, innovative technology and safety is priority for continuous improvement in workshop activities.



STRATEGY	ACTION	COMMENTS
Enhance the information systems that support delivery of Council activities	Investigate options to increase speed and reliability of Council's network	Council underwent a refresh of switching infrastructure to ensure all services are supported and secure. This included centralised management and access control systems.
	Continued investment in existing information systems to delivery productivity enhancements	Council continues to invest in systems and applications to increase productivity and create efficiencies. A change management committee has been formed to ensure all changes to systems and applications are updated and configured ensuring increased efficiency and less downtime. Centralised billing and reporting tools for telecommunications are being piloted to streamline processes between the ordering and billing of services. Exception reporting will allow Council to obtain value for money and utilisation trends will be easily identified. Integration with the new ePlanning portal were created to assist in the processing of Development Applications.
	Implementation of mobility solutions for integrated asset management	A field trial of Mobile GIS and pilot project was completed during the year. Mobility solutions are available to roll out to operational areas as required.
Ensure strategic and asset management plans are underpinned by sound financial strategies	Consider the full life cycle costs associated with the investment in new assets, with a focus on capital investment and existing assets	Full life cycle costs of new assets are considered through preparation of a business plan for new Community Plan Proposals, ratio reporting in Council Business Paper reports and Quarterly Business Reviews. Improvements in Contract and Project Management to create consistent methodologies across Council are currently underway. Council completes all Capital Expenditure Review Business Cases, as required, and completes Business Case assessments for other material projects. Council is forecast to exceed the infrastructure renewals ratio benchmark in 2020/21.
	Review depreciation methodology and process	Depreciation methodology is reviewed as a part of the Fair Value process for assets each year. For 2020/21 the revaluation of Community Land and Other Structures was undertaken.
	Ongoing improvements to asset data and asset system capabilities	Data cleansing was completed for Community Land and Other infrastructure as part of the fair value process. Improvements in the Asset Management System continue to be implemented, to better manage asset data, including implementation of Mobility services.
	Integrate long term asset management considerations into Council decision making process	A reporting template was introduced in August 2017, which includes Fit For Future sustainability ratio impacts of Council recommendations and options, with Long Term Financial Planning and Asset Management impacts included.
	Improved integration of Asset Management Plans and Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP)	Financial data within Asset Management Plans (AMPs) has been updated, in line with Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) data. Progress continues as AMPs are scheduled for review. Further work was completed making capital reporting in the LTFP more accurate for the 2020/21 LTFP.

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