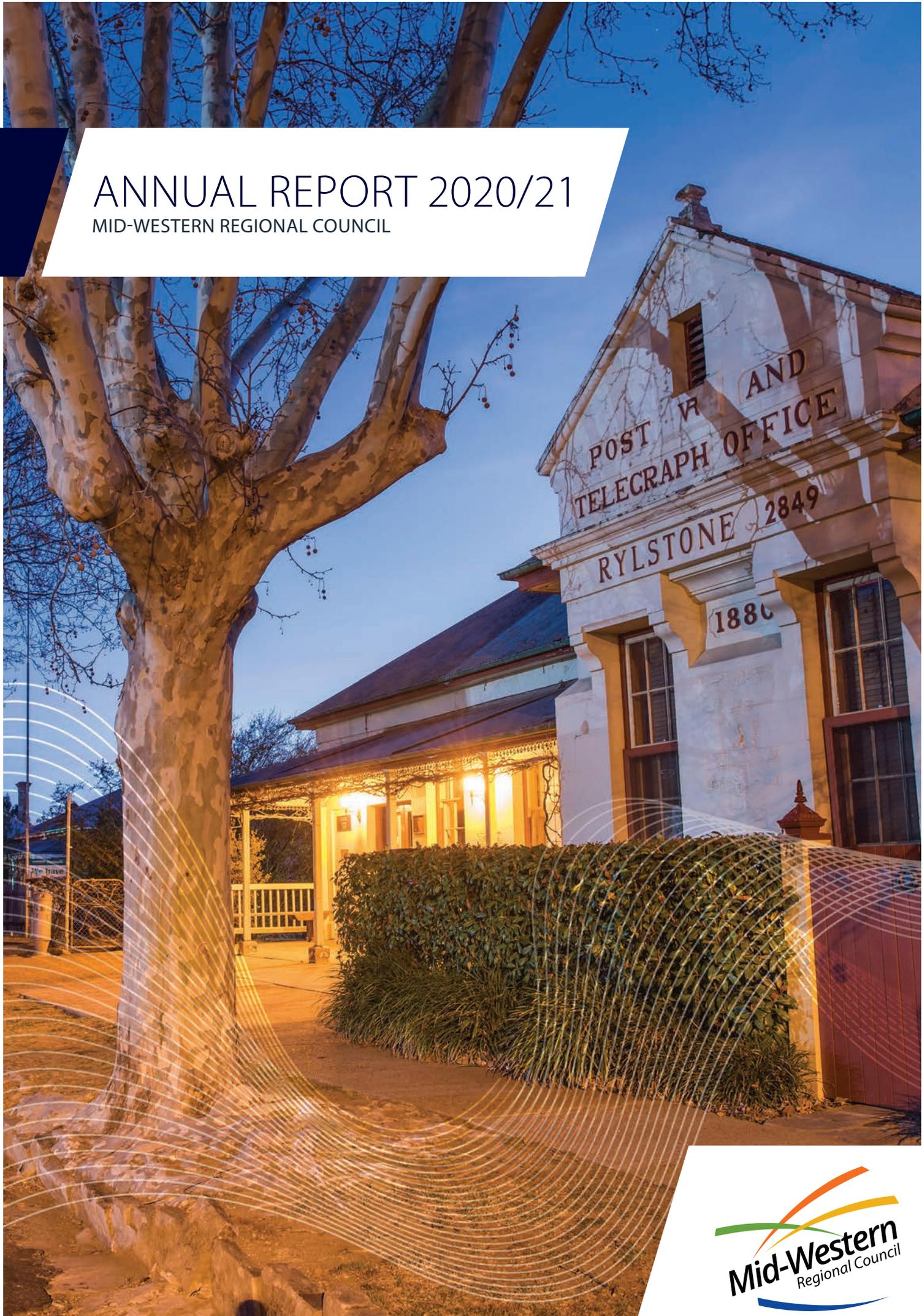


ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL



Contents



Message from the Mayor	3
Message from the General Manager	4
Your Council	5
Civic Leadership	6
Councillor Key Statistics	8
Organisation Structure	9
Vision and Values	10
About the Mid-Western Region	11
Key Completed Projects	12
Community Strategic Plan	17
Progress on the Operational Plan and Delivery Program	18
Looking After Our Community	19
Protecting Our Natural Environment	29
Building a Strong Local Economy	35
Connecting Our Region	39
Good Government	43
Managing the Money	51
Performance Measures	53
Statutory Information	55
State of the Environment Report 2016–2021	75

MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL

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MAYOR	Cr Des Kennedy
GENERAL MANAGER	Brad Cam

Message from the Mayor

After what has been yet another challenging year for our entire region, I am proud to present Mid-Western Regional Council's 2020/21 Annual Report and showcase the projects and achievements Council has delivered in spite of many obstacles.

I have been humbled by the resilience of businesses and residents throughout our region, who have overcome challenges and hardship, most recently as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and previous to that bushfires, a mouse plague and drought. I am however hopeful that our region has now moved into the recovery phase and life will begin to return to a new normal, businesses can open, events can be hosted, family and friends can reunite and enjoy all that our beautiful region has to offer alongside visitors who are keen to return.

Council has delivered an impressive amount over the last 12 months across all of its areas, as you'll read in the Key Completed Projects.

Whilst Council continues to create new and improved infrastructure for the community like the 8km walking loop from Mudgee to Putta Bucca Wetlands, it also invests heavily in maintaining our existing infrastructure as demonstrated by the ongoing Sewer Mains Maintenance Programs. We understand our communities are growing and we are growing services to meet that, with projects like the Kandos-Rylstone Pre-School extension that saw ten childcare places open up as a direct result of the building upgrades.

We work hard to deliver on the community's wish list through our annual budgeting process, and a perfect example of that is the Liberty Swing in Robertson Park. This project was proposed by a local father, approved through the budgeting process and installed for the enjoyment of children and adults in wheelchairs.

Some very exciting major projects were also nearing completion during this time including the \$8 million purpose-built Mudgee Arts Precinct. This facility was hugely anticipated, ranking as the fifth most important major project to residents surveyed in 2016. Construction of Glen Willow's \$18 million second stage was also well progressed with all six new playing fields established and turfed and



the two amenities buildings erected.

Looking towards the future there are an abundance of opportunities for our region, particularly given the numerous State Significant Projects currently under construction or approved in the mining and renewable energy sectors. Combined with this, the trending migration out of Sydney by remote-working tree changers who are discovering the lifestyle benefits and freedoms to be had living and working in our beautiful region.

Of course, these opportunities and changes will come with challenges to our health care system, with access to services such as GP clinics and aged care, as well as increased pressure on Council services, such as roads, waste and water, but particularly with the availability of affordable housing. As a region, I think we need to look towards developing long term plans and solutions to ensure there are affordable housing options for all, in order to retain and attract essential workers moving to the region.

This will be the fifth and final Annual Report presented by the outgoing Council following an extended term due to COVID-19 and the consequential postponement of elections. It has been an honour to serve my community as Mayor for the past 11 years.

I am proud of the achievements of the outgoing Council and hope we have done a good job for our community. I would like to thank my fellow Councillors and Council's staff for all their hard work.

DES KENNEDY
MAYOR

Message from the General Manager

Mid-Western Regional Council's 2020/21 Annual Report is a record of the organisation's achievements, key projects and financial deliverables over the past 12 months.

The Annual Report is evidence of Council's continued strong financial performance with an \$8 million operating surplus captured in this reporting period. This is a great outcome, particularly given the uncertain global climate as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As in previous years we have responsibly planned for the future through investment and prudent financial management, delivering debt-free budgets and a substantial capital works program. We continue to plan for the future with continuous business improvements and strategies to achieving long term financial stability.

A total \$50.3 million was invested in the purchase of Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment (IPPE), a 38 per cent increase on the previous year. In real terms this represents assets for the community to use directly like roads, playgrounds and footpaths, and assets that are used by Council to deliver these services like road graders, lawn mowers and water carts.

We continue to work hard to reduce the burden on our ratepayers and successfully secured \$47.7 million in government and industry grants and contributions. Grant funding is a valuable source of income and has enabled us to commence construction on much desired community facilities like the Mudgee Arts Precinct and the second stage of Glen Willow. Roads maintenance continues to be one of the top priorities we share with the community and in this area we secured more than \$10 million in state and federal government grant funding to undertake road sealing throughout the region.

Long term projects including the Hill End Road and Wollar Road upgrades continue and Council has taken a lead role in collaborative projects like the Dixons Long Point Crossing that has multiple stakeholders including other local government organisations.



We responded to and learnt from two critical incidents at Mudgee Sewage Treatment Plant and the Charbon Reservoir. Staff promptly identified and responded to a failure and in both instances went above and beyond to maintain services for residents. Incidents such as these help us to improve on systems and processes and are thoroughly reviewed and examined both internally and externally.

Local Government Elections that had been postponed in 2020 were again delayed from September 2021 to December 2021 resulting in the outgoing Council serving an additional 15 months on the standard four year term. I wish to thank all nine Councillors for their efforts and collaboration over this extended term in delivering the best outcomes for our community.

I'd like to extend that thanks to Council staff and volunteers who have persevered in exceptional circumstances presented by the pandemic. In spite of great challenges, we've maintained a high level of service for our community and great ingenuity has been displayed to ensure projects and works continued to be delivered.

BRAD CAM
GENERAL MANAGER

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 December 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 with Local Government elections to be held on Saturday 4 December 2021. The last meeting for the outgoing Council is 3 November 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

Civic Leadership

THE ROLE OF COUNCIL

The role of the Councillors, as members of the body corporate are:

- to direct and control the affairs of the Council in accordance with the Local Government Act
- to provide effective civic leadership to the local community
- to ensure as far as possible the financial sustainability of the Council
- to ensure as far as possible that the Council acts in accordance with the principles set out in Chapter 3 of the Act and the plans, programs, strategies and policies of the Council
- to develop and endorse the Community Strategic Plan, delivery program and other strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies of Council
- to determine and adopt a rating and revenue policy and operational plans that support the optimal allocation of Council resources to implement the strategic plans (including the Community Strategic Plan) of Council and for the benefit of the local area
- to keep under review the performance of Council, including service delivery
- to make decisions necessary for the proper exercising of Council's regulatory functions
- to determine the process for appointment of the General Manager by Council and to monitor the General Manager's performance
- to determine the senior staff positions within the organisation structure of the Council
- to consult regularly with community organisations and key stakeholders and keep them informed of the Council's decisions and activities
- to be responsible for ensuring that the Council acts honestly, efficiently and appropriately, and
- the governing body is to consult with the General Manager in directing and controlling the Council

COUNCIL DECISIONS

Council is recognised as a single entity and Councillors only have the authority to make decisions as a group, when they are acting as Council, that is, in Council meetings.

Council meetings are held at the Chambers of the Mudgee Administration Centre on the third Wednesday of every month except for January (no meeting). Occasionally Council holds extraordinary meetings. These are Council meetings held outside the normal meeting cycle, most often to consider matters of an urgent nature.

Meetings are open to the public, and residents and businesses are actively encouraged to attend and participate in the decision-making process. Prior to the commencement of the formal Council meeting, Public Forum is held. This is an opportunity for members of the public to address Council on any issue of relevance to the Council.

Council also has advisory committees comprised of Councillors, members of the public and staff of the Council. These committees focus on specific narrow areas of expertise, and make recommendations for consideration by Council.

Council meetings are available to view live via webcast on the internet, giving the public access to Council decisions and debate without the need to attend meetings in a physical capacity. Archived videos from previous meetings are also available, as well as links to meeting schedules, agendas and minutes.

HAVING YOUR SAY

There are many ways for residents to have a say on the governing of the Mid-Western Region. Residents can:

- vote for Councillors every four years through the Local Government election for Mid-Western Regional Council
- arrange to speak at the Public Forum
- write to or telephone elected members of the Council
- get social and connect with Council on social media, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- make a submission on Council's four year Delivery Plan including the one year Operational Plan when on exhibition each year
- participate in the review of the Community Strategic Plan every four years
- make submissions on items placed on public exhibition or notification, including major projects, development applications, strategic plans and policies

Mid-Western Regional Council is committed to engaging its residents, stakeholders and staff in the development of policies and plans and the delivery of services for the community. Council's Agency Information Guide will assist residents in having their say.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Councillors and staff are bound by a Code of Conduct, which sets the standards for ethical behaviour and decision making.

The Code states Councillor and staff roles and responsibilities and outlines steps to be followed when making and investigating allegations of breaches of the Code.

During 2020/21, there were no Code of Conduct complaints made against Councillors/staff.

Code of Conduct matters are dealt with via the following means:

- referred to a Conduct reviewer
- referred to the various legislative authorities where required (Office of Local Government, Independent Commission Against Corruption)
- resolved in accordance with Council's Procedures for the Administration of the Code of Conduct

Councillor Key Statistics

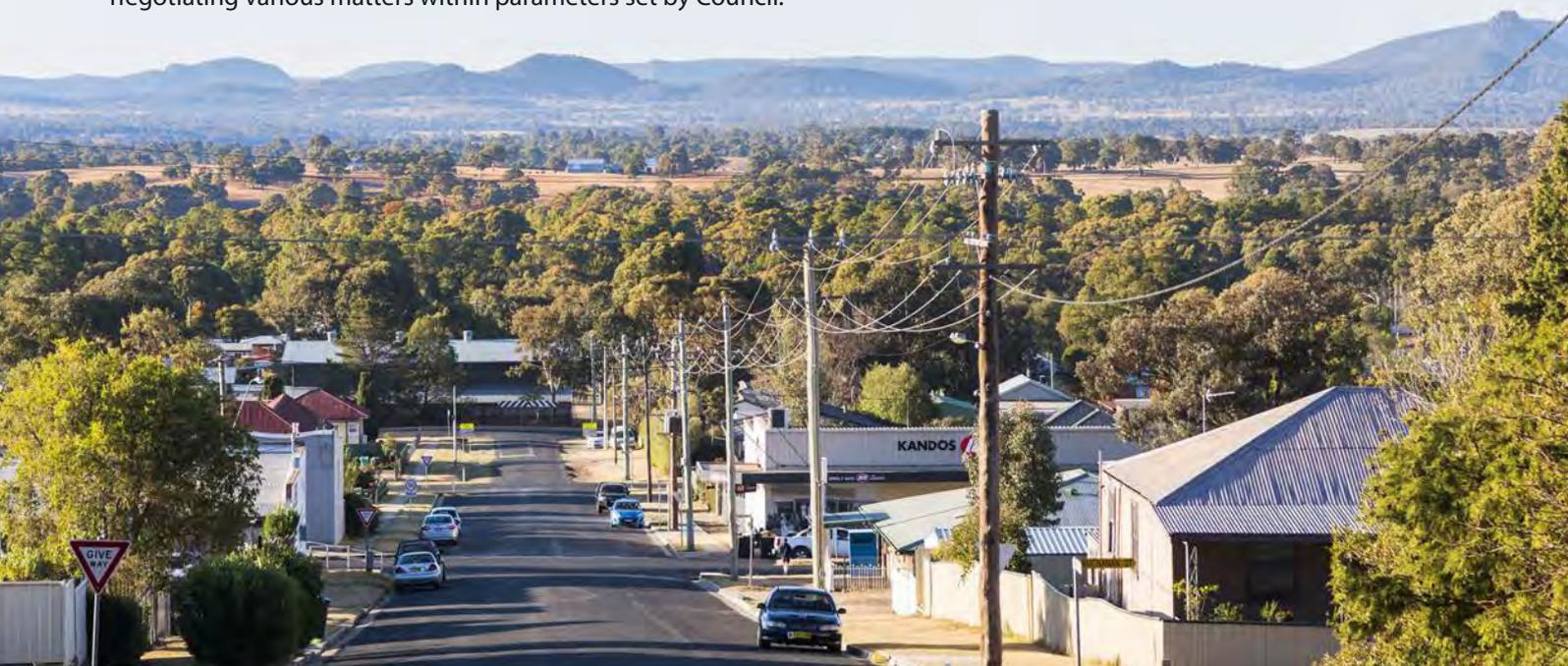
COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS

11 Ordinary Council meetings and 3 Extraordinary meeting were held between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021.

Elected Member	ORDINARY MEETINGS ATTENDED		EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS ATTENDED	
	Number	%	Number	%
Cr Des Kennedy – Mayor	10/11	91%	2/3	67%
Cr Sam Paine – Deputy Mayor	11/11	100%	2/3	67%
Cr Paul Cavalier	8/11	73%	1/3	33%
Cr Russell Holden	11/11	100%	2/3	67%
Cr Alex Karavas	11/11	100%	3/3	100%
Cr Esme Martens	10/11	91%	3/3	100%
Cr John O'Neill	10/11	91%	2/3	67%
Cr Peter Shelley	10/11	91%	3/3	100%
Cr Percy Thompson	11/11	100%	3/3	100%

DELEGATED DECISION MAKING

As provided for in the Local Government Act, the Council can delegate some of its decision making authority to the General Manager, allowing a more efficient operation in several areas such as enforcement of Council regulations and finalising or negotiating various matters within parameters set by Council.



Organisation Structure



MID-WESTERN REGIONAL COUNCIL

Des Kennedy

Mayor



Brad Cam

General Manager



Garry Hemsworth

Director, Operations

- Works
- Infrastructure Planning
- Water and Sewer
- Waste and Environment



Simon Jones

Director, Community

- Customer Services
- Recreational Services
- Major Projects
- Community Services
- Library Services



Julie Robertson

Director, Development

- Economic development
- Health and Building
- Statutory Planning
- Strategic Planning



Michele George

Executive Manager,
People & Performance

- WHS and Risk
- Business Improvement
- Return to Work
- Human Resources



Leonie Johnson

Chief Financial Officer

- Financial services
- Property and Revenue
- Procurement and Fleet
- Information and communications technology



Vision and Values



OUR VISION

A prosperous and progressive community we proudly call home.



OUR VALUES

Respect



We respect ourselves, our team mates and our organisation as a whole.

When we talk or write to each other we show respect by being positive, polite and truthful; really listening; responding politely; and providing honest feedback.

We never tolerate bullying and discrimination in the workplace.

Integrity



We are all accountable for our own actions and also for assisting and supporting our fellow workers.

We seek solutions, we don't cast blame.

We work for the community and we are proud to show our care for the place in which we live.

We are committed to action – we do what we say we will do.

We are honest with each other in everything we say and do, and we are committed to open, two-way communication.

Recognition



We are committed to a healthy, safe and constructive working environment where everyone's well-being is our major focus.

We work together to develop employment policies and practices that are adaptable to individual circumstances.

We celebrate our achievements and recognise that everyone's contribution is essential to this Council's success.

In supporting each other and working together we create the right environment in which we all can achieve our very best.

We seek continuous improvement both individually and collectively.

We admit our mistakes and focus on getting better.

We strive to achieve our personal best and be industry leaders.

About the Mid-Western Region

Over 25,000 people call the Mid-Western Region home.

One of regional NSW's fastest growing areas, the region is the gateway to the Central West and Far West regions of the state. Just over three hours drive from Sydney and Newcastle, it is easily accessible and centrally located to other major regional centres.

Gulgong, Kandos, Mudgee and Rylstone townships are alive with visitors and families. The region has open spaces, parks and sporting facilities for activities and a large number of events held each year. Local markets celebrate culture by way of local produce and artisan creativity.

A key feature of the region's economy is its diversity. Business and investment is driven by five major industry sectors – agriculture, retail, construction, tourism and mining.

Each of these industries continues to provide job opportunities. The quality and diversity of the local labour force provides the region with a competitive edge.

Whilst the current labour force provides access to a wide range of skills and education levels, the future growth expected in the region will continue to increase the demand for new skills and qualifications.

Skilled workers such as engineers, builders, tradespeople, childcare and health professionals are likely to be in highest demand in the next three to five years.

Visitors to the region experience a real country community with heart, soul and spirit. Locals love the place they call home and are happy to share the surroundings with 691,000 visitors each year.



<p>Major towns and centres</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Mudgee Gulgong Kandos Rylstone</p> 	<p>Major industries</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Agriculture Mining Tourism Retail Construction</p> 	<p>Competitive advantages</p> <p>.....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diverse and growing economic base ▪ Centrally located to Sydney and Newcastle and major regional centres in NSW ▪ Regular coach and air services ▪ Skilled workforce ▪ Strong business services sector ▪ Great lifestyle benefits ▪ Thriving tourism, arts and cultural sectors ▪ Sustainable water supply 
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Looking After Our Community

Key completed projects



Mudgee Arts Precinct

Glen Willow Stage 2 construction progress

All six fields including multi-purpose, junior rugby league, rugby union and cricket wickets were turfed and the Rugby Union amenities building erected. Electricity was upgraded to the site, light tower footings installed, and internal roads constructed as part of the \$18 million project.

Kandos-Rylstone preschool extension

A major extension of the preschool was completed, including a second learning space, new office, staff room and kitchen, visiting specialist room/meeting room storage room and additional toilets. The facility can now accommodate ten additional children each day and an extra staff member.

Community hall upgrades

Gulgong and Rylstone Memorial Halls received essential upgrades including internal and external painting, and roof and guttering repairs.

Rylstone Service Centre

The newly refurbished Rylstone Service Centre opened within the Rylstone Chambers building on Louee Street. The centre includes a small library and general customer services.

Bridge Club kitchen upgrade

The Mudgee Bridge Club kitchen at Mudgee Showground was refurbished in consultation with the club. As part of the project 200 metres of pathway and accessible car parking bays were installed at Mudgee Showground.

Liberty swing Installed

A Liberty Swing and shade sail was installed at Robertson Park, Mudgee giving children and adults in wheelchairs, the elderly and those with disabilities the chance to swing. This project was put forward as a Community Plan Proposal by a local resident.

Construction begins on pathway loop

Construction commenced on an 8km loop from the Mudgee CBD to the Putta Bucca Wetlands, returning via Ulan Road. The first stage of pathway installation from the wetlands to the Putta Bucca residential area was completed.

White Circle playground rebuilt

The playground was rebuilt after the former playground was destroyed by fire in a vandalism attack in 2019 and now features multiple slides, climbing wall, swing sets and shade sail.

Public art program

Three new additions were added to the Lawson Park Sculpture Walk following their selection at the annual Sculptures in the Garden event. This brings the collection total to 23 sculptures, displayed along the Cudgegong River in Mudgee, as well as others installed in Gulgong, Kandos and Rylstone.



LOOKING AFTER
OUR COMMUNITY

Protecting Our Natural Environment

Key completed projects



Sewer mains maintenance

Council's sewer mains maintenance program continued with works carried out across the network in the four main centres of Mudgee, Gulgong, Rylstone and Kandos.

Charbon Reservoir upgrades

Existing reservoir infrastructure was refurbished and site security upgraded as part of improvements to the Charbon Reservoir.

Flirtation Hill improvements and working group

Council established the Flirtation Hill Working Group to assist in the development of the site's master plan. A number of the site's walking tracks were also repaired.

Trees for bushfire recovery

Council partnered with Watershed Landcare to provide bushfire affected landholders with native trees as part of their recovery following cancellation of National Tree Day 2020 due to COVID-19. The 2019/20 summer bushfires destroyed 255,000 hectares in the Mid-Western Region.

Red Hill tree planting

Native trees were planted to help rejuvenate the Red Hill environment in Gulgong, and encourage growth and protection of the plant and animal species native to the area.



PROTECTING OUR
NATURAL
ENVIRONMENT

Building a Strong Local Economy

Key completed projects



Glen Willow Stadium, Mudgee

Young Entrepreneurs Summit online event
Council's annual Central West Young Entrepreneurs Summit was live-streamed for the first time. Forty-five local and regional businesses joined from a variety of industries including the tourism and accommodation sector, hospitality, retail, agriculture, professional development and real estate.

Flavours of Mudgee Spend and Sip promotion
Flavours of Mudgee 2020 was cancelled due to COVID-19. To encourage shopping and support local businesses, Council provided the 2020 Flavours of Mudgee souvenir wine glasses to its previous Flavours stallholders to use in a Spend and Sip promotion for the month of September.

Doctor Doctor completes final season
Council supported the fifth and final season of Channel Nine's Doctor Doctor production. The program has provided invaluable exposure for our region and has been broadcast in New Zealand, the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Norway.

Filming prospectus
Council published its Film Prospectus: *Filming in the Mid-Western Region* in print and online. The document provides potential filmmakers with a snapshot of locations, venues and opportunities. The Mid-Western Region has become an attractive location for productions due to its close proximity to Sydney. In 2020, Rylstone was used as a location for Hollywood feature film and remake of the Stephen King classic Children of the Corn.

Jobs website launched
Council launched an all-local employment website, mudgeeregionjobs.com.au. The online platform allows

businesses to list job vacancies, recruit for positions, and source potential employees at no cost. This project was part of a series of initiatives and activities to support local business.

Charity Shield 2021
A crowd of 6,840 watched the South Sydney Rabbitohs defeat the St George Illawarra Dragons 48-16 at Mudgee's Glen Willow Stadium on Saturday, 27 February. Council estimates from economic data that approximately \$1.49 million was spent in the region over the weekend. Council will host the 2022 and 2023 Charity Shield as part of a further two year partnership with the clubs.

Manly v Gold Coast, Glen Willow Stadium
A crowd of 6,380 saw the Manly Warringah Sea Eagles win against the Gold Coast Titans 36-0 at Glen Willow in April for the NRL Round 6. Council estimates from economic data that approximately \$1.3 million was spent in the region over the weekend.

Fermenta Festival
The inaugural Fermenta Festival was held in Rylstone and Kandos, featuring a day of workshops followed by an afternoon Twilight Picnic that was unfortunately cut short by a storm. More than 70 per cent of the 213 attendees were visitors to the region. The event was hosted by Council in partnership with Cementa and Mudgee Region Tourism.



**BUILDING A STRONG
LOCAL ECONOMY**

Connecting Our Region

Key completed projects



Hill End Road upgrade

Major safety upgrades continued on Hill End Road as part of the three year project to widen shoulders and install guard rails in selected locations along the 42km stretch between Grattai and Tambaroora. The project progressed to the Hargraves area and is expected to be completed by mid-2022.

Wollar Road upgrade

The three-year Wollar Road upgrade through the Mungahorn Gap National Park progressed to the second stage following completion of the first 1.6km section in the previous financial year. In addition to road widening and pavement improvements, Council upgraded the intersection with the Castle Rocks Trail car park.

Mudgee Airport runway upgrades

The airport's runway, taxiways and aircraft parking were renewed with an all new a reseal, as well as repairs and line marking.

Sealing program continued

More than \$10 million in road sealing works commenced throughout the region after Council secured State and Federal Government grant funding. Round one works commenced to seal 4.6km of Mebul Road and 1.2km of Pyramul Road, while 2km of Coxs Creek Road was completed along with 19km of Aarons Pass Road. Council secured a further \$4.8 million to complete sealing on an additional 9km of Coxs Creek Road, 5.8km of Botobolar Road and 2km of Lower Piambong Road.

Bylong Valley Way

Safety improvements and sealing works were completed at Braithwaites Corner on the Bylong Valley Way. This section of road has been the site of tragic accidents, including motorcycle fatalities.

Dixons Long Point Crossing

A Feasibility Study was undertaken into the proposed bridge crossing at Dixons Long Point in consultation with various stakeholders. A preferred option has been selected in a location 1.5km north of the current four wheel drive crossing due to reduced bridge length with flood immunity and fewer piers in the Macquarie River.

Guntawang Road upgrades

One and a half kilometres of safety improvements were completed around the intersection of the Castlereagh Highway and Guntawang Road including shoulder widening, additional sealing, tree removal, new signage and barriers.

Footpath upgrades

Council installed and upgraded a number of footpaths throughout the region as part of a major project to improve access. A total of 25 footpath projects, of varying sizes, commenced in Mudgee, Gulgong and Rylstone. Projects were selected on a priority basis as identified in Council's Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP).

Footbridge upgrade

The timber deck of the Ulan Road timber footbridge adjacent to Mudgee Racecourse, was replaced with a new more durable reinforced plastic mesh material. New balustrades were also installed as part of the works.



CONNECTING OUR
REGION

Good Government

Key completed projects



COVID-19 Rate Relief

Council continued to assist residents experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic by offering payment extensions on the August rates notice. Council also waived any interest charges that would normally accrue on outstanding payments for the period up until 30 September 2020.

Candidate Information Session

Council hosted three Candidate Information Sessions in 2021 in preparation for Local Government Elections that were subsequently postponed from September to December. Led by former Leichhardt Council Mayor and Councillor of more than 20 years, Marie Sheehan, the sessions were well attended and open to any member of the community interested in learning about Council and the role and responsibilities of its elected members.

NSW Planning Portal

Staff worked to migrate lodgement of Development Applications to the NSW Planning Portal as mandated by the NSW Government. Council established a dedicated Planning Kiosk at the Mudgee Customer Service Centre to make it as easy as possible for customers to lodge an application with the assistance of staff.

Pop-up recovery sessions

Bushfire affected residents and business owners had the opportunity to discuss their specific recovery needs in-person with Council's Bushfire Liaison Officer visiting Kandos Library one day a week during September.



GOOD
GOVERNMENT

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.

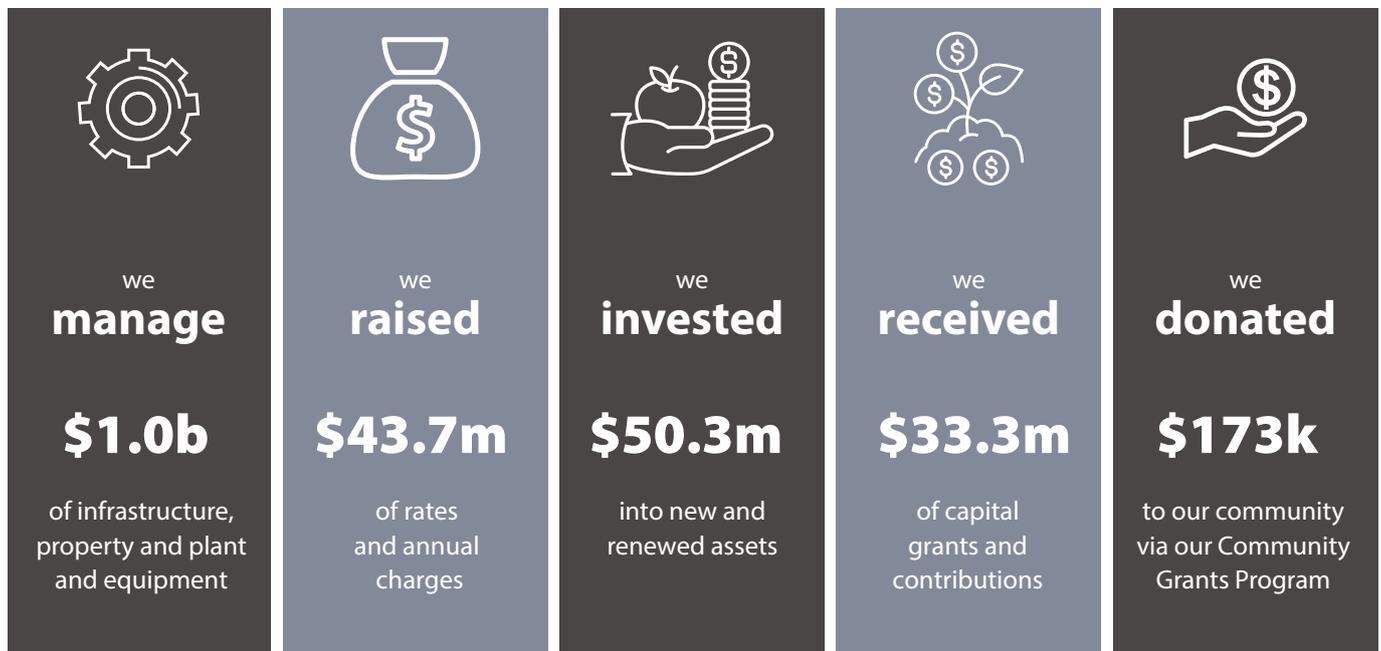
The plan represents an opportunity for Council and the community to strategically create and foster sustainable communities that reflect local values and aspirations. It allows the community to define and reconcile the economic, social, cultural and environmental priorities for the region.

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.

 <p>LOOKING AFTER OUR COMMUNITY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
 <p>PROTECTING OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
 <p>BUILDING A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
 <p>CONNECTING OUR REGION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
 <p>GOOD GOVERNMENT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1 Strong civic leadership 5.2 Good communications and engagement 5.3 An effective and efficient organisation



Progress on the Operational Plan and Delivery Program



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	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.



Looking After Our Community



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.

Provide comprehensive community support programs and services that embrace social justice, access and equity

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

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.

Provide customer focused library and information services

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.
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.

Explore funding opportunities for improved health services and work in partnership with Western Local Area Health Network to promote health projects

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.



Looking After Our Community

Strategy 1.1.3 Support networks, programs and facilities which promote health and well-being and encourage healthy lifestyles.

Provide financial assistance in accordance with Council's Community Grants Program Policy

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Support and implement programs which aim to reduce anti-social behaviour

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Maintain clean and attractive streets and public spaces where people feel safe

ACTION	COMMENTS
Regular street cleaning and litter collection in town centres	Council's street sweeping and town litter cleaning programs are progressing as scheduled.

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Work effectively with State Agency partners to maintain and enhance public safety

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.



Looking After Our Community

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.

Review of Development Control Plan

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Monitor employment and population growth

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Ongoing monitoring of land release and development

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

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Implement the Land Use Actions in the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Maintain and beautify civic open space and street access areas within towns and villages in the region

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.



Looking After Our Community

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.

Review asset management plans and underpin with financial strategy

ACTION	COMMENTS
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 sportsgrounds, parks, reserves and playgrounds across the region

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
Maintain and operate town and rural cemeteries in accordance with adopted service levels and policy requirements	Funeral services and maintenance of the cemeteries continue throughout the year in accordance with service levels and policy requirements.

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ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
Building upgrades and refurbishments as per Capital Works Program 2020/21	Capital works have been completed in line with the Capital Works program and allocated budgets.

Maintain and operate swimming pool centres across the region

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Provide youth representation through the Youth Council

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.



Looking After Our Community

Provide meaningful employment to members of the disabled community

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Arts and cultural events promotion

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

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Provision of meeting and exhibition space

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Public facilities to be accessible

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Protecting Our Natural Environment



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. Include biodiversity and heritage as key components in the development application process

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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. Work with the community and government agencies to identify and address the issues and mitigate impacts associated with mining

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Deliver projects which work towards protecting biodiversity and regeneration of native environment

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
Support Green Day	Green Day was cancelled by Landcare due to COVID-19.

Strategy 2.1.4 Control invasive plant and animal species.

Effective weeds management

ACTION	COMMENTS
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 2,400kms sprayed.

Collaborate with agencies to manage feral animals

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.



Protecting Our Natural Environment

Goal 2.2 Provide total water cycle management

Strategy 2.2.1 Identify and implement innovative water conservation and sustainable water usage management practices.

Encourage reduced water consumption through Best Practice Pricing

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Achieve NSW Government Best Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Identify and plan future maintenance, renewals and upgrades for Council's water supply infrastructure

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Support relevant agencies with implementation of regional plans

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Identify and plan future maintenance, renewals and upgrades for Council's sewerage treatment infrastructure

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
Implement Liquid Trade Waste Policy and Pricing as per 4 year rollout program	The program is now in the operational phase.



Protecting Our Natural Environment

Strategy 2.2.5 Provide a water and sewer network that balances asset conditions with available resources and community needs.

Identify and plan future maintenance, renewals and upgrades for Council’s stormwater assets

ACTION	COMMENTS
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 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.

Promote a philosophy of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Participate in regional procurement contracts for waste services that provided added value

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Build community awareness through environmental education

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Implement alternative energy and sustainable technologies in physical works and service delivery

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Building a Strong Local Economy



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.

Promote the region to target businesses that complement key local industries

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Work with Mudgee Region Tourism Inc (MRTI) to identify target markets and promote the region

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Work with business and industry groups to identify the main skills shortage areas

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.



Building a Strong Local Economy

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.

Provide brand leadership, market the region's competitive advantages and targeted marketing of investment opportunities

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Promote the development of infrastructure at the Mudgee Airport as an opportunity for business expansion in the aviation industry

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Lobby State and Federal Government for expanded health and education services

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

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

Strategy 3.2.4 Develop tools that simplify development processes and encourage high quality commercial and residential development.

Provide information to assist potential investors understand local development controls and assessment processes

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Work with lead agencies for employment to identify trends and discuss issues impacting employment

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Work with lead agencies for education in the region to identify opportunities for economic growth

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Connecting Our Region



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.

Work with the RMS to improve road safety

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
Facilitate the Local Traffic Committee	Regular Traffic Committee meetings were 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.

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

Strategy 4.1.2 Provide a road network that balances asset conditions with available resources and community needs.

Review the Roads Asset Management Plan

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.
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.



Connecting Our Region

Pursue additional funding for upgrading of roads infrastructure

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Support the continuation of commercial passenger services at Mudgee Airport

ACTION	COMMENTS
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 all current safety and security requirements.

Lobby for improved highway linkages along the Great Western Highway and Bells Line

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Pursue improved broadband and mobile coverage with Government and major service providers

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Implement the Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Examine opportunities to develop viable public transport options

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.



Goal 5.1 Strong civic leadership

Strategy 5.1.1 Provide clear strategic direction through the Community Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan

Ensure actions of the Operational Plan and Delivery Program are completed on time, on budget and meets performance criteria

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Ongoing review and enhancement of governance framework

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
Provide access to professional development programs for elected members	Access to professional development opportunities for Councillors were presented during the year for consideration.

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

Hold awareness sessions for potential candidates in the six months leading up to each Council election and ensure information packages are available

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Continue to lobby State and Federal Government on all matters that are of relevance to the region

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Publish monthly editions of Community News

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.



Operate and maintain a community works request system that provides timely and accurate information and responses

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Seek feedback on policy development and local issues

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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 yoursay.midwestern.nsw.gov.au , 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.

Benchmark Council's service delivery against relevant organisations

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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 2021/22.

Strategy 5.3.2 Provide a positive and supportive working environment for employees.

Attract, retain and develop a skilled workforce

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Conduct biennial employee opinion survey

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Monitor and review Council's policies and strategies

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.



Provide long term financial sustainability through sound financial management

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.
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.

Comply with relevant accounting standards, taxation legislation and other financial reporting obligations

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Provide effective and efficient internal support functions

ACTION	COMMENTS
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.

Enhance the information systems that support delivery of Council activities

ACTION	COMMENTS
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

ACTION	COMMENTS
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 (LTFFP)	Financial data within Asset Management Plans (AMPs) has been updated, in line with Long Term Financial Plan (LTFFP) data. Progress continues as AMPs are scheduled for review. Further work was completed making capital reporting in the LTFFP more accurate for the 2020/21 LTFFP.

Managing the Money

Mid-Western Regional Council receives money in the form of rates on residential, business, mining and farmland properties; interest on investments; government grants and subsidies; contributions from major industry; annual charges for services like water, sewer and waste; and user charges and fees.

Major cash outflows include construction of new assets and renewal of existing infrastructure; labour; materials and contractor payments; insurances; and contributions to local and regional bodies.

The following information provides a brief summary of Council's 2020/21 financial statements in a format that is readily understood by the community, customers, employees and other stakeholders.

INCOME

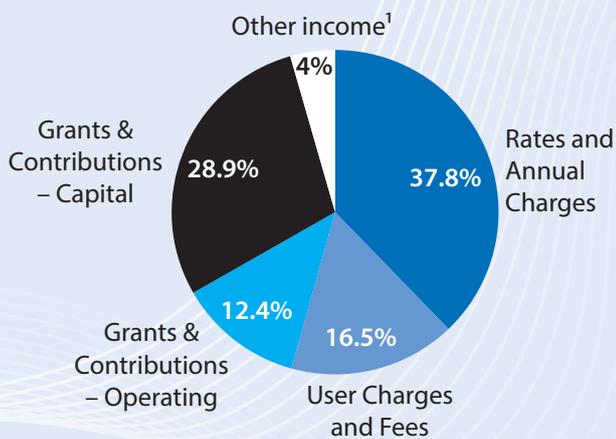
This year, Council's primary source of income was from Rates and Annual Charges of \$43.7 million or 37.8% of total income (2019/20: \$39.2 million or 38.5%).

Council generates a significant portion of revenue from fees and charges associated with the provision of services and facilities such as swimming pools; contract works; planning and building regulation; water consumption; and waste management.

This amounted to \$19 million or 16.5% in 2020/21 (2019/20: \$16.4 million or 16.1%).

Grants and contributions from Government and Industry continue to be an important funding source for provision of services to, and maintenance and construction of infrastructure for the community. Council received a total of \$47.7 million or 41.3% in grants and contributions in 2020/21. (2019/20: \$40.3 million or 39.4%).

TOTAL INCOME 2020/21 **\$116M**

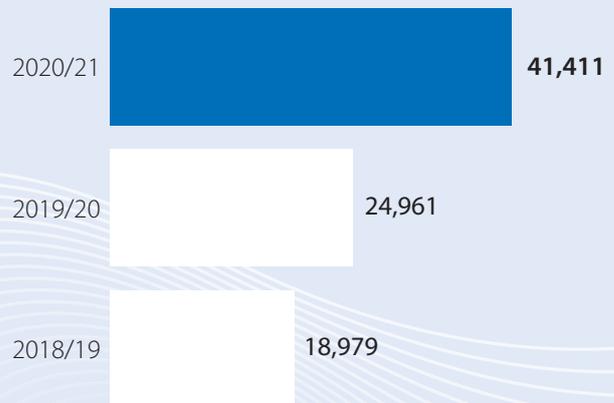


¹ Other income: Interest and investment income, other revenues and other income.

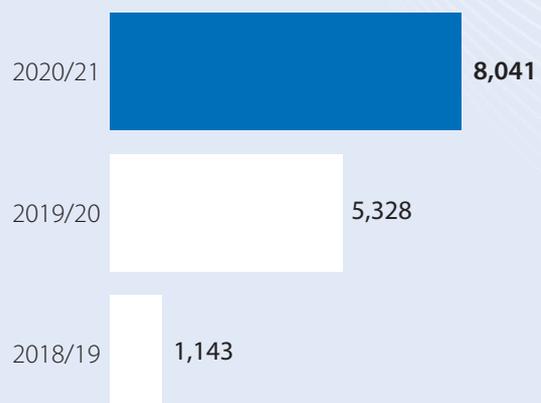
OPERATING RESULT

Council's operating result this year was \$41.4 million, this result is an indirect measure of Council's efficiency and ability to successfully cover its operating expenditure within operating revenue. (2019/20: operating result was \$24.9 million).

OPERATING RESULT (\$000)



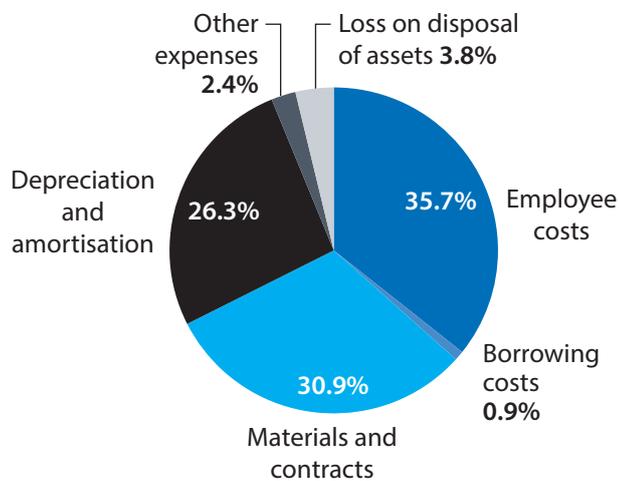
OPERATING RESULT BEFORE CAPITAL (\$000)



Council continues to invest as much money as possible into the renewal of existing infrastructure to ensure it is in a satisfactory and serviceable condition.

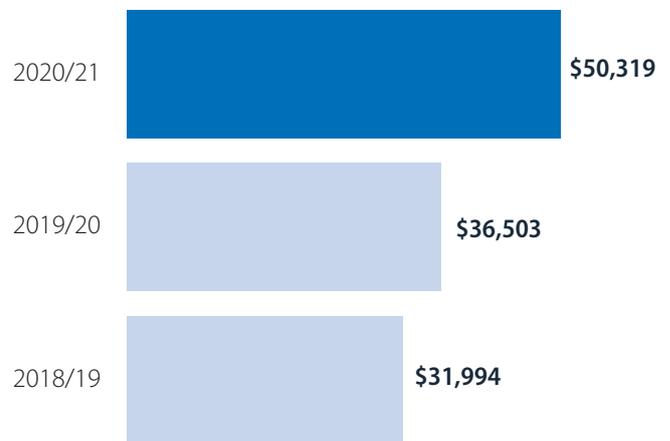
Council also continues to invest in new infrastructure to meet the demands of a growing community. Council delivered \$50.3 million of capital expenditure this year (2019/20: \$36.5 million).

OPERATING EXPENDITURE BEFORE CAPITAL



TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE **\$74M**

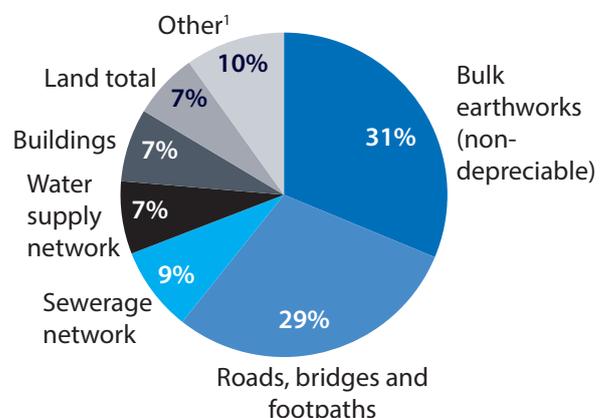
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE (\$'000)



ASSET MANAGEMENT

Council owns and maintains over half a billion dollars' worth of infrastructure including roads, parks, buildings, swimming pools, sports grounds, stormwater drainage, water and sewer networks, footpaths, buildings, and waste management facilities. These assets, which are used by the community every day, deteriorate over time, and require ongoing maintenance and renewal or replacement to keep them in a satisfactory condition.

INFRASTRUCTURE, PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT 2020/21



TOTAL WRITTEN DOWN VALUE **\$1.0B**

¹ Other: Stormwater drainage, plant and equipment, pools, open space etc

Performance Measures

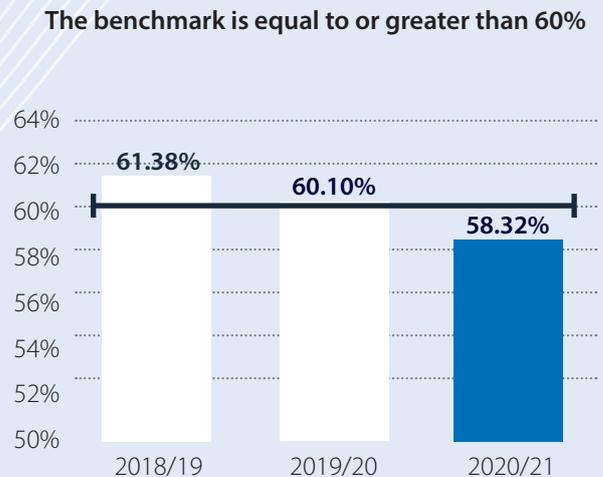
OPERATING PERFORMANCE RATIO

This ratio measures operating expenditure against operating revenue. It is important to distinguish that this ratio is focusing on operating performance and hence capital grants and contributions, fair value adjustments and reversal of revaluation decrements are excluded.



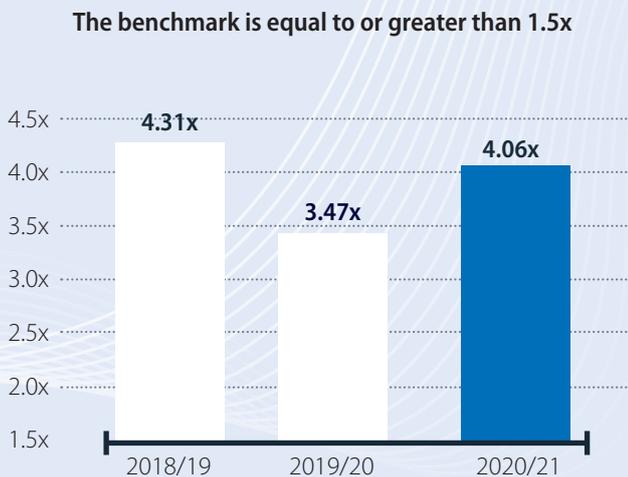
OWN SOURCE OPERATING REVENUE

This ratio measures fiscal flexibility. It is the degree of reliance on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions. Council's financial flexibility is improved by a higher level of own source revenue.



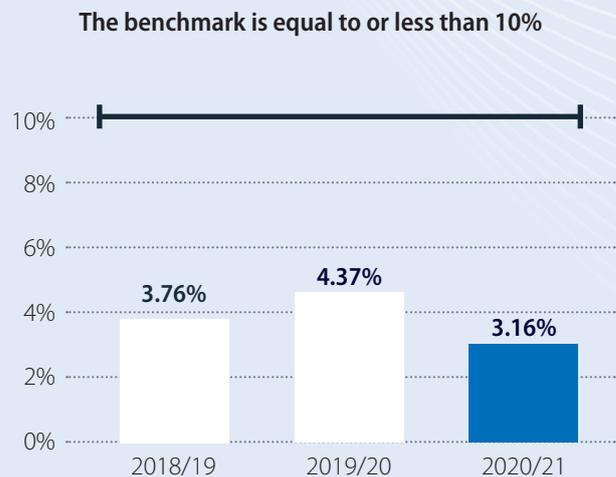
UNRESTRICTED CURRENT RATIO

This ratio is designed to assess the adequacy of working capital and its ability to satisfy obligations in the short term for the unrestricted activities of Council.



RATES, ANNUAL CHARGES, INTEREST AND EXTRA CHARGES OUTSTANDING PERCENTAGE

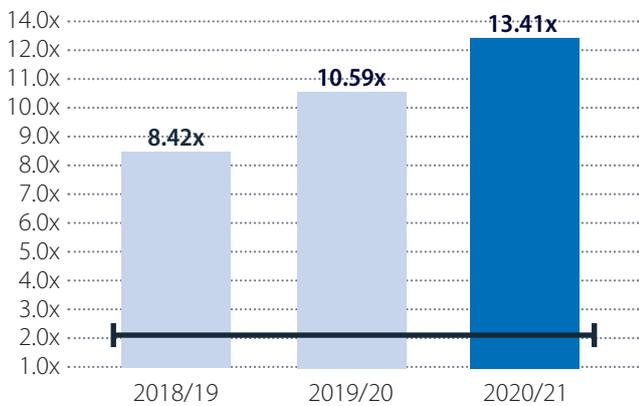
This ratio is designed to assess the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on Council's liquidity and the adequacy of recovery efforts.



DEBT SERVICE COVER RATIO

This ratio measures the availability of operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments.

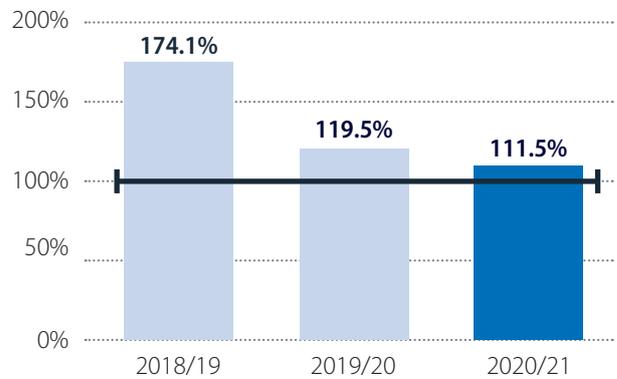
The benchmark for this ratio is greater than 2.0



BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE ASSET RENEWAL RATIO

This ratio assesses the rate at which assets are being renewed against the rate at which they are depreciating.

The benchmark for this ratio is 100% or greater

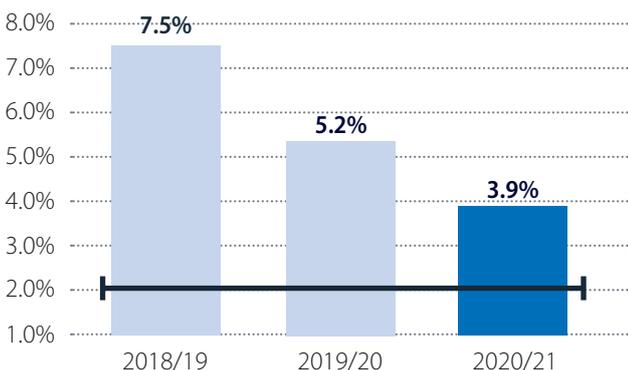


INFRASTRUCTURE BACKLOG RATIO

This ratio shows the backlog proportion against the total value of Council's infrastructure.

**There remains significant contention across the local government industry concerning both the benchmark being too low and the use of written-down value in the calculation itself.*

A benchmark of <2% was indicated as part of the Fit for the Future self-assessment tool



ASSET MAINTENANCE RATIO

This ratio compares actual versus required annual asset maintenance. A ratio above 1.0 indicates that Council is investing enough funds within the year to stop the infrastructure backlog from growing.

The benchmark for this ratio is 100% or greater



Statutory Information

Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

References to 'section' refer to the Local Government Act 1993, while references to 'clause' refer to the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005.

Council's general reporting requirements are set out in Section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 (Part 9, Division 7).

To access copies of the Acts and Regulations visit legislation.nsw.gov.au

AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORTS

Local Government Act 1993 – Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Section 428 A

A summary of Council's financial performance for the year can be found in the 'Managing the Money' (page 53) and 'Performance Measures' (page 55) sections of this report.

A full copy of the Financial Reports are available on Council's website.

Hard copies of financial statements are available from Council upon request.

END OF TERM REPORT

Local Government Act 1993 – Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Section 428 (2)

A detailed review of the progress against the Delivery Program action items is provided on pages 20–51.

A full copy of the End of Term report is available on Council's website.

RATES AND CHARGES WRITTEN OFF

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Clause 132

During the year Council abandoned \$730,575 in rates and charges (including postponed rates).

Pensioner rebate	\$724,164
Postponed rates	\$4,763
Other rates and charges	\$1,648

COUNCILLOR TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428(4)(b), Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 186

No Councillor undertook professional development during the reporting period which was the 5th year of the extended term. Extensive restrictions were imposed on Councillors by way of COVID 19 public health orders during this period.

OVERSEAS VISITS

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428(4)(b), Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(a)

Council is required to disclose details of any overseas visits undertaken by any Council officers including Councillors and staff.

No overseas visits were undertaken by any Council officers including Councillors and staff in 2020/21.

COUNCILLOR EXPENSES AND PROVISION OF FACILITIES

Local Government Act 1993 – Section 428, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217(1)(a1)

The Local Government Remuneration Tribunal is constituted under Sections 239 and 241 of the Local Government Act 1993 and is responsible for categorising Councils, County Councils and Mayoral Offices to determine the amounts of fees to be paid to Councillors, members of County Councils and Mayors in each category.

The Mayor and Councillors receive an annual fee established by Council and set within the approved range by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.

The Mayor's Fee for 2020/21 was \$44,250 plus a Councillor Fee of \$20,280. The Mayor served the entire 2020/21 financial year.

The Councillor's Fee for 2020/21 was \$20,280 for each Councillor who served the entire 2020/21 financial year.

COUNCILLOR EXPENDITURE 2020/21

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(a1)(i-viii)

	Councillor Fees	Mayoral Fees	Council meeting expenses ¹	Seminar expenses ²	Provision of Vehicle	Memberships and subscriptions	Misc expenses ³	Office equipment ⁴	Operating Lease ⁵	Total
General Operations	-	-	7,338.49	-	-	31,021.96	1,370.96	114.03	-	39,845.44
Cr Cavalier	20,280.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,399.86	-	21,679.86
Cr Holden	20,280.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,220.09	-	21,500.09
Cr Karavas	20,280.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	383.68	-	20,663.68
Cr Kennedy	20,280.00	44,250.00	-	426.92	6,141.18	-	169.16	1,777.94	-	73,045.20
Cr Martens	20,280.00	-	1,613.28	1,384.48	-	-	10.87	1,140.49	-	24,429.12
Cr O'Neill	20,280.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	254.01	-	20,534.01
Cr Paine	20,280.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	221.29	-	20,501.29
Cr Shelley	20,280.00	-	-	1,647.36	-	-	-	1,382.27	454.31	23,763.94
Cr Thompson	20,280.00	-	-	499.20	-	-	-	561.29	-	21,340.49
Total	182,520.00	44,250.00	8,951.77	3,957.96	6,141.18	31,021.96	1,550.99	8,454.95	454.31	287,303.12

¹ Council meeting expenses (accommodation, travel and meals)

² Conferences, seminars and representational/lobbying expenses (accommodation, travel and meals)

³ Miscellaneous expenses (meals, sundries, stationery etc)

⁴ Provision of office equipment, such as laptop computer and telephones

⁵ Operating Lease payments

No expenses were incurred for the provision of care for a child, or an immediate family member of a Councillor to allow the Councillor to undertake his or her civic functions.

No overseas or interstate visits were undertaken by elected members in 2020/21.

CONTRACTS AWARDED

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(a2)

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and Council's Procurement Policy, Council calls for tenders for the supply of various goods and services where the estimated spend under that contract exceeds \$150,000. The requirement to tender excludes the purchase or sale of land; purchases at public auction; contracts for employees of Council; purchase of goods and services under State Government or Commonwealth procurement contracts; emergency contracts; or where because of extenuating circumstances, remoteness of locality or the unavailability of competitive or reliable tenderers, Council decides by resolution (which states the reasons for the decision) that a satisfactory result would not be achieved by inviting tenders.

The following contracts were awarded during 2020/21:

Contractor	Goods / Services Provided	Amount payable under the contract (ex GST)
J Hutchinson Pty Ltd	Renovation and construction of Art Gallery and Tourist Information Centre	\$6,422,812.73
Buildique Pty Ltd	Mudgee Valley Caravan Park Cabin Relocation and General Works	\$143,555.19
Evergreen	Construction of Glen Willow Stage 2 Playing Fields	\$3,860,732.84
Custom Commercial Services Pty Ltd	Supply of Debt Management and Recovery Services - Rates, General Debtors and Water Usage Charges	\$240,000 for 20 month period
Fulton Hogan Industries Pty Ltd	Mudgee Airport Reseal	\$726,351.40
Renascent Regional Pty Ltd	Provision of construction of Glen Willow Rugby Union Clubhouse	\$2,586,222.64
D & C Powerlines Pty Ltd	Supply and install new substation for Stage 2 Glen Willow	\$186,500.00
PJL Constructions - Complete Mine Services & Solutions	Pathway and Refuge Pedestrian Works	\$385,857.87
Essential Energy	Contribution to LED Conversion of Street Lights	\$899,783.64
Manly Warringah Sea Eagles	NRL Manly Home Game - Glen Willow Stadium	CONFIDENTIAL
REES Electrical	Supply and installation of field lighting - Glen Willow Stage 2	\$1,593,330.00
Simply Energy	Contestable Site Retail Energy Agreement	\$394,483.64
Adaptive Pty Ltd ITF Trust T/A Dezin	Design and Construct Mudgee Showground Grandstand	\$695,350.00
Hunter H2O	Supply and Installation upgrade of PLC Gulgong WTP	\$225,888.00
Wollar Solar Development Pty Ltd	Voluntary Planning Agreement	\$200,000.0
F.A.S.T Fire Protection	Provision of Fire Services	\$300,000 approximate
Adaptive Pty Ltd ITF Trust T/A Dezin	Construction of amenities building at Billy Dunn Oval Gulgong	\$295,967.00

LEGAL EXPENSES

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(a3)

Council expended \$420,735 on legal costs during 2020/21. A total of \$252,314 related to the cost of obtaining legal advice or opinion in relation to various matters, and also includes the amounts incurred by Council in relation to legal proceedings as listed below.

Matter	Amount (ex GST)	Status
LEC Case 2020/342147 – Development Application decision appeal	\$43,229.70	Proceeding
Supreme Court/District Court/Local Court – Impounding of Alpaca	\$100,121.99	Proceeding

In addition, Council expended \$168,422 during the period in recovering outstanding rates and charges. These costs are debited as a charge against individual rate assessments. Council recovered \$108,745 of such costs during the period.

STATEMENT OF PROPOSED CHARGES FOR THE CARRYING OUT OF WORK ON PRIVATE LAND

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(a4)

By agreement with owners or occupiers of private land, Council carried out works such as paving and roadmaking, traffic control for private events and water, sewerage and drainage connections.

Council undertook private works in 2020/21 to the value of \$105,608 resulting in a profit of \$44,884. This represents a profit margin of 42.5%.

No subsidies were provided, and all work was intended to be carried out on a for profit basis in accordance with Council's Private Works Policy.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 356, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(a5)

The total amount contributed or otherwise granted by Council under Section 356 of the Local Government Act, 1993 was \$514,135.

Significant contributions are listed below.

Recipient	Amount
Housing Plus (Crisis Accommodation)	\$85,000
COVID-19 Clinic – Fee waiver for Showground hire	\$55,000
Pelican Airline Air Service	\$71,436
The Community Charity Shop, Kandos	\$60,000

DELEGATES TO EXTERNAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER BODIES

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(a6)

During 2020/21 Council resolved the delegates to external committees and other bodies.

These committees provide advice and feedback to Council on key issues that impact on the residents of the Mid-Western Regional Council LGA.

These are:

- Cudgong Bushfire Management Committee
- Rural Fire Service District Liaison Committee
- Mudgee Region Tourism Inc
- Ulan Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee
- Wilpinjong Coal Community Consultative Committee
- Moolarben Coal Community Consultative Committee
- Charbon Colliery & Inglenook Community Consultative Committee
- Western Joint Regional Planning Panel
- Murray Darling Association
- Local Traffic Committee
- Bowdens Silver Project Community Consultative Committee
- Crudine Ridge Wind Farm Consultative Committee
- Orana Arts
- Public Libraries NSW

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC)

Councillor Representative: Cr O'Neill

This committee was created under section 428A of the Local Government Amendment (Governance and Planning) Act 2016, to review a variety of Council's operations, such as risk management, fraud control and governance etc. It will also provide information to Council to assist with improvement of these functions.

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(a6)

These committees are established by Council to exercise specific functions. They comprise of local community members and Council representatives. Both these committees also provide advice and feedback to Council on key issues.

For 2020/21 there were 12 Advisory Committees operating within the region. Further information on these committees, including minutes and terms of reference, can be found on Council's website.

Australia Day Selection Committee

Councillor Representative: Mayor, (Cr Kennedy), Deputy Mayor (Cr Paine), Cr Shelley

The Australia Day Selection Committee selects the recipients of Council's annual Australia Day Awards.

Botobolar Community Committee

Councillor Representative: Cr O'Neill

This committee assists Council in community engagement and events, and maintenance of the grounds for the rural fire shed.

Cultural Development Committee

Councillor Representative: Cr Paine

The Cultural Development Committee provides advice to Council on the implementation of recommendations from the Cultural Plan.

Gulgong Memorial Hall Committee

Councillor Representative: Cr Thompson

The Gulgong Memorial Hall Committee assists Council with the management and promotion of the Gulgong Memorial Hall.

Gulgong Sports Council Sub Committee

Councillor Representative: Cr Thompson

The Gulgong Sports Council Sub Committee assists Council to manage active recreational facilities in Gulgong.

Mid-Western Regional Council Access Committee

Councillor Representative: Cr Karavas, Cr Paine

The Mudgee & Gulgong Access Committee and the Rylstone & Kandos Access Committee merged during this financial year to create the MWRC Access Committee. This committee provides advice to Council on matters relating to accessibility in the Mudgee, Gulgong, Rylstone and Kandos areas.

Mid-Western Regional Council Heritage Committee

Councillor Representative: Cr Paine, Cr Holden

The Heritage Committee advises Council about the preservation and enhancement of items and places within the Mid-Western Region that are of heritage significance.

Mid-Western Regional Youth Council

Councillor Representative: Cr Karavas, Cr Paine, Cr Holden

The Mid-Western Regional Youth Council provides consultation with and advocacy for youth.

Mudgee Showground Management Committee

Councillor Representative: Cr Karavas, Cr Holden

The Mudgee Showground Management Committee assists Council to manage the showground facility.

Mudgee Sports Council Sub Committee

Councillor Representative: Cr O'Neill

The Mudgee Sports Council Sub Committee assists Council to manage active recreational facilities in Mudgee.

Red Hill Committee

Councillor Representative: Cr Thompson, Cr Cavalier

The Red Hill Committee provides advice to Council on the development of a precinct master plan, and management of the site.

Rylstone and Kandos Sports Council Sub Committee

Councillor Representative: Cr Shelley

The Rylstone and Kandos Sports Council Sub Committee assists Council to manage active recreational facilities in Rylstone and Kandos.

STATEMENT OF CONTROLLING INTEREST

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(a7)

Council does not hold a controlling interest in any company, partnership, trust, joint venture or syndicate.

STATEMENT OF PARTICIPATION – CORPORATIONS, PARTNERSHIPS, CO-OPERATIVES, JOINT VENTURES, SYNDICATES OR OTHER BODIES

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(a8)

Council was a party to the following partnerships, Co-operatives, Joint Ventures and other bodies throughout 2020/21:

- State Cover
- Orana Regional Organisation of Councils
- Orana Joint Organisation
- Mudgee Region Tourism Inc
- Orana Water Utilities Alliance (OWUA)

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(a9)

Council is committed to the vision of fostering a progressive and prosperous community we proudly call home. We want to ensure that we encourage a culture that is supportive of Equal Employment (EEO) Principles in the workplace as well as having a diverse and inclusive workforce with a collection of skills, experiences and perspectives that is reflective of the community we serve.

As an organisation, Council is committed to the following EEO Principles as outlined in the Local Government Act 1993 (section 344)

- to eliminate and ensure the absence of discrimination in employment on the grounds of race, sex, marital or domestic status and disability in councils
- to promote equal employment for women, members of racial minorities and persons with disabilities in councils

We aim to provide an environment where employees and others in the workplace are treated fairly with respect, and are free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and bullying.

We aim to ensure that when employment decisions are made, they are based on merit, not on irrelevant attributes or characteristics that an individual may possess. We never tolerate bullying and discrimination in the workplace.

The Council aims to ensure that when employment decisions are made, they are based on merit, not on irrelevant attributes or characteristics that an individual may possess. The Council also aims to create a work environment, which promotes good working relationships.

In order to achieve our objective, Mid-Western Regional Council will:

- Develop and implement an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Plan
- Incorporate Council's core values of respect, integrity and recognition and the principles of diversity, equality and merit into all relevant policies and procedures
- Base all selection decisions on merit and the individual's ability to meet the requirements of the position
- Provide training and development that is consistent with the principles of equity and that supports Council's EEO objectives
- Provide a workplace free from bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Promote EEO and workplace diversity throughout Council to ensure that every employee is aware of and understands Council's policies on EEO related matters
- Provide those who work at Council with the Anti-Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, which provides guidance on what is acceptable behaviour and establishes what may constitute discrimination, vilification, harassment and bullying at work
- Provide effective mechanisms to resolve complaints

The achievements for 2020 – 2021

- **Position Descriptions**
 - Reviewed position descriptions for new and vacant positions to ensure that essential and desirable criteria are non-discriminatory
- **Communication and Awareness Raising**
 - Ensured all staff involved with recruitment and selection processes are trained in merit based selection and new staff complete the online learning module

- The Anti-Discrimination & Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, Workplace Bullying Policy, Workplace Environment Statement and Code of Conduct are accessible on Council's Intranet and given to new employees
- An overview of EEO, Discrimination and harassment is included in Council's induction program. Wherever possible, all staff attend induction within three months of commencement with Council

■ Training

- Refresher training presented to all current Managers, Supervisors and recruiting panel members on the importance of Equal Employment objectives and Anti-Discrimination policy
- We reviewed training needs to align with Council's capability framework to ensure all staff have access to training opportunities

■ Recruitment and Selection

- Reviewed and monitored Council's recruitment procedures to ensure compliance with EEO principles and merit based recruitment
- Ensured all advertisements for vacant positions include Council's commitment to EEO and workplace diversity and use non-discriminatory language.
- Development of standardised interview question template to ensure merit based selection criteria and EEO principles are followed

■ EEO Target Groups

- Women: 2020-2021 financial year saw Council maintain the level of women joining in comparison to the previous year
- Carers: Ensured that employees with carer responsibilities were provided with the provision of flexible working arrangements whilst ensuring operational needs and service delivery is met
- People with a Disability: Ensured ongoing support and commitment to the recruitment and employment of people with disabilities

SENIOR STAFF

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217 (1)(b-c)(i-v)

Council's organisation structure included four Senior Staff positions for 2020/21. Those positions were:

- General Manager
- Director Community

- Director Development
- Director Operations

The remuneration package for the General Manager totalled \$349,799, and included:

Salary component	\$288,968
Bonuses	NIL
Superannuation component	\$29,920
Non-cash benefits	\$23,558
Fringe Benefits Tax on non-cash benefits	\$7,353

The combined remuneration packages for all Directors for 2020/21 totalled \$658,015, and included:

Salary component	\$519,032
Bonuses	NIL
Superannuation component	\$65,597
Non-cash benefits	\$57,269
Fringe Benefits Tax on non-cash benefits	\$16,115

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(e)

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

COASTAL PROTECTION SERVICES

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(e1)

Council has not levied an annual charge for coastal protection services during the year.

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 428A(1)

A snapshot of the State of Environment report is provided as part of this report. A full copy of the State of Environment report can be found on Council's website midwestern.nsw.gov.au

CAPITAL WORKS PROJECTS

OLG Capital Expenditure Guidelines

Council has completed a capital expenditure review in accordance with the NSW OLG Capital Expenditure Guidelines for the below projects.

\$000	2020/21 Budget	2020/21 Actuals	Project Status at 30 June 2021
Glen Willow Stage 2	10,948,467	9,758,432	<p>Commencing in 2019 this project involves the senior rugby union facilities, multi-purpose playing fields, junior rugby league facilities and new access roads, bridge, pathway and parking. The total project cost is \$17.35 million and 100% funded by grants from State and Federal governments.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the project has another 7 months before completion. The project continues to progress well with significant works planned over the next 7 months, in line with the signing of contracts for the construction of the Rugby Union building and the field construction.</p> <p>The major achievement to date has been the completion of the multipurpose fields and the Rugby Union fields 1 and 2.</p>
Mudgee Art Gallery and Cultural Precinct	7,430,952	6,908,293	<p>Commencing in 2019 this project involves the refurbishment of the existing building at 90 Market Street and construction of a new building. The completed gallery includes gallery spaces for permanent and visiting collections, tourism office, art store, sculpture garden, café, and workshop space. The Cultural Precinct provides for the gallery/tourism facility as well as the cultural workshop/meeting room building and associated car parking, pathways and landscaped areas.</p> <p>The project was completed prior to the end of the financial year.</p> <p>The total project cost is \$8.8 million funded by \$5.3 million in grants from State and Federal governments.</p>
Solar Farm Initiative	448,200	121,082	<p>Commencing in 2020 this project involves the construction and ownership of the 5MW solar array to supply all of Council's energy demands with any excess to be used to support local businesses with affordable energy.</p> <p>The total project cost is \$8.93 million funded through \$4 million in borrowings, \$4.7 million in internally restricted reserves and \$183 thousand through unrestricted cash.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the project will be completed by March 2022. The project continues to progress well with construction works planned to begin by the end of 2021.</p>

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE DISABILITY INCLUSION PLAN

Disability Inclusion Act 2014 - Section 13(1)

Supporting an **inclusive workforce**

Action	Expected outcome	Key stakeholders	Reporting	2020/21 Progress report
Facilitate opportunities for people with disability or volunteer within Council	Increased diversity of Council workforce	People with disability	Workforce strategy	Volunteer opportunities exist within Council's Meals on Wheels and Community Transport services. In the past, people with disability have opted to volunteer with the Meals on Wheels service and continue to be welcome to do so. Volunteers from the local Rotary Clubs also assist with the facilitation of monthly movies at Mudgee Town Hall Cinema.
Engage with local disability service providers to identify strategies to enhance employment opportunities for people with a disability	Increase knowledge sharing between Council and local disability service providers.	People with disability	Annual report	Council teams work with local disability service providers in terms of negotiating supported employment opportunities and access to Council auspiced Community Services.

Statutory Information

Providing **effective and efficient** governance and leadership

Action	Expected outcome	Key stakeholders	Reporting	2020/21 Progress report
Review and amend the Access Committee's Terms of Reference to broaden its focus and purpose	Access Committee is provided with Terms of Reference that clearly outlines Access Committee's purpose, roles, responsibilities and processes to Council and the community. This will not be exclusive to issues of physical access.	Council/Access Committees	Updated Terms of Reference	The Access Committee Terms of Reference were updated and endorsed by Council at its September 2018 meeting. The Access Committee also participated in the preparation and reviews of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan.
Enhance community and visibility between Access Committees and Council	Provide Access Committees with more visibility about Council's decision-making processes.	Council/Access Committees	Updated Terms of Reference	Council's Access Committee that meets monthly to discuss and provide advice to Council on operational and strategic issues affecting physical access and inclusion for all residents and visitors to the region. The Committee has ongoing interactions with Council staff across various fields of responsibility.
Support better collaboration between Advisory (355) Committees	Improved collaboration between Advisory Committees for youth, recreation and inclusion so that all Council Advisory (355) Committees have a disability inclusion agenda.	Council/Advisory Committees/Access Committees	DIAP 2020	Disability inclusion is discussed where appropriate and relevant amongst Council staff responsible for its various section 355 committees.

Supporting the community **to promote and celebrate diversity and inclusion**

Action	Expected outcome	Key stakeholders	Reporting	2020/21 Progress report
As appropriate, incorporate disability awareness and inclusion across key Council activities and events	Encourage outreach, awareness and education about disability. Encourage people with disability to interact, showcase their talents and ability alongside people without disability.	Community/People with disability/Disability service providers	Annual report	Events and activities facilitated by Council's Community Development and Youth Services Officers welcome participation by a broad range of community members and do not discriminate against people with disability. Council's libraries work with local disability services and provide regular craft activities for people with disability. Council also provided workshop to people with disability for its annual community art competition and exhibition. Regular interagency meetings and communications also promote disability awareness and opportunities (such as grant funding and access to the NDIS) for people with disability. Council also collaborates with Rotary clubs to facilitate monthly accessible movie screenings for local disability service providers' participants.

Action	Expected outcome	Key stakeholders	Reporting	2020/21 Progress report
Establish collaboration between Council's Access Committees and all Council departments	Cross collaboration and education of Council staff. Increased understanding of accessibility and inclusion in all Council areas.	All of Council/ Community	Annual report	Internal staff training includes topics such as anti-discrimination and disability inclusion. Awareness and inclusion is also discussed between Council staff where relevant and appropriate.
Increase avenues for young people to support and promote an inclusive and diverse community	Council seeks to include initiatives within programs and events that enable young people to be involved in activities that promote disability inclusion.	Youth/ Community	Annual report	<p>In the past, Council proudly has supported initiatives such as annual Disability Inclusion Sports Awards, which includes the category 'Junior Athlete with a Disability Sportsmanship Award'. This did not proceed this year due to the global pandemic.</p> <p>A workshop was facilitated by Council staff with a local disability service to encourage and facilitate its clients to participate in an annual art competition and exhibition.</p> <p>Council partners with local Rotary Clubs to facilitate monthly movies at the Mudgee Town Hall Cinema and sessions are run specifically for disability support services to bring their clients and carers, if this is the preferred option to public screenings coordinated each month.</p>

Council **actively promotes meaningful communication and engagement** with the community

Action	Expected outcome	Key stakeholders	Reporting	2020/21 Progress report
Council seeks to provide local services and businesses with information on how to appropriately engage with people with disability and how their business could be more inclusive	Businesses are aware of Council's commitment and resources to assist with disability inclusion.	Local businesses	Annual report	<p>In the past, Council has been a proud supporter of local business 'Clock Awards', which includes awards for excellence in community services and disability access. Council also proudly supports initiatives such as annual Disability Inclusion Sports Awards, which includes the categories 'Disability Inclusive Sports Club Award' and 'Disability Inclusive Sports Volunteer Award'.</p> <p>Council has a broad range of accessible facilities and services, including local swimming pools with accessibility ramps and accessible change facilities, and accessible parks and playgrounds. This past financial year shade sails were installed over a liberty swing in Mudgee to increase its usability throughout summer months.</p>
Investigate the opportunity to provide a 'one-stop-shop' on Council's website that provides people with disability access to essential information e.g. accessible and appropriate services and facilities	Improved processes for engaging with people with a disability.	Council/People with disability	Annual report	<p>Accessible services for which Council is responsible are listed on Council's website, including Meals on Wheels and Community Transport services, and accessible playground and bathroom facilities. Council also regularly updates its listings on the National Public Toilet register, which notes accessible facilities. Accessibility is always considered when updating or constructing new Council facilities.</p> <p>Council staff are currently working on a new website for the Mudgee Arts Precinct, having regard to accessibility requirements when building the site.</p>
Council develops and implements Awards and criteria for local businesses who drive and practice disability inclusion	Businesses are rewarded and promoted for driving change in disability inclusion	Local businesses	Annual reporting	<p>Council is a proud supporter of local business 'Clock Awards', which includes awards for excellence in community services and disability access.</p> <p>Council also proudly supports initiatives such as annual Disability Inclusion Sports Awards, which includes the categories 'Disability Inclusive Sports Club Award' and 'Disability Inclusive Sports Volunteer Award'.</p>

Supporting **improved physical access** in the community

Action	Expected outcome	Key stakeholders	Reporting	2020/21 Progress report
Continue to implement the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP)	Increase pathway infrastructure to improve physical access of public space	Community/ Council	Pathways inspected every four years and PAMP is updated every two years	Nine PAMP projects were completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nandoura Street, Gulgong ▪ Lynee Street, Gulgong ▪ Putta Bucca Road, Mudgee ▪ Market Street, Mudgee ▪ Dabee Road, Kandos ▪ Dangar Street, Kandos ▪ McDonald Street, Kandos ▪ Cox Street, Rylstone ▪ Ilford Road, Rylstone
Auditing physical accessibility of Council owned buildings to consider leading practice prioritisation of upgrades	Physical accessibility of Council owned facilities is reviewed with priority upgrades identified.	Council	DIAP 2020	Council's building network comprises over 200 buildings and its Asset Management Plan establishes condition inspection program. Council's Asset Management Plan acknowledges greater demand for accessibility and services for an ageing cohort. It also notes that renewal plans are to include increased access at facilities.
Inclusion objectives to be referred to and considered when allocating community grants	Increase consideration of disability and inclusion in awarding Council grants	Community/ Council	Annual report	Council's Community Grants Program closely aligns with its Towards 2030 Community Plan, including strategies on providing equitable access to a range of places and spaces for all in the community, providing infrastructure and services to cater for the current and future needs of our community and maintaining the provision of high quality, accessible community services that meet the needs of our community.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS – INSPECTION OF PRIVATE SWIMMING POOLS

Swimming Pools Act 1992 (SP Act), s224F(2) Swimming Pools Regulation 2018 (SP Reg) cl23



COMPANION ANIMALS

Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 217(1)(f), Companion Animals Act 1988 (CA Act), Companion Animals Regulation 2018, and Companion Animals Guidelines (CA Guidelines)

Council undertakes companion animal management functions and activities in accordance with the Companion Animals Act 1998 and the associated Regulations.

Council's pound collection data for the 2020/21 reporting period has been lodged with the Department of Local Government.

Lodgment of data relating to dog attacks with OLG

Data relating to dog attacks is required to be lodged by Council with the Office of Local Government.

During the 2020/21 period, there were 98 separate dog attack incidents within the region, with a number of animal (primarily stock) and human victims.

Actions taken following dog attacks can include infringement notices, animal seizure, police action, and euthanasia of the attacking dog.

Over the last 12 months all animal activities has decreased, we believe this is due to covid-19 and more people working from home and spending more time with their pets.

Animal management/activities expenditure

During 2020/21, Council spent \$178,697 on companion animal management activities.

Council employs two full time and two part time Law Enforcement Officers to enforce the provisions of the Companion Animals legislation. These Law Enforcement Officers also attend to after- hours stock impounding.

As part of running an animal pound facility, Council utilises additional staff resources to ensure 7 day a week animal care and coverage.

The Office of Local Government provided \$36,318 of revenue to Council in 2020/21 for Animal Management Services.

A further \$73,866 was received from stock impounding fees, animal release fees, fines, animal sales and other related revenue, helping to partially offset the total cost of companion animal management to the community.

Companion Animal and Desexing Community Education Programs

Council strongly encourages residents to have their dogs and cats micro-chipped. Micro-chipping is quick, painless and easy. It is the easiest way a pet can be returned home, so it should be top priority for every pet owner. Council has a micro-chipping service, and charged \$36 for the service in 2020/21. During 2020/21, 272 companion animals were registered through Council.

During the 2020/21 period Council was unable to conduct their quarterly free microchipping days. Instead Council has been providing free microchipping of any companion animals that come into their care. This helps with responsible ownership as the animal is identified and the animal can in future be returned to its owner.

Strategies to comply with S64(5) - euthanasia alternatives for unclaimed animals

Council works with a number of organisations regarding foster care of impounded animals, including the Hunter Animal Rescue. Council's website links to the Friends of Mudgee Pound Facebook page with the advertising of impounded animals who are lost or looking for a new home.

Across 2020/21, Council compiled Pound Data Collection Returns for the Office of Local Government. 575 animals were seized. Of those, 233 dogs and 13 cats were able to be released to their owners. Unfortunately due to the low identification rate for cats, returning these animals to their owners is more difficult.

Of all the companion animals seized or surrendered during the 2020/21 period, 223 were rehomed through rehoming organisations or sold directly to the public.

A total of 116 animals were required to be euthanased as they were unsuitable to be rehomed.

Off-Leash Area

Council has three off-leash areas for companion dogs, located at Glen Willow Regional Sports Complex in Mudgee, Peoples Park in Gulgong, and the Rylstone Showground.

Mudgee has a new off-leash area which is located within the Glen Willow Regional Sports Complex near the suspension bridge. It consists of 3 areas; small dogs, active dogs (all dogs) and large dogs.

Summary of Pound Data	Cats	Dogs	Total
Seized and transferred to Council's facility	201	374	575
Abandoned/Stray	117	191	308
Surrendered by Owners	75	89	164
Returned to Owners	3	89	92
Released to Owners	14	144	158
Euthanased	68	48	116
Sold	54	59	113
Released to Organisations for re-homing	56	54	110
Died at Council Facility	0	11	11
Stolen or escaped from Council's Facility	2	1	3
Holding pending Court Action	0	0	0

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) ACT 2009

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 – Section 125(1) Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018 – Clause 8, Schedule 2

Under Section 7 of the GIPA Act agencies must review their programs for the release of government information to identify the kinds of information that can be made publicly available. Council's program for the proactive release of information involved providing as much information as possible on Council's website and where proactive making other information available free of charge in accordance with Council's Information Guide.

During the 2020/21 reporting period, Council received a total of 5 formal access applications as detailed in the table below.

Table A: Number of applications by type of applicant and outcome*

	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/deny whether information is held	Application withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Private sector business	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	20%
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of the public (by legal representative)	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	40%
Members of the public (other)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	40%
Total	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	5	
<i>% of Total</i>	<i>40%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>20%</i>		

* More than one decision can be made in respect of a particular access application. If so, a recording must be made in relation to each such decision. This also applies to Table B.

Table B: Number of applications by type of applicant and outcome*

	Access granted in full	Access granted in part	Access refused in full	Information not held	Information already available	Refuse to deal with Application	Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held	Application withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Personal information applications*	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	20%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	4	80%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	5	
<i>% of Total</i>	<i>40%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>20%</i>		

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

Table C: Invalid applications

Reason for invalidity	Number of applications	% of Total
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	2	100%
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0	0%
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0	0%
Total number of invalid applications received	2	100%
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	1	50%

Table D: Conclusive resumption of overriding public interest against disclosure – matters listed in Schedule 1 of the Act

	No. times consideration used*	% of Total
Overriding secrecy laws	0	0%
Cabinet information	0	0%
Executive Council information	0	0%
Contempt	0	0%
Legal professional privilege	0	0%
Excluded information	0	0%
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0	0%
Transport safety	0	0%
Adoption	0	0%
Care and protection of children	0	0%
Ministerial code of conduct	0	0%
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0	0%
Privilege generally – Sch 1(5A)	0	0%
Information provided to High Risk Offenders Assessment Committee	0	0%
Total	0	

* More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and, if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application). This also applies in relation to Table E.

Table E: Other public interest considerations against disclosure – matters listed in table to Section 14 of the Act

	No. of times consideration used*	% of Total
Responsible and effective government	0	0%
Law enforcement and security	0	0%
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	0	0%
Business interests of agencies and other persons	1	100%
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0	0%
Secrecy provisions	0	0%
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0	0%
Total	1	

Table F: Timeliness

	No. of applications*	% of Total
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	5	100%
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with the applicant)	0	0%
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0	0%
Total	5	

Table G: Number of applications reviewed under Part 5 of the Act (by type of review and outcome)

	Decision varied	Decision upheld	Total	% of Total
Internal review	0	0	0	0%
Review by Information Commissioner*	0	0	0	0%
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	0	0	0	0%
Review by NCAT	0	0	0	0%
Total	0	0	0	
<i>% of Total</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>		

* The Information Commissioner does not have the authority to vary decisions, but can make recommendations to the original decision-maker. The data in this case indicates that a recommendation to vary or uphold the original decision has been made by the Information Commissioner.

Table H: Applications for review under Part 5 of the Act (by type of applicant)

	No. of Applications for review	% of Total
Applications by access applicants	0	0%
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)	0	0%
Total	0	

Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies

	No. of Applications transferred	% of Total
Agency-Initiated Transfers	0	0%
Applicant-Initiated Transfers	0	0%
Total	0	

PUBLIC INFORMATION DISCLOSURES

Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 – Section 31 Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011, Clause 4

Council received no public interest disclosures during the 2020/21 financial year.

PLANNING AGREEMENTS

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 – Section 7.5(5)

Company	Effective	Purpose	Amount	Due Date	Paid
Caerleon	Sep-13	Fairydale Lane Contribution	\$500,000	Lump sum payment on connection of Fairydale Lane to the spine road, based on \$500 per lot of registered plans for the subdivision. Thereafter a per lot contribution upon registration	No
		Community Open Space Network	Land for parks, recreation, stormwater and sewer	As stages are released	Yes – for stages released

Company	Effective	Purpose	Amount	Due Date	Paid
Charbon Coal	Sep-10	Annual Contribution - Road Maintenance	\$0.05 per tonne per kilometre	Due by 31 July each year for coal hauled in previous year	No
		Annual Contribution - Road Maintenance	\$0.77 per tonne	\$75,000 paid as bond. To be charged with calculated contribution on an annual basis until \$75,000 exhausted. A further \$75,000 shall then be paid to Council, with annual charges payable whilst mining continues	Yes – completed
		Lump Sum - Carwell Creek Bridge Upgrade	\$210,000	\$210,000 due within 30 days of commencement of construction works by Council	Yes - completed
		Annual Contribution - Community Facilities	\$0.01 per Run of Mine tonnes per annum	Due by 31 July each year for coal hauled in previous year	No
		Lump Sum - Community Facilities	\$50,000	\$50,000 payable within one month of receipt of project approval for a community project in Rylstone, Kandos, Charbon and/ or Clandulla	Yes - completed
Moolarben Coal Stage 1	Aug-08	Lump Sum - Open Cut Coal	\$1,000,000	Payable in three equal annual instalments, with the first payment due within 7 days of first loading and dispatch of coal produced from the open cut operation	Yes – completed
		Lump Sum - Underground Coal	\$300,000	Payable in three equal annual instalments, with the first payment due within 7 days of first loading and dispatch of coal produced from the underground operation	Yes – completed
		Lump Sum - Road Maintenance	\$1,000,000	Payable in three equal annual instalments, with the first payment due within 7 days of the commencement of construction	Yes – completed
	Jan-15	Annual Contribution - Road Maintenance	\$1,250,000	\$62,500 per annum for 20 years, with the first instalment due on the anniversary of the first loading and dispatch of coal	12 of 20
		Annual Contribution - Community Infrastructure	\$1,000,000	\$100,000 per annum for 10 years, with the first instalment due on the anniversary of the first loading and dispatch of coal	Yes – completed
Ulan Coal Mines Limited	Mar-11	Lump Sum - Community Infrastructure	\$3,475,000	\$2 million to be paid within 30 days of date of agreement. Balance of \$1.475 million to be paid within a year of the date of the first contribution	Yes - Completed
		Annual Contribution - Road Maintenance Cope Road	\$1,050,000	\$50,000 per annum for 21 years, with the first instalment due within 30 days of date of agreement. Subsequent annual payments due on anniversary date of first contribution	11 of 21

Company	Effective	Purpose	Amount	Due Date	Paid
Wilpinjong Coal Pty Ltd	Mar-06	Lump Sum - Coal Shipment	\$450,000	Payable prior to the first shipment of coal from the land	Yes – completed
		Annual Contribution - Community Infrastructure	\$800,000	\$40,000 per annum for 20 years, with the first instalment due on the anniversary of the first loading and dispatch of coal	14 of 20
		Annual Contribution - Road Maintenance	\$30,000 per annum	\$30,000 per annum for the life of the mining operation, with the first instalment due on the anniversary of the first loading and dispatch of coal	14 of life
		Annual Contribution - Bus Routes	\$60,000	\$20,000 per annum for three years	Yes – completed
Wilpinjong Coal Pty Ltd	Jan-11	Lump Sum - Ulan-Wollar Road	\$50,000	Non cash contribution of \$50,000 of gravel to be used for upgrading of the Ulan-Wollar Road	Yes – completed
		Lump Sum - Ulan-Wollar Road Upgrade	\$600,000	\$600,000 payable by instalments within 14 days of invoices as issued by Council at each stage of the primary road works	Yes – completed
		Annual Contribution - Community Infrastructure	\$600 per annum per permanent employee contractor in excess of 100 for 20 year consent period	31 March each year	9 of 15
	Oct-16	Annual Contribution - Community Infrastructure	\$600 per annum per permanent employee contractor for extended project life	Per annum starting in 2028 for approximately 7 years (end of project)	No
Crudine Ridge Wind Farm Pty Ltd	Aug-17	Annual Contribution	\$1,250 pa multiplied by the name plate megawatt (MW) capacity of the wind turbine generators multiplied by the number of wind turbine generators installed	Payment to commence on the first anniversary of the operation date	No
Moolarben Coal Stage 2	Jan-15	Community Enhancement	\$515 per annum for each full-time equivalent employee in excess of 320 employees	Payable from commencement of construction until mining operations under this approval cease	5 of life
		Cope Road Maintenance	\$480,000	Payable in 4 instalments of \$120,000 plus CPI, with the first payment to be made on the commencement of mining	Yes – completed

State of the Environment Report 2016–2021

A State of the Environment (SoE) Report is an important management tool which aims to provide the community and local council with information on the condition of the environment in the local area to assist in decision-making.

Since 2007, the councils of the Greater Central West Region of NSW¹ have joined to produce Regional SoE Reports as part of council reporting requirements.

NSW legislation means that councils are not required to produce SoE reports each year, but in the year of the council election. However, the participating councils have decided to continue reporting on an annual basis so that they can provide a detailed SoE report that covers trends in the intervening years.

The 2020 council elections were postponed until 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Being the year of the council election, this SoE report responds to the requirement in the *Local Government Act 1993* that councils measure and report on the progress of the environmental objectives or goals in their Community Strategic Plan (CSP).

This report lists Mid-Western Regional Council's environmental goals, identifies appropriate indicators to measure them and briefly reports on trends in these indicators since the last council election (2016). It also discusses any major environmental impacts on the environmental goals between 2016 and 2021.

Environmental Goals

In Mid-Western Regional Council's CSP, there are three environmental goals under Outcome 2 – Conserving and promoting the natural beauty of our region:

1. Protect and enhance our natural environment
2. Provide total water cycle management
3. Live in a clean and environmentally sustainable way

Environmental Indicators

Over 100 indicators have been identified and used to measure the state of the environment across the Greater Central West region using data compiled over the past five years. The indicators are categorised into five themes:

1. Land
2. Biodiversity
3. Water and Waterways
4. People and Communities
5. Towards Sustainability

The table below shows how Council's Environmental Goals are measured by the Environmental Indicators detailed in the remainder of the report.

Environmental Goals	Environmental Indicators
1. Protect and enhance our natural environment	Land, Biodiversity, People and Communities
2. Provide total water cycle management	Water and Waterways
3. Live in a clean and environmentally sustainable way	People and Communities, Towards Sustainability

Trends/Environmental Impacts



Land

There was a significant increase in the number of development consents and building approvals over the past five years. The number of mining and exploration titles have decreased across the LGA with a slight decrease in the extent of mining.



Biodiversity

The area of private land protected under voluntary conservation agreements steadily increased in the past five years. There was a high level of restocking of local waterways with native fish. The number of priority weeds identified across the LGA steadily rose.



Water and Waterways

Both water pollution and drinking water complaints declined over the past five years. The irrigation footprint in the LGA remained the same over that period. Town water consumption declined over the past five years possibly reflecting increased water restrictions.



People and Communities

Volunteering for environmental projects declined over the last five years. The number of indigenous sites identified on the AHIMS register rose steadily. Council maintained its strong management of indigenous and non-indigenous heritage in the last five years.



Towards Sustainability

The amount of waste sent to landfill increased slightly over the past five years, and the community recycling rate declined. Council's greenhouse gas emissions decreased in 2020-21 and there was a significant increase in the uptake of small-scale renewable energy across the LGA.

¹ Bathurst, Blayney, Bourke, Bogan, Cabonne, Coonamble, Cowra, Gilgandra, Lachlan, Mid-Western Regional, Narromine, Oberon, Orange, Warren and Warrumbungle Councils



LAND

Issue	Indicator	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Trend
Contamination	Contaminated land sites – Contaminated Land Register (number)	1	1	1	1	1	→
	Contaminated land sites – potentially contaminated sites (number)	31	0	0	0	0	↑
	Contaminated sites rehabilitated (number)	0	0	0	0	0	→
Erosion	Erosion affected land rehabilitated (ha)	0	0	0	0	0	→
Land use planning and management	Number of development consents and building approvals	281	266	439	409	688	↓
	Land use conflict complaints (number)	36	30	39	44	49	↓
	Loss of primary agricultural land through rezoning (ha)	0			0	0	→
Minerals and petroleum	Number of mining and exploration titles	149			627	218	↑
	Area covered by mining and exploration titles (ha)	682,000	650,000	593,000	606,000	606,000	↑

↑ Improvement → No or little change ↓ Worsening trend

Note: the trend is based on comparing the average of the four previous years of reporting with 2020/21

BIODIVERSITY

Issue	Indicator	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Trend
Habitat Loss	Total area in the National Parks Estate (ha)	100K	100K	101K	101K	101K	↑
	Total area of State Forests (ha)	16,841	16,841	16,841	16,841	16,841	→
	Total area protected in Wildlife Refuges (ha)	5,689			8,253	6,987	↑
	Area protected in conservation reserves and under voluntary conservation agreements (ha)	1,657	2,204	2,294	4,651	4,676	↑
	Extent of Travelling Stock Reserves in LGA (ha)	1,301		1,378	1,463	1,125	↓
	Proportion of Council reserves that is bushland/remnant vegetation	73%	76%	73%	76%	77%	↑
	Habitat areas revegetated	100	2	1	1	10	↓
	Clearing complaints (number)	3	7	9	4	1	↑
	Roadside vegetation management plan (Yes/No)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	→
	Roadside vegetation rehabilitated (ha)	0	15	0	0	0	↓
Threatened Species	Threatened species listed (number)				181	181	→
	Threatened species actions implemented (e.g. PAS, recovery plans) (number)	2	1	1	1	0	↓
	Fish restocking activities: native species (number)	124K	55,005	39,750	47,500	88,673	↑
Priority weeds and feral animals	Fish restocking activities: non-native species (number)	38,334	27,667	29,000	30,000	17,000	↑
	Number of declared priority weeds	95	95	96	98	104	↓
	Invasive species (listed priority or WONS) under active management	24	19	21	17	16	↓

↑ Improvement → No or little change ↓ Worsening trend



WATER AND WATERWAYS

Issue	Indicator	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Trend
Surface and ground water quality	Average salinity levels in selected streams (EC)	486	585	614	610	565	↑
	E.coli remote from wastewater treatment plants (per 100ml)	0	0	0	0	0	→
Riparian	Riparian vegetation recovery actions (number)	1	2	2	2	2	↑
	Riparian vegetation recovery area (ha)	50	4	5	5	5	↓
Industrial/agricultural pollution	Load Based Licencing Volume (kg)	14,567	12,012	10,605	24,172	17,601	↓
	Exceedances of licence discharge consent recorded (number)	4	0	0	0	3	↓
	Erosion and sediment control complaints received by Council (number)	20	5	7	5	13	↓
Stormwater pollution	Number of gross pollutant traps installed	4	4	4	4	4	→
	Total catchment area of GPTs (ha)	118	118	118	118	118	→
	Water pollution complaints (number)	0	1		5	1	↑
Town water quality	Number of instances drinking water guidelines not met	77	34	26	27	18	↑
	Number of drinking water complaints	67	94	48	36	32	↑
Dam levels	Average dam levels	48.0%	45.0%	37.0%	29.0%	30.0%	↓
Water extraction	Number of Water Supply Work Approvals from surface water sources	335			284	325	↓
	Volume of surface water permissible for extraction under licences (GL)	38			28	34	↓
	Actual volume extracted through surface water licences (GL)					2.6	→
	Number of Water Supply Work Approvals from groundwater resources	2,307			2,583	2,579	↓
	Volume of groundwater permissible for extraction under licences (GL)	35			29	35	↓
	Actual volume extracted through groundwater licences (GL)				3.7	3.5	↓
Council water consumption	Area of irrigated Council managed parks, sportsgrounds, public open space (ha)	70	71	72	72	85	↓
	Water used by Council for irrigation (including treated and untreated) (ML)	175	236	192	209	189	↑
Town water consumption	Annual metered supply (ML)	1,931	2,190	2,019	2,104	1,924	↑
	Annual consumption (Total from WTP) (ML)	2,280	2,554	2,484	2,439	2,096	↑
	Average annual household mains potable water usage (kL)	192	214	198	200	162	↑
	Average level of water restrictions implemented	0	0	0	2	2	↓
	Water conservation programs (number)	0	0	0	1	0	↓

↑ Improvement → No or little change ↓ Worsening trend



TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

Issue	Indicator	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Trend
Waste generation	Total waste entombed at primary landfill (tonnes)	22,639	21,783	19,789	20,617	23,591	↓
	Total waste entombed at other landfills (excl recyclables) (tonnes)	0	0	0	0	0	→
	Average total waste generated per person (tonnes)	0.92	0.88	0.79	0.82	0.93	↓
	Average cost of waste service per residential household	\$375	\$383	\$500	\$517	\$517	↓
Hazardous / liquid waste	DrumMuster collections (number of drums)	1,732	1,705	3,009	2,605	4,169	↑
	Household Hazardous Wastes collected (kg)	6,284	4,948	13,288	2,519	22,661	↑
Reduce	Organics collected (diverted from landfill) (tonnes)	3,363	2,277	3,330	3,031	4,414	↑
	E-Waste collected (diverted from landfill) (tonnes)	39	35	29	36	43	↑
Recycle	Volume of material recycled (tonnes)	3,113	4,222	1,680	3,090	2,652	↓
	Volume of material recycled per person (kg)	127	170	67	122	105	↓
Littering and illegal dumping	Number of illegal waste disposal complaints to Council	25	48	8	30	0	↑
Engineering, infrastructure and civil works	New road construction (km)	1.1	0.25	0.55	0	2.0	↓
	Road upgrades (km)	83	71	55	59	80	↓
Risk management	Flood management plans / flood mapping – increase in area covered	710	0	0	0	7,229	↑
	Hazard reduction burns (number)	11	11	11	4	10	↑
Climate change mitigation	Office paper used by Council (A4 & A3 reams)	1,956	1,817	1,980	1,916	1,861	↑
	Council sustainability initiatives (number)	0	1	3	1	0	↓
	Council mitigation initiatives (number)	1	0	0	0	0	↓
Council greenhouse gas emissions	Annual electricity consumption for Council controlled facilities (MWh)	5,867	6,315	6,100	5,938	5,749	↑
	Annual natural gas consumption for Council controlled facilities (GJ)	0	0	0	0	0	→
	Annual bottled gas consumption for Council controlled facilities (L)			9,003	6,604	4,382	↑
	Total fuel consumption (KL)	708	971	1,022	1,242	996	↑
	Proportion of Council's electrical energy demand met from Council-owned renewable energy infrastructure	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	1.6%	↑
	Council total operational greenhouse gas emissions (tCO ₂ -e/year)	24,215	24,401	25,978	27,067	23,691	↑
Community greenhouse gas emissions	Small scale renewable energy uptake (kW installed)	1,216	1,889	3,219	3,710	4,971	↑
	Number of solar water heaters and heat pumps installed	15	18	36	9	13	↓

↑ Improvement → No or little change ↓ Worsening trend



PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

Issue	Indicator	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Trend
Active community involvement	Environmental volunteers working on public open space (hrs)	186	272	141	171	0	↓
	Number of environmental community engagement programs	6	4	4	4	0	↓
	Number of growers markets/local food retailers specialising in local food	3	3	3	3	5	↑
Indigenous heritage	Number of indigenous sites on AHIMS register	4,328	4,566	4,856	5,097	5,243	↑
	Inclusion in DCPs and rural strategies (Yes/No)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	→
	Extent of liaison with indigenous communities (self-assessed from 0= none to 3=high)	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	→
	Development approvals on listed indigenous sites (number)	1	0	0	0	0	↑
	Number of indigenous heritage management actions/responses	0	0	1	0	1	↑
Non-Indigenous heritage	NSW Heritage items (number)	14	14	15	15	15	↑
	Locally listed heritage items (number)	526	526	526	482	482	↓
	Actions to protect non-indigenous heritage (including management plans) (number)	1	0	1	1	1	↑
	Heritage buildings on statutory heritage lists demolished/degraded in past year (number)	1	2	0	2	0	↑
	Heritage buildings on statutory heritage lists renovated/improved in past year (number)	41	9	29	61	24	↓

↑ Improvement
 → No or little change
 ↓ Worsening trend



Cygnets hatched at the new Putta Bucca Wetlands Extension in 2020 (photo Mark Leary)

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