



AGENDA

CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE

11 APRIL 2024

MEMBERSHIP: Councillors J Black, L Burns, S Chowdhury, M Dickerson, V Etheridge, J Gough, R Ivey, D Mahon, P Wells and M Wright.

The meeting is scheduled to commence at 5.30 pm.

		Page
CSC24/8	LEAVE OF ABSENCE (ID24/620)	
CSC24/9	CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (ID24/621) In accordance with their Oath/Affirmation under the Act, and Council's Code of Conduct, Councillors must disclose the nature of any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest which may arise during the meeting, and manage such interests accordingly.	
CSC24/10	REPORT OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COMMITTEE - MEETING 26 FEBRUARY 2024 (ID24/431) The Committee had before it the report of the Wellington Town Committee meeting held 26 February 2024.	3
CSC24/11	2023/2024 CHRISTMAS NEW YEAR CLOSURE PERIOD (ID24/408) The Committee had before it the report dated 2 April 2024 from the Chief Executive Officer regarding 2023/2024 Christmas New Year Closure Period.	8
CSC24/12	MONTHLY REPORTING SNAPSHOT FOR COUNCILLORS - MARCH 2024 (ID23/2979) The Committee had before it the report dated 2 April 2024 from the Corporate Strategy Performance Coordinator regarding Monthly Reporting Snapshot for Councillors - March 2024.	22
CSC24/13	2024 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION UPDATE (ID24/541) The Committee had before it the report dated 20 March 2024 from the Manager Corporate Governance regarding 2024 Local Government Election Update.	36

CONFIDENTIAL

CSC24/14 VALUE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE DUBBO RSL FOR THE OLD DUBBO BOWLING CLUB UPDATE (ID24/623)

The Committee had before it the report dated 3 April 2024 from the Director Organisational Performance regarding Value to Negotiate with the Dubbo RSL for the Old Dubbo Bowling Club Update.

In accordance with the provisions of Section 9 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1993 the Chief Executive Officer is of the opinion that consideration of this item is likely to take place when the meeting is closed to the public for the following reason: commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the Council (Section 10A(2)(d)(ii)).



**DUBBO REGIONAL
COUNCIL**

Report of the Wellington Town Committee - meeting 26 February 2024

**AUTHOR: Governance Team Leader
REPORT DATE: 29 February 2024**

The Council had before it the report of the Wellington Town Committee meeting held 26 February 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report of the Wellington Town Committee meeting held on 26 February 2024, be noted.



REPORT
WELLINGTON TOWN COMMITTEE
26 FEBRUARY 2024

PRESENT: Councillor R Ivey, the Chief Executive Officer, the Director Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement, the Manager Community Services, R Whiteley (Community Representative), E Holmes (Community Representative), D Ramsland (Community Representative), D Mitchell (Community Representative), T Kelly (Community Representative), I Parkes (Community Representative), M Griggs (Community Representative) and J Wykes (Community Representative).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

The Director Infrastructure, the Manager Strategic Partnerships and Investment, the Corporate Strategy and Performance Coordinator and the Executive Officer Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement.

Councillor R Ivey assumed the Chair of the meeting.

The proceedings of the meeting commenced at 5.32 pm.

WTC24/1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY (ID24/365)

The Manager Strategic Partnerships and Investment delivered an Acknowledgment of Country.

WTC24/2 LEAVE OF ABSENCE (ID24/375)

Requests for leave of absence were received from Councillor Gough and T Dray (Community Representative).

T Kelly attended via Audio-Visual link.

WTC24/3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (ID24/376)

The following conflict of interest was declared:

- I Parkes – Non-pecuniary, Less Than Significant in WTC24/5.

WTC24/4 REPORT OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COMMITTEE - MEETING 11 DECEMBER 2023 (ID24/378)

The Committee had before it the report of the Wellington Town Committee meeting held 11 December 2023.

OUTCOME

1. That the report of the Wellington Town Committee meeting held on 11 December 2023, be noted.
2. That it be noted that E Holmes notified her apology for the meetings of 4 September 2023 and 11 December 2023.
3. That it be noted that the Committee will be included as a key stakeholder in the Drought Resilience Plan project.

WTC24/5 OXLEY MUSEUM 37 WARNE STREET WELLINGTON - UPDATE TO BE PROVIDED ON BUILDINGS CURRENT USE (ID24/379)

The Committee was addressed by I Parkes regarding this matter.

OUTCOME

1. That the address provided by I Parkes be noted.
2. That it be noted that I Parkes (as a member of the Historical Society) will explore grant funding opportunities that could support relocation of large objects.
3. That it be noted that the Chief Executive Officer will continue discussions with the Historical Society to discuss future planning.

I Parkes (Community Representative) declared a non-pecuniary, less than significant interest in the matter now before the Committee and remained in the room during the Committee's consideration of this matter. The reason for such interest is that I Parkes is a member of the Historical Society.

WTC24/6 CENTRAL-WEST ORANA RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONE (ID24/380)

The Committee was addressed by D Mitchell, R Whitley and the Chief Executive Officer regarding this matter.

OUTCOME

1. That the address provided by D Mitchell and R Whitley be noted and presentation notes be shared with the Committee.
2. That it be noted that the Chief Executive Officer, as a member of Central-West Orana REZ Steering Committee, will facilitate discussions regarding the concerns raised by the Wellington Town Committee regarding vegetation plantings around solar farms.
3. That it be noted that Committee members will explore potential funding opportunities to fund design and implementation tree planting around highway entry

points and make formal submissions during the public exhibition period of the Draft 2024/2025 Delivery Program and Operational Plan, Budget and associated documents.

4. That the update provided by the Chief Executive Officer regarding the Voluntary Planning agreement and Renewable Energy Awareness and Career Training (REACT) Centre project, be noted.

At this juncture T Kelly left the meeting, the time being 6.30 pm.

WTC24/7 UPDATE ON THE RHINO RENEWAL PROJECT & WELLINGTON CBD ANALYSIS (ID24/381)

The Committee was addressed by the Manager Strategic Partnerships and Investment regarding this matter.

OUTCOME

1. That the address provided by the Manager Strategic Partnerships and Investment be noted.
2. That it be noted that the Committee supports the outcome of the community survey and is supportive of the allocation of funds to the sunken garden project.
3. That the Committee be updated on sunken garden project at future meetings.
4. That it be noted, as discussed during the meeting, a letter in the name of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be provided to CBD businesses and building owners regarding the outcomes of the CBD analysis.
5. That it be noted that the Committee requested that Council consider any other actions that could be taken in response to the CBD audit.

WTC24/8 UPDATE ON OPERATIONAL PLAN ACTIONS (ID24/382)

The Committee was addressed by the Corporate Strategy and Performance Coordinator, Director Infrastructure and Director Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement regarding this matter.

OUTCOME

1. That the address by the Corporate Strategy and Performance Coordinator, Director Infrastructure and Director Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement, be noted.
2. That it be noted that, as part of the December quarterly budget review, \$70,000 has been allocated to the temporary pedestrian crossing on the Duke of Wellington Bridge, further noting that works on the path will not provide disability access and Council is yet to be advised of the outcome of the application made to the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

**WTC24/9 GENERAL BUSINESS, CORRESPONDENCE AND QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
(ID24/383)**

The Committee was addressed by the Chair and the Director Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement regarding this matter.

OUTCOME

- 1. That the address provided by the Chair and the Director Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement be noted.**
- 2. That it be noted that the Director Infrastructure will examine seating within Bicentennial Park.**
- 3. That it be noted that the Director Infrastructure will explore improvements in the presentation of Brennan’s Way pedestrian pathway.**
- 4. That it be noted that the Committee will be provided with a copy of the of the information requested from the Wellington Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) upon its receipt.**
- 5. That it be noted that the discussions regarding meeting minutes will be considered during the implementation of the Community Committees Service Review outcomes.**

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

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CHAIRPERSON



REPORT: 2023/2024 Christmas New Year Closure Period

DIVISION: Chief Executive Officer
REPORT DATE: 2 April 2024
TRIM REFERENCE: ID24/408

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide update 	
Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an update on the outcomes of the extended two-week closure period implemented in 2023/2024, focusing on service delivery, staff leave balances, survey results, customer contact numbers, and the effectiveness of communication and marketing campaigns. 	
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment of the extended closure period is needed for informed decision-making regarding the potential 2024/2025 Christmas and New Year closures. This data-driven approach will facilitate informed decision-making to optimise future closure strategies and ensure minimal disruption to services while meeting community expectations. 	
Financial Implications	Budget Area	Multiple across Council
	Funding Source	Multiple across Council Annual and Long Service Leave (Regulated) Reserve
	Proposed Cost	Additional on call expenses for the 2 nd week
	Ongoing Costs	Nil with the exception of the above
Policy Implications	Policy Title	Leave Entitlement Policy Fatigue Management Policy
	Impact on Policy	Adherence to policies required for the Christmas Closure period

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Towards 2040 Community Strategic Plan is a vision for the development of the region out to the year 2040. The Plan includes six principal themes and a number of objectives and strategies. This report is aligned to:

Theme: 4 Leadership

CSP Objective: 4.1 Council provides transparent, fair and accountable leadership and governance

Delivery Program Strategy: 4.1.4 Statutory requirements are met and services are provided in a cost-effective and timely manner

Theme: 4 Leadership

CSP Objective: 4.1 Council provides transparent, fair and accountable leadership and governance

Delivery Program Strategy: 4.1.2 Council's decision-making processes are open, transparent and accountable

Theme: 4 Leadership

CSP Objective: 4.2 The resources of Council are sustainably managed

Delivery Program Strategy: 4.2.4 The business activities of Council are financially sustainable and provide financial returns to the community

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the information contained within the report of the Chief Executive Officer dated 2 April 2024, be noted.
2. That it be noted that a future report will be provided to Council for the determination of the shutdown period dates for the 2024/2025 Christmas - New Year period.

Murray Wood
Chief Executive Officer

MW
Chief Executive Officer

BACKGROUND

In past years, many Council services and facilities traditionally observed a one-week closure during the Christmas/New Year period, a practice that diverged from various other industries that typically shut down for a two-week duration during the same time frame.

Since the advent of COVID-19, there has been a noticeable uptick in both physical and mental fatigue among staff, with the added issue of substantial accrued leave balances stemming from previous travel and activity constraints.

In response to fatigue management and accrued leave balances, for the 2023/2024 Christmas – New Year period, Council implemented an extended closure from Monday, 25 December 2023, returning Monday, 8 January 2024. This was an extension of the traditional Council closure period by an additional week.

Previous Resolutions of Council

13 July 2023 CSC23/34	<i>That the information contained within the report of the Chief Executive Officer dated 1 July 2023, be noted.</i>
27 July 2023 CCL23/185	

REPORT

The Council team has undertaken an assessment of the extended closure period to inform future decision-making regarding the 2024/2025 Christmas and New Year closure. By evaluating various parameters including service delivery impacts, leave balances, staff feedback obtained through surveys, customer engagement metrics and the impact of communication and marketing efforts, this report aims to offer comprehensive insights into the implications and effectiveness of the preceding closure period.

Enhancing Cemetery Services | Addressing Concerns and Improving Accessibility

The Community, Culture and Places (CCP) team acknowledges the concerns raised regarding cemetery services during the 2023/2024 Christmas shutdown period and has subsequently amended processes as a result of the lessons learnt, to prevent any such recurrence.

It is important to note that Council proactively communicated the proposed shutdown plans with cemetery stakeholders. On 1 November 2023, CCP staff emailed and posted notifications to all five local funeral homes, outlining the shutdown plans. Subsequent verbal conversations were held in the following weeks to discuss bookings and confirm application deadlines. At no point during these communications did any of the funeral homes express concern about the shutdown plan.

The following steps are being implemented for future closure periods:

- *On-call Assistance:*
An on-call Cemetery Administration Officer will be available to assist with urgent enquiries, following a structured process.
- *Improving Access via Virtual Office (after hours emergency service provider):*
DRC are developing a triage flow chart for the 'Virtual Office' after-hours call provider to prioritise cemetery-related calls. This will ensure that callers have engaged with a funeral home initially, provide responses to basic enquiries and escalate matters as necessary to the on-call staff. Callers will also be directed to utilise the DRC&ME cemeteries page where relevant (expected to be live by April 2024).
- *Enhanced Online Access:*
The DRC&ME Cemeteries page will offer public access to an Online Booking Calendar, allowing both the public and funeral homes to search for and book preferred service days and times within available resources, without the need to contact the Community, Culture, and Places Executive Support Team for confirmation. This platform will also facilitate the submission of required applications. The Director Community, Culture and Places facilitated a number of consultation sessions throughout March 2024 with local Funeral Homes to showcase the DRC&ME Cemeteries Page. Funeral Directors provided feedback and discussed its implementation within their own business processes. Comments were overall very positive with Funeral Directors looking forward to the page going live.
- *Clarifying Urgency and Escalation:*
DRC will define a clear trigger point for enquiries to be escalated to the on-call team member, distinguishing urgent enquiries, such as those from funeral homes requiring immediate assistance, from non-urgent matters.

In addition, it's important to understand that interment processes may be subject to various factors beyond Council's control, such as funeral home and Minister availability, family travel arrangements and weather events. As part of ongoing cemetery service improvements, Council will also promote to the public the opportunities to explore information online and to understand the ways Council works with stakeholders, such as funeral homes.

The Council team will continue to foster open communication and collaboration with local funeral homes to address concerns promptly and ensure efficient resolution for future proposed closure periods, noting this dialogue needs to be two-way for success.

Leave Balances Analysis | Managing Fatigue and Organisation Sustainability

There were two internal factors that supported the trial of the two-week shutdown; managing fatigue and organisational sustainability. The wellbeing and fatigue management of employees is critical for any organisation and is a focus area of Council. After a prolonged period of emergency management in preceding years, this has become more critical. As a result of the preceding years, Council also holds a significant leave liability that continues to grow. A positive way to support organisational sustainability is to find solutions to supporting the reduction of this liability.

To gauge the impact of the trial, Council conducted a comparative analysis of leave usage and leave liability during the Christmas Closure Periods of 2023 and 2024 and conducted an employee feedback survey.

- **Leave Hours Taken:**
 In 2023, a total of 10,297.68 hours were utilised, whereas in 2024, this figure increased to 18,076.62 hours. This represents a variance of 7,778.94 hours, indicating a significant increase in leave utilisation patterns between the two years.
- **Leave Liability:**
 Additionally, we assessed the leave liability associated with the closure periods. The analysis reviewed the specific liabilities on 31 December 2023 (inclusive of PP14 - 1 week closure) and 31 January 2024 (inclusive of PP15 - 1 week closure). The liability on 31 December 2023 amounted to \$11,724,091, a slight decrease was observed on 31 January 2024, totalling \$11,217,161. The resulting variance of -\$506,930 captures the reduction in the leave liability that Council holds.

Christmas Closure Period - Comparison 2023 /2024

Leave Type	Leave Hours Taken			Value		
	2023	2024	Variance	2023	2024	Variance
Total	10,297.68	18,076.62	7,778.94	\$ 533,537.02	\$ 860,103.54	\$ 326,566.52

Leave taken during the period 23/12/2022 to 05/01/2023 and 23/12/2023 to 5/01/2024

Total RDO hours included in total

Leave Liability

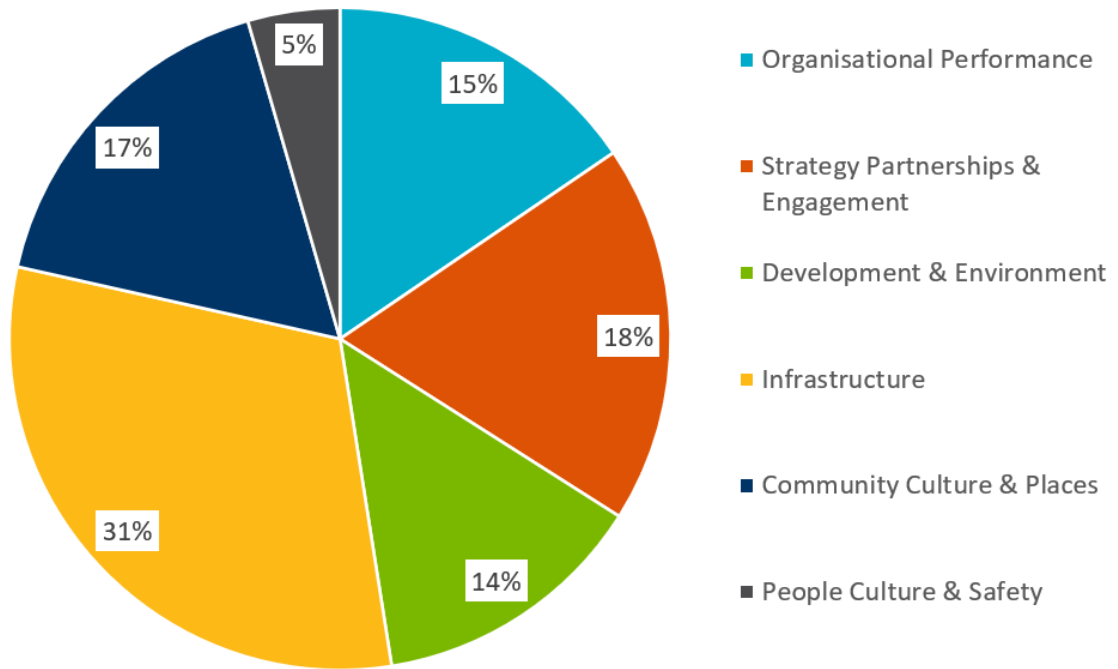
31 December 2023 – Inc PP14 – 1 week closure	\$11,724,091
31 January 2024 – Inc PP15 – 1 week closure	\$11,217,161
Variance	\$506,930

Liability doesn't include MRL

Employee Feedback Survey – Two-week shutdown

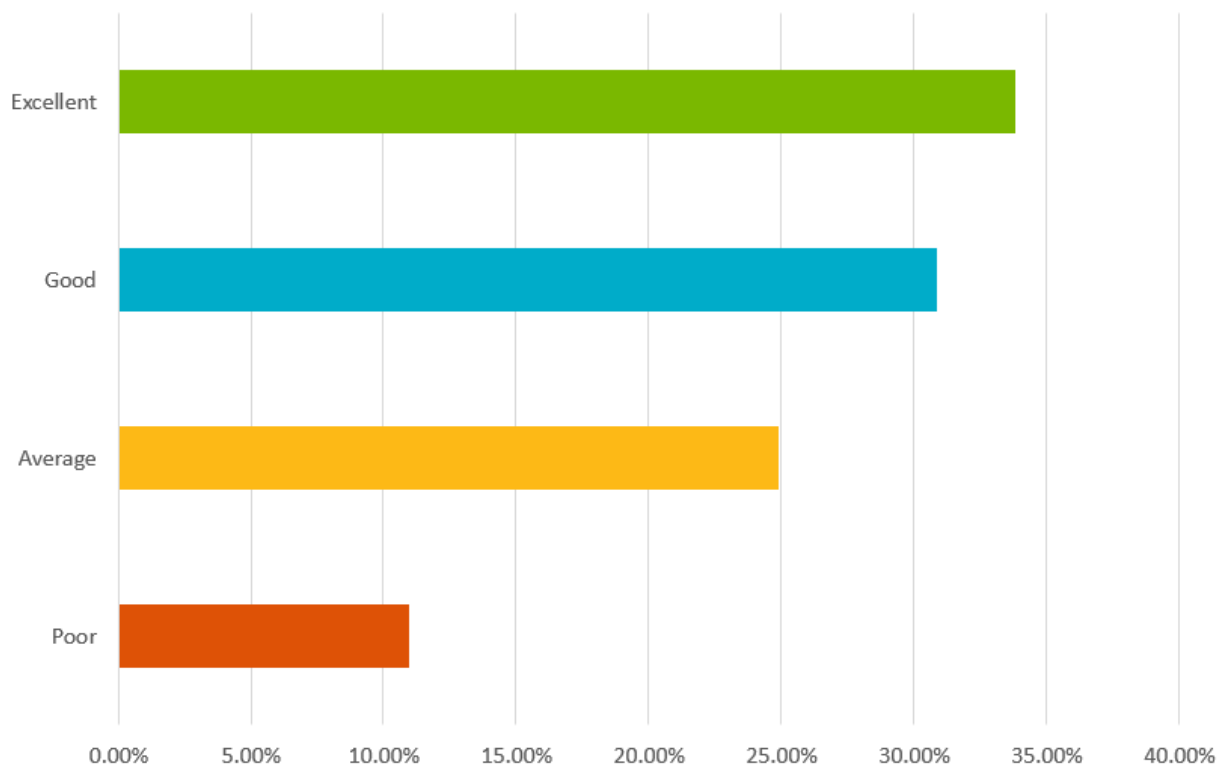
One of the commitments made as part of trialling a two-week shutdown was the collation of employee feedback on the trial. There were 11 questions as part of the survey covering overall experience, work impacts, wellbeing and comments. The survey was completed by 202 employees across all areas of Council. Below is the breakdown of responses by area.

Response by Division



There was a reasonable representation across all areas of Council that participated in the feedback survey. Below is the overall rating of the two-week shutdown experience.

Overall Experience Rating



Based on the survey, the overall experience of the two-week shutdown by employees was primarily positive (64.68%). If another two-week shutdown was implemented, there are several ideas which were provided in the feedback which would ensure it is an improved experience for our employees and the community.

Customer Engagement Metrics

During the extended Christmas/New Year closure period, customers that telephoned Council’s mainline number, 6801 4000, were greeted with the following recorded message:

“Dubbo Regional Council will be closed for the Christmas and New Year holiday period from Monday 25 December, re-opening at 9am Monday 8th January. Dubbo Regional Council wishes you a safe and happy Christmas and New Year. Please note the following option is for emergencies only. For general enquiries and requests for service, please call back during our business hours. For all emergencies, please press 1.

The mainline number was dialled 806 times. The number of calls, of which customers elected to progress to selecting the “emergency” option 1 after listening to the recorded message, was 197. This is an increase of 41 attempted calls and 60 progressed calls to after hours in comparison to the 2022/2023 closure.

The call volume dissection for the action requests resulted in 322 logs and are outlined as follows. Please note, General calls include:

- Calls which were not deemed an emergency and a log was created and advised to call back during business operational hours.
- Council Water & Sewer staff returning call to acknowledge the service request received.

Contact report 17:00 22.12.2023 until 09:00 8.1.2024	Call Count
Dubbo Ranger	116
General	92
Dubbo Sewer & Water	61
Dubbo Waste Management	20
Dubbo Parks & Sport/ Garden Facilities	7
Wellington Sewerage & Water	7
Dubbo AIRPORT	6
Wellington Waste Management	4
Dubbo Roads/Footpath Traffic Signs	3
Dubbo Trees Urban/Rural	2
Wellington Parks & Sport/ Garden Facilities	2
Dubbo Cemeteries/Funerals	1
Wellington Roads/Trees/drainage	1
TOTAL	322

Below is the call count average per closure day comparison from 2022/2023 and 2023/2024. Overall, there was an increase of 18% contact rate, noting 2022/2023 operational days (excluding public holidays) was three vs seven days in the 2023/2024 closure period.


Service Request Area	2023/2024 Call Count Avg per Closure day	2022/2023 Call Count Avg per Closure day	Variance Increase/(Decrease)	Variance Increase/(Decrease) %
Dubbo Ranger	11.6	8	3.6	45%
General	9.2	6.7	2.5	38%
Dubbo Sewer & Water	6.1	3.0	3.1	103%
Dubbo Waste Management	2	2.7	-0.7	-25%
Dubbo Parks & Sport/ Garden Facilities	0.7	1.8	-1.1	-62%
Wellington Sewerage & Water	0.7	1.8	-1.1	-62%
Dubbo AIRPORT	0.6	0.5	0.1	20%
Wellington Waste Management	0.4	1.5	-1.1	-73%
Dubbo Roads/Footpath Traffic Signs	0.3	0.8	-0.5	-64%
Dubbo Trees Urban/Rural	0.2	0.3	-0.1	-40%
Wellington Parks & Sport/ Garden Facilities	0.2	0	0.2	200%
Dubbo Cemeteries/Funerals	0.1	0	0.1	100%
Wellington Roads/Trees/drainage	0.1	0.2	-0.1	-40%
TOTAL	32.2	27.3		18%

During the closure period the following message was displayed on DRC&ME CRM request tiles as a pop-up message advising all requests will be actioned upon return. This was a change in approach from the 2022/2023 Christmas closure period and was deemed a successful approach in comparison to the previous year.



The number of service requests lodged through DRC&ME transactional portal during the closure period was 132. An increase of 116% in comparison to 2022/2023 closure period. The breakdown of the requests is as follows:

Service Request	Count
Bin Liner Delivery Request - DRC&ME	37
Damaged or Stolen Waste Bins - DRC&ME	23
Rates Payment Summary - DRC&ME	9
Verify My Account - DRC&ME	9
Missed Bin - DRC&ME	7
Damaged / Stolen Waste Collection Bins	6
Other Water Requests - DRC&ME	6
Change of Address Notification / Change of Name Notification - DRC&ME	5
Reprint of Rates Notice or Rates Payment Receipt - DRC&ME	4
Roads Requests - DRC&ME	4
Customer Feedback - DRC&ME	3
Graffiti & Vandalism - DRC&ME	3
Nuisance Animals - DRC&ME	3
Residential Waste Services - Delivery upsize request - DRC&ME	3
Missed Service - Recycling Bin	2
Request for Email Notices - DRC&ME	2
Abandoned Vehicles	1
Cancellation of Direct Debit Authority - DRC&ME	1
Councillor Request - DRC&ME	1
Missed Service - General Waste	1
Missed Service - Organic Waste	1
Parks & Sporting Requests - DRC&ME	1
Total	132

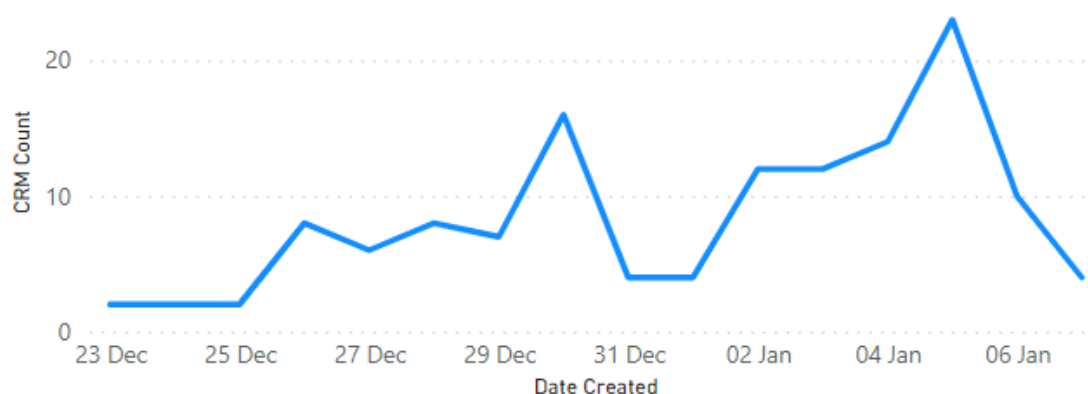


**DRC
& ME**

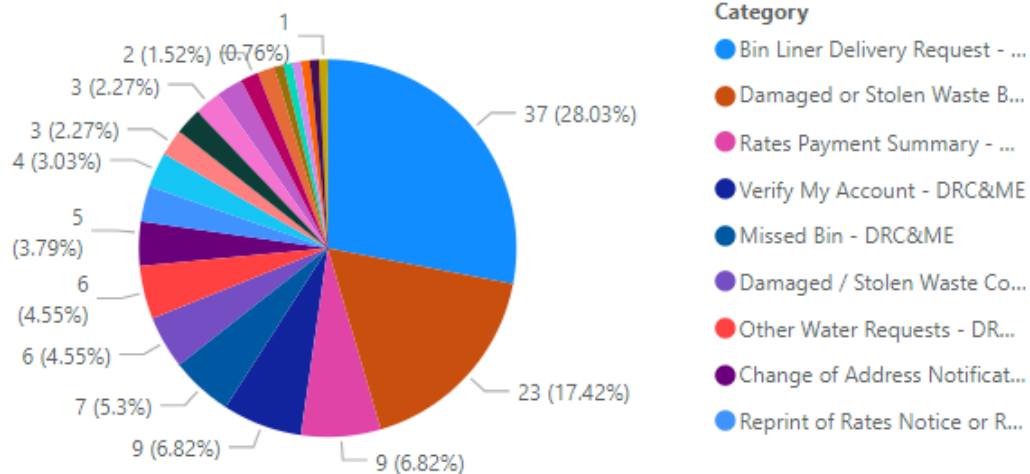
132

Total CRMs lodged

Number of CRM Lodgements - Trend



Number of CRMs by Category



Below is the request count comparison from 2022/2023 and 2023/2024. Overall, there was an increase of 157% contact rate, noting 2022/2023 operational days (excluding public holidays) was three, compared to seven days in the 2023/2024 period.

Service Request Area	2023/2024 Request Count	2022/2023 Request Count	Variance Increase/(Decrease)	Variance Increase/(Decrease) %
Bin Liner Delivery Request - DRC&ME	37	20	17.0	85%
Damaged or Stolen Waste Bins - DRC&ME	23	12	11.0	92%
Rates Payment Summary - DRC&ME	9	1	8.0	800%
Verify My Account - DRC&ME	9	4	5.0	125%
Missed Bin - DRC&ME	7	5	2.0	40%
Other Water Requests - DRC&ME	6	1	5.0	500%
Change of Address Notification / Change of Name Notification - DRC&ME	5	1	4.0	400%
Reprint of Rates Notice or Rates Payment Receipt - DRC&ME	4	3	1.0	33%
Roads Requests - DRC&ME	4	2	2.0	100%
Customer Feedback - DRC&ME	3	1	2.0	200%
Graffiti & Vandalism - DRC&ME	3	0	3.0	300%
Nuisance Animals - DRC&ME	3	0	3.0	300%
Residential Waste Services - Delivery upsize request - DRC&ME	3	0	3.0	300%
Missed Service - Recycling Bin	2	1	1.0	100%
Request for Email Notices - DRC&ME	2	0	2.0	200%
Abandoned Vehicles	1	1	0.0	0%
Cancellation of Direct Debit Authority - DRC&ME	1	0	1.0	100%
Councillor Request - DRC&ME	1	0	0.8	500%
Missed Service - General Waste	1	1	0.3	50%
Missed Service - Organic Waste	1	0	1.0	100%
Parks & Sporting Requests - DRC&ME	1	1	0.0	0%
Dumping of Rubbish	0	1	-1.0	-100%
Claims Against Council - Motor Vehicles - DRC&ME	0	1	-1.0	-100%
DRC&ME Other Requests	0	4	-4.0	-100%
Stormwater run off issues - stormwater from public land affecting private land eg. run off from road entering private land	0	1	-1.0	-100%
Total	126	61		157%

The after-hour's "contact us" form on Council's website, facilitated through the Web Chat function, was disabled during the closure period to avoid duplication of service requests received via the portal and via Council's email.

During the Christmas closure period, 66 emails from the community were received and actioned to the Customer Experience team for processing upon return. Of these 66 emails, 27 were service requests which were lodged through the system upon return on Monday, 8 January 2024. All emails registered were administrated within two business days upon return.

During the closure period, this message was displayed on YourSay request tiles as a pop-up message, advising all Your Say interactive feature enquiries would be responded to upon return.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Dubbo Regional Council
Festive Season Closures!

CLOSED FROM
25 December 2023

RE-OPENING
8 January 2024, 9am

Please note during this closure period, YourSay interactive features, including contributions, questions, and answers, will be responded to upon our return. We appreciate your understanding.

 DUBBO REGIONAL COUNCIL

 (02) 6801 4000

 Cnr Church & Darling St, Dubbo
Corner of Nanima Crescent & Warne St, Wellington

 PO Box 81, Dubbo NSW 2830

There were three engagement activities/projects open for public conversation/interaction over the closure period, with zero participation during the closure period. Open projects included consultation surveys and one notice of intention, as follows:

- Wellington Rhino Renewal Project Survey
- Waste Strategy and Implementation Plan Survey
- Notice of Intention – Dick Park Reserve.

Communications and Marketing Report

Following is an extract from the implementation plan which includes external communication/engagement:

TIMING	TYPE / MEDIA	MESSAGING / ACTIVITY
28 August 2023	Media Release	Following Council meeting. MR to highlight closure dates and why Council has made the changes.
From 4 December 2023 to 8 January 2024	Website – corporate, DRC&ME, YourSay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webpage updated with closure information • Feature webpage on the homepage pointing to the closure dates and details • Website carousel changed • DRC&ME banners changed • YourSay banner changed
	Social Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook cover photo • Social posts one per week promoting the closures and pointing to website for full details – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn
	Nexa Screen *Customer Experience	Holiday shutdown period dates
	Email Signature	IT to change email signature to reflect shutdown period dates
	Poster – CAB doors / Dubbo Wellington	
From 4 December 2023 to 18 December 2023	Radio	Holiday shutdown period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Binjang - 2DU
7, 14 and 21 December 2023	Photo News Snapshot	Holiday shutdown period
14 December 2023	Photo News – Full Page	Holiday shutdown period - potential for Christmas feature as taken in 2022, combined with year in review
6 and 20 December 2023	Daily Liberal - Council News Advert Template	Holiday shutdown period dates

TIMING	TYPE / MEDIA	MESSAGING / ACTIVITY
13 December 2023	Daily Liberal – Half page Ad	Holiday shutdown period dates
	Wellington District Leader Half Page	Holiday shutdown period dates
7, 14 and 21 December 2023	Council Column (DL)	Holiday shutdown period dates
11 December 2023	Public Notice	Holiday shutdown period dates – changes made to two weeks, essential services remain
22 December 2023 to 8 January 2024	Poster	For CX doors – contact numbers
25 December 2024	Social Media	Happy Holidays / pointing to closures webpage - Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn

To summarise the above, following is a list of the ways the Christmas Closure was communicated, noting that individual business areas of Council also communicated directly with stakeholders.

- Half page Daily Liberal advert of all closure information
- Full page Dubbo Photo News Advert – half page closure, half page year in review
- A4 poster for CX doors
- A4 poster for all closure information
- Banner tile for DRC&ME portal
- Carousel tile for DRC website
- Eblast tile
- Nexa screen tile
- Socials tiles
- Elston Park digital sign tile
- Email signature tile
- Facebook cover picture tile
- Dubbo Photo News Snapshot Tile
- Daily Liberal news advert column

Social Media Results

	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter
Post 1	3,811 Impressions 128 Engagements	138 Impressions 7 Engagements	244 Impressions 2 Engagements
Tourism and facilities	1,678 Impressions 22 Engagements	169 Impressions 3 Engagements	Word limit too long
Essential services	2,195 Impressions 53 Engagements	218 Impressions 4 Engagements	Word limit too long
DL advertisement	2,586 Impressions 110 Engagements	292 Impressions 3 Engagements	237 Impressions 1 Engagements
Merry Christmas	1,552 Impressions 11 Engagements	153 Impressions 5 Engagements	230 Impressions 1 Engagements
Totals	11,822 Impressions 324 Engagements	970 Impressions 22 Engagements	711 Impressions 4 Engagements
TOTAL			
13,503 Impressions (how many people saw the posts)			
350 Engagements (how many people interacted with the posts)			

Consultation

- Funeral homes were contacted after the Christmas/New Year period.
- Internal staff survey was undertaken.

Resourcing Implications

- Minimal staffing requirements were required during the closure period.

Next Steps

- A report will be provided to Council for the determination of the Christmas – New Year shutdown period dates for the year 2024/2025.



DUBBO REGIONAL
COUNCIL

REPORT: Monthly Reporting Snapshot for Councillors - March 2024

DIVISION: Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement
REPORT DATE: 2 April 2024
TRIM REFERENCE: ID23/2979

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide review or update 	
Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide high level report snapshots for Councillors regarding Council's Financial Performance, Facility Performance and Customer Experience. 	
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillors are provided high level data and reporting on a monthly basis for visibility and oversight on performance trends. 	
Financial Implications	Budget Area	Various
	Funding Source	Various
Policy Implications	Policy Title	There are no policy implications arising from this report
	Impact on Policy	N/A

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Towards 2040 Community Strategic Plan is a vision for the development of the region out to the year 2040. The Plan includes six principal themes and a number of objectives and strategies. This report is aligned to:

- Theme: 4 Leadership
- CSP Objective: 4.1 Council provides transparent, fair and accountable leadership and governance
- Delivery Program Strategy: 4.1.2 Council's decision-making processes are open, transparent and accountable
-
- Theme: 4 Leadership
- CSP Objective: 4.1 Council provides transparent, fair and accountable leadership and governance
- Delivery Program Strategy: 4.1.3 Council provides quality customer service

RECOMMENDATION

That the information contained within the report of the Corporate Strategy and Performance Coordinator, dated 2 April 2024, be noted.

Steven Jennings
Manager Growth Planning

ZJ
Corporate Strategy
Performance Coordinator

BACKGROUND

Previous Resolutions of Council

11 May 2023 CSC23/19	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the report from the Chief Executive Officer dated 11 April 2023, be noted.2. That the report in the current format continue to be produced monthly until the end of the current Council term.3. That upon election of a new Council in September 2024, a review of the Monthly Report for Councillors be undertaken in consideration of the new Councillor's priorities.
24 August 2023 CCL23/212	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the information contained within the report of the Chief Executive Officer dated 1 July 2023, be noted.2. That the proposed changes to the presentation of Major Capital Projects dashboard, as outlined in the report, be endorsed.

REPORT

This report is a standing monthly report for Councillors and provides high level data, statistics and commentary for Councillors from the Financial Performance and Services and Facility Performance and Customer Experience dashboards. It should be noted that select data is public facing, data that is not public facing is not provided within the monthly report and is provided to Councillors via other methods.

Data collected at the time of the reporting may not have been validated/audited and numbers are subject to change pending published annual reports.

March 2024 data is provided in **Appendix 1**.

Major Projects: As at the end of March 2024, Council's Your Say platform was showcasing 65 Community consultation or engagement projects, with 21 of these being active capital works projects.

APPENDICES:

[1](#) Dashboard Snapshots - March 2024

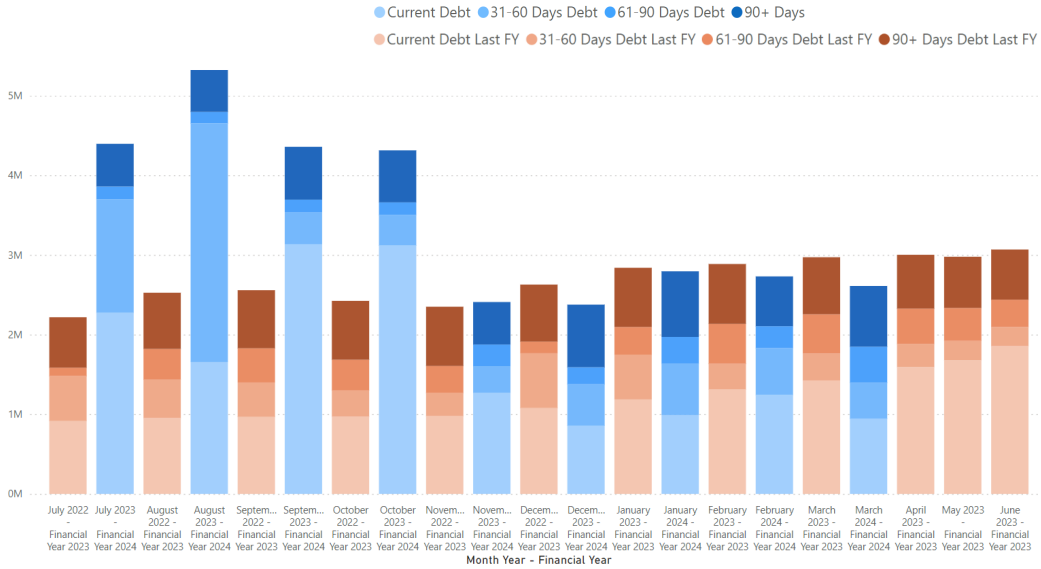


FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

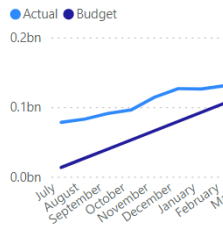
REPORT PRINT DATE: 03/04/2024

Associated fees are outline in Council’s Fees and Charges document; however the overdue balances below do not include rates, annual charges or capital grants.

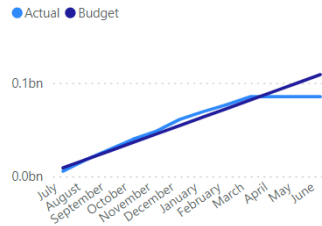
Current and last Financial Year Overdue Debt



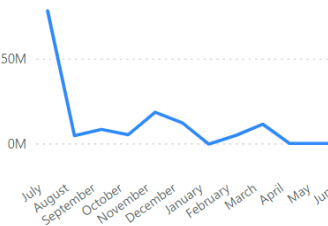
YTD Revenue



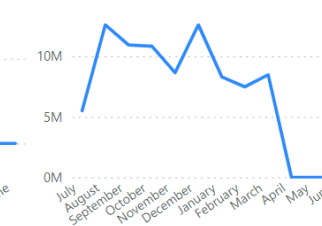
YTD Expenditure



Monthly Revenue



Monthly Expenditure

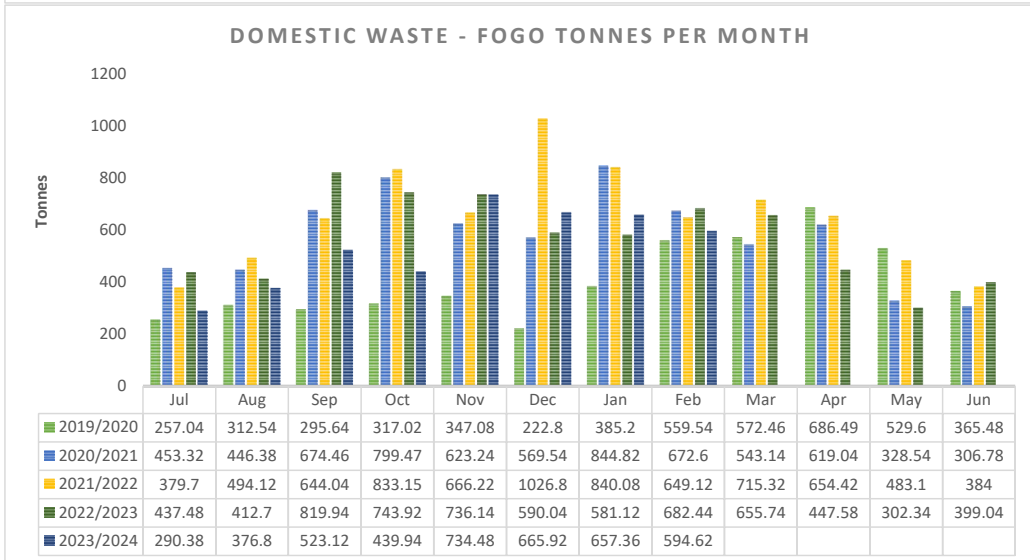




FACILITY AND SERVICE
PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

REPORT PRINT DATE: 03/04/2024

SERVICES PERFORMANCE

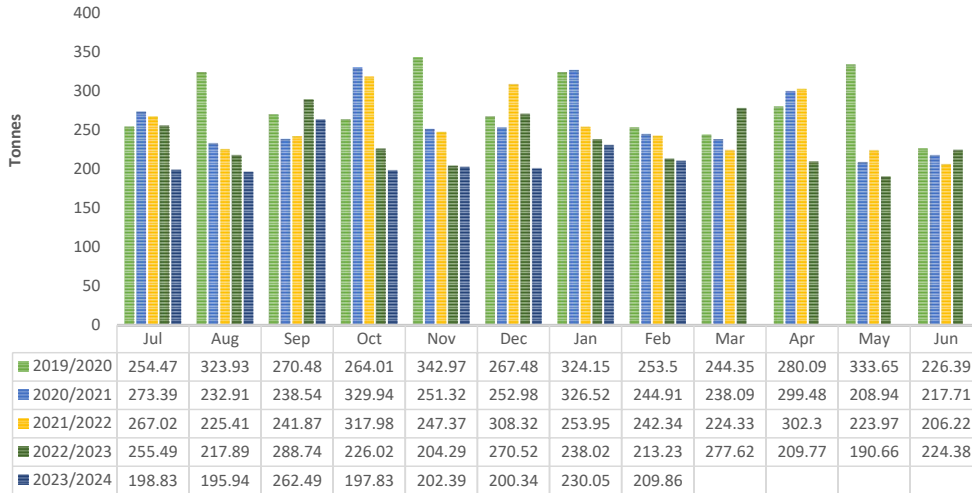




FACILITY AND SERVICE
PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

REPORT PRINT DATE: 03/04/2024

DOMESTIC WASTE - RECYCLING TONNES PER MONTH



DOMESTIC WASTE - DIVERTED FROM LANDFILL
TONNES PER MONTH

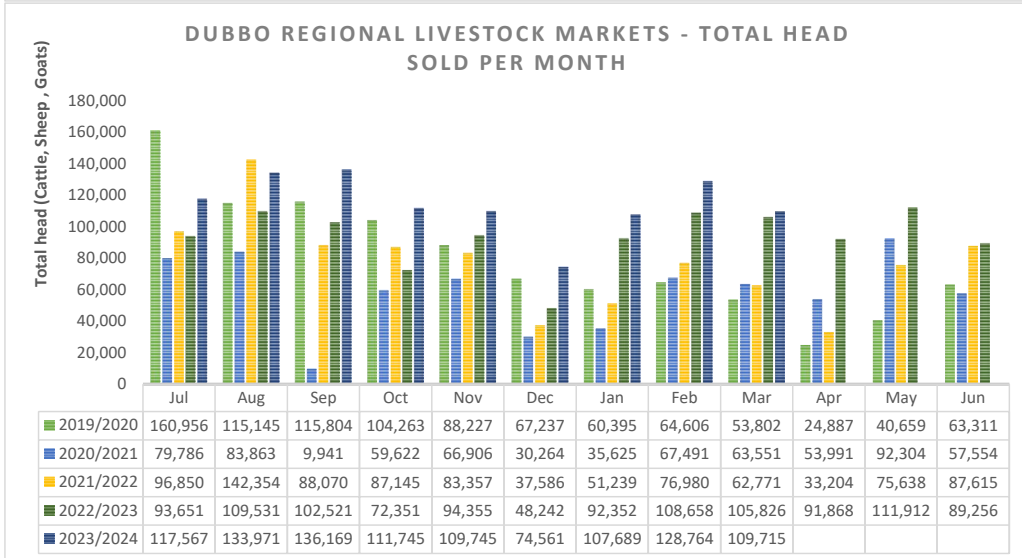
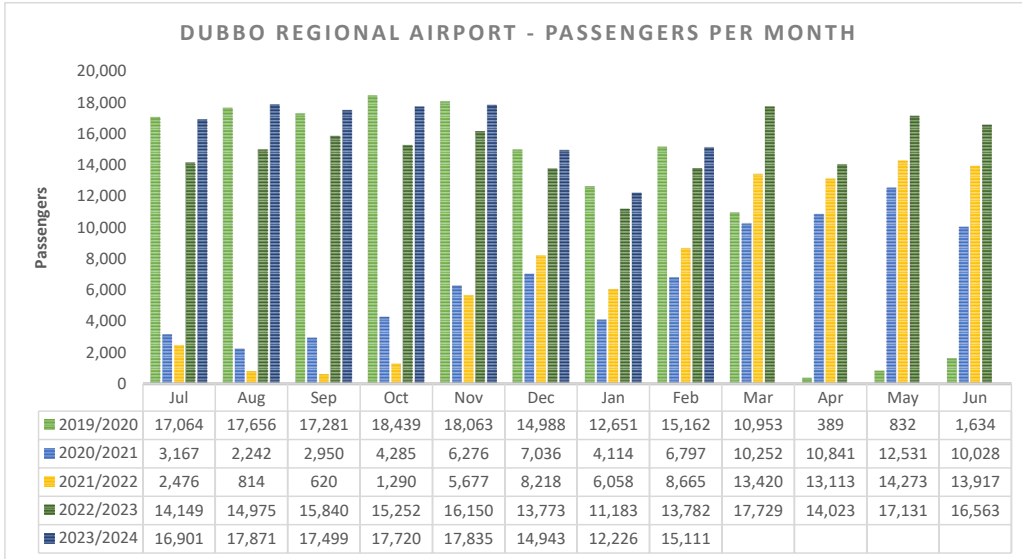




FACILITY AND SERVICE
PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

REPORT PRINT DATE: 03/04/2024

PASSENGERS & VOLUME – COMMERCIAL

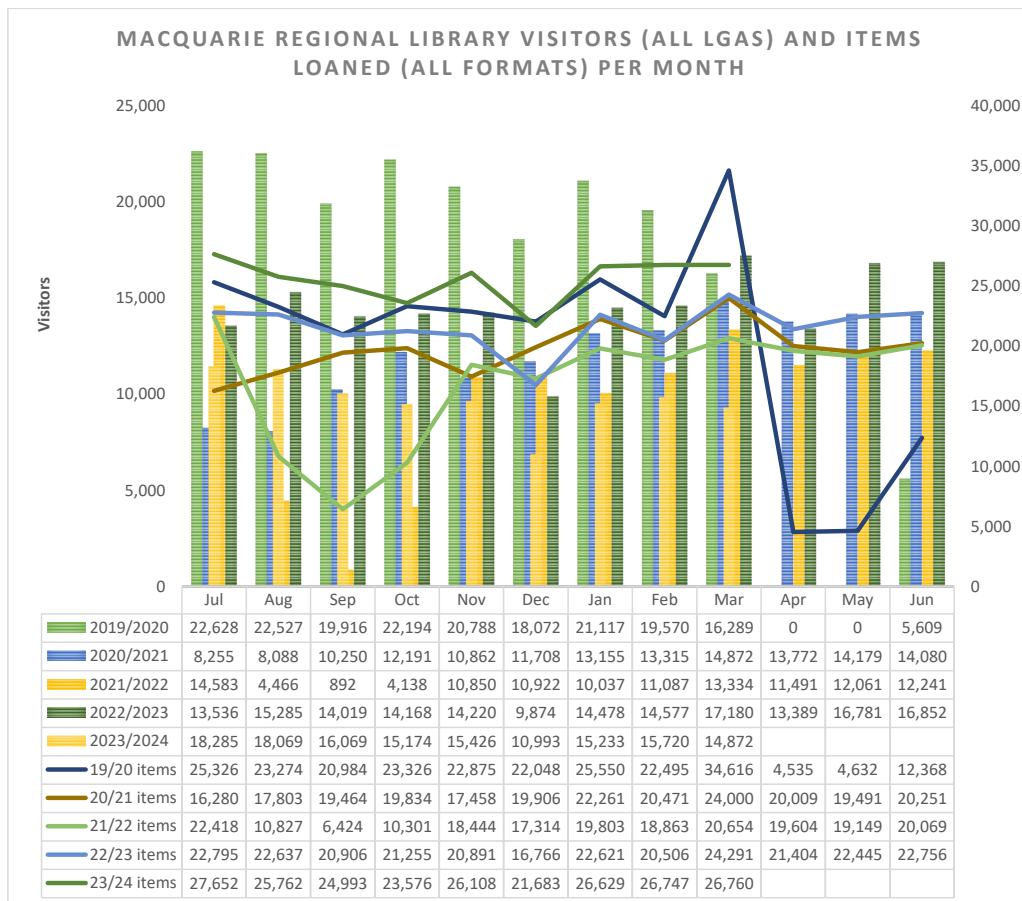
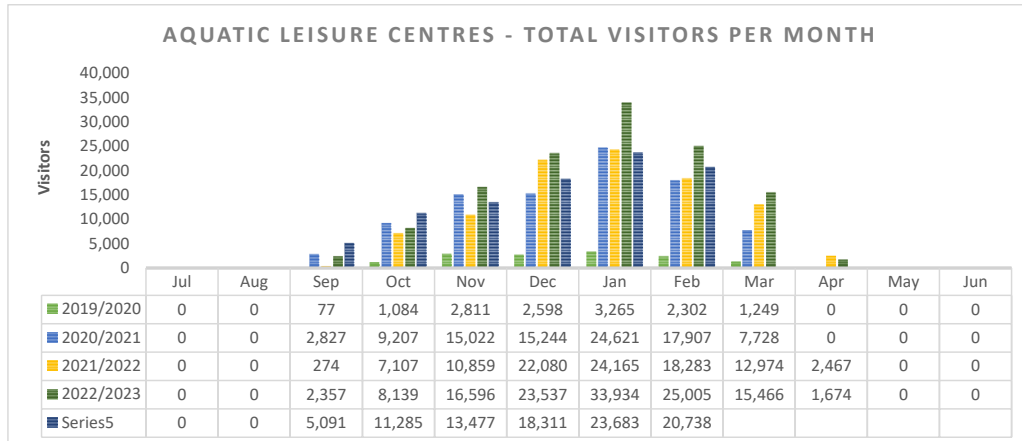




FACILITY AND SERVICE
PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

REPORT PRINT DATE: 03/04/2024

VISITORS & CUSTOMERS – COMMUNITY

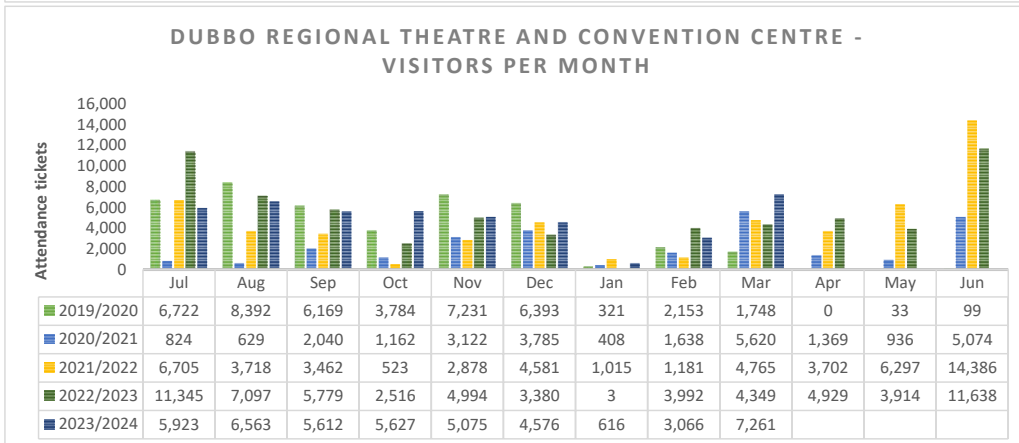
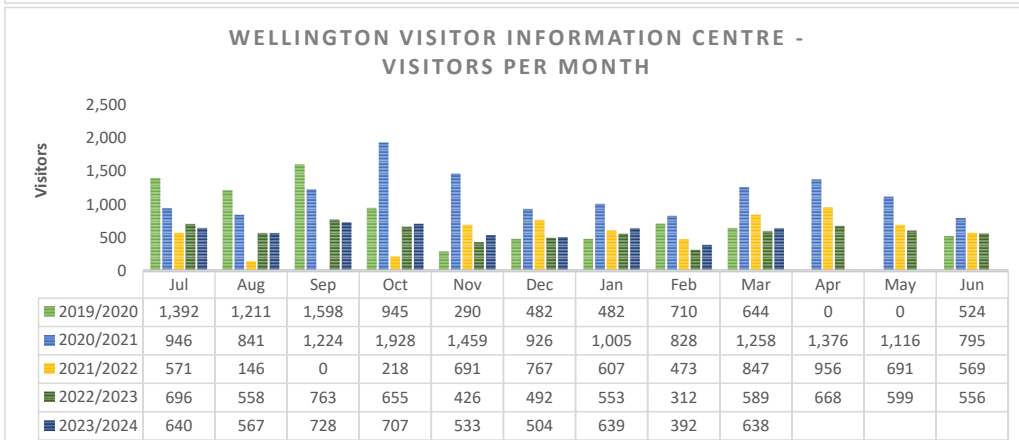
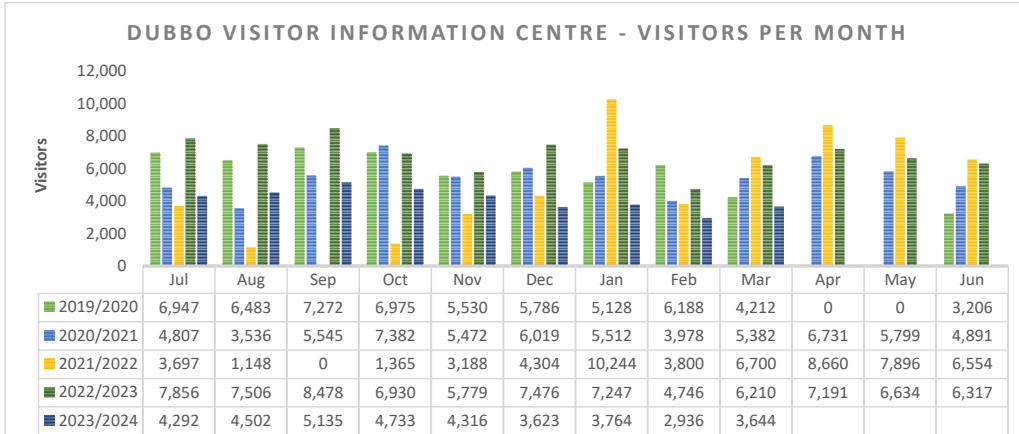




FACILITY AND SERVICE
PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

REPORT PRINT DATE: 03/04/2024

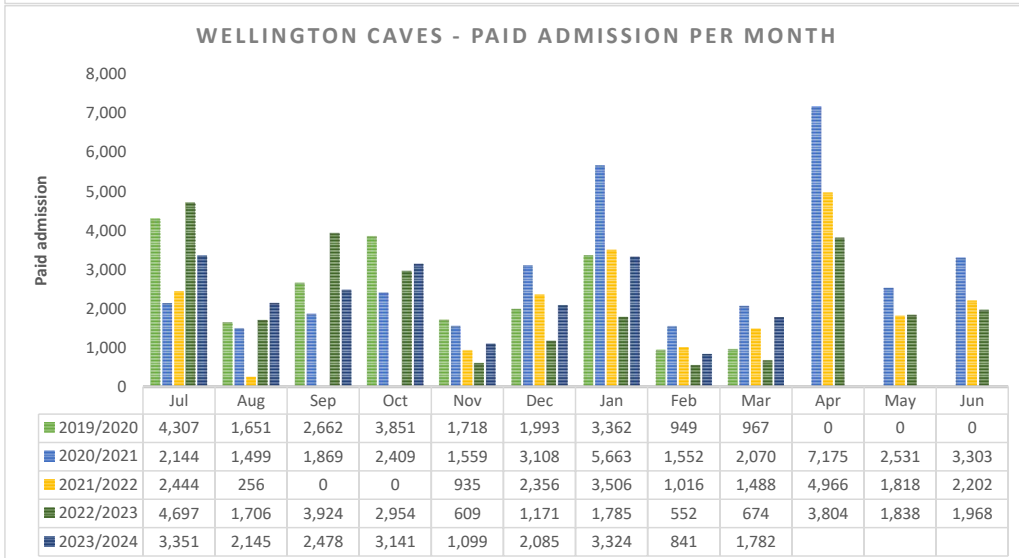
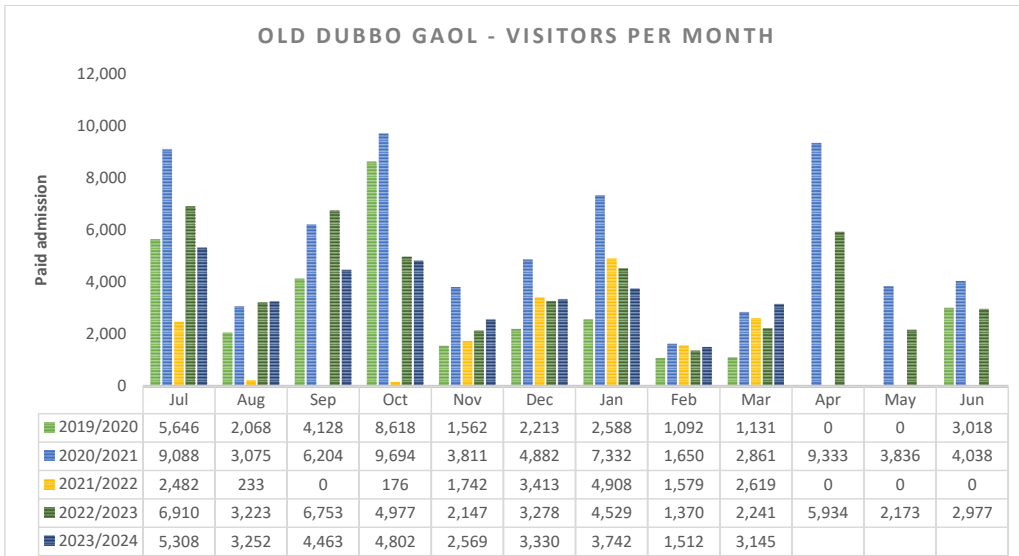
VISITORS & CUSTOMERS – TOURISM & CULTURAL





FACILITY AND SERVICE
PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

REPORT PRINT DATE: 03/04/2024

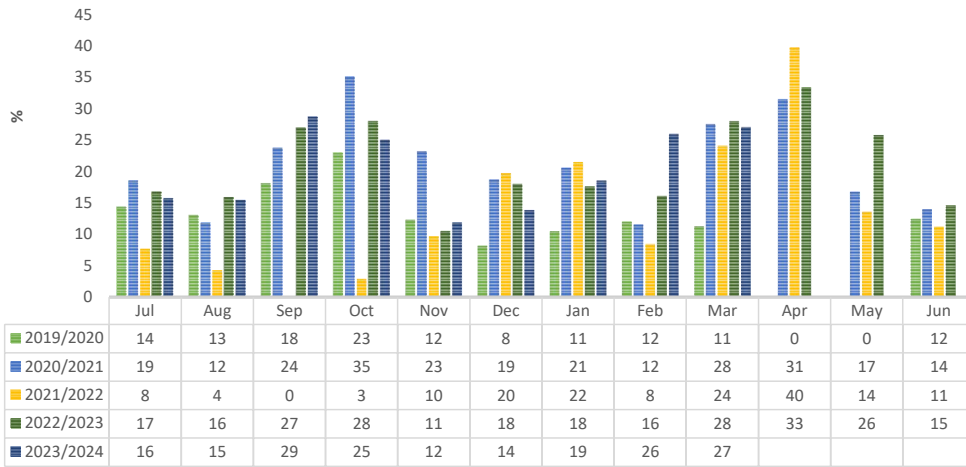




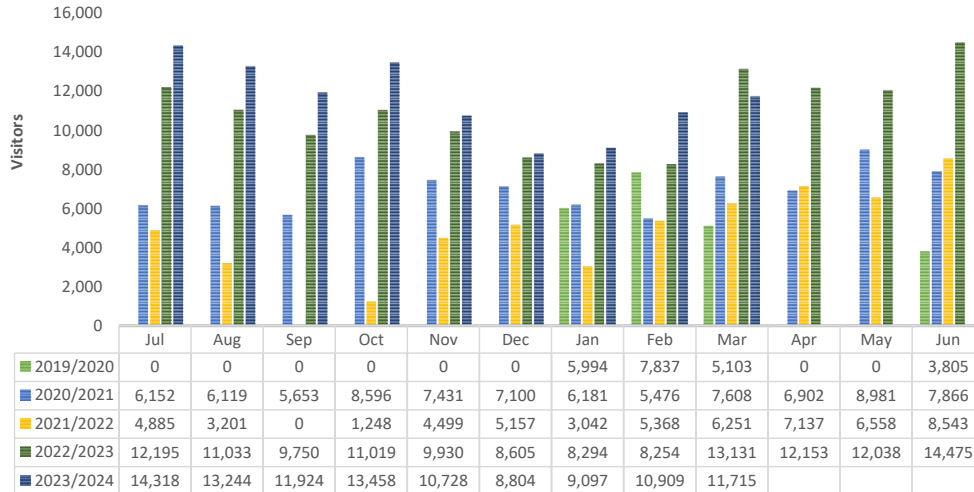
FACILITY AND SERVICE
PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD

REPORT PRINT DATE: 03/04/2024

WELLINGTON CAVES CARAVAN PARK - OCCUPANCY % PER MONTH



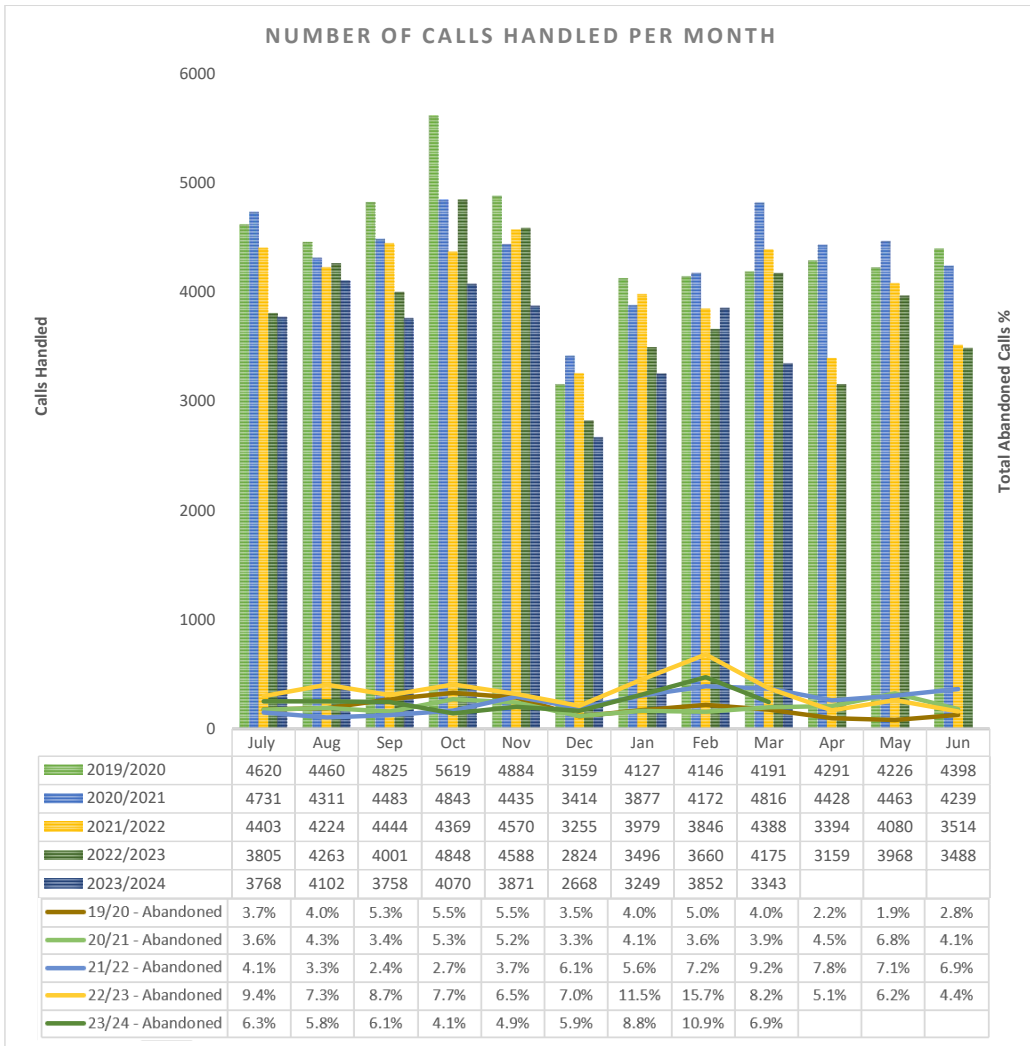
WESTERN PLAINS CULTURAL CENTRE - VISITORS PER MONTH





CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
CHARTER DASHBOARD

REPORT PRINT DATE: 03/04/2024

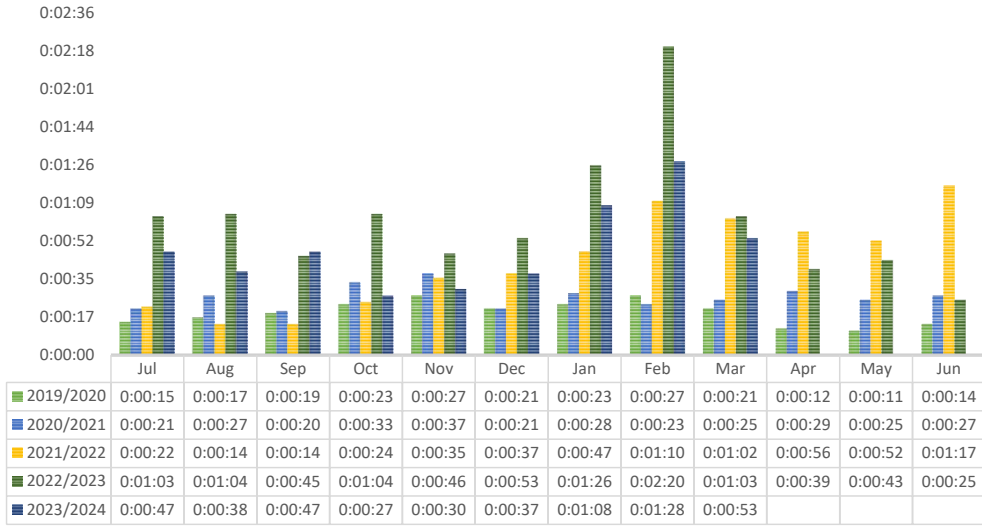




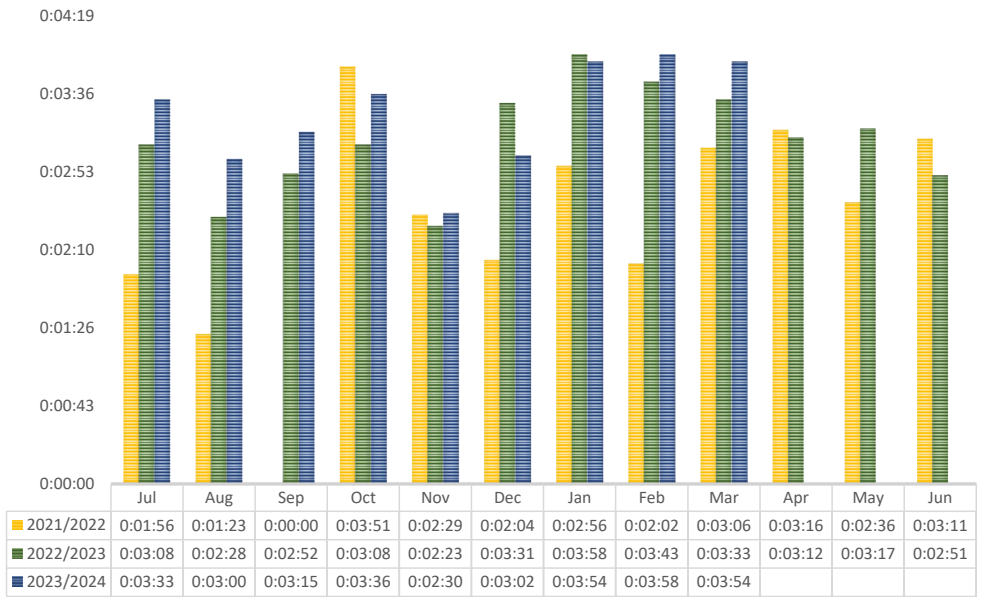
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
CHARTER DASHBOARD

REPORT PRINT DATE: 03/04/2024

AVERAGE WAIT TIME IN CALL CENTRE QUEUE



AVERAGE WAIT TIME IN COUNTER QUEUE

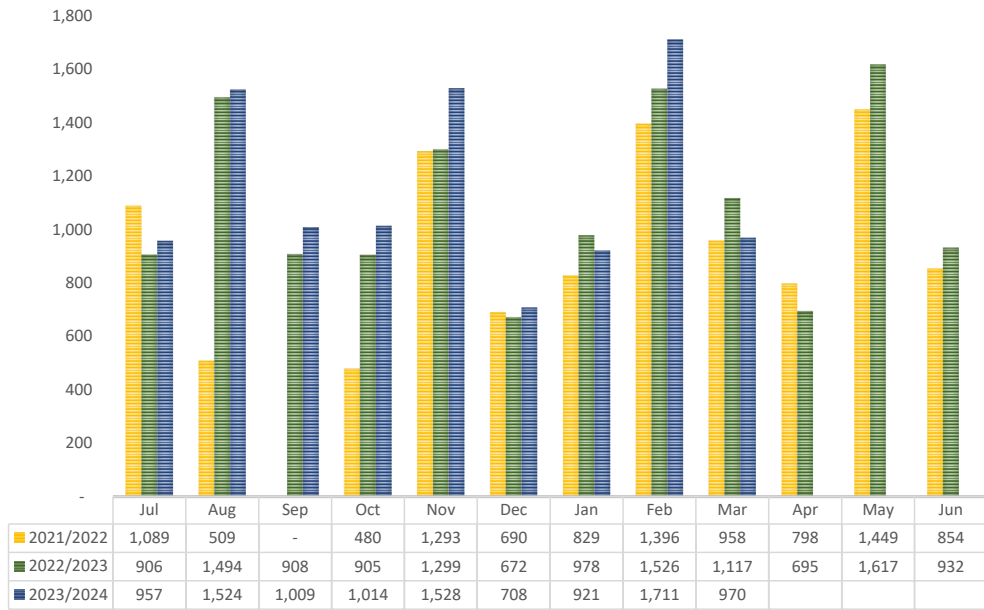




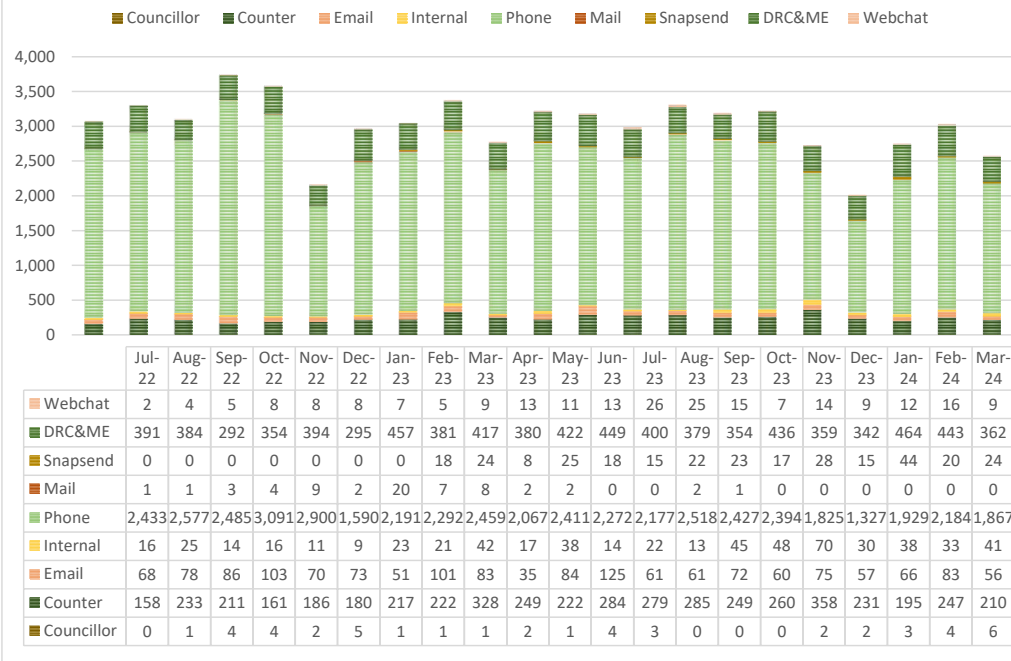
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
CHARTER DASHBOARD

REPORT PRINT DATE: 03/04/2024

NUMBER OF COUNTER TRANSACTIONS PER MONTH



CUSTOMER SERVICE REQUEST TOTAL PER MONTH BY CATEGORY





DUBBO REGIONAL
COUNCIL

REPORT: 2024 Local Government Election Update

DIVISION: Organisational Performance
REPORT DATE: 20 March 2024
TRIM REFERENCE: ID24/541

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek direction or decision Provide review or update Fulfil legislated requirement/Compliance 	
Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Government Election will be held on 14 September 2024. This report provides information for consideration around statutory requirements leading into the election, and Council processes supporting the election (both pre and post election). 	
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline of pre candidate information sessions. Promotion of campaign rules for candidates in the election. Set meeting dates immediately following the election. Timeline for Councillor Induction program following election. 	
Financial Implications	Budget Area	Corporate Governance
	Funding Source	2024 Election Expenses
	Proposed Cost	NSW Electoral Commission \$580,230 (excl. GST) Pre-Candidate Program \$5,150 (incl GST) Induction Program (est. \$33,000)
	Ongoing Costs	Nil
Policy Implications	Policy Title	N/A
	Impact on Policy	N/A

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The Towards 2040 Community Strategic Plan is a vision for the development of the region out to the year 2040. The Plan includes six principal themes and a number of objectives and strategies. This report is aligned to:

- Theme: 4 Leadership
- CSP Objective: 4.1 Council provides transparent, fair and accountable leadership and governance
- Delivery Program Strategy: 4.1.4 Statutory requirements are met and services are provided in a cost-effective and timely manner
- Theme: 4 Leadership
- CSP Objective: 4.1 Council provides transparent, fair and accountable

leadership and governance

Delivery Program Strategy: 4.1.2 Council's decision-making processes are open, transparent and accountable

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council note the pre candidate information sessions for the upcoming election.
2. That Council note the Caretaker period, commencing on 15 August 2024, for the upcoming election.
3. That following the declaration of the Local Government election results, an Ordinary Council Meeting be held on Thursday 26 September 2024 for the Mayoral election, with an alternative date for an Ordinary Council Meeting to be held on Thursday 3 October 2024 should the declaration of Local Government election results take longer than anticipated.
4. That Council note the rules for campaigning for the 2024 Local Government Election.
5. That Council note the induction program for new Councillors to be undertaken on:
 - Wednesday 25 September 2024
 - Thursday 26 September 2024
 - Wednesday 2 October 2024
 - Thursday 3 October 2024
 - Wednesday 9 October 2024 (Wellington)
 - Thursday 10 October 2024
 - Wednesday 16 October 2024
 - Thursday 17 October 2024
6. That an Ordinary Council meeting be held on Thursday 24 October 2024.

Jane Bassingthwaighe
Director Organisational Performance

AR
Manager Corporate
Governance

BACKGROUND

Along with the majority of NSW Councils, it has been resolved that the NSW Electoral Commission will be conducting the 2024 Local Government Election for Dubbo Regional Council, as resolved on 9 February 2023. Accordingly, Council entered a contract with the NSW Electoral Commission in June 2023, for delivery of the election, at a cost of \$580,230 (excl. GST).

Previous Resolutions of Council

9 February 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pursuant to sections 296(2) and (3) of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) (“the Act”) and subject to confirmation of estimates as provided by the Electoral Commissioner, that an election arrangement be entered into by contract for the Electoral Commissioner to administer all elections of the Council.2. Pursuant to sections 296(2) and (3) of the Act, as applied and modified by section 18, that a council poll arrangement be entered into by contract for the Electoral Commissioner to administer all council polls of the Council.3. Pursuant to sections 296(2) and (3) of the Act, as applied and modified by section 18, that a constitutional referendum arrangement be entered into by contract for the Electoral Commissioner to administer all constitutional referenda of the Council, if required.
-----------------	--

This report provides information on the pre candidate program, important election dates, and the induction program for new Councillors.

REPORT

The upcoming Council election will be held on 14 September 2024. This will also conclude the current term of Council, which has been shorter than the standard four-year term (two years and nine months) due to the previous election being delayed under the COVID-19 pandemic conditions.

This election will see the results of the referendum from the December 2021 election being implemented, specifically:

- The ward system has been abolished for candidates and voters
- A total of 11 Councillors will be elected (an increase from the current 10 councillors)

A circular from the Office of Local Government is attached at **Appendix 1** regarding the upcoming election and any potential referendums, which must be resolved by Council and submitted by early August 2024. Should a referendum be successful in the 2024 Local Government election, it would come into effect at the next Local Government election (September 2028).

The Corporate Governance team have established a working group to build and implement a program for the upcoming election, including pre-candidate sessions, facilitating the end of the current council term, and the induction program for the successful Councillors (following the September 2024 election).

The Customer Experience and Engagement team have developed a Your Say page and Engagement Plan to support the election program, which includes a communication plan to promote the program of information at Dubbo Regional Council and includes links to (generic) government material on nominating for election and public voting.

Consultation

Pre Candidate Information Sessions

To date, five pre candidate sessions have been confirmed and those sessions are outlined below. Staff are currently liaising with an organisation called “Politics in Colour” to deliver an information session and will continue to consider other suitable pre candidate sessions.

Women for Election: This is a targeted program to inspire more women in the region to see themselves as future political leaders, at all levels of government. The sessions are delivered by external facilitators at no cost to Council:

- Friday 3 May 2024 at 11:30am – 4.00pm: Women for Election (First Nations Women)
- Saturday 4 May 2024 at 9:30am - 4:30pm: Women for Election (All Women)

Local Government NSW (LGNSW): This session will be delivered by Peter Tegart on behalf of LGNSW. It aims to provide participants with an understanding of the role of Councillor and will discuss the expectations and potential challenges of the role.

- Tuesday 28 May 2024 at 5:30pm – 9:00pm: Peter Tegart for Local Government NSW

Dubbo Regional Council: The CEO and Governance staff will hold two information sessions for anyone considering running in the upcoming election:

- Monday 17 June 2024 at 6.00pm - 7:30pm (Wellington)
- Wednesday 26 June 2024 at 6.00pm - 7:30pm (Dubbo)

End of the Current term of Council

Under the Local Government Act, all Councils must abide by a caretaker period in the 28 days prior to an election. For the current elected body, this period commences on 16 August 2024 until 13 September 2024. During Caretaker period, Council should not make any major decisions that would limit the actions of the incoming Council.

- Under caretaker mode, Council’s should not, for example; enter into any contract or undertaking involving an expenditure or receipt by the Council of an amount equal to or greater than \$150,000 or 1% of the Council’s revenue from rates in the preceding financial year (whichever is the larger) determine a “controversial development application”, except where a failure to make such a determination would give rise to a deemed refusal, or such a deemed refusal arose before the commencement of the

caretaker period appoint or reappoint the Council's General Manager (except for temporary appointments).

- The last Council meeting for the current elected body will be Thursday 15 August 2024
- All Councillors will be required to return their Council issued equipment by no later than 4pm on Friday 13 September 2024

Councillors standing for Re-election

Current Councillors may stand for re-election in 2024. Those interested in re-election are reminded of the following statutory requirements around campaigning and signage:

Clause 8.17 of Councils Code of Conduct outlines the rules regarding the prohibited use of council resources for campaigning:

8.17

You must not use Council resources (including Council staff), property or facilities for the purpose of assisting your election campaign or the election campaigns of others unless the resources, property or facilities are otherwise available for use or hire by the public and any publicly advertised fee is paid for use of the resources, property or facility.

- A list of Do's and Don'ts regarding election signage has been developed for the Your Say page, and is provided here for reference:

Campaign Do's - Signs and materials can be displayed if:

- On private land with owner's written permission, including boundary walls/fences
- Fixed to a table or stall on a footpath or other public place the on day of polling
- Electronic signs MUST include name/address of the authorised person
- Displayed between 5 August 2024 until 6pm, 14 September 2024
- Candidates have a week to remove signage after 14 September 2024

Campaign Don'ts - Signs should not be:

- Larger than 0.8m² (Larger requires Development Application)
- Placed on premises or structures owned, occupied or managed by Council, State Government or Crown
- Located on a road or related area, including trees unless the poster is on a registered vehicle
- Within 6m of an entrance to a voting centre, including if heard loudspeakers or broadcasting devices
- Flyers are placed on windscreens of vehicles
- Circulated before 5 August 2024
- Circulated after 6pm, 14 September 2024

Induction program for new Councillors

The working party has developed a robust induction program for the newly elected group of Councillors to provide the education, practical understanding, support and strategies for new and potential returning Councillors. These sessions include presentations, workshops and site visits with the CEO, Directors and relevant staff, along with external presenters for Code of Conduct, DPE Water, Insurance, and a new two day program called Strategic Public Leaders (16 and 17 October 2024).

Successful candidates will need to attend all these sessions which will run from 9am to 5pm on:

- Wednesday 25 September 2024
- Thursday 26 September 2024
- Wednesday 2 October 2024
- Thursday 3 October 2024
- Wednesday 9 October 2024 (Wellington)
- Thursday 10 October 2024
- Wednesday 16 October 2024
- Thursday 17 October 2024

Resourcing Implications

- Council has signed a contract with the NSW Electoral Commission for delivery of the 2024 Local Government Election for \$580,230 (excl. GST) The election is a statutory requirement, and the budget allocation has been made in advance.
- The majority of pre candidate sessions are fully funded or delivered in-house. The Office of Local Government session is costed to council at \$5,150 (incl. GST)
- The induction program for Councillors is delivered by the CEO, Directors, and relevant council staff, along with several external presenters. There is no cost for some external presenters i.e. Council' insurance provider, however there are costs for other external presenters, current costs estimate for external presenters is \$33,000 (incl. GST).

Planned Communications

- The working party has developed the above program for potential candidates about the election requirements.
- The Your Say webpage promotes the above program and supports the election process with a number of links to key information. The webpage will go live following this report and will be monitored and updated during the lead up to the election.
- Successful candidates will complete an oath and affirmation ceremony and complete the induction program in September and October 2024.
- The Mayoral Election will be undertaken by a vote from newly elected Councillors at the first Council meeting on Thursday 26 September 2024 (or alternatively Thursday 3 October 2024) per the recommendation.

Timeframe

Key Date	Explanation
11 April 2024	Corporate Services Committee

APPENDICES:

- [1↓](#) Circular to Councils 24-01 Constitutional referendums and council polls



Circular Details	24-01 / 18 January 2024 / A857671
Previous Circular	20-39 Constitutional referendums and council polls
Who should read this	Councillors / General Managers / Council Governance Staff
Contact	Council Governance Team / 02 4428 4100 / olg@olg.nsw.gov.au
Action required	Information

Constitutional referendums and council polls

What's new or changing

- Councils are reminded to inform the NSW Electoral Commissioner (NSWEC) if they have resolved for the NSWEC to administer a constitutional referendum or poll in conjunction with the September 2024 local government elections.

What this will mean for your council

- Under section 16 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a council must obtain the approval of its electors at a constitutional referendum to do each of the following:
 - divide a council area into wards or abolish wards
 - change the number of councillors
 - change the method of electing the mayor
 - change the method of election for councillors where the council's area is divided into wards.

Key points

- Councils should notify the NSWEC as soon as possible if they wish to enter into an arrangement for the administration of a referendum or poll.
- If a council resolves that a constitutional referendum or poll is to be conducted, it must comply with the notification requirements contained in Schedule 10 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.
- Any changes approved at a constitutional referendum held in September 2024 will come into effect at the September 2028 local government elections.

Where to go for further information

- For councils considering, or that have resolved to have the NSWEC conduct a constitutional referendum or poll, contact Steve Robb at the NSW Electoral Commission on telephone 9290 5431 or Steve.Robb@elections.nsw.gov.au.
- See attachment to this Circular for further information.

Douglas Walther
A/Deputy Secretary, Local Government

Office of Local Government
 5 O'Keefe Avenue NOWRA NSW 2541
 Locked Bag 3015 NOWRA NSW 2541
 T 02 4428 4100 F 02 4428 4199 TTY 02 4428 4209
 E olg@olg.nsw.gov.au W www.olg.nsw.gov.au ABN 20 770 707 468

Attachment

Conducting a constitutional referendum

If a council resolves to conduct a constitutional referendum it must comply with the notification requirements contained in Schedule 10 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.

This includes notifying the Electoral Commissioner within 21 days of council resolving to conduct a constitutional referendum. Where the constitutional referendum is to be held in conjunction with the 14 September 2024 ordinary election of councillors, the council must notify the Electoral Commissioner of the question to be asked at the constitutional referendum by no later than 12 noon on the closing date for that election on 5 August 2024.

It is critical that the referendum question or questions are carefully worded to ensure workable outcomes. Questions should be clear, concise, and be capable of being responded to with a 'yes' or 'no' answer.

If more than one question is asked on a subject, then extra care needs to be taken to ensure that the possible combinations of 'yes' and 'no' answers do not produce a conflicting decision.

Councils are responsible for the preparation and publicity of the required explanatory material. Councils must ensure this material presents a balanced case both for and against any proposition to be put to a constitutional referendum.

Dividing an area into wards or abolishing all wards

Under section 210(5) of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), a council must not divide its area into wards or abolish all wards unless it has obtained approval to do so at a constitutional referendum.

After receiving elector approval at a constitutional referendum, and before dividing its area into wards, a council must undertake the consultation required by section 210A of the Act. This includes consulting with the Electoral Commissioner and the Australian Statistician together with public exhibition of the proposal. (Compliance with section 210A is not required where approval has been given by electors at a referendum to abolish wards.)

Changes to wards approved at a constitutional referendum conducted in September 2024 come into effect for the electoral term commencing in September 2028.

Changing the number of councillors

Section 224(2) of the Act requires that not less than 12 months before an ordinary election the council must determine the number of its councillors for the following term.

If a council has determined to change the number of its councillors, it must obtain approval at a constitutional referendum. Approval at a constitutional referendum conducted in September 2024 changes the number of councillors for the electoral term starting September 2028.

Office of Local Government
5 O'Keefe Avenue NOWRA NSW 2541
Locked Bag 3015 NOWRA NSW 2541
T 02 4428 4100 F 02 4428 4199 TTY 02 4428 4209
E olg@olg.nsw.gov.au W www.olg.nsw.gov.au ABN 20 770 707 468

If a reduction in councillor numbers is approved at a referendum and has not yet taken effect, a casual vacancy in the office of a councillor (but not a mayor elected by the councillors), must not be filled if the number of councillors will remain at or above the number approved at the referendum (section 294B of the Act).

Changing the method of electing the mayor

The Act provides two methods for electing a mayor — by popular vote at an ordinary election or by vote among the councillors. Section 228 of the Act permits a council to change the way the mayor is elected by seeking approval of its electors at a constitutional referendum.

Councils with wards are reminded that sections 280(2) and 281(2) of the Act require the same number of councillors to be elected for each ward. A popularly elected mayor is not included in this count. In such circumstances, councils should be mindful that changing the method of electing the mayor could result in an increase or decrease in the number of councillors to be elected.

If following the September 2024 election, electors approve a change to the way the mayor is elected, that change will come into effect for the electoral term commencing in September 2028.

Changing the method of electing councillors

The councillors for an area divided into wards are to be elected in accordance with either method of election prescribed under section 280 or 281 of the Act.

The method of election under section 280 (method 1) is to apply unless a decision made at a constitutional referendum is in force, which requires the method of election to be conducted under section 281 (method 2).

The decision made at a constitutional referendum to alter the method of election to method 2 must also specify the number of councillors to be elected by the ward electorate and the number of councillors to be elected by the area electorate.

If electors at a constitutional referendum conducted in conjunction with the 2024 ordinary elections approve a change to the method for electing councillors, this will come into effect for the electoral term commencing in September 2028.

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T 02 4428 4100 F 02 4428 4199 TTY 02 4428 4209
E olg@olg.nsw.gov.au W www.olg.nsw.gov.au ABN 20 770 707 468