



AGENDA

CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE

11 FEBRUARY 2025

MEMBERSHIP: Councillors J Black, L Butler, S Chowdhury, J Cowley, M Dickerson, R Ivey, K Richardson, A Ryan, P Toynton, P Wells and M Wright.

The meeting is scheduled to commence at 5:30 PM.

		Page
CSC25/1	LEAVE OF ABSENCE (ID25/69)	
CSC25/2	CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (ID25/70) 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.	
CSC25/3	INVESTMENT UNDER SECTION 625 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT - DECEMBER 2024 (ID25/1) The Committee had before it the report dated 6 January 2025 from the Revenue Accountant regarding Investment Under Section 625 of the Local Government Act - December 2024.	4
CSC25/4	2024/2025 DELIVERY PROGRAM AND OPERATIONAL PLAN - PROGRESS REPORT - 1 JULY TO 31 DECEMBER 2024 (ID25/2) The Committee had before it the report dated 6 January 2025 from the Corporate Strategy Performance Coordinator regarding 2024/2025 Delivery Program and Operational Plan - Progress Report - 1 July to 31 December 2024.	20
CSC25/5	VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICES REVIEW UPDATE (ID25/98) The Committee had before it the report dated 28 January 2025 from the Manager Strategic Partnership and Investment regarding Visitor Information Services Review Update.	90

CSC25/6	2024/2025 FESTIVE SEASON CLOSURE - CHRISTMAS NEW YEAR PERIOD (ID25/65)	130
	The Committee had before it the report dated 30 January 2025 from the Chief Executive Officer regarding 2024/2025 Festive Season Closure - Christmas New Year Period.	
CSC25/7	DETERMINATION OF COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATION ON COUNCIL COMMUNITY COMMITTEES (ID24/2412)	138
	The Committee had before it the report dated 30 January 2025 from the Governance Team Leader regarding Determination of Councillor Representation on Council Community Committees.	
CSC25/8	DRAFT COUNCIL POLICY - CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE - RESULTS OF PUBLIC EXHIBITION (ID25/128)	144
	The Committee had before it the report dated 29 January 2025 from the Governance Team Leader regarding Draft Council Policy - Code of Meeting Practice - Results of Public Exhibition.	
CSC25/9	DRAFT COUNCIL POLICY - PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS - RESULTS OF PUBLIC EXHIBITION (ID25/130)	218
	The Committee had before it the report dated 30 January 2025 from the Governance Officer regarding Draft Council Policy - Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors - Results of Public Exhibition.	

CONFIDENTIAL

CSC25/10 DUBBO REGIONAL AIRPORT AIRLINE REGULAR PASSENGER TRANSPORT (RPT) FEES AND CHARGES 2025/2026 (ID25/99)

The Committee had before it the report dated 28 January 2025 from the Manager Airport Strategy and Operations regarding Dubbo Regional Airport Airline Regular Passenger Transport (RPT) Fees and Charges 2025/2026.

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)) (Confidential report to allow commercial negotiations to occur with airlines. Publicity of report could jeopardise negotiations.).



REPORT: Investment Under Section 625 of the Local Government Act - December 2024

DIVISION: Organisaional Performance
REPORT DATE: 6 January 2025
TRIM REFERENCE: ID25/1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide review or update.• Fulfil legislative requirement/compliance.	
Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investment under Section 625 of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>.	
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Section 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.• Section 625 of the Local Government Act 1993.• Council's Investment Policy and Strategy.	
Financial Implications	Budget Area	Organisaional Performance
	Funding Source	Interest Earned on Investment
Policy Implications	Policy Title	Investment Policy 2024
	Impact on Policy	There are no policy implications arising from this report.

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 principle themes and a number of objectives and strategies. This report is aligned to:

Theme: 4 Leadership
CSP Objective: 4.2 The resources of Council are sustainably managed.
Delivery Program Strategy: 4.2.1 The system of raising revenue is equitable and revenue from grants and other income sources is maximised

RECOMMENDATION

That the information contained within the Investment under Section 625 of the Local Government Act Report be noted.

Jane Bassingthwaighte
Director Organisaional Performance

BM
Revenue Accountant

BACKGROUND

As required by Section 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, this report contains the details of all monies that Council has invested under Section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993* dated as at the last day of the reporting month.

In accordance with the *Investment Ministerial Order* dated 12 January 2011, Dubbo Regional Council (Council) may only invest money (on the basis that all investments must be denominated in Australian Dollars) in the following forms of investment:

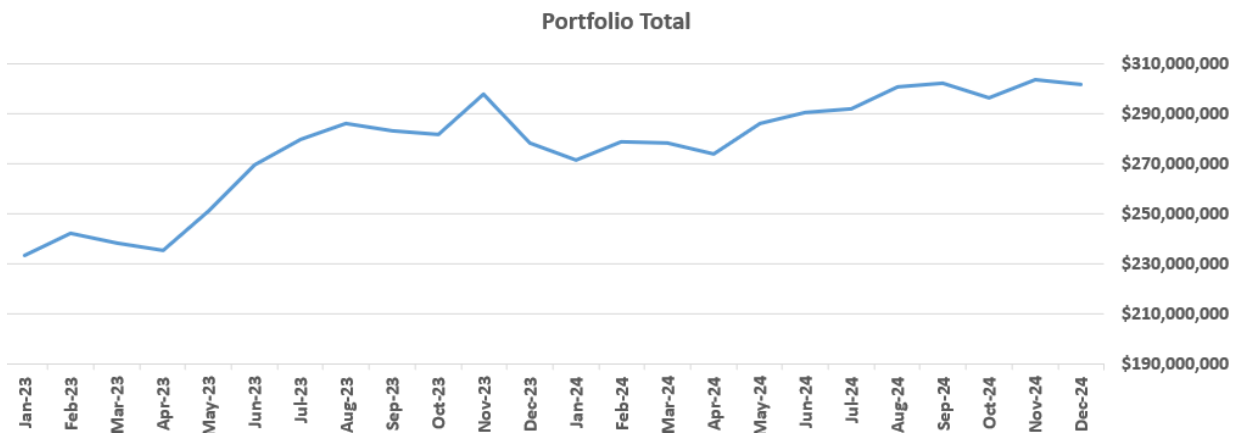
- a. any public funds or securities issued by or guaranteed by the Commonwealth, any State of the Commonwealth or a Territory;
- b. any debentures or securities issued by a council (within the meaning of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW));
- c. interest bearing deposits with, or any debentures or bonds issued by, an authorised deposit taking institution (as defined in the *Banking Act 1959* (Cwth)), but excluding subordinated debt obligations;
- d. any bill of exchange which has a maturity date of not more the 200 days; and if purchased for value confers on the holder in due course a right of recourse against a bank which has been designated as an authorised deposit-taking institution by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority;
- e. A deposit with the New South Wales Treasury Corporation or investment in an Hour-Glass investment facility of the New South Wales Treasury Corporation.

Investments, when placed, have been done so in accordance with the *Local Government Act, Local Government (General) Regulations 2021* and Council's Investment Policy and Strategy. Interest on investment has been accounted for on an accrual basis. This report details investments and annualised returns for the reporting month. Attachment 1 provides more detailed information on Council's investment portfolio for this period.

REPORT

Portfolio Overview

As of 31 December 2024, Council had a total investment Portfolio Face Value of \$301,551,234.89. This is inclusive of Councils Cash at bank consisting of General Funds, Sewer Funds, Water Funds, and restricted Grant Funding. Laminar Capital have provided a Market Value of \$305,920,434.30 for Council's Total Investment Portfolio.



Portfolio Fund Breakdown

Portfolio Breakdown – Current Month			
Fund	Total Amount Invested	PFA Bank Account Balance	Total
General	\$112,000,000.00	\$37,297,184.67	\$149,297,184.67
Water	\$57,000,000.00	\$4,772,764.05	\$61,772,764.05
Sewer	\$85,000,000.00	\$5,481,286.17	\$90,481,286.17
Total	\$254,000,000.00	\$47,551,234.89	\$301,551,234.89

Portfolio Breakdown – Previous Month			
Fund	Total Amount Invested	PFA Bank Account Balance	Total
General	\$117,000,000.00	\$33,813,344.32	\$150,813,344.32
Water	\$54,000,000.00	\$8,354,322.51	\$62,354,322.51
Sewer	\$87,000,000.00	\$3,393,394.71	\$90,393,394.71
Total	\$258,000,000.00	\$45,561,061.54	\$303,561,061.54

Key Movements

Investment Activity during the month was as follows:

- Investment Maturities – funds returned to Council:

ADI	Instrument	Amount	Funded by
Bank of Queensland	Term Deposit	\$3,000,000.00	Sewer
Bank of Queensland	Term Deposit	\$2,000,000.00	Water
Commonwealth Bank	Term Deposit	\$5,000,000.00	General
National Australia Bank	Term Deposit	\$4,000,000.00	Sewer

- New Investments Purchased – funds paid out by Council:

ADI	Instrument	Amount	Funded by
Bank of Queensland	Term Deposit	\$5,000,000.00	Sewer
Bank of Queensland	Term Deposit	\$5,000,000.00	Water

Notable Bank Account activity during the month was as follows:

- Notable Extraordinary Income – funds received by Council of an extraordinary nature:

During the month of December there was no notable extraordinary income.

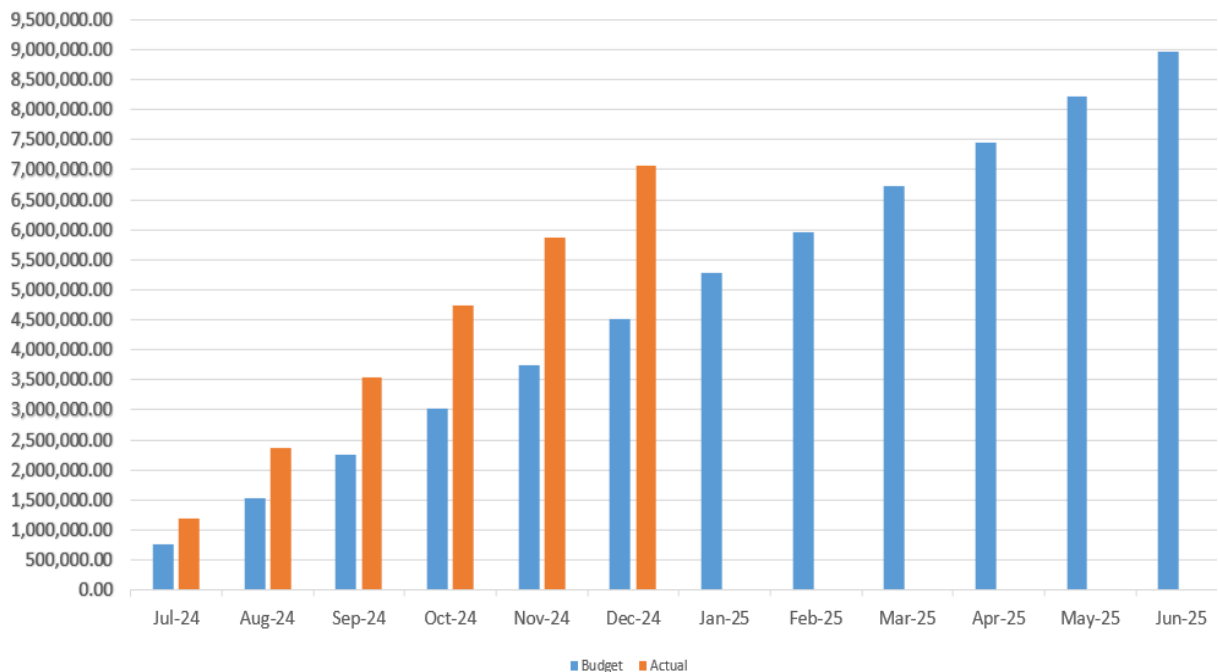
- Notable Expenditure – funds paid out by Council:

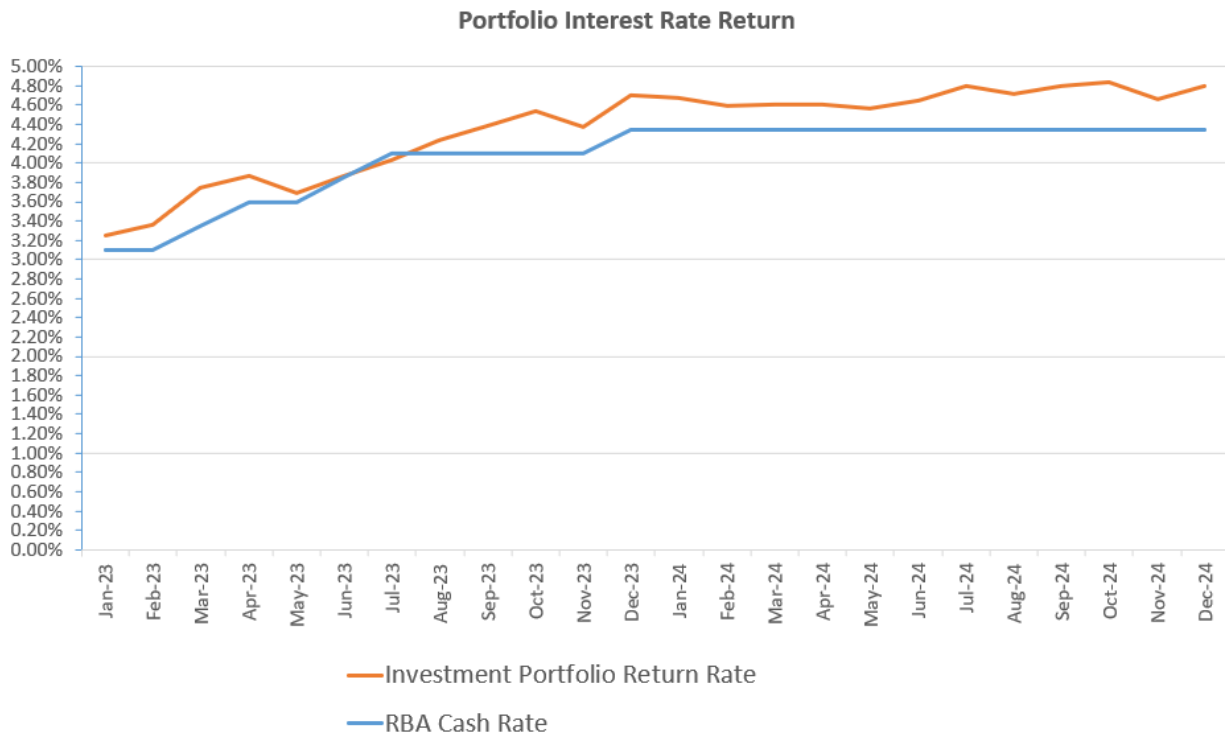
Animal Shelter Construction	\$1,247,462.66	General
Troy Gully Pump Station Upgrade	\$1,005,828.11	Sewer

Investment Interest Overview:

Interest earned on investments has been included within Council’s 2024/2025 Operational Plan, with total income generated from the Investment Portfolio forecast to be in excess of \$8,957,302.00. A budget adjustment for the additional income forecasted will be made as part of the December quarterly review process.

Budget to Actual - Interest on Investments





Council has investments totalling \$31,000,000.00 Face Value which were invested with fixed interest rates below the current Official Cash Rate of 4.35%. Investments totalling \$18,000,000.00 will mature in the 2025 Financial Year with interest rates of 0.90% and 1.70%. Longer term investments beyond 30 June 2025 totalling \$13,000,000.00 were invested with interest rates ranging from 1.70% to 4.25%. These investments were placed with competitive interest rates at the time the investments were made.

Summary

Cash Account

Council outperformed the 11.00 am Official Cash Rate market benchmark for one month return of 4.35%, achieving a return of 4.75% for its At Call investments.

Investment Portfolio

Council outperformed the twelve-month Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Performance Index of 4.47%, with an average return of 4.75% for its overall portfolio return.


Consultation

- Laminar Capital Pty Ltd provides advisory services to Council on any investment related decision.

Resourcing Implications

- The management of Council's investment portfolio is a primary activity of a staff member within Council's Financial Operations branch.

APPENDICES:

[1](#)  Investment Report - Laminar Report - December 2024 - Attachment

Dubbo Regional Council

Investment Report

1 December 2024 to 31 December 2024



Portfolio Valuation As At 31 December 2024

Security	Security Rating	ISIN	Face Value Original	Face Value Current	Fl Cap Price/ Unit Price/ Share Price	Unit Count/ Share Count	Accrued Interest Price	Market Value	% Total Value	Running Yield	Weighted Running Yield
At Call Investment											
NAB At Call In	S&P ST A1+		47,551,234.89	47,551,234.89	100.000		0.000	47,551,234.89	15.54%	4.75%	4.75%
			47,551,234.89	47,551,234.89				47,551,234.89	15.54%		
Covered Fixed Bond											
SunBank 3.25 24 Aug 2026 COVEREDFIX	Moody's Aaa	AU3CB0239267	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	97.999		1.139	4,956,900.00	1.62%	2.95%	2.95%
			5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00				4,956,900.00	1.62%		
Fixed Rate Bond											
MACQ 1.7 12 Feb 2025 Fixed	S&P A+	AU3CB0270387	8,000,000.00	8,000,000.00	99.635		0.651	8,022,880.00	2.62%	1.65%	
NTTC 0.9 15 Jun 2025 - Issued 04 Feb 2021 - Dubbo Regional Council Fixed	Moody's Aa3		5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000		0.491	5,024,550.00	1.64%	0.90%	
NTTC 0.9 15 Jun 2025 - Issued 10 Feb 2021 - Dubbo Regional Council Fixed	Moody's Aa3		5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000		0.491	5,024,550.00	1.64%	0.90%	
NTTC 4.8 15 Dec 2028 - Issued 30 August 2024 - Dubbo Council Fixed	Moody's Aa3		5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000		0.210	5,010,500.00	1.64%	4.80%	
RABOBK 4.25 12 May 2026 Fixed	Moody's Aa2	AU3CB0233898	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	99.709		0.575	5,014,200.00	1.64%	3.71%	
			28,000,000.00	28,000,000.00				28,096,680.00	9.18%		2.34%
Floating Rate Note											
Auswide 0.9 17 Mar 2025 FRN	Moody's Baa2	AU3FN0067393	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.014		0.206	5,011,000.00	1.64%	5.37%	
Auswide 1.3 10 Jun 2025 FRN	Moody's Baa2	AU3FN0069555	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.156		0.330	5,024,300.00	1.64%	5.74%	
Auswide 1.5 07 Nov 2025 FRN	Moody's Baa2	AU3FN0073037	3,500,000.00	3,500,000.00	100.323		0.875	3,541,930.00	1.16%	5.92%	
BOQ 0.63 06 May 2026 FRN	S&P A-	AU3FN0060406	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	99.927		0.761	5,034,400.00	1.65%	5.05%	
MYS 0.65 16 Jun 2025 FRN	Moody's Baa2	AU3FN0061024	8,000,000.00	8,000,000.00	99.941		0.210	8,012,080.00	2.62%	5.11%	
MYS 1.3 13 Oct 2025 FRN	Moody's Baa2	AU3FN0072369	8,000,000.00	8,000,000.00	100.341		1.221	8,124,960.00	2.66%	5.72%	
UBS Aust 0.5 26 Feb 2026 FRN	Moody's Aa3	AU3FN0058608	4,500,000.00	4,500,000.00	99.969		0.472	4,519,845.00	1.48%	4.92%	
			39,000,000.00	39,000,000.00				39,268,515.00	12.84%		5.39%
Term Deposit											
BOQ 5.42 30 Jan 2025 427DAY TD	S&P ST A2		8,000,000.00	8,000,000.00	100.000		0.475	8,038,014.24	2.63%	5.42%	
BOQ 4.95 03 Mar 2025 181DAY TD	S&P ST A2		2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000		1.614	2,032,276.72	0.66%	4.95%	
BOQ 4.95 10 Apr 2025 762DAY TD	S&P ST A2		5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000		4.001	5,200,034.25	1.70%	4.95%	
BOQ 4.8 02 Feb 2026 549DAY TD	S&P A-		5,500,000.00	5,500,000.00	100.000		1.986	5,609,216.42	1.83%	4.80%	
BOQ 4.76 21 Sep 2026 1461DAY TD	S&P A-		5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000		1.291	5,064,553.40	1.66%	4.76%	
BOQ 4.85 11 Dec 2026 738DAY TD	S&P A-		5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000		0.372	5,018,602.75	1.64%	4.85%	
BOQ 4.91 23 Sep 2027 1826DAY TD	S&P A-		4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	100.000		1.332	4,053,270.12	1.32%	4.91%	
BOQ 5.15 03 Mar 2028 1827DAY TD	S&P A-		3,000,000.00	3,000,000.00	100.000		4.261	3,127,832.88	1.02%	5.15%	
BOQ 5.15 03 Mar 2028 1827DAY TD	S&P A-		2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000		4.275	2,085,504.10	0.68%	5.15%	
BOQ 5.15 03 Mar 2028 1827DAY TD	S&P A-		2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000		4.261	2,085,221.92	0.68%	5.15%	
BOQ 5.23 May 2028 1462DAY TD	S&P A-		2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000		3.055	2,061,095.90	0.67%	5.00%	
BOQ 4.75 02 Aug 2029 1826DAY TD	S&P A-		4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	100.000		1.965	4,078,602.72	1.33%	4.75%	
BOQ 5.07 27 Nov 2029 1826DAY TD	S&P A-		6,000,000.00	6,000,000.00	100.000		0.472	6,028,336.44	1.97%	5.07%	
BOQ 5.05 06 Dec 2029 1833DAY TD	S&P A-		7,000,000.00	7,000,000.00	100.000		0.443	7,030,991.80	2.30%	5.05%	
BOQ 5.05 06 Dec 2029 2M 1833DAY TD	S&P A-		2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000		0.443	2,008,854.80	0.66%	5.05%	
BOQ 5.11 Dec 2029 1834DAY TD	S&P A-		5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000		0.384	5,019,178.10	1.64%	5.00%	
PCCU 5.2 13 Jun 2025 364DAY TD	S&P ST A2		5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000		2.849	5,142,465.75	1.68%	5.20%	
JUDO 5.2 22 May 2025 365DAY TD	S&P ST A2		3,000,000.00	3,000,000.00	100.000		3.177	3,095,309.58	1.01%	5.20%	
JUDO 5.2 22 May 2025 365DAY TD	S&P ST A2		2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000		3.177	2,063,539.72	0.67%	5.20%	
JUDO 5.13 16 Dec 2025 550DAY TD	S&P ST A2		3,000,000.00	3,000,000.00	100.000		2.811	3,084,328.77	1.01%	5.13%	
JUDO 5.13 16 Dec 2025 550DAY TD	S&P ST A2		4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	100.000		2.811	4,112,438.36	1.34%	5.13%	
JUDO 1.7 16 Sep 2026 1826DAY TD	S&P BBB		3,000,000.00	3,000,000.00	100.000		0.494	3,014,810.97	0.99%	1.70%	
MACQCU 5.12 18 Feb 2025 365DAY TD	Unrated ST UR		2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000		4.433	2,088,653.16	0.68%	5.12%	
NAB 5.07 28 Feb 2025 365DAY TD	S&P ST A1+		5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000		4.250	5,212,523.30	1.70%	5.07%	
NAB 5.07 28 Feb 2025 365DAY TD	S&P ST A1+		3,000,000.00	3,000,000.00	100.000		4.250	3,127,513.98	1.02%	5.07%	
NAB 5.25 02 Jul 2025 397DAY TD	S&P ST A1+		5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000		3.078	5,153,904.10	1.68%	5.25%	

NAB 5.3 07 Jul 2025 376DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000	2.730	5,136,493.15	1.68%	5.30%
NAB 5.45 07 Jul 2025 371DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	12,000,000.00	12,000,000.00	100.000	2.732	12,327,895.92	4.03%	5.45%
NAB 5.4 08 Jul 2025 365DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	100.000	2.604	4,104,153.44	1.34%	5.40%
NAB 5.2 04 Aug 2025 367DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000	2.151	2,043,024.66	0.67%	5.20%
NAB 5.3 15 Aug 2025 385DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000	2.294	2,045,884.94	0.67%	5.30%
NAB 4.9 10 Sep 2025 365DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000	1.504	2,030,071.24	0.66%	4.90%
NAB 5.2 24 Sep 2025 488DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000	3.148	5,157,424.65	1.69%	5.20%
SunBank 5.18 05 Feb 2025 365DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	1,500,000.00	1,500,000.00	100.000	4.669	1,570,036.44	0.51%	5.18%
SunBank 5.11 06 May 2025 455DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000	4.606	5,230,300.00	1.71%	5.11%
SuncorpGp 5.11 13 Aug 2025 547DAY TD	S&P ST A1	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000	4.508	5,225,400.00	1.71%	5.11%
Westpac 5.09 18 Mar 2025 365DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000	4.016	5,200,810.95	1.70%	5.09%
Westpac 5.09 18 Mar 2025 365DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000	4.016	2,080,324.38	0.68%	5.09%
Westpac 5.29 30 Apr 2025 365DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	100.000	0.899	1,008,985.75	0.33%	5.29%
Westpac 5.01 23 Jul 2025 516DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	5,000,000.00	5,000,000.00	100.000	0.522	5,026,079.45	1.64%	5.01%
Westpac 5.15 27 Oct 2025 458DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000	0.903	2,018,060.28	0.66%	5.15%
Westpac 5.15 27 Oct 2025 458DAY TD	S&P ST A1+	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000	0.903	2,018,060.28	0.66%	5.15%
Westpac 5.2 08 Jan 2026 549DAY TD	S&P AA-	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	100.000	1.197	4,047,868.48	1.32%	5.20%
Westpac 5.2 08 Jan 2026 549DAY TD	S&P AA-	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000	1.197	2,023,934.24	0.66%	5.20%
Westpac 5.2 08 Jan 2026 549DAY TD	S&P AA-	2,000,000.00	2,000,000.00	100.000	1.197	2,023,934.24	0.66%	5.20%
Westpac 5.17 30 Apr 2029 1826DAY TD	S&P AA-	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	100.000	0.878	4,035,127.68	1.32%	5.17%
Westpac 4.5 14 Aug 2029 1826DAY TD	S&P AA-	4,000,000.00	4,000,000.00	100.000	0.579	4,023,178.08	1.32%	4.50%
Westpac 4.56 04 Oct 2029 1826DAY TD	S&P AA-	3,000,000.00	3,000,000.00	100.000	1.099	3,032,981.91	0.99%	4.56%
		182,000,000.00	182,000,000.00			186,047,104.41	60.82%	5.04%
Total Portfolio		301,551,234.89	301,551,234.89			305,920,434.30	100.00%	4.75%

Portfolio Valuation By Categories As At 31 December 2024

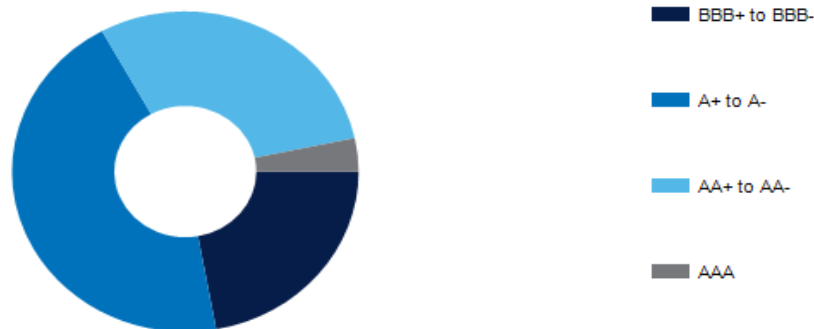
Short Term Issuer/Security Rating Group	Market Value	% Total Value
N/R	2,088,653.16	0.68%
A2	32,768,407.39	10.71%
A1	5,225,400.00	1.71%
A1+	118,042,781.80	38.59%
Portfolio Total	158,125,242.35	51.69%

Market Value by Security Rating Group (Short Term)



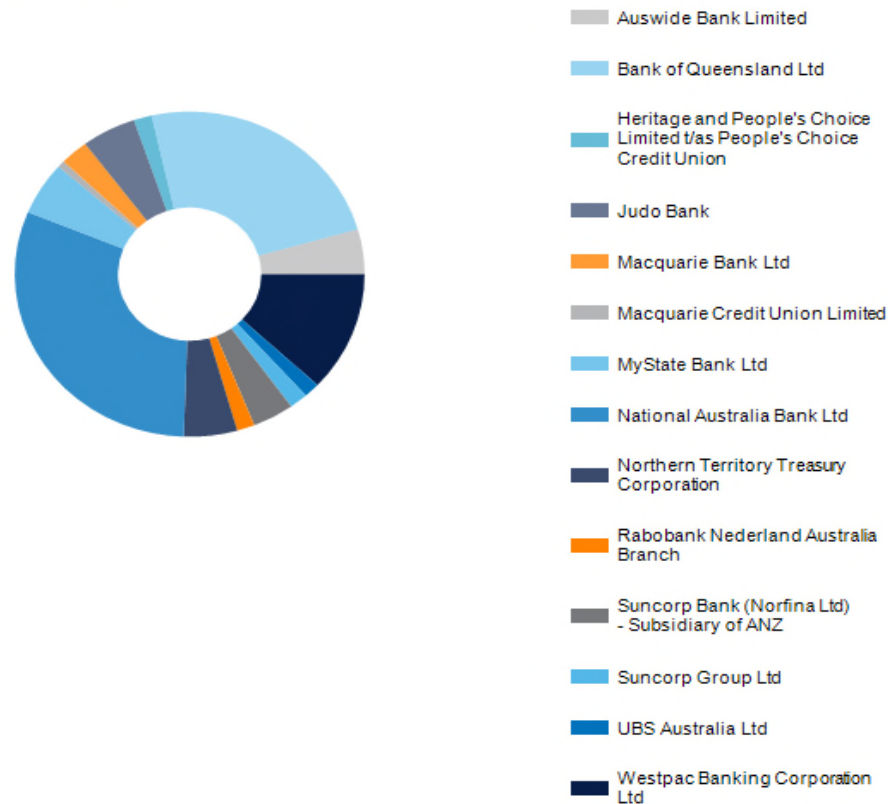
Long Term Issuer/Security Rating Group	Market Value	% Total Value
BBB+ to BBB-	32,729,080.97	10.70%
A+ to A-	66,328,541.35	21.68%
AA+ to AA-	43,780,669.63	14.31%
AAA	4,956,900.00	1.62%
Portfolio Total	147,795,191.95	48.31%

Market Value by Security Rating Group (Long Term)



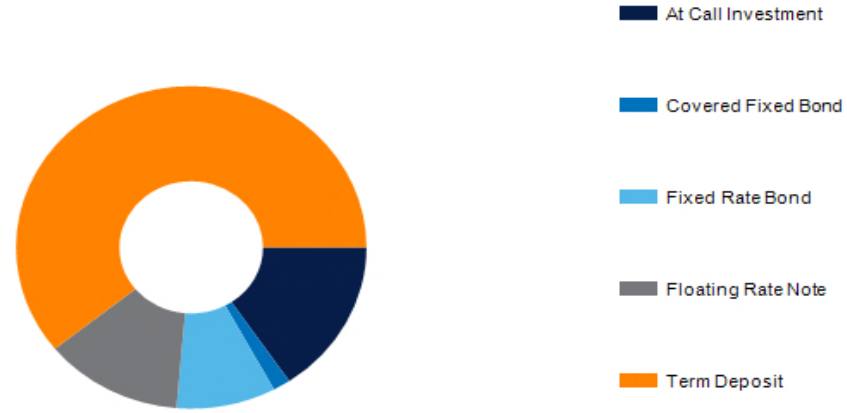
Issuer	Market Value	% Total Value
Auswide Bank Limited	13,577,230.00	4.44%
Bank of Queensland Ltd	73,575,986.56	24.05%
Heritage and People's Choice Limited t/as People's Choice Credit Union	5,142,465.75	1.68%
Judo Bank	15,370,427.40	5.02%
Macquarie Bank Ltd	8,022,880.00	2.62%
Macquarie Credit Union Limited	2,088,653.16	0.68%
MyState Bank Ltd	16,137,040.00	5.27%
National Australia Bank Ltd	93,890,124.27	30.69%
Northern Territory Treasury Corporation	15,059,600.00	4.92%
Rabobank Nederland Australia Branch	5,014,200.00	1.64%
Suncorp Bank (Norfina Ltd) - Subsidiary of ANZ	11,757,236.44	3.84%
Suncorp Group Ltd	5,225,400.00	1.71%
UBS Australia Ltd	4,519,845.00	1.48%
Westpac Banking Corporation Ltd	36,539,345.72	11.94%
Portfolio Total	305,920,434.30	100.00%

Market Value by Issuer



Security Type	Market Value	% Total Value
At Call Investment	47,551,234.89	15.54%
Covered Fixed Bond	4,956,900.00	1.62%
Fixed Rate Bond	28,096,680.00	9.18%
Floating Rate Note	39,268,515.00	12.84%
Term Deposit	186,047,104.41	60.82%
Portfolio Total	305,920,434.30	100.00%

Market Value by Security Type



Term Remaining	Market Value	% Total Value
0 to < 1 Year	205,911,492.35	67.31%
1 to < 3 Years	50,381,535.62	16.47%
3 to < 5 Years	49,627,406.33	16.22%
Portfolio Total	305,920,434.30	100.00%

Note: Term Remaining is calculated using a weighted average life date (WAL) where appropriate and available

Market Value by Term Remaining



Performance Statistics For Period Ending 31 December 2024

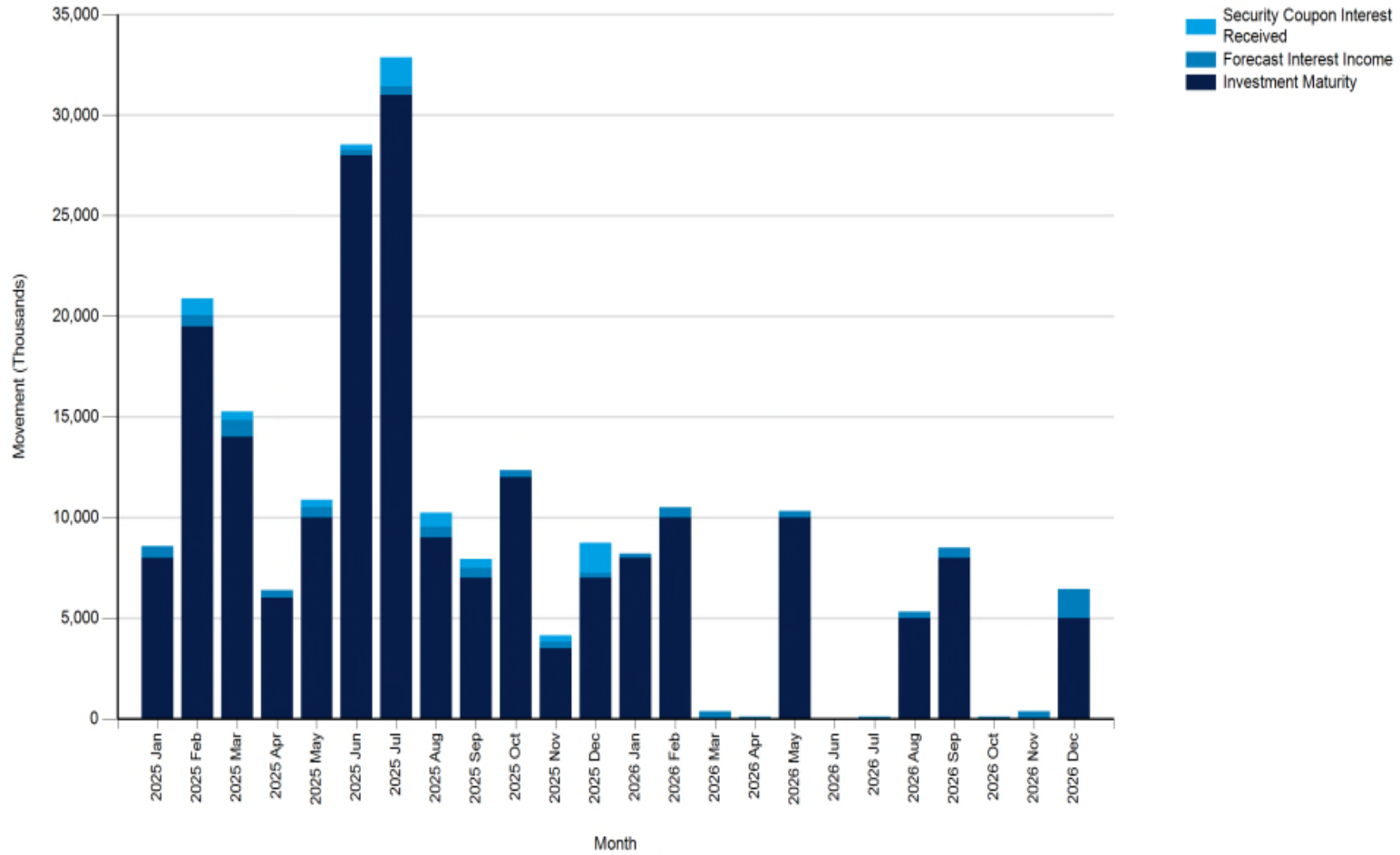
Trading Book	1 Month	3 Month	12 Month	Since Inception
Dubbo Regional Council				
Portfolio Return (1)		0.42%	1.23%	5.06%
Performance Index (2)		0.38%	1.12%	4.47%
Excess Performance (3)		0.04%	0.11%	0.59%

Notes

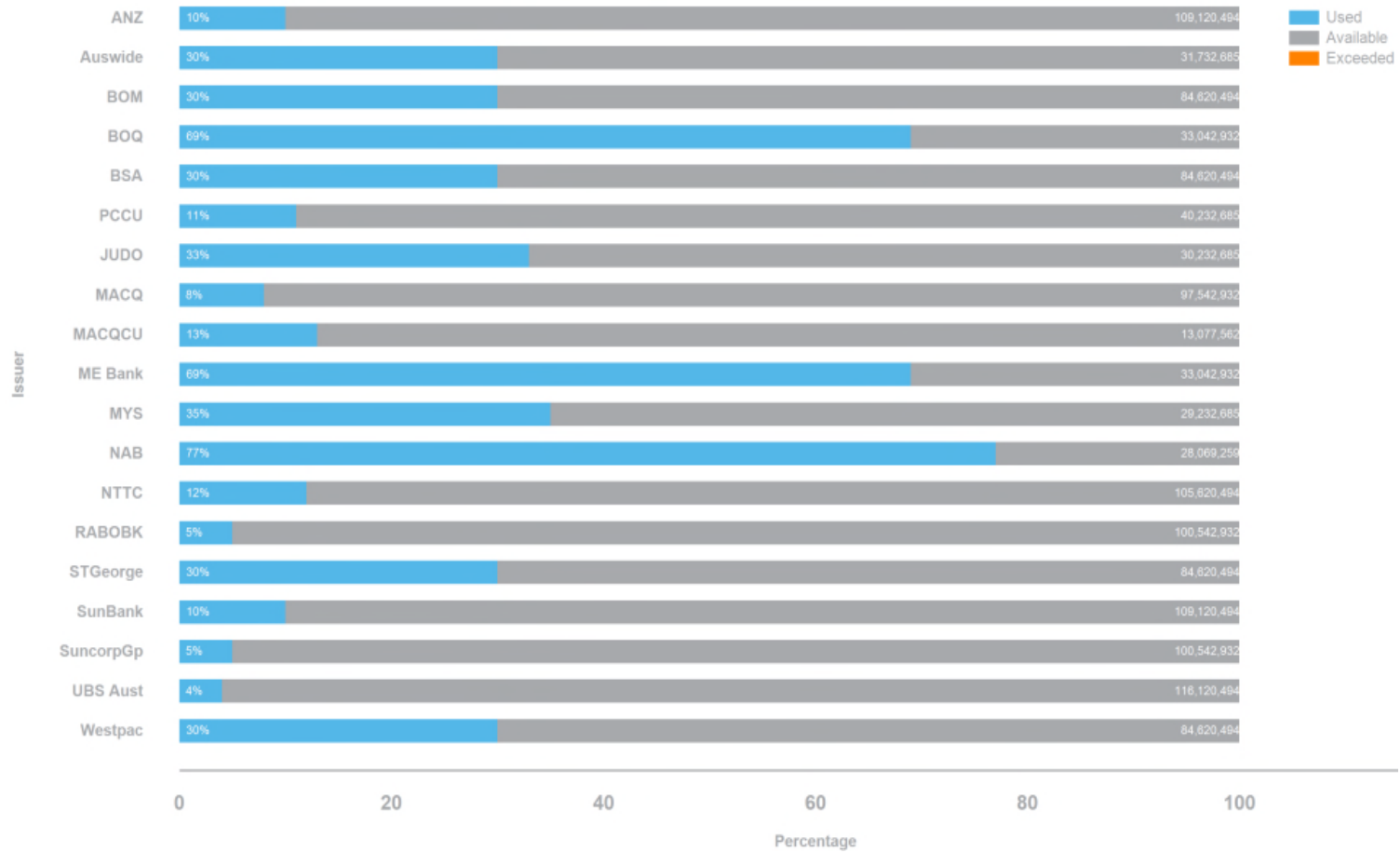
- 1 Portfolio performance is the rate of return of the portfolio over the specified period
- 2 The Performance Index is the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index (Bloomberg Page BAUBIL)
- 3 Excess performance is the rate of return of the portfolio in excess of the Performance Index

Trading Book	Weighted Average Running Yield
Dubbo Regional Council	4.75

Cash Flow Movements



Issuer Trading Limits





REPORT: 2024/2025 Delivery Program and Operational Plan - Progress Report - 1 July to 31 December 2024

DIVISION: Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement
REPORT DATE: 6 January 2025
TRIM REFERENCE: ID25/2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose	Provide review or update	• Fulfil legislated requirement/Compliance
Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This report details Council’s progress on implementing the Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2024/2025. The Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2024/2025 has 191 actions of which; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5% are complete (10 actions) 90% are on target (172 actions) 2% are off target (4 action) 1% are not due to start (2 actions) 1% are deferred (2 actions) 1% are cancelled (1 action). 	
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chief Executive Officer is required to provide progress updates to Council at least every six months in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993. The Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines. 	
Financial Implications	Budget Area	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
	Funding Source	Corporate Strategy and Performance
	Proposed Cost	There are no costs associated with the completion of this report.
	Ongoing Costs	Nil.
Policy Implications	Policy Title	There are no policy implications arising from this report.
	Impact on Policy	Nil.

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

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the 2024/2025 Delivery Program and Operational Plan – Progress Report – July to December 2024 (attached as Appendix 1) be noted.**
- 2. That the actions that are listed as cancelled or deferred for reasons outlined in the report be noted.**

Jessica Brown
Director Strategy Partnerships and Engagement

ZJ
Corporate Strategy
Performance Coordinator

BACKGROUND

Previous Resolutions of Council

27 June 2024 CCL24/150	In part... 5. <i>That the following draft documents be adopted and commence operation on 1 July 2024:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Draft 2024/2025 Delivery Program and Operational Plan (Appendix 1).</i> • <i>Draft 2024/2025 Budget and Forward Forecasts for 2025/2026, 2026/2027 and 2027/2028 including Capital Expenditure (Appendix 2).</i> • <i>Draft 2024/2025 Fees and Charges (Appendix 3).</i> • <i>Draft 2024/2025 Statement of Revenue Policy (Appendix 4).</i> • <i>Draft 2024/2025 Resourcing Strategy (including the Long-Term Financial Plan, Workforce Management Strategy and Asset Management Strategy) (Appendix 5).</i> • <i>Draft 2024/2025 Macquarie Regional Library Operational Plan, Budget and Fees and Charges (Appendix 6).</i>
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REPORT

The 2024/2025 Delivery Program and Operational Plan contains 191 actions which have been separated into the following six themes.

- Housing 18 actions 10% of all actions;
- Infrastructure 41 actions 21% of all actions;
- Economy 29 actions 15% of all actions;
- Leadership 30 actions 16% of all actions;
- Liveability 41 actions 21% of all actions; and
- Environmental Sustainability 32 actions 17% of all actions.

Each action has been allocated to a Responsible Officer who is accountable for its progress. The Responsible Officer is required to determine its status in accordance with **Figure 1**.







Status Option	Definition	Legend
Completed	Action completed for the year and there will be no further resources needed to deliver it.	
On Target	Action underway and is progressing as planned.	
Off Target	There is an issue that has delayed progress with this action, or it has not started due to an issue.	
Not due to start	This action is not scheduled to start until later in the year and can be updated in the relevant quarter.	
Cancelled	The action will not start/progress any further.	
Deferred	The start date has been moved into the next or following financial year/s.	

Figure 1. Status descriptions

The detailed progress report, attached as **Appendix 1**, provides status updates and the input comment for each action. **Figure 2** summarises the status by Community Strategic Plan (CSP) theme for the period of July to December 2024.

- 5% of actions are complete;
- 90% of actions are on target;
- 2% of actions are off target;
- 1% of actions are not due to start
- 1% of actions are deferred; and
- 1% of actions are cancelled.

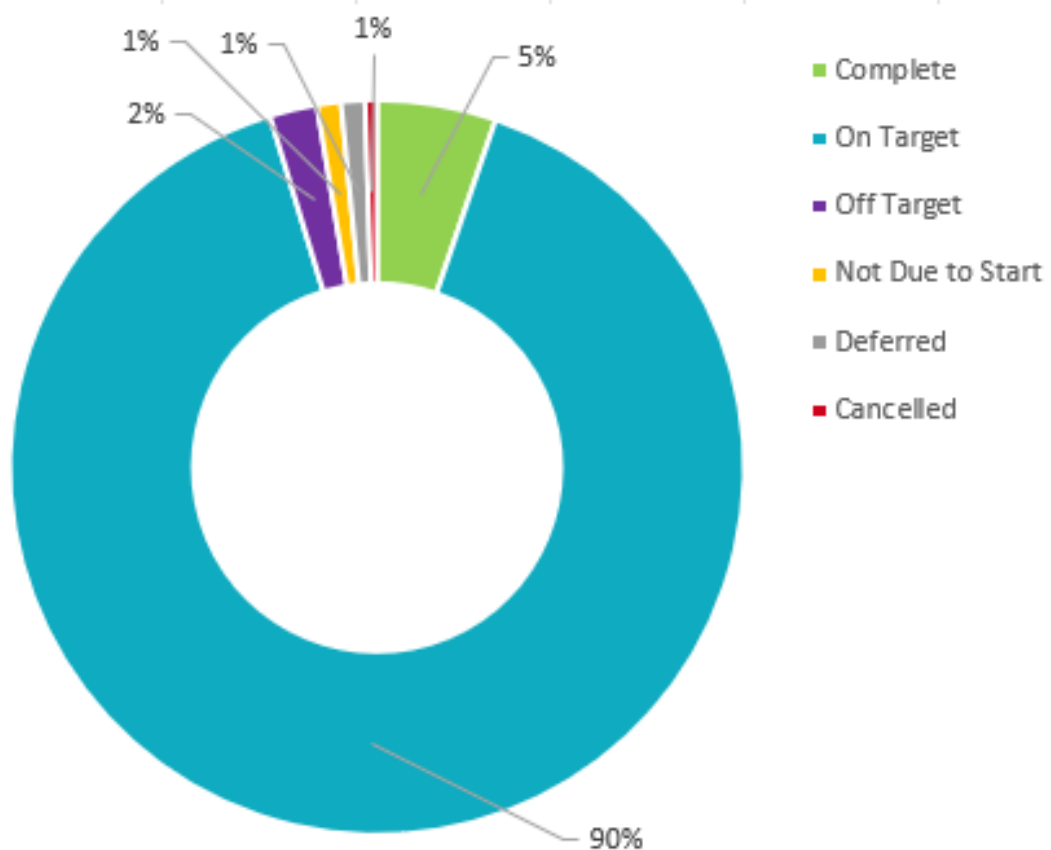


Figure 2. Overall status

It should also be noted that progress of actions is at 31 December 2024. There may be outcomes that have been achieved in January 2025 that are not reflected in this report.

Summary of action status by Theme



Information regarding the seven actions that are off target, deferred or cancelled is provided in the table below.

Action	Status	Update
1.1.3.1 Prepare an issues paper for a Dubbo CBD Strategy.	Off Target	Council received Gateway Determinations from the Department of Planning in December 2024 to make residential accommodation permitted in the Dubbo CBD, Progress on this project has been delayed as a result of staff time being required to further other priority housing projects, including the North-West and the Central-West Precincts in Dubbo, and the Housing Strategies being funded under the Federal Government's Housing Support Program - Stream 1.
2.1.3.1 Finalise a business case and feasibility analysis for an additional southern crossing of the Macquarie River in Dubbo.	Off Target	Council is currently preparing a technical brief for the engagement of consultant services to complete the business case for this project. Council has determined a list of smaller projects and tasks that need to be undertaken prior to the preparation of a detailed business case, and the timeframes to complete some of these tasks will not enable Council to finalise a detailed business case by the end of this financial year. The projects and tasks identified, need to be carried out to meet the minimum guideline requirements for a detailed business case, as well as to address some of the concerns raised by community in the last round of consultation. Some of these projects and tasks include: 1. The finalisation of the Dubbo City Strategic Model traffic model (currently underway) 2. Traffic impact assessment for the project to determine changed traffic conditions in existing streets around Dubbo (which cannot be started until the Dubbo City wide model is complete) 3. Further design detail for key intersections, such as Tamworth Street and Minore Road, addressing some of the design and traffic challenges that might arise with each option proposed. 4. Detailed concept designs for traffic control signal intersections proposed on the Newell Highway, meeting TfNSW requirements for intersection design. 5. Concept designs for realignment of Bligh Street to manage traffic from the South Bridge into the CBD, ensuring traffic does not impact safety of the current Lady Cutler ovals. 6. Carry out Aboriginal Heritage and Ecological assessments for each option. 7. Further refine costs and benefits of each option. 8. Determine impact of each option on the existing Tracker Riley cycleway.

<p>3.2.1.3 Complete civil construction works for Moffatt Stage 4.</p>	<p>Off Target</p>	<p>It is expected that a development application will be lodged by June 2025. To date the project has experienced significant delays due to flooding and investigation and assessment of Aboriginal cultural heritage items.</p>
<p>5.5.2.2 Complete the planning proposal for the reclassification and rezoning of Alexander Bell Memorial Park.</p>	<p>Off Target</p>	<p>Work is continuing on the drafting of the documentation required for reclassification / rezoning of the parcel of land.</p>
<p>2.1.2.4 Undertake the design for stage 2 of the Blueridge link road which will connect the new road alignment in Blueridge Estate through to the Mitchell Highway.</p>	<p>Deferred</p>	<p>Council resolved at its July 2024 Ordinary Meeting that due to a road safety findings report, Council adopt Sheraton Road (between Boundary Road and Wellington Road) as the primary haulage route for the three heavy industry developments located on Sheraton Road, outside of peak school drop off and pick up times. As a result the Blueridge Road Stage 2 is deferred with the priority for design of Sheraton Road.</p>
<p>2.2.5.8 Commence construction of Blueridge Link Road Stage 1.</p>	<p>Deferred</p>	<p>Council resolved at its July 2024 Ordinary Meeting that due to a road safety findings report, Council adopt Sheraton Road (between Boundary Road and Wellington Road) as the primary haulage route for the three heavy industry developments located on Sheraton Road, outside of peak school drop off and pick up times. As a result, the Blueridge Road Stage 1 is deferred with the priority for design and re-construction now Sheraton Road with enforceable controls on truck movements during school peak periods.</p> <p>Council has applied for external funding for Blueridge Road Stage 1 and there has been no determination of that Australian Government grant program to date.</p>
<p>3.1.1.7 Complete construction of the Macquarie River Foreshore Event Precinct.</p>	<p>Cancelled</p>	<p>Council resolved as the December 2024 Ordinary Meeting (CCL24/349) not to proceed with the Macquarie River Event Precinct, with the Old Dubbo Gaol Plaza being the priority project.</p>

Consultation

- Consultation was undertaken internally with Responsible Officers and Responsible Authorisers of each action to ensure that the status and comments had been updated appropriately.

- The Chief Executive Officer is required to provide progress updates to Council at least every six months in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993.

Resourcing Implications

- Administration of the Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements sits with the function of Strategic Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement.
- Responsible Officers and Responsible Authorises are required to update the status and provide comments on each of their actions during the reporting period.

Next Steps

- A copy of this progress report will be uploaded to [Integrated Planning and Reporting - Dubbo Regional Council](#).
- The outcomes of the report will be included in a media release that will be provided to local media and community to advise community of the progress made and direct community to Council's website to read the report.
- A final report will be presented to Council in August 2025 to show progress of the 2024/2025 Delivery Program and Operational Plan for the period July 2024 to June 2025.

Timeframe

Key Date	Explanation
30 June 2025	End of 2024/2025 Operational Plan reporting period.
August 2025	Final progress report on the 2024/2025 Delivery Program and Operational Plan presented to Council.
October - November 2025	Annual Report presented to and adopted by Council.

APPENDICES:

1. [Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2024 2025- Progress Report - 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024](#)



Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2024/2025

Progress Report – 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024

How to read this report:

This heading is a theme of the Towards 2040 Community Strategic Plan




This heading is the Towards 2040 Community Strategic Plan objective




Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Focus	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer
This is the reference number in the Delivery Program	This is the description of the strategy as it appears in the Delivery Program	This is the description of the action as it appears in the Operational Plan	A traffic light is provided to show the status of the action	This provides an update on the progress of the action, including details of any milestones, highlights, issues or changes	This is the position title of the person who is responsible for this action

Status	Definition	Legend
Complete	Action completed for the year and there will be no further resources needed to deliver it	
On target	Action underway and is progressing as planned	
Off target	There is an issue that has delayed progress with this action, or it has not started due to an issue	
Not due to start	This action is not scheduled to start until later in the year and can be updated in the relevant quarter	
Deferred	The action will not be completed in the current financial year, and the start date has been moved into the next or following financial year/s.	
Cancelled	The action will not start/progress any further.	







Theme 1: Housing





1.1: Housing meets the current and future needs of our community

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
1.1.1	A variety of housing types and densities are located close to appropriate services and facilities	Assess applications for residential housing in a timely manner.		The Building & Development Services Branch assesses applications in a timely manner, especially when compared to other similar regional local councils. The Council League Table for 2023/2024 indicated Dubbo Regional Council as having an average assessment time of 49 days, with the updated figure to the end of November 2024 was 46 days.	3-MBDS Mgr Building & Development Services	Development and Environment
1.1.2	Housing is affordable and secure	Undertake regular engagement with stakeholders to monitor issues impacting housing affordability and choice.		Council conducted a Housing Supply Reference Group meeting on 18 October 2024, a Mayoral Developers Forum on 30 October 2024, and a range of consultation sessions in October to December 2024 to help with development of the Regional and Affordable Housing Strategies funded under the Federal Government Housing Support Program - Stream 1. The results of this engagement will be presented to Council in February 2025.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
		Investigate mechanisms to incentivise the development and release of new residential zoned land to assist the timely release of new housing supply.		Council was successful in obtaining funding under the Federal Government Housing Support Program - Stream 1 to prepare a range of Housing Strategies. This project will establish an updated strategic framework to manage housing growth to meet the long-term needs of our community. This will involve analysing demographic trends, housing supply and demand dynamics, various housing types, land use opportunities, and potential challenges to ensure new housing will enhance our region's character and liveability. Key components of the project include a Regional housing strategy, Large lot	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				residential strategy, Affordable housing policy, and Character statements for villages.		
1.1.3	Urban renewal occurs in the Dubbo Central Business District and Wellington Town Centre	Prepare an issues paper for a Dubbo CBD Strategy.		Council received Gateway Determinations from the Department of Planning in December 2024 to make residential accommodation permitted in the Dubbo CBD, Progress on this project has been delayed as a result of staff time being required to further other priority housing projects, including the North-West and the Central-West Precincts in Dubbo, and the Housing Strategies being funded under the Federal Government's Housing Support Program - Stream 1.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
1.1.4	Public and social housing are integrated into residential areas	Advocate and collaborate with the State Government and developers to increase the level of affordable community and social housing.		Council was successful in obtaining funding under the Federal Government Housing Support Program - Stream 1 to prepare an Affordable Housing Policy. This involves identifying Council's role and options for incentivising an increase in social and affordable housing in the region, and partnerships required. Council undertook consultation in October, November and December 2024 with social housing providers, the NSW Government and the community to better understand social housing issues and possible solutions.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
1.1.5	Development opportunities are communicated to the community	Undertake regular engagement and education activities with stakeholders to communicate development trends, permissibility of development, and processes.		This is an ongoing process, with staff attending various functions to engage with stakeholders. This includes attending and presenting at functions such as: the Mayoral Forum; and the Chamber of Commerce Breakfast.	3-MBDS Mgr Building & Development Services	Development and Environment

1.2: An adequate supply of land is located close to community services and facilities

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
1.2.1	Land is suitably zoned, sized and located to facilitate a variety of housing types and densities	Ongoing Implementation the Master Plan for the North-West Residential Urban Release Area.		Council is progressing the North-West Urban Release Area planning proposal, development control plan and infrastructure contributions plan. These are anticipated to be placed on exhibition in quarter 2 2025 as a cohesive planning package.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
		Ongoing Implementation of the Master Plan for the Central-West Residential Urban Release Area.		Council is preparing an infrastructure contributions plan and undertaking further consultation with Transport for NSW to further implement the master plan. Council has progressed with the Strategic Transportation Model to identify traffic impacts, and this is anticipated to be shared with TfNSW in quarter 2 2025.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
		Review and make submissions on proposed changes to the planning system as opportunities arise.		A submission into the NSW Upper House Inquiry into the Impact of Renewable Energy Zones on rural and regional communities and industries in NSW has been prepared and submitted. this submissions will be provided to Council in february 2025 for notation. and information.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
		Develop and implement the Master Plan for Keswick Estate.		Draft master plan and associated lodgment of Planning Proposal was endorsed by Council at the December Ordinary Council meeting. A final revision of the master plan will be made in the coming weeks pending an engineering assessment of the plan. The associated Planning Proposal for the re-zoning in accordance with the Masterplan was lodged on 8 January 2025.	3-MPLD Manager Property & Land Development	Organisational Performance
		Develop and Implement the Master Plan for the residential land in Montefiores.		Council applied for funding under the NSW Regional Strategic Housing Strategic Planning Fund - Round 3 to prepare a structure plan for land in Montefiores. Successful applications will be announced in April 2025.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
1.2.2	Adequate land is available in the villages for development	Prepare funding opportunities to undertake Large Lot Residential		Council received funding under the Federal Government Housing Support Program - Stream 1 to undertake a Large Lot Residential Strategy and Village Place Plans. A report was presented	3-MGP Manager	Development and Environment



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		Strategies for land in the peri-urban areas and villages.		to Council on 15 August 2024 that provided information about the project.	Growth Planning	
1.2.3	Development is supported by a strategic and affordable infrastructure framework	Maintain Council's Development Contribution Framework and Planning Agreement frameworks and associated registers.		Council's planning agreement register is available online at https://www.dubbo.nsw.gov.au/Builders-Developers/Planning-Controls-Tools-and-Resources/planning-agreements Council's development contributions register is available online at https://www.dubbo.nsw.gov.au/Builders-Developers/Planning-Controls-Tools-and-Resources/infrastructure-contributions	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
		Assess requests to enter into Planning Agreements in a timely manner.		Council is currently considering multiple planning agreements, with most related to projects in the Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone. Council noted a report in December 2024 that provided an updated on planning agreements associated with the Renewable Energy Zone, including their status and value of funding.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
		Review infrastructure contributions plans for Dubbo.		Council is preparing an infrastructure contributions plan for the North-West and Central-West Urban Release Areas. A project plan has been created for the review of the Dubbo infrastructure contributions plan so that timeframes, work schedules, services and facilities can be identified for inclusion.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
1.2.4	Rural and productive agricultural land is managed sustainably	Cumulative impacts of the development of the Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (CWOREZ) are strategically planned for.		Council is actively collaborating with other Council's in the Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone and State Government Departments with the implementation of a Steer Co Group for overall coordination. This includes a number of working groups, which are focused on housing and accommodation, social services, environment, traffic and transport and economic development.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment



1.3: Short-term and emergency accommodation is available

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
1.3.1	Short-term accommodation is available for the workforce associated with significant infrastructure, major projects and employment generators	Housing opportunities for short term workers in the region are explored and strategically planned for.		<p>Council received Gateway Determinations from the Department of Planning in December 2024 to make residential accommodation permitted in the Dubbo CBD, and for part of the Keswick Estate to be rezoned to allow for the development of temporary workers accommodation with development approval.</p> <p>The NSW Government released legislation in December 2024 that makes construction workers accommodation permitted with consent in a residential zone.</p> <p>Council continues to work with the NSW Government to ensure housing and accommodation impacts of the Renewable Energy Zone are strategically planned for.</p>	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
1.3.2	Crisis and emergency accommodation supports the needs of the community	Continue to work with State Government and developers to increase the level of crisis and emergency accommodation available.		<p>A key action item of the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan (to be placed on public exhibition in February 2025) was to establish the Community Safety and Crime Prevention Reference Group. The Reference Group was endorsed by Council in November 2024, and will commence meetings early 2025. The Reference Group will undertake advocacy activities and work with State Government agencies and developers to address levels of crisis and emergency accommodation.</p>	2-DCCP Director Community Culture & Places	Community Culture and Places



Theme 2: Infrastructure


2.1: The road transportation network is safe, convenient and efficient



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
2.1.1	Traffic management facilities enhance the safety and efficiency of the road transport network	Maintain effective processes to identify, consider and prioritise new or renewed traffic management facilities.		Council gains knowledge of the need for new or renewed traffic facilities through customer requests and ongoing inspections and audits undertaken by staff across the road network. Works are prioritised based on various road safety and road capacity criteria.	3-MISD Mgr Infrastructure Strategy & Design	Infrastructure
2.1.2	The road network meets the needs of users in terms of traffic capacity, functionality and economic and social connectivity	Implement the 2020 Dubbo Regional Council Dubbo Transportation Strategic Plan in conjunction with Transport for NSW.		<p>Council is currently progressing road planning activities at multiple locations around Dubbo. Some examples include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rail overpass design near the intersection of Minore Road and Chapmans Road - First design option has been prepared by a consultant on behalf of Council, and the consultant has now commenced working on a second option. The design options will inform Council what land is required for a road corridor on the future western distributor alignment, in the vicinity of the rail crossing. 2. Update to the Dubbo Traffic Model - In conjunction with Transport for NSW (TfNSW), Council has engaged a consultant to prepare a new Strategic Traffic Model for Dubbo utilising Vissum modelling software. The consultant is currently working on finalising the base model. The model will help inform future transport infrastructure requirements for the new urban release areas in West Dubbo. 3. Western Distributor - Council has been working with developers in West Dubbo to set the width and alignment of the western distributor through the central west urban release area. 	3-MISD Mgr Infrastructure Strategy & Design	Infrastructure






Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				<p>4. Council recently finalised the design of the River Street West Road, including the design of the intersection with the new Newell Highway alignment (new Dubbo bridge). Both of these projects are currently under construction and will unlock further residential development in the North West urban release precinct.</p> <p>5. Council recently finalised road capacity and safety assessments for multiple roads in South-East Dubbo for the purposes of determining appropriate interim and long term haulage routes for the three heavy industry developments on Sheraton Road.</p> <p>6. Council is progressing civil designs for Sheraton Road and the future Southern Distributor road that runs through future Blueridge Estate and connects with the Mitchell Highway.</p> <p>7. South Bridge Project - Council is working on a technical brief for the engagement of consultant services to undertake a detailed business case for the remaining two alignment options for the Southern bridge crossing.</p>		
		Investigate opportunities to monitor the condition of the road network through smart technology.		Council staff have met with Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA) during December 2024 and January 2025 to discuss their smart technology options for road condition assessments. It is proposed Council will trial IPWEA "camera car" technology for road defect management during early 2025.	3-MID Manager Infrastructure Delivery	Infrastructure
		Undertake road infrastructure planning for the Dubbo Urban Release Areas.		<p>Council is currently progressing road planning activities at multiple locations around Dubbo. Some examples include:</p> <p>1. Rail overpass design near the intersection of Minore Road and Chapmans Road - First design option</p>	3-MISD Mgr Infrastructure Strategy & Design	Infrastructure

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				<p>has been prepared by a consultant on behalf of Council, and the consultant has now commenced working on a second option. The design options will inform Council what land is required for a road corridor on the future western distributor alignment, in the vicinity of the rail crossing.</p> <p>2. Update to the Dubbo Traffic Model - In conjunction with Transport for NSW (TfNSW), Council has engaged a consultant to prepare a new Strategic Traffic Model for Dubbo utilising Vissum modelling software. The consultant is currently working on finalising the base model. The model will help inform future transport infrastructure requirements for the new urban release areas in West Dubbo.</p> <p>3. Western Distributor - Council has been working with developers in West Dubbo to set the width and alignment of the western distributor through the central west urban release area.</p> <p>4. Council recently finalised the design of the River Street West Road, including the design of the intersection with the new Newell Highway alignment (new Dubbo bridge). Both of these projects are currently under construction and will unlock further residential development in the North West urban release precinct.</p> <p>5. Council recently finalised road capacity and safety assessments for multiple roads in South-East Dubbo for the purposes of determining appropriate interim and long term haulage routes for the three heavy industry developments on Sheraton Road.</p> <p>6. Council is progressing civil designs for Sheraton Road and the future Southern Distributor road that runs</p>		

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				through future Blueridge Estate and connects with the Mitchell Highway. 7. South Bridge Project - Council is working on a technical brief for the engagement of consultant services to undertake a detailed business case for the remaining two alignment options for the Southern bridge crossing.		
		Undertake the design for stage 2 of the Blueridge link road which will connect the new road alignment in Blueridge Estate through to the Mitchell Highway.		Council resolved at its July 2024 Ordinary Meeting that due to a road safety findings report, Council adopt Sheraton Road (between Boundary Road and Wellington Road) as the primary haulage route for the three heavy industry developments located on Sheraton Road, outside of peak school drop off and pick up times. As a result the Blueridge Road Stage 2 is deferred with the priority for design of Sheraton Road.	3-MISD Mgr Infrastructure Strategy & Design	Infrastructure
2.1.3	Additional flood-free road access over the Macquarie River at Dubbo is provided	Finalise a business case and feasibility analysis for an additional southern crossing of the Macquarie River in Dubbo.		Council is currently preparing a technical brief for the engagement of consultant services to complete the business case for this project. Council has determined a list of smaller projects and tasks that need to be undertaken prior to the preparation of a detailed business case, and the timeframes to complete some of these tasks will not enable Council to finalise a detailed business case by the end of this financial year. The projects and tasks identified, need to be carried out to meet the minimum guideline requirements for a detailed business case, as well as to address some of the concerns raised by community in the last round of consultation. Some of these projects and tasks include: 1. The finalisation of the Dubbo City Strategic Model traffic model (currently underway)	3-MISD Mgr Infrastructure Strategy & Design	Infrastructure




Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				<p>2. Traffic impact assessment for the project to determine changed traffic conditions in existing streets around Dubbo (which cannot be started until the Dubbo City wide model is complete)</p> <p>3. Further design detail for key intersections, such as Tamworth Street and Minore Road, addressing some of the design and traffic challenges that might arise with each option proposed.</p> <p>4. Detailed concept designs for traffic control signal intersections proposed on the Newell Highway, meeting TfNSW requirements for intersection design.</p> <p>5. Concept designs for realignment of Bligh Street to manage traffic from the South Bridge into the CBD, ensuring traffic does not impact safety of the current Lady Cutler ovals.</p> <p>6. Carry out Aboriginal Heritage and Ecological assessments for each option.</p> <p>7. Further refine costs and benefits of each option.</p> <p>8. Determine impact of each option on the existing Tracker Riley cycleway.</p>		
2.1.4	Adequate and convenient car parking is available in commercial centres	Undertake a detailed analysis of car parking requirements in the Wellington CBD that includes identifying future infrastructure needs.		<p>A detailed analysis of car parking requirements has been undertaken for Nanima Crescent in the CBD of Wellington. As there is adequate parking availability in the CBD area of Wellington, there are no identified needs for further infrastructure to support future growth and demand within the CBD. There is however a need for parking to be formalised on Nanima Crescent with signs and line marking, as well as potential timed parking restrictions in high demand commercial areas.</p> <p>Parking inventory was undertaken for Nanima Crescent from Gisborne Street to Maughan Street, and a detailed</p>	3-MISD Mgr Infrastructure Strategy & Design	Infrastructure


Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				parking plan prepared, including proposed timed parking in high demand areas. Community consultation was undertaken with potential effected businesses on Nanima Crescent. Some adjustments are required to the signage plan and further consultation undertaken before implementing the plan.		
		Undertake a detailed analysis of car parking requirements in the Dubbo CBD that includes identifying future infrastructure needs.		A brief will be developed late in the financial year for this body of work to be undertaken.	3-MISD Mgr Infrastructure Strategy & Design	Infrastructure
		Monitor parking sensor data from around the Brisbane, Talbragar and Macquarie street shopping precincts in Dubbo, to facilitate greater public access to parking spaces.		<p>Council installed 150 inground parking sensors in August 2022. There were 100 sensors were installed in Church Street between Brisbane and Bligh streets, 20 in Brisbane Street between Talbragar street and the railway line, and 30 in Macquarie Street between Riverdale and Church Street.</p> <p>The sensors report back to the Parking officers when overstay of time violations have been detected. This frees up the Parking Officers to continue patrolling other areas in the CBD and the region. Not all detected violations result in the issuing of an infringement due to circumstances such as the car has left the spot before parking officers arrive, the car has a valid mobility parking scheme permit, plus other reasons.</p> <p>Since 1 July 2024 the sensors in Church Street have recorded 955 violations which resulted in 687 Infringements issued, the Macquarie Street sensors recorded 786 violations resulting 474 infringements issued, and Brisbane Street had 110 violations with 98 infringements issued.</p>	3-MEC Manager Environmental Compliance	Development and Environment




Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
2.1.5	Council works collaboratively with government and stakeholders on transport-related issues	Work with regional stakeholders for the transportation of oversized and over mass components related to the Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone.		Dubbo Regional Council is involved in discussing regional solutions with affected neighbouring Councils for the transportation of over sized over mass componentry associated with the Renewable Engery Zone to ensure that solutions can be applied across the Local Government Areas. Council is also in discussion with Transport for NSW, particularly to determine suitable upgrades for roads intersecting the Golden Highway that will be used for the transportation of renewable energy componentry.	2-DI Director Infrastructure	Infrastructure
		Pursue opportunities for additional funding of road projects through the State and Federal Government.		This is ongoing as grants become available. During the period July 2024 to December 2024 applications were submitted to the State Government Safer Roads Program.	3-MID Manager Infrastructure Delivery	Infrastructure
		Advocate to the State and Federal Government for funding for a business case for the western distributor road that incorporates the needs of heavy freight.		The action will be addressed following the completion of a report in response to Notice of Motion - Newell Highway Bypass Dubbo. The report is to be put to Council in February 2025.	3-MISD Mgr Infrastructure Strategy & Design	Infrastructure
		Advocate to the State Government for additional overtaking lanes on the Mitchell Highway between Dubbo and Wellington.		Discussion were held with Transport for NSW on 6 December 2024 regarding a proposal for an overtaking lane between Geurie and Wellington. This is in the initial stages of investigation.	2-DI Director Infrastructure	Infrastructure
		Advocate and collaborate with State and Federal Governments in relation to issues and truck configuration limitations on the Golden Highway.		A round table meeting was held in October 2024 with State Government Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, Orana and Hunter regional members of parliament to discuss the outcomes of the Orana Hunter Connections and Beyond Golden Highway Transport Study. The Orana Hunter Connections and	2-DI Director Infrastructure	Infrastructure






Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				Beyond Golden Highway Transport Study was finalised in June 2024 with Dubbo Regional Council staff contributing information included in the study. The study identified a number of heavy haulage limitations along the Golden Highway and included works such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PBS 2B approved access • Overtaking lanes • Right and left hand turn lanes off the state highway • Bridge widening and realignment 		






2.2: Infrastructure meets the current and future needs of our community




Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
2.2.1	Water and sewer infrastructure and services meet the needs of the community	Quarterly meetings are held with NSW Health and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water to review the operation of the Dubbo drinking water supply system.		Council's water and sewer staff met on 22 November 2024 with representatives from NSW Health and Department Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water to consult on current and future capital projects, resourcing, training, water supply maintenance and operations, treatment processes and water quality.	3-MWSS Manager Operations Water Supply & Sewerage	Infrastructure
		Quarterly meetings are held with NSW Health and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water to review operation of the sewerage treatment system.		Council's water and sewer staff met on 22 November 2024 with representatives from NSW Health and Department Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water to consult on current and future capital projects, resourcing, training, maintenance, operations and treatment processes.	3-MWSS Manager Operations Water Supply & Sewerage	Infrastructure
		Complete the upgrade of Troy Gully Sewerage Pump Station.		Contractors have been awarded the contract to perform major upgrades to Troy Gully Sewer Pump Station. The pump station is the largest of all sewer pump stations in the Dubbo Local	3-MSWSS Manager Strategy Water	Infrastructure

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				Government Area, transferring approximately 6.7ML of raw sewage each day from all properties in Dubbo east of the Macquarie-Wambool River to the Dubbo Sewage Treatment Plant. Upgrades to the pump station include the replacement of aging drywell pumps with new and efficient submersible pumps, replacement of all electrical control equipment, demolition of aging buildings, security and lighting improvements, and new security fencing. A strong focus has been placed on workplace safety, particularly with regard to confined space access. Modifications have focused on the removal of the need for maintenance to be performed by Council staff within the pump station. New pipework will be installed at ground level for easy access. A gantry crane will also be installed to allow maintenance on the submersible pumps to be undertaken at ground level. This work is expected to be complete in late August 2025.	Supply & Sewerage	
		Complete the upgrade of Geurie Raw water pump station.		Upgrade of Geurie Raw Water Pump Station is being undertaken by contractors on behalf of Council. The upgrade replaces two existing submersible pumps with two new line shaft turbine pumps, complete with bronze impellers. The wet well of the pump station has been cleaned and de-silted. A new platform has been constructed over the pump station to allow for the installation of a new switchboard and control gear, as well as filtration equipment. The platform has been installed at such a height to ensure reliable operation during major flooding events in the Macquarie-Wambool River. The upgrade will allow	3-MSWSS Manager Strategy Water Supply & Sewerage	Infrastructure





Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				full integration of bore water to the Geurie Water Treatment Plant, currently capable of accepting only river water. Modifications to the pump station will allow Geurie to be supplied by river water, bore water, or a mixture of both. Such capability will increase water security for the village in times of high river turbidity and in events where the Macquarie-Wambuul river ceases to flow.		
		Finalise modelling for the Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan and develop an issues paper.		Council, in conjunction with consultants, has prepared detailed hydraulic models of both its water supply and gravity sewerage networks in the Dubbo area. Final draft reports on both networks have been provided to Council for review. The reports identify capacity issues and associated capital works upgrades over the next 30 years. Concurrently, Council has developed a sewer servicing strategy for the Sandy Creek catchment in West Dubbo, as well as areas in the vicinity of Westview Street and Richardson Road. The development of these strategies will allow considerable expansion of Dubbo further to the west and will specifically facilitate the development of the Central and Southwest Urban Release Areas.	3-MSWSS Manager Strategy Water Supply & Sewerage	Infrastructure
		Complete the fluoride dosing system in Dubbo.		Completion of the replacement fluoride dosing facility is on track for completion in late April 2025.	3-MSWSS Manager Strategy Water Supply & Sewerage	Infrastructure
2.2.2	Solid waste management services meet the needs of the community	Kerbside domestic waste services are provided to customers in accordance with Council's adopted service levels.		Council continues to provide waste services to the community within the adopted service levels. Rural and Urban Tip vouchers and Bulky waste collection has transitioned to an online system. Between July and December 2024,	3-MRRE Mgr Resource Recovery & Efficiency	Development and Environment



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				more than 3,000 tip vouchers were redeemed and 1,500 bulky waste collections conducted.		
		Prepare and implement the Local Government Area Waste Strategy.		Council completed Public Exhibition of the draft Waste Strategy in 2024. The final version of the Waste Strategy will be presented to Council for consideration at the February 2025 Council meeting.	3-MRRE Mgr Resource Recovery & Efficiency	Development and Environment
2.2.3	Urban drainage systems meet the needs of the community	Develop and have adopted by Council maintenance service levels for Recreation and Open Space assets.		A template for the Maintenance Service Levels (Parks) was submitted to Executive Leadership Team in December. This draft is largely completed, and the approved template will now be used to finalise the MSLs for the Sporting Facilities and Reserves. It is anticipated that the MSLs will be submitted to Council, with the recommendation of public exhibition, by May.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
2.2.4	Enhanced telecommunications coverage is available in the region	Collaborate with the Regional Tech Hub (RTH) on the Wellington Project to help resolve connectivity issues for businesses in Wellington.		Continuing the education and awareness to local Wellington and village communities of the Regional Tech Hub and the importance of reporting any issues. No current reports have been made to the Regional Tech Hub for issues reported by community. Reminders to community of the 3G shutdown as of 28 October were communicated.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
2.2.5	Council maintains infrastructure and delivers services at the adopted service levels as agreed with the community	Asset Management Plans undergo annual monitoring and review to reflect any changes in asset condition or service levels of the asset portfolio.		Council is generating Master Plans for the two main Waste Facilities, which will include Asset and Financial Management schedules. The Master plans will be presented to Council for consideration in quarter 2 2025.	3-MRRE Mgr Resource Recovery & Efficiency	Development and Environment
		Review Council's building assets to determine the present and future needs and opportunities for these assets.		Work has progress and a report will be provided to Council early 2025.	3-MBA Manager Building Assets	Organisational Performance


Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		Complete construction of Saxa Road Comobella Bridge.		Approach road construction works are largely completed including a bitumen seal, The road connections to the proposed new bridge remain unfinished until the bridge is constructed. Bridge construction site works will commence mid-January 2025 and be completed by mid April 2025.	3-MID Manager Infrastructure Delivery	Infrastructure
		Complete construction of Burrendong Bridge Number 1.		Construction of the bridge structure was completed in November 2024. Temporary approach road works have been established onsite, and traffic access across the new bridge commenced in December 2024. Permanent approach road construction will commence in February 2025.	3-MID Manager Infrastructure Delivery	Infrastructure
		Complete construction of Molong Street Bridge, Stuart Town.		Construction of Molong Street bridge was completed in November 2024. Temporary approach road works have been established onsite, and traffic access across the new bridge commenced in December 2024. Permanent approach road construction will commence in February 2025.	3-MID Manager Infrastructure Delivery	Infrastructure
		Complete reconstruction of Ballimore Road.		Preliminary works, including survey and culvert works were undertaken in December 2024. Ballimore Rd, construction site works including tree clearing, drainage and earthworks will commence in February 2025.	3-MID Manager Infrastructure Delivery	Infrastructure
		Complete rehabilitation Saxa Road (Maryvale - Bakers).		Saxa Road rehabilitation Project will be delivered by contract. Tender documentation preparation has commenced with the design to be completed early next year. Tenders will be advertised in February 2025. Site works will commence following the award of a contract.	3-MID Manager Infrastructure Delivery	Infrastructure

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		Commence construction of Blueridge Link Road Stage 1.		<p>Council resolved at its July 2024 Ordinary Meeting that due to a road safety findings report, Council adopt Sheraton Road (between Boundary Road and Wellington Road) as the primary haulage route for the three heavy industry developments located on Sheraton Road, outside of peak school drop off and pick up times. As a result the Blueridge Road Stage 1 is deferred with the priority for design and re-construction now Sheraton Road with enforceable controls on truck movements during school peak periods.</p> <p>Council has applied for external funding for Blueridge Road Stage 1 and there has been no determination of that Australian Government grant program to date.</p>	3-MID Manager Infrastructure Delivery	Infrastructure
		Continue construction of River Street West Collector Road Stage 1 including the intersection on the Newell Highway.		<p>Council's civil works contractor has commenced underground stormwater construction at the River Street West site. Underground utility relocations on Bunglegumbie R Road and River Street West intersection have been completed. Construction of a roundabout at the location commences in mid-January 2025.</p> <p>The intersection works of River Street West and the new Newell Highway are currently being undertaken as a variation to the New Dubbo Bridge project which is managed by Transport for NSW.</p>	3-MID Manager Infrastructure Delivery	Infrastructure
2.2.6	Council utilises a modern and efficient plant fleet that meets operational needs	Complete a full review of light vehicles in consideration of the Zero Emissions Fleet Strategy goals, including consideration of Electric Vehicles and associated infrastructure.		Review currently underway with discussions being held with a third party for an in-depth review on charging infrastructure.	3-MFDS Manager Fleet & Depot Services	Infrastructure

2.3: The transportation systems support connections within and outside the region



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
2.3.1	Appropriate and well-connected rail infrastructure is available	Advocate to the State Government to improve access and timing for passenger train services to reach major destinations.		Council has been advised that when the regional rail fleet and the regional rail maintenance facility is operational Dubbo will have a morning train to Sydney. Council has provided feedback to the NSW Government's Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plans to ensure everyone has access to safe, reliable and efficient transport options.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
2.3.2	A network of cycleways and pedestrian facilities is provided and maintained	Review and implement the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan for the Local Government Area.		<p>Council has engaged a consultant to update and consolidate the Dubbo and Wellington Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plans (PAMP). A survey has been undertaken by the consultant for Dubbo, Wellington and surrounding villages. Council consulted with the community from 30 September to 11 November 2024 and received feedback from the Dubbo and Wellington community, as well as surrounding villages.</p> <p>Public information sessions were also held on the 15th and 17th of October in Dubbo and Wellington, enabling the community to interact with staff to gain further clarity and provide feedback. The consultant is currently drafting the plan, which will go out for community consultation to obtain further feedback once finalised.</p>	3-MISD Mgr Infrastructure Strategy & Design	Infrastructure
2.3.3	Public transport services are available in our villages	Undertake activities to understand public transport needs within the Villages and advocate the outcomes.		No progress has been made. Work due to commence once Villages Committees have been confirmed.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
2.3.4	Our community has convenient air access to a variety of destinations	Establish and maintain partnerships to promote air travel, emergency management and support route viability and affordability.		Airline Partnerships: Discussions with key aviation partners regarding an ongoing partnership have been positive, with negotiations now progressing to	3-MASO Manager Airport	Organisational Performance


Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				<p>define key metrics. Additionally, Dubbo Regional Airport has initiated an update to its 2020 route analysis, identifying key drivers for existing route development and follow-on ports for Dubbo travellers. This insight will support targeted future discussions on potential new route opportunities.</p> <p>Regional connectivity: Discussions have taken place with key stakeholders in the mining and renewables sector, with Dubbo Regional Airport exploring charter operation opportunities to support workforce requirements with a resources company.</p> <p>Emergency Service Collaborations: Discussions with RFS and contracted firefighting bodies regarding the Memorandum of Understanding are ongoing. Dubbo Regional Airport remains committed to finalising the agreement and is actively engaging with key stakeholders to maintain momentum.</p>	Strategy and Operations	
		Progress the Wellington Aerodrome and Recreation Park Strategic plan.		Stakeholder discussions have highlighted demand for additional hangarage and expanded event opportunities at WARP. These discussions are progressing with a key stakeholder, and Council officers are awaiting design plans to advance these initiatives. Additionally, significant milestones for AAM have been announced by companies operating at WARP, supported by Australian Government initiatives, reinforcing the aerodrome's potential role in future aviation advancements.	3-MASO Manager Airport Strategy and Operations	Organisational Performance
2.3.5	Roadside environments and entrance statements	Develop and adopt village maintenance and mowing service levels.		The final draft of the Public Parks Maintenance Service Levels document,	3-MGSO Manager	Infrastructure








Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
	are developed and maintained			covering 80% of villages, details park classification and their respective maintenance standards.	Greenspace Operations	
		Identify and respond to notifications of hot-spot areas for illegal dumping and implement appropriate measures where necessary to reduce instances of illegal dumping.		Council Rangers have received 216 reports of illegal dumping from 1 July 2024. Illegal dumping can range from a bag of rubbish through to a trailer load of items including rubbish, clothing, toys, mattresses, furniture, and white goods. All reports of illegal dumping made to Council are investigated if any evidence is found that can be used to identify the person responsible Council takes action against the person. This can include the issuing of Notices to clean up and fines. When hot spots for illegal dumping are identified the Environmental Compliance team will install a remote trail camera and or remote License Plate camera in order to capture footage of offenders and try to identify them.	3-MEC Manager Environmental Compliance	Development and Environment





Theme 3: Economy




3.1: Visitor economy growth is supported

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
3.1.1	Diverse and unique visitor opportunities are explored, developed and supported	Advocate for and support tourism businesses in the region.		The new Visitor Guide (2025-2026) has concluded sales activity with an expected launch in March 2025 (revenue received \$180,000 to support the printing and marketing of the guide). The guide will provide a platform to market the destination to potential visitors in NSW and Australia. Met with Destination NSW in September for a marketing strategy workshop and secured a complimentary advertising space for \$11,000 in the Caravan and Camping Holiday Guide. Regular meetings with Destination Country and Outback to advocate, improve and support tourism in the region. Working with Channel 9 and the tv show Travel Guides for an episode to be filmed in Dubbo. Presented to the Board of Taronga Western Plains Zoo.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
		Promote the region on destination marketing platforms and collaborative programs.		Four dedicated campaigns targeting different markets were created to drive visitation across the summer school holiday period to the Dubbo Region and the Great Western Plains destinations, to increase purchase of the Great Big Adventure Pass. Three of four campaigns concluded, with social media advertising delivering a reach of 73,753 and 5,958 engagements. Two campaigns targeted Sydney, Newcastle and nearby regional areas to attract the family market (Dubbo Region, Great Western Plains and Great Big Adventure Pass). The third campaign was targeted Visiting Family and Friends audience already in the Dubbo Region.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				<p>Dubbo.com.au activity: No of page views: 93,535 (decrease from 101,973) Page views per session: 1.86</p> <p>Dubbo Region social media activity 123,113 reach (decrease from 348,048) 5,984 visits 12,323 followers (increase of 386)</p> <p>Visit Dubbo social media activity: 2,703 reach (increase from 987) 333 visits 7,280 followers (decrease of 14)</p>		
		Develop the Visitor Services Action Plan.		<p>Initial service review of Wellington and Dubbo Visitor Information Centres complete with further data collection of visitors to both locations is underway. Key programs and activities include State Cup Accommodation concierge service (34 assistance registrations), Visitor Guide drops to over 40 locations across Dubbo and Wellington, distribution to QLD and Victorian information centres and school holiday program distribution to local providers. Local product promotion undertaken through 93 hamper sales, conference attendee packs (Ranger conference) and retail sales at both locations. Visitor Guide (2025-2026) sales being undertaken by key information staff. Three bus tours conducted, 167 Driver Reviver products provided, Great Big Adventure Passes sold at both locations. Assisted with the Shop Local Christmas campaign during the November / December retail period.</p>	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		Progress strategic plans and strategies for the Old Dubbo Gaol.		Conservation Management Plan, Interpretation Plan and Exhibition Plans still current and implemented.	3-MRE Manager Regional Experiences	Community Culture and Places
		Progress strategic plans and strategies for the Wellington Caves.		Monthly Service Review Management Responses have been undertaken. Capital improvement plan currently being developed in preparation of budget period.	3-MRE Manager Regional Experiences	Community Culture and Places
		Complete construction of the Old Dubbo Gaol Heritage Plaza.		Project on track with all major design decisions complete. Consultants are progressing 75% designs and cost plan. Artwork delivery date is expected to be April 2025.	3-MRE Manager Regional Experiences	Community Culture and Places
		Complete construction of the Macquarie River Foreshore Event Precinct.		Council resolved as the December 2024 Ordinary Meeting (CCL24/349) not to proceed with the Macquarie River Event Precinct, with the Old Dubbo Gaol Plaza being the priority project.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Progress the Wiradjuri Cultural Tourism Centre, including an associated community led operating model.		Development Application is approved, with final construction designs underway. Funding Deed for the Growing Region Program Round 1 has progressed. Facility is due to open late 2026 (pending no further funding or construction delays).	3-MRE Manager Regional Experiences	Community Culture and Places
		Council partners with the Taronga Western Plains Zoo on the Regional Tourism Activation Fund Round 2 - New Serengeti Plains Visitor Experience and Eco Accommodation Tourism Infrastructure Project to support the development of unique visitor opportunities.		New collaborative governance process has been established to ensure TWPZ is aware of milestone timelines and deliverables,	2-DSPE Director Strategy Partnership & Egmt	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
		Develop action plan in response to the findings of the Phosphate Mine business case and feasibility analysis.		An inspection was completed by the Resource Regulator on Tuesday 7 January 2025 and has advised that staff are now able to commence work on the recommendations from the 2022 Geotechnical Report. Development of a	3-MRE Manager Regional Experiences	Community Culture and Places




Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				two stage Action Plan for the Mine (Stage 1 being clean up and maintenance, Stage 2 Geotechnical remedial works) is underway.		
		Implement and monitor the Marketing Services Action Plan.		Sales for the Destination Partnership Program closed with over 100 advertisements secured by local businesses wanting to leverage Council's destination marketing activity. Ongoing support for internal marketing services included Council festival closures, destination Christmas campaign, Smokescreen 2025 program, compost giveaway, Australia Day award nominations, bulky rubbish collection, DRTCC season subscriber program, Garage Sale Trail, pedestrian access and mobility plan, Dubbo Day awards, celebration of 6 years of food organics and garden organics and staff recruitment.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
3.1.2	Events that foster cultural, recreational and community interaction opportunities are supported	Cultural, recreational and community events are supported through Council's Financial Assistance Policy.		Support continues, face-to-face and via email and phone to local event organisers delivering events that offer cultural, recreational and community engagement. These events are also promoted extensively via Council's promotional channels.	3-MREV Manager Regional Events	Community Culture and Places
		Develop the Dubbo Region Events Strategy.		Broader community engagement including public survey on YourSay concluded on 11 December 2024 with 76 contributions. The draft document is now expected to go before Council at its April meeting.	3-MREV Manager Regional Events	Community Culture and Places
		The Business Plan for the Dubbo Showground is reviewed and updated each year including the maintenance schedule and asset renewal.		A funding model is being sought to progress the development of a 2026-2031 Master Plan for Dubbo Showground.	3-MREV Manager Regional Events	Community Culture and Places



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		The Business Plan for the Wellington Showground is reviewed and updated each year including the maintenance schedule and asset renewal.		Feedback from Wellington Showground stakeholder consultation and the revised renewal plan will be included in the Business Plan. A funding request for the 2025/2026 forward budget has been submitted to develop a 2026-2031 Master Plan for Wellington Showground.	3-MREV Manager Regional Events	Community Culture and Places
3.1.3	Visitor accommodation is available	Develop and monitor tourism accommodation visitation reports.		Accommodation occupancy rate is being compiled every month and is shared with industry and stakeholders. Dubbo average occupancy rate in Quarter 1 (73%) and Quarter 2 (70%) Wellington average occupancy rate in Quarter 1 (41%) and Quarter 2 (48%)	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
		Partner with the State Government and other industry bodies to ensure that tourist and visitor accommodation is protected from the impacts of major projects.		Monthly meetings with State Government to review upcoming major projects and workforce requirements. Work with Destination Network Country and Outback strategic review the impacts of the Renewable Energy Zone on short-term accommodation stock in the region (via successful grant application). Working with Council departments to understand workforce and housing requirements of major projects in the region.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement

3.2: Employment opportunities are available in all sectors of our economy




Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
3.2.1	Employment and investment opportunities for all sectors of the community are fostered	Develop and maintain strong partnerships with diverse advisory groups, industry representatives and government agencies to encourage economic growth.		Partnerships continue to develop with Regional Development Australia (Resources, Energy, and Industry Innovation Forum), Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (Drought Resilience Plan program and partnership opportunities), and Regional Australia Institute (Regional Alliance Activators).	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement


Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				<p>REACT (Renewable Energy Awareness and Careers Training) facility business case developed with the assistance of stakeholders including DRNSW, Renewable Energy proponents, Corrective Services, Department of Education, Aboriginal advisory bodies, Federation University, and TAFE NSW. Grant application submitted for through the Local Community Fund (Legacy Infrastructure Fund) for REACT. Regular taskforce meetings with Workforce Australia for workforce readiness (Infrastructure working group, Healthcare and Social Assistance group). Women in Construction program (part 1) completed in partnership with Transport NSW and Abergeldie (20 participants identifying as youth, first nations and with a disability).</p>		
		Monitor and review policies and procedures to promote local business especially SMEs and Aboriginal organisations within the LGA.		<p>Council Procurement from First Nations businesses for the Oct/Nov/Dec Quarter was \$635,439 Council Procured from 16 x registered and recognised Supply Nation businesses in the reporting period. A Council motion was passed in December 2024, which will result in the PMO Team conducting a formal analysis, review and recommendations to update the effectiveness of the local business purchasing and support initiatives.</p>	3-MPMO Manager Project Management Office	Organisational Performance
		Complete civil construction works for Moffatt Stage 4.		<p>It is expected that a development application will be lodged by June 2025. To date the project has experienced significant delays due to flooding and investigation and assessment of Aboriginal cultural heritage items.</p>	3-MPLD Manager Property & Land Development	Organisational Performance

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
3.2.2	Traineeships and employment pathways are available for all sectors of the community	Advocate and support the employment of youth, Aboriginal, long-term unemployed and people with a disability by proponents of major projects.		The Building Opportunities through Outreach Training and Support (BOOTS) women in construction program was developed in partnership with Abergeldie Complex, NSW Department of Education, VERTO, Skillset and Workforce Australia. The program had 8 graduates (3 identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and 5 as long-term unemployed). Two graduates are now in full time employment. Women in Construction program (Part 1) completed in November with 20 participants. 8 identify as under 25, 7 identify as Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander, and 1 person with a disability. Educating and promoting the opportunities for employing people with a disability through regular Council newsletters.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
		Collaborate with local schools, universities, businesses and government agencies to identify employment pathways and traineeship opportunities.		Workforce development programs were supported by Council including the BOOTS (Building Opportunities through Outreach Training and Support) program, Vet student visit to Dubbo, Renewable Energy Awareness Training Centre business case, Women in Construction program (Part 1), Wake up Shake Up program (VERTO), Orana Youth Forum (sponsor and participant). Workforce website page updated to provide clear information and links for individuals and businesses for seeking assistance for employment pathways. Social media channel (Dubbo Region Connect) provides consistent information and links to the website page for job seekers and employers.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
		Complete a detailed business case of the Renewable Energy Awareness and Career Training (REACT) Centre.		Detailed business case has been completed and a grant submission has been completed for the Legacy	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic	Strategy Partnerships

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				Infrastructure Fund (Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone). Two locations were considered for the training centre being the former Soil Conservation site and a site in Wellington town. A presentation and final document of the business case has been provided to financial stakeholders.	Partnerships & Investment	and Engagement
3.2.3	The growth, development and diversification of the agricultural industry is supported	Advocate to government agencies for increased support for business, including the potential to decentralise government services to improve processes for the supply chain for agricultural related products from the region.		Working with stakeholders and Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to understand current challenges and opportunities.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
3.2.4	The Dubbo Central Business District and Wellington Town Centre are supported by commercial activation programs and activities	Implement and measure outcomes of the Economic Development Services Action Plan.		Projects and activities undertaken include December Shop Local campaign which included a marketing campaign to shop local during the Christmas season and the installation of the Christmas tree and associated decorations. Continual promotion of the MyDubboRegion Shopping Card program for local businesses. Websites and data information updated on the business and industry pages (Dubbo.com.au) for new residents, workforce readiness and renewable energy zone information. Created new calendar for business and networking events to allow further promotion of events in the region. CBD audit undertaken for lights and flag poles (items requiring maintenance or replacement). Supported Dubbo Business Chamber as a sponsor of Rhino Awards and the Small Business Commissioner for Small Business Month. Regionally significant project information updated on the YourSay Page and promoted across social media channels.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement


3.3: A strategic framework is in place to maximise the realisation of economic development opportunities for the region


Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
3.3.1	Land is suitably zoned, sized and located to facilitate a variety of development and employment generating activities	Undertake regular engagement with businesses in relation to land zoning, appropriateness of proposed sites and approval pathways.		The assessment of development applications is an ongoing process. Staff within the Building & Development Services Branch are in constant contact with business with regard to the zoning of properties, appropriateness of sites given the development proposed and approval pathways. Council provides a duty planning service to the community in both Dubbo and Wellington.	3-MBDS Mgr Building & Development Services	Development and Environment
3.3.2	The Dubbo Central Business District and Wellington Centre are supported by long-term plans	Implement and monitor opportunities to contribute to the Wellington Town Centre Plan.		Construction of the Uungula Wind Farm has commenced, which will provide further opportunities for delivery of items included in the Wellington Town Centre plan through the adopted Voluntary Planning Agreement. Staff are reviewing the terms of the agreement to identify funding quantum and timing to understand any opportunities upcoming for the Wellington Town Centre Plan.	3-MBDS Mgr Building & Development Services	Development and Environment
3.3.3	Major investment is proactively attracted and supported in line with regional opportunities	Provide investment attraction services including; location identification, up to date investment collateral and investor concierge services to assist with positive economic outcomes for the Dubbo Region.		Investment attraction actions undertaken include: Developers Forum Presentation; investment collateral updated, new maps for infrastructure and services in the region, Enquiries continue to be strong with 44 external investment enquiries (17 for Dubbo, 7 for Wellington and the remainder for whole region). Regional tours, face to face meetings and in-depth discussions with Lotus Energy, Clara Energy, Hydrostor, Gwydir Circular Economy, Verdant Industries, Pano AI and PV Industries. Development of internal process improved for communications, information sharing and tracking of external enquiries.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement





Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		Collaborate with supply chain business to help support a diverse and growing regional economy		Improvement of internal process to identify and connect potential investment opportunities with other businesses in the region. Solar panel recycling companies to connect with local businesses for input and output to enhance potential circular economy (ie: PV Industries, Hiway). Collaborate and assist Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development with programs and enquires in the energy and manufacturing industries (Minore Solar Farm, ICN and AUKUS, Renewable Energy Zone landing page on websites to be coordinated and connected).	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement


Theme 4: Leadership



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


Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
4.1.1	Council encourages and facilitates two-way communication with and between stakeholders and the community	Progress the adopted Community Engagement Strategy including Community Participation Plan 2023-2027 and implement improvement actions.		<p>The Community Engagement Strategy, including the Community Participation Plan, was reviewed in alignment with the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework within three months of the Local Government Election (October 2024) during this period. In Q3 (January-March 2025), the reviewed Community Participation Plan will be made available for public exhibition to gather community feedback, with Council endorsement in April 2025.</p> <p>Updates on the action plan during Q2 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Community Conversations Pop-Ups: Engagement efforts were supported across the organisation through various Community Conversations Pop-Up events in Q2, with 50 pop-up consultations occurring in this period, which included broader representation from across departments evident through with Delivery Program 2025-2029. * Centralised Data Collection: A centralised approach to collecting community data and insights was established to support Council decision-making and grant projects. This includes mandatory community consultation sections in Council reports, and all projects now require an engagement plan that identifies stakeholders, feeding into a centralised stakeholder database. * Creation of internal dashboards that exhibits customer and community 	3-MCE Mgr Customer Experience & Engagement	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement


Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				<p>satisfaction as a key performance indicator - Internal dashboards will be developed in Q3 which display Customer satisfaction measures across all touch points and a dashboard for Community satisfaction will be developed which incorporates measures from the Community Insights Survey and Check In. Satisfaction benchmarks established through the survey and check in, will define the base indicators for the Corporate Organisational measures within the Blueprint and if they have been met. Monthly Councillor Snapshot reporting will include this data.</p> <p>* Internal Capability Building: Efforts continued to enhance internal capabilities in data collection and survey design. An internal analytics service was developed to evaluate research methods and engagement tools for effectiveness and optimisation.</p> <p>* Staff to be trained in facilitation - A training program aligned to IAP2 principles will be rolled out internally which aims to increase confidence and capacity for Council staff in engagement practices.</p>		
		Provide opportunities for the community to interact and communicate with Councillors.		<p>Council supports opportunities for members of the public to interact with Councillors and encourages direct contact when appropriate. The newly elected Councillors have had limited opportunities since they commenced their term in Civic Office in October 2024. There has been one Citizenship ceremony and a Remembrance Day event, along with public forums at the beginning of each Council Meeting. Upcoming opportunities for interaction</p>	3-MGIC Manager Corporate Governance	Organisational Performance




Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				include the Australia Day ceremonies in Wellington and Dubbo.		
		Conduct a range of civic events and ceremonies, including Australia Day, Remembrance Day and Anzac Day.		Following the election in September 2024, the newly elected Councillors attended a formal ceremony to take their respective Oath or Affirmations for their civic office roles. There have also been two Citizenship Ceremonies, the Dubbo Day Awards ceremony and the Remembrance Day ceremony (both in November 2024). Councillors also had the opportunity to attend and present several end of year school awards presentations within the LGA and will have significant roles in the upcoming Australia Day ceremonies.	3-MGIC Manager Corporate Governance	Organisational Performance
		Collaborate with neighbouring LGAs to investigate and consider formal boundary adjustments.		Cabonne Council resolved in November 2024 to submit a joint application to the OLG for the proposed boundary adjustment. Meeting with the OLG in January 2024 to plan the remainder of the project.	2-DSPE Director Strategy Partnership & Egmt	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
4.1.2	Council's decision-making processes are open, transparent and accountable	Ensure Council meeting business papers, agendas and minutes are publicly available in accordance with legislation.		Council is required to make the business papers available 3 days in advance of each Council and Standing Committee meeting. There have been nine Council meetings (including Extraordinary Council meetings and two Standing Committee meetings during this reporting period and all business papers, agendas and minutes have been made available in accordance with statutory timeframes. There have also been seven Mandated Committee meetings (Audit Risk and Improvement, Floodplain, and Local Traffic Committees) during the reporting period.	3-MGIC Manager Corporate Governance	Organisational Performance
		Collaborate with community organisations to progress the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan, including supporting		Developing a campaign to raise awareness about our work to support	2-DSPE Director Strategy	Strategy Partnerships





Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		community awareness of external grant opportunities.		external grant opportunities for community	Partnership & Egmt	and Engagement
		Implement and measure outcomes of Communication Services Action Plan.		<p>Communicate with a range of internal and external stakeholders to ensure all communications to the community are accurate, transparent and understandable. Communications are published across a wide range of outlets including, social media, YourSay, media releases, community emails, direct newsletters and advertising. Projects included the adoption of the DPOP and Budget, WPCC programs including Homeground and Dubbo Art Fair, funding announcements, improvement works, community events, Dubbo Regional Livestock Market announcement. Council also undertook campaigns to save the Indoor Sports Hub in Dubbo and encourage our community to support locals during the holiday period and assisted with promotion of events for Old Dubbo Gaol 50 year celebrations, DRTCC Season Launch and Smokescreen. Outcomes of the standing committee and Ordinary Council meetings are also reported on a monthly basis. A total of 114 media releases were distributed to local, regional and national media outlets. Council responded to 83 media requests ensuring questions were answered by the relevant staff members for both local radio, television and print outlets. The focus continues to answering community questions through social media channels as well as making sure the message is understandable and suitable for the platform on which it is being delivered.</p>	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		An informed response to the outcomes of the Organisational Sustainability Review and Improvement Plan is provided to new elected body.		Has been included as part of the onboarding process for the new elected body.	1-CEO Chief Executive Officer	Organisational Performance
4.1.3	Council provides quality customer service	Implement and monitor the Customer Experience Strategy.		<p>The Customer Experience Strategy sets out a three-year action plan, with current activities aligning with the objectives for year three of this cycle. Consultation and planning for the next three-year action plan has commenced throughout this period, focusing on strategic priorities for the 2025-2027 period. The updated action plan will highlight key projects and strategic objectives for this new phase and will be finalised by June 2025. Actions currently being undertaken include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Employ a combination of measurements to provide a complete view of the customer experience - Including implementing a Customer Effort Score measurement of Customer Sanctification (CSAT) and for loyalty through the Net Promoter Score (NPS) - work is currently underway with the Customer Insights team to find a centralised data metric system to measure these scores across Council more broadly and is ongoing. Additional research is being undertaken to develop a Customer Relationship System, this action will be included in the 2025-2027 action plan. * Revision of the Customer Experience Charter and Service Level Agreements to ensure that they still meet our customer exceptions. - A review was completed and a revised Charter including adjustments to service levels will be presented to Executive Leadership Team in February 2025 with design to be undertaken in March 2025 	3-MCE Mgr Customer Experience & Engagement	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement




Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				<p>to align with Corporate Brand Guidelines. A broader Customer Request Management workflow review is being undertaken and will incorporate the endorsed Development Plan (DP) and Operational Plan (OP) actions once established to align agreed upon service levels throughout Council.</p> <p>* Continue to implement mobile technology solutions so that our staff can work anywhere and at any time - This includes the roll out of Actus App throughout Infrastructure Delivery teams in Dubbo. Delayed.</p> <p>* Develop a council-wide approach to recruitment for customer-facing roles to ensure talent retention- this is being explored through the current Employee Value Proposition framework from PC&S. Strengthen relationships will occur once framework implemented.</p> <p>* Include service design projects in Council's Community engagement activities- on track through Engagement services new framework and Strategy and was evident through recent consultations such as Housing for our Future, Delivery Program 2025-2029 and Cemetery improvement program.</p>		
		<p>Monitor the adopted Customer Experience Charter and ensure the standards are followed in relation to customer requests and correspondence.</p>		<p>A review of the Customer Experience Charter and Service Level Agreements is currently underway to ensure they continue to meet our customers' expectations. This revision, which includes adjustments to service levels, is expected to be completed by March 2025.</p> <p>Dashboards have been implemented to track adherence to target response times as outlined in the Customer Experience Charter. Monthly progress</p>	<p>3-MCE Mgr Customer Experience & Engagement</p>	<p>Strategy Partnerships and Engagement</p>





Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				<p>reports are distributed to Executives and Executive Officers, and these updates are a recurring agenda item in Manager meetings. The dashboard is also accessible via Central, allowing Supervisors, Team Leaders, and Coordinators to actively monitor their teams performance.</p> <p>Since the dashboard's implementation, we've recorded a reduction in outstanding correspondence in some areas and across some monthly periods. The organisation will continue to monitor and look for ways to improve reducing overdue correspondence. A comprehensive report detailing performance over the past three years, aligned with the Customer Experience Charter, was presented at the November 2024 Council Committee meeting and endorsed at the Ordinary Council Meeting November 2024.</p>		
		Expand and promote services available through the DRC&ME Portal.		<p>DRC&ME continues to evolve each quarter, with over 10,500 registered users and over 20,600 service requests lodged through the portal. Expansion efforts are ongoing, with plans to enhance the user interface based on customer feedback, scheduled for completion by June 2025.</p> <p>New services and developments launched in Q2 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Applications for Council Property including purchase, lease or licence. *Enhanced User Profile Management: Improvements to the change of address, name, and contact details processes, making them more customer-centric. * New bin services for new dwelling requests *GiPA Applications: Streamlined contact 	3-MCE Mgr Customer Experience & Engagement	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				<p>processes for increased accessibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Requests for Council Reports * Overgrown Blocks Private Land reporting * Dumping of Rubbish reporting *Public Graffiti Education: Launched educational materials following graffiti reports. *Email Notifications: Expanded capacity for timely community and customer updates. 		
		Ensure business continuity plans are in place for the provision of Council services, and implement when required.		Council's Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is reviewed annually and a training exercise was completed by the Executive Leadership Team in July 2024. The next review will be a substantial review with additional sub-plans and information from learned experiences.	3-MGIC Manager Corporate Governance	Organisational Performance
		Undertake regular surveys to obtain community insights.		<p>Following the Community Insights survey conducted in March-April 2024, a follow-up survey will be launched in Q3 2025. This survey will gather community feedback on current progress, priorities, and alignment with the Development Program (draft) to ensure it reflects community needs.</p> <p>In Q2, 33 engagement projects were launched on YourSay, each incorporating various engagement tools and elements. Several of these projects included survey components to gather additional community insights across the 33 initiatives.</p>	3-MCE Mgr Customer Experience & Engagement	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
4.1.4	Statutory requirements are met and services are provided in a cost-effective and timely manner	Maintain the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.		Delivery Program consultation phase completed, the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan will be put to Council in April 2025, for public exhibition in May 2025.	2-DSPE Director Strategy Partnership & Egmt	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		Ensure governance reports to external agencies comply with statutory requirements.		Governance are required to report to a number of external bodies such as the Office of Local Government, the NSW Ombudsman's Office, the Information and Privacy Commission, the Independent Commission against Corruption and other statutory bodies. Some of these reports are required annually (or more frequently) and there is a reporting calendar is in place to ensure deadlines are met, while other reports are only required reactively.	3-MGIC Manager Corporate Governance	Organisational Performance
		Review and adopt the Audit Plan in accordance with Audit Risk and Improvement Committee.		Following an assurance mapping process, conducted by an external facilitator, the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee have adopted a four year Audit Program and a one year Audit Plan. Three audits have been completed during this reporting period by external providers.	3-MGIC Manager Corporate Governance	Organisational Performance
		Implement the Work Health and Safety Action Plan.		Implementation continues for the targets within the WHS Action Plan. No change on the numbers from previous, except to confirm there are 21 targets.	3-MPCS Manager People Culture & Safety	Organisational Performance
		Manage and support the Audi, Risk and Improvement Committee to facilitate and enhance risk accountability.		There have been three Audit Risk and Improvement Committee meetings in this reporting period, being August October and December 2024. Following the Local Government Election in September, Councillor Ivey was appointed as the new Councillor member for the Committee. Audits have been completed on Airport Compliance, Heavy Vehicle Chain of Responsibility, and DRIVES (a Transport for NSW requirement) during the reporting period,	3-MGIC Manager Corporate Governance	Organisational Performance

4.2: The resources of Council are sustainably managed




Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
4.2.1	The system of raising revenue is equitable, and revenue from grants and other income sources is maximised	Ensure adherence to the Office of Local Government Compliance and Reporting Requirements.		All Office of Local Government compliance and reporting requirements up to December 2024 have been met. The GST Certificate was submitted to the Office of Local Government in July 2024. The rates were levied by service of rates notices under section 562(4) of the Local Government Act 1993 in July 2024. The 2023/2024 financial statements and the audit by the NSW Audit Office were finalised in October 2024, and are now available on the Dubbo Regional Council website. The September Quarter Business Review Statement was prepared and approved by Council in November 2024. Council funds were invested in accordance with legislative requirements and Council's Investment Strategy and Policy, and the monthly reports on money invested under section 625 of the Local Government Act 1993 have been prepared and provided to Council.	3-CFO Chief Financial Officer	Organisational Performance
		Considered approach to grant attraction opportunities focusing on renewals.		Considering the development of a community energy strategic framework to guide grants	2-DSPE Director Strategy Partnership & Egmt	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
4.2.2	Technological capabilities meet the requirements of Council and the community	Implement the Smart Council Strategy Action Plan.		<p>Council continues to advance the Smart Council Strategy with key projects including the upgrade of our document management system (Content Manager) completing in Q2. This project enhanced document handling and retrieval for streamlined operations.</p> <p>We have also focused on improving cyber strategies by implementing Australian Signals Directorate (ASD) Essential 8 controls to protect our digital infrastructure and safeguard against cyber threats. Enhancements to our business continuity plans are also underway, ensuring we are prepared to respond to disruptions, maintaining essential services and minimising</p>	3-CIO Chief Information Officer	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				downtime. We are actively migrating branch-level applications to the cloud, offering scalability, flexibility, and cost savings. This aligns with our Smart Council Strategy to integrate and optimise systems.		
		Effective service provision of Council's Geographical Information System.		A comprehensive and accurate Geographical Information System is being maintained. Circa 83 works as executed (WAX) plans have been captured in the corporate GIS system year to date.	3-CIO Chief Information Officer	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
		Maintain an accurate Land Information System database.		Information is constantly updated to ensure the accuracy of the database, and to ensure Planning Certificates are issued in accordance with Legislation.	3-MBDS Mgr Building & Development Services	Development and Environment
		Progress the Smart Region Strategy.		Council completed a Smart Region Strategy project with the University of New South Wales, which collected temperature data in a number of residential areas in Dubbo to assist with future planning controls to manage urban heat impacts. Information about this project is available online at https://yoursay.dubbo.nsw.gov.au/smart-and-cool-places-project . Council is also negotiating a further project with the University of NSW for the delivery of a battery energy storage system for the Dubbo Administration Building.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
4.2.3	A highly skilled, diverse and motivated workforce is maintained	Implement and revise the Workforce Management Strategy to identify future workforce requirements.		Progress continues on all the Workforce Management Strategies for 2024. Inclusion Diversity and Belonging Strategy is being prepared for publishing, the Leadership Development Program commences rollout on 28 January 2025. A framework for trainees and apprentices has been drafted to support Resourcing and Entry Pipelines, the Service Review Program continues as planned and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy plan on a page has been drafted.	3-MPCS Manager People Culture & Safety	Organisational Performance

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		Review and align learning initiatives and compliance to ensure value and effective capability building.		Training spend has been progressing well against the budget with 60% of the budget allocated at the end of December 2024, with the majority spend in WHS Compliance and Perform.	3-MPCS Manager People Culture & Safety	Organisational Performance
		Support employee feedback and engagement through an annual pulse check and review of action planning.		Annual Pulse Check was completed during October, the results have been published on Central for employees. P&C Business Partners will be discussing it with the divisions at upcoming meetings.	3-MPCS Manager People Culture & Safety	Organisational Performance
		Implement the initiatives designed under the Inclusion Diversity and Belonging strategy.		The Inclusion Diversity and Belonging Strategy has been endorsed. The strategy is awaiting alignment with corporate branding before being published. Action has commenced on the activities within the Strategy.	3-MPCS Manager People Culture & Safety	Organisational Performance
4.2.4	The business activities of Council provide financial returns to the community	Implement the outcomes of the Dubbo Regional Livestock Markets Business Structure Service Review.		<p>The implementation of the revised status quo is progressing as planned.</p> <p>The new staffing structure has been finalised and is currently in the recruitment phase. The tender for stock handling services is out to market and is expected to be presented at the February Council meeting. Access licences for agents have been drafted and are with DSSA solicitors for review and approval. The software package selection process has been narrowed down to two suppliers. Dubbo Regional Council will go to market for the final selection within the next four weeks. The full implementation of the revised status quo is projected to occur during the April-May period.</p>	3-MDRLM Manager DRLM	Organisational Performance
4.2.5	Service reviews are conducted to improve the performance of Council	Implement the adopted service review program to inform strategic business planning, organisational performance and Council decision making.		Agreed service review framework is being delivered/adjusted	2-DSPE Director Strategy Partnership & Egmt	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement

Theme 5: Liveability


5.1: The health and safety of the community is improved

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
5.1.1	Effective medical services and facilities are available	Advocate for appropriate health service provision and collaborate with government agencies and industry to support key work attraction initiatives.		GP Registrar Welcome Event series continues with 15 registrars in attendance at the August event. Collaboration with Regional Development Australia to discuss the Welcome Experience (key worker attraction program funded by the NSW State Government) to provide collateral for new key workers in the region. Council collaborated and participated in the Regional Development Australia Youth Forum and the CSIRO Generation STEM program that highlighted key worker initiatives and employment pathways in the region.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
		Work with stakeholders in the Dubbo Health, Education and Wellbeing Precinct to support the growth of services and facilities.		Continue working with University of Sydney and School of Rural Health to undertake the GP Registrar Welcome Event series. August event had 15 registrars in attendance. Collaboration with key stakeholders for the Region on the Rise campaign that will promote health and education workforce to live and work in the region (launch date early 2025).	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
5.1.2	The needs of older people and people with a disability are monitored to ensure appropriate services and facilities are available	Participate in regular interagency groups to inform strategic plans that address the needs of older people and people with a disability.		Council's Community Development (CDO) Officer chairs and attends bimonthly Dubbo Aged Services Interagency meetings and events such as Dementia Awareness Walk - Victoria Park with Dementia Choir performance (Sept. 2023), Holland Open Garden Event (Oct. 2023); Memory Walk & Jog (Feb. 2024), and Dubbo Dementia Expo (Sept. 2024).	3-MCMS Manager Community Services	Community Culture and Places




Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		Maintain and implement the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.		Council's Community Development Officer for Seniors and people with disability has been working with all relevant divisions of Council to gain information on progressing or completed actions within the current DIAP. The annual report was also completed for NSW Disability Council and Local Government NSW in December 2024.	3-MCMS Manager Community Services	Community Culture and Places
5.1.3	There is an appropriate level of policing in our region	Implement the adopted Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan.		Council's draft Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan 2025 - 2029 has been endorsed by Council to go on public exhibition during February 2025.	3-MCMS Manager Community Services	Community Culture and Places



5.2: Our First Nations communities and cultures are celebrated and enhanced




Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
5.2.1	The health, education and socio-economic status of our First Nations communities is improved	Provide and maintain an Aboriginal liaison service and participate in advisory groups to support and assist our First Nations community.		Council's Aboriginal Liaison Officer position is currently vacant, with the position expected to be filled early 2025	3-MCMS Manager Community Services	Community Culture and Places
		Maintain Supply Nation membership in Council's Procurement Policy to include the First Nations business sector.		Supply Nation Membership has been renewed for year ending Sept 2025.	3-MPMO Manager Project Management Office	Organisational Performance
5.2.2	The culture of our First Nations communities is recognised and celebrated	Implement Council's Reconciliation Action Plan to address national Closing the Gap initiatives including health, cultural, economic and social outcomes.		Council's Reflect RAP received conditional endorsement from Reconciliation Australia in late 2024. Council's creative services team was able to create a final, public facing document which included artwork, logo's and CEO forwards which is to be endorsed by Reconciliation Australia and then launched by Council before March 2025	3-MCMS Manager Community Services	Community Culture and Places

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
5.2.3	Items, areas and places of First Nations cultural heritage significance are protected and conserved	Effective working relationships with First Nations community representatives that deliver protection and enhanced broader community understanding for matters and items of cultural significance.		Undertaken a heritage study in Northwest Urban Release area that has identified cultural assets of very high significance. This will now be a consideration in the urban design and how to increase Traditional Owners access whilst protecting for future generations and incorporating into public land management of the future urban release area.	1-CEO Chief Executive Officer	Organisational Performance




5.3: The lifestyle and social needs of the community are supported

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
5.3.1	The social services requirements of our community are identified and met	Participate in interagency groups in regard to social service issues.		Council's Community Services team attend and facilitate a wide range of interagency networks. These include: Wellington Interagency, Dubbo and Wellington DV collectives, Wellington Children's Committee, Youth Interagency, Emergency Support Group, Youth Council, Early Years Education Support Group, Family Day Care forums, Community Collaborative, Youth Action Meetings, Dubbo Aboriginal Community Working Party, NAIDOC, Communities for Children Committee, Family Safety Collaboration, Local Government Community Safety & Crime Prevention Network, Local Government Multicultural Network, Welcoming Cities.	3-MCMS Manager Community Services	Community Culture and Places
		Community service outcomes supported with funding in accordance with Council's Financial Assistance Policy.		Council completed 2024/2025 Round 1 of the Community Services Fund as per resolution from the ordinary Council meeting dated 15 September 2024.	3-MCMS Manager Community Services	Community Culture and Places
		Opportunities for community based partnerships are explored to enhance		The adoption of the Community Safety and Crime Prevention will pave the way for the establishment of a Reference	2-DCCP Director Community	Community Culture and Places

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		Council's related services and improve community outcomes.		Group that will assist with developing a network to further discuss these matters. DRC representatives take part in a number of inter-agency meetings as well as the Youth Action Meetings (YAMs)	Culture & Places	
		Diverse audiences are catered for in corporate and destination communication platforms.		Following accessibility trial in 2023/2024, the accessibility tool has now been implemented on Council's Corporate and Destination websites. The tool supports residents and visitors, who have diverse needs, in accessing communication material. Investigation into a replacement website quality assurance tool has resulted in Council identifying a cost-effective replacement option. The new alternative has a range of features to support Council staff in their movement towards the industry standard in Website Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) of Grade 8 language for communication. Visitor Services have five flyers for tourism information translated into Mandarin, Malayalam, Nepalese, Punjabi and Urdu (5 top non-English speaking languages spoken in the region) to support both visitors and residents. Flyers are located in Dubbo and Wellington Visitor Information Centres.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
5.3.2	A variety of youth activities and entertainment is available	Develop and implement the Youth Strategy.		Council has completed the community survey to gain valuable data and local information to assist in the creation of meaningful actions for the draft Youth Action Plan 2025 - 2029. The survey was run over 44 days of engagement. The plan is now being constructed with a presentation to Council planned for April 2025.	3-MCMS Manager Community Services	Community Culture and Places

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
5.3.3	People have access to a range of burial and interment options	Develop long term management plans for cemetery facilities and ensure required service support.		A Cemetery Action Plan has been developed, and the Cemetery Operations Management Policy has been finalised, with a corresponding public-facing document currently in progress. Council has implemented necessary adjustments to ensure compliance with legislative requirements as a cemetery operator, and the development of master plans for the New Dubbo and Wellington Lawn cemeteries has commenced with completion expected by June 2025.	5-EOCCP Exec Officer Community Culture & Places	Community Culture and Places
5.3.4	Our community values domestic, companion and other animals	Complete construction of the new Dubbo Animal Shelter.		Construction of the new animal shelter is progressing, all the buildings have been constructed, the internal fit out including lining of the buildings has commenced. The majority of dog enclosures have been built, and these are currently being covered in an epoxy coating to extend the durability of the enclosures and floors. The sealing of the enclosures and floors with epoxy coating will also assist in preventing the spread of disease. Staff are currently preparing transition plans towards completion of the facility in March 2025.	3-MEC Manager Environmental Compliance	Development and Environment
		Implement an education program to educate residents on the requirements of keeping companion animals.		Staff from Council's animal shelter and rangers have been involved in healthy pet days in conjunction with the Animal Welfare League. Councils' communication branch has been working closely with the rangers and animal shelter team to put together various educational social media posts. The Rangers are updating the information session materials and are looking to attend preschools to show the children safe ways to behave and interact with companion animals.	3-MEC Manager Environmental Compliance	Development and Environment







5.4: Our community has access to a full range of educational opportunities




Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
5.4.1	Access to a variety of high quality education facilities, opportunities and choice is available	Advocate for appropriate primary, secondary and tertiary education service provision and collaborate with government agencies and industry to support key worker attraction initiatives.		Working with University of Sydney School of Rural Health for the GP Registrar Welcome Event series continues with 15 registrars in attendance at the August event. Collaborating with Regional Development Australia for the Welcome Experience (key worker attraction program funded by the NSW State Government) to provide collateral for new key workers in the region. Council collaborated and participated in the Regional Development Australia Youth Forum and the CSIRO Generation STEM program that highlighted key worker initiatives and employment pathways in the region. Collaborating with Charles Sturt University to promote the SPARK Festival which encourages the sharing of ideas, innovation and technology through engagement of the local community.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement
5.4.2	Childhood, pre-school and after hours care meets the needs of the community	Provide and maintain Family Day Care services in Dubbo and Wellington.		Dubbo Family Day Care currently has 19 Family Day Care Educators located across Dubbo, Wellington, Narromine and Warren. Dubbo Family Day Care have 154 children across the service with 225 children on a waiting list.	3-MCMS Manager Community Services	Community Culture and Places
		Implement the activity work plan of under Communities for Children.		Council's Communities for Children Officer is a full-time position which facilitates community-based child and family programs and services for vulnerable and disadvantaged families within Wellington. This program continues to be externally funded through CatholiCare with the existing subcontract agreement in place until	3-MCMS Manager Community Services	Community Culture and Places

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				June 2026. There are specific programs which are detailed in the Work Activity Plan.		
5.4.3	Access to a high standard of library services and facilities is available	Implement the findings of the Macquarie Regional Library Service Review.		MRL Information Technology systems are currently being integrated into the DRC Information Technology branch for improved information management and cyber security risk management. Finalisation of all processes, including budget allocation and division of assets management, is underway.	3-MMRL Manager Macquarie Regional Library	Community Culture and Places
		Implement the Macquarie Regional Library Operational Plan.		MRL Annual Report 2023/2024, including the audited statement of accounts being finalised. State Library NSW Public Libraries Statistical Return (performance) completed. Library Improvement Plan (2025-2028) actions are progressing with minor schedule changes based on organisational prioritisation.	3-MMRL Manager Macquarie Regional Library	Community Culture and Places


5.5: Our community has access to a diverse range of recreational opportunities







Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
5.5.1	Passive and active open space is located to maximise access and use by the community	Review and implement the Strategic Open Space Master Plan.		Final edits are being made to the Open Space Master Plan 2035 prior to a report being submitted to the Ordinary Council Meeting. This report will include a recommendation to place the Open Space Master Plan 2035 on public exhibition seeking the community's feedback. Based on this feedback, and any further edits or amendments, it will then be submitted to Council for adoption.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Engage with the community in the planning and development of public open space areas.		Council continues to engage with the community in the design and location of public open space. The Multi-cultural	3-MROS Manager	Community Culture and Places

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				Garden at Dubbo Regional Botanic Garden has just come off 63 days of public exhibition, and the leash-free area for Wellington (38 days) are recent examples.	Recreation & Open Space	
		Implement the Public Open Space Guidelines to identify standards for future development.		The Public Open Space Guidelines have been peer reviewed (internally) and are progressing. A report will be prepared for Executive Leadership Team for their comments prior to public exhibition.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
5.5.2	Unique recreation and open space facilities are available	Complete the repaired of flood damage areas of Pioneer Park in Wellington.		The irrigation system installation has been delayed due to the unavailability of the Contractor. The irrigation system is currently 30% installed and is scheduled to be completed by the end of February 2025.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Complete the planning proposal for the reclassification and rezoning of Alexander Bell Memorial Park.		Work is continuing on the drafting of the documentation required for reclassification / rezoning of the parcel of land.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Complete design and engagement of contractor for renewal of Elston Park water park.		Preparation of tender based on advice from Splash Park specialists. It is anticipated that the tender will go out to marketplace in March 2025.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Complete renewal of Cameron Park pedestrian lighting.		The work has been commenced and it is anticipated to be completed by April 2025. Project remains on schedule and within budget.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
5.5.3	Our sporting facilities cater for a wide range of events and opportunities	Actively engage and collaborate with sports user groups and Dubbo Regional Sports Council to support effective asset management and development and viable and responsive service delivery.		Council remains committed to working with the Dubbo Regional Sports Council. Current discussions include the preparation of agreed briefs relating to the sport specific requirements. The Dubbo Regional Sports Council held the Sports Awards in December that were well attended.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		Complete irrigation renewal at John McGrath Oval.		Finalisation of the John McGrath Irrigation Renewal Project was completed in December on time and within budget.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Progress irrigation renewals of Victoria Park number 2 and 3 ovals.		The tender documentation is being prepared ready for distribution to the marketplace in March/April 2025.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Complete construction of amenity block at Victoria Park that meets community needs.		Independent consultant was engaged to undertake a review of all public amenity blocks across the Dubbo Regional Council. This audit was undertaken in December 2024. The final report back from the consultant is due back in late January 2025, the report will include comments and recommendations in relation to the Victoria Park amenity block based on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Principles (CTPED).	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places







5.6: The diversity of our heritage, cultural services and facilities are maintained and promoted



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
5.6.1	Our community participates in and celebrates the high quality of cultural services and facilities available	Implement the 2024/2025 action plan (SPARC).		Being implemented with an identified action for the 2024/2025 undertaken. 33 Actions were identified for completion in the year, 11 have been completed and 17 underway or yet to be initiated.	3-MRE Manager Regional Experiences	Community Culture and Places
		Develop and curate a season program each year at Dubbo Regional Theatre and Convention Centre offering a diverse range of shows and genres.		A successful Season Launch was held with 368 people in attendance. The 2025 Season program with the theme 'A Million Reasons' acknowledges over one million people have visited the DRTCC since the official opening in 2010. The Season program comprises of 20 productions across the genres of musicals/cabaret, comedy, family and youth, dance and drama.	3-MREV Manager Regional Events	Community Culture and Places






Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		The Dubbo Regional Theatre and Convention Centre Business Plan is reviewed and updated annually including the maintenance schedule and asset renewal program.		As part of the Asset Renewal Plan, the 15 year old foyer carpet has been replaced. A large portion of the original carpet has been repurposed in non-public areas to line walkways on side stage and on the cat walks above the theatre auditorium.	3-MREV Manager Regional Events	Community Culture and Places
		Progress and implement the strategic plans and strategies for the Western Plains Cultural Centre.		Strategic Business Plan is in development following the outcomes of the Strategic Marketing Plan.	3-MRE Manager Regional Experiences	Community Culture and Places
5.6.2	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse peoples' culture and heritage is celebrated	Collaborate with the culturally and linguistically diverse local community to identify needs and respond to opportunities for celebration.		Council has been able to support many local multicultural groups within the region through the Event and Community Services Fund grant rounds. Council continues to provide letters of support for local groups to apply for non-Council funding.	3-MCMS Manager Community Services	Community Culture and Places
		Prepare and implement the Master Plan for Multicultural Garden.		Concept plans were on public exhibition from 4/10 - 2/12/2024 (63 days). Council received 112 contributions that are now under review to help inform the development of a final master plan.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Maintain Sister Cities relationships and support opportunities for cultural exchange.		Next exchange program on track to be launched in Late February 2025. Meeting held with staff to increase visibility and applications and a new program design is being developed to increase viability and promotion of program.	3-MRE Manager Regional Experiences	Community Culture and Places
5.6.3	Items of heritage significance are protected, conserved and adapted for re-use where appropriate	Provide a heritage advisory service to protect and enhance heritage assets, and to identify items of heritage significance.		Council offers a heritage advisory service to assist staff in the assessment of development applications, and to assist the general public. Appointments can be made with Council.	3-MBDS Mgr Building & Development Services	Development and Environment

Theme 6: Environmental Sustainability






6.1: We achieve net zero emissions



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
6.1.1	Investment in renewable energy opportunities are encouraged and supported	Collaborate with the State Government to ensure the deployment of the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone takes a strategic approach to community development.		Council is actively collaborating with other Council's in the Central West and Orana Renewable Energy Zone and State Government Departments with the implementation of a Steer Co Group for overall coordination. This includes a number of working groups, which are focused on housing and accommodation, social services, environment, traffic and transport and economic development.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
		Implement the Energy Strategy and Implementation Plan.		Energy Report being conducted (and due March 2025) to allow for a snapshot to be reviewed/compared against the adopted Energy Strategy and Implementation Plan.	3-MRRE Mgr Resource Recovery & Efficiency	Development and Environment
6.1.2	Council buildings and facilities are energy efficient, carbon neutral and utilise renewable energy sources	A review of the energy use of Council buildings is undertaken to identify opportunities for renewable energy use.		UNSW were successful in gaining the funding for the Solar and Battery trial program. This project is kicking off early 2025. Learnings from this project will be ongoing and further provide opportunities to influence how energy can be managed across multiple council facilities.	3-MBA Manager Building Assets	Organisational Performance
		Monitor and report the energy performance of Council buildings and facilities via Council's energy management tool.		Monitoring is ongoing, data baselines are being established and comparisons of trends ongoing.	3-MBA Manager Building Assets	Organisational Performance
		Implementation the application of Council's Sustainable Building Policy.		The Sustainable Building policy were included in the design of the Dubbo Animal Shelter.	2-DOP Director Organisational Performance	Organisational Performance
		The Net Zero Framework is implemented.		The Net Zero Framework was endorsed and adopted by Council in 2023. The requirement for Council to achieve 'net zero emissions' is outlined within Council's Towards 2040 Community Strategic Plan (Objective 6.1).	3-MRRE Mgr Resource Recovery & Efficiency	Development and Environment

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		Review the top five energy consuming water and sewer sites and investigate opportunities for offsetting Councils electrical costs.		<p>Council continually reviews energy consumption of its Water Supply and Sewerage assets. Council will shortly commence design work associated with major upgrades to Keswick Sewer Pump Station and Wheelers Lane Town Water Supply Bore in South Dubbo, located on Hennessy Drive near the intersection of Wheelers Lane. Among major upgrades to the infrastructure itself, Council intends to install a solar array of size suitable to offset the majority of electricity operating costs during the day. Existing submersible pumps will also be replaced with new and efficient models.</p> <p>Council, in conjunction with contractors is undertaking major upgrades to its Troy Gully Sewer Pump Station, located on River Street adjacent the Dubbo to Gilgandra railway crossing in North Dubbo. This upgrade includes the replacement of all aging dry-well pumps with submersible pumps. This work will halve the amount of electricity consumed by the pump station, whilst maintaining the same required flow rates. Council also intends to install a large solar array at the site of the pump station to offset daytime electricity costs.</p> <p>As part of the construction of a new fluoride dosing facility at the John Gilbert Water Treatment Plant in Dubbo, Council will install solar panels on the roof of the new dosing facility to offset electricity costs associated with providing fluoridated water to the community.</p>	3-MSWSS Manager Strategy Water Supply & Sewerage	Infrastructure
6.1.3	Alternative modes of transport are available	Investigate the provision of electric vehicle charging stations, along with opportunities to fund installation of these facilities.		Investigations into suitable location of Electric vehicle charging stations at the	2-DOP Director	Organisational Performance



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				Dubbo Regional Airport along with Grant funding opportunities.	Organisational Performance	
6.1.4	Existing and new development is sustainable, has sufficient greenspace and efficiently uses resources	Investigate policy mechanisms to reduce the urban heat effect.		A report addressing the potential introduction of a Tree Preservation Order (Private Trees) has been prepared for consideration by Council. If adopted the Tree Preservation Order will help protect private trees and assist in heat island effect mitigation. Information is being gathered to commence the draft Greening Strategy.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Implement the Street Tree Master Plans and Street Tree Maintenance Guidelines in line with budget and resources.		The Street Tree Master Plans continue to be implemented. The Spring planting has been finalised and the Autumn planting list is being organised. The Priority Streets (as identified in the Plans) continue to main the focus on plantings, with considerations given to Customer Requests.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Implement the Significant Tree Register and the Tree Removal-Amenity valuation for public trees policy.		The Significant Tree Register continues to be implemented across the Dubbo Regional Council. A review of the document will be undertaken over the next 3 months.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Further development of a Tree Preservation Order in accordance with the resolutions of Council.		A report will be put to Council in early 2025.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Circular industrial opportunities are targeted for the Region to maximise opportunities from the Central West and Orana Renewable Energy Zone, other major infrastructure and developments in the Region.		Participated in the CWO REZ Steering Committee that has driven the need for a cumulative impacts study on waste management for REZ. This includes the potential external funding a business case development for legacy waste management infrastructure.	1-CEO Chief Executive Officer	Organisational Performance




6.2: We recognise, plan for and respond to the impacts of climate change

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
6.2.1	The impacts of climate change are identified and addressed through collaboration with our community and government	Council's strategic planning for services and infrastructure incorporates adaptation to the impact of climate change.		Council considered the findings of the UNSW study at its December Ordinary Meeting.	1-CEO Chief Executive Officer	Organisational Performance
		Climate change risk planning for Council and Council's assets is included within Council's Risk Management Framework and associated documents by December 2024.		Climate Change Risks have been included in the Risk Management Framework and the risk controls are awaiting confirmation by the Risk Owners.	3-MPCS Manager People Culture & Safety	Organisational Performance
		Adopt an urban forest tree canopy target and target external funding opportunities such as Voluntary Planning Agreements.		Information is being gathered to prepare for the drafting of the greening Strategy that will identify a realistic canopy cover for Dubbo and Wellington.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
6.2.2	Water supply is provided efficiently and sustainably to our community	Promote and encourage water savings initiatives to the community.		Council has a range of water saving educational information and materials available on its website for the community to access.	3-MWSS Manager Operations Water Supply & Sewerage	Infrastructure
		Investigate activities and funding strategies to ensure long-term water security.		Council has entered into a Public Private Partnership (PPP) with Squadron Energy to construct an Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant (AWTP). Squadron Energy will commit \$3.6 million (excl GST) in funding towards this project. The AWTP will be located at the Dubbo Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) and will utilise treated effluent generated by the facility. The proposed AWTP will produce recycled water to be utilised by Squadron Energy for the purposes of concrete batching and dust suppression. Council has also partnered with the University of Newcastle who will undertake research in relation to the AWTP and the recycled water that it produces. The University will review the quality of water and its potential uses. Council has now closed tenders for the award of construction for the AWTP.	3-MSWSS Manager Strategy Water Supply & Sewerage	Infrastructure



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				Tender assessments are now being conducted.		
6.2.3	Waste management processes reduce our environmental footprint and impact on the environment	Investigate smart technology to improve waste management practices.		Council continues to investigate and adopt smart technologies that are aimed to improve waste management practices. Council is currently investigating the application of Telematics to generate efficient service routes, increase contamination identification, resource recovery and reduce the risk of waste collection vehicle fires.	3-MRRE Mgr Resource Recovery & Efficiency	Development and Environment
		Work with NetWaste on waste projects and opportunities for greater diversion from landfill.		Council is a member on the Netwaste steering committee and chairs the Landfill Operators Group. Council will continue to work with Netwaste on potential waste projects and trials for greater diversion from landfill and also increase reuse, recycling and circular economy opportunities.	3-MRRE Mgr Resource Recovery & Efficiency	Development and Environment




6.3: Land use management sustains and improves the built and natural environment



Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
6.3.1	The quality of the Macquarie, Talbragar and Bell river corridors are managed and enhanced	Review the Parks and Bushcare Program in line with the adopted Volunteer Framework.		The review of the Program is being undertaken in line with the review of the adopted volunteer framework. The review will assess alignment between the framework and our current practices, and explore opportunities to restructure and realign our approach to volunteer engagement.	3-MGSO Manager Greenspace Operations	Infrastructure
6.3.2	Stormwater discharge into receiving waters is limited	Implement adopted drainage strategies.		Council has drainage strategies for different catchments in both Dubbo and Wellington. When new development is proposed within a catchment, Council ensures that proposed drainage	3-MISD Mgr Infrastructure Strategy & Design	Infrastructure

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				systems are in accordance with adopted drainage strategies.		
6.3.3	Endangered ecological communities, threatened species, habitats and environmental assets are protected	Investigate funding opportunities targeted to the restoration of degraded environments.		Council continues to monitor and submit grant applications as opportunities are identified.	3-MROS Manager Recreation & Open Space	Community Culture and Places
		Report on the Weed Action Program (Department of Primary Industry).		Tasks are being completed as planned and all progress is being recorded for inclusion in the first-quarter report to the Department of Primary Industry.	3-MGSO Manager Greenspace Operations	Infrastructure
		Assess major infrastructure projects so that they reasonably avoid endangered ecological communities, threatened species, habitats and environmental assets.		The assessment of development applications is an ongoing process. Assessing the impact on the natural environment is undertaken with all applications, including infrastructure projects which are often done under Part 5 of the Act.	3-MBDS Mgr Building & Development Services	Development and Environment

6.4: We plan for and mitigate the impacts of natural events and disasters

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
6.4.1	People and property are protected from fire-related incidents	Implement outcomes arising from the certification of Bushfire Prone Land Mapping.		Council is maintaining a database to indicate properties that should be considered for inclusion and removal from the bushfire prone land map, and will provide this to NSW Rural Fire Service as opportunities arise.	3-MGP Manager Growth Planning	Development and Environment
6.4.2	Development does not place the community at risk from flood impacts	Commence the Wellington Flood Study.		Council has engaged a consultant to prepare the flood study, and the project has commenced. Expressions of interest have also been called for membership of the Floodplain Management Committee for this flood study.	3-MISD Mgr Infrastructure Strategy & Design	Infrastructure

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
		Complete the Ballimore Village Flood Study.		<p>The Ballimore Flood Study was prepared by Council and was adopted by Council at the Ordinary Council meeting held on 15 August 2024. The Council adopted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Ballimore Flood Study (Volume 1) dated 11 July 2024 as attached to the report as Appendix 1 be adopted. 2. That the Ballimore Flood Mapping Compendium (Volume 3) dated 11 July 2024 as attached to the report as Appendix 2 be adopted. 3. That the following interim development controls apply to Ballimore: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Defined Flood Event (DFE) shall be the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) event. b. A Flood Planning Level (FPL) of the DFE (1% AEP) + 0.5 metres freeboard shall be applied to all new dwellings proposed. c. All new dwellings shall have a suspended floor system (no slab on ground) and be designed such that future house raising is possible. <p>That these interim development controls shall apply until the Ballimore Flood Risk Management Study and Plan is adopted by Council, at which point the resulting control measures adopted shall supersede those discussed above.</p>	3-MISD Mgr Infrastructure Strategy & Design	Infrastructure
6.4.3	Local emergency management organisations and local State Emergency Services are capable of responding to emergencies	The adopted Local Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN) is up to date and utilised in emergency situations.		The EMPLAN has been adopted and will be available on the Dubbo Regional Council website by the next reporting period.	3-MPCS Manager People Culture & Safety	Organisational Performance
		Progress the business case and associated government financial support for the strengthening and lengthening of Dubbo Regional Airport to cater for Rural Fire Service air fleet.		The draft business case has been reviewed, and an addendum is being developed to separate the case into distinct stages, clearly outlining the benefits and financial implications of each phase. Additionally, a 'one-pager' is	3-MASO Manager Airport Strategy and Operations	Organisational Performance

Code	3 Year Focus	1 Year Action	Status	Comments	Responsible Officer Position	Responsible Directorate
				being prepared to support ministerial and funding discussions. To advance funding efforts, two grant applications have been submitted, leveraging key elements of the current business case, which in turn is informing the development of the addendum. Dubbo Regional Airport was successful in the Grant Application for Growing Regions Program for \$14.6M (50/50 funding) for Strengthening of the Runway, which was announced on the 14 Jan 2025		
		Coordinate Council's response and assist relevant agencies during emergencies and disasters.		No emergencies or disasters have occurred during the reporting period. The LEMO role is fully resourced.	3-MPCS Manager People Culture & Safety	Organisational Performance
		Collaborate with Narromine Shire Council to Implement the outcomes of the Drought Resilience Plan.		Regional Drought Resilience Plan has been submitted to CSIRO for feedback and subsequent release of implementation funding. Draft implementation plan has been created.	3-MSPI Mgr Strategic Partnerships & Investment	Strategy Partnerships and Engagement



DUBBO REGIONAL
COUNCIL

REPORT: Visitor Information Services Review Update

DIVISION: Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement
REPORT DATE: 28 January 2025
TRIM REFERENCE: ID25/98

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide review or update 	
Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an update to the Service Review of the Visitor Information Centres in the Dubbo Region 	
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft review was provided to the ARIC Committee in August 2024 which included the recommendation for further data collection prior to commencing the implementation plan Data has been collected and reviewed and is provided in this report Service Review report is attached 	
Financial Implications	Budget Area	Strategic Partnerships and Investment
	Funding Source	Not applicable
	Proposed Cost	N/A
	Ongoing Costs	N/A
Policy Implications	Policy Title	Not applicable
	Impact on Policy	N/A
Consultation	As noted in report	

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: 4.2 The resources of Council are sustainably managed
 Delivery Program Strategy: 4.2.5 Service reviews are conducted to improve Council's performance

RECOMMENDATION

That the report from the Manager Strategic Partnerships and Investment be noted.

Jessica Brown
Director Strategy Partnerships and Engagement

KH
Manager Strategic
Partnership and
Investment

Previous Resolutions of Council

The draft outcomes of the level 2 service review were presented to the Audit Risk Committee on 5 August 2024 by the Manager Strategic Partnerships and Investment.

5 August 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <i>That demographic and visitor information metrics to be collected from Visitor Information Centres (Dubbo and Wellington) to inform further decision for service model delivery.</i>2. <i>That performance metrics and targets are developed for Visitor Information Centres services, including a review of current business measurements and opportunity to improve customer insight.</i>3. <i>That agreed 'priority services' be developed for Dubbo and Wellington Visitor Information Centres to provide parameters to inform future decision making.</i>4. <i>That the Manager Strategic Partnerships and Investment provide a report to Council at the conclusion of the collection of data to be included with the report of the Visitor Information Service Review.</i>
ARIC24/45	

BACKGROUND

A service review of the Dubbo and Wellington Visitor Information Centres (VICs) was undertaken in 2024. As the tourism landscape is rapidly changing the review considered the operations of both VICs and how the services can meet visitor expectations whilst remaining relevant. The review included the evaluation of services provided, operational challenges and a financial analysis.

The primary objectives of the VICs include providing local tourism information, selling regional products, and delivering exceptional customer service. With a focus on engaging visitors and residents alike, the centres offer a range of services such as accommodation advice, event information, and retail sales of local merchandise. The review highlighted the importance of VIC accreditation, which enhances credibility, access to resources, and competitive advantage in attracting visitors.

The review identified operational challenges, including a high dependency on staffing, particularly during weekends which lead to higher operational costs. The Dubbo VIC, located on a floodplain, faces additional challenges due to recurring flooding which can affect service continuity and visitor accessibility. The Wellington VIC, co-located within the Wellington Administration Building, experiences limited visibility and declining patronage which is exacerbated by inadequate parking facilities for visitors (especially for caravans and motorhomes).

The Dubbo Region visitor economy supports 1.3 million visitors annually resulting in \$275 million injected into the region. The VICs support the tourism industry at a financial cost to

Council of between \$580,000 to \$980,000. The VICs have had an increase in retail income, primarily from Dubbo, however staffing costs remain the largest expense. The flow-on of economic spend within the region due to information provided to visitors is difficult to quantify yet noted in the industry as integral to the visitor economy to encourage spend and longer stays.

Stakeholder feedback revealed a disconnect between VICs and local tourism operators, highlighting the need for improved collaboration and strategic vision. Furthermore, the review emphasised the impact of digital transformation on visitor engagement, suggesting an opportunity at the VICs to enhance their online presence and integrate digital services with traditional offerings to meet changing consumer behaviours.

Whilst the review highlighted several opportunities for improvement, it was noted that visitor demographic data was required for the VICs before any significant changes were considered. This was to ensure that changes being made would be in the best interest of the users of the VICs rather than the demographic of the typical visitor to the region (families of primary-aged school children).

REPORT

A five-month data collection (August – December) for the visitor information centres at Dubbo and Wellington was undertaken and included school holidays, off-peak period, winter and summer months to achieve a diverse survey response.

The survey obtained responses from 464 visitors to both Dubbo and Wellington information centres. There were 49% surveys completed from Dubbo VIC and 51% from Wellington VIC. A snapshot of the key insights are noted below:

Dubbo Region Visitor Information Centres Customer Insights Survey



Key insights are that a large proportion of respondents were visitors, over the age of 55 years old and travelling as a couple. The top four reasons to visit the VIC were to seek information on things to do; use clean amenities; to ask for a map of the region; or to purchase souvenirs and local produce. Noteworthy data obtained was that one-third of respondents were not staying overnight, and that more than one quarter of respondents did not research their trip prior to visiting the region. This information will be used for the enhancement of product and marketing for the visitors to the VICs.

Overall, the survey results confirmed that the visitors using the information centres are somewhat different to the Dubbo Region's key target market from a visitor attraction perspective. The overall key target market for the Dubbo Region is families with infant or school-aged children, median age is approximately 35 years old and staying for 2 nights. The survey results of the information centres showed that the visitor is an older demographic, is limited in their use of digital channels for research but is looking for local knowledge, clean amenities, purchasing local products and a personal interaction.

During the period of data collection, several key building asset issues at the Dubbo VIC were identified and are currently being addressed. These include sewage system issues,

deteriorating roof and guttering and uneven pavement causing potential safety and accessibility issues. These asset renewals are due to be complete by March 2025.

Based on the service review and subsequent data collection, the following recommendations are noted for implementation.

Recommendation 1:

- That the sponsor of the Service Review (Manager Strategic Partnerships and Investment) presents the findings of the review and management response with staff and stakeholders to generate collaboration and promote opportunities for innovation.

Recommendation 2:

- Develop a Visitor Information Centres improvement program in consultation with staff including agreed priority services for both locations.

Recommendation 3:

- That consideration be given for development of clear performance metrics and targets for Visitor Information Centre services, including a review of current business measurements and opportunity to improve customer insight.

A number of medium and long-term recommendations are outlined in the service review report for consideration (Appendix 1).

Consultation

- Service Review consulted with internal tourism operators, key external tourism operators, key industry body and current staff
- Survey respondents were a combination of visitors and residents
- Concerns raised were high cost of staff for a digitally influenced market, the need for a tourism strategy across all tourism related areas of Council, consideration for co-located VICs, and new revenue streams
- The survey was undertaken to identify the demographic of the VIC patrons vs the current visitor target market
- Other concerns including co-location will be addressed through the recommendations of the service review.

Resourcing Implications

- Nil; general recommendations will be undertaken within current operating budget.

APPENDICES:

- [1](#) Service Review - Visitor Information Centres



Strategic Service Review – Dubbo and Wellington Visitor Information Centres

Date of Review: June 2024



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Summary of Findings

This report presents a review of the Dubbo and Wellington Visitor Information Centres (VICs), operated by the Dubbo Regional Council. The review encompasses an evaluation of services provided, operational challenges, financial analysis, and strategic recommendations aimed at enhancing overall performance. The tourism landscape is rapidly changing, necessitating that both VICs adapt their services to meet visitor expectations and remain relevant.

The primary objectives of the VICs include providing local tourism information, selling regional products, and delivering exceptional customer service. With a focus on engaging visitors and residents alike, the centres offer a range of services such as accommodation advice, event information, and retail sales of local merchandise. The report highlights the importance of VIC accreditation, which enhances credibility, access to resources, and competitive advantage in attracting visitors.

The review identifies significant operational challenges, including a high dependency on staffing, particularly during weekends, leading to escalated operational costs. The Dubbo VIC, located on a floodplain, faces additional challenges due to recurring flooding, affecting service continuity and visitor accessibility. In contrast, the Wellington VIC, co-located within the Administration Building, experiences limited visibility and declining patronage, exacerbated by inadequate parking facilities for visitors.

Financially, both VICs have operated at a loss over the past six years, with annual losses ranging from \$580,000 to \$980,000. Despite a modest increase in retail income, primarily from Dubbo, staffing costs remain the largest expense, necessitating a review of the current service model. The report underscores the need to identify new income opportunities and enhance operational efficiency.

Stakeholder feedback reveals a disconnect between VICs and local tourism operators, highlighting the need for improved collaboration and strategic vision. Furthermore, the review emphasises the impact of digital transformation on visitor engagement, suggesting that VICs must enhance their online presence and integrate digital services with traditional offerings to meet changing consumer behaviours.

Opportunities for Improvement

The review identifies several opportunities for improvement, including:

1. **Service Model Re-evaluation:** Consideration of co-location with local attractions or businesses to share operational costs and enhance visitor engagement.
2. **New Income Streams:** Implementation of online sales platforms, accommodation concierge services, and potential bike hire offerings.
3. **Operational Efficiency:** Streamlining staffing structures and integrating point-of-sale systems with Council accounting for improved financial management.

Conclusion

The strategic service review of the Dubbo and Wellington Visitor Information Centres highlights areas for improvement, emphasising the importance of adapting to evolving tourism dynamics while ensuring financial sustainability. By implementing the recommended strategies, Council can optimise resources, enhance visitor experiences, and contribute to the long-term growth and prosperity of the region's tourism sector.

Background to Review

This report provides the findings of the service review provided by the Dubbo and Wellington Visitor Information Centres (VICs) which are owned and operated by Dubbo Regional Council. The review has assessed services provided, challenges and financial analysis of the operation and suggested strategies to implement to improve overall performance.

The review has been conducted internally and includes financial analysis, location review, resourcing, patronage trends, staffing structure, and a review of the digital influence on VICs.

The decision for Council to conduct a strategic service review of the Dubbo and Wellington Visitor Information Centres stems from multiple factors:

- **Changing Tourism Trends:** The tourism industry is dynamic, with trends and preferences constantly evolving. Dubbo and Wellington, being key tourist destinations in the Region, must adapt to these changes to remain competitive and attract visitors. A strategic service review considers if the current services offered by the Visitor Information Centres align with these changing trends and visitor expectations.
- **Budgetary Considerations:** Local Government faces budget constraints and needs to ensure resources are allocated efficiently. By conducting a review of the Visitor Information Centres, Council can assess the cost-effectiveness of these services and explore opportunities for streamlining operations or reallocating funds to areas of greater need.
- **Performance Evaluation:** Evaluating the performance of the VICs allows Council to measure effectiveness in promoting tourism, providing information to visitors, and supporting local businesses. This review also gathered feedback from stakeholders, assessed visitor numbers, analysed revenue and operating costs.
- **Community Input:** Engaging with local tourism stakeholders and businesses is essential to understand their needs and priorities. A strategic service review provides an opportunity for stakeholders to provide input and suggestions for improving the VICs services and enhancing their role in promoting the Region.
- **Planning:** The review aligns with broader strategic planning initiatives aimed at enhancing the region's tourism offerings, economic development, and community well-being. By evaluating the role of the VICs within the context of these strategic objectives, Council can identify opportunities for alignment and synergies.

Overall, conducting a strategic service review of the Dubbo and Wellington VICs demonstrates Council's commitment to optimising resources, enhancing tourism experiences and supporting the long-term growth and prosperity of the Region.

Visitor Information Centres

The objectives of VICs are to tell the story of a local region, distribute information, sell local products and tourism merchandise, and to provide customer service to visitors. Customer service is central to the delivery of service with providing information to visitors and residents such as points of interest, historical and natural assets, tourism products, accommodation, wayfinding, events, and the sale of local products and tourism merchandise. The products and services within individual VICs vary between centres depending on the focus of that centre or the region.

Visitor Information 'Accreditation'

VICs have the opportunity to be accredited at the cost of \$600 per year per site. Retaining accreditation in New South Wales (NSW) offers several benefits, both for the VIC itself and for the community which are outlined in the accreditation documentation:

- 1. Credibility and Trust: Accreditation signifies that your VIC meets certain standards of quality, professionalism, and service excellence. This enhances trust and credibility among visitors, tourists, and stakeholders.*
- 2. Access to Resources: Accredited VICs often have access to resources, training programs, and support networks provided by tourism bodies or government agencies. These resources can help VIC staff stay updated on industry trends, improve customer service skills, and enhance their knowledge about local attractions and amenities.*
- 3. Visibility and Promotion: Accreditation can increase your VIC's visibility within the tourism industry. Accredited VICs may be promoted through official tourism channels, websites, and marketing materials, leading to increased foot traffic and revenue.*
- 4. Quality Assurance: Accreditation ensures that your VIC maintains certain standards related to information provision, visitor assistance, facilities, and accessibility. This commitment to quality assurance can lead to positive reviews, repeat visits, and recommendations from satisfied visitors.*
- 5. Competitive Advantage: Accreditation sets your VIC apart from non-accredited competitors. It can be a deciding factor for visitors when choosing where to seek information and assistance, giving you a competitive edge in attracting tourists and travellers.*
- 6. Compliance: Accreditation may be required to access certain funding opportunities, participate in tourism initiatives, or maintain partnerships with tourism organisations. By retaining accreditation, the VICs remains compliant with industry standards and regulations, ensuring continued eligibility for support programs and collaborations.*



Accredited sites have access to use the  brand for all signage, however, must meet the criteria for accreditation. Summarised key criteria include:

- Open 360 days per year for a minimum of 42hrs per week (including at least 4hrs on both Saturday and Sunday)
- Employ a minimum of one permanent staff member with the relevant experience.
- Each VIC may close up to 5 gazetted Public Holidays each year.
- Maintain operational protocols as outlined.
- Provide information on accommodation, attractions and emergency help services.
- Maintain current knowledge of neighbouring regions and products.
- Have the ability to facilitate bookings on behalf of customers.
- Display or carry regional and statewide information brochures depending on customer demand and space availability.

Operating / Ownership Structure

A total of 103 accredited Visitor Information centres across NSW with the majority (88%) owned and operated by Local Government organisations. Other ownership models include Local Tourism Organisations (4 facilities), Chamber of Commerce (3 facilities), Independent Committees (1 facility), Office of Environment and Heritage (1 facility) and National Parks and Wildlife (1 facility). Different operating models are undertaken to suit the needs of the region, including location, tourism industry, collaboration and visitation.

Digital Influence on Service Demand

As consumer behaviour changes and adapts to the highly digitised world, VICs must also consider these changing behaviours and the influence on the operations of VICs. Devices such as smart phones have altered the way consumers are linked with information. Interactive digital platforms such as 'Google Maps', as well as websites (e.g. 'YouTube'), social media and apps (for example 'Waze') have disrupted the traditional methods of gaining access to up-to-date and relevant information.

It is considered that changing consumer behaviour is influencing the way people utilise and interact with VIC's. Many Information Centres are adapting services to maintain their relevancy, however, there are sectors of the community who do not have or wish to access digital platforms. All sectors of the visitor market and community should be considered when providing visitor information services (physical and digital) for local information.

Given current digital trends and how visitors access information, consideration for operational efficiencies should be considered. The VIC accreditation body, Tourism Group, have noted a viable business model for VICs to be co-located with tourism attractions. The accreditation body suggests that "approximately 70% of VIC's in Australia are now co-located with a major attraction"¹. This allows for focus to be provided to digital access while still providing a physical presence with another operation such as gallery, café etc.

¹ Wayne Clift – The Tourism Group (2024)

The Dubbo Region Tourism Economy

The tourism sector in the Dubbo Regional Local Government Area (LGA) is responsible for directly employing 1,398 people. It is the 7th highest employment sector and generates \$80.1m in wages and salaries. The vast majority (62%) of the people employed in industry are in the accommodation and food services sector. Tourism is a significant contributor to the local economy, with businesses directly engaged in the sector producing gross revenue (output) of \$274.6m annually².

The 2023 Tourism Research Australia (TRA) data³, shows that average annual visitation to the Region is 1.24m people. Of the 1.24m visitors coming to the Region, 44% are staying overnight at an average stay of 2.6 nights. Those people who choose to stay overnight are spending on average \$279 each person per day compared to those visiting for the day who spend an average of \$196 per day. It is estimated that visitors spend a combined total of \$584m each year in the Region. Visitors spend money across a broad array of goods and services and therefore all sectors are influenced by visitor spending. The distribution of each \$1 spent by a Tourist in the Region can be seen below:

Industry Sector	Dubbo Regional (A) (2023 Release 1)	
	\$	%
Accommodation & Food Services	\$0.42	41.9%
Retail Trade	\$0.12	11.6%
Transport, Postal & Warehousing	\$0.11	11.0%
Ownership of Dwellings	\$0.08	8.4%
Manufacturing	\$0.08	8.0%
Arts & Recreation Services	\$0.07	6.6%
Administrative & Support Services	\$0.03	2.9%
Education & Training	\$0.03	2.8%
Wholesale Trade	\$0.03	2.6%
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	\$0.02	2.3%
Other Services	\$0.01	0.7%
Information Media & Telecommunications	\$0.01	0.6%
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$0.01	0.6%
Total	\$1.00	100.0%

Table 1: Distribution of each \$1 spent by a tourist – Dubbo Regional Council (2023 – release 1 (Remplan))

VICs make a positive economic contribution to the local economy by facilitating visitor spending, however, the overall economic impact is difficult to determine. It is considered that there is a significant financial impact of the information they provide to customers which unlocks a series of flow-on positive economic impacts. It has been noted there is a significant gap in the research available of the impact of VIC's.

A similar study was completed in New Zealand in 2015 (The Economic Impact Analysis of the i-Site network⁴) on the economic impact of advice given for "i-Site" information centres. The study estimated additional spending amount of \$109.3m per annum was attributed directly to the advice provided across the 15 centres. This averages to \$7.26m per year per information centre. No Australian studies could be found on the economic impact of advice provided by information centres.

² Remplan

³ TRA Supplied Data (September 2023)

⁴ Economic Impact of Analysis of the i-Site Network - McIlrath and Gordon (2015)

Current Operating Structure

Staff Resourcing

In the context of Dubbo Regional Council the VIC team is in Strategic Partnerships and Engagement division and is part of the Strategic Partnerships and Investment Branch within Council. The team operate both Dubbo Information Centre (DVIC) and Wellington Information Centre(WVIC).

The VICs are overseen by the Visitor Information Co-ordinator and reports to the Economic Development & Visitor Services Team Leader. In addition to the Visitor Information Co-ordinator, there are four Information Services Officers, two full time staff in Dubbo and two part-time staff in Wellington. There are also several casual staff who work flexible weekend and holiday shifts depending on requirements of the operation.

Currently two ambassadors (volunteers) work a combined total of 8 hours a week at DVIC. The ambassadors have been a part of the DVIC operation for over 10 years and have a good operational knowledge of operational procedures.

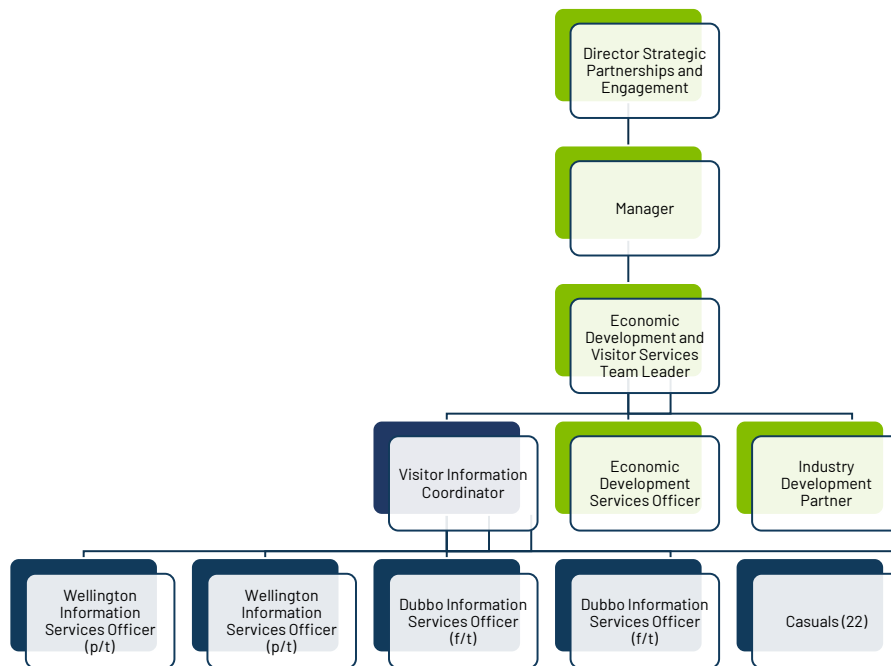


Figure 1: DRC Organisational Structure

Services Provided

The VIC's provide a wide range of services including both paid and free. These services are provided for a range of internal and external stakeholders including visitors, local community, tourism industry businesses and internal Council departments. Below is a list of the services provided by the facilities and staff:

Visitor & Tourism Services

- Souvenir and merchandise sales.
- Local produce or products sales (focussed retail promotion at both facilities).
- Food and beverage (drinks, ice creams etc).
- Access to clean and accessible public toilets.
- Directional and way-finding advice including maps (free and paid).
- Tourist attraction information
- Tourist attraction sales (Wellington Caves, Great Big Adventure Pass, Dubbo Observatory, Taronga Western Plains Zoo, Dundullimal Homestead)
- Accommodation advice (availability, bespoke requirements such as pets, accessibility, large families etc).
- Natural disaster advice (road closures, alternative routes, up to date information).

The below services are provided by the Dubbo centre staff only.

- Accommodation concierge service (free service)
- Providing a staff member for guided bus tours (external bus providers – paid service)
- Managing the Dubbo Regional Airport souvenir consignment stock program
- Industry support through information sharing (ie: local accommodation businesses)
- Accommodation forum (a previous VIC engagement initiative via a regular gathering of accommodation providers and stakeholders which is conducted on a case-by-case basis)

Local Community Services

- Ticketing agent for Transport NSW (selling XPT Trainlink tickets - Wellington VIC only).
- Providing bus timetables and public transport information.
- 'New Resident' enquiries and providing welcome packs.
- Hamper Services (packaged local goods for business use such as Real Estate agents)

Council Support Services

Staff provide support services for several internal Council branches. The primary support role is to the distribution of physical collateral and marketing support for the tourism industry in the region.

- Distribution of school holiday program collateral (physical and digital).
- Assistance with local events promotion (e.g. Events Board).
- Distributing the Dubbo Region Tourism Guide to businesses across the Region.
- Support for the Visitor Guide Partnership Program (advertising sales)
- Facilitate the Visitor Information Centre Partnership Program (a paid partnership program) for the support and promotion of local businesses.
- Tourism market report (occupancy and patronage information). This report has been completed for over 20 years and is a local monitor of economic conditions for the Region.
- Event support (e.g. State Touch Carnival accommodation concierge service). – Dubbo only
- CBD monthly audit and reporting (issues such as graffiti / tagging) – Dubbo only

VIC staff are responsible for distributing the Visitor Guides to tourism businesses across the region. There is a requirement to service over 200 local sites regularly to ensure the collateral is available to visitors at point of engagement. Whilst this service is resource heavy (staff, vehicles, time available) it is critical to the service provision for tourism across the region.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Dubbo + Villages	25,530	16,896	16,509	19,489	22,121	7,590
Wellington	0	193	4,165	210	1,024	1,333
Outside Dubbo	18,920	8,490	13,635	7,680	16,410	2,820
Total	44,450	25,579	34,309	27,379	39,555	11,743

Table 2: Tourism Guide distribution 2019-2024 undertaken by VIC staff.

Service Standard

Overall, both the Wellington and Dubbo VICs provide a high standard of service to visitors and the community which is reflective through public ratings. Currently Dubbo has an average rating of 4.5 stars (out of 5) for both Google reviews and Trip Advisor. Wellington has an average rating of 5 stars for Trip Advisor and 4.4 stars for Google Reviews.

Dubbo reviews examples



Information/visitors centre

May 2024 • Couples


We were welcomed by Chris with a friendly smile and welcome. She informed us of all the area had to offer and mainly dealt with things that were of interest to us. We were given a brief outline of the Dubbo area and Chris was clearly very proud of Dubbo and the community. We found the visitors centre a must do for first time visitors to the area.

Written 21 May 2024

 **Francine Smith**
9 reviews • 0 photos ⓘ

★★★★★ 4 days ago NEW

Absolutely delightful place to stop for friendly and informative info about Dubbo. My young teen son and I borrowed the disc golf set (which was great fun) and then got some info about other places to visit. There's toilets and a small playground outside, plus it's very close to Old Dubbo Gaol and a supermarket in the Main Street. Definitely recommend.

 **Bronwyn Jackson**
19 reviews • 20 photos ⓘ

★★★★★ 5 weeks ago

The Visitor Centre was my first stop in Dubbo. Grace was very helpful in providing information and personal recommendations, as well as accessing information about my personal interests eg live music venues. A very worthwhile stop for visitors to Dubbo.

Wellington reviews examples



Joanne Falson
51 reviews

★★★★★ 2 months ago

The lovely ladies at reception are very helpful and always friendly. Thank you so much for your time and assistance, I appreciate it very much.



celina marscham
Local Guide · 40 reviews · 190 photos

★★★★★ 5 months ago

Welcoming friendly helpful staff, cool inside lots if information

Dubbo Facility Analysis

The VIC operates 7 days per week from 9am – 5pm (weekdays) and 8am – 4pm (weekends). As the DVIC site is a stand-alone facility it operates with two information officers onsite during the 7 day a week operation. The coordinator spends the majority of the time at the DVIC with a minimum of 1 day a week in Wellington.

Location

The site is located on the corner of the Newell Highway and Macquarie Street and has parking for cars and caravans/trailers and coach buses. The building is located adjacent to Macquarie Lions Park which includes a recently upgraded children's playground, free BBQ facilities and potable water facilities for caravaners.

Historically, information centres have been placed near or on major roads or highways for ease of access for road travellers. The current location on the Newell Highway creates a highly visible site for travellers on the highway. However, it should be noted that historical data indicates that the key source markets for visitors to the region are from Western Sydney, Other Sydney suburbs, Central West (Orange and Bathurst), Hunter Region and Northern NSW which would indicate that the majority of visitors may not naturally drive past the facility.

The new Dubbo Bridge located on River Street is due to be open in 2026. The project will divert non-local highway traffic to the new section of Newell highway (see image). The current DVIC site will not be directly accessible nor visible from the new bridge and altered section of highway.

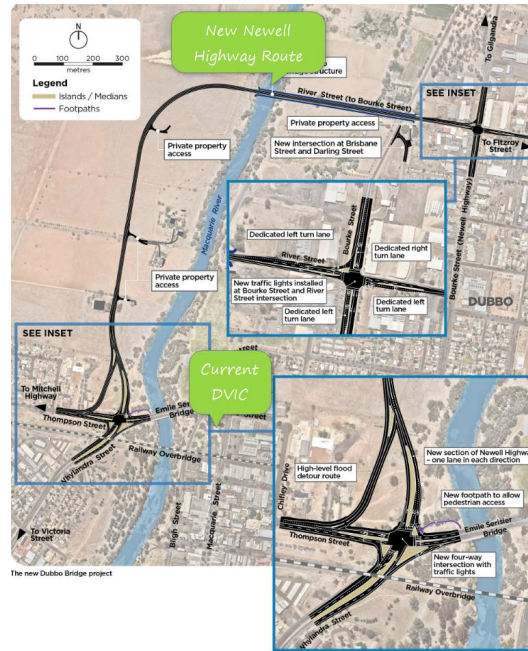


Figure 2: New Dubbo Bridge and Newell Highway diversion plan (supplied: Transport for NSW 2023)

The physical building has several challenges connected to the current location. Firstly, the site is located on a floodplain of the Macquarie/Wambool River system and is subject to flooding (see Figure 2). The recurring flooding in 2022 resulted in the site being evacuated five (5) times over a period of 3 months and this resulted in major disruption to the services being offered. The floodplain location has also restricted the implementation of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations being placed on or near the site to cater for the growing number of EV travellers coming to the region.

In times of extreme weather events and natural disasters, the VIC is often used by both locals and visitors as a hub for up-to-date information such as road closures, changed access to the region and other impacts. This hub for information can be considerably impacted when it the building is closed or being threatened to close due to its close proximity to the river at times of flooding.



Figure 3: Flooding to the Dubbo Visitor Information Centre - 10 October 2022

In recent times, the building has experienced issues that have been exacerbated by the flooding events. Such issues include the overflow of the men's urinal, sewage smells that have led some visitors to walk out of the centre or to comment on the smell, and staff comment on the smell on a daily/weekly basis. In addition, the sewage network external to the building has also experienced issues including the septic tank overflowing into Macquarie Lions Park. Whilst the issues are being investigated it should be examined if such issues will be re-occurring given the location of the building and susceptibility to flooding.

The physical building is also a 'standalone' information centre which is deemed unusual for VICs around Australia. Due to high operational and resourcing costs for an information centre many VICs are now co-located with another operation to assist in costs efficiency. Many information centres are now co-located with museums, galleries and/or cafes in the local area.

Information Centre	Standalone / Co-located	Weekdays	Weekends
Back O Bourke Visitor Information & Exhibition Centre	Interactive attraction, onsite Cafe	9:00am - 5:00pm	9:00am - 5:00pm
Bathurst Visitor Information Centre	Museum, onsite Café	9:30am - 4:30pm	9:30am - 4:30pm
Brewarrina Visitors Information & Exhibition Centre	Interactive attraction	9:00am - 5:00pm	10:00am - 2:00pm
Broken Hill Visitor Information Centre	Onsite Café, Walking tours departing from VIC.	9:00am - 4:00pm	10:00am - 2:00pm
Canowindra Visitor Information Centre	Museum	10:00am - 4:00pm	10:00am - 4:00pm
Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre	Museum and Gallery, Driver Reviver	9:00am - 5:00pm	9:00am - 5:00pm
Coonamble (Unaccredited)	Standalone	8:30am - 5:00pm	10:00am - 2:00pm (Sat) Closed (Sun)
Cowra Visitor Information Centre	Small interactive exhibition	9:00am - 5:00pm	9:00am - 5:00pm
Dubbo Visitor Information Centre	Standalone	9:00am - 5:00pm	8:00am - 4:00pm
Forbes Visitor Information Centre	Museum	9:00am - 5:00m	10:00am - 3:00pm
Gilgandra Co-ee Heritage & Visitor Information Centre	Onsite café. Small exhibition area	9:00am - 4:00pm	9:00am - 4:00pm
Gulgong (Unaccredited)	Standalone	1:00pm - 3:00pm (Mon & Tues)	Closed (Wed - Sun)
Lightning Ridge Visitor Information Centre	Standalone	9:00am - 5:00pm	9:00am - 5:00pm
Moree Visitor Information Centre	Standalone	9:00am - 5:00pm	9:00am - 1:00pm
Mudgee Visitor Information Centre	Gallery and onsite café)	9:00am - 5:00pm	9:00am - 5:00pm
Narrabri Region Visitor Information Centre	Interactive attraction	9:00am - 5:00pm	9:00am - 2:00pm
Narromine Visitor Information Centre	Attraction and museum	10:00am - 4:00pm Closed (Tues)	10:00am - 4:00pm
Nyngan Visitor Information Centre	Museum	8:30am - 4:30pm	10:00am - 2:00pm
Orange Visitor Information Centre	Museum, gallery and onsite cafe	9:00am - 5:00pm	9:00am - 5:00pm
Parkes Visitor Information Centre	Museum	9:00am - 4:00m	10:00am - 3:00pm
Seven Valleys Visitor Information Centre (Lithgow)	Gallery	9:00am - 5:00pm	9:00am - 5:00pm
The Great Cobar Museum & Visitor Information Centre	Museum	8:30am - 5:00pm	9:00am - 5:00pm
Wellington Visitor Information Centre	Standalone, permanent Driver Reviver	9:00am - 5:00pm	9:00am - 5:00pm

Table 3: Standalone and co-located VICs

Dubbo Patronage and Trends

Patronage to the Dubbo site has been monitored via a number of methods over the past 5 years. From 2018-2021 'people counter' technology was used to track patronage, however, after the flood in 2021 this system no longer functioned. In the interim the visitor numbers were estimated via the automatic door openings which were unable to count if multiple people entered the building at once or if the door was activated due to weather conditions. In 2023 Council implemented a new system to accurately capture visitors via security camera human detection software technology.

Annual patronage to the DVIC has been varied in the past 5 years due to the pandemic and the impacts to travel and tourism. Prior to 2020, annual patronage at the DVIC averaged approximately 75,000 people per year (approx. 210 people per day). In 2020 and 2021 the pandemic disrupted visitation traffic considerably with visitation dropping to 50,000 people or less. In 2022 the visitation numbers increased which corresponded to the increased visitation throughout the region as visitors sought holidays within their own borders (over 80,000 visitors to DVIC). The numbers in 2023 have identified a lower than pre-pandemic as many holiday makers sought overseas travel. Visitation in 2024 may provide additional data to understand the current trend for visitors to the VIC and to regions in general. Currently, daily visitor patronage is 127 people per day which indicates a continued decline to the number to the DVIC.

Whilst the number of visitors are recorded, neither the DVIC or WVIC currently gather regular data insights on visitors (ie. age, reason for visit, length of visit in region).

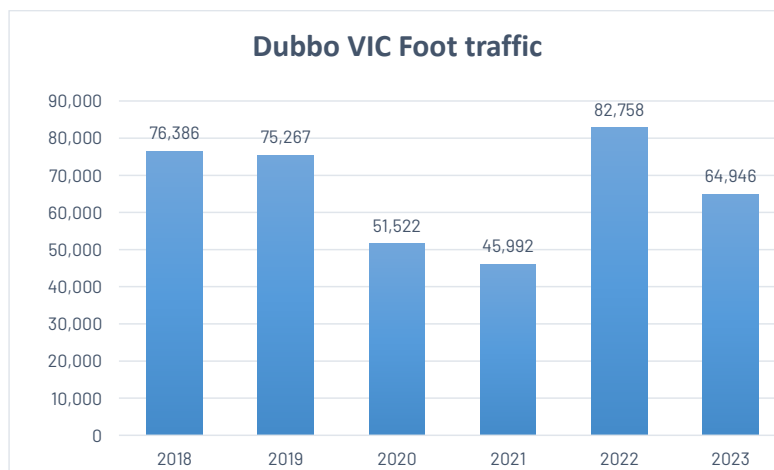


Figure 4: Dubbo VIC Foot traffic.

Month	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Jan	4,242	5,607	5,128	5,512	5,122	7,247	3,764
Feb	4,162	4,218	6,188	3,978	3,800	4,746	2,936
Mar	6,088	8,474	4,212	5,382	6,700	6,210	3,644
Apr	7,180	6,612	0	6,731	8,660	7,191	4,336
May	6,374	5,898	0	5,799	7,896	6,634	4,436
June	6,006	5,462	3,206	4,891	6,554	6,317	3,929
July	6,860	6,947	4,807	3,697	7,856	4,292	4,329
Aug	6,390	6,483	3,563	1,145	7,507	4,502	4,273
Sep	7,801	7,275	5,545	0	8,478	5,135	4,527
Oct	8,335	6,975	7,382	1,365	6,930	4,733	4,103
Nov	5,998	5,530	5,472	3,188	5,779	4,316	3,360
Dec	6,950	5,786	6,019	4,304	7,476	3,623	3,513
Total	76,386	75,267	51,522	45,992	82,758	64,946	47,153
Ave Customer Per Day	212	209	143	128	230	178	129

People counter technology Auto door counter New technology via cameras

Table 4: Dubbo VIC Door Counter Data – 2018-2024

Customer Data

Customers to the DVIC include both visitors to the region and local community where postcode data is collected through the point-of-sale software. As outlined in Table 4 of paying customers in the past 4 years, 43% are from other regions within NSW (ie visitors), one third (33%) of paying customers are from residents and 24% of customers are from interstate. This information shows interesting data that one-third of the revenue to the DVIC is driven by residents.

Dubbo Visitor Information Centre - Customer Postcode Analysis (Calendar Year)						
Customer Origin	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total	%
New South Wales	2,859	2,936	2,541	1,316	9,652	43.2%
Local Residents	1,941	2,240	2,238	949	7,368	33%
Victoria	297	621	570	221	1,709	7.7%
Queensland	373	619	829	334	2,155	9.7%
South Australia	84	206	199	59	548	2.5%
Northern Territory	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Australian Capital Territory	119	101	126	25	371	1.7%
Western Australia	29	109	138	43	319	1.4%
Tasmania	17	61	68	22	168	0.8%
Overseas/International	2	3	30	2	37	0.2%
Total 'Paying' Customers	5,721	6,896	6,739	2,971	22,327	

Table 5: Dubbo Visitor Information Centre - Customer Postcode Analysis (Calendar Year)

*This data is for paying customers only and excludes walk in traffic with no purchase. The 2024 data is up to and including 30th June 2024.

The fortnightly Saturday Farmers Markets hosted in Macquarie Lions Park contributes to foot traffic and general activity in the area. A trial was undertaken to align opening times on weekends with the start of the Dubbo Farmers Markets (8am until 4pm). This was to assist in reducing the cost to the Farmers Markets which historically have been required to pay a fee to Council to facilitate early opening for customers and stall holders to access the toilets. The trial period ran from November 2023 to April 2024 and received positive feedback and allowed for continual operation of the markets. This trial was successful and the small alteration of operating times on weekends has continued.

Wellington Facility Analysis

The VIC operates 7 days per week from 9am – 5pm. The facility operates with one staff member onsite during weekday operational times as it is located within the Wellington Administration Building (WAB). On weekends two staff are rostered to assist with staff breaks, lunch allowances and to reduce security risks.

Location

The WVIC is located within the Council owned Wellington Administration Building however it operates as a separate entity with a dedicated external door for visitors. The building is situated on the corner of Warne Street and Nanima Crescent on the Mitchell Highway which is one of the main highways connecting Sydney to the Central West and Orana Region. The WVIC was relocated to this location in 2019 from a stand-alone site in Cameron Park.

The site is at an awkward/late turning position at a busy intersection making it visually difficult for travellers to access. In addition, the location has limited parking options for those travelling with caravans, camper trailers or motorhomes, which are a primary target for visitors centres. Council has received complaints in the past due to the poor availability of parking options for caravans etc in Wellington.

The WVIC site is a relatively large space (see Figure 6) including two enclosed offices that are largely underutilised. With co-location of the WVIC in the WAB, the shared overheads have created a lower operating cost for the Wellington facility, however, it is a large space with limited visitation. After a report to the Financial Committee on 14 May 2024, the office spaces were made available to lease and are currently undergoing discussions for potential leasees.



Figure 5: Interior of Wellington Visitor Information Centre

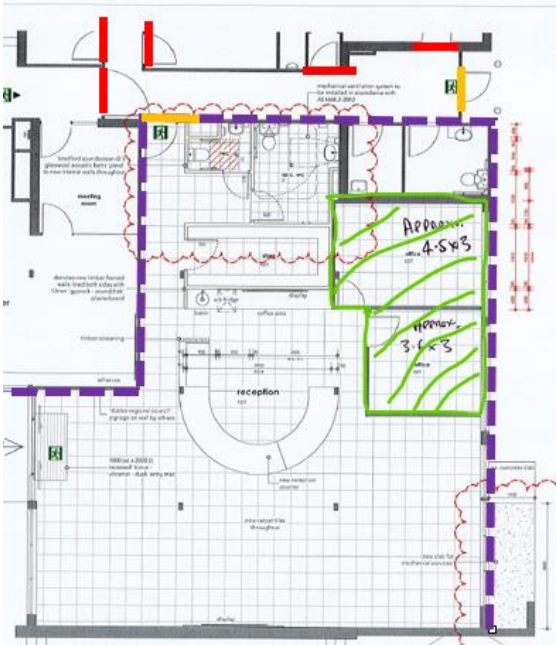


Figure 6: Wellington Visitor Information Centre Site Layout delineated by the purple line.

Wellington Patronage and Trends

Wellington patronage is tracked differently to the Dubbo facility with all visitors manually counted and asked for their postcode as they enter the building.

Patronage data has indicated a consistent decline in customer numbers in the past five years. Up until 2019 the WVIC was located in a stand-alone building in Cameron Park and had over 17,000 visitors in 2018. Since 2019 the numbers have been in steady decline with 2023 reporting just under 7,000 visitors. This decline could be attributed to several factors including the change of location to the WAB, the pandemic and to changes in visitor to the region. However, WVIC did not see the spike in numbers in 2022 that occurred at the Dubbo facility.

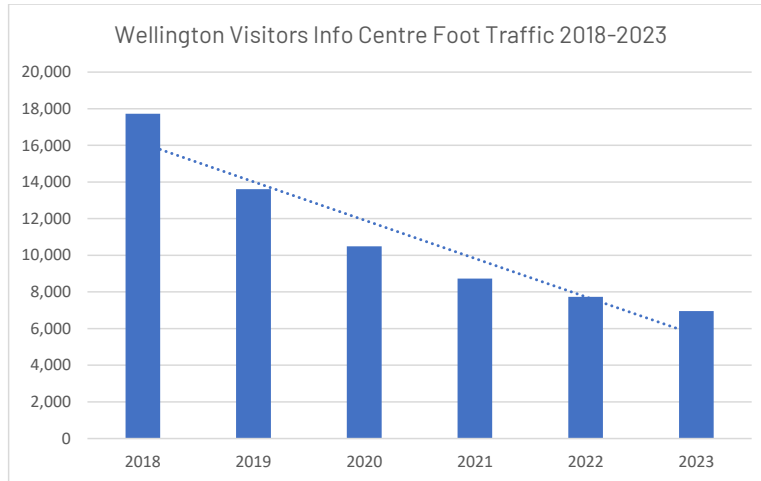


Figure 7: Wellington VIC Foot Traffic. *Wellington Visitors Centre moved locations in October 2019

Customer Data

Due to the smaller patronage, WVIC track the postcodes of all visitor entry to the facility (not just the paying customer). Customers to the WVIC include both visitors to the region and local community as per point-of-sale data. However, a larger portion of customers (42.5%) are residents with an additional 26.6% from NSW visitors. The remainder of customers are from interstate or international visitors (30%). This data demonstrates that almost to half of the WVIC’s revenue is driven by residents. Table 6 shows patronage data for the WVIC.

Wellington Visitor Information Centre – Walk-In Customer Postcode Analysis (Calendar Year)						
Postcode Origin	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total	%
Local Residents	2,607	2,329	2,761	1,384	9,081	42.5%
New South Wales	1,433	1,737	1,694	828	5,692	26.6%
Victoria	207	247	245	349	1,048	4.9%
Queensland	399	706	1,012	608	2,725	12.7%
South Australia	270	611	701	54	1,636	7.6%
Northern Territory	17	68	67	5	157	0.7%
Australian Capital Territory	3	15	12	126	156	0.7%
Western Australia	53	103	166	61	383	1.8%
Tasmania	17	63	101	26	207	1.8%
Overseas/International	4	67	127	108	306	1.4%
Total Walk-in Visitors	5,010	5,946	6,886	3,549	21,391	

*This data includes all walk-in customers (paying and non-paying)

Table 6: Wellington Visitor Information Centre – Walk-In Customer Postcode Analysis

In addition to visitor information services the WVIC is also the designated Driver-Reviver location in Wellington. The program provides free tea and coffee for drivers all year round as the WVIC is classed as a permanent site. Based on data collected, this presented less than 1% in 2022, 3% in 2023 and currently tracking at 10% for 2024. In May 2023 a permanent sign was installed in Wellington to indicate when the Driver Reviver was open. This has driven a significant increase in numbers to the WVIC since the installation.

Calendar Year	2022	2023	2024 (YTD)
Free Tea and Coffee Provided	24	215	451

Financial Analysis

Overview

The information centres are an important service for visitors and residents; however, the functions currently operate at a loss. Over the past 6 years, the combined operating loss (excluding depreciation) for both visitors centres have ranged from \$580,000 to \$980,000 annually. See figure 8

The pandemic was a key factor in the operating results for both VICs in FY2020 and FY2021 and have caused the financial results to vary. Additionally, it should be noted that there was a change in accounting methodology for 'corporate overheads' which resulted in a substantial reduction in losses from FY2022 onwards. The overall operating loss in 2023 was \$628,700. At the time of reporting end of year results for FY2024 was not available.

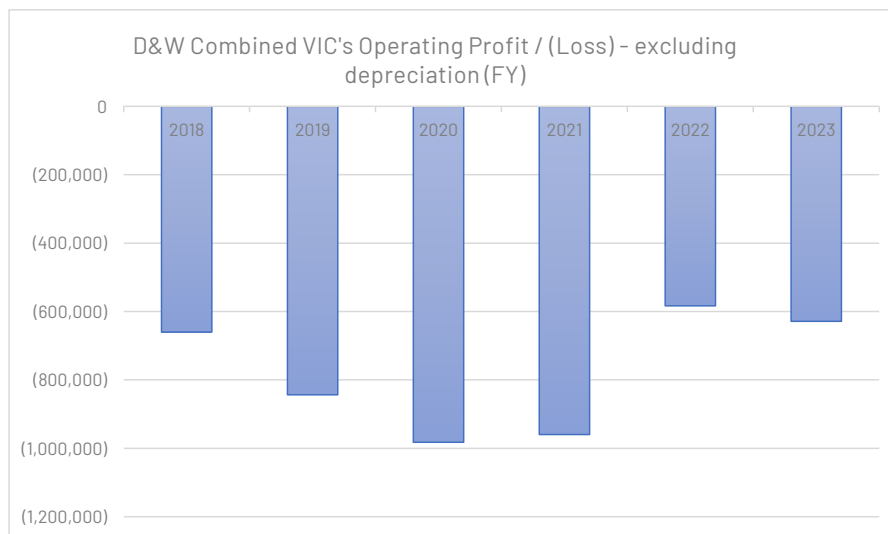


Figure 8: DVIC and WVIC combined operating profit/loss

*Graphed results are based on Operating Profit/(Loss) – excluding depreciation

D+W VIC OPERATIONS	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023
Operating Income (excluding grants)	\$96,025	\$161,287	\$101,214	\$172,240	\$123,471	\$170,293
Operating Expenditure (excluding depreciation)	\$756,023	\$1,004,849	\$1,083,602	\$1,132,007	\$706,905	\$798,993
Operating Profit / (Loss) - Excluding depreciation	(\$659,998)	(\$843,562)	(\$982,388)	(\$959,767)	(\$583,434)	(\$628,700)
Depreciation	\$75,751	\$118,384	\$136,193	\$108,319	\$114,000	\$120,849
Operating Profit / (Loss)	(\$735,749)	(\$961,946)	(\$1,118,581)	(\$1,068,086)	(\$697,434)	(\$749,549)

Key Income and Expenses

As the centres operate at a loss it is important to understand key expenses and incomes (or the functions). Wages are the highest expense for the service with an average staff wage cost of \$524,000 per year from 2018-2023. This equates to around \$1,435 per day to staff both operations.

Retail sales are the primary income for both VIC sites. Both sites sell a range of branded souvenirs including mugs, t-shirts, placemats, clothing, soft-toy animals and local produce. Operating incomes vary between Dubbo and Wellington the average daily income across both sites is \$466.55 (based on 365 operational days, 2023 figures).

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Operating Income (excluding Grants)						
Dubbo						
Sales	62,448	89,752	77,677	136,166	103,699	154,320
Sundry	22,734	54,040	10,963	11,213	5,992	291
	85,182	143,792	88,640	147,379	109,691	154,611
Wellington						
Sales	10,314	14,176	11,286	24,446	13,350	15,007
Commission	529	3,319	1,288	415	430	675
	10,843	17,495	12,574	24,861	13,780	15,682
	96,025	161,287	101,214	172,240	123,471	170,293

Table 7: Operating income from Dubbo and Wellington VICs

Retail stock held is reflective of the size of the retail space, stock turnover and visitor numbers through the locations. Dubbo's stock turnover ratio per annum is approximately 3:1. While Wellington's stock turnover ratio is sitting at 1:1 per year. There has been a conservative effort by Wellington staff to reduce old stock in the past 12 months.

Retail Stock Holding Value (at Cost) Dubbo & Wellington Visitor Information Centres			
	Dubbo	Wellington	Total
2018	\$ 26,506.64	\$ 4,531.42	\$ 31,038.06
2019	\$ 45,355.32	\$ 23,672.32	\$ 69,027.64
2020	\$ 38,933.86	\$ 19,352.05	\$ 58,285.91
2021	\$ 47,429.50	\$ 15,996.21	\$ 63,425.71
2022	\$ 32,449.94	\$ 15,902.01	\$ 48,351.95
2023	\$ 50,381.54	\$ 13,951.62	\$ 64,333.16

Table 8: Retail Stock Holding Value (at Cost)

Whilst the above stock levels could be seen as reasonable for the level of turnover, it has been identified that the retail areas of both sites are quite large and are holding what looks like minimum stock in comparison to the size of the sites. It could be an option to consider investing more into stock to fill the retail areas which could spur on a growth in retail sales or alternatively, reducing the size of the retail space to match the revenue turnover and therefore reduce the risk to Council for holding excess stock.

It has been identified, that both VIC's do not have a dedicated marketing budget to promote the retail offering to residents and visitors. Further consideration could be provided to the provision of a marketing budget or to include the VICs into the marketing of the destination products undertaken by the marketing team.

Dubbo Financial Operations

In 2023 the total income for the DVIC was \$154,611 which equates to approximately \$424 per day. As previously stated, income is generated primarily from selling souvenirs and local produce. The trend of retail sales at DVIC is growing with the range of souvenirs and produce maintaining consistent growth. In particular the sales of local hampers have stimulated growth in sales leading up to the Christmas period.

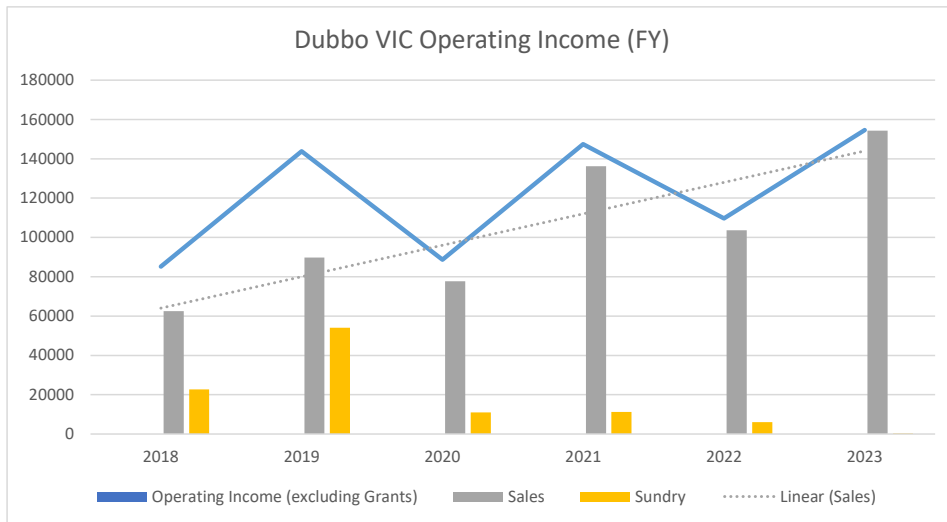


Figure 9: Dubbo VIC Operating Income

Dubbo’s operating income generation is shown in Figure 3 above.

The highest expenses for the DVIC operation is staffing (permanent and casual) at approximately \$375,000 per annum and cleaning at approximately \$34,000 per annum.

The majority of Dubbo’s cleaning costs relates to the cleaning of the public toilets located in the facility and not to the ongoing sewage system issues experienced at the centre. Consideration to be given to the cleaning charges and the potential for current staff to undertake daily cleans.

Wellington Financial Operations

Income for the 2023 financial year was \$15,682 which is on average \$43.20 per day. This is significantly lower than the Dubbo facility, which has an average spend of \$2.37 per visitor (DVIC) compared to \$2.18 per visitor average (WVIC).

The WVIC staffing expenses are approximately \$240,000 per year (\$661 per operational day). The co-location within the Wellington Administration Building from the location in Cameron Park was a cost saving to the organisation to only have one staff member on site on weekdays. The existing co-location with the administration building, results in expenses are shared across Council divisions using the site. However, as noted previously, there are two underutilised office spaces that could be commercially leased out reducing the overheads for the WVIC.

Note: A presentation to the Financial Performance Committee on May 2024 resulted in the recommendation to offer the two offices to lease. Currently, negotiations are underway for a potential lease arrangement.

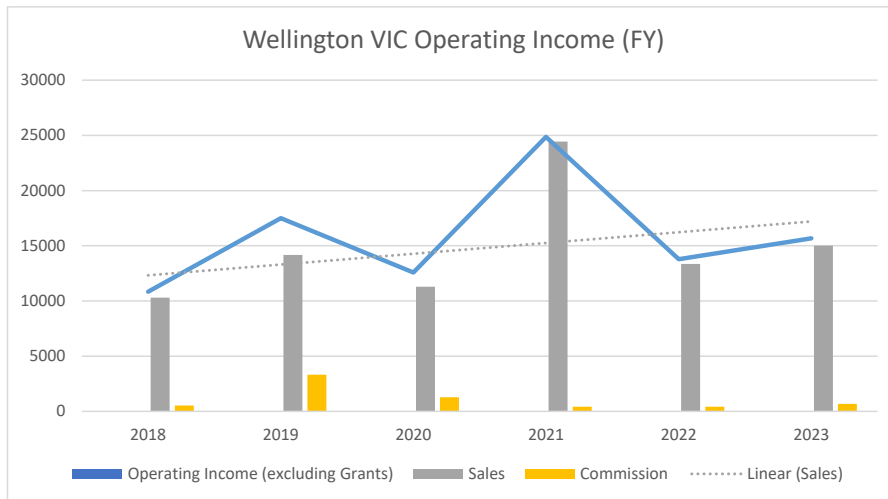


Figure 10: Wellington VIC Operating Income

One of the key service differences between the two facilities is that Wellington provides access to NSW Trainlink tickets for travel on the XPT Service (Wellington to Dubbo or Wellington to Sydney). This service provided by the WVIC to the Wellington community on behalf of the NSW Government. It is a commission-based arrangement (25%) that provides approximately \$2000 revenue to the operation annually (the pandemic years).

NSW Trainlink Ticket Agency Summary - Wellington VIC

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
Tickets Sold	342	294	162	141	154	220	114
Amount	\$9,668.38	\$9,472.39	\$2,746.38	\$2,549.15	\$4,249.17	\$8,351.66	\$2,991.53
Commission Rec'd	\$2,417.10	\$2,368.10	\$686.60	\$637.29	\$1,062.29	\$2,087.92	\$727.16

*Ticket sales and related commission (up until 30 September)

Table 9: NSW Trainlink Ticket Agency Summary - Wellington VIC

Given the high staff costs, low visitation and low income, consideration should be given for service model for the WVIC. Service model should consider co-location with another 7 day a week business / operation, reduced hours on weekends, and if an accredited facility is required for Wellington.

Stakeholder Insights

A number of tourism stakeholders were invited to provide feedback regarding the VICs and their role in the industry and region. Stakeholders included tourism attractions in the region, accommodation providers, tourism operations managed by Council and previous VIC Coordinators. Key items highlighted from stakeholders are:

- A number of operators were unaware of the VIC's role in assisting the industry.
- Digital services could be integrated and aligned with physical services.
- Suggestion for a new partnership model aligned to target markets.
- Lack of strategic collaboration and vision of tourism in the region.
- Disjointed tourism strategy and efforts across Council operators has lead to a siloed effect.
- VICs maybe overstaff in some areas (ie: a minimum of 2 staff members on site at all times was noted to be difficult and costly to achieve especially on weekends or during quiet times such as February). They felt it was unnecessary and an expensive way to operate the VIC's.
- Consideration for a Bike Hire service (not e-bikes) given the number of enquires taken for bike hire

In addition to local stakeholders, the review also considered information from key industry bodies. The accreditation body NSW VICs, The Tourism Group, noted a number two key items for the service review.

- More than 70% of VICs are now co-located due to increasing costs and digital influence
- Many VICs are now implementing a commercial accommodation booking platform (such as 'Bookeasy') to generate a commission on accommodation booking and assistance (currently provided for free).

Digital Influence Review

In general, society is becoming a highly digitised environment where an online presence is a requirement of a business. To promote the region's destination highlights and opportunities, the Visitor Guide is produced for visitors as a resource for information for their travel. The Visitor Guide is a partnership program where advertisements are sold for an 18-month period. Council has both physical and digital assets for a combined marketing effort to capture all visitors seeking information. Digital channels offer a more cost-effective solution for disseminating information however, it is suggested that a seniors demographic prefer a physical guide. Some regions have moved to a 'digital only' tourism collateral strategy including visitor guides, websites and social media.



Figure 11: Dubbo Region Visitor Guide 2023 (cover and example of inside pages); online asset located www.dubbo.com.au

Online Visitor Guide

The Dubbo Region online Visitor Guide is hosted on Issuu and then placed on dubbo.com.au as a publication. Key stats from Issuu outlined below:

Year	Impressions	Reads	Average Read Time
23/24 Visitor Guide	4,253	777	4 minute, 45 second
21/22 Visitor Guide	4,981	3,203	6 minute
19/20 Visitor Guide	6,541	2,505	6 minute 34 second
18/19 Visitor Guide	14,434	4,751	4 minute 27 second

The average read time suggests that users are reading the content not just opening the page and closing immediately. Digital platforms can be integrated with other services such as booking accommodation, purchasing tickets, or accessing transportation information which provides users with a seamless experience.

Website - Dubbo.com.au/Visit

The Dubbo Region 'Visit' landing page ranks as the 4th most visited page on the website in the last 12 months. However, the average engagement time is 41 seconds and has a 50% bounce rate (a bounce rate of 26% to 40% is considered optimal). A bounce rate is where a user will go to a website page and immediately leave the page.

	Pageviews	Average time on page	Bounce rate	Users	Top Acquisition Method	Top 3 pages
2023	397,000	1m 14s	41.95%	132,000	Organic search	Events Calendar, Homepage, Dubbo Region Directory
2022*	129,993	1m 19s	66.02%	42,492	Organic search	Events Calendar, Homepage, Great Big Adventure Pass
2021	313,558	1m 27s	72.06%	125,066	Organic search	Covid Updates Page, Homepage, Events Calendar
2020	251,363	1m 20s	63.85%	83,802	Organic search	Homepage, Events Calendar, Visit Landing Page
2019	442,583	1m 22s	64.74%	151,955	Organic search	Homepage, Events Calendar, Visit Landing Page

*Note: there was a noted data issue with 2022 which is reflected in the statistics.

Key stats from the last 12 months from www.Dubbo.com.au :

- Total website users - 136,000
- Event count - 1.1M
- Average engagement time 1m 11s

Top pages accessed:

- Events calendar 91,000 views
- Homepage 27,000 views
- Dubbo Region directory 19,000
- Visit Landing Page 12,000

How are people finding our website?

- Organic search 84,000 users
- Direct 36,000 users
- Referral 9,000 users
- Organic Social 7,000 users

Opportunities and Gaps

The service review of the VIC facilities in Dubbo and Wellington has created opportunities for insight, analysis of services provided and associated costs to Council, and improvement to service in the short and long term.

Customer Data

The service review has highlighted the gap in data metrics regarding the visitors to each of the facilities such as demographics, high visitation days and times, what visitors use the service for and how they rate the service provided by the VICs. Postcode data is obtained from purchases however, many visitors use the VIC for bathroom facilities, finding out information about the region or local accommodation, Driver Reviver stop or to shop local products. This information is valuable to making sound decisions regarding significant changes such as service models or location changes.

Whilst staff can provide professional recommendations based on onsite knowledge this can sometimes be contradictory to current data. For example; the key demographic for the region is the family market who researches travel via digital sources. However, a significant number of visitors to the VICs would be perceived as the 'Grey Nomad' sector looking for personal and physical information. Staff information is not incorrect as they are servicing a different demographic to the key market of the region (ie. Family market).

New Income Opportunities

Throughout the review a number of services were indicated as potential services that could be used to increase the income to the VICs. Due to the potential outlay these costs opportunities should only be considered if they can be funded with current staff and return on investment is warranted.

Online Sales Platform

Visitors do request for merchandise or local produce to be bought over the phone and mailed to the visitor. However, due to Council's financial policy staff are unable to take credit cards over the phone and therefore the sale is declined. In an increasing digital world it would be recommended to consider the ability to have an online shop to increase retail sales and local produce. This could include a purchase prior to arrival in the region and delivered to the accommodation provider for the visitor.

Bike Hire

The provision of bike-hire services was identified given the number of enquiries for 'Bicycle Hire' was substantial enough to warrant investigations for service. This service was provided by the DVIC in the past and the results of that program could be used as a guide in the formation of a new such service.

Accommodation Concierge Service

An opportunity for revenue generation is the provision of paid accommodation concierge service. The VICs currently offer a free accommodation concierge service in particular during times of high occupancy in the region. It is recommended that the VIC's investigate the viability establishing a commission-based booking system such as 'Bookeasy'. This would enable VIC staff to easily view accommodation options available for booking, enable them to make the

booking on behalf of the client with ease, whilst also generating a new source in revenue. There are a considerable number of other visitors centres across NSW and Australia that use similar platforms and can be seen as standard practice to undertake.

Local Guided Tour Service

Another service gap identified through visitor requests is for a "Local Guided Tour" Service. This can be seen as a gap in the local tourism service offering and not necessarily a gap in the VIC service offering. However, from the anecdotal evidence gathered, there is enough evidence to recommend further investigation of Guided Tour options partnership opportunities and service feasibility. There is currently a 'Guided Tour' pay-for-use service provided for bus operators to engage VIC staff on their bus tour services, however this is rarely utilised given it is for a small niche market (e.g a few times per year).

It should be noted that local motels and hotels often act as pseudo visitor centres, with most having wall mounted brochures filled with all the local attractions and activities. Motel and hotel staff are often asked about local recommendations for food and hospitality and other local advice. This avenue could be investigated further to determine if an opportunity is available to connect visitors and visitor information.

Service Model

The services provided to visitors in both locations are of a high standard as per online reviews. However, given the cost of wages, facility operational expenses, income variation between the sites and accreditation requirements, a review of the current service model should be considered. Many services provided are free (advice/guidance) and generally relate to un-locking visitor spending in the local economy. Other service models to consider are co-location, pop-up style kiosks (information only), service windows and the impact of non-accreditation for Wellington.

Facilities for VIC co-location includes sites such as the Western Plains Cultural Centre (Dubbo) or the Wellington Caves. These locations could be investigated as both a cost saving measure and a way to increase visitor centre utilisation. This dual site collaboration could be a major cost saving for both sites, with the cost of services and utilities being shared across a number of facilities. Other co-location opportunities (noting no discussions have been undertaken) could be Dubbo and Wellington Libraries, Taronga Western Plains Zoo, Wellington Administration Building (Customer Service) or Dubbo Regional Airport. Some locations would require the VICs operating hours to be reduced and therefore accreditation would not be gained (ie: Wellington Library).



Figure 12: Example of Parramatta City Council - Pop-up Visitor Information Centre Kiosk (2024)

Efficiency Opportunities

Throughout the process, some efficiencies were identified in relation to operational process and staff tasks to be considered for improvement. Some improvements have already been implemented.

Service Review Findings and Recommendations

The below table outlines key findings and associated options.

Review Findings	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Data Collection completed	Undertake a 3 month data collection of visitors	Option 1 plus undertake visitor survey (VICs and non-VICs)	
Under-utilised floor space	Increase retail infrastructure and subsequent stock holding	Co-location opportunities or include interactive spaces (exhibition or lounge areas)	Move to smaller premises
High overheads relative to income	Investigate co-location opportunities for both Dubbo & Wellington VICs	Investigate hybrid roles/positions within the VIC operations	Investigate cost saving initiatives (such as cleaning alternatives)
Accreditation	Investigate impacts of loss of accreditation for both sites	Continue accreditation	Investigate having 1 x accredited VIC and 1 x non-accredited VIC
Service models	Investigate co-location models (see below site suitability)	Investigate hybrid model of reduced hours, service window and increased online retail shop.	Investigate pop-up kiosk opportunities
Site location suitability	Investigate feasibility of alternate standalone or hybrid sites	Continuation of existing sites	Uncover opportunities to utilise other Council sites more effectively
Income generation	Investigate feasibility of additional revenue streams (eg Accommodation booking platform, bike hire, online sales platform)	Investigate visitor data and trends to identify correlation between income streams and customers.	Investigate a retail strategy (including marketing/promotions) to increase sales revenue with current products and floor space.

The service review also uncovered opportunities to increase the efficiency and improve operational performance. These will be reviewed as standard operational improvements

Further Data Collection

A presentation of current findings at the ARIC Committee recommended to undertake further data analysis prior to implementation of recommendations. The data collection was to confirm the demographics of the visitor to information centres rather than relying on the visitor type to the region (ie: family).

Survey Results

Over a period of August through to December, 464 responses were obtained from visitors to both Dubbo and Wellington VICs.

Dubbo Region Visitor Information Centres Customer Insights Survey



Recommendations

This section details recommendations for service improvement based on the findings in the sections above. Given the scope of this review each of the recommendations will need to be considered by Council and endorsed recommendations should inform a resourced implementation or improvement program.

Internal and external stakeholder feedback to this review, and examination of industry service standards, indicates that clear service priorities, data collection and investigation of alternative service models will directly support improved service performance, direction of limited resources and more effective engagement with industry and community stakeholders.

With this understanding, recommendations have been provided as:

Short-term Recommendations: activities that should occur regardless on the longer-term decisions of Council.

Recommendation 1: That the sponsor of the Service Review (Manager Strategic Partnerships and Investment) presents the findings of the review and management response with staff and stakeholders to generate collaboration and promote opportunities for innovation.

Recommendation 2: Develop a Visitor Information Centres improvement program in consultation with staff including agreed priority services for both locations.

Recommendation 3: That consideration be given for development of clear performance metrics and targets for Visitor Information Centres services, including a review of current business measurements and opportunity to improve customer insight.

Medium to Long-Term Recommendations should occur once general recommendation have been undertaken.

Recommendation 4: That consideration be given for the accreditation of Wellington be maintained and the associated staffing costs for weekends.

Recommendation 5: That a review the existing staff structure in line with core service definition be undertaken, including utilisation of casuals and requirements of accreditation.

Recommendation 6: That investigation be progressed on service model options including co-locations, reduced hours, service windows and/or online retail shop opportunities.

Recommendation 7: That investigation be progressed on potential strategic partnerships / co-location opportunities, including other Council facilities and non-Council facilities to support service delivery.

Recommendation 8: That investigation be progressed for new income opportunities such as Bike Hire, online shop, accommodation concierge services.



REPORT: 2024/2025 Festive Season Closure - Christmas New Year Period

DIVISION: Chief Executive Officer
REPORT DATE: 30 January 2025
TRIM REFERENCE: ID25/65

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 for 2024/2025. 	
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment of the extended closure period provides valuable insights to inform future decisions regarding Christmas and New Year closures. By adopting a data-driven approach, we can optimise closure strategies to minimise service disruptions, meet community expectations and incorporate lessons learned from previous years. 	
Financial Implications	Budget Area	Multiple across Council
	Funding Source	Multiple across Council Annual and Long Service Leave (Regulated) Reserve
	Proposed Cost	Operational expenses for on-call wages as per branch requirements
	Ongoing Costs	Nil with the exception
Policy Implications	Policy Title	There are no policy implications arising from this report
	Impact on Policy	Not applicable

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 30 January 2025, be noted.**
- 2. That Council endorse the two-week closure period as standard practice for future Christmas and New Year festive periods.**

Murray Wood
Chief Executive Officer

MW
Chief Executive Officer

BACKGROUND

During the 2023/2024 festive period, Council trialled a two-week closure of services and facilities over Christmas and New Year. Based on the success of the trial, the closure was endorsed for the 2024/2025 festive period at the July 2024 Ordinary Council meeting.

For the 2024/2025 period, Council continued this extended closure, with the majority of services and facilities closing on Monday, 23 December 2024, and reopening on Monday, 6 January 2025.

The 2024/2025 closure arrangements were informed by lessons learned from the previous year and feedback from both the community and staff to ensure a balanced approach.

Previous Resolutions of Council

<p>13 July 2023 CSC23/34</p>	<p><i>That the information contained within the report of the Chief Executive Officer dated 1 July 2023, be noted.</i></p> <p>Endorsed at the Ordinary Council meeting 27 July 2023 CCL23/185</p>
<p>11 July 2024 CSC24/37</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>That the information contained within the report of the Chief Executive Officer dated 1 July 2024, be noted.</i> 2. <i>That the two-week closure period of Monday 23 December 2024 to Friday 3 January 2025 inclusive be endorsed.</i> 3. <i>That the service summary provided in the report of which services will be fully, partially or closed be endorsed.</i> <p>Endorsed at the Ordinary Council Meeting 25 July 2024 CCL24/167</p>

REPORT

Council staff have conducted an evaluation of the 2024/2025 extended closure period to assess its impact on service delivery, staff satisfaction, leave liability and community needs. The evaluation included feedback from the previous year, staff surveys, customer engagement data, leave data and a review of communication and marketing efforts.

Key findings included:

- **Minimal Backlogs:** There were no significant backlogs or unsustainable workloads upon reopening.
- **Cemetery Services:** Improvements to cemetery services included on-call administrative support for funeral homes, an enhanced dedicated website page and increased online service availability through DRC&ME. These measures effectively supported service continuity, with no complaints or negative feedback received.

- Staff Feedback: Adjustments based on staff survey results from the 2023/2024 closure included expanded access to leave for part-time and full-time staff, alternative arrangements for new staff with limited leave balances and on-call availability of critical staff to ensure continuity of essential services.
- Leave Liability: While critical services continued during the closure period, the leave liability for Council has reduced by \$436,966.

Our approach included key learnings from the 2023/2024 closure which helped inform Council's planning for the 2024/2025 closure period. A detailed communications and marketing strategy was implemented to:

- Announce the closure period and arrangements for critical services.
- Provide clear responses to frequently asked questions.
- Ensure the community was well-informed about Council's availability during the closure.

These efforts ensured a smooth transition into and out of the closure period, with both staff and community needs effectively managed.

Results

1. Call Centre

During the extended Christmas/New Year closure period, Monday 23rd December 2024 to 9.00am Monday 6th January 2025, customers who telephoned Council's mainline number, 6801 4000, were greeted with the following informational recorded message:

Dubbo Regional Council is currently closed for the Christmas and New Year holiday period, re-opening at 9am Monday 6th January. Dubbo Regional Council wishes you a joyful festive season. Please note the following option is for emergencies only. For general enquiries and requests for service, please call back when we re-open on Monday, 6th January. For all emergencies, please press 1.

During the closure period, the mainline number 6801 4000 was dialled 929 times. Of these, 246 customers selected the "emergency" option (Option 1) after listening to the recorded message.

The call volume dissection for the action requests resulted in 278 logs, a reduction of 14% from previous year (322) and are outlined in **Table 1. Contact Report**.

Table 1. Contact Report

Contact report 17:00 20.12.2024 until 09:00 06.01.2025	Call Count
Dubbo Sewer & Water	98
Dubbo Ranger	68
General	62
Dubbo Waste Management	18
Wellington Roads/Trees/drainage	7
Wellington Sewerage & Water	7
Dubbo AIRPORT	4
Dubbo Roads/Footpath Traffic Signs	3
Dubbo Trees Urban/Rural	3
Wellington Waste Management	3
Dubbo Parks & Sport/ Garden Facilities	2
Dubbo Ranger - PEN	2
Wellington Cemeteries/Funerals	1
Dubbo Buildings/Security etc	0
Dubbo Cemeteries/Funerals	0
Dubbo Development & Environmental Services	0
Dubbo Illegal Use of Council Land	0
Dubbo Safety & Injury	0
Dubbo Water/Sewer Treatment Plant	0
Dubbo Media	0
Wellington Airport	0
Wellington Buildings/Security etc	0
Wellington Development & Environmental Services	0
Wellington Parks & Sport/ Garden Facilities	0
Wellington Safety & Injury	0
Wellington Water/Sewer Treatment Plant	0
TOTAL	278

NOTE: "General" includes:

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

Service Request Area Comparison

The table below outlines the breakdown of emergency calls through the after-hours provider during the closure period, comparing data from 2023/2024 to 2024/2025. Overall, there was a decrease in total calls by 43, representing a 13% reduction in the contact rate.

Table 2. Service Request Area Comparison

Service Request Area	2023/2024 Request Count	2024/2025 Request Count	Variance Increase/Decrease from previous closure period	Variance Increase/Decrease from previous close period %
Dubbo Sewer & Water	61	98	37	61%
Dubbo Ranger	116	68	-48	-41%
General	92	62	-30	-33%
Dubbo Waste Management	20	18	-2	-10%
Wellington Roads/Trees/drainage	1	7	6	600%
Wellington Sewerage & Water	7	7	0	0%
Dubbo AIRPORT	6	4	-2	-33%
Dubbo Roads/Footpath Traffic Signs	3	3	0	0%
Dubbo Trees Urban/Rural	2	3	1	50%
Wellington Waste Management	4	3	-1	-25%
Dubbo Parks & Sport/ Garden Facilities	7	2	-5	-71%
Dubbo Ranger - PENs for Stray Animals	Not offered	2	2	0%
Wellington Cemeteries /Funerals	0	1	1	100%
Dubbo Buildings/Security etc	0	0	0	0%
Dubbo Cemeteries /Funerals	0	0	0	0%
Dubbo Development & Environmental Services	0	0	0	0%
Dubbo Illegal Use of Council Land	0	0	0	0%
Dubbo Safety & Injury	0	0	0	0%
Dubbo Water/Sewer Treatment Plant	0	0	0	0%
Dubbo Media	0	0	0	0%
Wellington Buildings/Security etc	0	0	0	0%
Wellington Development & Environmental Services	0	0	0	0%
Wellington Parks & Sport/ Garden Facilities	2	0	-2	-100%
Wellington Safety & Injury	0	0	0	0%
Wellington Water/Sewer Treatment Plant	0	0	0	0%
Total Overall	321	278	-43	-13%

2. Online Services - DRC&ME Transactional Portal

During the closure period, a pop-up message was displayed on the DRC&ME homepage, advising that all requests would be actioned upon return, except for specific services and applications. Additionally, tailored messages were displayed on service hub pages to address their differing operational requirements. An additional pop-up message will be created for future years to be displayed on the Water & Sewer hub.

3. Online Services Report: Closure Period Analysis

During the closure period, 134 service requests were lodged through the DRC&ME transactional portal, reflecting an increase of 12 requests (10%) compared to the 2023/2024 closure period.

Whilst requests were not discouraged, it should be noted that customers were informed their requests would be attended to once services reopened. The breakdown of service requests by category is included in **Table 3**.

Table 3. Dissection of Action Requests and Comparison

Service Request Area	2023/2024 Request Count	2024/2025 Request Count	Variance Increase/ Decrease from previous closure period	Variance Increase/ Decrease from previous close period %
Bin Liner Delivery Request - DRC&ME	37	28	-9	-24%
Verify My Account - DRC&ME	9	18	9	100%
Damaged Waste Bins - DRC&ME	23	16	-7	-30%
Missed Bin - DRC&ME	7	15	8	114%
Rates Payment Summary - DRC&ME	9	13	4	44%
Residential Waste Services - Delivery upsize request - DRC&ME	3	5	2	67%
Missed Service - General Waste	1	4	3	300%
Direct Debit Customer Authority - DRC&ME	0	3	3	300%
Cemetery Plot Reservation - Perpetual Exclusive Right of Interment - DRC&ME	New Service	2	2	
Biosecurity (Weeds & Pests) - DRC&ME	0	2	2	200%
Cemetery Interment Permit Application - DRC&ME	New Service	2	2	
Customer Feedback - DRC&ME	3	2	-1	-33%
Other Requests - DRC&ME	0	2	2	200%
Reprint of Rates Notice or Rates Payment Receipt - DRC&ME	4	2	-2	-50%
Request for Email Notices - DRC&ME	2	2	0	0%
Swimming Pool Compliance - DRC&ME	0	2	2	200%
Water Quality Issue/Request - DRC&ME	0	2	2	200%
Cancellation of Direct Debit Authority - DRC&ME	1	1	0	0%
Cemetery Ashes Interment Application - DRC&ME	New Service	1	1	
Cemetery Enquiry - Plot Enquiry - DRC&ME	New Service	1	1	
Complaint Officer - DRC&ME	New Service	1	1	
Nuisance Animals - DRC&ME	3	1	-2	-67%
Other Water Requests - DRC&ME	6	5	-1	-17%
Overgrown unsightly blocks/car wrecks in front yard - Private Land - DRC&ME	0	1	1	100%
Request for Email notices for Business/Commercial - DRC&ME	0	1	1	100%
Roads Requests - DRC&ME	4	1	-3	-75%
Visitor Guide 2025-2026 DPP Ad Booking - DRC&ME	New Service	1	1	
Change of Address Notification / Change of Name Notification - DRC&ME	5	0	-5	-100%
Councillor Request - DRC&ME	1	0	-1	-100%
Parks & Sporting Requests - DRC&ME	1	0	-1	-100%
Claims Against Council - Motor Vehicles - DRC&ME	0	0	0	0%
Graffiti & Vandalism - DRC&ME	3	0	-3	-100%
Total	122	134	12	10%

4. Website and Email Contact:

The "Contact Us" form on Council's website, facilitated through the Web Chat function, was disabled during the closure period to prevent duplication of service requests submitted via the DRC&ME portal and/or Council's generic email.

Council General Email (council@dubbo.nsw.gov.au):

- A total of 48 service requests were registered via this email address and subsequently assigned for processing by the Customer Experience team.
- Overall, 455 emails were received through council@dubbo.nsw.gov.au between 21 December 2024 and 5 January 2025, encompassing a range of enquiries, service requests and general correspondence.

5. YourSay Platform Update: Closure Period

During the closure period, a pop-up message was displayed on all YourSay project pages which has an open interactive tool, advising users that all queries and conversations would be responded to upon the return of staff. Additionally, the YourSay platform banner was

updated to reflect the closure advice, ensuring clear communication to all users about the temporary service changes.

During the closure period, six engagement activities/projects were open for public comment or interaction, comprising two surveys and four public exhibitions. Despite being available, there was no recorded participation during this period.

Open projects	
Surveys	Public Exhibitions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery Program 2025–2029 • Housing for Our Future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Tiger Moth Circuit Development Control Plan • Draft Council Policy – Technology Provisions for Councillors • Draft Council Policy – Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities • Draft Council Policy – Code of Meeting Practice

The absence of participation during the closure period highlights the potential impact of the holiday season on community engagement. These timeframes were extended to account for the 14-day closure period. This was to ensure public exhibitions and consultation activities remained transparent and accessible to the public.

6. Communications and Marketing Report

A comprehensive Communications and Marketing Plan was developed and implemented between 3 December 2024 and 6 January 2025.

Consultation

- All Council Staff.
- All stakeholders of facilities and critical services, including funeral homes.
- Elected Body.

Resourcing Implications

- There were minimal staffing requirements during the closure period.

Next Steps

- Council will continue to plan for future shutdown periods, ensuring proactive engagement with internal and external stakeholders and effective communication with the community.



REPORT: Determination of Councillor Representation on Council Community Committees

DIVISION: Organisational Performance
REPORT DATE: 30 January 2025
TRIM REFERENCE: ID24/2412

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek direction or decision 	
Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillor representation to the following committees is to be determined prior to the first meetings of the Community Committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellington Town Committee Villages Committee Youth Council Renewable Energy Community Benefit Committee Sister City Committee Multicultural Advisory Committee 	
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting structure calls for a minimum of two Councillor members. One Councillor representative as the Community Committee Chairperson and one alternative Councillor representative. 	
Financial Implications	Budget Area	Corporate Governance
	Funding Source	This function of Corporate Governance is included within the adopted budget.
Policy Implications	Policy Title	Code of Meeting Practice Community Committees and Working Parties (July 2022)
	Impact on Policy	The policy will be replaced with a revised Terms of Reference for the Council Community Committees under the Community Engagement Groups framework.

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: 4.1.1 Council encourages and facilitates two-way communication with and between stakeholders and the community

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council determines the number and names of Councillor representatives for the Wellington Town Committee, one being the Chairperson.
2. That Council determines the number and names of Councillor representatives for the Villages Committee, one being the Chairperson.
3. That Council determines two Councillor representatives for the Youth Council, one being the Chairperson.
4. That Council determines two Councillor representatives for the Renewable Energy Zone Benefit Committee, one being the Chairperson.
5. That Council determines three Councillor representatives for the Sister City Committee, one being the Chairperson.
6. That Council determines two Councillor representatives for the Multicultural Advisory Committee, one being the Chairperson.
7. That the above representatives will serve on the Council Community Committees for the duration of the Council term.
8. That the Expressions of Interest for the Renewable Energy Zone Benefit Committee and Multicultural Advisory Committee remain open until such time that the Committee is functioning as intended.

Jane Bassingthwaighte
Director Organisational Performance

SW
Governance Team Leader

BACKGROUND

Previous Resolutions of Council

<p>CCL24/315 26 November 2024</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Council endorse the Community Engagement Group models as outlined in Table 1 of this report. 2. That Council endorse the creation of six Council Community Committees, being; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellington Town Committee • Villages Committee • Youth Council • Renewable Energy Community Benefit Fund Committee • Sister City Committee • Multicultural Advisory Committee 3. That work commences to see a call for expressions of interest for membership on the six Council Community Committees in January 2025, with the first committee meetings to be held in February and March 2025. 4. That Council endorse the creation of a new Dubbo Region Interests Council, being; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dubbo Region Arts and Culture Council 5. That work commences to see a call for expressions of interest for executive committee membership on the Dubbo Region Arts and Culture Council in January 2025, with the first meeting to be held in March 2025.
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REPORT

Following the new Community Engagement Groups model being endorsed staff have commenced work on an overarching framework revised Terms of Reference, committee Charters and engagement platforms.

This report seeks to determine the Councillor representatives for the Council Community Committees as outlined in **Table 1**. The table also includes a high-level update on the development of each of the committees.

NOTE: The endorsed *Renewable Energy Community Benefit Fund Committee* title has been updated to Renewable Energy Zone Benefit Committee. This title better reflects the purpose of the committee and its function.

Table 1. Council Community Committees

Wellington Town Committee	
Proposed meeting schedule	Quarterly, and ad hoc as required. First meeting Monday 3 March 2025.
Proposed membership	Councillor representatives to be determined with one

	determined to be chairperson Director Strategy Partnerships and Engagement (or delegate) Director Infrastructure (or delegate) Community representatives (14)
Overall status update as at 29/01/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 former members rejoined. 5 EOIs received.
Villages Committee	
Proposed meeting schedule	Quarterly, and ad hoc as required. First meeting Wednesday 5 March 2025.
Proposed membership	Councillor representatives to be determined with one determined to be chairperson Director Strategy Partnerships and Engagement (or delegate) Director Infrastructure (or delegate) Community representatives (maximum 22)
Overall status update as at 29/01/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 former members rejoined. 5 EOIs received.
Youth Council	
Proposed meeting schedule	Monthly March 2025.
Proposed membership	Councillor representative and alternative Youth Development Officer Community representatives (aged 12 to 24 years) (8) Note: development of Youth Network member list; whereby vacancies or apologies to meetings can be filled from the list. The network may meet informally to provide insights to Youth Council.
Overall status update as at 29/01/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing with existing operations.
Renewable Energy Zone Benefit Committee	
Proposed meeting schedule	Biannual, and ad hoc as required.
Proposed membership	Councillor representatives (2) Director Development and Environment (or delegate) Manager Growth Planning Director Strategy, Partnerships and Engagement (or delegate) Locality Representatives* (selected based on locational based agenda items) Representatives from the Wellington Town Committee (2) Representatives from the Villages Committees (1 North of Wellington area and 1 South of Wellington area)
Overall status update as at 29/01/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 EOIs received.
Sister City Committee	
Proposed meeting schedule	Biannual, and ad hoc as required.

Proposed membership	Councillor representatives (3) Manager Regional Experiences (or alternative) The Sister Cities Officer Community representatives (6) High School Sector Representative within the LGA (1)
Overall status update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 former members rejoined. Invited High School Sector Representative
Multicultural Advisory Committee	
Proposed meeting schedule	Biannual, and ad hoc as required.
Proposed membership	Councillor representatives (2) Director Community Culture and Places (or delegate) Community representatives (15)
Overall status update as at 29/01/2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 EOIs received.

Consultation

- Discussions have been held with executive staff, corporate governance staff, community engagement group lead staff and administration support staff to understand suitable committee numbers based on former committee structures and the meetings formats.

Resourcing Implications

- It is estimated that 150 hours annually will be required from the Corporate Governance Branch for administration support to the Council Community Committees. Including such work as, production of agendas and minutes and booking meetings.
- Hours for non-Corporate Governance Branch staff time is unknown at this stage.
- Staff hours will be recorded throughout the Council term to inform a check-in review on the effectiveness and sustainability of the new structure.

Total Financial Implications	Current year (\$)	Current year + 1 (\$)	Current year + 2 (\$)	Current year + 3 (\$)	Current year + 4 (\$)	Ongoing (\$)
a. Operating revenue	0	0	0	0	0	0
b. Operating expenses	7,074	7,074	7,074	7,074	0	0
c. Operating budget impact (a – b)	7,074	7,074	7,074	7,074	0	0
d. Capital Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0
e. Total net impact (c – d)	7,074	7,074	7,074	7,074	0	0

Does the proposal require ongoing funding?	Yes
What is the source of this funding?	Corporate Governance Branch, operational

Table 1. Ongoing Financial Implications

Timeframe

Key Date	Explanation
WC 16 December 2024	Former members of the Wellington Town Committee, Villages Committee and Sister City Committee are invited to rejoin.
WC 13 January 2025	Expressions of Interest called for the Wellington Town Committee and Villages Committee, Renewable Energy Zone Benefit Committee, and Multicultural Advisory Committee.
WC 13 January 2025	Communications Plan enacted; including social media posts, inclusion in Council News (e-newsletter published 15 January 2025), Council Snapshot (published 30 January 2025).
10 January 2025	Former member invitation to rejoin closes.
3 February 2025	Expression of Interest close 9am Monday 3 February 2025.
4 February 2025	Initial review of Expressions of Interest numbers (filled positions) and evaluation.
11 February 2025	Determination of Councillor representatives and Chairperson (Corporate Services Committee).
WC 17 February 2025	Submitters advised of outcome of Expression of Interest.
25 February 2025	Adoption of the minutes of the Corporate Services Committee.
March 2025	First meetings to commence as suitable for individual Committees.



REPORT: Draft Council Policy - Code of Meeting Practice - Results of Public Exhibition

DIVISION: Organisational Performance
REPORT DATE: 29 January 2025
TRIM REFERENCE: ID25/128

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt a policy Fulfil legislated requirement/Compliance 				
Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council previously resolved to place the draft Council Policy, Code of Meeting Practice, on public exhibition. The public exhibition period for the draft Council Policy – Code of Meeting Practice has concluded, with zero submissions received. The draft policy now ready for adoption. 				
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This policy must be reviewed and adopted by Council within the first 12 months of a new Council Term in accordance with Section 360 of the Local Government Act https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1993-030#sec.360 First review placed on Public Exhibition as required. Local Government Act 1993. Local Government NSW – Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW 2021 				
Financial Implications	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Budget Area</td> <td>There are no financial implications arising from this report.</td> </tr> </table>	Budget Area	There are no financial implications arising from this report.		
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Policy Implications	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Policy Title</td> <td>Code of Meeting Practice.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Impact on Policy</td> <td>Once adopted with revisions, this will become the policy of council.</td> </tr> </table>	Policy Title	Code of Meeting Practice.	Impact on Policy	Once adopted with revisions, this will become the policy of council.
	Policy Title	Code of Meeting Practice.			
Impact on Policy	Once adopted with revisions, this will become the policy of council.				

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

RECOMMENDATION

That the draft Council Policy, Code of Meeting Practice, as attached at Appendix 1, be adopted.

Jane Bassingthwaite
Director Organisational Performance

SW
Governance Team Leader

BACKGROUND

Under section 360(3) of the Local Government Act, an elected body must revise and adopt this policy within 12 months of the start of the Council Term. Public consultation is mandatory for this Policy for significant changes.

Previous Resolutions of Council

<p>12 October 2023 CSC23/60 (CCL23/278)</p>	<p><i>That the draft Council Policy, Code of Meeting Practice, as attached at Appendix 1, be adopted.</i></p>						
<p>26 November 2024 (CCL24/313)</p>	<p>1. That the draft Council Policy – Code of Meeting Practice, as attached as Appendix 1, be endorsed for the purpose of public exhibition for a period of 42 days and that prior to exhibition it be amended as below:</p> <p>a. 5.19: When a Councillor requests to attend a meeting by audio-visual link replace the specified period of 24 hours’ notice with “by 1.5 hours prior to the meeting, unless extenuating circumstances apply”.</p> <p>b. 3.9 A Councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the Council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a Notice of Motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted by 12 midday on the day that is eight calendar days before the meeting, not including the day of the meeting in the count. For example, if a meeting is scheduled for 5:30pm on a Tuesday, the notice of motion must be submitted by 12 midday on the Monday of the previous week.</p> <p>c. 8.5 (a) Questions on Notice must be lodged in writing with the Chief Executive Officer by 12 midday on the day that is eight calendar days before the meeting, not including the day of the meeting in the count. For example, if a meeting is scheduled for 5:30pm on a Tuesday, the question on notice must be submitted by 12 midday on the Monday of the previous week.</p> <p>d. That Council update the Code of Meeting Practice to correct the below typographical errors and or minor updates:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Current</th> <th>Correction</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>The time, date and place of Ordinary meetings will be determined during the Ordinary meeting of Council held each September for the ensuing year.</td> <td>The time, date and place of Ordinary meetings will be determined during the Ordinary meeting of Council held in September, following the Mayoral Election, for the ensuing two years.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Meetings Held Via Audi-Visual Link.</td> <td>Meetings Held Via Audio-Visual Link.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Current	Correction	The time, date and place of Ordinary meetings will be determined during the Ordinary meeting of Council held each September for the ensuing year.	The time, date and place of Ordinary meetings will be determined during the Ordinary meeting of Council held in September, following the Mayoral Election, for the ensuing two years.	Meetings Held Via Audi-Visual Link.	Meetings Held Via Audio-Visual Link.
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Meetings Held Via Audi-Visual Link.	Meetings Held Via Audio-Visual Link.						

	2. That a further report be submitted to Council detailing results of public exhibition, for adoption of the final policy.
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REPORT

The Code of Meeting Practice was reviewed as per the requirement under section 360(3) of the Local Government Act that the elected body must revise and adopt this policy within 12 months of the start of the new council term. (**Appendix 1**).

Whilst the current policy is being reviewed as required, and provides the opportunity for practical and administrative amendments, there is a higher level review of the Model Code of Meeting Practice and conduct reforms currently being considered by the Minister for Local Government. The proposed reforms address how Councillors gather, debate and make decisions. The discussion paper is currently available and is attached as **Appendix 2**. The following link will take you to the consultation and information page. [Reforms to the Model Code of Meeting Practice - Office of Local Government NSW](#)

The proposed reforms are currently out for consultation and a draft submission on these reforms will be reported to the February Ordinary Council meeting, prior to submissions which close on 28 February 2025. Councillors may have thoughts or suggestions for inclusion in the submission.

If successful, the reforms will filter into new Model Codes and requirements in early 2025 (and a further draft policy will be reported to Council as required).

Consultation

- Noting that as per section 361 of the Local Government Act, a draft Code of Meeting Practice must be placed on Public Exhibition for a period of “not less than 28 days;”. To ensure maximum opportunity for submissions.
- The Public Exhibition period was Friday 29 November 2024 to Tuesday 28 January 2025.
- There were no public submissions received.

Resourcing Implications

- There are no additional resourcing implications for the proposed policy.

Options Considered

- The majority of the provisions within this Policy are mandatory under the Model Code of Meeting Practice.
- The additional non-mandatory provisions were adopted by the previous terms of councils. You are able to review the non-mandatory provisions for changes if required.
- Administrative changes have been made to update information on the following:

- 3.9 A Councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the Council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted **eight** business days before the meeting is to be held **by 12pm**. (note this does not include the day of the meeting) This has been updated due to the change of meeting days to Tuesdays so it allows adequate time for the processing on the agenda and does not impact the release date of the agenda.
- 4.9 No more than two (2) speakers are to be permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the council meeting, is highlighted to potential update this as in the recent past we do not adhere to this requirement allowing more than two people to speak to a topic of interest.
- 5.2 A Councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the Council or of a Committee of the Council unless personally present at the meeting, unless permitted to attend the meeting by audio-visual link under this code.
- 5.19 A request by a Councillor for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the Chief Executive Officer **1.5 hours prior to the meeting in question unless extenuating circumstances apply**.
- 8.5 (a) Questions on Notice must be lodged in writing with the Chief Executive Officer no later than 12pm eight business days prior to the scheduled Ordinary Meeting of the Council (note this does not include the day of the meeting). This has been updated due to the change of meeting days to Tuesdays, so it allows adequate time for the processing on the agenda and does not impact the release date of the agenda.

Next Steps

- The Policy, if adopted, come into immediate effect.
- Once adopted, the Policy will be displayed on Council's website, in accordance with the Government Information (Public Access) Act.
- Relevant staff will be notified of the updated policy.
- Business paper release to the elected body will change to become Tuesday prior to the meeting.
- Business paper release to the public, via Council's website, will change to Wednesday prior to the meeting.

APPENDICES:

- 1 [↓](#) Draft Council Policy - Code of Meeting Practice - review November 2024
- 2 [↓](#) OLG - Councillor Conduct and Meeting Practices - A New Framework - September 2024



DUBBO
REGIONAL
COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICY

Code of Meeting Practice

Date November 2024

Council Resolution Date

Clause Number

Responsible Position Manager Corporate Governance

Branch Corporate Governance

Division Organisational Performance

Version 6

TRIM Reference Number

Review Period Within 12 months of new Term of Council or when the Model Code of Meeting Practice is updated by the Office of Local Government NSW.

Review Date November 2026

Consultation Public Exhibition prior to adoption

Document Revision History	
Description	Date
Amended and adopted by Council following merger between former Dubbo City and Wellington Councils	July 2016
Amended to include provision for web streaming of Council and Standing Committee meetings	October 2017
Amended to reflect position title change from General Manager to Chief Executive Officer	May 2018
Adopted by Council following workshop and Public Exhibition	July 2019
Submitted to Council for adoption following minor changes (see notes)	October 2021
Adopted by Council following workshop and Public Exhibition after 2021 Local Government Elections	April 2022
Submitted to Council for adoption to be place on Public Exhibition for 28 days.	July 2023
Adopted by Council following Public Exhibition	26 October 2023
Review and amended submitted to Council for Public Exhibition following 2024 Local Government Elections	26 November 2024

Notes

Amendments made for new Term of Council to reflect updated Model Code of Meeting Practice.

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1. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

A Council and a Committee of the Council of which all the members are Councillors must conduct its meetings in accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice adopted by the Council.

BACKGROUND AND RELATED LEGISLATION

The Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Code) is made under section 360 of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation).

Council must adopt a Code of Meeting Practice that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Code of Meeting but may also include non-mandatory and other supplementary provisions of the Model Code providing that it does not contain provisions that are inconsistent with the mandatory provisions of the Model Meeting Code.

This Code of Meeting Practice has been publicly exhibited in accordance with the Act and adopted by the Council.

SCOPE

This Code applies to all meetings of Council and Committees of Council of which all the members are Councillors (Committees of Council). These Committees include the Committee of the Whole; the Infrastructure, Planning and Environment Committee; the Culture and Community Committee; and the Corporate Services Committee. Council Committees whose members include persons other than Councillors may adopt their own rules for meetings unless the Council determines otherwise.

DEFINITIONS

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
The Act	<i>The Local Government Act 1993.</i>
Act of disorder	An act of disorder is defined in clause 15.11 of this code.
Amendment	In relation to an original motion, means a motion moving and amendment to that motion.
Audio recorder	Any device capable or recording speech.
Audio-visual link	means a facility that enables audio and visual communication between persons at different places
Business day	Any day except Saturday or Sunday or any other day the whole or part of which is observed a public holiday throughout NSW.
Chairperson	In relation to a meeting of the council, the person presiding at the meeting as provided by section 369 of the Act and clauses 6.1 and 6.2 of this code; and in relation to a meeting of a committee, the person presiding at the meeting as provided by clause 20.11 of this code.

This code	Council's adopted Code of Meeting Practice.
Committee of the Council	A committee established by the council in accordance with clause 20.2 of this code (being a committee consisting only of councillors) or the council when it has resolved itself into committee of the whole under clause 12.1.
Council official	Has the same meaning it has in the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW
Day	Calendar day.
Division	A request by two councillors under clause 11.7 of this code requiring the recording of the names of the councillors who voted both for and against a motion.
Foreshadowed amendment	A proposed amendment foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.18 of this code during debate on the first amendment.
Foreshadowed motion	A motion foreshadowed by a councillor under clause 10.17 of this code during debate on an original motion.
MCOMP	NSW Government Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW 2021.
Open voting	Voting on the voices or by a show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system or similar means.
Planning decision	A decision made in the exercise of a function of a Council under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 including any decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan, or a development contribution plan under that Act, but not including the making of an order under Division 9.3 of Part 9 of that Act.
Performance Improvement Order	An order issued under Section 438A of the Act.
Quorum	The minimum number of councillors or committee members necessary to conduct a meeting.
The Regulation	<i>The Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.</i>
Webcast	A video or audio broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet either concurrently with the meeting or at a later time.
Year	The period beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June.

RESPONSIBILITIES

A Council and a Committee of the Council of which all the members are Councillors must conduct its meetings in accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice adopted by the Council.

POLICY

See next page for Dubbo Regional Council's Code of Meeting Practice.

2. MEETING PRINCIPLES

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 2.1)

2.1 Council and committee meetings should be:

Transparent: Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.

Informed: Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.

Inclusive: Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.

Principled: Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.

Trusted: The community has confidence that councillors and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.

Respectful: Councillors, staff, and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.

Effective: Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.

Orderly: Councillors, staff, and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

3. BEFORE THE MEETING

Timing of Ordinary Council Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 3.1 - 3.2)

3.1 The time, date and place of Ordinary meetings will be determined during the Ordinary meeting of Council held in September, following the Mayoral Election, for the ensuing two years, unless it is a Local Government election year in which case the Ordinary meeting dates will be determined in October for the ensuing year.

Note: Under section 365 of the Act, councils are required to meet at least ten (10) times each year, each time in a different month unless the Minister for Local Government has approved a reduction in the number of times that a council is required to meet each year under section 365A.

Extraordinary Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 3.3)

3.2 If the Mayor receives a request in writing, signed by at least two (2) Councillors, the Mayor must call an extraordinary meeting of the Council to be held as soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request. The mayor can be one of the two Councillors requesting the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.2 reflects section 366 of the Act.

Notice to the Public of Council Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 3.4-3.6)

3.3 The Council must give notice to the public of the time, date, and place of each of its meetings, including extraordinary meetings and of each meeting of Committees of the Council.

Note: Clause 3.3 reflects section 9(1) of the Act.

3.4 For the purposes of clause 3.3, notice of a meeting of the Council and of a Committee of council is to be published before the meeting takes place. The notice must be published on the Council's website, and in such other manner that the Council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

3.5 For the purposes of clause 3.3, notice of more than one (1) meeting may be given in the same notice.

Notice to Councillors of Ordinary Council Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 3.7 - 3.8)

3.6 The Chief Executive Officer must send to each Councillor, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the Council, a notice specifying the time, date, and place at which the meeting is to be held, and the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

Note: Clause 3.6 reflects section 367(1) of the Act.

3.7 The notice and the agenda for, and the business papers relating to, the meeting may be given to Councillors in electronic form, but only if all Councillors have facilities to access the notice, agenda, and business papers in that form.

Note: Clause 3.7 reflects section 367(3) of the Act.

Notice to Councillors of Extraordinary Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 3.9)

3.8 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given to Councillors of an Extraordinary meeting of the Council in cases of emergency.

Note: Clause 3.8 reflects section 367(2) of the Act.

Giving Notice of Business to be Considered at Council Meetings

*(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 3.10-3.11
MCOMP Non-mandatory Provisions 3.12-3.13)*

3.9 A Councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the Council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and be submitted **by 12 midday on the day that is eight calendar days before the meeting, not including the day of the meeting in the count. (For example, if a meeting is scheduled for 5.30pm on a Tuesday, the notice of motion must be submitted by 12 midday on the Monday of the previous week).**

3.10 A Councillor may, in writing to the Chief Executive Officer, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered. If a Councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under this clause wishes to withdraw it after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to Councillors, the Councillor may request the withdrawal of the motion when it is before the Council.

3.11 If the Chief Executive Officer considers that a notice of motion submitted by a councillor for consideration at an ordinary meeting of the council has legal, strategic, financial or

policy implications which should be taken into consideration by the meeting, the chief executive officer may prepare a report in relation to the notice of motion for inclusion with the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council.

3.12 A notice of motion for the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the notice of motion. If the notice of motion does not identify a funding source, the chief executive officer must either:

(a) prepare a report on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted for inclusion in the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the council, or

(b) by written notice sent to all councillors with the business papers for the meeting for which the notice of motion has been submitted, defer consideration of the matter by the council to such a date specified in the notice, pending the preparation of such a report.

Questions With Notice

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 3.14-3.16)

3.13 A Councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.9, ask a question for response by the Chief Executive Officer about the performance or operations of the Council.

3.14 A Councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.13 that comprises a complaint against the Chief Executive Officer or a member of staff of the Council, or a question that implies wrongdoing by the Chief Executive

Officer or a member of staff of the Council.

3.15 The Chief Executive Officer or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.13 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the Council or orally at the meeting.

Agenda and Business Papers for Ordinary Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 3.17-3.22)

3.16 The Chief Executive Officer must cause the agenda for a meeting of the Council or a Committee of the Council to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.

3.17 The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the agenda for an Ordinary meeting of the Council states:

(a) all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the Council, and

(b) if the mayor is the chairperson – any matter or topic that the chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and

(c) all matters, including matters that are the subject of staff reports and reports of Committees, to be considered at the meeting, and

(d) any business of which due notice has been given under clause 3.9.

3.18 Nothing in clause 3.17 limits the powers of the mayor to put a Mayoral Minute to a meeting under clause 9.6.

3.19 Nothing in clause 3.17 limits the powers of the Chief Executive Officer to table a report at a meeting under clause 3.20.

3.20 Subject to clause 3.21, the Chief Executive Officer may, by report signed by the Chief Executive Officer, put to the meeting, in writing, without notice any matter or topic that is within the

jurisdiction of the Council, or of which the Council has official knowledge.

3.21 Any report put to the meeting under clause 3.20 must not be used to put without notice matters that are routine and not urgent or matters for which proper notice should be given because of their complexity. For this clause, a matter will be urgent where it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled Ordinary meeting of the Council.

3.22 The Chief Executive Officer must not include in the agenda for a meeting of the Council any business of which due notice has been given if, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, the business is, or the implementation of the business would be, unlawful. The Chief Executive Officer must report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next meeting of the Council.

3.23 Where the agenda includes the receipt of information or discussion of other matters that, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, is likely to take place when the meeting is closed to the public, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the agenda of the meeting:

(a) identifies the relevant item of business and indicates that it is of such a nature (without disclosing details of the information to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public), and

(b) states the grounds under section 10A(2) of the Act relevant to the item of business.

Note: Clause 3.23 reflects section 9(2A)(a) of the Act.

3.24 The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the details of any item of business which, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to

the public, are included in a business paper provided to Councillors for the meeting concerned. Such details must not be included in the business papers made available to the public and must not be disclosed by a Councillor or by any other person to another person who is not authorised to have that information.

Statement of Ethical Obligations

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 3.23)

3.25 Business papers for all ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the council and committees of the council must contain a statement reminding councillors of their oath or affirmation of office made under section 233A of the Act and their obligations under the council's code of conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Availability of the Agenda and Business Papers to the Public

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 3.24-3.27)

3.26 Copies of the agenda and the associated business papers, such as correspondence and reports for meetings of the Council and Committees of Council, are to be published on the Council's website, and must be made available to the public for inspection, or for taking away by any person free of charge at the offices of the Council, at the relevant meeting and at such other venues determined by the Council.

Note: Clause 3.26 reflects section 9(2) and (4) of the Act.

3.27 Clause 3.26 does not apply to the business papers for items of business that the Chief Executive Officer has identified under clause 3.23 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 3.27 reflects section 9(2A) (b) of the Act.

3.28 For the purposes of clause 3.26, copies of agendas and business papers must be published on the council's website and made available to the public at a time that is as close as possible to the time they are available to Councillors.

Note: Clause 3.28 reflects section 9(3) of the Act.

3.29 A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.26, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form.

Note: Clause 3.29 reflects section 9(5) of the Act.

Agenda and Business Papers for Extraordinary Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 3.28-3.32)

3.30 The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the agenda for an Extraordinary meeting of the Council deals only with the matters stated in the notice of the meeting.

3.31 Despite clause 3.30, business may be considered at an Extraordinary meeting of the Council, even though due notice of the business has not been given, if:

(a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and

(b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled Ordinary meeting of the Council.

3.32 A motion moved under clause 3.31(a) can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with.

3.33 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion moved under

clause 3.31(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

3.34 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the chairperson under clause 3.31(b) on whether a matter is of great urgency.

Pre-meeting Briefing Sessions

(MCOMP Non-mandatory Provision 3.33-3.38)

3.35 Prior to each Ordinary meeting of the Council, the Chief Executive Officer may arrange a pre-meeting briefing session to brief Councillors on business to be considered at the meeting. Pre-meeting briefing sessions may also be held for Extraordinary meetings of the Council and meetings of Committees of the Council.

3.36 Pre-meeting briefing sessions are to be held in the absence of the public.

3.37 Pre-meeting briefing sessions may be held by audio-visual link.

3.38 The Chief Executive Officer or a member of staff nominated by the Chief Executive Officer is to preside at pre-meeting briefing sessions.

3.39 Councillors must not use pre-meeting briefing sessions to debate or make preliminary decisions on items of business they are being briefed on, and any debate and decision-making must be left to the formal Council or Committee meeting at which the item of business is to be considered.

3.40 Councillors (including the Mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of a briefing at a pre-meeting briefing session, in the same way that they are required to do so at a Council or Committee meeting. The Council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at pre-meeting briefing sessions and how the conflict of interest was managed by the Councillor who made the declaration.

3.41 A record of minutes will be taken in pre-meeting briefings including the items discussed, attendees at the

meetings, timings, and conflicts of interest as detailed in clause 3.40.

4. PUBLIC FORUMS

(MCOMP Non-mandatory Provision 4.1-4.24)

4.1 The Council will hold a public forum during each Ordinary and Extraordinary meetings of the Council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public.

4.2 Public forums may be held by audio-visual link.

4.3 Public Forum is limited to a maximum period of thirty (30) minutes and shall be held following "Apologies" on the Council agenda. Should there remain time following speakers who have previously nominated, the mayor will enquire of the Public Gallery if there are any other speakers.

Should the number of nominated speakers exceed the thirty (30) minute time frame, a decision by Council may extend the time frame for Public Forum by a length of time nominated by the mover of the motion.

4.4 Members of the public wishing to discuss items of business listed on the business paper will be given preference over those wishing to discuss matters that are not included on the agenda to be considered at the meeting.

4.5 To speak at a public forum, a person must first make an application to the Council in the approved form. Applications to speak at the public forum must be received at least two (2) hours prior to the commencement of the public forum and must identify the item of business on the agenda of the council meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item, where applicable. Any material for distribution to the Council must be submitted with the application for approval by the Chief Executive Officer.

4.6 A person may apply to speak on more than one item however the total time that person speaks for must not exceed five (5) minutes.

4.7 Legal representatives acting on behalf of others are not to be permitted to speak at a public forum unless they identify their status as a legal representative when applying to speak at the public forum.

4.8 The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a public forum. The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application and advise the chairperson prior to the respective public forum session.

4.9 No more than two (2) speakers are to be permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the Council meeting.

4.10 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to address the Council on the item of business. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to address the Council, the first two (2) speakers to register interest to speak on that item shall be permitted to speak to the item.

4.11 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may, in consultation with the Mayor or the chairperson as the case may be, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the Council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business. Additional speakers shall speak once all

registered speakers have spoken and will only be permitted provided that the maximum time for public forum of thirty (30) minutes is not exceeded.

4.12 Approved speakers at the public forum are to register with the Council any written, visual, or audio material to be presented in support of their address to the Council at the public forum, and to identify any equipment needs no less than one (1) business day before the public forum. The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented should the request be unreasonable and the equipment not being readily available.

4.13 The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate is to determine the order of speakers at the public forum. This will usually be determined by the order in which the requests are received.

4.14 Each speaker will be allowed five (5) minutes to address the Council. This time is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson.

4.15 Speakers at public forums must not digress from the item on the agenda of the Council meeting they have applied to address the Council on. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard and will be requested to return to their seat.

4.16 A Councillor (including the chairperson) may, through the chairperson, ask questions of a speaker following their address at a public forum. Questions put to a speaker must be direct, succinct and without argument.

4.17 Speakers at public forums **cannot** ask questions of the Council, Councillors, or Council staff.

4.18 The Chief Executive Officer or their nominee may, with the concurrence of the chairperson, address the Council for up to two (2) minutes in response to an address to the Council at a public forum after the address and any subsequent questions and answers have been finalised.

4.19 Where an address made at a public forum raises matters that require further consideration by Council staff, the Chief Executive Officer may recommend to the chairperson that the Council defer consideration of the matter pending the preparation of a further report on the matters.

4.20 When addressing the Council, speakers at public forums must comply with this code and all other relevant Council codes, policies, and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct, or making other potentially defamatory statements.

4.21 If the chairperson considers that a speaker at a public forum has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the chairperson may request the person to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the chairperson's request, the chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking.

4.22 Clause 4.21 does not limit the ability of the chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers at public forums in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of this code.

4.23 Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.20, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse further applications

from that person to speak at public forums for a period of six (6) months. Should this speaker repeat this conduct following this suspension at a further public forum session, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at public forums for a period of twelve (12) months. Should this speaker repeat this conduct following this second suspension at a further public forum session, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at public forums indefinitely.

4.24 Councillors (including the mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of an address at a public forum, in the same way that they are required to do so during the remainder of a Council or Committee meeting. The Council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at public forums and how the conflict of interest was managed by the Councillor who made the declaration.

4.25 Where an address relates to an issue of general interest (that is a matter not listed on the agenda), it cannot be debated by Council except where in accordance with clause 9.3 of this code:

(a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and

(b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council.

4.26 Speakers must conduct themselves with respect to Council and observe the rules of order and meeting procedure as contained in Council's Code of Meeting Practice. As part of Public Forum, the

Mayor shall ensure the conduct of public forum is such that presenters:

- confine their presentation to a statement of facts
- not insult or make personal reflections or impute improper motives to any Councillor or member of staff
- not say or do anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting or is likely to bring Council into contempt
- allow other speakers to put their views without interruption.

4.27 Any potential tenderer (being a person or entity, including their agent, employee or representative, that has requested documents or information regarding a tender or quotation) must not be permitted to address a meeting of Council (including any Committee or Working Party of Council) regarding the relevant tender or quotation without the prior written consent of the Chief Executive Officer.

In deciding whether to grant such consent, the Chief Executive Officer may take into consideration: any relevant legislative requirements, tendering guidelines issued by the Office of Local Government from time to time, terms of the relevant tender or quotation documents, Council's Code of Conduct, and the rules of procedural fairness.

(It is noted that Council has a statutory obligation to ensure that any requests for tender or quotation documents, or information or clarification regarding the tender or quotation, from any potential tenderer must be directed to the responsible officer identified in the tender or quotation documents.)

4.28 It is Council's practice that members of the public who have an interest in matters before Council's standing committees (Infrastructure, Planning and Environment Committee;

Culture and Community Committee or Corporate Services Committee) are advised that they may attend and address those committees. This practice is more informal and there is often interaction, questions, or discussions between those persons and the Councillors and staff. This informality has been at the discretion of the Chairperson, noting that only those matters listed on the Committee's agenda will be discussed; matters of "general interest" are not to be raised by the public.

There is no specific agenda item for Public Forum during Committee meetings, but registered speakers will address the Council immediately prior to the subject matter on the agenda.

5. COMING TOGETHER

Attendance by Councillors at Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 5.1 – 5.8)

5.1 All Councillors must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the Council and of Committees of the Council of which they are members.

Note: A Councillor may not attend a meeting as a Councillor (other than the first meeting of the Council after the Councillor is elected or a meeting at which the Councillor takes an oath or makes an affirmation of office) until they have taken an oath or made an affirmation of office in the form prescribed under section 233A of the Act.

5.2 A Councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the Council or of a Committee of the Council unless personally present at the meeting, unless permitted to attend the meeting by audio-visual link under this code. *(with prior approval a minimum of 1.5 hours before the meeting)*

5.3 Where a Councillor is unable to attend one or more Ordinary meetings of the Council, the Councillor should formally request that the Council grant them a leave of absence from those meetings. This clause does not prevent a Councillor from making an apology if they are unable to attend a meeting. However, the acceptance of such an apology does not constitute the granting of a leave of absence for the purposes of this code and the Act.

Note: The making an apology by a Councillor is to be done in writing to the Chief Executive Officer at least one (1) hour prior to the commencement of a meeting who will notify the Mayor, or chairperson prior to the commencement of a meeting. An apology will not be recorded for an absent Councillor who has not provided formal notification.

5.4 A Councillor's request for leave of absence from Council meetings should, if practicable, identify (by date) the meetings from which the Councillor intends to be absent and the grounds upon which the leave of absence is being sought.

5.5 The Council must act reasonably when considering whether to grant a Councillor's request for a leave of absence.

5.6 A Councillor's civic office will become vacant if the Councillor is absent from three (3) consecutive ordinary meetings of the Council without prior leave of the Council, or leave granted by the Council at any of the meetings concerned, unless the holder is absent because they have been suspended from office under the Act, or because the Council has been suspended under the Act, or as a consequence of a compliance order under section 438HA.

Note: Clause 5.6 reflects section 234(1) (d) of the Act.

5.7 A Councillor who intends to attend a meeting of the Council despite having been granted a leave of absence should, if practicable, give the Chief Executive Officer at least two (2) days' notice of their intention to attend.

The Quorum for a Meeting

*(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 5.9 – 5.13
Non-mandatory Provisions 5.14-5.16)*

5.8 The quorum for a meeting of the Council is a majority of the Councillors of the Council who hold office at that time and are not suspended from office.

Note: Clause 5.8 reflects section 368(1) of the Act.

5.9 Clause 5.8 does not apply if the quorum is required to be determined in accordance with directions of the Minister in a performance improvement order issued in respect of the Council.

Note: Clause 5.9 reflects section 368(2) of the Act.

5.10 A meeting of the Council must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:

(a) at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or

(b) within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or

(c) at any time during the meeting.

5.11 In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date, and place fixed:

(a) by the chairperson, or

(b) in the chairperson's absence, by the majority of the councillors present, or

(c) failing that, by the Chief Executive Officer.

5.12 The Chief Executive Officer must record in the Council's minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the Council, together with the names of the Councillors present.

5.13 Where, prior to the commencement of a meeting, it becomes apparent that a quorum may not be present at the meeting, or that the health, safety or welfare of Councillors, Council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the meeting because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency, the Mayor may, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer and, as far as is practicable, with each Councillor, cancel the meeting. Where a meeting is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the Council's website and in such other manner that the Council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to

the attention of as many people as possible.

5.14 Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 5.13, the business to be considered at the meeting may instead be considered, where practicable, at the next ordinary meeting of the Council or at an extraordinary meeting called under clause 3.2.

Meetings Held Via Audio-Visual Link

(MCOMP Non-Mandatory Provisions 5.16 – 5.18)

5.15 A meeting of the Council or a Committee of the Council may be held by audio-visual link where the mayor determines that the meeting should be held by audio-visual link because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency. The mayor may only make a determination under this clause where they are satisfied that attendance at the meeting may put the health and safety of councillors and staff at risk. The mayor must make a determination under this clause in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer and, as far as is practicable, with each councillor.

5.16 Where the mayor determines under clause 5.16 that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, the Chief Executive Officer must:

(a) give written notice to all councillors that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, and

(b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that all councillors can participate in the meeting by audio-visual link, and

(c) cause a notice to be published on the council's website and in such other manner the Chief Executive Officer is satisfied will bring it to the attention of as many people as possible, advising that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link and providing information about where members of the public may view the meeting.

5.17 This code applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link under clause 5.15 in the same way it would if the meeting was held in person.

Note: Where a council holds a meeting by audio-visual link under clause 5.15, it is still required under section 10 of the Act to provide a physical venue for members of the public to attend in person and observe the meeting.

Attendance by Councillors at Meetings by Audio-Visual Link

(MCOMP Non-Mandatory Provisions 5.19 – 5.30)

5.18 Councillors may attend and participate in meetings of the Council and Committees of the council by audio-visual link with the approval of the Council or the relevant Committee.

5.19 A request by a Councillor for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the Chief Executive Officer **a minimum of 1.5 hours prior to the meeting in question, unless extenuating circumstances apply, and needs to provide the reasons why the Councillor will be prevented from attending the meeting in person.**

5.20 Councillors may request approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link. Where a Councillor requests approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link, the request must specify the meetings the request relates to in addition to the information required under clause 5.19.

5.21 The council must comply with the Health Privacy Principles prescribed under the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* when collecting, holding, using, and disclosing health information in connection with a request by a councillor to attend a meeting by audio-visual link.

5.22 A Councillor who has requested approval to attend a meeting of the Council or a Committee of the Council by audio-visual link may participate in the

meeting by audio-visual link until the Council or Committee determines whether to approve their request and is to be taken as present at the meeting. The Councillor may participate in a decision in relation to their request to attend the meeting by audio-visual link.

5.23 A decision whether to approve a request by a Councillor to attend a meeting of the Council or a Committee of the Council by audio-visual link must be made by a resolution of the Council or the Committee concerned. The resolution must state:

(a) the meetings the resolution applies to, and

(b) the reason why the Councillor is being permitted to attend the meetings by audio-visual link where it is on grounds other than illness, disability, or caring responsibilities.

5.24 If the Council or Committee refuses a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link, their link to the meeting is to be terminated.

5.25 A decision whether to approve a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link is at the Council's or the relevant Committee's discretion. The Council and Committees of the Council must act reasonably when considering requests by Councillors to attend meetings by audio-visual link. However, the Council and Committees of the Council are under no obligation to approve a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the technical capacity does not exist to allow the Councillor to attend the meeting by these means.

5.26 The Council and committees of the council may refuse a councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the council or committee is satisfied that the councillor has failed to appropriately declare and manage conflicts of interest, observe confidentiality or to comply with this code

on one or more previous occasions they have attended a meeting of the council or a committee of the council by audio-visual link.

5.27 This code applies to a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link in the same way it would if the councillor was attending the meeting in person. Where a councillor is permitted to attend a meeting by audio-visual link under this code, they are to be taken as attending the meeting in person for the purposes of the code and will have the same voting rights as if they were attending the meeting in person.

5.28 A councillor must give their full attention to the business and proceedings of the meeting when attending a meeting by audio-visual link. The councillor's camera must be on at all times during the meeting except as may be otherwise provided for under this code.

5.29 A councillor must be appropriately dressed when attending a meeting by audio-visual link and must ensure that no items are within sight of the meeting that are inconsistent with the maintenance of order at the meeting or that are likely to bring the council or the committee into disrepute.

Entitlement of the Public to Attend Council Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 5.31 – 5.33)

5.30 Everyone is entitled to attend a meeting of the Council and Committees of the Council. The Council must ensure that all meetings of the Council and Committees of the Council are open to the public.

Note: Clause 5.30 reflects section 10(1) of the Act. Committees of the Council in this context refers to standing committees where all Councillors are members.

5.31 Clause 5.30 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

5.32 A person (whether a Councillor or another person) is not entitled to be present at a meeting of the Council or a Committee of the Council if expelled from the meeting:

(a) by a resolution of the meeting, or

(b) by the person presiding at the meeting if the Council has, by resolution, authorised the person presiding to exercise the power of expulsion.

Note: Clause 5.32 reflects section 10(2) of the Act.

Note: clause 15.14 confers a standing authorisation on all chairpersons of meetings of the council and committees of the council to expel persons from meetings. Clause 15.14 authorises chairpersons to expel persons other than councillors from a council or committee meeting.

Webcasting of Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 5.34 – 5.39)

5.33 Each meeting of the council or a committee of the council is to be recorded by means of an audio or audio-visual device.

These meetings shall be webcast as an audio-visual live stream with a copy of the stream being retained on Council's website for a minimum period of 6 months.

5.34 At the start of each meeting of the council or a committee of the council, the chairperson must inform the persons attending the meeting that:

(a) the meeting is being recorded and made publicly available on the council's website, and

(b) persons attending the meeting should refrain from making any defamatory statements.

5.35 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the council's website:

(a) at the same time as the meeting is taking place, or

(b) as soon as practicable after the meeting

5.36 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the council's website for at least twelve (12) months after the meeting.

5.37 Clauses 5.35 and 5.36 do not apply to any part of a meeting that has been closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act.

Note: Clause 5.33 – 5.37 reflect section 236 of the Regulation.

5.38 Recordings of meetings may be disposed of in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*.

Attendance of the Chief Executive Officer and Other Staff at Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 5.40 – 5.43 and Non-Mandatory Provision 5.44)

5.39 The Chief Executive Officer is entitled to attend, but not to vote at, a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a Committee of the Council of which all the members are Councillors.

Note: Clause 5.39 reflects section 376(1) of the Act.

5.40 The Chief Executive Officer is entitled to attend a meeting of any other Committee of the Council and may, if a member of the Committee, exercise a vote.

Note: Clause 5.40 reflects section 376(2) of the Act.

5.41 The Chief Executive Officer may be excluded from a meeting of the Council or a Committee while the Council or Committee deals with a matter relating to the standard of performance of the Chief Executive Officer or the terms of employment of the Chief Executive Officer.

Note: Clause 5.41 reflects section 376(3) of the Act.

5.42 The attendance of other Council staff at a meeting, (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the Chief Executive Officer.

5.43 The Chief Executive Officer and other council staff may attend meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual-link. Attendance by council staff at meetings by audio-visual link (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the Chief Executive Officer.

6. THE CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson at Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 6.1 – 6.2)

6.1 The Mayor, or at the request of or in the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor (if any) presides at meetings of the Council.

Note: Clause 6.1 reflects section 369(1) of the Act.

6.2 If the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor (if any) are absent, a Councillor elected to chair the meeting by the Councillors present presides at a meeting of the Council.

Note: Clause 6.2 reflects section 369(2) of the Act.

Election of the Chairperson in the Absence of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 6.3 – 6.8)

6.3 If no chairperson is present at a meeting of the Council at the time designated for the holding of the meeting, the first business of the meeting must be the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting.

6.4 The election of a chairperson must be conducted:

(a) by the Chief Executive Officer or, in their absence, an employee of the Council designated by the Chief Executive Officer to conduct the election, or

(b) by the person who called the meeting or a person acting on their behalf if neither the Chief Executive Officer nor a designated employee is present at the meeting, or if there is no Chief Executive Officer or designated employee.

6.5 If, at an election of a chairperson, two (2) or more candidates receive the same number of votes and no other candidate receives a greater number of votes, the chairperson is to be the candidate whose name is chosen by lot.

6.6 For the purposes of clause 6.5, the person conducting the election must:

(a) arrange for the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes to be written on similar slips, and

(b) then fold the slips to prevent the names from being seen, mix the slips and draw one of the slips at random.

6.7 The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the chairperson.

6.8 Any election conducted under clause 6.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Chairperson to Have Precedence

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 6.9)

6.9 When the chairperson rises or speaks during a meeting of the Council:

(a) any Councillor then speaking or seeking to speak must cease speaking and, if standing, immediately resume their seat, and

(b) every Councillor present must be silent to enable the chairperson to be heard without interruption.

7. MODES OF ADDRESS

(MCOMP Non-Mandatory Provisions 7.1 – 7.4)

7.1 If the chairperson is the Mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Mayor' or 'Madam Mayor'.

7.2 Where the chairperson is not the Mayor, they are to be addressed as either 'Mr Chairperson' or 'Madam Chairperson'.

7.3 A Councillor is to be addressed as 'Councillor [surname]'.

7.4 A Council officer is to be addressed by their official designation or as Mr/Ms [surname] or their position title.

7.5 During a meeting of the Council, all Councillors except for the chairperson, or any Councillor prevented by physical infirmity, shall stand when speaking.

8. ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 8.1/8.2 – 8.4)

8.1 The general order of business for an ordinary meeting of the council shall be:

- 01 Opening meeting
- 02 Prayer
- 03 Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country
- 04 Apologies and applications for a leave of absence or attendance by audio-visual link by Councillors
- 05 Conflicts of Interest
- 06 Public Forum
- 07 Confirmation of Minutes
- 08 Mayoral minute(s)
- 10 Procedural Matters
- 11 Information Only Matters
- 12 Petitions
- 13 Matters Considered by Committees
- 14 Notices of Motion/ Notices of Motion of Rescission
- 15 Delegates' Reports
- 16 Reports from Staff
- 17 Questions on Notice
- 18 Comments and Matters of Urgency
- 19 Confidential matters
- 20 Conclusion of the meeting

8.2 The order of business as fixed under 8.1 may be altered for a particular meeting of the Council if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion can be moved without notice.

8.3 Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.2 may speak to the motion before it is put.

8.4 With regard to the lodgement of petitions:

(a) Petitions must be lodged in the format as specified in the Petitions Policy

(b) Petitions may be lodged at a Council meeting however they are not to

be considered or debated unless a resolution of Council is passed to transact the business of the meeting and the chairperson rules it as a matter of urgency in accordance with clause 9.3.

(c) Petitions lodged with Council will be presented to Council for consideration at the next available Ordinary meeting of Council where the agenda has not already been determined.

8.5 (a) Questions on Notice must be lodged in writing with the Chief Executive Officer no later than **12 midday on the day that is eight calendar days before the meeting, not including the day of the meeting in the count.** (For example, if a meeting is scheduled for 5:30pm on a Tuesday, the question on notice must be submitted by 12 midday on the Monday of the previous week).

(b) Questions on Notice must directly relate to the business of the Council and must put every such question directly, succinctly and without argument, in accordance with clause 9.18.

9. CONSIDERATION OF BUSINESS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Business that can be Dealt with at a Council Meeting

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 9.1 – 9.5)

9.1 The Council must not consider business at a meeting of the Council:

(a) unless a Councillor has given notice of the business, as required by clause 3.10, and

(b) unless notice of the business has been sent to the Councillors in accordance with clause 3.7 in the case of an Ordinary meeting or clause 3.9 in the case of an Extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.

9.2 Clause 9.1 does not apply to the consideration of business at a meeting, if the business:

(a) is already before, or directly relates to, a matter that is already before the Council, or

(b) is the election of a chairperson to preside at the meeting, or

(c) subject to clause 9.9, is a matter or topic put to the meeting by way of a mayoral minute, or

(d) is a motion for the adoption of recommendations of a Committee, including, but not limited to, a Committee of the Council.

9.3 Despite clause 9.1, business may be considered at a meeting of the Council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the Councillors if:

(a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and

(b) the business to be considered is ruled by the chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council.

9.4 A motion moved under clause 9.3(a) can be moved without notice.

Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 9.3(a) can speak to the motion before it is put.

9.5 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 9.3(b).

Mayoral Minutes

*(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 9.6 – 9.9
Non-mandatory Provision 9.10)*

9.6 Subject to clause 9.9, if the Mayor is the chairperson at a meeting of the Council, the Mayor may, by minute signed by the Mayor, put to the meeting, in writing, without notice any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the Council, or of which the Council has official knowledge.

9.7 A Mayoral Minute, when put to a meeting, takes precedence over all business on the Council's agenda for the meeting. The chairperson (but only if the chairperson is the Mayor) may move the adoption of a Mayoral Minute without the motion being seconded.

9.8 A recommendation made in a Mayoral Minute put by the Mayor is, so far as it is adopted by the Council, a resolution of the Council.

9.9 A Mayoral Minute must not be used to put without notice matters that are routine and not urgent or matters for which proper notice should be given because of their complexity. For the purpose of this clause, a matter will be urgent where it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled Ordinary meeting of the Council.

9.10 Where a Mayoral Minute makes a recommendation which, if adopted, would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the Council's current adopted operational plan, it must

identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the recommendation.

If the Mayoral Minute does not identify a funding source, the Council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the Chief Executive Officer on the availability of funds for implementing the recommendation if adopted.

Staff Reports

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 9.11)

9.11 A recommendation made in a staff report is, so far as it is adopted by the Council, a resolution of the Council.

Reports of Committees of Council

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 9.12 – 9.13)

9.12 The recommendations of a Committee of the Council are, so far as they are adopted by the Council, resolutions of the Council.

9.13 If in a report of a Committee of the Council distinct recommendations are made, the Council may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

Questions

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 9.14 – 9.19)

9.14 A question must not be asked at a meeting of the Council unless it concerns a matter on the agenda of the meeting or notice has been given of the question in accordance with clauses 3.10 and 3.13.

9.15 A Councillor may, through the chairperson, put a question to another Councillor about a matter on the agenda.

9.16 A Councillor may, through the Chief Executive Officer, put a question to a Council employee about a matter on the agenda. Council employees are only obliged to answer a question put to them through the Chief Executive Officer at the direction of the Chief Executive Officer.

9.17 A Councillor or Council employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to information. Where a Councillor or Council employee to whom a question is put is unable to respond to the question at the meeting at which it is put, they may take it on notice and report the response to the next meeting of the Council or before the next meeting of Council with the response being circulated to all Councillors.

9.18 Councillors must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.

9.19 The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a Councillor or Council employee.

10. RULES OF DEBATE

Motions to be Seconded

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 10.1)

10.1 Unless otherwise specified in this code, a motion or an amendment cannot be debated unless or until it has been seconded.

Notices of Motion

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 10.2 – 10.4)

10.2 A Councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 is to move the motion the subject of the notice of motion at the meeting at which it is to be considered.

10.3 If a Councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.10 wishes to withdraw it after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to Councillors, the Councillor may request the withdrawal of the motion when it is before the Council.

10.4 In the absence of a Councillor who has placed a notice of motion on the agenda for a meeting of the council:

(a) any other Councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move the motion at the meeting, or

(b) the chairperson may defer consideration of the motion until the next meeting of the Council.

Chairperson's Duties With Respect to Motions

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 10.5 – 10.8)

10.5 It is the duty of the chairperson at a meeting of the Council to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.

10.6 The chairperson must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.

10.7 Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion under clause 10.6, the chairperson is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.

10.8 Any motion, amendment, or other matter that the chairperson has ruled out of order is taken to have been lost.

Motions Requiring the Expenditure of Funds

(MCOMP Non-Mandatory Provision 10.9)

10.9 A motion or an amendment to a motion which if passed would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the Council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the motion. If the motion does not identify a funding source, the Council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the Chief Executive Officer on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted.

Amendments to motions

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 10.10 – 10.16)

10.10 An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.

10.11 An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion before the Council and must not be a direct negative of the original motion. An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the chairperson.

10.12 The mover of an amendment is to be given the opportunity to explain any uncertainties in the proposed amendment before a seconder is called for.

10.13 If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved, and so on, but no more than one (1) motion and one (1) proposed amendment can be before Council at any one time.

10.14 While an amendment is being considered, debate must only occur in relation to the amendment and not the original motion. Debate on the original motion is to be suspended while the amendment to the original motion is being debated.

10.15 If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated. If the amendment is lost, debate is to resume on the original motion.

10.16 An amendment may become the motion without debate or a vote where it is accepted by the councillor who moved the original motion.

Foreshadowed Motions

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 10.17 – 10.19)

10.17 A Councillor may propose a foreshadowed motion in relation to the matter the subject of the original motion before the Council, without a seconder during debate on the original motion. The foreshadowed motion is only to be considered if the original motion is lost or withdrawn and the foreshadowed motion is then moved and seconded. If the original motion is carried, the foreshadowed motion lapses.

10.18 Where an amendment has been moved and seconded, a Councillor may, without a seconder, foreshadow a further amendment that they propose to move after the first amendment has been dealt with. There is no limit to the number of foreshadowed amendments that may be put before the Council at any time. However, no discussion can take place on foreshadowed amendments until the

previous amendment has been dealt with and the foreshadowed amendment has been moved and seconded.

10.19 Foreshadowed motions and foreshadowed amendments are to be considered in the order in which they are proposed. However, foreshadowed motions cannot be considered until all foreshadowed amendments have been dealt with.

Limitations on the Number and Duration of Speeches

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 10.20 – 10.30)

10.20 A Councillor who, during a debate at a meeting of the Council, moves an original motion, has the right to speak on each amendment to the motion and a right of general reply to all observations that are made during the debate in relation to the motion, and any amendment to it at the conclusion of the debate before the motion (whether amended or not) is finally put.

10.21 A Councillor, other than the mover of an original motion, has the right to speak once on the motion and once on each amendment to it.

10.22 A Councillor must not, without the consent of the Council, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than five (5) minutes at any one time.

10.23 Despite clause 10.22, the chairperson may permit a Councillor who claims to have been misrepresented or misunderstood to speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, and for longer than five (5) minutes on that motion or amendment to enable the Councillor to make a statement limited to explaining the misrepresentation or misunderstanding.

10.24 Despite clause 10.22, the Council may resolve to shorten the duration of

speeches to expedite the consideration of business at a meeting.

10.25 Despite clauses 10.20 and 10.21, a Councillor may move that a motion or an amendment be now put:

(a) if the mover of the motion or amendment has spoken in favour of it and no Councillor expresses an intention to speak against it, or

(b) if at least two (2) Councillors have spoken in favour of the motion or amendment and at least two (2) Councillors have spoken against it.

10.26 The chairperson must immediately put to the vote, without debate, a motion moved under clause 10.25. A seconder is not required for such a motion.

10.27 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is passed, the chairperson must, without further debate, put the original motion or amendment to the vote immediately after the mover of the original motion has exercised their right of reply under clause 10.20.

10.28 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is lost, the chairperson must allow the debate on the original motion or the amendment to be resumed.

10.29 All Councillors must be heard without interruption and all other Councillors must, unless otherwise permitted under this code, remain silent while another Councillor is speaking.

10.30 Once the debate on a matter has concluded and a matter has been dealt with, the chairperson must not allow further debate on the matter.

11. VOTING

Voting Entitlements of Councillors

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 11.1 – 11.3)

11.1 Each councillor is entitled to one (1) vote.

Note: Clause 11.1 reflects section 370(1) of the Act.

11.2 The person presiding at a meeting of the Council has, in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.

Note: Clause 11.2 reflects section 370(2) of the Act.

11.3 Where the chairperson declines to exercise, or fails to exercise, their second or casting vote, in the event of an equality of votes, the motion being voted upon is lost.

Voting at Council Meetings

*(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 11.5 – 11.9
Non-mandatory Provision 11.10)*

11.4 A Councillor who is present at a meeting of the Council but who fails to vote on a motion put to the meeting is taken to have voted against the motion.

11.5 If a Councillor votes against a motion put at a Council meeting, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the Councillor's dissenting vote is recorded in the Council's minutes as if a division had been called.

11.6 The decision of the chairperson as to the result of a vote is final unless the decision is immediately challenged and not fewer than two (2) Councillors rise and call for a division.

11.7 When a division on a motion is called, the chairperson must ensure that the division takes place immediately. The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the names of those who vote for the motion and those who vote against it are recorded in the Council's minutes for the meeting.

11.8 When a division on a motion is called, any Councillor who fails to vote will be recorded as having voted against the motion in accordance with clause 11.4 of this code.

11.9 Voting at a meeting, including voting in an election at a meeting, is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system). However, the Council may resolve that the voting in any election by Councillors for Mayor or Deputy Mayor is to be by secret ballot.

11.10 All voting at council meetings, (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

Voting on Planning Decisions

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 11.12 – 11.15)

11.11 The Chief Executive Officer must keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the Council or a Council Committee (including, but not limited to a Committee of the Council), the names of the Councillors who supported the decision and the names of any Councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.

11.12 For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is taken to have been called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of the Council or a Council Committee.

11.13 Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document.

11.14 Clauses 11.11–11.13 apply also to meetings that are closed to the public.

Note: Clauses 11.12–11.14 reflect section 375A of the Act.

Note: The requirements of clause 11.11 may be satisfied by maintaining a register of the minutes of each planning decision.

12. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 12.1 – 12.4)

12.1 The Council may resolve itself into a Committee to consider any matter before the Council.

Note: Clause 12.1 reflects section 373 of the Act.

12.2 All the provisions of this code relating to meetings of the Council, so far as they are applicable, extend to and govern the proceedings of the Council when in Committee of the Whole, except the provisions limiting the number and duration of speeches.

Note: Clauses 10.20–10.30 limit the number and duration of speeches.

12.3 The Chief Executive Officer or, in the absence of the Chief Executive Officer, an employee of the Council designated by the Chief Executive Officer, is responsible for reporting to the Council the proceedings of the Committee of the Whole. It is not necessary to report the proceedings in full, but any recommendations of the Committee must be reported.

12.4 The Council must ensure that a report of the proceedings (including any recommendations of the Committee) is recorded in the Council's minutes. However, the Council is not taken to have adopted the report until a motion for adoption has been made and passed.

**13. DEALING WITH ITEMS BY
EXCEPTION**

(MCOMP Non-mandatory Provisions 13.1 – 13.7)

13.1 The Council or a Committee of Council may, at any time, resolve to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together by way of a single resolution.

13.2 Before the Council or Committee resolves to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together under clause 13.1, the chairperson must list the items of business to be adopted and ask Councillors to identify any individual items of business listed by the chairperson that they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or that they wish to speak on.

13.3 The Council or Committee must not resolve to adopt any item of business under clause 13.1 that a Councillor has identified as being one they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or to speak on.

13.4 Where the consideration of multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 involves a variation to the order of business for the meeting, the Council or Committee must resolve to alter the order of business in accordance with clause 8.2.

13.5 A motion to adopt multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 must identify each of the items of business to be adopted and state that they are to be adopted as recommended in the business paper.

13.6 Items of business adopted under clause 13.1 are to be taken to have been adopted unanimously.

13.7 Councillors must ensure that they declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to items of business considered together under clause 13.1 in accordance with the requirements of the council's code of conduct.

14. CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETINGS TO THE PUBLIC

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 14.1 – 14.2)

14.1 The Council or a Committee of the Council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion or the receipt of any of the following types of matters:

(a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than Councillors),

(b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,

(c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,

(d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:

(i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or

(ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the Council, or

(iii) reveal a trade secret,

(e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,

(f) matters affecting the security of the Council, Councillors, Council staff or Council property,

(g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,

(h) information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land,

(i) alleged contraventions of the Council's Code of Conduct.

Note: Clause 14.1 reflects section 10A(1) and (2) of the Act.

14.2 The Council or a Committee of the Council may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public.

Note: Clause 14.2 reflects section 10A(3) of the Act.

Matters to be Considered when Closing Meetings to the Public

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 14.3 – 14.7)

14.3 A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 14.1:

(a) except for so much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege, or security, and

(b) if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret – unless the Council or Committee concerned is satisfied that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.3 reflects section 10B(1) of the Act.

14.4 A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 14.1(g) unless the advice concerns legal matters that:

(a) are substantial issues relating to a matter in which the Council or Committee is involved, and

(b) are clearly identified in the advice, and

(c) are fully discussed in that advice.

Note: Clause 14.4 reflects section 10B(2) of the Act.

14.5 If a meeting is closed during the discussion of a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (as referred to in clause 14.2), the consideration of the motion must not include any consideration of the matter or information to be discussed in that other part of the meeting other than consideration of whether the matter concerned is a matter referred to in clause 14.1.

Note: Clause 14.5 reflects section 10B(3) of the Act.

14.6 For the purpose of determining whether the discussion of a matter in an open meeting would be contrary to the public interest, it is irrelevant that:

(a) a person may misinterpret or misunderstand the discussion, or

(b) the discussion of the matter may:

(i) cause embarrassment to the Council or Committee concerned, or to Councillors or to employees of the Council, or

(ii) cause a loss of confidence in the Council or Committee.

Note: Clause 14.6 reflects section 10B(4) of the Act.

14.7 In deciding whether part of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the Council or Committee concerned must consider any relevant guidelines issued by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.

Note: Clause 14.7 reflects section 10B(5) of the Act.

Notice of Likelihood of Closure Not Required in Urgent Cases

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 14.8)

14.8 Part of a meeting of the Council, or of a Committee of the Council, may be closed to the public while the Council or Committee considers a matter that has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter

that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed, but only if:

(a) it becomes apparent during the discussion of a particular matter that the matter is a matter referred to in clause 14.1, and

(b) the Council or Committee, after considering any representations made under clause 14.9, resolves that further discussion of the matter:

(i) should not be deferred (because of the urgency of the matter), and

(ii) should take place in a part of the meeting that is closed to the public.

Note: Clause 14.8 reflects section 10C of the Act.

Representations by Members of the Public

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 14.9-14.17)

14.9 The Council, or a Committee of the Council, may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting, before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.

Note: Clause 14.9 reflects section 10A(4) of the Act.

14.10 A representation under clause 14.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded.

14.11 Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 14.9, members of the public must first make an application to the Council in the approved form. Applications must be received by Council no less than two (2) hours before the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.

14.12 The Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate) may refuse an application made under clause 14.11. The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.

14.13 No more than three (3) speakers are to be permitted to make representations under clause 14.9 and each speaker shall be allowed a maximum of two (2) minutes to make representations to the Council.

14.14 If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to make representations under clause 14.9, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to make representations to the Council. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to make representations under clause 14.9, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate is to determine who will make representations to the Council.

14.15 The Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate) is to determine the order of speakers.

14.16 Where the Council or a Committee of the Council proposes to close a meeting or part of a meeting to the public in circumstances where the matter has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, the chairperson is to invite representations from the public under clause 14.9 after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded. The chairperson is to permit no more than three (3) speakers to make representations in such order as determined by the chairperson.

14.17 Each speaker will be allowed two (2) minutes to make representations, and

this time limit is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson. Speakers must confine their representations to whether the meeting should be closed to the public. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

Expulsion of Non-councillors from Meetings Closed to the Public

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 14.18 - 4.19)

14.18 If a meeting or part of a meeting of the Council or a Committee of the Council is closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act and this code, any person who is not a Councillor and who fails to leave the meeting when requested, may be expelled from the meeting as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act.

14.19 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the Council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Obligations of Councillors Attending Meetings by Audio-Visual Link

(MCOMP Non-Mandatory Provision 14.20)

14.20 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must ensure that no other person is within sight or hearing of the meeting at any time that the meeting is closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

**Information to be Disclosed in
Resolutions Closing Meetings to the
Public**

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 14.21)

14.21 The grounds on which part of a meeting is closed must be stated in the decision to close that part of the meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The grounds must specify the following:

(a) the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act,

(b) the matter that is to be discussed during the closed part of the meeting,

(c) the reasons why the part of the meeting is being closed, including (if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret) an explanation of the way in which discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

Note: Clause 14.21 reflects section 10D of the Act.

Resolutions Passed at Closed Meetings to be Made Public

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 14.22 – 14.23)

14.22 If the Council passes a resolution during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution public as soon as practicable after the meeting, or the relevant part of the meeting, has ended, and the resolution must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

14.23 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 14.22 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

15. KEEPING ORDER AT MEETINGS

Points of Order

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 15.1 – 15.3)

15.1 A Councillor may draw the attention of the chairperson to an alleged breach of this code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.

15.2 A point of order cannot be made with respect to adherence to the principles contained in clause 2.1.

15.3 A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the Councillor raising the point of order to state the provision of this code they believe has been breached. The chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

Questions of Order

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 15.4 – 15.7)

15.4 The chairperson, without the intervention of any other Councillor, may call any Councillor to order whenever, in the opinion of the chairperson, it is necessary to do so.

15.5 A Councillor who claims that another Councillor has committed an act of disorder, or is out of order, may call the attention of the chairperson to the matter.

15.6 The chairperson must rule on a question of order immediately after it is raised but, before doing so, may invite the opinion of the Council.

15.7 The chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

Motions of Dissent

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 15.8 – 15.10)

15.8 A Councillor can, without notice, move to dissent from a ruling of the chairperson on a point of order or a question of order. If that happens, the chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting until a decision is made on the motion of dissent.

15.9 If a motion of dissent is passed, the chairperson must proceed with the suspended business as though the ruling dissented from had not been given. If, as a result of the ruling, any motion or business has been rejected as out of order, the chairperson must restore the motion or business to the agenda and proceed with it in due course.

15.10 Despite any other provision of this code, only the mover of a motion of dissent and the chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put. The mover of the motion does not have a right of general reply.

Acts of Disorder

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 15.11 – 15.12)

15.11 A Councillor commits an act of disorder if the Councillor, at a meeting of the Council or a Committee of the Council:

(a) contravenes the Act, the Regulation or this code, or

(b) assaults or threatens to assault another Councillor or person present at the meeting, or

(c) moves or attempts to move a motion or an amendment that has an unlawful purpose or that deals with a matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the Council or the Committee, or addresses or attempts to address the Council or the Committee on such a motion, amendment, or matter, or

(d) insults, makes unfavourable personal remarks about, or imputes improper motives to any other Council

official, or alleges a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct, or

(e) says or does anything that is inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting or is likely to bring the Council or the Committee into disrepute.

Note: Clause 15.11 reflects section 182 of the Regulation.

15.12 The chairperson may require a Councillor:

(a) to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(a), (b) or (e), or

(b) to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clause 15.11(c) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation, or

(c) to retract and apologise without reservation for any statement that constitutes an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.11(d) and (e).

Note: Clause 15.12 reflects section 233 of the Regulation.

How Disorder at a Meeting may be Dealt With

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 15.13)

15.13 If disorder occurs at a meeting of the Council, the chairperson may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than fifteen (15) minutes and leave the chair. The Council, on reassembling, must, on a question put from the chairperson, decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This clause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the public as well as disorder arising from the conduct of Councillors.

Expulsion from Meetings

*(MCOMP Non-mandatory Provision 15.14 - 15.16
Mandatory Provisions 15.17 - 15.20)*

15.14 All chairpersons of meetings of the Council and Committees of the Council are authorised under this code to expel any person other than a Councillor, from a

Council or Committee meeting, for the purposes of section 10(2)(b) of the Act. Councillors may only be expelled by resolution of the Council or the Committee of the Council.

15.15 Clause 15.14 does not limit the ability of the Council or a Committee of the Council to resolve to expel a person, including a Councillor, from a Council or Committee meeting, under section 10(2)(a) of the Act.

15.16 A Councillor may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the Council for having failed to comply with a requirement under clause 15.12. The expulsion of a Councillor from the meeting for that reason does not prevent any other action from being taken against the Councillor for the act of disorder concerned.

Note: Clause 15.16 reflects section 233(2) of the Regulation.

15.17 A member of the public may, as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the Council for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the meeting.

15.18 Where a Councillor or a member of the public is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

15.19 If a Councillor or a member of the public fails to leave the place where a meeting of the Council is being held immediately after they have been expelled, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the Council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the Councillor or member of the public from that place and, if necessary, restrain the Councillor or member of the public from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

How Disorder by Councillors Attending Meetings by Audio-Visual Link May be Dealt With

(MCOMP Non-Mandatory Provisions 15.21 – 15.22)

15.20 Where a councillor is attending a meeting by audio-visual link, the chairperson or a person authorised by the chairperson may mute the councillor's audio link to the meeting for the purposes of enforcing compliance with this code.

15.21 If a councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link is expelled from a meeting for an act of disorder, the chairperson of the meeting or a person authorised by the chairperson, may terminate the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting.

Use of Mobile Phones and the Unauthorised Recording of Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 15.23 – 15.26)

15.22 Councillors, Council staff and members of the public must ensure that mobile phones are turned to silent during meetings of the Council and Committees of the Council.

15.23 A person must not live stream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone, or any other device to make a recording of the proceedings of a meeting of the Council or a Committee of the Council without the prior authorisation of the Council or the Committee.

15.24 Without limiting clause 15.17, a contravention of clause 15.23 or an attempt to contravene that clause, constitutes disorderly conduct for the purposes of clause 15.17. Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 15.23, may be expelled from the

meeting as provided for under section 10(2) of the Act.

15.25 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the Council or person presiding, may, by using only such force as is necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

16. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 16.1

Non-Mandatory Provision 16.2)

16.1 All Councillors and, where applicable, all other persons, must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at meetings of the Council and Committees of the Council in accordance with the Council's code of conduct. All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed by the person who made the declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.

16.2 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting in accordance with the council's Code of Conduct. Where a councillor has declared a pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter being discussed at the meeting, the councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting must be suspended or terminated and the councillor must not be in sight or hearing of the meeting at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the council or committee, or at any time during which the council or committee is voting on the matter.

17. DECISIONS OF THE COUNCIL

Council Decisions

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 17.1 – 17.2)

17.1 A decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting of the Council at which a quorum is present is a decision of the Council.

Note: Clause 17.1 reflects section 371 of the Act.

17.2 Decisions made by the Council must be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is made.

Rescinding or Altering Council Decisions

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 17.3 – 17.9 and 17.11

Non-mandatory Provisions 17.10 and 17.12 – 17.14)

17.3 A resolution passed by the Council may not be altered or rescinded except by a motion to that effect of which notice has been given under clause 3.9.

Note: Clause 17.3 reflects section 372(1) of the Act.

17.4 If a notice of motion to rescind a resolution is given at the meeting at which the resolution is carried, the resolution must not be carried into effect until the motion of rescission has been dealt with.

Note: Clause 17.4 reflects section 372(2) of the Act.

17.5 If a motion has been lost, a motion having the same effect must not be considered unless notice of it has been duly given in accordance with clause 3.9.

Note: Clause 17.5 reflects section 372(3) of the Act.

17.6 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution, and a notice of motion which has the same effect as a motion which has been lost, must be signed by three (3) Councillors if less than three (3) months has elapsed since the

resolution was passed, or the motion was lost.

Note: Clause 17.6 reflects section 372(4) of the Act.

17.7 If a motion to alter or rescind a resolution has been lost, or if a motion which has the same effect as a previously lost motion is lost, no similar motion may be brought forward within three (3) months of the meeting at which it was lost. This clause may not be evaded by substituting a motion differently worded, but in principle the same.

Note: Clause 17.7 reflects section 372(5) of the Act.

17.8 The provisions of clauses 17.5–17.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.

Note: Clause 17.8 reflects section 372(7) of the Act.

17.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 17.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.10 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.

17.10 Where a Councillor intends to move a notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution relating to a development application, the Councillor must advise the Chief Executive Officer their intent to do so immediately following the adoption of the motion and the notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer no later than 48 hours after the completion of the meeting at which the resolution was adopted. This will allow the Council to delay the formal approval of the development application until the matter is finalised.

17.11 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the Council may be moved on the report of a Committee of the Council and any such report must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the Council.

Note: Clause 17.11 reflects section 372(6) of the Act.

17.12 Subject to clause 17.7, in cases of urgency, a motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the Council may be moved at the same meeting at which the resolution was adopted, where:

(a) a notice of motion signed by three Councillors is submitted to the chairperson, and

(b) a motion to have the motion considered at the meeting is passed, and

(c) the chairperson rules the business that is the subject of the motion is of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council.

17.13 A motion moved under clause 17.12(b) can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.12(b) can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.14 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.12(c).

17.15 Where a Councillor has indicated that they wish to submit a notice of motion under 17.12(a), the chairperson must adjourn the meeting for five (5) minutes to allow the preparation of the notice of motion.

Recommitting Resolutions to Correct an Error

(MCOMP Non-mandatory Provisions 17.15 – 17.20)

17.16 Despite the provisions of this Part, a Councillor may, with the leave of the chairperson, move to recommit a resolution adopted at the same meeting:

(a) to correct any error, ambiguity, or imprecision in the council's resolution, or

(b) to confirm the voting on the resolution.

17.17 In seeking the leave of the chairperson to move to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.16(a), the Councillor is to propose alternative wording for the resolution.

17.18 The chairperson must not grant leave to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.16(a), unless they are satisfied that the proposed alternative wording of the resolution would not alter the substance of the resolution previously adopted at the meeting.

17.19 A motion moved under clause 17.16 can be moved without notice. Despite clauses 10.20–10.30, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.16 can speak to the motion before it is put.

17.20 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the chairperson under clause 17.16.

17.21 A motion moved under clause 17.16 with the leave of the chairperson cannot be voted on unless or until it has been seconded.

**18. TIME LIMITS ON COUNCIL
MEETINGS**

(MCOMP Non-mandatory Provisions 18.1 – 18.5)

18.1 There are no time limits imposed on Council or Committee meetings however the chairperson may adjourn a meeting of Council or Committee if required due to the meeting not completing in a reasonable timeframe, following the moving and adoption of a motion to do so.

19. AFTER THE MEETING

Minutes of Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 19.1 – 19.7

Non-Mandatory Provision 19.2(a))

19.1 The Council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the Council.

Note: Clause 19.1 reflects section 375(1) of the Act.

19.2 At a minimum, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the Council's minutes:

(a) the names of councillors attending a council meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,

(b) details of each motion moved at a Council meeting and of any amendments moved to it,

(c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,

(d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and

(e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

19.3 The minutes of a Council meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the Council.

Note: Clause 19.3 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

19.4 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

19.5 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.

Note: Clause 19.5 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

19.6 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors

after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

19.7 The confirmed minutes of a Council meeting must be published on the Council's website. This clause does not prevent the Council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of its meetings on its website prior to their confirmation.

Access to Correspondence and Reports Laid on the Table at, or Submitted to, a Meeting

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 19.8 – 19.11)

19.8 The Council and Committees of the Council must, during or at the close of a meeting, or during the business day following the meeting, give reasonable access to any person to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting.

Note: Clause 19.8 reflects section 11(1) of the Act.

19.9 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the correspondence or reports relate to a matter that was received or discussed or laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting when the meeting was closed to the public.

Note: Clause 19.9 reflects section 11(2) of the Act.

19.10 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the Council or the Committee resolves at the meeting, when open to the public, that the correspondence or reports are to be treated as confidential because they relate to a matter specified in section 10A(2) of the Act.

Note: Clause 19.10 reflects section 11(3) of the Act.

19.11 Correspondence or reports to which clauses 19.9 and 19.10 apply are to be marked with the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act that applies to the correspondence or report.

**Implementation of Decisions of the
Council**

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 19.12)

19.12 The Chief Executive Officer is to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the Council.

Note: Clause 19.12 reflects section 335(b) of the Act.

20. COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Application of this Part

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 20.1)

20.1 This Part only applies to Committees of the Council whose members are all Councillors.

Council Committees Whose Members are all Councillors

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 20.2 – 20.4)

20.2 The Council may, by resolution, establish such Committees as it considers necessary.

20.3 A Committee of the Council is to consist of the Mayor and such other Councillors as are elected by the Councillors or appointed by the Council.

20.4 The quorum for a meeting of a Committee of the Council is to be:

- (a) such number of members as the Council decides, or
- (b) if the Council has not decided a number – a majority of the members of the Committee.

Functions of Committees

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 20.5)

20.5 The Council must specify the functions of each of its Committees when the Committee is established but may from time to time amend those functions.

Notice of Committee Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 20.6 – 20.7)

20.6 The Chief Executive Officer must send to each Councillor, regardless of whether they are a Committee member, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the Committee, a notice specifying:

- (a) the time, date, and place of the meeting, and
- (b) the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

20.7 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given of a Committee meeting called in an emergency.

Attendance at Committee Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 20.8 – 20.9)

20.8 A Committee member (other than the Mayor) ceases to be a member of a Committee if the Committee member:

- (a) has been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the Committee without having given reasons acceptable to the Committee for the member's absences, or
- (b) has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the Committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the Committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.

20.9 Clause 20.8 does not apply if all the members of the Council are members of the Committee.

Non-members Entitled to Attend Committee Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 20.10)

20.10 A Councillor who is not a member of a Committee of the Council is entitled to attend, and to speak at a meeting of the Committee. However, the Councillor is not entitled:

- (a) to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, or
- (b) to move or second a motion at the meeting, or
- (c) to vote at the meeting.

**Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of
Council Committees**

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 20.11 – 20.14)

20.11 The chairperson of each Committee of the Council must be:

- (a) the Mayor, or
- (b) if the Mayor does not wish to be the chairperson of a Committee, a member of the Committee elected by the Council, or
- (c) if the Council does not elect such a member, a member of the Committee elected by the Committee.

20.12 The Council may elect a member of a Committee of the Council as deputy chairperson of the Committee. If the Council does not elect a deputy chairperson of such a Committee, the Committee may elect a deputy chairperson.

20.13 If neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson of a Committee of the Council is able or willing to preside at a meeting of the Committee, the Committee must elect a member of the Committee to be acting chairperson of the Committee.

20.14 The chairperson is to preside at a meeting of a Committee of the Council. If the chairperson is unable or unwilling to preside, the deputy chairperson (if any) is to preside at the meeting, but if neither the chairperson nor the deputy chairperson is able or willing to preside, the acting chairperson is to preside at the meeting.

Procedure in Committee Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 20.15 – 20.18)

20.15 Subject to any specific requirements of this code, each Committee of the Council may regulate its own procedure. The provisions of this code are to be taken to apply to all Committees of the Council unless the

Council or the Committee determines otherwise in accordance with this clause.

20.16 Whenever the voting on a motion put to a meeting of the Committee is equal, the chairperson of the Committee is to have a casting vote as well as an original vote unless the Council or the Committee determines otherwise in accordance with clause 20.15.

20.17 Voting at a Council Committee meeting is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system).

**Closure of Committee Meetings to the
Public**

(MCOMP Mandatory Provisions 20.19 – 20.21)

20.18 The provisions of the Act and Part 14 of this code apply to the closure of meetings of Committees of the Council to the public in the same way they apply to the closure of meetings of the Council to the public.

20.19 If a Committee of the Council passes a resolution, or makes a recommendation, during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the chairperson must make the resolution or recommendation public as soon as practicable after the meeting or part of the meeting has ended and report the resolution or recommendation to the next meeting of the Council. The resolution or recommendation must also be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

20.20 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the chairperson under clause 20.19 during a part of the meeting that is webcast.

Disorder in Committee Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 20.22)

20.21 The provisions of the Act and this code relating to the maintenance of order in Council meetings apply to meetings of Committees of the Council in the same way as they apply to meetings of the Council.

Minutes of Council Committee Meetings

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 20.23, 20.25 – 20.29

Non-mandatory provision 20.23(a) and 20.24)

20.22 Each Committee of the Council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. At a minimum, a Committee must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the Committee's minutes:

(a) the names of councillors attending a meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,

(b) details of each motion moved at a meeting and of any amendments moved to it,

(c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,

(d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and

(e) such other matters specifically required under this code.

20.23 All voting at meetings of committees of the council (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

20.24 If a Councillor votes against a motion put at a Committee of Council meeting, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the Councillor's dissenting vote is recorded in the Council's minutes.

20.25 The minutes of meetings of each Committee of the Council must be confirmed at the next Ordinary Council meeting.

20.26 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

20.27 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at that subsequent meeting.

20.28 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

20.29 The confirmed minutes of a meeting of a Committee of the Council must be published on the Council's website. This clause does not prevent the Council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of meetings of committees of the Council on its website prior to their confirmation.

21. IRREGULARITIES

(MCOMP Mandatory Provision 21.1)

21.1 Proceedings at a meeting of a Council or a Council Committee are not invalidated because of:

- (a) a vacancy in a civic office, or
- (b) a failure to give notice of the meeting to any Councillor or Committee member, or
- (c) any defect in the election or appointment of a Councillor or Committee member, or
- (d) a failure of a Councillor or a Committee member to declare a conflict of interest, or to refrain from the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, the relevant matter, at a Council or Committee meeting in accordance with the Council's code of conduct, or
- (e) a failure to comply with this code.

Note: Clause 21.1 reflects section 374 of the Act.

Office of Local Government



Councillor conduct and meeting practices

A new framework

September 2024

olg.nsw.gov.au



Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

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The need for change – returning local democracy to councils

Strong and thriving communities need effective local government. No other level of government is as close to the issues and people.

Effective local government comes when councillors are visibly in control of their councils. How councillors act and how appropriately and transparently decisions are made at meetings is critical in demonstrating to the community that their elected representatives understand the consequences of their decisions, and then make the best possible decisions they can for their community as a whole.

Unfortunately, the existing councillor conduct framework is not delivering on the need for transparency or the necessary degree of respect in the community for the role that councillors have.

Closed council briefing sessions are being used to make decisions away from the public view. Council debates on issues are too often personal slanging matches, rather than forums for robust but respectful discussions on what is best for the community.

Similarly, we have seen a growth in the number of complaints, often over trivial issues. Data from the Office of Local Government (OLG) has shown there has been 4289 complaints over the last 3 years (2020/21 to 2022/23) through the code of conduct process. Overall:

- 420 were referred for preliminary enquiries and then discontinued
- 136 were investigated as potential pecuniary interest matters
- 102 were investigated as potential misconduct (not pecuniary interest)
- 36 related to public interest disclosures, and
- 2 related to political donations

But of these thousands of complaints, in the years since 2020/21 OLG has:

- taken action against 14 councillors by way of a suspension or reprimand
- referred 4 councillors to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) for misconduct, and
- disqualified and dismissed one councillor on the basis of Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) recommendations

The volume of frivolous complaints is crowding out the ability of the OLG and the sector to adequately deal with councillors who abuse their office or cause serious governance problems. It is critical the framework that governs both the behaviour and meeting practices of councillors ensures the community can observe and comment on the behaviour of councillors, instead of inhibiting the operation and function of local democracy.

The weaknesses of existing frameworks

The simple, but compelling premise is local councils should be accountable to their community with council staff being accountable to their councillors, through the General Manager. The best way to achieve this aim is for councils to provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision making. Unfortunately, this simple concept has been lost.

How councillors behave, how they deliberate and the responsibilities they hold should be modelled on how members of Parliament are expected to behave and act. As the governing body, councillors should act fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the local community, and they should be responsible employers and provide a consultative and supportive working environment for staff. A criticism made about the current framework for councillor conduct or meeting practices is that they do not reflect local government's status as an independent third tier of government: it allows an unelected State Government official to determine penalties and guilt thus undermining the status of local government.

While most local councils and local councillors do the right thing with the best intent, there are some councillors who are not so motivated. In these cases, the current councillor behavioural framework, as implemented in NSW, does not facilitate the best outcomes or resolve issues.

In relation to complaint management, it is not considered acceptable to create better complaint management pathways for the processing of code of conduct complaints. The current code of conduct simply enables too many complaints about councillors, all too often for political or vexatious reasons.

It is for this reason that the Government has embarked upon a new approach that refocuses the limited resources of the State on those concerns that matter most: serious misbehaviours and attempts by councillors to enrich themselves through their office.

Weaknesses of the current framework include:

- The councillor conduct framework distracts from, rather than enhances, robust democratic debate. Complaints are weaponised for political reasons, or to silence dissent from other elected representatives.
- Councillors and community members report dissatisfaction with the process for resolving code of conduct complaints – being expensive, overly legal, prone to political sparring and not timely, with average timeframes exceeding 12 months and more than 24 months if they are then referred to OLG for further investigation.
- Issues are not being addressed and resolved at the local level – instead complaints are escalated unnecessarily to the State Government to resolve because of the view that public censure from the local council is not a 'strong enough' punishment.
- Communities and councillors report that council decision making is not transparent – with decisions being seen as made behind closed doors, information not being provided or withheld, too much use of closed to the public briefings or councils going into closed sessions for no adequate rationale.
- Bad councillor behaviour is not considered to have been addressed quickly enough and when sanctions are imposed it is too late or of little consequence.
- There is a lack of clarity around OLG's role as the sector regulator – taking too long to resolve matters and not focussing on the important financial and government concerns in the sector, instead spending time focussed on individual councillor behaviour.
- OLG reports challenges in relying on the reports of council conduct reviewers – investigations into councillors need to be done afresh, the process is cumbersome with multiple feedback loops and serious sanctions can only come from suspensions handed down by NCAT.

With so much focus on the bad behaviour of a limited number of councillors there is not enough attention given to the good work that councillors do. The role of a councillor is a noble public service, and the local government behavioural framework should support those who seek to do the right thing and punish those that are not so motivated.

Options for a better approach

Improving the councillor conduct framework and the meeting practices of councils can be achieved but will require changes to the Local Government Act 1993 (the Local Government Act), as well as updating the various regulations, codes and policies that apply. Some of the work to update the regulations and codes can be done quickly, while others requiring legislative change will take some time.

This paper provides an overview of the proposed new approach to both the councillor conduct framework and meeting practices. The proposals are to:

- Make OLG directly responsible for dealing with pecuniary interest and significant non-pecuniary conflicts of interest, with sanctions (suspensions and loss of pay) being determined by an appropriate tribunal or body,
- Refer behavioural based concerns about councillor conduct to a State-wide panel of experienced councillors to judge their peers,
- Reset the code of conduct to be similar to Parliamentary Codes, making it clear the expected patterns of councillor behaviour,
- Ensure the community can observe local democratic processes by banning closed to the public briefing sessions, while at the same time restoring the dignity and prestige of the council chamber.

These changes are only proposed for councillors and there is no change proposed for the code of conduct for Local Government staff. Feedback from stakeholders is that the existing code of conduct of staff remains fit for purpose and is largely effective.

Seeking your views

This discussion paper has been prepared to seek the views of the community, key stakeholders and the local government sector about the proposed changes.

Submissions will be accepted to **COB Friday 15 November 2024**.

All input received through this consultation process **may be made publicly available**. Please let us know in your submission if you **do not want** your name and personal details published.

As part of the consultation process, we may need to share your information with people outside OLG, including other public authorities and government agencies. We may also use your email to send you notifications about further feedback opportunities or the outcome of the consultation.

There may also be circumstances when OLG is required by law to release information (for example, in accordance with the requirements of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009). There is a privacy policy located on OLG's website that explains how some data is automatically collected (such as your internet protocol (IP) address) whenever you visit OLG's website. The link to that policy is <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/about-us/privacy-policy/>.

Further information about how to make a submission is provided at section 7 of this paper.

What are the principles of change?

In preparing the proposed reforms the following principles have guided the discussion and the intent of the changes:

- **Council leadership and decision making is paramount** – it is critical that the sector, as the third tier of government, is given independence to make decisions in the best interests of the community
- **Freedom of speech** – as elected officials, councillors have the constitutional right and democratic responsibility to speak freely about issues affecting their local community and to advocate for the interests of that community
- **Transparency and accountability** – as a democracy councils need to hear, consider and debate issues in an open manner
- **Significant penalties should only be imposed by a judicial or quasi-judicial body** – to ensure procedural fairness and thorough testing of allegations, significant penalties should be given by bodies such as the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal
- **A strong and proportionate local government regulator** – the role of OLG should be to create the framework for local government, ensure councils, joint organisations (JOs), and county councils have the capacity to operate within the framework so that the regulator intervenes as rarely as needed
- **Subsidiarity** – decisions are made at the level closest to those impacted by those decisions
- **Justice is timely and proportionate** – where allegations are made, they should be heard, tested and dealt with as quickly as possible.

Question

Are we missing anything in the principles of change?

Potential changes to the code of conduct and oath of office

The key proposed reform for the councillor behavioural framework is to move to a streamlined, aspirational Code of Conduct. This is equivalent to the Code of Conduct framework for NSW Members of Parliament available [here](#) and [here](#).

The aspirational Code of Conduct would clearly and succinctly outline the behavioural expectations of local councillors (approximately 2-3 pages) in easy-to-understand language. It would then be supported by a clearer framework and definitions for misbehaviour of elected officials.

The aspirational Code of Conduct would not set out the definitions of misbehaviour as these would be legislated as explained in later sections of this discussion paper.

Separating the behavioural expectations in a Code of Conduct from definitions of misbehaviour reflects a positive approach to councillor behaviour. The separation also recognises that the majority of councillors want to do the right thing and they should have easy access to the standards expected of them.

The revamped Code of Conduct could also be aligned to the Oath of Office for local councillors ensuring that the behavioural standards and expectations are clear and understood when a councillor takes office. The existing framework can make it difficult to understand the behavioural expectations and standards upon councillors.

Importantly, the revamped Code of Conduct will not seek to restrain the ability of a councillor to speak publicly on matters pertaining to their council, even when that councillor is disagreeing with, or being critical of, the decisions of the majority.

It is proposed to make the new Code of Conduct an aspirational code of expected behaviours instead of enforceable for local councillors.

Question

What are the key elements of an aspirational Code of Conduct that should be enshrined?

Question

What are your views about aligning the Oath of Office to the revamped Code of Conduct?

Potential changes to the definitions and assessment of councillor misbehaviour

The current Local Government Act defines councillor misconduct as a breach of the Local Government Act or other regulatory provisions, which includes the Code of Conduct. This means that it is difficult for the average person to understand the definition of misconduct as they need to reference several other regulatory instruments and policy documents to determine what constitutes.

It is proposed in the revised framework that misbehaviour will be more clearly defined and articulated within the Local Government Act, with the reference to regulations and other statutory instruments only for further enunciation or explanation.

These definitions, which are described in later sections would cover:

- Pecuniary conflicts of interests, (for example decisions that financially benefit the councillor or a close associate),
- Significant non-pecuniary conflicts of interests (for example where a councillor participates in a decision and a direct advantage/disadvantage is created for a person or company the councillor is friendly with or associated with), and
- Councillor misbehaviour in public office (for example, poor conduct in meetings leading to exclusion by the Mayor or Chair of the Committee).

This will make clearer to all participants in the local government sector what is considered misbehaviour by a local councillor.

The definitions of misbehaviour do not change the other legislative requirements. Communities, residents, workers and fellow councillors expect their elected officials to act in an appropriate and ethical way, including observing workplace health and safety, environmental and criminal laws. If there is an offence or complaint under these other laws, people should

seek redress from the appropriate regulator including SafeWork, Independent Commission Against Corruption or the NSW Police.

The behavioural standards in the revamped Code of Conduct will reinforce the expectation that councillors are community leaders and therefore exemplars of good behaviour. As community leaders it is also expected councillors will meet legislative obligations. Therefore, misbehaviour only needs to be defined as those issues which go to the nature of councillors as elected officials, being conflicts of interest or misbehaviour in public office.

These are the expectations that are upon councillors because of the public trust that is placed in them as elected officials. In this way it more closely reflects, with appropriate adjustments the framework that applies to other elected officials in other levels of Government.

Conflicts of interest

The first proposed limb of the revised misbehaviour definition is a councillor's failure to manage a conflict of interest.

Management of conflicts of interest is important to ensure that councillors act and are seen to act in the public good, not for private benefit or personal gain. Conflicts of interest arise when there is a conflict, perception or potential of a conflict between an official's private interests and public duty.

The test for pecuniary interests is quite clear as it is an objective test; would a councillor or one of their close associates (spouse, family members), receive a financial benefit as a result of a decision. However, testing whether there is a non-pecuniary conflict of interest is more challenging.

Pecuniary interests

It is proposed to align the definition of pecuniary interests for NSW councillors with those that are utilised and defined for NSW members of parliament, requiring disclosure of the following interests:

- Real property – property in which councillors have an ‘interest’
- Sources of income – all income over \$500 other than salary of office
- Gifts – all gifts of cumulative value of more than \$500
- Contributions to travel – of value of more than \$250 (including flight upgrades)
- Interests and positions in corporations – eg stocks and shares, directorships
- Positions in unions and professional or business organisations
- Debts – of cumulative value of more than \$500, excluding home loans or debts for goods and services disposed of within a year
- Dispositions of property
- Engagement to provide a service involving use of a councillor’s position and
- Discretionary disclosures.

It is proposed that the interests for disclosure by the councillor are similarly extended to the interest of a spouse or de facto partner, relative, or partner or employer, or a company or other body of which the councillor, or their nominee, partner or employer, is a shareholder or member. This extends only to the extent the councillor is aware or should be aware of such interests.

It is proposed there remains an absolute prohibition on a councillor being involved in any matter before council where a pecuniary conflict of interest exists, unless otherwise determined via regulation.

It is also proposed to give extended investigation powers to OLG to investigate and request information on corporate structures such as trust or companies to

determine underlying beneficial ownership and interests.

OLG, as the agency responsible for investigating alleged breaches of pecuniary interests, needs clear powers to compel the production of information and/or records, to ensure that pecuniary interest returns are provided and made publicly available. If there is non-compliance with an OLG direction, which may include the requirement to make a declaration, remedies such as penalty infringement notices (PIN) should be available to ensure cooperation with investigative processes.

Question

Is the proposed pecuniary interest framework appropriate? Is anything missing?

Non-pecuniary interests

A conflict of interest does not necessarily have to be financial in nature. It could also arise from familial or personal relationships, affiliations or memberships. It is equally important that such conflicts are managed appropriately to ensure that decision making is seen to be transparent and remains in the public interest.

An interested and informed observer should be confident a decision made by a councillor is free from bias or a reasonable apprehension of bias. This means that any concerns about a potentially significant conflict of interest should be declared and appropriately managed.

The nature and breadth of non-pecuniary interests naturally means that the framework for management of such interests is more nuanced, with the management approach often dependent upon the individual circumstances of the case.

It is also important to recognise that councillors, as representatives of their community, reside within their community, so memberships of clubs, congregational

memberships etc should not automatically be seen as conflicts of interest.

If a decision of a councillor directly advantages (or disadvantages) a particular individual or organisation the councillor is friendly with or associates with, then that can be a conflict that should be publicly declared, if the councillor considered it of minor consequence, it wasn't controversial, or the councillor did not hold the casting vote.

Alternatively, if a decision of a councillor directly advantages (or disadvantages) a particular individual or organisation the councillor is friendly with or associates with, then that can be a conflict requiring the councillor to recuse themselves from being involved in the decision-making process if there was a major advantage or disadvantage (or potential for), if it was controversial or the vote of the councillor was critical.

The appropriate test for whether a non-pecuniary interest should be declared is based on an objective test, not in the mind of the individual who is subject to the conflict of interest. The test is whether a reasonable and informed person would perceive that the councillor could be influenced by a private interest when carrying out their official functions in relation to a matter.

Whether the councillor abstains themselves from a decision, or decides to participate, the continued and timely disclosure of interests is critical. Disclosure ensures the community is aware of any potential conflicts and how the councillor is managing and responding to the issue.

Councillors should remain as vigilant about disclosure of non-pecuniary interests as they are about pecuniary interests.

Question

Do you agree with the principles of what constitutes a significant or major non-pecuniary interest?

Property developers and real estate agents

The NSW Government has made a commitment to ensure the conflicts of interest that exist between a councillors' public duties to make decisions on behalf of communities and the private interests that exist in securing a profit as a developer or real estate agent are addressed. A simple change to ban developers or real estate agents from being councillors is not possible as it infringes the right to political free speech implied by the Australian Constitution.

Ordinarily conflicts of interest are managed through declarations and withdrawing from decision making. However, in the case of property development and real estate interests, where so much of what a council does is related to land and the potential for speculation in the changes of land value arising from planning, development and infrastructure decisions, it can be impossible to isolate the precise interests that would drive a councillor's decision.

Without some way of managing these conflicts, the community confidence that planning, development and infrastructure decisions are taken transparently in the public interest will erode. Given the importance of planning, development and infrastructure decisions to resolving the housing crisis, driving the move to net zero through the electrification of the economy and building community resilience to disasters, it is critical to restore confidence.

To address this concern, an alternative means of managing the inherent conflict of councillors undertaking real estate and development business activity is being considered which involves requiring councillors to divest themselves from real estate or development business activities and contractual obligations.

Legislation is being drafted that will:

- identify how developers and real estate agents are identified,
- create the obligation to divest and not enter into real estate or development business arrangements through contracts,
- establish the penalties, including disqualification, where a councillor engages in contractual arrangements with real estate agents or developers,
- ensure there are exemptions so councillors can buy and sell their own property using a real estate agent, and
- create transitional arrangements for the introduction of the new obligations.

Question

Are there any other specific features that should be included to address concerns about councillors undertaking real estate and development business activities?

Councillor misbehaviour in public office

The third proposed component of a revised definition of misconduct is misbehaviour in public office.

Misbehaviour in public office would cover behaviour which is inconsistent or outside of the norms of behaviour expected from a councillor, particularly given their role as a community leader. Given the discussion is about behaviour rather than action, there is a much greater degree of interpretation, and it is appropriate that councillors judge their fellow councillors on whether they could be considered to have misbehaved.

There would be three limbs to this proposed misbehaviour definition being conduct that:

- Is unbecoming of a councillor
- Brings council into disrepute; and/or
- Is assessed as being outside the norms and expectations of a sitting councillor.

The first two tests of this framework are established legal concepts with existing case law and precedents.

Unbecoming conduct means behaviour more serious than slight, and of a material and pronounced character. It means conduct morally unfitting and unworthy, rather than merely inappropriate or unsuitable, misbehaviour which is more than opposed to good taste or propriety. Conduct unbecoming refers to the conduct that is contrary to the public interests, or which harms his/her standing of the profession in the eyes of the public. Examples can be referenced in *Oei v The Australian Golf Club [2016] NSWSC 846*.

To bring something into disrepute is to lower the reputation of the profession or organisation in the eyes of ordinary members of the public to a significant extent. It is a higher threshold than the test of bringing an individual into disrepute - (*Zubkov v FINA (2007) CAS 2007/A/1291*).

The third limb of the misbehaviour definition allows consideration of behaviours and actions of a sitting councillor which are considered egregious or problematic that are otherwise not captured by the other elements of the definitions.

As this is a test of appropriate behaviour, the determination of whether the misbehaviour occurred would be undertaken by the peers of the councillor. This would involve the formation of an 'Local Government Privileges Committee' (Privileges Committee) of senior and experienced mayors and ex-mayors from across NSW to meet and assess the complaints made against councillors. The Privileges Committee would be supported by OLG, but decisions would be made by the mayors or ex-mayors on the Privileges Committee who would draw on their expertise as mayors, as well as having served at least two council terms as a councillor.

There would also be an opportunity to apply these principles to poor behaviour in meetings, particularly where a councillor has failed to comply with the directions given by the mayor or Privileges Committee Chair.

Question

Is this the appropriate threshold to face a Privileges Committee?

Question

How else can complaints be minimised?

Addressing inappropriate lobbying

A number of investigations by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) has led to recommendations to put in place measures to address concerns about lobbying of councillors. ICAC has been concerned about councillors having relationships with development applicants that pose a conflict of interest, concerns with councillors meeting with development applicants in private settings to discuss their applications, and concerns about councillors receiving gifts and inducements as part of lobbying activities to improperly influence council decision-making.

Lobbying is an important feature of democratic representative government, and all councillors get lobbied by residents, businesses and community groups. However, inappropriate lobbying that isn't declared presents certain risks and can lead to corrupt behaviour or improper decision-making. On the recommendation of ICAC to address these risks, OLG is developing lobbying guidelines and a model policy on lobbying for councils to adopt that will:

- address how professional lobbyists are identified and the obligations on councils and councillors if they met a professional lobbyist,
- set out inappropriate behaviours when being lobbied,
- identify steps to be taken to ensure transparency,
- require council officials to report inappropriate or corrupt lobbying behaviours to the councils general manager.

The development of lobbying guidelines and a model policy on lobbying will ensure councillors and councils understand these risks and have effective controls in place to address them.

Question

What key features should be included in lobbying guidelines and a model policy?

Dispute resolution and penalty framework

Consistent with the principles outlined earlier, it is proposed that there be a significant change to the dispute resolution and penalties framework for misbehaviour.

While the overall intent is to reduce the weaponisation of the complaints process and reduce the number of complaints, there is also a need for more timely resolution of matters and ensure that the limited investigation and regulator resources are directed to the more significant misbehaviour matters.

There is also an opportunity to bring the dispute resolution framework more into line with that used in other levels of government.

The approach being proposed is to create clear separation between the process for consideration of conflicts of interest and the processes for consideration of misbehaviour. This has the benefit of removing general managers from being central to the complaint process.

Under the reforms, the investigation of serious conflicts of interest would be put entirely into the hands of OLG. The approach also removes the existing 'two step' process of referrals to conduct reviewers and then OLG.

There would be no investigations of misbehaviour, instead councillors would be required to demonstrate to their peers why their actions, which may have led to the complaint, were appropriate to the circumstances.

To implement these new approaches, changes to the systems and structures of investigation and complaints handling are needed.

Abolishing the 'two step process'

The existing process for complaints is set out in the Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct.

In simple terms, the complaint process involves the general manager or the mayor receiving a complaint, determining whether the complaint is valid and referring the matter to a complaints coordinator within the council, who will in turn appoint an external conduct reviewer. Once the conduct reviewer investigates the issue, interviews the complainant and the subject of the complaint, as well as any other relevant people, provides a report to the council and the council makes a decision, many months can pass.

As it currently stands, if OLG, receives a referral following the council consideration of a complaint, they are then expected to rely on the investigation report of the conduct reviewer to make an assessment. However, investigation reports prepared by conduct reviewers may satisfy the evidentiary standard required for a councillor to be censured but may not satisfy the higher evidentiary standard required to support disciplinary action under the misbehaviour provisions under the Local Government Act, such as suspension or disqualification. OLG's experience is that rarely can it rely on these reports and must instead recommence an investigation process if it decides to pursue the matter.

Instead of this existing two-step process:

- Complaints about conflict of interest matters would be made directly to OLG, and
- Complaints about misbehaviour would be made directly to the Local Government Privileges Committee via a dedicated webform.

Under the proposed approach, there would be no role for privately hired investigators to determine whether the Code of Conduct has been breached.

Giving OLG the power to issue penalty infringement notices

In order to ensure information is provided to OLG more effectively, it is proposed to enable OLG the discretion to issue penalty infringement notices (PINs) for minor or insignificant breaches of the conflicts of interest declarations. The PINs would be primarily utilised in circumstances where the breach is considered minor or administrative in nature – for example an inadvertent failure to lodge a return of interests.

This change to PINs is designed to allow a quick process for dealing with minor matters to free up limited regulatory resources while still ensuring that sanction for important matters is provided.

Like all other PIN provisions in other NSW legislations there would be the ability for the PIN to be appealed or special circumstances to be considered. Where the breach was considered more serious in nature then it can be referred to an appropriate tribunal or body for more significant punishment.

Question

What level of PIN is appropriate?

NSW Local Government Privileges Committee

Along with the PIN framework, it is also proposed to create a Local Government Privileges Committee (Privileges Committee) to examine all allegations of misbehaviour in public office. This would replace the existing code of conduct review framework and instead aim to provide a speedy process for resolution and assessment of behavioural complaints against councillors. It also allows for the sector to better govern itself. The Privileges Committee would only examine issues of misbehaviour, not conflicts of interest.

The Privileges Committee would be made up by a group of experienced mayors and ex-mayors from across NSW to ensure that a variety of perspectives and experiences are considered. The Privileges Committee would be supported by a small Secretariat from OLG who could be delegated the power by the Privileges Committee to dismiss matters that are vexatious, trivial, where the Privileges Committee lacks jurisdiction, or where there is an alternative remedy available.

The Privileges Committee process would be paid for by either individual councillors or their councils, dependent on the outcome.

Penalties that could be imposed by the Privileges Committee are as follows:

- Censure of the councillor
- Warning of the councillor
- Where referred following misbehaviour in a council meeting, a potential loss of sitting fees
- Referral to an appropriate tribunal or body for more serious sanction, including suspension or disallowance.

As noted above if the breach is deemed serious then the Privileges Committee would have the power to refer a matter to the OLG for preparation of a brief for an appropriate tribunal or body.

Question

Are the penalties proposed appropriate, and are there any further penalties that should be considered?

Referral of significant sanctions to appropriate tribunal or body

Under the existing processes for consideration of complaints, OLG, in particular the Departmental Chief Executive (or their delegate), can suspend a councillor for between 1-3 months with a consequential loss of sitting fees. This creates the situation where a public servant is sitting in judgement on an elected official. Where a greater suspension is appropriate, the Departmental Chief Executive may refer the matter to an appropriate tribunal or body.

To remedy the concerns about whether it is appropriate for an unelected official to stand in judgment on an elected councillor, it is proposed that any significant sanction, such as suspension, significant fine or disqualification from office, can only be undertaken by an appropriate tribunal or body.

This reduces the existing power of the Departmental Chief Executive to impose penalties. It reflects the principle that significant sanctions, including suspension, should only be imposed by a judicial or quasi-judicial body. It also removes the dual roles of the head of OLG, meaning OLG's focus is on preparing the brief of evidence for consideration by the appropriate tribunal or body.

The role of the appropriate tribunal or body would therefore be to look at all serious misconduct matters that have either been referred by the Privileges Committee, appeals from PINs or referrals of conflict of interest matters from the OLG.

Question

Are the existing sanctions available under the Local Government Act sufficient?

Question

Should decisions on sanctions for councillors be made by the Departmental Chief Executive or a formal tribunal with independent arbitrators and a hearing structure?

Restoring dignity to council meetings

A council chamber is a chamber of democracy, and the mayor as figurehead represents the authority of that council.

Unfortunately, many council meetings are conducted without the appropriate level of dignity or reverence for tradition that suggests the importance of the debate and the need for civility. Councillors are not expected to agree with each other, in fact debate is encouraged, but the debate should be fair and respectful.

A council meeting, and the council chamber itself, should see meetings conducted with dignity. Unfortunately, there are too many examples where the dignity of council meetings has been lost, either because councillors are not appropriately reverential and respectful, or the manner of debate is lowered by inappropriate chamber design or meeting practices.

Proposed reforms to the Model Code of Meeting Practice

To restore the prestige and dignity of the council chamber reforms to the meeting code of practice are being developed to support the mayor in exercising their statutory responsibility to preside at meetings and to ensure meetings are conducted in an orderly and dignified manner.

The proposed reforms will confer the power on mayors to expel councillors for acts of disorder and to remove the councillor's entitlement to receive a fee for the month in which they have been expelled from a meeting.

As a further deterrent against disorderly conduct, councillors will also be required to apologise for an act of disorder at the meeting at which it occurs and, if they fail to comply at that meeting, at each subsequent meeting until they comply. Each failure to apologise becomes an act of misbehaviour and will see the councillor lose their entitlement to receive their fee for a further month.

To provide a check against misuse of the power of expulsion and subsequent loss of entitlement of a fee, councillors will be entitled to a right of review.

Councillors will also be expected to stand, where able to do so, when addressing a meeting and when the mayor enters the chamber.

The proposed reforms will also expand the grounds for mayors to expel members of the public from the chamber for acts of disorder and enable the issuing of a PIN where members of the public refuse to leave a meeting after being expelled.

Question

Are there any other powers that need to be granted to the mayor or chair of the relevant meeting to deal with disorderly behaviour?

Banning briefing sessions

A practice has recently developed in local government where councillors receive briefings from staff that are closed to the public.

As an example, development applications should be considered in the public domain. However, councillors receive private briefings from the council planners before they are dealt with in the public forum of a council or committee meeting. Consequently, members of the public impacted by the council's decision have no idea what the councillors have been told or what has been discussed.

To promote transparency and address the corruption risks identified by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) that can arise from a lack of transparency, it is proposed that councils will no longer be permitted to hold pre-meeting briefing sessions in the absence of the public.

Any material provided to councillors, other than the mayor, that will affect or impact or be taken into account by councillors in their deliberations or decisions made on behalf of the community must be provided to them in either a committee meeting or council meeting. This restriction will not apply to mayors. As the leader of the organisation, the mayor needs to have candid conversations with the general manager outside of formal meetings.

To further promote transparency, the proposed reforms will also extend the period that recordings of council and committee meetings must be maintained on a council's website.

Question

Are there any other measures needed to improve transparency in councillor deliberations and decision making?

How to provide feedback?

This discussion paper has been released through the Office of Local Government's communication channels and on the Government's Have your Say Website.

You can make submissions on this proposed framework by **COB Friday 15 November 2024**. Further information is available on OLG website at <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/misconduct-and-intervention/councillor-conduct-framework/>.

Submissions can be made online here - <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/misconduct-and-intervention/councillor-conduct-framework/>

OR

in writing to: councillorconduct@olg.nsw.gov.au

OR

Locked Bag 3015 NOWRA NSW 2541

Submissions must be clearly labelled "Councillor Conduct Framework Review"

Please direct any inquiries to the OLG's Strategic Policy Unit at councillorconduct@olg.nsw.gov.au or on (02) 4428 4100.

Next Steps

Feedback from this consultation process will be carefully analysed and incorporated to finalise the revised councillor conduct framework.

OLG will then look to finalise necessary draft legislation, regulations and materials for implementation of the revised model over the coming year. Consultation will continue with the local government on the implementation of the revised framework.

Information about the progress of the Councillor Conduct Framework Review will be available on the [OLG website](#).

Office of Local Government

olg.nsw.gov.au





REPORT: Draft Council Policy - Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors - Results of Public Exhibition

DIVISION: Organisational Performance
REPORT DATE: 30 January 2025
TRIM REFERENCE: ID25/130

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt a policy Fulfil legislated requirement/Compliance 	
Issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council previously resolved to place the draft Council Policy, Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors, on public exhibition. The public exhibition period for the draft has concluded, with zero submissions received. The draft policy is now ready for adoption. 	
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This policy must be reviewed and adopted by Council within the first 12 months of a new Council Term in accordance with Sections 252 and 253 Local Government Act 1993: https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1993-030#sec.252 Section 403 Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 Office of Local Government (formerly Division of Local Government) Guidelines for the payment of expenses and provision of facilities for Mayors and Councillors in NSW Local Government (State) Award 2020 Australian Taxation Office Taxation Determination TD 2021/6 	
Financial Implications	Budget Area	Corporate Governance
	Funding Source	Funds to be covered from the allocated Members' Expenses Budget.
	Ongoing Costs	Annual cost range from \$191, 527 to \$206,228
Policy Implications	Policy Title	Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors.
	Impact on Policy	Once adopted with revisions, this will become the policy of council.

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

That the draft Council Policy, Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors, as attached at Appendix 1, be adopted.

Jane Bassingthwaite
Director Organisational Performance

TN
Governance Officer

BACKGROUND

Council reviewed the *Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to the Mayor and Councillors* policy as required, within 12 months of the commencement of a new Council Term, under section 252(1) of the Local Government Act 1993.

The current policy was adopted 21 September 2022 following public exhibition.

The draft Council Policy, *Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors* went the November 2024 Ordinary Council Meeting and it was resolved to place the draft policy on public exhibition. As there were zero submissions the policy is now ready for adoption at the February 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting.

Previous Resolutions of Council

21 September 2022 CCL22/244	<i>That the draft Council Policy, Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors, as attached at Appendix 1, be adopted.</i>											
26 November 2024 CCL24/314	<p>1. <i>That Council update the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>If the Mayor so chooses, a vehicle will be provided in accordance with the Corporate Fleet Policy. This service is reviewed following each Mayoral election, having regard to the sustainability of the vehicle prior to change over.</i> <li>b. <i>Remove the \$10,000 limit for the Mayoral travel reimbursement in line with the proposed removal of the second paragraph at 4.2.4 (Mayor utilising personal vehicle).</i> <li>c. <i>That Council update the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors to correct the below typographical errors:</i> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>Current</i></th> <th><i>Correction</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Rates of accommodation and meal amounts are determined by the Australia Taxation Office which is updated annually.</i></td> <td><i>Rates of accommodation and meal amounts are determined by the Australian Taxation Office which is updated annually.</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Repeated use of the word alternate within table on page 13 and 14 of the policy.</i></td> <td><i>Update to alternative within the table.</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Councillor vehicle allowance claims must be for the most direct route must be taken.</i></td> <td><i>Councillor vehicle allowance claims must be for the most direct route able to be taken.</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Local Government (State) Award 2020</i></td> <td><i>The current version of the Local Government (State) Award, removing any values.</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>That a further report be submitted to Council detailing results of public exhibition, for adoption of the final policy.</i></p>		<i>Current</i>	<i>Correction</i>	<i>Rates of accommodation and meal amounts are determined by the Australia Taxation Office which is updated annually.</i>	<i>Rates of accommodation and meal amounts are determined by the Australian Taxation Office which is updated annually.</i>	<i>Repeated use of the word alternate within table on page 13 and 14 of the policy.</i>	<i>Update to alternative within the table.</i>	<i>Councillor vehicle allowance claims must be for the most direct route must be taken.</i>	<i>Councillor vehicle allowance claims must be for the most direct route able to be taken.</i>	<i>Local Government (State) Award 2020</i>	<i>The current version of the Local Government (State) Award, removing any values.</i>
<i>Current</i>	<i>Correction</i>											
<i>Rates of accommodation and meal amounts are determined by the Australia Taxation Office which is updated annually.</i>	<i>Rates of accommodation and meal amounts are determined by the Australian Taxation Office which is updated annually.</i>											
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<i>Councillor vehicle allowance claims must be for the most direct route must be taken.</i>	<i>Councillor vehicle allowance claims must be for the most direct route able to be taken.</i>											
<i>Local Government (State) Award 2020</i>	<i>The current version of the Local Government (State) Award, removing any values.</i>											

REPORT

While there is no Model Policy for the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors, The Office of Local Government has a recommended template for the policy. Council's draft Policy is based on that template and is attached at **Appendix 1**. In addition, the draft Policy has been reviewed in accordance with the Guidelines for the Payment of Expenses and the Provision of Facilities for Mayors and Councillors in NSW, issued in 2009.

The set limits for accommodation and vehicle reimbursement generally change on an annual basis. To avoid such limits becoming out of date, references in the draft policy have changed from dollar figures to reference documents/limits set by the Australian Taxation Office for example.

Consultation

- To ensure maximum opportunity for submissions, Council recommended that the Policy be placed on Public Exhibition for an additional 14 days to account for the Christmas/New Year holiday period. The Public Exhibition period was Friday 29 November 2024 to Tuesday 28 January 2025.
- There were no formal submissions received.
- The Policy complies with section 403 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation) and section 252 of the Act.

Resourcing Implications

- Councillor and Mayoral fees will be determined separately after the ruling of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.
- Financial implications have been budgeted for based on inclusions in the policy regarding the General provisions and monetary limits, travelling on council business including conferences, legal assistance, insurances, and training and professional development programs.
- The proposed changes also align with Council's administrative processes.

Total Financial Implications	Current year (\$)	Current year + 1 (\$)	Current year + 2 (\$)	Current year + 3 (\$)	Current year + 4 (\$)	Ongoing (\$ p.a.)
a. Operating revenue	0	0	0	0	0	0
b. Operating expenses	266,368	191,527	196,304	201,199	206,228	206,228
c. Operating budget impact (a – b)	-266,368	-191,527	-196,304	-201,199	-206,228	-206,228
d. Capital Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0
e. Total net impact (c – d)	-266,368	-191,527	-196,304	-201,199	-206,228	-206,228
Does the proposal require ongoing funding?		Yes				
What is the source of this funding?		The funds will be allocated from Members' Expenses in ongoing budgets.				

(The induction program for the newly elected Councillors is included in the current year fees.)

Options Considered

The proposed updates are highlighted in red text in the attachment and are summarised as follows:

- 2.4.2 - Omission of the rates table at Accommodation, Travel and Meals. This has been replaced by a link to the Australian Taxation Office Travel Allowance page.
- 2.4.2 - Private Vehicle Travel rates have been updated. Hybrid and Electronic Vehicles have been included.
- 2.4.2 – Other Expenses - Enrolment Fees have been updated. Personal carer or child care fees have been amended to state 'as incurred'.
- 3.3.4 - Vehicle allowance has been changed to be inclusive of all Councillors.
- 3.3.7 – More detail has been provided.
- 3.8.1 – Updated to 11 Councillors.
- 3.8.5 – Addition of omitted words.
- 4.1.8 – Wellington has been included.
- 4.2.4 – The second paragraph has been removed to align with current Council policy.
- Email address has been updated on application forms.
- Administrative changes to update minor typographical errors and formatting, including those listed in the resolution from November 2024.

Next Steps

- The Policy, if adopted, comes into immediate effect.
- Once adopted, the Policy will be displayed on Council's website, in accordance with the Government Information (Public Access) Act.
- Relevant staff will be notified of the updated policy.

APPENDICES:

- 1 [↓](#) DRAFT Council Policy - Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors - Reviewed 18/11/2024



COUNCIL POLICY

Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors

Date November 2024

Council Resolution Date

Clause Number

Responsible Position Manager Corporate Governance
Branch Corporate Governance
Division Organisational Performance
Version 7
TRIM Reference Number ED22/170971
Review Period Every 2 years (or within the first 12 Months of each the new term of Council)
Review Date November 2024
Consultation Public Exhibition

Document Revision History	
Description	Date
Adopted by Council for the purpose of public exhibition	28 August 2017
Adopted by Council	23 October 2016
Draft considered by Council	11 November 2019
Adopted by Council	8 January 2020
Adopted by Council for the purpose of Public Exhibition	28 June 2021
Adopted by Council	23 August 2021
Adopted by Council for the purpose of Public Exhibition	24 March 2022
Adopted by Council	26 May2022
Adopted by Council for the Purpose of Public Exhibition	28 July 2022

Adopted by Council	22/09/2022
Notes	
Changes made 26 April 2021, 4 May 2021 and 28 June 2021. Public Exhibition 30 June – 2 August 2021 Template and layout changes (including individual numbering of clauses) has been updated. This is to bring the policy in line with the Model Policy provided by the Office of Local Government.	
Changes made to increase the Mayor and Councillor accommodation and travel amount and to remove the travel within the LGA requirement for the Mayor. Minor formatting changes updating title from Executive Manager Governance and Internal Control to Manager Corporate Governance.	

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

The objectives of this policy are to:

- enable the reasonable and appropriate reimbursement of expenses incurred by Councillors while undertaking their civic duties
- enable facilities of a reasonable and appropriate standard to be provided to Councillors to support them in undertaking their civic duties
- ensure accountability and transparency in reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities to Councillors
- ensure facilities and expenses provided to Councillors meet community expectations
- support a diversity of representation
- fulfil the Council's statutory responsibilities.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND RELATED LEGISLATION

This policy enables the reasonable and appropriate reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities to Councillors to help them undertake their civic duties.

It ensures accountability and transparency, and seeks to align Councillor expenses and facilities with community expectations. Councillors must not obtain private or political benefit from any expense or facility provided under this policy.

The policy has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation), and complies with the Office of Local Government's Guidelines for the payment of expenses and provision of facilities to Mayors and Councillors in NSW.

The policy sets out the maximum amounts Council will pay for specific expenses and facilities. Expenses not explicitly addressed in this policy will not be paid or reimbursed.

- Local Government Act 1993, Sections 252 and 253
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, sections 217 and 403
- Guidelines for the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities for Mayors and Councillors in NSW, 2009

1.3 SCOPE

The policy applies to all Councillors, including the Mayor.

1.4 DEFINITIONS

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
The Act	The Local Government Act 1993
Expenses	Payments made by Council to reimburse Councillors for reasonable costs or charges incurred, or to be incurred, for discharging their civic functions. Expenses are separate and additional to annual fees.
Facilities	Equipment and services that are provided by Council, to Councillors, to enable them to perform their civic functions with relative ease and at a standard appropriate to their professional role as Councillors.
Official duties/Civic duties	Functions and duties that Councillors are required to undertake to fulfil their legislated role and responsibilities for the Council that should result in a direct benefit for the Council and/or for the local government area.
The Regulation	The Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

1.5 RELATIONSHIP TO ANNUAL FEES

The payment of expenses and the facilities which may be provided to the Mayor and Councillors under this policy shall be provided in addition to the annual fees payable to the Mayor and Councillors as determined by the Council under Sections 248 and 249 of the Act.

1.6 CODE OF CONDUCT

Council's Code of Conduct sets the minimum requirements of behaviour for Council officials. The Code of Conduct refers, in part, to the use of Council Resources as follows:

- You must use Council resources ethically, effectively, efficiently and carefully in the course of your official duties and must not use them for private purposes (except when supplied as part of a contract of employment) unless this use is lawfully authorised and proper payment is made where appropriate.
- You must be scrupulous in your use of Council property including intellectual property, official services and facilities and must not permit their misuse by any other person or body.

- You must avoid any action or situation that could create the appearance that Council property, official services or public facilities are being improperly used for your benefit or the benefit of any other person or body.
- You must not convert any property of the Council to your own use unless properly authorised.
- You must not use Council's computer resources to search for access, download or communicate any material of an offensive, obscene, pornographic, threatening, abusive or defamatory nature.

These sections of the Code are relevant to this policy in that they provide for an overarching standard of behaviour that the Mayor and Councillors would be expected to display when using Council's resources.

2. GENERAL PROVISIONS

2.1 GENERAL EXPENSES

- 2.1.1 Additional to the facilities provided by Council to Councillors and the Mayor under this policy, it is expected that further expenses may be incurred in the performance of Councillors' and the Mayor's civic duties. Accordingly, Council will provide reimbursement of approved expenses only incurred in the performance of a Councillors' or Mayor's role.
- 2.1.2 In accordance with section 403 of the Regulation, this policy does not include the provision for a general expense allowance. No allowances or expenses other than those expressly contained in this policy are payable to the Mayor or Councillors.

2.2 RESTRICTIONS

- 2.2.1 Councillors must not obtain private or political benefit from any expense or facility provided under this policy.
- 2.2.2 Any gifts received by Councillors must be declared in Council's Gift Register and surrendered. Council's Code of Conduct should be adhered to at all times.
- 2.2.3 Councillors will not be reimbursed for alcoholic beverages.

2.3 PROCESSES

Approval

- 2.3.1 Expenses should only be incurred by Councillors in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

- 2.3.2 Approval for incurring expenses, or for the reimbursement of such expenses, should be obtained before the expense is incurred.
- 2.3.3 Up to the maximum limits specified in this policy, approval for the following may be sought after the expense is incurred, but must be made within three months of the expense being incurred:
- local travel relating to the conduct of official business (including meals within the LGA);
 - carer costs.
- 2.3.4 Final approval for payments made under this policy will be granted by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.

Direct Expenses

- 2.3.5 Council may approve and directly pay expenses. Requests for direct payment must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for assessment against this policy with sufficient information and time to allow for the claim to be assessed and processed.

Reimbursement

- 2.3.6 All claims for reimbursement of expenses incurred must be made on the prescribed form (Appendix 1: Expenses of Members of Council – Incidental Expenses; Appendix 2: Expenses of Members of Council – Vehicle Allowance), supported by appropriate receipts and/or tax invoices and be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer. In the absence of receipts, claims must be accompanied by a Statutory Declaration (Appendix 4).
- 2.3.7 Any claim submitted to Council for reimbursement of expenses must be approved by the Manager Corporate Governance, having regard to appropriateness of the claim and regard to budget allocations. The Chief Executive Officer will then authorise the claim approval form.
- 2.3.8 All claims must be made within three months of the expense being incurred.

Advance Payment

- 2.3.9 For official travel outside of the Dubbo Regional Local Government Area (LGA), any meals which are not included in the event being attended will be paid in advance where possible.
- 2.3.10 Requests for advance payment of meals must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for assessment against this policy using the prescribed form (Appendix 3: Expenses of Members of Council – Meals).
- 2.3.11 Meal allowances will be made in accordance with section 2.4 of this policy
- 2.3.12 Advance payments will only be possible if the prescribed form is received at least one week before the monthly pay run, otherwise, payment will be made the following month.

Notification

2.3.13 If a claim is approved, Council will make payment directly, through pay roll, or reimburse the Councillor through accounts payable.

2.3.14 If a claim is refused, Council will inform the Councillor in writing that the claim has been refused and the reason for the refusal.

Reimbursement to Council

2.3.15 If Council has incurred an expense on behalf of a Councillor that exceeds a maximum limit, exceeds reasonable incidental private use or is not provided for in this policy:

- Council will invoice the Councillor for the expense
- the Councillor will reimburse Council for that expense within 14 days of the invoice date.

2.3.16 If the Councillor cannot reimburse Council within 14 days of the invoice date, they are to submit a written explanation to the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer may elect to deduct the amount from the Councillor's allowance.

Timeframe for Reimbursement

2.3.17 Unless otherwise specified in this policy, Councillors must provide all claims for reimbursement within three months of an expense being incurred. Claims made after this time cannot be approved.

2.3.18 Despite section 2.3.17 above, following a Local Government Election, Councillors have up to six months to submit claims for reimbursement for the use of a private vehicle (in accordance with section 2.4.2).

Disputes Resolution

2.3.19 Any dispute relating to the administration of this policy must be made in writing to the Chief Executive Officer detailing the grounds for the dispute. Any such disputes will be referred to the next scheduled Ordinary Meeting of the Council for determination and resolution.

2.4 MONETARY LIMITS

2.4.1 Expenses under this policy, in most instances, will be reimbursed based on actual expenditure. However, monetary limits have been applied which set a maximum level of expenditure which Council will reimburse for each type of expense. These limits are listed below in the tables.

The monetary limits contained within this policy have been set based on information available on reasonable market rates for the provision of the relevant services. Regional considerations have also been addressed with respect to accommodation costs.

These limits may be amended with any amendment to this policy and will be assessed for relevance and reasonableness on an annual basis in line with the annual policy review.

2.4.2 Monetary Limit Tables

Accommodation, Travel and Meals

Rates of accommodation and meal amounts are determined by the Australian Taxation Office which is updated annually. A limit of \$5,000/year per Councillor and \$18,000/year for the Mayor applies. This limit does not include registration costs for conferences or events.

[What is a travel allowance? | Australian Taxation Office](#)

Rate - Travel	
Air travel	Standard economy air fare
Train travel	First class fare, including sleeping berth when required
Taxi	Standard rate
Bus	Standard rate

Private Vehicle Travel

Rate		Limit	Comment
Private vehicle	Engine size less than 2.5L: \$0.83/km Engine size 2.5L or larger: \$0.98/km Hybrid vehicle: \$0.64/km Electric vehicle \$0.44/km	Kilometre allowance will be capped at a reasonably priced economy class return air fare/taxi for single destination travel (for example, drive from Dubbo to Sydney for an event) (section 3.4.5) Up to \$5,000/year per Councillor Up to \$10,000/year for the Mayor	Private vehicle rates in accordance with the current version of the Local Government (State) Award 2020 Councillors will need to seek their own accounting advice regarding tax requirements on distances claimed over 5,000 km.

Other Expenses

Expense Type	Rate/Limit	Comments
Registration costs	None	Includes costs relating to official luncheons, dinners and tours/inspections which are relevant to the interests of the Council
Enrolment fees	\$3,120/year per Councillor in accordance with section 3.2	In most cases, Council will arrange and fund attendance of the Mayor and Councillors at training courses
Incidental expenses associated with attendance at seminars, training courses or official functions	\$100 per day	Expenses in this category may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking fees • Tolls The following expenses will not be reimbursed and are the responsibility of the Mayor/Councillors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any traffic or parking fines • Administrative charges for road toll accounts • Alcohol (not consumed as part of meal) • Cigarettes • Mini-bar items including snack foods Note: Meals are not included in this category.
Cost of service provided	None	No payment shall be reimbursed for any component of a ticket which is additional to the service cost of the function, such as a donation to a political party or candidate's electoral fund, or some other private benefit. An additional payment to a registered charity may be acceptable as part of the cost of the function.
Personal carer or child care	As incurred.	Council will reimburse costs as incurred for the engagement of a

	No annual limit.	babysitter or carer where required to allow the Mayor or Councillors to attend any Council, Standing Committee, Meetings, Committee Meetings, Working Party or Council workshops. The period of cover shall include the period of 30 minutes prior to and after the conclusion of the meeting or workshop.
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3. PAYMENT OF EXPENSES FOR COUNCILLORS

3.1 ATTENDANCE AT SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

3.1.1 This section shall apply for the Mayor and Councillors authorised and/or appointed as delegates under this policy to attend conferences.

Definition of Conference

3.1.2 In this part **conference** means conferences, seminars, congresses, forums, workshops, courses, meetings, deputations, information and training sessions, events etc related to the industry of local government and held within Australia.

3.1.3 Council is committed to ensuring its Councillors are up to date with contemporary issues facing Council and the community, and Local Government in NSW.

3.1.4 Council will allocate a sufficient amount annually in its budget to facilitate Councillor attendance at conferences and seminars. This allocation is for all Councillors. The Chief Executive Officer will ensure that access to expenses relating to conferences and seminars is distributed equitably.

3.1.5 Approval to attend a conference or seminar is subject to a written request to the Chief Executive Officer. In assessing a Councillor request, the Chief Executive Officer must consider factors including the:

- relevance of the topics and presenters to current Council priorities and business and the exercise of the Councillor’s civic duties
- cost of the conference or seminar in relation to the total remaining budget.

Conference Costs

- 3.1.6 Council will meet the reasonable cost of registration fees, transportation and accommodation associated with attendance at conferences approved by the Chief Executive Officer with any necessary bookings to be made through the Mayor’s office and in accordance with this policy.
- 3.1.7 Council will also meet the reasonable cost of meals when they are not included in the conference fees. Reimbursement/Advance payment for accommodation and meals not included in the conference fees will be subject to this Policy.
- 3.1.8 The Council, in accordance with section 2.4, will pay all normal registration costs for delegates which are charged by organisers, including those relating to official luncheons, dinners and tours/inspections which are relevant to the interests of the Council.
- 3.1.9 All reasonable travel costs for delegates to and from the conference location and venue will be met by the Council in accordance with section 3.4.
- 3.1.10 The Council will normally pay registration fees, accommodation costs and airline/train tickets direct to conference organisers/travel agent in advance. Where this is not appropriate or possible an advance payment or cheque equivalent thereto may be paid to the attendee for payment to the appropriate party.

Who May Attend Conferences

- 3.1.11 Council will continue to be represented at the Annual Conference or Convention of the Associations as detailed hereunder, subject to appropriate funding provision being provided in the Council’s Annual Budget and subject to the usual conditions.
- 3.1.12 Attendance at conferences are to be approved by the Council with the Chief Executive Officer to approve attendances at seminars and conferences by staff.
- 3.1.13 Conference Attendance Table

ORGANISATION	DELEGATES	OBSERVERS
Local Government NSW	Mayor, or their nominee, three other Councillors as delegates plus an alternative delegate (to act as delegate if required) and Councillors as determined by the Council	Chief Executive Officer or Nominee and Councillors as determined by the Council
Australian Livestock Markets Association	Mayor, or their nominee, one Councillor and	Chief Executive Officer or nominee and the Director Organisational Performance

	alternative Councillors determined by the Council	
Australian Airport Association	Mayor, or their nominee, one Councillor and alternative Councillors determined by the Council	Chief Executive Officer or nominee and the Director Organisational Performance
Local Government Women's Conference	Two Councillors and alternative Councillors determined by the Council	Chief Executive Officer or nominee
Local Government Aboriginal Network Conference	Two Councillors and alternative Councillors determined by the Council	Chief Executive Officer or nominee
Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly	Mayor, or their nominee	Chief Executive Officer or nominee

3.1.14 Councillors may attend other conferences with the approval of Council.

3.2 TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL EXPENSES

- 3.2.1 Council will allocate a sufficient amount annually in its budget to facilitate professional development of Councillors through programs, training, education courses and membership of professional bodies.
- 3.2.2 An amount of \$33,000 will be allocated annually for Councillor Professional Development, being \$3,000 annually for each Councillor.
- 3.2.3 This amount will be allocated for individual professional training plans for Councillors and any unexpended funds shall not be carried over to the following year.
- 3.2.4 This allocation may be made available for individual training courses for Councillors or attendance at conferences where the conference directly relates to their role as a Councillor.
- 3.2.5 Expenses incurred by Council without a reasonable excuse for non-attendance at related events, including but not limited to training sessions and conferences, by a Councillor may result in a possible reimbursement to Council by that Councillor for costs incurred.
- 3.2.6 In the first year of a new Council term, Council will provide a comprehensive induction program for all Councillors which considers any guidelines issued by the Office of Local

Government (OLG). The cost of the induction program will be in addition to the ongoing professional development funding.

- 3.2.7 Annual membership of professional bodies will only be covered where the membership is relevant to the exercise of the Councillor's civic duties, the Councillor actively participates in the body and the cost of membership is likely to be fully offset by savings from attending events as a member.
- 3.2.8 Approval for professional development activities is subject to a prior written request to the Chief Executive Officer outlining the:
- details of the proposed professional development
 - relevance to Council priorities and business
 - relevance to the exercise of the Councillor's civic duties.
- 3.2.9 In assessing a Councillor request for a professional development activity, the Chief Executive Officer must consider the factors set out in this policy, as well as the cost of the professional development in relation to the available budget.

3.3 LOCAL TRAVEL AND EXPENSES

- 3.3.1 Where the Councillor attends local functions on behalf of Council, Council will be responsible for the payment of any fees for both the Councillor and their partner/accompanying person.
- 3.3.2 Councillors will be reimbursed for use of a private vehicle (Councillor's own) in accordance with monetary limits set out in section 2.4 of this policy.
- 3.3.3 Councillors using private vehicles (Councillor's own) in accordance with this policy may claim the kilometre rates for the necessary travel at the rate set out in section 2.4 of this Policy as with such rate deemed to cover and include any claims for accidental damage or repairs to the private vehicle and any loss of no claim bonus and any excess not covered by an insurance.
- 3.3.4 Vehicle allowance for travel within the Local Government Area can be claimed on trips in excess of 10km ~~excluding the Mayor while~~ on verified Council business.
- 3.3.5 Councillors may claim vehicle allowance for attendance at Council meetings, Standing Committee meetings and Councillor Workshops with no prior approval required.
- 3.3.6 Councillors may claim vehicle allowance when undertaking other **official duties** in their role as a Councillor with prior approval from the Mayor's office.
- 3.3.7 **Councillor vehicle allowance claims must be for the** most direct route **able to** be taken.
- 3.3.8 Councillors will be personally responsible for all traffic or parking fines incurred while travelling in private or Council vehicles while on Council business.
- 3.3.9 All claims must be made in accordance with sections 2.3.6 to 2.3.8 of this policy.

3.4 TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE LGA INCLUDING INTERSTATE TRAVEL, ACCOMMODATION AND INCIDENTAL EXPENSES

3.4.1 All expenses in this section will be reimbursed in accordance with monetary limits set out in section 2.4 of this policy.

Travel

3.4.2 All reasonable travel costs for delegates to and from the conference location and venue will be met by the Council. Where appropriate, travel will be provided by air (economy class). Depending upon the location or circumstances, it may be more appropriate for travel to be undertaken by car or train.

3.4.3 Where trains are used the Council will provide first class travel, including sleeping berths where available.

3.4.4 Where travel by motor vehicle is used it should be undertaken by Council vehicle where available, or by private vehicle subject to prior approval of the Chief Executive Officer.

3.4.5 Councillors may use private vehicle allowance in accordance with sections 2.4 and 3.2.3 of this Policy. This claim for kilometre allowance is subject to such claim not exceeding economy class air fares to and from the particular destination.

3.4.6 Where air travel is booked by Council for Councillors, Councillors shall not accrue frequent flyer points under the respective airlines program. This is considered a personal benefit.

Accommodation

3.4.7 In circumstances where it would introduce undue risk for a Councillor to travel to or from official business in the late evening or early morning, reimbursement of costs for accommodation and meals on the night before or after the meeting may be approved by the Chief Executive Officer. This includes where a meeting finishes later than 9.00pm or starts earlier than 7.00am and the Councillor lives more than 50km from the meeting location.

3.4.8 In accordance with section 2.4, Council will pay reasonable double room or twin share accommodation costs the night before and/or after the commitment where this is necessary because of travel and/or in accordance with section 3.4.7.

3.4.9 Where evidence is provided that accommodation within the above cost range cannot be provided or is not available then the Chief Executive Officer has the discretion to approve the increase in costs.

Incidental Expenses

- 3.4.10 So that Councillors, as representatives of the Council whilst on official business are not financially disadvantaged, Councillors shall be entitled to claim incidental expenses.
- 3.4.11 The amount of the payment under Clause 3.4.10 shall be equal to reasonable costs substantiated by a tax invoice receipt or statutory declaration to the effect that the expenditure was incurred, and up to the relevant daily limits as per section 2.4 of this policy.
- 3.4.12 Such payments shall be made to cover incidental expenses associated with the official business, such as conferences, such as:
- (a) laundry - Council will meet the cost of reasonable laundry or dry cleaning services whilst away on Council business, if necessary;
 - (b) optional activities in a conference program where approved by the Chief Executive Officer;
 - (c) gifts taken - If it is appropriate that gifts be required for presentations, Council will provide items as determined by the Chief Executive Officer.
- 3.4.13 The following items are expressly excluded from incidental expenses that will be funded by Council:
- (a) bar fridge - Council will not meet the cost of any expenses incurred from the use of the bar fridge provided in the hotel room or snack food as provided by the bar fridge service.
 - (b) bar service - Council will not meet the cost of any expenses incurred at the bar located within the hotel other than where special guests have been invited for drinks at the request of the Mayor or leader of the Council's delegation or meals as provided for in 2.4.
- 3.4.14 An advance payment to the Councillor's bank account for any meals not included in registration/accommodation costs may be paid. The amount payable per meal is defined in section 2.4 of this policy. Any request for advance payment of meals must be completed on the attached form (Appendix 4). Refer section 2.3.9 to 2.3.12.

3.5 OVERSEAS TRAVEL

- 3.5.1 Overseas Travel for any purpose which is considered to be relevant to Council business and/or of particular benefit to the local community must be approved by Council. Full details of the travel and the purpose for the travel must be approved on an individual basis.
- 3.5.2 The use of a tabled Mayoral Minute (not included on the Council Agenda) to obtain Council approval for travel is not considered appropriate as it is not consistent with principles of openness and transparency.
- 3.5.3 Retrospective re-imburement for overseas travel is not permitted.

3.5.4 After returning from overseas the Councillor, or an accompanying member of Council staff, must provide a detailed written report to Council on the aspects of the trip relevant to Council business and/or the local community.

3.5.5 In regard to Sister City Relationships the establishment of a Sister City Relationship will be on the basis that Council bear no cost of staff members, the Councillor or members of the public visiting Sister Cities, with the exception being in respect of the Sister Cities Officer as follows:

That Council fund the salary, travel and accommodation expenses for the Sister Cities Officer to undertake a visit to Minokamo and Wujiang every three years, with the first visit being within the first year of appointment of a new person to the position based upon the following conditions:

- *The visits to both Minokamo and Wujiang being combined during the one (1) overseas trip*
- *A maximum of seven (7) days is spent during any one (1) combined visit*
- *That the Sister City Officer be paid his /her normal salary for a maximum of seven (7) days during any one (1) visit*
- *An economy return air fare being provided from Dubbo to the Sister Cities*
- *The Sister City Officer being paid for subsistence and accommodation during any visit at Level One (1) of the Reasonable Travel Allowance for the Sydney Metropolitan Area as determined from time to time by the Australian Taxation Office and as detailed in Council's Management Policy – Travelling and Subsistence Expense Policy.*
- *Travel insurance, a visa to visit China and travel to and from airports to accommodation being funded by Council.*
- *Council not incurring any other incidental travel costs such as a passport, luggage, clothes, money conversion costs and travel debit / credit card costs.*

3.6 CARE

3.6.1 Council will reimburse reasonable costs of care arrangements including childcare expenses and the care of elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate family members of Councillors to allow the Councillors to undertake their Council business obligations.

3.6.2 Such costs will be certified by the Councillor to be necessarily incurred in the course of fulfilling their civic duties and/or conducting Council business.

3.6.3 Limits for the cost of care are as stated in section 2.4 of the policy.

3.7 SPOUSE AND PARTNER EXPENSES

- 3.7.1 Where the Councillor attends local functions on behalf of Council, Council will be responsible for the payment of any fees for both the Councillor and their partner/accompanying person (3.3.1).
- 3.7.2 Where the Mayor or a Councillor is accompanied at a conference all costs for, or incurred by, the accompanying person, including travel, breakfast, meals, registration and/or participation in any conference programs, are to be borne by the Councillor/accompanying person and not by Council. The exception to this is that Council will meet the costs of the official conference dinner for an accompanying person of a Councillor for the Local Government NSW Annual Conference only. Accompanying person's registration, or accompanying person's program fees, are to be paid to the conference organiser, etc. and paid at the time of registration. The Council is prepared to receive such registration and payments and to forward them on to the conference organiser, etc with any Council delegates' registration.
- 3.7.3 Where Council meets, on account, any expenditure or cost on behalf of an accompanying person attending a conference, such expenditure must be repaid to Council by the Councillor/accompanying person within seven (7) days of being invoiced for such expenditure following the conclusion of the conference.

3.8 INSURANCE

Personal Accident Insurance

- 3.8.1 Council carries a personal accident insurance policy on Councillors of Council as set out hereunder.

*On the lives of **eleven (11)** Councillors whilst engaged on their duties as Councillors of the Dubbo Regional Council, including whilst travelling.*

Professional Indemnity/Public Liability Insurance

- 3.8.2 Public Liability – indemnify each insured person(s) for all costs, charges, expenses and defence costs **but** excluding **fines** and **penalties** incurred in relation to any **prosecution** (criminal or otherwise) of any insured person(s), attendance by any insured person(s) at any official investigation, examination, inquiry or other proceedings ordered or commissioned during the period of insurance by any official body or institution that is empowered to investigate the affairs of Council by reason of any **wrongful act** wherever or whenever committed or allegedly committed by the insured person(s) in their capacity as insured person(s), **BUT** subject to any limitations or conditions set out in the policy of insurance which is, at the direction of Council.
- 3.8.3 Professional Indemnity - for matters arising out of the Councillor's performance of civic duties or exercise of the functions provided the performance or exercise of the relevant civic duty or function is in the opinion of Council bona fide and/or proper and is carried out in good faith,

as required under 731 of the Local Government Act, BUT subject to any limitation or conditions set out in the policy of insurance, which is, at the direction of Council, taken out.

Councillors' and Officers' Liability Insurance

- 3.8.4 Councillors' and Officers' Liability Insurance provides limited financial protection to Councillors and staff in circumstances where they may be named as an individual to a claim, and the normal protections under the Local Government Act or Council's General and Professional Liability insurance are not available.
- 3.8.5 The protection provided covers the liability to pay civil damages, the claimant's legal costs, and the Councillor's or staff member's costs incurred in **the claim (policy limit \$20 million)**. The protection extends to the estate and heirs of a deceased Councillor or staff member.

3.9 LEGAL EXPENSES

Legal and Representation Costs – Enquiries, Investigations, Hearings, etc

- 3.9.1 Council may, if requested, indemnify or reimburse the reasonable legal expenses of:
- a Councillor defending an action arising from the performance in good faith of a function under the Local Government Act provided that the outcome of the legal proceedings is favourable to the Councillor
 - a Councillor defending an action in defamation, provided the statements complained of were made in good faith in the course of exercising a function under the Act and the outcome of the legal proceedings is favourable to the Councillor
 - a Councillor for proceedings before an appropriate investigative or review body, provided the subject of the proceedings arises from the performance in good faith of a function under the Act and the matter has proceeded past any initial assessment phase to a formal investigation or review and the investigative or review body makes a finding substantially favourable to the Councillor.
- 3.9.2 In the case of a code of conduct complaint made against a Councillor, legal costs will only be made available where the matter has been referred by the Chief Executive Officer to a conduct reviewer and the conduct reviewer has commenced a formal investigation of the matter and makes a finding substantially favourable to the Councillor.
- 3.9.3 Legal expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising out of the performance by a Councillor of his or her functions under the Act are distinguished from expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising merely from something that a Councillor has done during his or her term in office. For example, expenses arising from an investigation as to whether a Councillor acted corruptly would not be covered by this section.

3.9.4 Council will not meet the legal costs:

- of legal proceedings initiated by a Councillor under any circumstances
- of a Councillor seeking advice in respect of possible defamation, or in seeking a non-litigious remedy for possible defamation
- for legal proceedings that do not involve a Councillor performing their role as a Councillor.

3.9.5 Reimbursement of expenses for reasonable legal expenses must have Council approval by way of a resolution at a Council meeting prior to costs being incurred.

Legal Advice

3.9.6 Legal advice relating to a pecuniary interest, conflict of interest or matter governed by the code of conduct which in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer is necessary to clarify the Councillor's responsibilities in the performance of his/her duties will be provided and paid for by Council.

3.10 ADDITIONAL EXPENSES FOR THE MAYOR

3.10.1 See section 2.4 for additional monetary limits for the Mayor.

4. PROVISION OF FACILITIES

4.1 PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES FOR COUNCILLORS

4.1.1 To assist the Councillors, including the Mayor, in discharging the function of Civic Office, Councillors are, if they request, entitled to receive the following without reduction to the fees payable under Section 248 of the Act.

4.1.2 Secretarial service including typing, photocopying, printing and postage for the following purposes:

- a) Initiating correspondence to, and answering correspondence received from, residents/ratepayers, Members of Parliament, Government Departments, statutory authorities/bodies, other local authorities, other Councillors, Local Government related bodies and organisations or the general public in relation to the business of the Council or Local Government subject to a response to petitions received by Councillors will only be made to the principal person who lodges the petition and not all signatories.
- b) Replying to invitations to attend functions/gatherings received in their capacity as a Councillor;
- c) Communications to Councillors and Council's staff on official business;

- d) Access to a customer service portal to report and manage and complaint/request received as a Councillor

provided that under no circumstances will the Council permit the facilities provided to be used for the initiation or issue of circular type letters or election material/letters.

- 4.1.3 Appropriate refreshments/meals will be available for Council meetings, Council Committee meetings, Councillor briefings and workshops, approved meetings and engagements, and official council functions as approved by the Chief Executive Officer.
- 4.1.4 Suitable stationery supplies.
- Councillor business cards and name badges
 - Postage - official Councillor correspondence - to be directed through the Council's own mail system.
- 4.1.5 Access to Information - Councillors can obtain copies of Council information, if the information is required to enable a Councillor to undertake their role as defined under Section 232 of the Local Government Act 1993.
- When seeking information on policy issues and day to day matters, in the exercise of their statutory role as a member of the Council, Councillors are to direct their enquiries to the Chief Executive Officer, the relevant Director, or an officer nominated by the Director, as per the Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy.
- 4.1.6 Preparation of media material for the chairpersons of Council's Standing Committees in respect of Committee issues.
- 4.1.7 Access to a suitable vehicle or vehicles (if available) provided by the Council for use on official duties connected with discharging the duties of Civic Office.
- 4.1.8 The provision of an electronic tablet device, appropriate broadband communications and a suitable printer in the Dubbo and Wellington Civic Administration Buildings.
- 4.1.9 Provision of appropriate Council branded clothing including, but not limited to, blazer, jacket, polo shirt or t-shirt as approved by the Chief Executive Officer.
- 4.1.10 An appropriate space for Councillors be provided Monday to Friday 8am – 8pm to allow them to meet with ratepayers.
- 4.1.11 All unexpended facilities or equipment supplied under this policy are to be relinquished immediately upon a Councillor or Mayor ceasing to hold office or at the cessation of their civic duties.
- 4.1.12 When a Councillor or the Mayor take a leave of absence in excess of one month, they are required to hand in their facilities and equipment, such as vehicle, phone, tablet or laptop for the period that they will be on leave.

4.2 PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES FOR MAYORS

4.2.1 The use of Mayoral Robes and Chain of Office

4.2.2 Suitable office accommodation in the Dubbo Civic Administration Buildings including the provision of a computer and software packages that enable email and internet services, along with meeting room provisions at the Wellington Administration Building.

4.2.3 A range of secretarial and support services including telephone and reception duties, typing, organisation of Civic Receptions including catering, preparation of speeches, press releases, meetings and correspondence and other reasonable requests by the Mayor.

4.2.4 ~~If the Mayor so chooses, A~~ vehicle will be provided in accordance with the corporate Fleet policy. This service is reviewed following each Mayoral election, having regard to the sustainability of the vehicle prior to changeover.

~~Alternatively, the Mayor may utilise their personal vehicle, if suitable, and maintain a logbook for reimbursement of kilometres travelled while carrying out Civic duties up to the limit set out in section 2.4.2. Such reimbursement must be submitted on the prescribed form every three months and be accompanied by supporting documentation (log book).~~

4.2.5 A mobile telephone service for which all expenses are paid but which is to be used exclusively for Council and Civic duties.

4.2.6 Preparation of media material for the Mayor in respect of Council activities.

4.2.7 Reasonable expenses for the Mayor and partner/accompanying person to attend on behalf of Council in the office of Mayor on official (including conferences) or legal occasions including travel, accommodation subsistence and the like. Attendance at local functions (excluding conferences as defined in section 3.1) by the Mayor and partner/accompanying person shall be paid by Council.

4.2.8 If the Mayor so chooses, a credit card facility with a monthly card limit up to \$5,000 to be used for expenses incurred in the pursuit of official Council business. The credit card facility is to be used in situations where it is not possible to go through Council's normal procedure for the ordering and/or payment of goods and services. Initial approval to hold a Corporate Purchase Card must come from the CEO. The Corporate Purchase Card cannot be used for the following:

- Cash advances under any circumstances.
- Accommodation/travel and work related expenses – preferred payment is via the administration team of the Mayor's Office. The Mayor's Purchase Card may be used for accommodation/travel related expenses in emergency situations and must be submitted to the Manager Corporate Governance as soon as practicable.
- Fines and penalties, unless approved by the CEO (e.g., Toll Notices).

- Private expenditure or personal purchases with a view to reimburse Council at a later date.
 - Split purchases - the cardholder to pay in one credit card transaction and not split the payment.
 - Purchases in conjunction with award points or any personal award card or membership benefits (e.g., Frequent Flyer or Woolworths Rewards).
- 4.2.9 Provision of appropriate Council branded clothing including, but not limited to, blazer, jacket, polo shirt or t-shirt as approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

5. OTHER MATTERS

5.1 ACQUISITION AND RETURNING OF FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT BY COUNCILLORS

- 5.1.1 Councillors will be issued with facilities as provided for under this policy upon election to Office.
- 5.1.2 All unexpended facilities or equipment supplied under this policy are to be relinquished immediately upon a Councillor or Mayor ceasing to hold office or at the cessation of their civic duties.
- 5.1.3 Should a Councillor wish to purchase Council equipment previously allocated to them at the cessation of their duties, a written request should be submitted to the CEO. A fair market price will be proposed at the time of purchase.

5.2 ANNUAL FEES – MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

Fees Payable to Councillors

- 5.2.1 Pursuant to Section 248 of the Act, Council shall, prior to 30 June each year, set by resolution the annual fees to be paid to a Councillor for the following year commencing 1 July, provided that such fee shall be within the range for Council determined annually by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.
- 5.2.2 Such payment shall be subject to Section 254A of the Act and any specific resolution of the Council under Section 254A.

Fees Payable to the Mayor

- 5.2.3 Pursuant to Section 249 of the Act, the Council shall, prior to 30 June each year, set by resolution, the annual fee to be paid to the Mayor for the following year commencing 1 July provided that such fee shall be within the range for the Council determined annually by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.

5.2.4 Pursuant to Section 249(5) of the Act, the Council may pay the Deputy Mayor (if there is one) a fee determined by Council for such time as the Deputy Mayor acts in the office of the Mayor. The amount of the fee so paid must be deducted from the Mayor's annual fee.

5.2.5 There will be an automatic transfer of the additional annual mayoral fee during any leave of absence of the Mayor, to the person acting in the role of the Mayor.

Fees from Paid Board Positions

5.2.6 Councillors and Mayors may keep any fees received from elected board positions, where such positions directly related to their position as Councillor or Mayor on the provision that any such position must be endorsed by Council.

5.3 SUPERANNUATION

5.3.1 In accordance with section 254B of the Act, and as resolved by Council on 24 February 2022, a superannuation contribution payment is payable with, and at the same intervals as, the annual fee is payable to Councillors. The amount of a superannuation contribution payment is in line with those payments made to employees of Council.

6. END SECTION

6.1 RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1.1 All Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer and the Manager Corporate Governance are responsible for enacting this policy.

6.2 APPENDICES

6.2.1 Appendix 1 – Expenses of Members of Council – Incidental Expenses

6.2.2 Appendix 2 - Expenses of Members of Council – Vehicle Allowance

6.2.3. Appendix 3 - Expenses of Members of Council – Meals

6.2.4 Appendix 4 – Expenses of Members of Council – Statutory Declaration Form

EXPENSES OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Incidental Expenses

(Including meals when purchased within the Dubbo Regional LGA)



Please complete this form and return to the Governance Team Leader.

NOTE: Reimbursement of incidental expenses must be accompanied by the relevant approvals from the Mayor's office and receipts.

APPLICANT DETAILS	
Title	Councillor
Name/s	

INCIDENTAL EXPENSES			
Date		Meeting/Function	
Summary of Expenses Claimed			Cost
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
			\$
Total out of pocket expenses			\$

Only expenses incurred in line with the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors Policy will be reimbursed.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE	
Signature	
Print Name	
Date	

Submit to: governance@dubbo.nsw.gov.au
 Deliver to: Mayor's Office
 Cnr Church and Darling St | Dubbo or Cnr Nanima Cres and Warne St | Wellington

EXPENSES OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Incidental Expenses

(Including meals when purchased within the Dubbo Regional LGA)



OFFICE USE ONLY	
Total payable	
Cost Number	

APPROVAL			
MGIC Signature		Date	
CEO signature		Date	

Submit to: governance@dubbo.nsw.gov.au
 Deliver to: Mayor's Office
 Cnr Church and Darling St | Dubbo or Cnr Nanima Cres and Warne St | Wellington

EXPENSES OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Vehicle Allowance

Section 252, Local Government Act 1993



Please complete this form and return to the Governance Team Leader

NOTE: Reimbursement of travel expenses must be accompanied by the relevant approvals from the Mayor's office

APPLICANT DETAILS	
Title	Councillor
Name/s	

VEHICLE ALLOWANCE				
Date	Meeting/Function	Start Odometer	End Odometer	Distance Travelled (km)
Total distance claimable				
Engine size				

APPLICANT SIGNATURE	
Signature	
Print Name	
Date	

EXPENSES OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Vehicle Allowance

Section 252, Local Government Act 1993



OFFICE USE ONLY			
Total distance claimable		Amount per km	
Total payable			
Cost number			

APPROVAL			
MCG Signature		Date	
CEO signature		Date	

Submit to: governance@dubbo.nsw.gov.au
 Deliver to: Mayor's Office
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EXPENSES OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Meals – Outside of LGA



Please complete this form and return to the Governance Team Leader.

NOTE: Payment of travel expenses must be accompanied by the relevant approvals from the Mayor's office. Meal expenses will be paid before travel if completed forms are received at least one week prior to monthly pay run.

APPLICANT DETAILS	
Title	Councillor
Name/s	

Only meals which are not included in registration fees or provided as part of the event will be reimbursed.

MEALS			
Date/s		Meeting/Function	
Location of function			
Number of breakfasts			
Number of lunches			
Number of dinners			

APPLICANT SIGNATURE	
Signature	
Print Name	
Date	

OFFICE USE ONLY					
Payable/breakfast	\$	Payable/lunch	\$	Payable/dinner	\$
Totals/meal	\$		\$		\$
Total payable					
Cost Number					

APPROVAL			
MCG Signature		Date	
CEO signature		Date	

Submit to: governance@dubbo.nsw.gov.au

Deliver to: Mayor's Office

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EXPENSES OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Statutory Declaration



[Redacted area]

I, _____ (Name)
 of _____ (Address)
 _____ (Occupation)

do solemnly and sincerely declare

_____ *Insert matter declared to. Where the matter is long add the words "as follows:" and then set out in numbered paragraphs.*

I make this solemn declaration by virtue of the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959* as amended and subject to the penalties provided by that Act for the making of false statements in statutory declarations, conscientiously believing the statements contained in this declaration to be true in every particular.

 Declared at _____ (Signature of person making declaration)
 On _____ (Place of declaration)
 In the presence of _____ (Date)
 _____ (Signature of witness)
 _____ (Name of witness)

See over page for notes, including witness requirements

EXPENSES OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Statutory Declaration



NOTE 1.-A person who wilfully makes a false statement in a statutory declaration under the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959* as amended is guilty of an offence against that Act, the punishment for which is a fine not exceeding \$200 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or both if the offence is prosecuted summarily, or imprisonment for a term not exceeding four years if the offence is prosecuted upon indictment.

NOTE 2.-A statutory declaration may be made before a Magistrate, a Justice of the Peace, a Commissioner for Affidavits, a Commissioner for Declarations, a Notary Public, **a person before whom a statutory declaration may be made under the law of the State in which the declaration is made**, an Australian Consular Officer or an Australian Diplomatic Officer as defined by section two of the Consular Fees Act 1995, a chiropractor, a dentist, a legal practitioner, a medical practitioner, a nurse, a patent attorney, a pharmacist, a veterinary surgeon, an agent of the Australian Postal Corporation who is in charge of an office supplying postal services to the public, a bailiff, a bank officer with five or more years of continuous service, a building society officer with five or more years of continuous service, the chief executive officer of a Commonwealth court, a civil marriage celebrant, the clerk of a court, a credit union officer with five or more years of continuous service, the holder of a statutory office, the Judge of a court, the Master of a court, a member of the Australian Defence Force who is an officer or a non-commissioned officer within the meaning of the Defence Force Discipline Act 1982 with five or more years continuous service or a warrant officer within the meaning of the Act, a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia, the Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants or the National Institute of Accountants, a member of the Institute of Corporate Managers, Secretaries and Administrators, a member of the Institution of Engineers, Australia other than at the grade of student, a member of the Parliament of the Commonwealth, the Parliament of a State, a Territory legislature or a local government authority of a State or Territory, a minister of religion registered under Division 1 of Part IV of the Marriage Act 1961, a permanent employee of the Commonwealth or of a Commonwealth authority or a State or Territory or of a State or Territory authority or a local government authority with five or more years continuous service, a permanent employee of the Australian Postal Corporation with five or more years continuous service who is employed in an office supplying postal services to the public, a police officer, the Registrar or Deputy Registrar of a court, a Senior Executive Service officer of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territory or of a Commonwealth, State or Territory authority, a Sheriff, a Sheriff's officer, or a teacher employed on a full-time basis at a school or tertiary education institution.

Submit to: governance@dubbo.nsw.gov.au

Deliver to: Customer Experience Centre

Cnr Church and Darling St | Dubbo or Cnr Nanima Cres and Warne St | Wellington

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