

Wingecarribee Shire Council Annual Report

2017/18



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Acknowledgement of Country

The Wingecarribee Shire acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land and we pay our respects to Elders both past and present. We would also like to acknowledge our young leaders who are the Elders of tomorrow and our future.

Photography credits

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INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report provides a detailed account of Council's achievements and challenges during the year, and demonstrates the wide variety of services delivered to the community throughout 2017/18. The Report details our performance against the commitments set out in our *Delivery Program 2017 - 2021* and *Operational Plan 2017/18*, and provides insight into our financial position and decision making processes.

The report is prepared in compliance with the *Local Government Act 1993*.

OUR COMMUNITY VISION

In 2031 we will be...

“A healthy and productive community, learning and living in harmony, proud of our heritage and nurturing our environment.”



Mayor's Message

It is with pleasure that I present to you the Wingecarribee Shire Council Annual Report for 2017/18. This report highlights the tireless work of Council in keeping the Wingecarribee Shire vibrant and picturesque for all to enjoy.

The year began with Council moving into our second year of the *Investing in Our Future* Special Rate Variation (SRV) improvement program.

Over the course of the next ten years, Council will spend an additional \$98.1 million on essential infrastructure across the Shire. This year's reconstruction of Church Street in Burrawang was one of our first major projects to be funded via this program.

Closing out the year, Council committed a further \$219 million over the next four years on essential public infrastructure. This will result in our Shire receiving multi-million dollar upgrades to its sewage treatment plants, roads, bridges, footpaths, drains, community buildings and recreation areas.

In between these announcements Council continued to provide our visitors with first-class community and tourism experiences. Leading these were our Australia Day, NAIDOC Week and Tulip Time celebrations. Also returning during the year was Council's award-winning Pie Time Festival. This year's event attracted national coverage and resulted in record crowds visiting the Shire for the month-long festivities.

Other Council initiatives to be recognised included our Southern Highlands Koala Conservation Project, which took home top honours at the Local Government NSW *Excellence in the Environment* Awards.

Our commitment to the environment was further highlighted in a ground-breaking joint program with Endeavour Energy that saw over 1,700 old street lights replaced with energy efficient LED fittings. Street lighting usage is expected to drop by 20 per cent and greenhouse gas emissions reduce by 632 tonnes per year as a result of this program.

Another highlight was the partnership Council continues to foster with residents in order to strengthen social networks and increase public participation opportunities. This year our Community Assistance Scheme alone distributed over \$129,000 to 59 wonderful Highlands organisations.

As we enter the second half of this current term of Council, I thank my fellow Councillors for their commitment to our Shire, its citizens and visitors.

I would also like to acknowledge the leadership the previous Mayor Ken Halstead demonstrated for the first two years of this term.

Councillor Duncan Gair
Wingecarribee Shire Mayor

General Manager's Foreword

The 2017/18 financial year saw Council continue to deliver on the strategic priorities outlined in our four-year *Delivery Program 2017 - 2021*.

Over the last twelve months we've focused on our people and culture to help deliver better customer services. Central to this was the launch of our internal Business Transformation Program. This long-term initiative involves Council reviewing its core in-house services, technology and processes to improve the way Council conducts business.

While there was a significant focus on business improvement practices, the year was not without major work to our public infrastructure and assets. Over the last twelve months Council has delivered a total of 119 capital works projects, valued at \$17.2 million. Projects included:

- rehabilitation of Old South Road between Merrigang and Bowral Streets in Bowral
- rehabilitation of sections of Church Street in Burrawang
- reconstruction works on Wilson Drive in Hill Top
- construction of the new Colo Vale Rural Fire Station
- refurbishment of the Stephens Park amenities building
- resurfacing and tiling of Bowral Swimming Pool
- construction of Belmore Falls Road bridge, and
- the upgrade of Exeter's Bundanoon and Exeter Roads.

I am also pleased to report that these 119 projects were delivered \$334,000 under budget – a demonstration of Council's ongoing commitment to operating within its means to deliver quality services to the community. A number of these projects were funded under the *Investing in Our Future* Special Rate Variation improvement program.

Council continues to maintain a strong financial position as highlighted through the audited financial statements for the year ended 2017/18 (located in the annexures to this report).

Council has exceeded all the financial benchmarks set by the NSW State Government. There also continues to be improvement in the Building and Infrastructure Renewal Ratio and Infrastructure Maintenance Ratio. Our updated Long Term Financial Plan shows that we are on track to meet these benchmarks within the next 2-3 years.

Council continues to proactively seek grant funding through both the Federal and State Government to help deliver positive outcomes for the Wingecarribee Shire community.

During the 2017/18 financial year, Council secured funding through the first two rounds of the NSW State Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund for a range of community infrastructure projects, which it is anticipated will be delivered over the next 12-24 months.

A personal highlight was the announcement that Council had reported 158 days with no lost time injuries, demonstrating our ongoing commitment to improving workplace health and safety outcomes.

Also this year, Council joined the Canberra Region Joint Organisation. Joint organisations form part of the State Government's local government reform package aimed at creating stronger councils. Entering this partnership will enable us to further increase our profile in southeast NSW. This partnership will also provide opportunities for members to join together to advocate for improved funding for key projects across the region.

All of these achievements were made possible by the commitment of our staff, who continue to deliver the challenging goals we've set ourselves. I want to thank all staff for their ongoing commitment to achieving the outcomes set out in Council's Community Strategic Plan, and for their resilience in the face of the ever-changing and complex legislative and regulatory environment in which we operate.

Ann Prendergast
General Manager

COUNCIL INFORMATION

Wingecarribee Shire Council consists of nine councillors who are elected by the residents of the Shire every four years. The next election is scheduled for 2020.

Our Elected Council for 2016 - 2020



Clr Duncan Gair (Mayor)



Clr Garry Turland (Deputy Mayor)



Clr Grahame Andrews



Clr Ken Halstead



Clr Gordon Markwart



Clr Graham McLaughlin



Clr Peter Nelson



Clr Ian Scandrett



Clr Larry Whipper



Decision making and Council meetings information

Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month, except during a summer break in late December and January. Council's decision making takes place at these meetings.

The General Manager has extensive statutory and operational delegations, and is responsible for implementing the decisions of Council as well as the day-to-day management of the organisation.

The community contributes to Council decision making through advisory committees and community engagement activities where focus groups are developed to provide input to decisions on specific projects.

Council also undertakes statistically representative surveys and invites public comment on draft documents and project specific information.

At its meeting on 23 November 2016, Council adopted the committee governance structure for the 2016 - 2020 term. The structure includes:

- Council committees
- Advisory committees
- Community reference groups
- Sunset working groups
- External committees

Governance of these committees is supported by the Committee Manual 2016 - 2020, which was adopted by Council in February 2017.

For more information on Council committees, visit Council's website www.wsc.nsw.gov.au/council-committees.

SHIRE INFORMATION

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians

The Wingecarribee Shire Council acknowledges the Gundungurra and “Tharawal” or “Dharawal” (as it is referred to in historical records)¹ people as the traditional custodians of this place we now call the Wingecarribee Shire.

There is a strong association to the Wingecarribee, Wollondilly and Nattai rivers. These rivers are connected to their culture, dreaming and songlines.

A Dreamtime creation story, Gurangatch and Mirragan speaks about how this whole countryside came into being. The story describes an almighty struggle between two ancestral creator spirits, one a giant eel-like creature, Gurangatch, an incarnation of the ancestral rainbow serpent, and the other, a large native cat or quoll, Mirragan. Jenolan Caves holds a special significance to the Gundungurra people who knew it as ‘Binomil’ or ‘Bin-oo-mur’.

In spite of the impact of European settlement of Australia, the Gundungurra and Dharawal Aboriginal heritage has not been extinguished. The remains of prehistoric and historic Aboriginal occupation exists throughout the Southern Highlands.

State government records indicate over 400 significant Aboriginal sites within the Shire including 86 sites or objects that exist in the vicinity of Council managed land or roadside reserves.

Wingecarribee Shire Council recognises that by acknowledging our past, we are laying the groundwork for a future which embraces all Australians; a future based on mutual respect and shared responsibility for our land.

European settlement

The first European settlement in the Southern Highlands was established in 1821 beside a pebbly ford across the Wingecarribee River on the old Argyle Road, which ran from the newly settled land south of Camden through Bong Bong to Sutton Forrest then on to Goulburn. In 1831, when construction of a new line of road from Mittagong to the south commenced, travellers were diverted to the new administrative centre five miles downstream at Berrima.

When the railway bypassed Berrima to take in Mittagong, Bowral and Moss Vale, commercial focus shifted to those towns. At the first Commonwealth Census of 1911, the European population in the area had grown to just over 9,700. Most of the population was in the three towns of Bowral, Mittagong and Moss Vale, a pattern which continues to the present day.

Location and geography

Wingecarribee Shire is located 75 kilometres from the south western fringe of Sydney and 110 kilometres from Sydney’s central business district. The Shire has a total area of approximately 2,700 square kilometres, 56 per cent of which is north of the Wingecarribee River. It is comparable in size to that of urban Sydney, averaging 55 kilometres from east to west and 45 kilometres from north to south, with its geographic centre north west of Berrima and its demographic centre to the south east of Bowral. Much of the Shire is located at or above 640 metres above sea level.

The pattern of development is one of small towns and villages, separated by a semi-rural landscape.

¹ Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council (2015).
W: www.tharawal.com.au

Eastern parts of the Shire, known as the 'Yarrowa Brush' by early settlers, are bounded by the Illawarra Escarpment and Morton National Park. The north of the Shire is characterised by rugged eucalypt bushland. The Wollondilly and Wingecarribee Rivers flow through the west of the Shire, and the south of the Shire is bounded by Uringalla Creek.

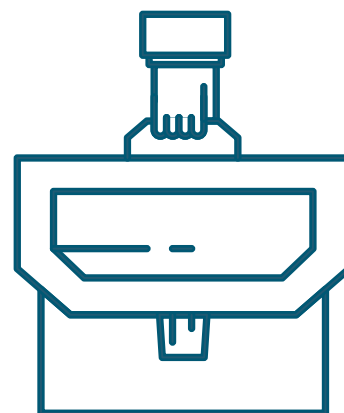
Community²

The Shire has a population of 49,070 (Census data, 2016). Our community enjoys a comprehensive choice of health and education services, and largely chooses to live in separate houses of low density. The median age of 47 years is higher than the NSW and Australian averages, and the median weekly household income of \$1,334 is lower than the NSW and Australian averages, but higher than the regional NSW average.

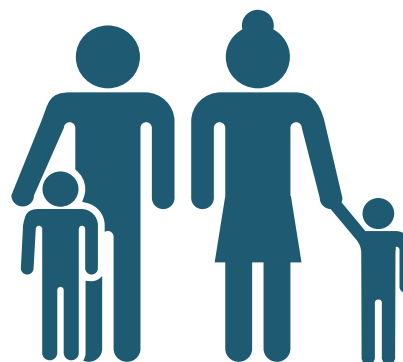
- Medium and high density housing accounts for 8 per cent of overall housing stock
- The population within the Shire has increased by almost 3,500 over the last five years
- Currently, 32.8 per cent of the population is over 60 years of age
- Two per cent of the population identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, compared with the NSW average of 2.9 per cent
- There has been an increase in the number of people needing assistance due to disability over the last five years
- 81.5 per cent of people who work in the Shire also live in the area
- Over 23 per cent of the population in the Shire participate in volunteering activities.



46% of residents are aged 50 years +



23% participated in voluntary work



Population increased by 3,500 over 5 years

² Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Census data

Industry

The Shire's numerous attractions mean that tourism continues to offer significant prospects for economic growth, replacing the more traditional primary industries of agriculture and forestry. There have been recent trends in economic growth towards trade, manufacturing, healthcare and social assistance, construction, education and training, and accommodation and food services.

Transportation

The Shire's towns are linked by bus and rail services, with Sydney Trains offering services from the Shire to Sydney in the north and Goulburn in the south. NSW Trainlink operates daily to and from Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. Buses operate to and from Moss Vale to Nowra and Wollongong, and link Colo Vale and Hill Top to Sydney Trains services at Picton. Within the Shire, buses link Moss Vale to the outlying villages of Berrima, Burrawang, Robertson, Exeter, Tallong, and Wingello; and Mittagong to Hill Top and Colo Vale.

Environment

Wingecarribee Shire has outstanding biodiversity values and this is due primarily to the diverse geology, large rainfall gradient east to west and altitude changes that occur resulting in many different habitat types. Habitats include sandstone forests, tall forests, rainforests, grassy woodlands, Permian slopes, riverine habitats, and upland swamps.

There is great diversity of native flora, with over 2,150 species. There are over 370 vertebrate fauna species. Approximately 50 threatened plants, over 56 threatened animals and one endangered population occur in the Shire. There are 15 Threatened Ecological Communities, and over 69 different plant community types. The Southern Highlands is also home to the largest koala population in southern NSW.

Wingecarribee Shire has large areas of high conservation value including part of the World Heritage Greater Blue Mountains area, and two declared wilderness areas.



Moss Vale Train Station



OUR STAFF

Workforce Demographics

Council continues to ensure that a skilled and professional workforce is employed to support the achievement of its operational and strategic goals. Like most NSW Councils, Wingecarribee Shire Council has an ageing workforce, with those aged over 45 making up over 55 per cent of the workforce. The representation of women within the workforce is currently at 39.8 per cent and 60.2 per cent for males.

Looking to the future, Council is working towards creating apprenticeship, traineeship and cadetship employment opportunities within Council. This will provide sustainable employment opportunities for residents within the Shire, and will create a solid foundation of skills for future workforce planning. It will also help with proactively managing skills shortages in some professions in Council.

As at 30 June 2018, Council had 417 full time equivalent employees, in the following age groups:

Age group	Number
17 - 24 years	11
25 - 34 years	76
35 - 44 years	100
45 - 54 years	127
55 - 64 years	85
65+ years	18
Total	417

Council Recognition

In September 2017, Local Government NSW awarded Council's Aboriginal Community Development Officer, Melissa Wiya, the *Aboriginal Indoor Employee of the Year* award. Ms Wiya received this award in recognition of her contribution to local and indigenous communities, her work on programs such as Council's annual NAIDOC Week celebrations and National Reconciliation Week activities, and meeting with Federal politicians and Government representatives as part of a delegation supporting the Walk for Justice.

Other recognition included:

- The Moss Vale War Memorial Aquatic Centre won an award at the Southern Highlands Local Business awards in the Fitness Service category
- Local Government NSW *Excellence in the Environment Award* for the Southern Highlands Koala Conservation Project
- Gold at the Canberra Region Tourism Awards for 'Pie Time' 2017
- Silver at the Qantas National Tourism Awards for 'Pie Time' 2017
- *World Toilet Tourism Award* for the Welcome Centre.



**Council's Aboriginal Community Development Officer
Melissa Wiya with Clinton Pryor at the 'Walk for Justice'**

Photo courtesy Andy Dries©



**Council's Manager Tourism and Events at the 2017
QANTAS National Tourism Awards**

Integrated Planning and Reporting

All councils in NSW work within the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework. Council's framework is shown in Figure 1. The framework recognises that Council plans and policies should not exist in isolation and are strategically linked to the aspirations of the community.

The framework ensures that Council, in partnership with the community, articulates the aspirations of the community within a Community Strategic Plan (CSP) which provides, at a minimum, a 10-year outlook.

The CSP is then supported by a four-year Delivery Program that outlines the actions Council will undertake to achieve the goals of the CSP. A one-year Operational Plan is also developed to specifically detail the activities to be performed in that financial year and the budget for doing so. Further, Council's Resourcing Strategy demonstrates how Council will manage its workforce, finances and assets to achieve the aspirations and issues identified in the CSP.

Wingecarribee 2031 was Council's CSP throughout the 2017/18 reporting period. It outlines five key themes that are underpinned by strategies that support the achievement of the community's long term goals and aspirations. These themes are:

1. Leadership
2. People
3. Places
4. Environment
5. Economy

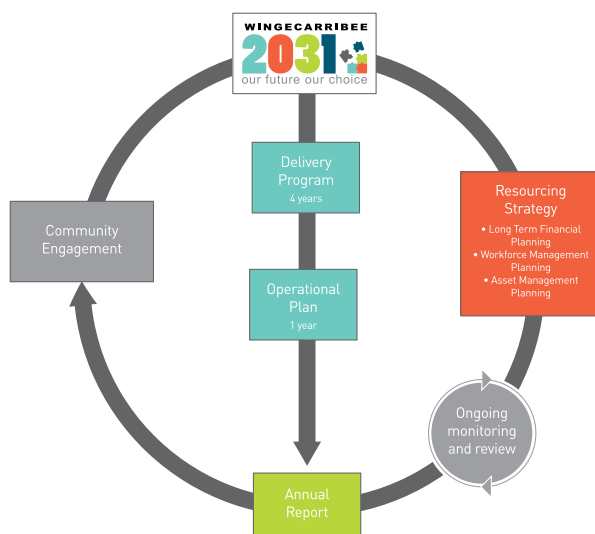


Figure 1. Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

Achievements

The Annual Report outlines Council's achievement of the strategies outlined in the *Delivery Program 2017 - 2021*. The achievement of these strategies ensures that Council is working towards the long term vision for our community articulated in the CSP.

Council's achievements are outlined within each of the key themes of the CSP, and the relevant Delivery Program strategies are listed numerically, for example DP01.

This is the first Annual Report focusing on the achievements in implementing the *Delivery Program 2017 - 2021*.

To view Council's current plans and documents visit www.wsc.nsw.gov.au/integrated-planning-and-reporting.



LEADERSHIP

Leadership services

- Asset Planning and Support
- Civic Leadership
- Corporate Information
- Corporate Relations
- Corporate Strategy
- Customer Service
- Development Services
- Economic Development
- Employee Services
- Financial Services
- Governance and Legal
- Information Services
- Property Services

Highlights and Special Projects:

- Significant milestone of 158 consecutive days of no lost time injuries in the workplace.
- Council joined the Canberra Region Joint Organisation.
- Funding approved for \$219 million of capital works projects over the next four years.
- Completion of the procurement framework.
- Ten 'Your Say Wingecarribee' consultation projects resulted in almost 8,300 unique visits to 'Your Say Wingecarribee' and over 700 people providing feedback on the projects.

Leadership Indicators

Leadership Indicators	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Formal Government Information (Public Access) requests processed within 20 working days	32	48	33	43
Hours lost due to workplace injury	2,121	860	2,275	539

DP01 Develop and implement an elected-member professional development program

Council is awaiting the release of the *Councillor Induction and Professional Development Guidelines* by the NSW Government before progressing further with this action. Once finalised, the guidelines will be issued under section 23A of the *Local Government Act 1993*, which requires councils to take into consideration the guidelines before exercising any of its functions.

Following release of the guidelines, Council will commence work on a needs analysis for its Councillor professional development program.

DP02 Strengthen Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting and governance frameworks

Work commenced on the development of the *Operational Plan and Budget 2018/19* in November 2017. As required under the *Local Government Act 1993*, the Operational Plan and Budget was placed on public exhibition in April/May 2018, and was adopted by Council on 13 June 2018. To further support Council's Delivery Program, revised performance measures are being developed to determine the effectiveness of the program.

A Fraud Control Health Check was undertaken to strengthen Council's fraud and corruption control framework. The resulting internal audit report found that, in most instances, Council has the controls within its business processes that were recommended by the Independent Commission Against Corruption. The report contained 12 findings with 32 recommended improvement opportunities. Each of these recommendations was accepted by Council, and 13 have already been implemented, with the remaining 19 to be implemented in coming months.

DP03 Improve community understanding and awareness of Council decisions

Council uses a variety of communication channels to inform the community of its decisions. Staff continue their positive working relationships with local and regional media stakeholders in a bid to ensure Council activities and decisions are reported. Notices of upcoming meetings of Council are placed in local newspapers, and Council meeting agendas and minutes are published on Council's website.

Council adopted its Media Policy in April 2018, which provides a framework for Council's interaction with media outlets.

DP04 Develop and maintain an engaged and safe workforce

Council continues to monitor all workplace incidents, and where required, these are investigated to prevent future incidents. Overall, the number of days lost as a result of each lost time injury continues to fall, with Council achieving a significant milestone in 2017/18 of 158 consecutive days without any lost time injuries. Council rolled out a new initiative in 2018 with the launch of TAKE 5, which is designed to identify site risks for any type of work across Council.

Council is developing a Workplace Health Program to support wellbeing in the workplace, based on the South Western Sydney Local Health District's Five Ways to Wellbeing.

Skills shortages continue to be an issue with a number of professions difficult to attract and retain. This includes planners, development engineers, accredited certifiers, accountants, engineers, mechanical fitters (water and sewer specialists), and various water and sewer operators. With an ageing workforce, the development of replacement staff through internal training of apprentices and cadets remains a high priority.

DP05 Implement actions from Council's Fit for the Future Improvement Program

Council's *Fit for the Future* Improvement Plan included 15 strategies, and Council has commenced implementation of all improvement strategies. Council's Long Term Financial Plan outlines projections for Council achieving the benchmarks set by the NSW Government.

Council is currently on track to meet the seven financial and asset management benchmarks which have been set by the NSW State Government to determine a Fit for the Future council.



Infrastructure Services working safely on-site

The NSW Government's *Fit for the Future* Local Government Reform Program contained as a key initiative the formation of Joint Organisations, with the aim of providing a forum for councils and State agencies to collaborate, plan and deliver on regional priorities. The principal functions of a joint organisation are:

- Strategic planning and priority setting
- Intergovernmental collaboration, and
- Shared leadership and advocacy.

Council has resolved to participate in the Canberra Region Joint Organisation, and together with other members is working to establish the appropriate governance documentation to ensure it operates efficiently. Joint organisations will commence operations from 1 July 2018.

DP06 Ensure Council's financial systems, procedures and practices are in line with industry best practice

Council's Auditor, the NSW Audit Office, issued an independent auditor's report stating that Council's financial records and statements are fairly and appropriately presented.

Over the course of the year, Council has considered variations to the 2017/18 budget on a quarterly basis, in accordance with legislative requirements. The year end result for the 2017/18 financial year was a surplus of \$1.16 million. The surplus was allocated to the Capital Projects Reserve and Property Development Reserve.

The 2018/19 Budget (including four year forward estimates) and Long Term Financial Plan were formally adopted by Council in June 2018. Council continues to demonstrate its commitment to strong financial management by adopting a four year balanced budget.

The adopted budget includes funding for an unprecedented level of capital works. Over the next four years, \$219 million of infrastructure renewal and improvement projects will be undertaken. This includes allocations of:

- \$107 million for water and sewer infrastructure improvements, including \$62 million towards the upgrading of Bowral and Moss Vale treatment plants
- \$59 million towards roads, bridges and footpaths
- \$21 million towards community buildings and recreation areas, and
- \$17 million towards stormwater drainage works.

Council is proposing to borrow \$48 million over the course of the next four years, which will be used to fund a number of significant infrastructure projects. Council has sufficient financial capacity to fund the debt servicing associated with these loans, in accordance with its revised Loan Borrowings Policy, which was adopted in May 2018.

Council adopted a revised Investment Policy in July 2017, which now includes a position on preferencing financial institutions that do not support the fossil fuel industry (where all other factors are equal).

DP07 Manage Council's fleet to ensure maximum value obtained

The total value of Council's plant and light vehicle replacement program for the 2017/18 financial year was \$2.8 million. Major replacement items include a rear-delivery patching truck, the Southern Highlands Community Transport Community Bus, two wing deck mowers, and a materials handler for the Resource Recovery Centre.

Work has commenced on a number of the recommendations raised through the plant and fleet internal audit conducted in early 2018, including updating key fleet management policies, refinement of plant expenditure and utilisation reports, and developing an implementation plan for Council's fleet management software.

DP08 Manage Council's property portfolio to ensure to maximise community benefit

Council continues to manage its property portfolio within legislative requirements and within the policy direction set by Council. This has included a range of property acquisitions and disposals, leasing and licensing, road closures and administration of other property matters.

Council has completed a number of property acquisitions and disposals during the 2017/18 financial year, including the acquisition of two strategic parcels of land - one that will allow for future parking improvements in the Bowral CBD, and another to accommodate an extension of Bowral Cemetery.

The enforcement of site access arrangements for the Mt Gibraltar Telecommunications Tower also continues to ensure Council's ongoing compliance with legislative and safety requirements.

DP09 Procurement activities are undertaken to achieve best value while underpinned by a robust ethical framework which enables local supplier participation

Council has undertaken a significant review of its procurement guidelines and procedures. Council formally adopted the Procurement Policy in May 2018.

The Procurement Policy and Guidelines were developed to reflect Council's position that all procurement activities will:

- comply with legislation
- demonstrate best value for money
- consider long-term financial, environmental and social outcomes, and
- be conducted in a transparent, fair and ethical manner.

A range of initiatives have been introduced to encourage local supplier participation, including advertising in local papers, holding pre-lodgement briefings, and the inclusion of a mandatory non-cost selection criteria for local participation (weighting of 10% for all formally evaluated tenders and quotations).

Council has continued to manage its panel arrangements to ensure work is undertaken to a high standard and in accordance with contract rates. A number of major contracts have been renegotiated over the past 12 months, including the renewal of the plant and equipment hire panel contract, the vegetation and bushland panel contract, and the renewal of the tree management panel contract.

DP10 Develop and implement enhanced asset management practices

Council has progressively implemented the Asset Management Improvement Plan over the course of the 2017/18 year to enhance asset management practices within Council. The Asset Management Improvement Plan forms part of the broader Strategic Asset Management Plan, which establishes a framework to guide planning, construction, maintenance and operation of the infrastructure essential for Council to provide services to the community.

Notable achievements in this area include reviewing customer service levels, introducing online tablet-based asset systems, and introducing a new asset inspection regime. In addition, Council also continued the ongoing program of reviewing individual asset management plans, revaluing assets, collecting asset data, and updating risk management systems.

DP11 Develop and implement Business Transformation Program

The Business Transformation Program was established to ensure Council systems and processes support effective service delivery and to ensure that the way Council interacts with its customers is responsive and provides a variety of methods of interaction for customers.

Work is currently underway on four priority projects:

- Delivering a customer first culture
- Development application determination times
- Maintenance work management
- Assets quality control.

DP12 Enhance customer interaction with Council

A focus of the Business Transformation Program outlined at DP11 is enhancing Council's interaction with customers. Several areas were identified for immediate attention, with the following projects occurring during 2017/18:

- instigating training in customer service for outdoor staff
- improving workflows for transferring enquiries, prioritising customer enquiries over non-urgent, information-based correspondence.

In addition, a 'Customer First' working group has been established to review all customer contact channels in order to develop an improvement action plan. This work will continue into the 2018/19 financial year.

DP13 Ensure council services are delivered efficiently and effectively



Bowral Swimming Centre

Council has an ongoing Service Delivery Review program, with Council's Southern Regional Livestock Exchange and Aquatic Services under review during the 2017/18 period. The outcome of both of these reviews is expected in the 2018/19 financial year.

Council is awaiting the outcome of a grant application through the NSW Government Growing Local Economies Fund to progress proposed upgrade works to the Southern Regional Livestock Exchange.

DP14 Identify opportunities for regional collaboration

Council formally resolved to become a member of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation in February 2018. Further information on the aims of Joint Organisations can be found under DP05.

Council also continues to work with regional programs and groups, including:

- Cities Power Partnership
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- NSW Roads Congress
- Primary Health Network
- Public Libraries Association South East Zone
- Regional Development Australia Southern Inland
- Regional Illegal Dumping Program
- Regional Infrastructure Working Group
- Roads and Maritime Service Regional Forum.

DP15 Provide quality, timely and accessible information to the community

Council continues to provide quality, timely and accessible information to the community. News items are proactively identified within Council, and communicated through multiple channels including media releases, quarterly publications of *Wingecarribee Today*, radio and television interviews, staff newsletters, Council's online digital Media Centre, and via Council's Facebook and Twitter social media accounts.

Staff monitor social media sites and provide prompt feedback to queries or concerns. During 2017/18, Council issued 138 media releases and published 259 social media posts.

In addition, Council has 4,290 individual subscribers to its four main e-newsletters: *ArtsInfo*, *Wingecarribee Web*, *Wildlife Wingecarribee*, and *Wingecarribee Shire Council Connect*. A total of 97 updates were sent across these four e-newsletters during the reporting period, covering a range of issues including the six week Get Ready for Bushfire challenge and the Station Street upgrade proposal in Bowral.

DP16 Implement an effective Community Engagement Framework

In 2017/18, engagement activities continued to build on relationships with key audiences and improve the consistency of communication with internal and external stakeholders. Consultation for construction projects attracted significant interest in the community.

A focus for the 2017/18 year has been the development and launch of a Community Engagement Toolkit for Council staff, to ensure effective community engagement with major projects. In addition, a survey about communication and community engagement was developed, to seek information about the ways residents, businesses and property owners look for and access information, and expect to be consulted. The survey results will be used to inform the final review of Council's Community Engagement Strategy and associated policy. The survey is scheduled for launch in the latter half of 2018.

The community has been invited to consider matters such as the upgrade of Station Street in Bowral, the rejuvenation of Bowral Memorial Hall, the Berrima Road deviation project, the draft Operational Plan and Budget 2018/19, a draft Urban Tree policy, a swimming pool satisfaction survey, and a playground survey.

Ten projects were uploaded to Council's online consultation hub Your Say Wingecarribee for consideration during the year, with 8,299 unique visits to the website, and 709 people actively engaging with the tool. Over 670 of these participated in surveys, with the playgrounds survey and the swimming pool satisfaction survey attracting the most submissions.

Council has 4,290 individual subscribers to its four main e-newsletters

DP17 Support Council committees and working groups

The committee governance framework is well utilised by staff and other stakeholders, and Council commenced a review of the framework in 2018. The outcome of the review is timed to coincide with the expiry of the two-year term for Councillor representation on committees in September 2018.

DP18 Actively build capacity for community participation in leadership including mentoring and support

Council continues to engage with various sector groups in developing a number of actions to build leadership capacity in the community. Work has commenced on skills exchange programs, innovation partnerships and continuous learning programs.

A proposed Southern Highlands Skills Exchange Platform aims to leverage community-wide leadership by facilitating continuous learning.

DP19 Develop partnerships and networking with community, government and business

Council continues to engage with individual members of the community, as well as sector groups, community groups, businesses, State and Federal government agencies, and non-government organisations.



Seniors Community Reference Group



PEOPLE

People services:

- Aquatic Services
- Asset Planning and Support
- Children's Services
- Civic Leadership
- Community Wellbeing
- Economic Development
- Emergency Management
- Library Services
- Natural Area Management
- Parks and Recreation
- Regulatory Compliance

Highlights and Special Projects:

- Community events for people with disability, seniors, and young people.
- Participation in regional committees including Primary Health Network and Headspace.
- Community Assistance Scheme grants totalling almost \$130,000 for 59 community projects.

Library Statistics

Library statistics	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Total Library Loans	277,875	228,231	248,195	247,796
Library Visits	159,616	164,557	167,225	166,972
Enquiries [#]	-	-	-	39,575
Internet Sessions [^]	14,506	17,997	16,786	14,851
Wireless Sessions [^]	-	-	10,589	14,534
eLibrary downloads [*]	8,871	9,404	9,815	18,590
Library website visits	40,313	40,549	48,867	51,545

[#] new statistic for 2017/18, estimate based on data collated for the State Library of NSW Enquiry Completion Rate Survey

[^] wireless sessions commenced in the second quarter 2016/17, impacting on the number of internet sessions

^{*} download numbers are included in Total Library Loans, and include eBooks, eAudio and eMagazines.

People Indicators

People Indicators	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Area of sports fields per 1,000 residents (hectares)	2.52	2.2*	2.4	2.2
Operating cost of actively maintained land per hectare (\$)	6,437	10,237*	12,702	12,003
Actively maintained land per 1,000 residents (hectares)	6.99	6.2*	6.3	6.3
Provision of playgrounds per 1,000 residents	6.9	6.3*	5.7	5.8

* Note: Council implemented a Parks and Open Spaces Strategy in 2015/16 which is being used to inform decision making on the provision of parks and associated levels of service. In developing this Strategy, Council reviewed its baseline data (in conjunction with industry benchmarks) and as such, the information in 2015/16 was updated to reflect this data.

Swimming Pool Attendance



Moss Vale War Memorial Aquatic Centre

Attendance per pool (during season/ annually)	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Bowral	50,090	36,341	47,965	43,854
Bundanoon	5,150	5,314	6,146	6,066
Moss Vale War Memorial Aquatic Centre	145,126	164,584	166,144	189,207

* Note: Mittagong Pool was not operational during 2017/18.

DP20 Advocate for improved health services in the Shire

The health and wellbeing of our community remains a priority in the work Council staff undertake. Council has been actively engaged in the development and promotion of a number of health initiatives in the community during the year.

Council staff participate in the South West Sydney Primary Health Network and associated initiatives, including a suite of programs to address the mental health needs of our community. Council also has worked with health agencies on programs including:

- Addressing food security issues through the support and promotion of OzHarvest distributing fresh food from local suppliers to vulnerable families. This includes fresh food being available to families through the Aboriginal Cultural Centre.
- Delivering the Go4Fun program at the Aboriginal Cultural Centre
- Developing a safe and supportive environment for families of ice drug users to meet and link with relevant support services
- Participating in the Tackling the Challenge – Talking Local Men's Health project
- Holding a Positive Ageing Forum during the Seniors Festival, focusing on the Five Ways to Wellbeing initiative
- Participating in the Headspace Consortium
- Coordinating the delivery of the Love Bites program to local high schools
- Coordinating Youth Week events across the Shire
- Promoting preventative health initiatives
- Sourcing State Government funding for future programs.

DP21 Partner with community based organisations in provision of services



Youth Mental Health Forum

Council staff take an active role in participating in local, regional and state-wide forums on a range of topics relevant to the community, including attending regular network, interagency and committee meetings to represent the needs of the community and keep informed of the issues and concerns being raised. These meetings provide the opportunity for collaboration, advocacy and productive partnerships with community based organisations.

The Community Services Expo is an annual event providing an opportunity for community organisations to promote their services and programs to the public and network with each other. This year, the Bowral Memorial Hall was at capacity with 57 stall holders, including transport, aged care, disability, Aboriginal services, housing and counselling services.

The Seniors Festival and Youth Week are major annual events, and the success of both of these celebrations was enhanced due to the partnerships that were created to deliver a range of different activities across the Shire.



Council and Belgravia Leisure staff celebrate their win at the 2017 Southern Highlands Local Business Awards

DP22 Partner with State and community organisations to provide a broad range of health and wellness programs to target specific needs of the community

The Five Ways to Wellbeing initiative has been strongly embedded in the delivery of health and wellness programs delivered by Council in 2017/18. Evidence suggests that a small improvement in community wellbeing can help people thrive, cope with challenging times and reduce the severity of some mental health problems. Building the five actions of *Take Notice*, *Connect*, *Give*, *Be Active*, and *Keep Learning* regularly into day to day living can positively contribute to wellbeing. This initiative was the framework for Youth Week activities and for parts of the Seniors Festival.

Partnerships with other service providers, including South West Sydney Local Health District, OzHarvest, and the Red Cross, have seen an increase in the services available at the Aboriginal Cultural Centre.

DP23 Provide affordable sport, recreation and leisure services

Council continued the maintenance schedule of facilities, including over 30 projects at more than 20 facilities. Work on the Shire's swimming pool facilities was necessarily undertaken over the winter months, with facilities being upgraded at both Bowral Pool and Bundanoon Pool.

In 2017/18, the Moss Vale War Memorial Aquatic Centre won an award at the 2017 Southern Highlands Local Business Awards in the Fitness Services category. Feedback received through the centre's 'Ask Nicely' feedback program indicated that community members are happy with the service being provided at the centre.

From 1 July 2018, the centre will be operated and managed by BlueFit following a competitive tender process.

**Over 239,000 people
visited a Council
Swimming Centre
in 2017/18**

DP24 Partner with Police, business and community representatives to implement the Community Safety Plan

A number of initiatives from the Community Safety Plan 2015-2020 were implemented throughout 2017/18.

Staff actively participated in the Southern Highlands Domestic Violence Forum, which has a membership including Police, business and community organisations. The forum has addressed initiatives to support women with or without children escaping domestic violence to remain living in this community. A banner stating 'Southern Highlands Says No to Domestic Violence' has begun a tour of the Shire, being displayed at different schools and sporting events.

The Expect Respect golf day held in November 2017 at the Highlands Golf Club attracted a record number of players who gave generously, and assisted in raising awareness in the community.

'Tips for Car Security' flyers were distributed in the community prior to Christmas as a reminder to residents to lock their vehicles, and not leave valuables behind.

The Love Bites program was delivered to students in a local high school. The program is a school based domestic violence and sexual assault prevention program. The program will be rolled out to secondary schools in the area.

A funding grant application was submitted to NSW Police through their Crime Prevention Strategy to address issues of vandalism identified at Corbett Gardens. The outcome of the grant application will be known later in 2018.

Council facilitates the Wingecarribee Community Safety Committee, which aims to provide a safer community for all people in the Shire. Committee membership includes:

- NSW Member for Goulburn
- NSW Member for Wollondilly
- Representatives from the Hume Police District
- Southern Highlands Chamber of Commerce
- Moss Vale and Rural Chamber of Commerce
- Southern Highlands Liquor Accord
- Argyle Community Housing
- Four community representatives.



Council's Ranger and NSW Police distribute the 'Tips for Car Security' flyer in Bowral

DP25 Partner with agencies to ensure emergency management processes and procedures are in place

Council has undertaken a number of activities to ensure the Shire is well placed to deal with emergencies as they arise. In July 2017, Council participated in a biosecurity field exercise with the Wingecarribee Shire Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC), based on an outbreak of foot and mouth disease. The exercise was the first of its kind in NSW, and was an outstanding success with a number of valuable learnings and issues identified.

In September 2017, Council staff launched the six-week Get Ready for Bushfire challenge in conjunction with the Southern Highlands Rural Fire Service (RFS). The program coincided with the RFS Get Ready weekend and included a series of weekly emails which provided information to residents on how to prepare a personal Bushfire Survival Plan, and what to do to survive a bushfire.

The LEMC endorsed the Wingecarribee Local Snow Plan in February 2018, and in June 2018 ran an emergency management exercise based on a significant snow event, to test the plan. Council will work with the LEMC in assessing the outcomes of this exercise and to incorporate key learnings into the plan.

During the Seniors Festival in April 2018, the LEMC presented a two-hour workshop called Fire and Ice aimed at building resilience in seniors to extreme weather events. In support of the workshop, Council staff wrote an editorial piece for the Climate Council, which was syndicated in 78 newspapers around Australia, highlighting that communities around the country are realising the importance of building community resilience in the face of climate change.



Biosecurity field exercise at the SRLX, July 2017

Council applied for a Community Resilience Innovation Program Grant to further develop the workshop and collateral materials into a portable community engagement and education module for seniors in the hope of building greater community resilience to natural disasters. Council will be informed of the outcome of the grant application early in the new financial year.

DP26 Implement public health and safety regulatory programs

During the 2017/18 year, Council undertook 260 food safety inspections in line with the NSW government's Scores on Doors food safety program, which was adopted by Council in 2015. A total of 115 food shops received a score of 5 stars, 58 received 4 stars, and 87 received either 3 stars or less or were outside the remit of the program.

Council has continued its education and awareness campaign associated with the program ensuring that food operators are made aware of their obligations under the Food Act 2003 to promote public health through food safety.

DP27 Assess the changing profile of the Shire and prioritise services accordingly

The 2016 Australian Census data was released progressively in 2017/18.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics data is released every five years, providing a valuable insight into the demographics of the community. A number of presentations were delivered internally and externally, ensuring that a broad range of people have access to this information. The most recent Census data is available on Council's website.

Council's active participation in a range of stakeholder networks and interagency meetings provides opportunities to work closely with local service providers and be aware of potential and future needs or issues, and devise strategies to address them. The exchange of experiences and expertise along with the communication of research and best practice contribute to the delivery of services in the community sector.

DP28 Provide children's services to support family life



Children's Services

Council's Children's Services continue to provide services and support to families across the Shire through the Family Day Care program and the Out of School Hours service. Both services were affected by the transition to the new Federal Child Care Subsidy Package,

due to commence on 1 July 2018 and is the government's largest ever child care subsidy reform.

Council was successful in its application for a Community Child Care Fund Grant, and is now looking to develop a business and marketing plan to ensure the ongoing viability of Family Day Care into the future. Over the next three years, Council will be working towards a sustainable future, looking for ways to increase numbers of Family Day Care educators, particularly in outlying areas where there is a lack of available child care services to support families.

DP29 Support agencies to implement community programs and initiatives

The Wingecarribee Community Assistance Scheme encourages the development of community initiatives and aims to build capacity, encourage participation and support initiatives that promote partnerships and working together to maintain our community and its assets.

A total of 59 community projects received financial assistance through this scheme in 2017/18, ranging from \$432 to \$7,000. Successful projects focus on arts and culture, sport and recreation, community development and the environment. Council awarded a total of \$127,600 under this scheme.

The scheme will continue into 2018/19, with 73 applications for financial assistance received. In June 2018, 59 of these applications were recommended for funding for the 2018/19 financial year.

**Council awarded
\$127,600 under
the Community
Assistance Scheme**

Council also worked to streamline the application process for Contingency Fund sponsorships, and guidelines were developed to assist community groups in organising one-off events or seeking sponsorship for those events. Council also facilitated Club Grants, with Mittagong RSL and Moss Vale Services Club providing \$50,000 for community groups.

DP30 Provide companion animal services



Mossy Moggies desexing and microchipping program

Council continues to promote responsible companion animal management and works with pet owners in the Shire to ensure they meet their obligations, through a combination of education and regulatory enforcement. Council has conducted proactive patrols of off-leash hot spots to educate dog owners on their responsibilities when using public spaces, as well as responding to reports of dog attacks, barking dogs, and strays.

In September 2017, Council staff submitted a report on the grant funded Mossy Moggies program to the Office of Local Government. Under this program Council provided desexing and micro-chipping for cats belonging to socially disadvantaged people. The feedback from partner organisations and people who participated in the program was overwhelmingly positive. In total, 61 cats were desexed and microchipped during the course of this program.

Council continues to operate Wingecarribee Animal Shelter, providing high quality care for the lost and abandoned animals of the Shire. Council staff continue to work with local stakeholder groups, such as the Friends of Wingecarribee Animal Shelter, in order to achieve commendable re-homing rates under Council's Alternatives to Euthanasia Policy. The shelter continues to engage with the community through media such as its Facebook page, as well as through volunteers and community groups.

DP31 Support initiatives which enhance opportunities for learning and skill development

Council has worked with the University of Wollongong and TAFE Moss Vale, through the Learning Sector Group initiative, to offer Certificate III and IV courses in Ageing at Moss Vale TAFE, short courses, and guest lectures in dementia care at the University.

In conjunction with Regional Development Australia Southern Inland, Council has commenced development of a digital hub for job seekers and businesses to connect in the region. The hub will provide information to Council on skills gaps, employment rates, and skilled visa requirements. It is designed to be used by a wide range of people, including those with disabilities.

The hub will provide a skills gap analysis to each applicant, identifying opportunities to increase skills and therefore employability. This will facilitate Council's work with training partners in the region to assist job seekers to increase their skills for the employment opportunities available. Overall, the hub will assist in the creation of a workforce and education ecosystem for the region, designed to connect all community participants through one technology enabled platform.

DP32 Provide a range of services and programs through Council Library service

The number of loans remains constant over the reporting period when compared to previous reports, although the type of material and format continues to evolve to accommodate an increasingly online environment.

Visitation is slightly down over the reporting period. Interlibrary loans continue to fall, indicating the current collection meets community needs. A new library website is under development, and will allow greater access and interactivity through the use of mobile devices. The use of Facebook as a communication tool has been reviewed, in particular with respect to advertising children's services within the library, as attendance fills quickly for these activities.

Council took part in the State Library of NSW's Enquiry Completion Rate Survey in 2018, to determine how many reference enquiries were made at each library service for the year. It was calculated that library staff answer almost 40,000 enquiries each year.

Library staff answer close to 40,000 enquiries each year

A new e-resource service 'BorrowBox' was launched in February 2018. This service allows members to access new eBooks and eAudiobooks from the BorrowBox app, which can easily be downloaded to their mobile devices and computers.

Council continues to offer a range of services to the community, including:

- School holiday programs
- A summer reading club for school aged children
- Storytime for preschool aged children
- Rhymetime for newborns to two year olds
- Coding classes for school children
- Lego club
- HSC lock-in
- Class visits from local schools, and
- Assistance to local book clubs.

Council is undertaking a stocktake of all local history items, and the information accumulated will provide a comprehensive overview of the collection, identify preservation issues, increase specialised knowledge, guide strategic plans and identify opportunities for grant applications.

DP33 Implement sector plans that address key barriers to participation in community life

Council actively promotes and supports opportunities for people to be involved in community life. Council provides the financial resources for Volunteering Wingecarribee to recruit volunteers and refer them to community organisations.

The 2016 Census data indicates that 23.5 per cent of people aged over 15 years living in the Wingecarribee Shire volunteer their time, which represents an increase of 1,221 people from the previous data in 2011.

Young people in our community play an important role in the planning of events and activities for young people, with youth participation a key element of the Youth Week 2018 planning and coordination.

Fortnightly meetings at the Youth Hub in Bowral allowed for active participation and input into the planning and delivery of celebrations throughout Youth Week. This process allows the young people involved to develop knowledge and experience in event management, including budgeting, risk management and marketing.

The Seniors Community Reference Group were active participants in the planning and delivery of the Seniors Festival, with inclusion and accessibility key components of all events during the Festival.



Moss Vale Pedestrian Bridge

In July 2017, Council commenced implementation of its Disability Inclusion Action Plan. The plan presents an opportunity for Council to work towards sustainable outcomes while striving for equity, access, participation and equal rights for everyone. During this reporting period, Council commenced implementation of a number of initiatives to achieve better access and inclusion for people with a disability, including:

- Distribution of Missed Business Guides across the Shire to retail and small businesses
- Commencement of construction of a pedestrian bridge over the Unanderra railway line at Moss Vale
- Preparation of a Play Spaces Strategy
- Implementation of the Public Toilet Strategy

- Inclusion of a disability access question in the annual public swimming pool survey, and
- Participation in the development and review of the LGNSW online inclusive tourism training modules.

DP34 Develop and implement initiatives that support new residents participating in community life

Council is committed to providing all residents, including new residents, information that enables them to actively participate in the Shire. The Seniors Directory 2017 - 2019 has been produced as a free resource for people wanting information on aged care services, support groups and leisure activities. With over 30 per cent of our population aged over 60 years, it is a popular resource.

A new initiative in 2018 was the development of the FunFinder app, which aims to provide children, young people and their families easy access to a range of activities and events in and around our Shire. The app was an initiative of the Highlands Child, Youth and Family Network that applied for funds from Wingecarribee Club Grants, and was administered and financially supported by Council.

DP35 Support intergenerational programs and projects

During the 2017/18 year, Council organised a joint social event with local high school students and senior members of the community, to coincide with both the Seniors Festival and Youth Week, which overlapped in April 2018. This event led to connections, conversations and shared stories leading to a greater understanding and appreciation of each generation.



International Day of People with Disability

DP36 Support and co-ordinate a diverse range of community festivals and celebrations

Council has planned and delivered a range of community events during the 2017/18 year.

NAIDOC Week

The community response to this event has been increasing, outgrowing the capacity of the Civic Centre Theatre. During this event held at the Moss Vale Services Club, the 1967 Referendum Community Art Project was unveiled.

The Traditional Song and Dance group gave their first public performance following four workshops involving local primary and high school students during Term 2. Council partnered with National Parks and Wildlife Services to host two Finding Food in the Forest school holiday activities held during NAIDOC Week.

International Day of People with Disability

Council partnered with local disability services to host the Ability Walk at Lake Alexandra, Mittagong. The event was attended by about 80 people supported by their disability service provider. The event also included entertainment provided by local band *Hidden Wonders* (from Interchange Australia), games, art and craft activities, and a BBQ lunch.

Seniors Festival

The Seniors Festival commenced in April and ran for 14 days with over 40 events and activities covering every day of the festival. This year the festival promoted inclusiveness and encouraged seniors to remain active and engaged in the community. It is estimated that over 150 people participated in the festival.

National Youth Week

Youth Week celebrations also commenced in April with a calendar of six events planned in collaboration with young people and youth services. The week culminated in an outdoor cinema event at Leighton Gardens attended by over 120 young people.

DP37 Promote and deliver initiatives which enhance community understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage

Council works with a range of community groups to support a greater understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage. Attendance at the monthly Wingecarribee Aboriginal Cluster Group (now called the Wingecarribee Aboriginal Network) has steadily increased with a range of service providers working together to address the seven strategic priorities. The network's priorities are housing, health, education and employment, community connection, youth, projects and local decision making.

Council partnered with Red Room Poetry to deliver workshops in April 2018, engaging Aboriginal school students to explore poetry in first language to celebrate, share and preserve knowledge of First Nation languages and culture. The project aimed to strengthen the connection of First Nation students to country, language and community to enable them to feel pride in their cultural identities.

DP38 Facilitate the promotion of community arts, emerging artists and cultural awareness and activities

The Shire has a vibrant, diverse and creative community, which is particularly evident during the Southern Highlands Art Festival, launched in late October 2017. The feature event was the Art Trail, held over two consecutive weekends in November. This event continues to grow in popularity, in terms of both contributing artists and visitors. In 2017, 44 studios participated (an increase of 26 per cent from 2016) and visitors made over 6,700 studio visits (up 27 per cent from 2016).

The Foyer Gallery at Council provides an opportunity to promote emerging artists, and hosted a variety of exhibitions during 2017/18. For example, local Aboriginal artists exhibited their work during NAIDOC Week, Mental Health Month hosted artists living with persistent and severe mental health issues, and an exhibition of artwork by people living with disability coincided with the International Day of People with Disability.

Professional development and capacity building of artists remains an important part of the Arts and Culture Strategic Plan. Council facilitated several workshops in 2017/18, including a range of legal workshops for artists.

ArtsInfo continues to be a well subscribed online newsletter providing weekly updates on arts and culture events in the local area. Each edition promotes over 70 current and future events highlighting the diversity of cultural events available in our community.

Council has partnered with other regional councils to create a directory of artists in the local community, where individual artists can upload their information. The directory will provide a great resource for those wanting to access local artists. Local artists will be invited to add their information to the directory later in 2018.

Extensive consultations relating to the refurbishment of the Bowral Memorial Hall took place in 2017/18, providing opportunity for community input into the project, which was shortlisted for funding from the NSW Regional Cultural Fund. Council is in the process of preparing a submission for the second round of applications for funding, with the outcome expected to be known early in the 2018/19 year.



PLACES

Places services:

- Asset Planning and Support
- Community Wellbeing
- Economic Development
- Parks and Recreation
- Regulatory Compliance
- Stormwater
- Strategic Land Use Planning
- Transport
- Water and Sewer

Highlights and Special Projects:

- \$17.2 million spent on capital works projects.
- 200 street trees planted.
- Wingecarribee Heritage Awards held with 10 projects across eight categories recognised.
- Street light replacement program to reduce Council's energy consumption.

Places Indicators

Places Indicators	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Construction Certificates Approved	547	406	521	438
Development Applications Approved	779	697	934	985
Sub-division Certificates Approved	52	41	79	92
Sealed road network re-sealed annually (%)	4.55	9.7	7.9	9.1
Unsealed road network re-sheeted (%)	20.8*	19.3*	5	6
Unsealed road network maintained (maintenance grade) (kms)	205	224	207	200
Footpath maintained annually (carriageway kms)	5.3	8.84	10.08	13.6
Shared paths and cycle paths repaired (lineal metres)	505	100	4,410	3,311
Footpath installed annually (lineal metres)	615	1,980	1,420	1,100
Shared paths and cycle paths installed annually (lineal metres)	953	236	450	320

*Note: The unsealed road network was subject to increased re-sheeting works in 2014/15 and 2015/16 due to Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme funding available during this period.

DP39 Undertake advocacy activities to further the development of an integrated public transport network

Staff regularly attend regional forums with the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS), National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, and Institute of Public Works Engineers Australia to keep informed of regional issues. Grant funding opportunities are also explored to further the development of an integrated public transport network.

All asset management plans incorporate the efficient connections and interface between various transport modes including rail, road, buses, taxis, cycling, pedestrian and other forms of public transport.

This year Council staff have held meetings with the RMS to discuss and plan improved network outcomes within the Shire. Staff have also attended regional Infrastructure Working Group meetings to plan regional integrated public transport networks.

DP40 Provide infrastructure linkages between public transport hubs

Council has developed a robust capital works program which includes delivery of key infrastructure projects that improve links between public transport hubs.

Projects currently underway or completed in 2017/18 include:

- Station Street upgrade, Bowral
- Berrima Road bypass, Moss Vale
- Old South Road rehabilitation, between Bowral and Merrigang Streets, Bowral
- Part Church Road rehabilitation, Burrawang
- Merrigang Street planning and upgrade, Bowral
- Pedestrian Bridge construction over Unanderra railway line, Moss Vale
- Kirkham Road reconstruction planning, Bowral

Council has received grant funding of \$1.43 million under the NSW Fixing Country Roads program for the reconstruction of Kirkham Road, Bowral between Mittagong Road and Wingecarribee Street bridge. This project has been included in the capital works program for delivery in 2018/19.

An expression of interest application for the Moss Vale bypass road project was submitted for consideration under the NSW Growing Local Economies program. Concurrently, a submission was made under the Federal Regional Development Fund. Funding from both State and Federal governments is required for the project to proceed.

The project consists of three stages extending between Berrima Road and Moss Vale Road, located primarily on existing road reserves. Although this project has not received initial grant funding, Council will continue to apply for grants and progress the design in readiness for future delivery.

DP41 Promote public transport options and linkages across the Shire

Council is in the process of updating the Shire's road network model. The model looks at how linkages across the Shire interact and how they are utilised. The project includes reviewing current and future traffic projections, identifying network deficiencies and developing projects to address deficiencies. The model output will inform future capital works programs and contribution plans.

The model will provide benefits including:

- improved safety
- less congestion at key intersections
- improved future planning
- up-to-date information for Council and other road authorities
- alternative transport options, promoting health, economic savings and convenience, and
- energy savings.



Reconstruction of Church Street in Burrawang

DP42 Expand our network of footpaths and cycle ways to improve connectivity of the Shire

Council has developed a capital works program that includes the expansion of footpaths and cycleways. Key projects that were commenced or completed in 2017/18 include:

- construction of Pedestrian Bridge over the Unanderra railway line Moss Vale
- the design of a shared pathway between East Bowral and Moss Vale along Eridge Park Road, and
- submission of a grant application for the construction of pathways from Kings Road to Moss Vale Showground.

The development of Stage 3 of the Bicycle Strategy has begun. This strategy is the final stage of planning for an integrated active transport network and review of the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plans. Council is looking at opportunities to install pedestrian and cycle pathways when other major infrastructure - such as roads, water or sewer pipelines - is being constructed.

DP43 Partner with agencies to advocate for improved transport services

In 2017/18, Council continued to cultivate strong professional relationships with service providers and transport sector leaders. Council staff participated in the annual RMS Regional Forum held in Wollongong, the NSW Road Congress held at Parliament House Sydney, and attended numerous Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA) transport forums. The forums provided Council with up-to-date technical information as well as funding and grant information, and provided networking opportunities.

Council has become a member of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (JO), and is playing an active role in advocacy and regional transport as part of the JO Infrastructure Working Group. This group is investigating potential improvements to traditional transport services, and intermodal transport options.

DP44 Provide a rigorous planning assessment framework which reflects State legislation and Council's adopted land use strategy to ensure appropriate development outcomes

Council publicly exhibited three site-specific amendments to the Wingecarribee Local Environmental Plan (LEP), intended to provide for more efficient use of those sites, one being an extension to the Bowral cemetery through the acquisition and rezoning of an adjoining property on Kangaloon Road. Finalisation of the amendments is expected later in 2018.

Further amendments to the LEP to implement recommendations contained in the Wingecarribee Local Planning Strategy 2015 - 2031 have been initiated. An amendment to the SP3 Tourist Zone land use table to include additional permitted land uses was progressed during the year, and is expected to be completed in early 2018/19. A planning proposal to progress seven site-specific amendments supported by the strategy received Gateway endorsement to proceed from the Department of Planning and Environment in June 2018, and will undergo an agency referral process prior to being placed on public exhibition later in 2018.

All planning proposal submissions continue to be assessed in accordance with the Departmental guidelines, and Council's template and guidelines have been reviewed and updated to ensure proposals are assessed fairly, consistently and efficiently.

Council's planning assessment framework will be progressively updated over the next two-to-three years, to reflect changes to NSW planning legislation which came into effect on 1 March 2018. Council is awaiting further guidance from the State government to effect these changes.

DP45 Review and prepare planning strategies, policies and studies that retain the character of the Shire's towns and villages

Council recently completed the Wingecarribee Local Planning Strategy 2015 - 31 which described the character and important attributes of the Shire's towns and villages. The Strategy will inform a comprehensive review of Council's Development Control Plans (DCPs) and will guide future development in the Shire to ensure the character of towns and villages can be retained.

A number of administrative reviews to the DCPs have been completed, and a comprehensive review commenced in 2018. This larger review will continue into the second half of 2018. The Department of Planning and Environment has advised of changes to the legislation that will require standardisation of DCPs.

DP46 Implement initiatives that promote and protect cultural heritage



*Heritage Award winner on Shepherd Street, Bowral
Photo courtesy Donald Johnston©*

Council recently amended the Wingecarribee Local Environmental Plan (LEP) to formally add approximately 90 new items of heritage significance, to provide appropriate protection of cultural heritage through the LEP, and bringing the total number of heritage listed sites to over 300. This will ensure that these heritage significant buildings are protected both through their ability to attract future funding for maintenance and repair, and to ensure that future development is appropriately assessed to reduce or ameliorate any impact on the items.

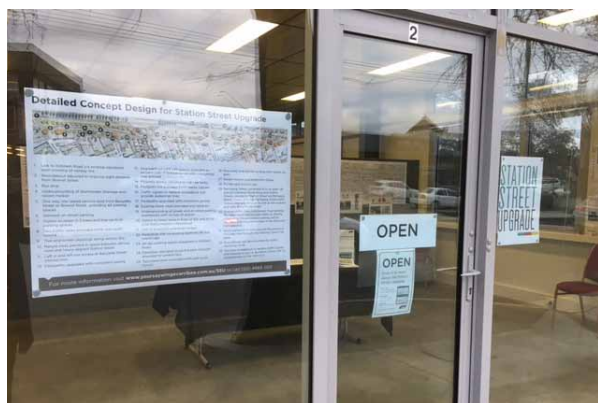
Council continues to run initiatives to promote and protect cultural heritage such as the biennial Heritage Awards, the heritage grants scheme and contributing to the annual National Trust Heritage Festival to build awareness of Council's heritage activities. The Heritage Awards were held in May 2018, with a total of 10 projects recognised across eight categories, including *Best Conservation of a Heritage Place* and *Best Heritage Precinct*.

DP47 Implement a program of towns and village centre improvements

Proactive and reactive maintenance has been undertaken in all CBD areas throughout 2017/18, including street sweeping, pavement cleaning and trip hazard removal.

Significant community engagement was undertaken during the reporting period regarding the Bowral Station Street Upgrade project. Detailed concept designs showing road realignments, changes to parking and streetscape improvements were placed on public exhibition in 2017, with submissions accepted over a period of 49 days.

During the public exhibition period a number of community and stakeholder engagement activities were undertaken to raise awareness, provide further information and answer questions about the project. Opportunities for engagement included stakeholder meetings, a shopfront open for 51 hours at varied times and a public meeting. These were supported by a range of communication tools including fact sheets, a letterbox dropped community update, media release, newspaper stories, radio interviews, letters to property owners, promotional postcards in cafes, posters in car parks and at the railway station, radio and newspaper advertising, emailed project updates, e-newsletters and social media posts.



Station Street Upgrade shop front, Bowral

The project website provided a comprehensive, clear and accessible source of information at all hours throughout the exhibition period. Information was also available for viewing at Bowral Library and the Civic Centre in Moss Vale. The information provided informed the design process, with designs near completion for the Kirkham Road upgrade, the Station Street road alignment, pedestrian access, and changes to parking and street scape improvements.

Other planned projects include the design for the Corbett Gardens infrastructure upgrade and the design for the Bowral Memorial Hall redevelopment. In addition, service-level maintenance plans for village and town CBDs are being developed.

DP48 Implement the Street Tree Master Plan

In 2017/18, Council continued to implement the Street Tree Master Plan, with 200 trees planted over the year. Planning is underway for additional planting in spring 2018. The Urban Tree Policy was updated, and was adopted by Council in May 2018. The Tree Risk Management Plan was endorsed in June 2018.

DP49 Provide and maintain high quality community facilities across the Shire

Council is implementing a number of operational tasks that improve the quality of facilities provided to the community. These include:

- a draft Play Spaces Strategy has been completed
- the Parks Asset Management Plan has been finalised, and
- a Public Toilet Strategy was adopted and implementation has commenced.

Designs for the Civic Centre rectification works have been completed and a development application has been submitted. The tender process for construction of the Civic Centre upgrade will commence as soon as possible, once approval has been received.

Other works being designed or delivered include:

- streetscape improvements at the Bowral northern entry
- renewal of the Lake Alexandra playground softfall
- the design of the Ironmines Oval amenities building
- refurbishment of the Leighton Gardens public toilets
- refurbishment of the Winifred West public toilets, and
- the design of the Corbett Gardens infrastructure upgrade.

DP50 Undertake the redevelopment of Bowral Memorial Hall

Significant progress has been made towards the redevelopment of Bowral Memorial Hall, including project updates and presentations to Councillors, and Bowral Memorial Hall user groups and stakeholders. Council staff continue to communicate with stakeholders informing them of design progress and incorporating a number of their suggestions into the redevelopment project scope and design.

Design is well progressed and will be completed by end of the 2018/19 financial year, with construction scheduled to take place in 2019/20 financial year. Council staff are continuing to progress this project in accordance with the *Delivery Program 2017 - 2021* and available funding.



Bowral Memorial Hall

DP51 Effectively plan for and deliver on the diverse needs of people with a disability

Council is committed to addressing the barriers for people with disability in our community.

Council has been instrumental in the development of an Inclusive Tourism course which is to be rolled out as an online training course by Local Government NSW. The course will guide participants in identifying barriers to access and providing the best possible customer service. The course will be divided into streams relevant to Councils, accommodation providers and small-to-medium sized businesses.

In all redevelopments of Council assets, Council has a requirement to include accessible facilities or to update facilities to improve access for those with a disability. In addition, Council has reviewed its Public Toilet Strategy with accessibility one of the key criteria assessed, and has undertaken an initial review of accessible parking information.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan first year report has been submitted to the NSW Government. Council will continue to fund the Ageing and Disability Officer role within Council following the cessation of State government funding for this role.

The Missed Business Guide continues to be distributed with a focus on Berrima during this period. The Guide provides local businesses with strategies on how to attract customers and staff by providing better access to their business.

Support and partnerships for projects and events supporting disability inclusion and awareness remains an important strategy.

DP52 Ensure planning controls allow for diversity of housing choice

Council's current planning framework allows for a mix of densities and housing types to facilitate diversity in housing choice. Medium density zones are appropriately located around key centres to ensure increased densities are located in close proximity to services and infrastructure.

In 2017, Council adopted a Local Planning Strategy which was endorsed by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment. As Council did not identify any additional or new urban release areas and instead relied upon infill development within Council's existing towns and villages, the Department specifically excluded the Residential component. Council has continued its work on developing a residential strategy which identifies additional new urban release areas and new rezoning opportunities throughout the Shire to enable diversity of housing choice. This is supported by land use zoning and variation in minimum lot size.

In 2018, Council has considered a number of planning proposals that were supported through the strategy. Those matters are currently being pursued through a planning proposal process and will enable greater diversity in housing choice.

A local housing strategy will be further pursued once Council has certainty over the guidelines proposed for such a strategy from the NSW Department of Planning and Environment in late 2018.

DP53 Partner with agencies to plan and deliver a program of road upgrades, renewals and maintenance

Council developed a comprehensive capital works program for 2017/18, and delivery of the program continued throughout the year. Rehabilitation works have been carried out on sections of the following:

- Wombeyan Caves Road, High Range
- Church Street, Burrawang
- Wilson Drive, Hill Top
- Old South Road between Merrigang Street and Bowral Street, Bowral, and
- Exeter Road, Exeter.



Road rehabilitation works

DP54 Implement a long term solution for the use and disposal of road side spoil

Council aims to design road and drain construction projects to minimise spoil/waste material to be taken to a waste disposal facility. This includes bringing forward the construction of suitable projects requiring the import and re-use of suitable fill and construction spoil including co-projects such as Clear Zone road safety improvements.

A number of sites are being investigated to determine the practicality of developing Council Depots for storage and processing of suitable reusable fill and pavement material. Where identified as viable, the intention is to obtain Environmental Processing Licences to progress these re-use options.

DP55 Review and implement Water Master Plan

During 2017/18, Council reviewed and updated its Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan, which has incorporated the long term capital works plan, review of current supply zones and the long term utilisation or upgrades of both of the Wingecarribee and Bundanoon supply schemes.

DP56 Review and implement Sewage Treatment Plant Upgrade Strategy

Council is in the final stages of obtaining approval from the Department of Industry – Water for the Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy. This strategy supports the upgrade of Moss Vale, Bowral and Mittagong waste water treatment plants over the next seven years.

Expressions of interest have been prepared for consideration under the NSW Government Safe and Secure

Water Program for 25 per cent funding for the design and construction of the Bowral and Moss Vale waste water treatment plants.

DP57 Improve stormwater management across the Shire

Delivery of the Floodplain Management Strategy is progressing, with the Office of Environment and Heritage confirming successful grant applications for a flood study at Whites Creek, and a risk management study at Nattai Ponds.

Council continues work to improve stormwater management across the Shire, with the tender process for Whites Creek and Nattai Ponds flood studies well underway. Studies by specialist consultants, and community consultation and feedback which will feed into these studies, has commenced. In addition, maintenance of Shire drains, creeks and reserves is ongoing.

DP58 Drinking water quality management

In 2015, Council adopted its Drinking Water Management System (DWMS), which is made up of several components, including the Drinking Water Quality Policy and the Drinking Water Management Plan. To ensure continual best practice and compliance of the DWMS, Council undertakes regular reviews and audits and provides annual updates to NSW Health regarding monitoring and performance.

Council has invested in both its water infrastructure and customer management practices in 2017/18, to ensure customer needs are met.



Some of the key areas of focus to ensure quality drinking water are:

- the re-adoption of the Drinking Water Quality Policy
- the adoption of the Backflow Management Policy
- continuous staff training and development
- customer and stakeholder liaison
- water sampling and analysis programs
- implementation of water theft management protocols, and
- scoping and delivering projects for enhancing associated water infrastructure.

DP59 Ensure the integrity of water and sewer infrastructure

The integrity of the water and sewer infrastructure is dependent on the delivery of a number of key programs, including:

- management of the security of the water supply
- appropriate trade waste and backflow management policies
- infiltration and illegal connection testing
- operational monitoring and sampling for water and sewer compliance, and
- disinfection programs within the network.

In 2017/18, Council has continued to conduct both planned and reactive maintenance of its infrastructure. Reviews and modifications of structure, skill base, and work practices are ongoing to maximise efficiencies and customer service standards.



Wingecarribee Water Treatment Plant



Bundanoon Dam

The catchment has seen an unusual increase in algae presence in the raw water at the WaterNSW managed Wingecarribee dam in 2017; however, treatment and protocols are in place to manage this issue, with no risk to the consumer.

Council staff regularly liaise with regulators such as NSW Health, WaterNSW and the Environment Protection Authority, and are continuously looking to implement more efficient skills and practices to ensure action plans for addressing priorities are in place.

Council staff have continued to review relevant policies, with revised policies on Trade Waste, Drinking Water and Backflow Management adopted in 2018. These policies complement the management practices on water theft and illegal property connections.

DP60 Ensure regulatory compliance of sewerage infrastructure



Robertson Sewerage Treatment Plant

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) regulatory annual returns for all six waste water treatment plants were completed in 2017/18, with five treatment plants achieving full compliance. The Berrima scheme had a pH non-compliance issue associated with its final treated effluent. This issue has previously been raised with the EPA, and an agreed Environmental Improvement Program is in place to manage this long-term issue.

Council has conducted a review of its licence parameters with the EPA, and new parameters have been agreed as part of the new licence conditions. Council has also commenced concept design programs at both Bowral and Moss Vale Waste Water Treatment Plants as part of its multi-million dollar investment program, with the Mittagong Treatment Plant concept design due to commence in 2018/19. These upgrades form a significant component of Council's commitment to meet long term environmental and regulatory requirements.

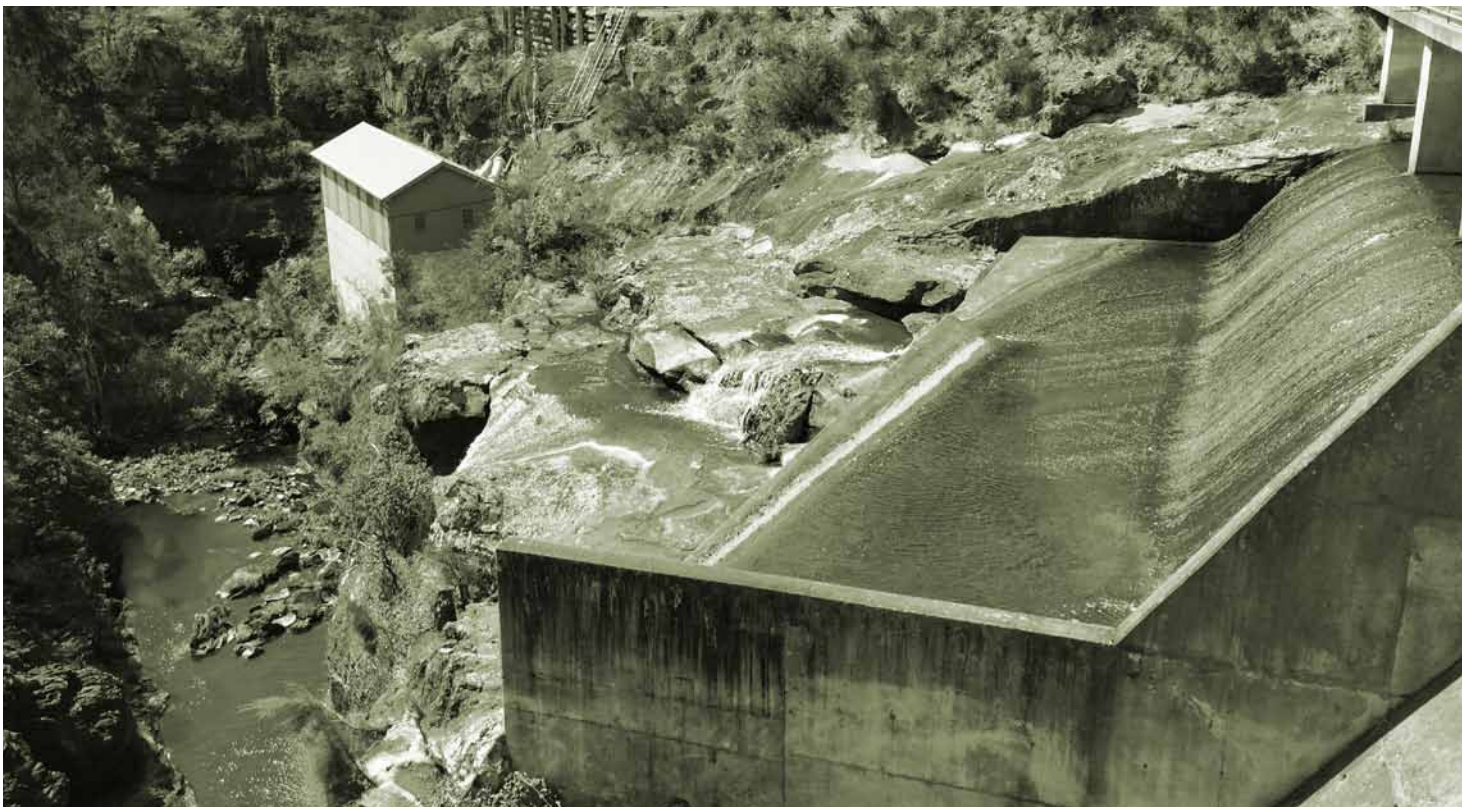
Infiltration testing has been successfully carried out to highlight any damaged assets or illegal customer connections. In addition, Council has completed a review of its Pollution Incident Response Management plans.

These plans are essential for managing risks that may arise at the treatment plants.

DP61 Facilitate and advocate for enhanced access to telecommunication networks

Council has worked closely with members of the business community, Highlands Entrepreneurs Regional Development, Southern Region Business Enterprise Centre, Australian Smart Communities Association, and Regional Development Australia Southern Inland on a number of initiatives to advocate for enhanced access to telecommunications, including:

- investigating and promoting a combination of high speed broadband and an Internet of Things
- investigating the feasibility of integrating different technologies with sector-based initiatives
- developing strategies to increase the number of local businesses with 'Google my Business' entries and credible websites, and
- working with potential carriers to determine the best options for improved telecommunications in the region.



ENVIRONMENT

Environment services

- Development Services
- Economic Development
- Environmental Services
- Natural Area Management
- Regulatory Compliance
- Regulatory Services
- Strategic Land Use Planning
- Waste Management

Highlights and Special Projects:

- Southern Highlands Koala Conservation Project won an LGNSW *Excellence in the Environment* award.
- Volunteers plant over 3,700 trees during National Tree Day.
- Twenty-six sites register for Clean Up Australia Day across the Shire.
- World Environment Day marked by a real-time public art piece designed to question the use of single-use plastics.
- Participation in the South East Cities Power Partnership to share knowledge and information on energy management.
- Recognition of the Community Recycling Centre as a model of excellence.

Environment Indicators

Environment Indicators	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Bushcare and Landcare participants (groups)	15	15	17	17
Community volunteers environmental work (hours)	3,260	3,279	3,237	3,786
Native trees and shrubs planted on public land and established native plant species	11,576	11,020	14,712	13,383
Workshops in the correct operation of wood heaters	2	5	1	2
Bushcare group work sessions	180	181	179	201
Domestic recycling diverted from landfill (tonnes)	4,721	5,060	5,345	5,857
Putrescible total (tonnes)	8,793	10,365	12,284	12,084
Green waste (tonnes)	9,593	9,120	9,256	8,380
Onsite sewerage management system inspections	300	300	350	301
Notices/infringements issued	22	26	21	28
Food shop inspections	463	383	409	260
Known cooling towers inspected annually (%)	100	17	100	100

DP62 Manage public natural assets

Environmental management activities continue to be successfully implemented by the Environment Levy funded Bushcare program across 38 bushland sites. A total of seven revegetation projects commenced during 2017/18. Two community planting activities were undertaken along the Wingecarribee River with the National Tree Day planting and with Frensham School.

The Community Nursery continues to operate with volunteer support with over 11,700 plants produced during the year.

During 2017/18, Council began using portable cameras for biodiversity and natural asset management, following adoption of the CCTV policy, code of practice and procedures in June 2017. This will be a vital tool for Council for the management of bushland assets including the monitoring of biodiversity and vertebrate pests and control of damaging activities.

Council continues work on the Southern Highlands Koala Conservation Project. This project was awarded the Local Government NSW *Excellence in the Environment* award in the "B" Division Category.

The Southern Highlands Platypus Conservation Project commenced in December 2017, utilising community engagement, citizen science and a Platypus Spotter app developed by Council.

The Southern Highlands Glossy Black Cockatoo Conservation Project also commenced in 2017/18. Council has partnered with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and the Friends of the Glossy Black Cockatoo community group on a collaborative and citizen science based approach with the community to help save the endangered Glossy Black Cockatoo.



Glossy Black Cockatoos curtesy Charles Dove/OEH

The project is called Glossies in the Mist and focuses on the Southern Highlands and Southern Tablelands. It is being funded through the NSW Government Saving Our Species program and will initially operate for three years with a budget of approximately \$110,000.

The project will include actions to address critical threats of loss of hollow trees, loss and degradation of important foraging habitat, availability of surface water in proximity to nesting and feeding habitat, lack of awareness of the species and its habitat requirements, and loss of local and regional scale habitat connectivity. Particular focus will be on improving management for the species within the Regional Wildlife Corridor mapped in Council's LEP in the Canyonleigh area.

The Local Government NSW (LGNSW) Roadside Environmental Management Plan Project has commenced with grant funding of \$46,000 received from LGNSW. The project will be completed by March 2019.

DP63 Maintain and build high value environmental lands and corridors

In 2017/18, Council reviewed its Private Land Biodiversity Conservation Strategic Plan in light of the introduction of the Biodiversity Conservation legislation reforms and the introduction of the Biodiversity Conservation Trust. Council encourages conservation on private land through a three-tiered program to support different types of landholders and conservation values.

In total, 188 properties are registered with Council's Habitat for Wildlife program, and 117 properties are registered with the Land for Wildlife program. Council has entered into a new Vegetation Conservation Agreement to protect and enhance Robertson Basalt Rainforest (a threatened ecological community) on private land.



Land for Wildlife property

The NSW Office of Environment and Heritage has commenced work on the Green Web Corridors project. This will use the draft vegetation mapping in conjunction with Koala satellite tracking data and predictive distribution of koala habitat. Green Web is anticipated to be completed in the second half of 2018.

In addition Council made a submission to the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage on the draft Biodiversity Conservation Investment Strategy 2017 – 2037, advocating for clearer links between the Biodiversity Conservation Trusts and Council's programs, and clearer opportunities for conservation investment by the Trust in the Shire.

DP64 Ensure the impacts of development on biodiversity are assessed, monitored and mitigated

Council continues to work within the relevant legislation to ensure that impacts of development on biodiversity are assessed, monitored and mitigated. A more rigorous assessment process has been introduced following the introduction of the revised *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*. All applications that involve an impact on biodiversity are now considered by a dedicated staff member who is qualified in Biodiversity Impact Assessments.

Legislative instruments to control the clearing of vegetation in the Shire are contained in the Wingecarribee Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plans. Council employs a dedicated staff member to assess and mitigate the impacts of development and tree removal applications, and to investigate cases of illegal clearing that are within Council's jurisdiction. Council's action complements the functions of State agencies such as the Office of Environment and Heritage who also have roles in managing biodiversity and vegetation controls.

DP65 Build community partnerships and education programs to reduce pollution

In 2017/18, Council ran two community workshops on the correct operation of wood heaters to minimise air pollution and delivered two school based education programs focused on water quality. Council ran the Household Chemical Clean Out event in May which saw the removal of over 14 tonnes of unwanted and waste chemicals from the community.

Council continues to operate an investigation and enforcement program for pollution and illegal dumping matters. During this period a number of investigations have resulted in *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* enforcement notices being issued for matters including noise pollution, asbestos disposal, and chemical spills. A small number of wood smoke and odour complaints were also investigated.

DP66 Reduce the impact from Council infrastructure and operations

Council undertakes environmental assessments of the potential impact from Council works utilising Council's adopted procedure and assessment tool for this function. These tools have been reviewed to reflect changes in the relevant legislation. Controls to minimise and mitigate environmental impacts are identified through this process.

The Local Government NSW grant funded Roadside Vegetation Management Project has commenced, and will see the development and implementation of environmental guidelines which will relate to works within Council's road reserves that affect roadside vegetation.

DP67 Develop and implement policies that support reduction in pollution across the Shire

Council aims to ensure up to date environment and sustainability policies are adequate and appropriate to address the community's needs and emerging issues.

During this reporting period, Council:

- adopted the Council Operations Environment Policy
- developed the Noise Policy
- adopted the Use of Portable Cameras for Natural Asset Management Procedure, which complements the CCTV and Portable Camera Surveillance Policy, and
- adopted and implemented the Urban Backyard Burning of Vegetation Policy.

DP68 Implement planning controls that protect the Shire's natural resources

The Wingecarribee Local Environmental Plan (LEP) is currently being amended in line with the recently completed Wingecarribee Local Planning Strategy 2015 - 2031 to ensure the overriding planning framework is reflective of the community's expectations to protect the Shire's natural resources. The planning proposal to amend the LEP is progressively moving towards gazettal.

All planning proposal submissions received by Council that are included in the Local Planning Strategy have been provided with a Gateway determination and have been publicly exhibited.

DP69 Advocate to State and Federal government to ensure planning controls and State plans reflect community priorities

Council continues to advocate with both the State and Federal governments to ensure planning controls and State plans are reflective of community expectations. Recent submissions have been provided on proposed legislative and policy changes including:

- the State Environmental Planning Policy – Vegetation
- the State Environmental Planning Policy – Rural
- the introduction of Complying Development for Medium Density Development.

Council will continue to liaise with the Department of Planning and Environment to ensure proposed legislative changes can be implemented in a way that is consistent with community expectations and priorities.

DP70 Develop partnerships with community and agencies to identify, update, and maintain awareness of key natural resources

Council has several programs, run in conjunction with the community and other agencies, that increase awareness of key natural resources, including:

- the Waterwatch Program, with results published on Council's website and NSW Atlas of Living Australia's website
- bird monitoring sites in conjunction with Birdlife Southern Highlands
- Who's Living on My Land? workshops for local rural landholders, and

- citizen science tools including a Platypus spotter, a Wombat mange treatment tracker, a Koala spotter, and a Glossy Black Cockatoo hollow bearing tree recorder.

In addition, Council publishes quarterly editions of the *Wingecarribee Web* e-Newsletter to over 1,000 subscribers, and maintains a number of geographic information system environmental datasets for Council processes. Our website is reviewed and updated regularly to ensure currency and reliability of information.



Natural resources workshop

DP71 Implement community awareness programs that promote sustainable living

In October 2017, Council ran the Wingecarribee Schools Environment Day, with a record attendance of over 700 students from 20 schools, participating in 26 activities covering a wide range of environment and sustainability matters.

Council participated in Plastic Free July for the first time in 2017, using the event to focus community awareness on the issue of overuse of plastics. A number of displays were set up and an online community engagement platform established. Eighteen local businesses participated in the campaign.



Schools Environment Day 2017

Council facilitated a Demystifying Energy workshop during the Seniors Festival in April, with the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH). Those who attended were encouraged to bring their electricity bills for assessment and were provided impartial advice on the suitable size for solar installations based on their energy consumption. Two further workshops are scheduled for July 2018.

Council is developing a school based stormwater education program for rollout across schools in the Shire. Council has supported several schools by providing stormwater education sessions to students on site at local waterways. These sessions will be formalised into a package that can be offered to schools within the Shire.

An Earth Hour event organised by Council in March 2018 was a great success, with over 300 people attending. A local student spoke to the crowd about sustainability issues, and Local Renewable Energy experts and OEH's energy team were on-hand to talk to the community on renewable energy and energy efficiency. Children were introduced to solar lighting through a lantern making workshop. Mains electricity lights were turned off at 8:30pm to mark Earth Hour. The event was held in conjunction with the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens, local artists and supported by the NSW Country Arts Support Program administered by Regional Arts NSW and Southern Tablelands Arts.

DP72 Develop partnerships and network to leverage off existing programs

Council continues to work with a number of partners and stakeholders, including CANWin, OzHarvest, and the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH).

Useful community networks were developed through the Earth Hour event participants (including OEH and the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens) with opportunities to share information and cross-promote events.

In addition, Council has assisted in developing networks between the OEH and Emergency Services through the Seniors Festival Fire and Ice workshops, and Council continues to work with OEH to implement energy management workshops for the community.

Council is working closely with a group of south eastern Councils as part of the Cities Power Partnership "buddies" group. This network shares knowledge and resources in the area of energy management.

The Rural Fire Service (RFS) is supportive of Council's new Urban Backyard Burning of Vegetation Policy. Both Council and the RFS are providing the community with consistent messages around this policy.

Community networks have been strengthened between Council and various community groups during the development of Plastic Free July activities including with Moss Vale Community Gardens and Creative Space group.

DP73 Implement State Government regulations

Council continues to update the planning framework to ensure it is consistent with State Government regulations. Over the next two-to-three years Council will progressively implement changes to NSW planning legislation and regulations. Council continues to make changes to its internal planning protocols following changes to the planning legislation in March 2018.

In the assessment of planning proposals, development applications, certification of building works and food shops, and onsite sewer management, Council continues to apply statutory controls and State policies.

Council has also implemented changes to the manner in which it undertakes assessment and determination of tree removal applications following the introduction of the Vegetation State Environmental Planning Policy at the end of 2017. Council now has a system of Vegetation Control Permits for consideration of tree removal under its jurisdiction.

DP74 Advocate and educate for improved development outcomes

The Local Planning Strategy was completed within the reporting period and a number of meetings with government agencies were held to advocate for more rigorous planning controls in the Southern Highlands, particularly surrounding medium density development.

Council has commenced work on a Local Housing Strategy and a comprehensive Development Control Plan review in 2018. These will guide future development in the Shire to facilitate positive development outcomes that are reflective of community expectations.

DP75 Support the establishment and expansion of businesses that produce goods locally

Council actively collaborates with local business leaders, including Chambers of Commerce, business enterprise centres, regional development initiatives, and organisations promoting entrepreneurs in the Shire. Work is being conducted in aligning local food producers, processors and consumers, with a Chef's Drinks and Canapés being planned for October 2018.

DP76 Promote and encourage waste minimisation and recycling

Council has promoted waste minimisation initiatives in the community, with over 200 students attending the Resource Recovery Centre (RRC) for Recycling Workshops, 300 community members attending the RRC for information sessions on recycling, and presentations have been made at the Country Women's Association and Bundanoon Garden Club. Work has begun on expanding waste minimisation and recycling programs into other sectors of the community including commercial and construction businesses.



Community Recycling Centre, Moss Vale

DP77 Implement strategies to reduce illegal dumping

Council continues to target illegal dumping, and in 2017/18 participated in a working group coordinated by the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA). This forum works on strategies to help reduce illegal dumping through the Reduce Illegal Dumping program and seeks funding from the EPA. Any funds allocated to Council are used to implement strategies to fight illegal dumping.

DP78 Manage the Resource Recovery Centre in accordance with Environmental Protection Authority licence and ensure efficient and cost effective operations

Upgrades are currently underway at the Resource Recovery Centre to enhance the way the environment is managed. The Community Recycling Centre (CRC) has been highly commended by the EPA, prompting visits from other agencies from interstate, with both the South Australian and Queensland governments sending representatives to view Council's facility as a model of excellence.

The Community Recycling Centre has been highly commended by the EPA

Council continues to make improvements to the facility to assist with environmental management.

Recently a cardboard bailer has been installed through EPA funding which will enable Council to access markets that others will find difficult with un-bailed cardboard. It will also reduce truck movements, saving on freight costs.

DP79 Develop and implement a Council Waste Strategy and Policy

Work is continuing on the development of the Waste Strategy, with a range of policies and procedures under development to ensure waste is managed according to best practice and to meet the future needs of the community and Council.

DP80 Implement strategies to improve energy management

An Energy Management Plan is being developed by Council to prioritise progress in energy management. Workshops have been held with key stakeholders to identify energy management opportunities. A number of energy management opportunities have been collated, and a project evaluation criteria has been developed. Project proposals have been developed for a number of initial projects.

An energy efficient street lighting upgrade project has commenced with Endeavour Energy. The project was developed to upgrade eligible inefficient streetlights across the Shire with the aim of significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Streetlights account for 15 per cent of Council's total energy consumption, and 11 per cent of total emissions. To date, over 1,750 streetlights have been upgraded across the Shire to energy efficient LED lights.

Council established a Revolving Energy Fund in 2012 to ensure ongoing funding is available for projects that promote energy efficiencies. In 2017/18, Council saved over \$61,000 in electricity costs through the implementation of energy management projects supported by the fund. Projects undertaken include the installation of solar photovoltaic systems on Council buildings, and lighting upgrades at the Civic Centre and Moss Vale Library.

DP81 Undertake initiatives that increase awareness and encourage water, energy and waste reduction

The Environment Levy sponsored the Southern Highlands Local Business Awards in the category of Environmental Sustainability. Nominations were received and judged during July and August 2017, and the award was presented in September 2017. Bare Body Beauty Co won the category and Gossip Hair and Beauty were Highly Commended. Both businesses showed a high level of sustainability integrated throughout their business and embedded in their business culture. Nominations for the 2018 awards opened in May 2018.

Council facilitated workshops for the community, aimed at improving energy use in the home, and supported the Earth Hour event in conjunction with the Southern Highlands Botanic Gardens.

DP82 Implement strategies to address the impacts of climate change

Council has completed a climate change risk assessment for Council operations, and tracks ongoing work identified in the Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

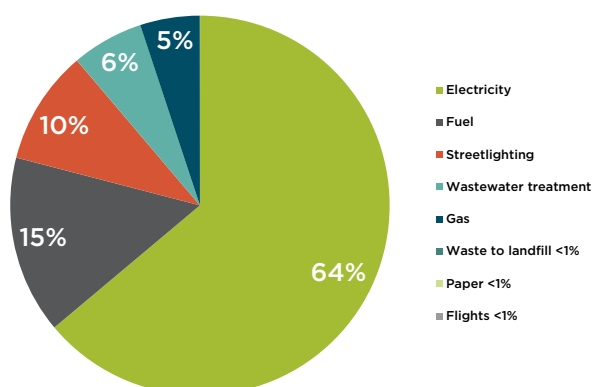
A formal review of the plan has commenced, and will include expanding the scope of the plan to include community impacts. The plan will be adopted in 2018/19.

DP83 Improve resource and energy efficiency at Council facilities and monitor carbon emission

Council continues to monitor its greenhouse gas emissions. While Council continues to take actions to reduce emissions, increases in some areas may also occur over time as services are increased and operational requirements change. Variations in weather from year to year can also result in fluctuations of energy consumption, with dry conditions experienced in 2017/18 resulting in higher water pumping requirements.

For the 2017/18 period, Council's greenhouse gas emissions total was 15,362 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂-e). Electricity, fuel and street lighting were the highest sources of greenhouse gas emissions, as seen in Figure 2, below. Emissions attributable to providing water and sewer (electricity and fugitive emissions) account for 57 per cent of the total emissions.

Figure 2: 2017/18 Greenhouse gas emissions



The following table provides a comparison over the last three years. Council has achieved a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions since reporting commenced in 2015/16 through the implementation of energy management projects such as the LED street lighting upgrade, and solar installations on Council buildings.

Greenhouse gas emissions over time (tCO₂-e)

Scope	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Scope 1	4,026	4,148	3,768
Scope 2	9,108	8,705	8,518
Scope 3	3,528	3,454	3,075
Total	16,662	16,307	15,361

Scope 1: Direct combustion such as fuel and gas

Scope 2: Purchased electricity and solar generated and used on site

Scope 3: Indirect emissions through items purchased such as paper.

Council will be participating in the Office of Environment and Heritage Community Emissions Profile Pilot Project. The output of this project will be a Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions Profile Report containing all information, references, activity data, assumptions, inputs, insights, charts, emission factors, and other relevant data relating to emissions. Council staff will participate in greenhouse gas accounting training offered as part of this project. The full annual greenhouse gas report will be published on Council's website in October 2018.

DP84 Encourage carbon reduction across the Shire

At its meeting on 13 September 2017 Council resolved to join the Climate Council's Cities Power Partnership. This national initiative aims to accelerate emission reduction and clean energy projects for Australian towns and cities.

The group consists of other Councils in the southeast region, including Shoalhaven, Kiama, Bega, and Eurobodalla.

The benefits resulting from Council participating in this program will include:

- knowledge sharing with other councils
- clean energy successes of councils and their communities showcased in print and online media across Australia
- access to leading experts in climate impacts and renewable energy solutions whose technical knowledge can help implement emissions reduction measures
- access to power analytics tools to track emissions, energy and the cost savings of projects.

The group provides a platform to share knowledge and information on energy management topics, including feasibility of large scale solar, and the development of an Electric Highway in the region to support the likely proliferation of electric vehicles.

Council partnered with the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) during Seniors Week to deliver two community information workshops:

- Demystifying Energy - presented by OEH covering energy management and efficiency topics, and
- Staying Safe in Extreme Weather - focused on building resilience but also touching on energy management.

The Community Emissions Baseline Pilot project aims to develop a global protocol for community-scale greenhouse gas emission inventories, and a compliant community emissions profile for councils in regional NSW. The project will also provide the tools and knowledge necessary to repeat this on an annual basis.



ECONOMY

Economy services:

- Development Control
- Economic Development
- Southern Regional Livestock Exchange
- Tourism and Events

Highlights and Special Projects:

- Tourism Southern Highlands won Silver at the Qantas National Tourism Awards for 'Pie Time' 2017.
- 'Pie Time' 2018 resulted in a 35 per cent increase in visitation to the Welcome Centre in June.
- Launch of 'Tulip Time' in May.
- Commencement of improvement works at the Southern Regional Livestock Exchange.

Economy Indicators

Economy indicators	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Accommodation bookings / commission through the Welcome Centre (\$)	39,359	36,001	25,628	30,298
Commission from events ticketed through the Welcome Centre (\$)	7,204	6,056	3,041	4,044
Visitation to the Welcome Centre	52,307	68,568	61,907	57,653
Tourism website hits	182,531	193,561	286,657	354,370

DP85 Support regional activities and partnerships to broaden and promote the range of business and industry investment

There has been ongoing collaboration with a range of local and regional organisations to promote business and industry investment in the Shire, including Highlands Entrepreneurs Regional Development, Southern Region Business Enterprise Centre, Canberra Region Joint Organisation, Regional Development Australia Southern Inland, and State and Federal government agencies.

DP86 Build on partnerships that increase and broaden local employment opportunities

Council is working with the University of Wollongong and TAFE Moss Vale to offer courses at both institutions including Certificate level courses, short courses and lectures. In addition, work has commenced on a digital hub for job seekers and businesses in the region to connect. This will provide information to Council on skills gaps, employment rates, and skilled visa requirements. Further information can be found at item DP31.

DP87 Ensure tourism development assessment is based on quadruple bottom line principles (i.e. considers environmental, economic, social and governance factors)

A number of development applications have been considered during the reporting period that relate to tourism, including localised temporary uses and also larger function centres. All applications have been considered in accordance with the provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and also quadruple bottom line principles. Where concerns have been raised during the assessment that have been unable to be overcome via amendment to the plans or imposing a condition of development consent, Council has not supported the applications.

DP88 Promote the Southern Highlands as a world class tourist destination

Council, through its unique Welcome Centre Destination Southern Highlands has implemented a proactive and integrated marketing strategy which is driven by a dedicated marketing calendar that carried theme months supported by signature events and aligned marketing activities. These are:

- January – Wedding Time
- February – Nature Time
- March – Music Time
- April – Heritage Time
- May – Tea Time
- June – Pie Time
- July – Winter Time
- August – Golf Time
- September – Tulip Time
- October – Taste Time
- November – Arts Time
- December – Christmas Time

Destination Southern Highlands was recognised for its destination marketing expertise during the period by winning Gold at the 2017 Canberra Region Tourism Awards in late November for its innovative and successful 'Pie Time' campaign, conducted during July. The region went on to win Silver against the best destination marketing campaigns from each State at the Australian Tourism Awards held in Perth in late February 2018.



Council's horticulturalists with the 2017 charity partner mascot



Pie Time launch, 2018

The Southern Highlands Destination Planner and Map for 2018 was developed and launched during 2017/18. Both the planner and map serve as key marketing tools for the region. They are used as the official regional motivational and planning guides, and are positioned and distributed to Southern Highlands key markets. The planner is also made available to locals and visitors to the region.

Council is working closely with key industry and government bodies to position the Southern Highlands in international and domestic markets as a major tourism destination. The Southern Highlands has been included in the recently released Destination Sydney Surrounds South Destination Management Plan 2018 – 2022, which highlights the strengths of the region and the opportunities of visitor economy growth to developers, industry and government.

Recent statistics from Federal Tourism Research Australia continue to highlight that the Southern Highlands is regarded as a world class destination, with increases in visitation, spend and length of stay in the region over previous years.

Marketing resources and activities are employed to promote the Southern Highlands via digital platforms of www.visitsouthernhighlands.com.au, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. Further supporting this approach, communications via print publications, customer relations activities, Welcome Centre concierge servicing and unique integrated destination marketing campaigns such as Tulip Time and Pie Time are also undertaken.

DP89 Develop and implement marketing and promotional activities to promote the Southern Highlands

A proactive and integrated marketing plan for the region saw mixed achievements across a range of measures, including:

- unique website visits increased by 24 per cent
- merchandise sales at the Welcome Centre increased by seven per cent
- visitation numbers to the Welcome Centre decreased by seven per cent
- accommodation bookings through the Welcome Centre increased by 18 per cent, and
- membership (signed up businesses) totalled 235, surpassing targets by 3.5 per cent.

These results were mirrored across the Shire, with reports of increased visitation at the Bradman Centre, which increased by five per cent, Berrima Courthouse visitation increased by 24 per cent, and Fitzroy Falls Visitors Centre visitation increased by 12.5 per cent.



Sydney Weekender Pie Time filming

Council, through Destination Southern Highlands, has also collaborated with key tourism organisations to leverage marketing and product development services, and media visits were secured, resulting in publicity and coverage from visits to their online and traditional print publications.

A proactive public relations strategy has also been introduced, and the Pie Time destination marketing campaign was expanded, generating national and international media coverage. Significant publicity was also generated through the Welcome Centre winning at the World Toilet Tourism awards.

A local community tourism ambassador program My Southern Highlands has been developed that engages and rewards local residents as proud advocates of the Highlands amongst their visiting family and friends.

Planning and promotion commenced for the region's flagship event Tulip Time 2018, and a monthly What's On video has been produced and distributed, highlighting events and activities across the Shire.

In addition, a Southern Highlands Golf Pass was developed among the eight local golf courses to increase mid-week visitation. Council staff also hosted national TV broadcasting segments from *Better Homes and Gardens*, the *TODAY Show* and *Sydney Weekender*.

DP90 Explore options to progress Moss Vale Enterprise Zone

Council has begun preliminary work to determine options for the Moss Vale Enterprise Zone, engaging in discussions with various stakeholders and potential partners throughout 2017/18.

DP91 Support the establishment and expansion of clean industries

Council has developed a relationship with Low Carbon Living Southern Highlands, the aim of which is to improve the sustainability of industries in the region. The focus of this organisation is on reducing water, waste and energy costs, and it is expected they will partner with clean industry initiatives being promoted via government agencies and private sector interests.



DP92 Manage the operation of the Southern Regional Livestock facility including the coordination of cattle sales in the Southern Region and provide a financial return to Council



Southern Regional Livestock Exchange

In 2017/18, the Southern Regional Livestock Exchange (SRLX) established a risk matrix on proposed works that are required to upgrade the facility. The works have been prioritised according to risk and available funding, and the project is progressing through the Growing Local Economies grant assessment process.

A number of capital works projects have been completed, including:

- installation of a manure processing unit, and
- full replacement of the lights in the holding pens.

Overall, the volume going through the SRLX is consistent with agents' expectations in comparison with similar sized facilities, while still maintaining premium prices.

DP93 Ensure development does not impact on viable primary production and food security

All planning proposals submitted to Council for consideration are assessed against Council's strategic criteria and relevant Ministerial directions under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, which includes

the need to protect the agricultural value of rural land. Council has continued to assess planning policies in accordance with this criteria during the reporting period.

DP94 Facilitate programs and networks that support and strengthen business development

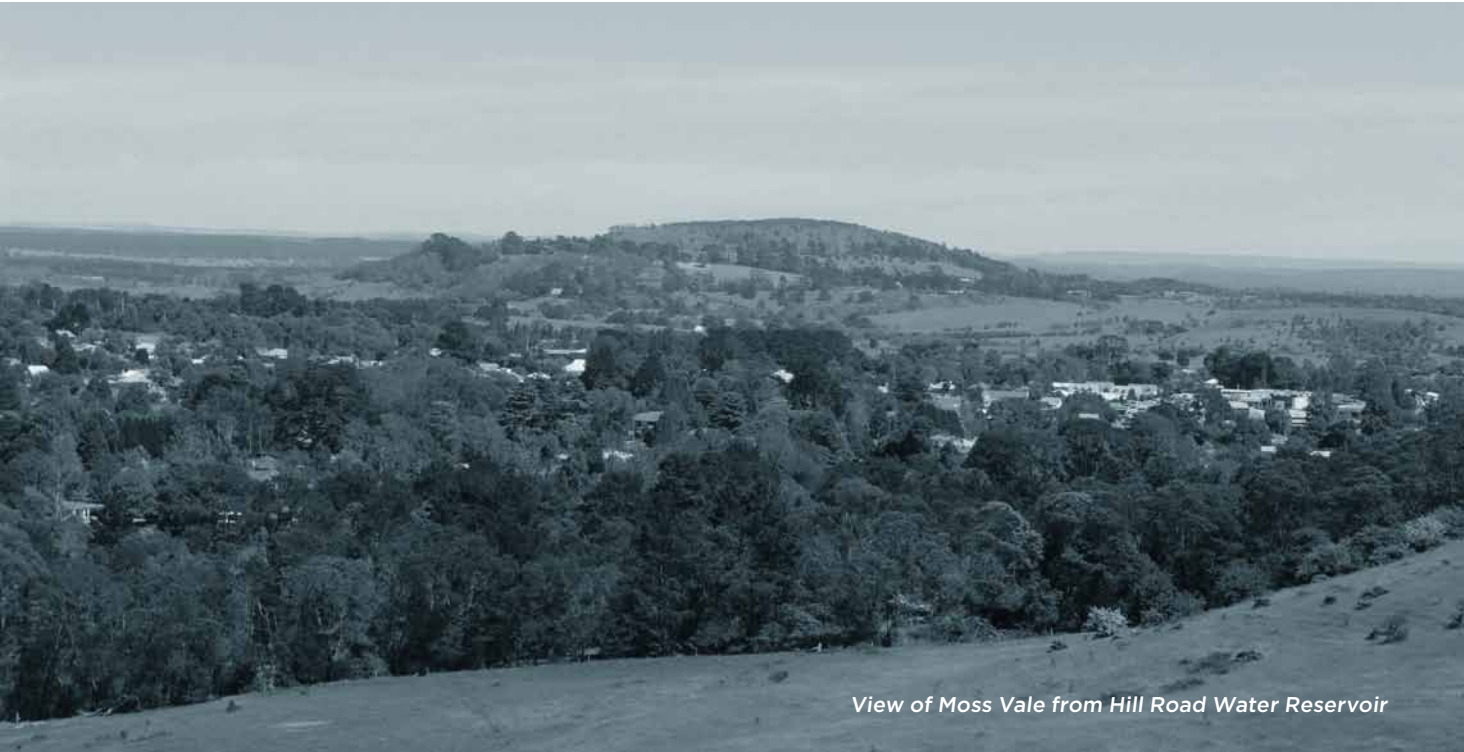
In collaboration with local participants, Council has been working on several programs to increase skills and job opportunities in the region. By leveraging a skills-based approach, the establishment of the Skills Exchange Platform project is intended to connect and strengthen all business programs and business networks in the region.

DP95 Support initiatives that provide opportunities for business mentoring and connection

Work is progressing on Council's Economic Development Strategy, which will guide activities in relation to this deliverable.

DP96 Support regional economic development initiatives

Council supports a number of regional economic development initiatives, including with Regional Development Australia Southern Inland, the Canberra Region Joint Organisation, local innovation specialists such as the Business Enterprise Centre and the Highlands Entrepreneurs Regional Development, and AusIndustry.



View of Moss Vale from Hill Road Water Reservoir

STATUTORY INFORMATION

The following chapter provides additional detailed supporting information and addresses statutory requirements under section 428 of the *Local Government Act 1993* and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* (Part 9, Division 7).

Private works

Private works will be undertaken by Council’s Infrastructure Services branch if sufficient resources are available, and the undertaking of the private works does not impact on Council’s works program or core business activities. Any private works undertaken will ensure that Council does not incur a loss and that the work is to an acceptable standard.

Private Works	Summary or details of work	No. of works	Total Costs	Owner Contribution	Council Contribution
General Fund	Clean Up Order on private land	1	\$83,752	\$83,752	\$0
Water Fund	Water Main Works	23	\$65,069	\$90,515	\$0
Sewer Fund	Sewer Main Works	60	\$114,231	\$147,110	\$0

Contracts Awarded

In accordance with section 428(2)(h) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the following is a list of contracts greater than \$150,000 awarded during the period 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

Description of Works	Contractor	Contract Value
Asphalt Works on Wilson Drive, Hilltop	Avijohn Contracting Pty Ltd	\$178,008
Plant Purchase	GYC Pty Ltd	\$311,118
Construction of Inter-allotment Drainage, Caalong Street, Robertson	Shore Contracting Pty Ltd	\$396,746
Microsoft Enterprise Agreement 1 April 2018 to 30 March 2019	Data #3 Limited	\$174,442
Review and Development of Floodplain Risk Management Studies	Catchment Simulation Solutions Pty Ltd	\$206,767
Bridges Condition Assessment	Pitt & Sherry Pty Ltd	\$322,740
Management and Operation of Moss Vale War Memorial Aquatic Centre	BlueFit Pty Ltd	\$530,000 [5+3+2+1 year contract]
Asphalt Concrete Works - Old South Rd Bowral	Roadworx	\$418,413
Bushland Services	Panel of 11 Contractors	\$400,000 p.a. [^] [2+1+1 year contract]
Sewer Mains Renewal and Manhole Replacement	Carve Earthworks and Construction Pty Ltd	\$2,778,837
Plant & Equipment Hire	Panel of 43 Contractors	\$1,000,000 [1+1 year contract]
Sheffield St Bowral Road Reconstruction	Avijohn Contracting Pty Ltd	\$184,910
Water Mains Renewal & Water Meters Replacement (Schedule 3)	SJ Plumbing Pty Ltd	\$750,993
Provision of Legal Services	Panel of 5 Contractors	\$1,500,000 [^] [3+2 year contract]
Code of Conduct Review Panel	Panel of 5 Contractors	\$150,000 [^] [2 year contract]
Water Mains Renewal & Water Meters Replacement (Schedule 1, Schedule 2, Schedule 4)	Carve Earthworks & Construction Pty Ltd,	\$2,211,587
Supply & Installation of Compressors, Bundanoon Dam Aeration Project	EMT Pty Ltd	\$205,765

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Description of Works	Contractor	Contract Value
Tree Maintenance Services – Category 1	Active Tree Services Pty Ltd	\$600,000* [2+1+1 year contract]
Tree Maintenance Services – Category 2	Panel of 5 Contractors	\$800,00^ [2+1+1 year contract]
Supply & Delivery of Premixed Concrete	Panel of 2 Contractors	\$600,000^ [1+1 year contract]
Construction of Pedestrian Bridge and Elevated Walkway over the Moss Vale/Unanderra Railway Line, Moss Vale	Saunders Civilbuild Pty Ltd	\$954,915
East Bowral Community Centre Car Park Civil Works	Shore Contracting Pty Ltd	\$190,247
Plant Purchase	Liebherr Australia Pty Ltd	\$427,350
Step Screen Renewal, Moss Vale Sewerage Treatment Plant	Gongues Constructions Pty Ltd	\$189,310
Stephens Park Amenities Buildings, Bowral	Dobsonei Pty Ltd	\$471,233
Mittagong Swimming Centre Repairs	Icon Building Group Pty Ltd	\$1,317,360
Berrima Road Deviation Bulk Earthworks	Stefanutti Construction Pty Ltd	\$2,782,115
Site Remediation (Asbestos)	P & D Envirotech Pty Ltd	\$160,862
Sprayed Bituminous Surfacing and Associated Services	Panel of 2 Contractors	\$1,300,000^ [9 month contract]
Design for Water Mains	Cardno (NSW/ACT) Pty Ltd	\$229,554
Asbestos Monitoring, Resource Recovery Centre	Greencap Pty Ltd	\$218,746
Plant Purchase	Illawarra Hino	\$234,377
Internal Audit Services	InConsult Pty Ltd	\$180,000* [3 year contract]

* Contract value is based on an estimate, as contract is unit rate. Estimate is based on previous volume.

^ Contract value is based on an estimate, as contract is a Panel Arrangement.

Condition of Public Works

Information on the condition of public works is included in the General Purpose Financial Statements through Note 10 - Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment and Special Schedule No. 7 - Report on Infrastructure Assets.

2017/18 Capital Works Projects

Works	Expenditure
Community and Operational Buildings	\$2,870,000
Roads and Related Assets	\$13,926,000
Bridges	\$705,000
Footpaths and Cycleways	\$1,688,000
Stormwater Drainage	\$5,841,000
Water Network	\$5,386,000
Sewer Network	\$8,349,000
Swimming Pools	\$489,000
Parks, Reserves and Sports fields	\$885,000
Total	\$40,139,000

Source: Note 10 General Purpose Financial Reports

Notes: This list includes capital projects dedicated to Council relating to new development.

This list does not include capital expenses relating to plant replacement, library books, furniture and fittings and land. These are not considered capital projects.



Water main upgrade on Wilson Drive, Colo Vale

Special Rate Variation

The following 2017/18 maintenance works and capital projects were funded by the Special Rate Variation:

2017/18 Investing in our Future Expenditure Program

Description of Works	Expenditure
Building Maintenance	\$336,936
Drainage Maintenance	\$110,000
Parks Maintenance	\$62,095
Roads Maintenance	\$625,000
Total Maintenance Expenditure	\$1,134,031
Replace space heater PCYC Mittagong	\$8,560
Wombeyan Caves Retaining Wall	\$24,000
Footpath construction Boolwey St Bowral	\$25,773
Culvert renewal Penrose Road	\$43,000
Culvert renewal Exeter Road	\$16,698
Culvert renewal Old Mandemar Road	\$13,077
Construct pit/pipe Sheaffe St Bowral	\$100,000
Construct levee opposite 15 Centennial Rd Bowral	\$10,000
Piped drainage Hamilton/Banksia St Bowral	\$412,000
Piped drainage Belmore to Renwick Channel Stage1	\$347,663
Piped drainage Dalton St Bowral	\$368,178
Pipe renewal Banksia St Bowral	\$15,000
Pit/pipe renewal Purcell/Price Streets Bowral	\$28,986
Stormwater drainage renewal Price St Bowral	\$15,774
Stephens Park amenities building	\$267,000
Welby Oval amenities building	\$4,193
Tree planting renewal	\$15,450
Park furniture community parks northern precinct	\$11,771
Boronia Park Furniture	\$6,935
Exeter Oval survey	\$2,150
Burrawang oval public toilet upgrade	\$4,275
Bowral memorial hall	\$11,000
East Bowral community centre carpark	\$163,015
Church Rd oval amenities building upgrade	\$5,489
Wera Road stockpile turning bay improvement	\$35,000
Gatehouse Lane Wera Road intersection improvements	\$80,000
Australia Ave Seal of approval	\$6,339
Local roads resealing program	\$327,000
Local roads gravel resheeting program	\$212,534

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Description of Works (continued)	Expenditure
Church St Burrawang road rehabilitation	\$372,305
Old South Rd Bowral	\$46,695
Wombeyan Caves Road segment 200	\$249,000
Total Capital Expenditure	\$3,248,860
Total	\$4,382,891

IPART Reporting Requirements: Long Term Financial Plan Comparison

This reconciliation compares Council's General Fund operating result for the period ended 30 June 2018 (source: Note 22) with the financial forecasts contained within Council's Special Rate Variation Application submitted to IPART in February 2016.

General Fund	LTFP Projection '000	Actual 2017/18 '000	Variation '000
Income from Continuing Operations			
Rates & Annual Charges	\$48,092	\$49,045	\$953
User Charges & Fees	\$7,282	\$10,421	\$3,139
Investment Income	\$1,796	\$1,468	-\$328
Other Revenues	\$3,225	\$3,399	\$174
Grants & Contributions Operating	\$8,022	\$8,575	\$553
Grants & Contributions Capital	\$2,666	\$24,807	\$22,141
Net Gains from the disposal of assets		-	
Total Income from Continuing Operations	\$71,083	\$97,715	\$26,632
Expense from Continuing Operations			
Employee Costs	\$28,919	\$27,589	-\$1,330
Borrowing Costs	\$570	\$714	\$144
Materials & Contracts	\$12,870	\$21,103	\$8,233
Depreciation & Amortisation	\$15,260	\$17,201	\$1,941
Other Expenses	\$11,265	\$7,416	-\$3,849
Net Loss from the disposal of assets	\$0	\$1,791	\$1,791
Total Expenses from Continuing Operations	\$68,884	\$75,814	\$6,930
Net Operating Result	\$2,199	\$21,901	\$19,702
Net Operating Result excluding Capital Grants and Contributions	-\$467	-\$2,906	-\$2,439

Major Variations Compared to Long Term Financial Plan (General Fund)

Comments and explanations for the major variations between Council's Long Term Financial Plan from February 2016 compared to the actual results for the period ended 30 June 2018 is provided below.

Movement	Reporting Line	Description of Variations	'000
Increase	Rates and Annual Charges	Additional domestic waste management income compared to budget	\$953
Increase	User Charges and Fees	Additional development income and user fees and charges at Council's waste facility	\$3,139
Decrease	Investment Income	Decreased investment income in general fund due to a lower than projected level of funds available for investment	-\$328
Increase	Other Revenues	Additional lease income received for Council owned properties	\$174
Increase	Grants and Contributions Operating	Additional income from Financial Assistance Grant, non contestable waste grant, storm damage grant, and environmental protection grants	\$553
Increase	Grants and Contributions Capital	Increase in dedicated and discovered assets (non-cash income), Council does not budget for dedicated infrastructure. Developer contributions income continue to exceed budget expectations. These funds are held in externally restricted reserves	\$22,141
Income Variations			\$26,632
Savings	Employee Costs	Reduction due to staff vacancies during the year and reduction in Workers Compensation premium	-\$1,330
Increase	Borrowing Costs	Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme adjustment to reflect grant as operating income	\$144

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Movement	Reporting Line	Description of Variations	'000
Increase	Materials and Contracts	A range of increases have led to this variation including (but not limited to) development contractors \$2 million, asbestos remediation works \$1.3 million, and Development legal expenses \$722,000. There are also a number of account reclassifications where expenses have been recorded as Materials and Contracts, rather than other expenses	\$8,233
Increase	Depreciation Expense	The increase in depreciation is primarily due to dedicated infrastructure from urban development and revaluation of water and sewer infrastructure in 2016/17	\$1,941
Savings	Other Expenses	This adjustment relates to the reclassification of expenses as Materials and Contracts, rather than other expenses. This is to ensure compliance with accounting standards and the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice	-\$3,849
Increase	Net loss from the disposal of Assets	Council does not estimate the net profit/loss from the disposal of assets as part of the annual budget, instead estimates are based on the expected sales proceeds	\$1,791
Expense Variations			\$6,930
Net Reportable Variations			\$19,702

Environment Levy

The following 2017/18 projects and programs were funded by the Environment Levy:

2017/18 Environment Levy

Program	Total
Biodiversity Conservation	\$644,204
Weed Management	\$454,056
Revegetation	\$93,629
Support Community Nursery	\$6,013
Vegetation Conservation	\$65,866
EEC Maintenance	\$2,060
Vertebrate Pest Management plans	\$1,801
Green Web Action	\$20,779
Community Capacity & Commitment	\$197,670
Awareness Campaigns	\$13,564
Community Education	\$33,844
Community Support	\$8,310
Landcare and Bushcare	\$27,090
Environment and Sustainability Committee support	\$9,690
Environment Levy Awareness	\$3,058
Rural Partner Program	\$29,421
Urban Sustainability Partner Program	\$72,693
Program Coordination	\$151,114
Environment Levy Program Coordination	\$138,782
Grant Applications	\$12,332
Corporate Support	\$68,163
Environmental Systems	\$9,189
Data Collection Biodiversity	\$8,977
Water Quality Equipment	\$212
River Health and Wetlands	\$68,915
Riparian Management Plans Delivery	\$68,915
Sustainable Living	\$52,627
Community Sustainability	\$52,627
Expenditure (2017/18)	\$1,191,882

Stormwater Management Program

The following 2017/18 projects were funded from the Stormwater Management Services Charge:

2017/18 Stormwater Management Charge

Project	Expenditure
Queen St Bowral Rd Drainage improvements design	\$20,000
Belmore to Renwick channel design	\$20,000
Abattoir Rd Moss Vale culvert replacement	\$6,160
Hamilton/Banksia Streets piped drainage	\$20,000
Upper Caalong St Drainage Robertson	\$79,482
Belmore to Renwick channel piped drainage	\$14,000
Garland Rd Bundanoon modify pit	\$5,594
Floodplain matching grants	\$665
Wembley Road Overland Flow Study	\$16,410
Asset Inspection and Data Collection	\$1,455
Tyndall St Mittagong drainage easement	\$22,930
Lyell Cook St Drainage Upgrade	\$138,900
Creek Cleaning	\$13,770
Stormwater Drainage Maintenance	\$139,229
Total	\$498,595

Rates and Charges Written Off

The following amounts were written off by Council during 2017/18:

Amount of Rates and Charges written off during 2017/18	Amount
Postponed Rates (section 595(1))	\$24,189
Pensioners (section 575)	\$1,700,438
Water Determinations	\$96,992
Other	\$50,657
Total	\$1,872,276

Financial Assistance to Persons for Council Functions

Contributions made by Council under Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993* in 2017/18 include:

Category	Donations / Contributions	Community Assistance Scheme	Rate Subsidies	Total
Arts & Culture	\$47,762	\$3,592	-	\$51,354
Charity Welfare	\$44,218	\$5,224	\$6,616	\$56,057
Community	\$332,534	\$98,628	\$64,348	\$495,510
Environment	\$20,850	-	-	\$20,850
Local Schools	\$1,105	-	-	\$1,105
Sporting & Rec	\$58,065	\$11,122	-	\$69,187
Total	\$504,534	\$118,565	\$70,963	\$694,063

Legal proceedings

Summary of the amount incurred by Council in relation to legal proceedings 2017/18:

Legal Matter	Amounts, costs and expenses paid or received		Summary of the state of Progress	Result
	Paid	Received		
Robertson (Montrose Berry Farm)	\$109,222	-	Finalised	Appeal upheld and conditional development consent granted by the Court
Village Lane Holdings	\$26,410	-	Finalised	Appeal was withdrawn by the Applicant
Tipglen Pty Ltd	\$43,532	-	Finalised	The appeal was resolved at a conciliation conference and conditional consent was granted
Willow Properties Pty Ltd	\$38,039	-	In progress	N/A
Oxley College	\$17,054	\$15,000	Finalised	Building Certificate was issued and proceedings were discontinued
Oporto Mittagong	\$28,812	\$10,000	Finalised	Appeal upheld and conditional development consent granted by the Court
Moss Vale Projects Pty Ltd	\$90,130	\$3,500	Finalised	Appeal was withdrawn by the Applicant
Lomman v Windbelt Pty Ltd (Centennial Winery)	\$137,885	-	Finalised	Judicial review was dismissed

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Legal Matter	Amounts, costs and expenses paid or received		Summary of the state of Progress	Result
	Paid	Received		
RG Capital (Australia) Pty Ltd	\$17,186	-	In progress	N/A
Lema & Mitchell	\$16,960	-	Finalised	The appeal was resolved at a conciliation conference and conditional consent was granted
Sarah King	\$9,925	-	Finalised	Ms King entered into consent orders (Council was successful)
Blackbrook Nominees	\$27,498	-	Finalised	Appeal was withdrawn by the Applicant
Tuxworth	\$17,339	-	Finalised	The appeal was resolved at a conciliation conference and conditional consent was granted
Evoke Corporation	\$29,318	-	Finalised	The appeal was resolved at a conciliation conference and conditional consent was granted
Tujilo Pty Ltd	\$31,438	-	In progress	N/A
Turland	\$46,634	-	In progress	N/A
Malcolm Holdings	\$17,905	-	In progress	N/A
Deluxe Projects	\$18,171	-	In progress	N/A
Baron Corp Pty Ltd	\$102,674	-	Finalised	The appeal was dismissed (Council was successful)
Michael Brown Planning	\$29,041	-	In progress	N/A

Government Information (Public Access) Applications

The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act) is the NSW Government's approach to giving the community greater access to government information. There are four main ways that Council information is made available:

- mandatory proactive release,
- authorised proactive release,
- informal release, and
- formal applications.

Council's program for the proactive release of information involves consultation with the Customer Service team and other key stakeholders.

Number of formal GIPA requests processed within statutory timeframes:

Month	No. Applications	No. Processed within statutory timeframes
July	6	6
August	1	1
September	1	1
October	4	4
November	5	5
December	1	1
January	5	5
February	2	2
March	5	5
April	4	4
May	6	6
June	3	3

Progress towards Audit Committee Recommendations

In December 2017, Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee recommended that:

Council's commitment to a Fraud and Corruption Control Plan should be communicated to external parties via the Annual Report and end of term report

and that:

Council should consider ... including details in the Report and/or end of term report on fraud and corruption control initiatives undertaken during the reporting period.

In response to these recommendations, Council reports that during 2017/18, Council undertook a number of fraud and corruption control initiatives. For example, a Fraud and Corruption Risk Self-Assessment was completed and actions identified to strengthen the internal control environment. Meanwhile, a Senior Corruption Prevention Officer from the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption delivered workshops to Council's management and operational staff on corruption prevention for local government.

Also undertaken was an internal audit of Council's fraud and corruption control framework, using the Fraud Control Health Check template published by the NSW Audit Office. As a result of the internal audit, Council has committed to developing a Fraud and Corruption Control Plan, which is anticipated to be finalised in 2018/19. Once adopted, the Fraud and Corruption Control Plan will build upon Council's existing control program to establish a diverse array of fraud and corruption control initiatives at strategic, tactical and operational levels which will be implemented either on an ongoing basis or at periodic intervals as appropriate.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

In July 2017, Council commenced implementation of many initiatives and actions towards achieving better access and inclusion for people with disability. The achievements under the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017 – 2021 for the period of 2017/18 include:

- an Ability Walk was held at Lake Alexandra, Mittagong in conjunction with Disability Services Australia, with 80 people with disability attending
- 400 Missed Business Guides were distributed to retail and small businesses across the Shire
- construction of a pedestrian bridge and associated footpaths over the Unanderra railway line at Moss Vale has commenced
- a Play Spaces Strategy is in development, following 382 responses to the playgrounds survey conducted in January/February 2018
- the Public Toilet Strategy has been adopted and implementation has commenced
- the annual public swimming pool surveys had an additional question included, with 76 people responding to ‘How satisfied are you with disability access and inclusion services, facilities, staff, support and information provision?’, and
- participation in the development and review of the Local Government NSW online Inclusive Tourism training modules.

Public Interest Disclosures (PID)

Council has adopted a Public Interest Disclosure Policy which is available on the Council website at www.wsc.nsw.gov.au. This document is also available to staff through the Council’s Intranet.

During 2017/2018, Council received two public interest disclosures, as detailed below:

	Made by public officials performing their day to day functions	Under a statutory or other legal obligation	All other PIDs
Number of public officials who made PIDs directly	2	-	-
Number of PIDs received	2	-	-
Of PIDs received, number primarily about:			
Corrupt conduct	1	-	-
Maladministration	1	-	-
Serious and substantial waste	-	-	-
Government information contravention	-	-	-
Local government pecuniary interest contravention	-	-	-
Number of PIDs finalised	-	-	-

Mayor and Councillor Expenses 2017/18

Details of the total cost for the payment of expenses and provision of facilities to Councillors to attend their civic duties are itemised below.

In accordance with section 252 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council will pay expenses incurred or to be incurred, and provide facilities for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors in accordance with the Expenses and Facilities for the Mayor and Councillors Policy to enable them to discharge their functions of civic office. The total cost in 2017/18 was \$238,318. This consists of:

Details	Cost
Accommodation	\$3,381
Conferences and Seminars	\$1,715
Office Equipment/ Maintenance	\$522
Councillor Training & Development	\$545
Printing and Stationery	\$89
Sundries	\$372
Sustenance/Entertainment	\$5,671
Telecommunications	\$2,801
Travel	\$7,312
Councillor/Mayoral Fees	\$215,910

There were no interstate* or overseas trips required by Councillors. There were no expenses payable in accordance with the guidelines accumulated by any spouse, partner, or other person who accompanied a Councillor. There were no expenses accumulated for the provisions of care for a child or immediate family member of a Councillor.

* For the purposes of this report, 'interstate' travel does not include travel to Canberra, ACT.

External Bodies Exercising Power

No external bodies exercised functions delegated by Council during the financial year.

Council did not hold any controlling interests in companies during the financial year.

Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan

Activities conducted to implement Council's Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan:

- assistance was provided to staff where conflict existed, with investigations conducted internally or externally as appropriate
- the plan objectives were maintained and reinforced with all staff, and
- all recruitment and selection was based on merit with the best candidate selected.

Remuneration package for the General Manager and Senior Staff

The current structure of Council consists of two Divisions with three senior management positions:

- General Manager
- Deputy General Manager (Operations, Finance and Risk)
- Deputy General Manager (Corporate, Strategy and Development Services).

Each senior staff member is employed under the Office of Local Government Standard Contract, which is performance based for a period of five years. The contract terms include salary, provision of motor vehicles and facilities and superannuation.

Position	Remuneration Package as at 30 June 2018
General Manager	\$312,298
Deputy General Manager(s)	\$512,500
Total	\$824,798

Companion Animal Management

Wingecarribee Shire Council's Ranger Services team continues to promote responsible companion animal management and work with pet owners in the Shire to ensure they meet their legislative obligations. This is achieved using a combination of education and regulatory enforcement. Rangers have conducted proactive patrols for off leash hot spots to educate dog owners on their responsibilities when using public spaces as well as responding to customer reports of dog attacks, barking dogs and strays.

The Shire has three off leash parks (all fenced), one in each of the major townships of Bowral, Moss Vale and Mittagong.

Following receipt of a grant from the Office of Local Government in 2016/17, Council undertook a program of desexing and microchipping cats belonging to pension card holders during that year. In September 2017, Council submitted a report to the Office of Local Government on the outcomes of the program. The feedback from partner organisations and people who participated in the program was overwhelmingly positive. The 61 cats desexed during the course of this program will go some way to reducing the number of unwanted litters of kittens in our Shire and being identified with microchips will mean that these cats can be reunited with their owners should they ever go missing. Council continues to promote responsible pet ownership and desexing of companion animals through the Wingecarribee Animal Shelter.

The amount of funding spent on companion animal management and activities in 2017/18 was \$696,220.

Animal Shelter Information	Cats	Dogs
Impounded (seized and stray)	222	311
Surrendered	28	66
Released to Owner	12	224
Sold	123	101
Transferred to rescue organisation	7	7

Council has a minimal euthanasia policy for dealing with animals impounded at the Wingecarribee Animal Shelter. Strategies include behavioural modification training, working with rescue organisations, and providing additional vet treatment to impounded animals funded in conjunction with the volunteer group Friends of Wingecarribee Animal Shelter.

Companion animals subject to Euthanasia	Cats	Dogs
Dangerous dogs	N/A	3
Illness/Injury	11	-
Unsuitable for rehoming	16	30
Unable to be rehomed	-	-
Feral/Infant Animal	67	-
Total subject to Euthanasia	94	33

There were 23 dog attack incidents in the Shire recorded on the Companion Animals Register in the period 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018. Seven of these investigations have been finalised.

Sixteen of these incidents occurred in a public place, 15 of these incidents involved one attacking dog and eight incidents involved two attacking dogs.

In seven of these incidents, the victim was an animal or animals. Nine cases involved human victims only, and seven cases involved both human and animal victims, including two involving supervised minors.

Suburb	No. of incidents
Moss Vale	5
Balaclava	3
Bowral	3
Hill Top	3
Mittagong	2
Yerrinbool	2
Bundanoon	1
Colo Vale	1
Medway	1
Robertson	1
Welby	1
Total	23

Swimming Pool Inspection Program

As a result of the swimming pool inspections conducted by Council in 2017/18, a total of 40 certificates of compliance and 10 notices of non-compliance were issued.

Council's Swimming Pool inspection data provided in 2016/17 was reported utilising a methodology which takes into account data that included online self-assessment of swimming pools where a compliance certificate was issued or a non-compliance with a required standard was detected. The data utilised for 2017/18 reflects the actual number of applications received by Council and accordingly the compliance certificates and also notices of non-compliance issued.



Status of Voluntary Planning Agreements

Particulars of compliance with, and effect of, planning agreements in force during the year under section 93G(5).

Application Number	Description of Works	Address	Party to Voluntary Planning Agreement	Status	Agreement Date
Renwick VPA	Community Centre, External Works	Renwick Drive, Renwick	Landcom	Active	11 September 2008
Douglas Road VPA	Infrastructure provision	Douglas Road, Moss Vale	Maloney Nominees Pty Ltd	Active	23 March 2010
Frensham Pool VPA	Intersection works and pool works	Range Road, Mittagong	Winifred West School	Active	7 December 2012
Nattai Ponds VPA	Dedicating land, Community facilities and road works	Isedale Road, Mittagong	Feldkirchen Pty Ltd	Active	11 April 2013
Retford Park VPA	Community park, ancillary works	Olds South Road/ Boardman Road	James Oswald Fairfax	Completed	18 August 2015

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ANNEXURES

Council's Audited Financial Statements are available online at www.wsc.nsw.gov.au/annual-reports.

Produced by Wingecarribee Shire Council

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