

# Annual Report 2023 - 2024



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**Liverpool  
Plains**  
Shire Council

## **Community Images**

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## **Disclaimer**

Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that this document is correct at the time of publishing.

*Front Cover image – Relaxing at the Liverpool Plains Military Tattoo at Longfield Oval, Quirindi.*

## **Prepared by Liverpool Plains Shire Council**

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## Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this land, the people of the Kamilaroi Nation.

We pay our respects to the Aboriginal Elders, both past and present.

We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to Liverpool Plains Shire.

*For Our Elders cake cutting, NAIDOC Celebration Quirindi Showground – July 2023*

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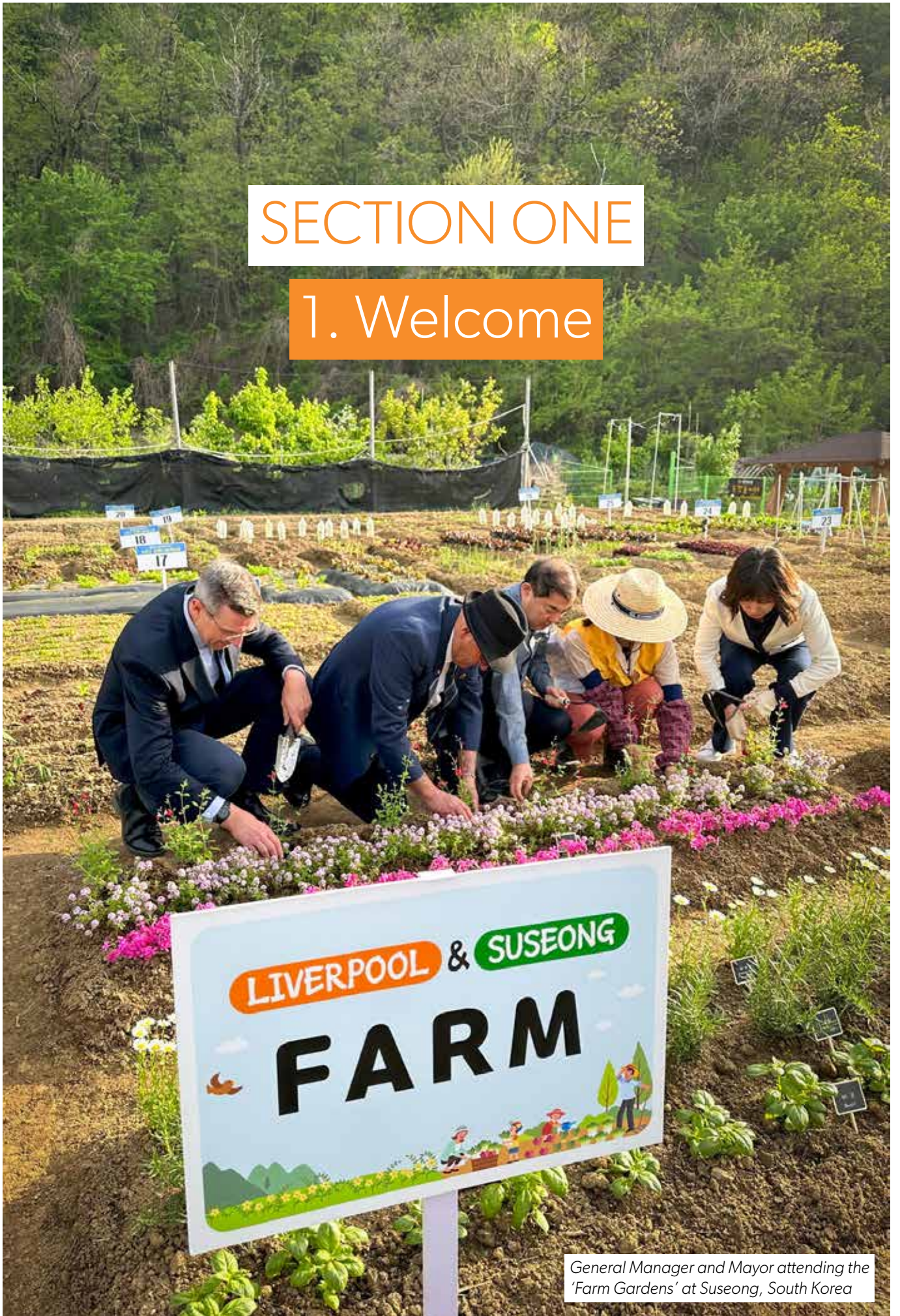


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# SECTION ONE

## 1. Welcome



*General Manager and Mayor attending the 'Farm Gardens' at Suseong, South Korea*





# Message from the General Manager

It is with great pleasure that I provide this message to the Liverpool Plains Shire Council's Annual Report for the 2023-2024 financial year, which details the progress we have made over the past 12 months whilst always focusing on the community's visions and aspirations.

Even though the Liverpool Plains experienced setbacks due to floods from previous years and continued maintenance works, we have continued to be committed to dedicating funds to our roads network with \$1.8m of SRV funds and a total of \$8.8m being invested into the Road and Transport Infrastructure, which went into maintaining 559km of sealed roads, 835km of unsealed roads, 27km re-sheeting and 26km of sealing as well as road surface rehabilitation to ensure well maintained pavements.

Council's aim for the 2023-2024 financial year was to deliver on the projects our community needs, the Quipolly Water Treatment Plant commenced operating in April 2024 providing drinking water to the residents of Werris Creek. We also delivered on an upgrade to Plains Fitness, bridge replacements in Gurton St and Bridge Road with no timber bridges now within the boundaries of Liverpool Plains, and completion of a two-year sewer main rehabilitation program for Werris Creek and Quirindi.

Our commitment to engage more with our community was put in place through projects such as the Quirindi Aquatic Centre, Growth Management Strategy, Inclusion Plan and the Drought Resilience Program. We also continued to seek submissions from the community on numerous policies and strategies throughout the year.

The 2023-2024 year also saw a push for recruitment with a focus on filling vacant roles within the organisation and growing our own talent. Council also successfully recruited our first school-based trainee in our Water Services area.

Training and upskilling our staff was also a priority together with a focus on culture and positive organisational changes. We began the process of developing organisational values with all staff invited to participate in workshops. Our leadership team participated in a series of Leadership Training workshops and 360 reviews were undertaken with Managers. We conducted an engagement survey with staff and also commenced the formation of a Better Workplace Group.

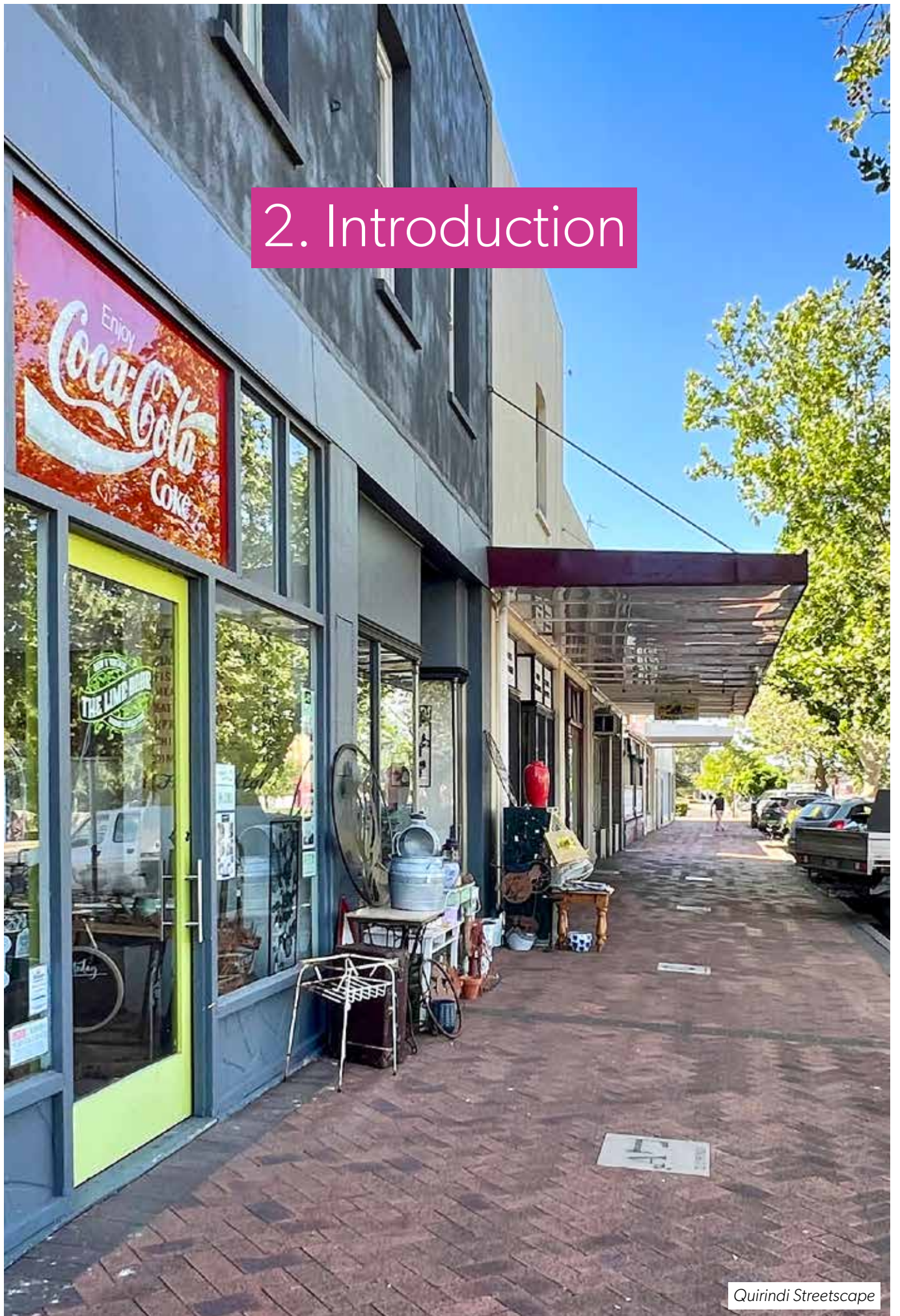
Although we have delivered on projects for the community there is still much more work that needs to be done over the coming year. I would like to acknowledge and thank the Councillors and Staff for their commitment to the organisation throughout the 2023-2024 period and I look forward to working together again in the year to come as we also welcome an incoming term of Council.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Murphy'.

**Gary Murphy**  
*General Manager*



## 2. Introduction



Quirindi Streetscape





## Our Vision

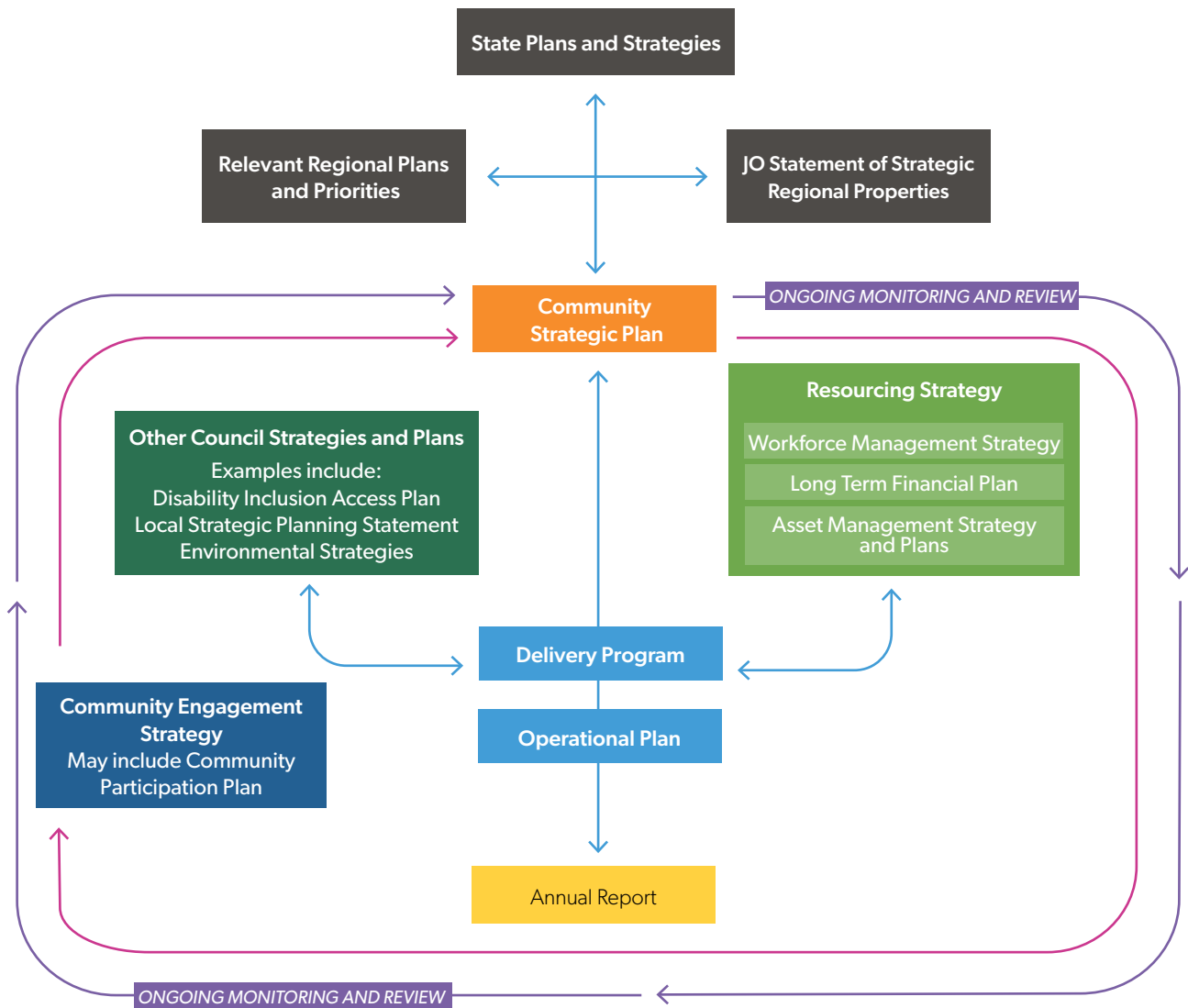
*"We aspire to have a great rural lifestyle that is inclusive of all cultures with access to quality services and facilities. Strong community, council and business leadership, whilst encouraging a thriving economy and a sustainable environment to carry us into the future."*

# Planning for our Future

## Our strategic approach

The NSW Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework is a legislative requirement for all NSW Councils. Council is required to develop a series of strategies and plans that are community focused and provide sustainability for future generations.

Utilising the framework depicted below, these documents detail how Council plans to deliver on our communities' priorities.





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## Our strategies and plans under this framework include:

- Community Strategic Plan (10+years)
- Community Engagement Strategy (4 years)
- Resourcing Strategies and Plans (4-10 years)
- Delivery Program (4 years)
- Operational Plan (1 year).

These plans are informed by the following Resourcing Strategies:

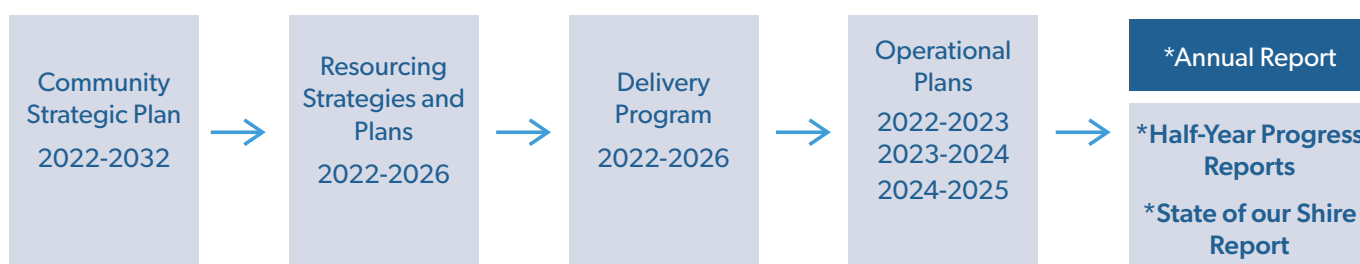
- Long Term Financial Plan (money)
- Asset Strategy and Plans (assets)
- Workforce Management Plan (people).

## The following reports detail our progress:

Council reports on these plans and the progress towards achieving the community's vision, priorities and goals through the following reports:

- State of the Shire Report  
(reports on the Community Strategic Plan at the commencement of a new council term)
- Annual Report  
(reports on the Delivery Program each year)
- Half-Year Progress Reports  
(reports on the progress of implementing the Delivery Program through the Operational Plan every six months).

## The flow of IPR plans and reports:



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# About our Annual Report

Our Annual Report details to the community what Council has delivered for the previous year from the 2022-2026 Delivery Program and the 2023-2024 Operational Plan.

This report comprises of four sections:

Annual Report, Statutory Reporting, State of our Shire Report and Financial Performance.

- Section 1: Provides an overview of who we are, the key achievements and highlights. From 2023-2024, the opportunities and challenges for the Liverpool Plains region and our performance against our four strategic outcomes.
- Section 2: Contains our Statutory Information which includes legislated requirements reporting under the *NSW Local Government Act (1993)*.
- Section 3: Contains our State of our Shire Report to be presented separately to the second meeting of the newly elected council for noting. This report covers the shortened term of the previous council and outlines how Council has contributed towards achieving the Community Strategic Plan.
- Section 4: Audited Financial Statements are usually included in the final section of this report, however at the time of publishing, Council was still waiting for the statements to be finalised. The Audited Financial Statements will provide a detailed account of Council's financial performance and will be published separately once available.



*Aerial view of Qurindi*

# Community Strategic Plan

## COMMUNITY



We value our beautiful landscapes, dynamic towns and villages and safe communities



Our health and education services meet our needs and are available in our local community



We celebrate local events and festivals as a cohesive community

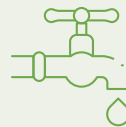


Our transport and telecommunications options support our business and lifestyle

## SUSTAINABILITY



Our infrastructure is well planned and maintained and will meet our needs now and, in the future



We have access to affordable clean water supplies



We actively manage the impact on our natural environment



Our local farming is sustainable



We actively foster and utilise renewable energy

## GOVERNANCE



We have a strong, sustainable, supported volunteer base



Our council, community and business leaders work together effectively



Liverpool Plains Shire Council represents the community it serves



We encourage our youth to become involved in the community as the leaders of tomorrow

## ECONOMY



Our economy is growing, and we offer a diverse range of job opportunities



We foster new business development for our future prosperity



Town planning reflects the diversity of our towns and villages



We embrace tourism



# Our Highlights



## Plains Fitness re-opening

In the six months since Plains Fitness re-opened its doors to reveal the new layout of the downstairs fitness area, five accessible bathrooms and a dedicated group fitness space, membership numbers have more than tripled. At the close of June 2024, Plains Fitness had 250 members, in addition to the casual visitors and personal fitness customers and group fit participants.

Plains Fitness and Quirindi High School have worked together for many years to offer students a place to develop healthy lifestyle habits. During 2024, Quirindi High School students have visited Plains Fitness for Physical Education and Sports Classes, taking advantage of the squash courts, group fit, weight and cardio equipment. Quirindi High School subsidises memberships for students 16 years and over, giving them the chance to learn the benefits of regular exercise for both mind and body.



## Volunteer Induction Session

In September 2023, the Human Resources team was joined by Mayor Hawkins OAM to run a successful volunteer induction session and welcomed four new volunteers to LPSC.

Volunteers are an incredibly valuable part of the organisation and will be assisting in delivering services to the community including the Friends of the Werris Creek library.



## Recruitment

The Human Resources team had a focus on recruiting to fill vacant roles within the organisation and we had 50 new employees commence with Council between July 2023 and June 2024.

Council successfully recruited our first Water Services School Based Trainee to assist with an industry wide shortage of skilled water services staff and to work towards our goal of 'growing our own' talent.



## Local Advisory Groups

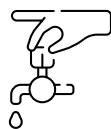
Currabubula, Premer and Spring Ridge Local Advisory Groups have driven local initiatives including the Currabubula Hall Upgrade, Currabubula Ball, planning for Premer's Centenary Celebrations and reviews of the facilities at Spring Ridge.



## Employee Culture

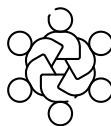
The Employee Voice Survey was conducted in October 2023 and the results reflected an increase across all metrics and shows an increase of employee's engagement and satisfaction with Council as an employer compared to the survey 12 months prior.

We began to develop our values through workshops which were held with feedback sought from all staff. Using this information, the Human Resources team developed the first draft of our organisational values and standards of behaviour.



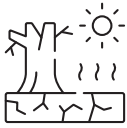
## Quipolly Water Treatment Plant

Operation of the Quipolly Water Treatment Plant commenced in April 2024 with drinking water delivered to Werris Creek residents from that date, ending an era for the old water treatment plant which had serviced the town. The new plant is proving very effective in removing taste and odour issues regularly experienced in water distributed from the old plant.



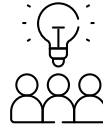
## Liverpool Plains Shire Council Inclusion Plan 2024 - 2026

Based on a holistic approach to inclusion which aims, over time, to remove the physical, non-physical, visible and invisible barriers that restrict people using our services and facilities. Community members raised the importance of signage that is well placed and easy to understand, safe and easy navigation of council buildings and open spaces, equitable access to services and pathways that were well designed and well maintained.



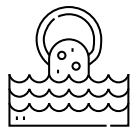
## Regional Drought Resilience Plan

Council partnered with Gunnedah Shire Council to develop a Regional Drought Resilience Plan with funding received from the NSW State Government. The Draft Regional Drought Resilience Plan was prepared following community consultation in April 2024. Four community stakeholder meetings, eleven pop up sessions, an online survey and a mail out to all residents of both shires was undertaken to seek input from residents, businesses and community groups across both shires. The final report will be presented to NSW State Government in November 2024.



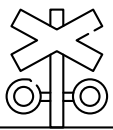
## Community Development

Council offered two rounds of funding access to our Community Funding Program during 2023-2024. Each round provides a total of \$10,000 to support community groups to provide events and services to residents and visitors. Every year, approximately 150 volunteers provide benefits to 6,000 residents and visitors.



## King George V Park – Septic Upgrade

This septic system upgrade has allowed for the increased usage of the facilities, thereby resolving any potential environmental hazards to the community.



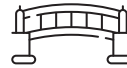
## Henry Street water main rail crossing replacement

The project to upgrade the resilience and capacity of critical water distribution mains in the Quirindi supply where they cross the railway line has been completed. These complex projects involved specialist trenchless technology under the railway carried out in co-ordination with Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) during planned rail shut down periods.



## Wastewater Mains Rehabilitation Program

Completion of a two-year sewer main rehabilitation program for both the Quirindi and Werris Creek systems has resulted in over 2.5 kms of mains being relined and up to 100 junctions rehabilitated.



## Timber bridges replaced

Both the Gurton Street and Bridge Road timber bridges have now been replaced with concrete bridges, resulting in Council no longer having any timber bridges within its boundaries.



## Visitor experiences and the visitor economy

The upgrade of the Quirindi Caravan Park facilities with an automatic boom gate and new power bollards to sites has seen an increase of 728 room nights from the prior year.

Council also provides six Freedom Camping Grounds located at the following villages: Currabubula, Premer, Spring Ridge, Wallabadah, Werris Creek & Willow Tree.

Continue to be a popular stopping point for travellers, bringing increased revenue to each village.

Council also plays a significant role in assisting visitors with their enquiries relating to local attractions across the region at the Visitor Information Centre, with 5,104 visitors dropping into the centre during 2023-2024.



## Liverpool Plains Shire Library Partnerships

Council has partnered with Go Co so that residents who are registered with MyAged Care have access to a home delivery service. Library staff coordinate the selection and packaging of the reader's requests and Go Co volunteers deliver and collect the packages. This important service enables people with limited mobility outside the home to continue their passion for reading.

1,000 Books before School has been developed in partnership with the Friends of Quirindi and Werris Creek Library. 1,000 Books before School encourages and rewards children to develop an interest in reading and for visits to the library to be a regular outing. Launched in March 2024, the program has over 100 children taking part and we expect this number to grow.

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## Key Road projects completed

Council maintained 559 km of sealed roads and 835 km of unsealed roads during 2023-2024. Including re-sheeting 27 km of roads, sealing 26 km of local and regional roads, and sealing 5 km of highway. In addition, 43,200 m<sup>2</sup> of road surface has been rehabilitated. These actions have ensured well-maintained pavements for the community, despite ongoing flood events.

The following local roads were re-sealed:

- Warrah Creek Road
- Borambil Creek Road
- Harrisons Plains Road
- Warrah Ridge Road
- Cansdell Street
- Milner Parade
- Gordon Street
- Doyle Street
- Kingston Street
- Coonabarabran Service Road.

The following roads were rehabilitated:

- Warrah Ridge Road
- Borambil Creek Road
- Lowes Creek Road
- Cattle Creek Road
- Seven Creeks Road
- Pialloway Road.

The Transport NSW Block Grant funding works resulted in a further 43,200m<sup>2</sup> of rehabilitation works and 45,100m<sup>2</sup> of road reseals for Council's Road network.

Roads rehabilitated:

- Coonabarabran Road
- Werris Creek Road
- Gap Road
- Waverley Road.

Roads resealed:

- Waverly Road
- Werris Creek Road.

35 km of the gravel road network has been maintained as per the defined level of service, with all the re-sheeting and grading program completed on schedule.





# Financial Summary

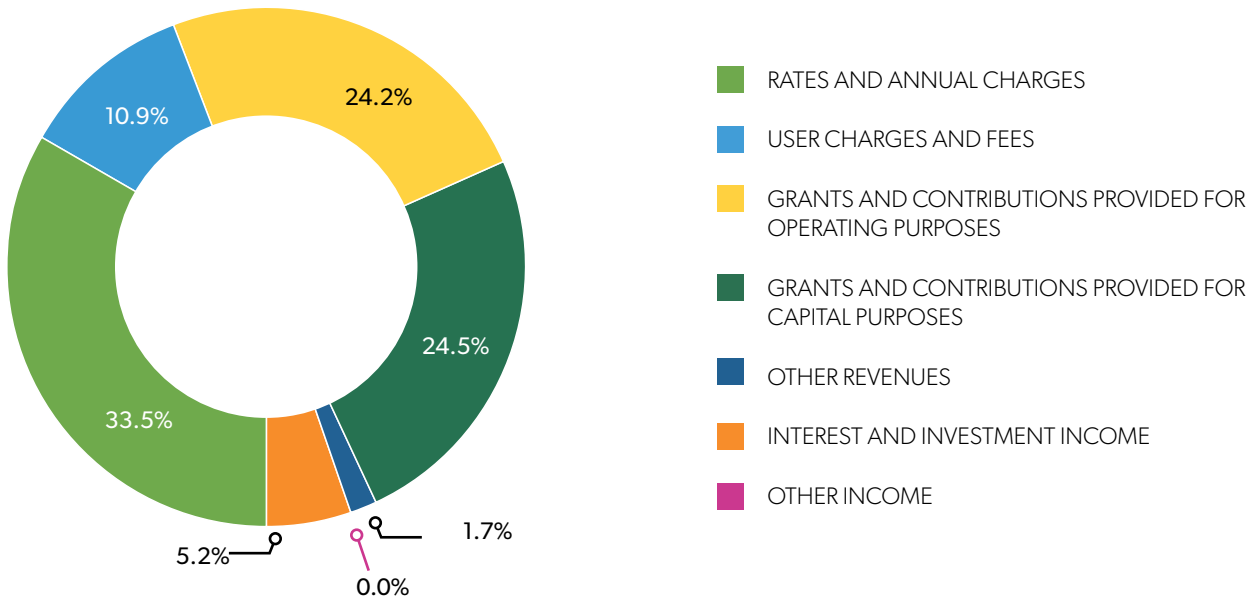
## Revenues and Expenditure Summary

Council is waiting for the finalisation of the 2023-2024 Audited Financial Statements.

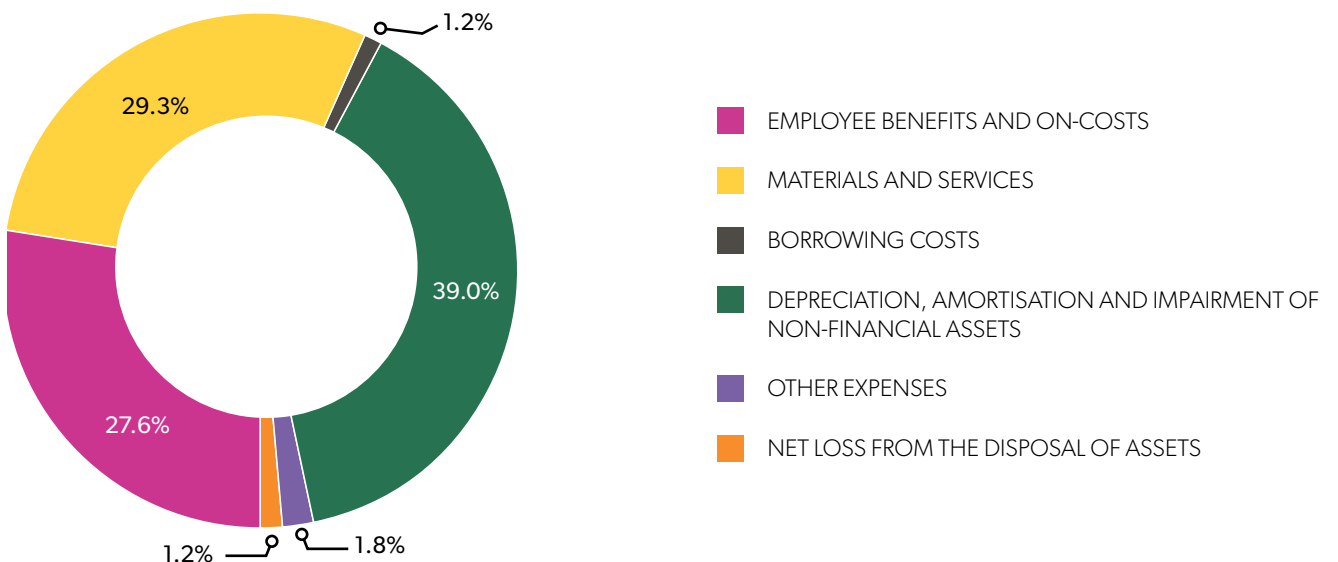
The anticipated financial position for 2023-2024, including capital income, is an operating surplus of \$7.5 million. The surplus reflects decreases in materials and services and employee costs due to less than anticipated grant funding received during the financial year, along with increased investment income.

Excluding capital grants and contributions, the net operation result is an operating deficit of \$3 million for the 2023-2024 financial year. This is an increase on last year's deficit of \$1.9 million. Please refer to the 2023-2024 Audited Financial Statements for detailed financial information, which will be reported separately to Council for adoption and made available on Council's website.

### Income from Continuing Operations 2023-2024



### Expenses from Continuing Operations 2023-2024



## Liverpool Plains Shire Council

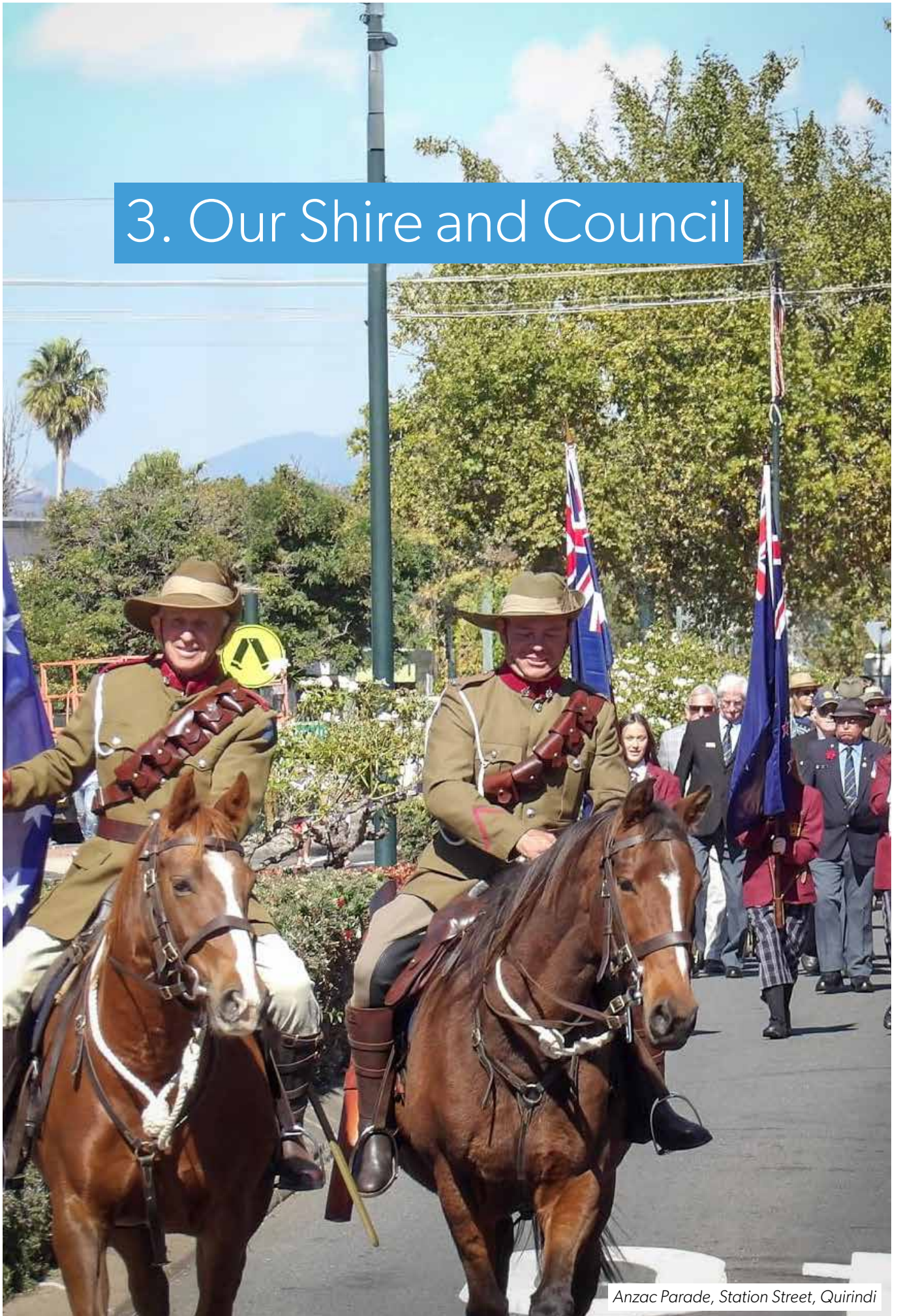
### Income Statement for the year ended 30 June 2024

Income from continuing operations	2023-2024 Original Budget \$'000	2023-2024 Actual \$'000	2022-2023 Actual \$'000
Rates and annual charges	14,688	14,449	14,034
User charges and fees	5,705	4,705	5,300
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	13,681	10,405	16,925
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	32,672	10,535	19,087
Other revenues	479	720	420
Interest and investment income	557	2252	773
Other Income	0	12	602
<b>Total Income from continuing operations</b>	<b>67,782</b>	<b>43,078</b>	<b>57,141</b>
Expenses from continuing operations	2023-2024 Original Budget \$'000	2023-2024 Actual \$'000	2022-2023 Actual \$'000
Employee benefits and on-costs	10,568	9,807	9,731
Materials and services	13,227	10,416	14,795
Borrowing costs	666	417	444
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	13,159	13,865	13,656
Other expenses	694	629	378
Net loss from the disposal of assets	0	435	932
<b>Total expenses from continuing operations</b>	<b>38,314</b>	<b>35,569</b>	<b>39,936</b>
<b>Operating result from continuing operations</b>	<b>29,468</b>	<b>7,509</b>	<b>17,205</b>
<b>Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes</b>	<b>(3,204)</b>	<b>(3,026)</b>	<b>(1,882)</b>





### 3. Our Shire and Council



*Anzac Parade, Station Street, Quirindi*

# About the Liverpool Plains Shire

Located in the New England North-West Region of NSW, the Liverpool Plains Shire extends across the traditional lands of the Kamilaroi Aboriginal people.

The Liverpool Plains sits at the junction of the New England and Kamilaroi Highways, approximately 350 kilometres north of Sydney, 250 kilometres north-west of Newcastle and 60 kilometres south of Tamworth.

The population centres of Quirindi and Werris Creek are located at the heart of the Shire and are supported by several smaller villages and hamlets including:

- Blackville
- Carroona
- Currabubula
- Pine Ridge
- Premer
- Spring Ridge
- Wallabadah
- Willow Tree

The Liverpool Plains Shire Council comprises of 5,086 square kilometres and is located on the north-west slopes and plains region of New South Wales.





# Our Community

MALE **50.2%** FEMALE **49.8%**

**\$1,165**  
MEDIAN WEEKLY  
HOUSEHOLD INCOME

**25.5%** EMPLOYED IN  
THE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

**2.3** PEOPLE  
IS AVERAGE  
HOUSEHOLD SIZE

**7,551**  
TOTAL POPULATION

**52%**  
LABOUR FORCE  
OF WORKING AGE

**12%**  
PARENTS BORN  
OVERSEAS

**34.6%**  
HAVE GAINED TERTIARY  
QUALIFICATIONS

**19%** OF ELIGIBLE  
WORKFORCE VOLUNTEER

**32%** HAVE LONG-TERM  
HEALTH CONDITIONS

**47**  
MEDIAN AGE

**14.9%**  
IDENTIFY AS ABORIGINAL  
THREE LARGEST  
ANCESTRIES ARE  
AUSTRALIAN,  
ENGLISH, AUSTRALIAN  
ABORIGINAL



**2** MOTOR VEHICLES  
PER DWELLING AVERAGE

# Our Council

Liverpool Plains Shire Council is constituted under the *Local Government Act 1993* and was proclaimed on 17 March 2004 following the merger of the former Quirindi Shire with parts of Gunnedah Shire and the former Murrurundi Shire and Parry Shire. We are bounded by Gunnedah Shire in the north, Tamworth Region in the east, Upper Hunter Shire in the south and Warrumbungle Shire in the west.

Our workforce is diverse, reflecting the varied nature of the work we undertake and services we provide. During 2023-2024, our workforce comprised 108 full-time equivalent employees.

Council services include:



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# Our Councillors

Our governing body comprises of seven Councillors, all of whom are elected to carry out duties under the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act).



Cr Doug Hawkins OAM  
Mayor



Cr Ken Cudmore  
Deputy Mayor



Cr Jason Allan



Cr Terry Cohen



Cr Donna Lawson



Cr Paul Moules



Cr Yvonne Wynne



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## Council Meetings

Council is required to hold a minimum of 10 Ordinary Council meetings per year.

Ordinary meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month (except in January), or as otherwise determined by Council. Extraordinary meetings may be held to deal with urgent matters that may arise throughout the year.

Meetings are held from 2.30pm in the Council Chambers at 60 Station Street, Quirindi and conducted in accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice. Copies of meeting business papers, including agendas and minutes, as well as audio-visual recordings of meetings, are available online from Council's website for members of the public to view.

Twelve ordinary meetings were held during 2023-2024, Table 1 indicates the total number of meetings attended by each elected member:

<b>Table 1: Council Meeting Attendance</b>	
<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Council Meetings Attended</b>
Cr Doug Hawkins OAM	11
Cr Ken Cudmore	10
Cr Jason Allan	12
Cr Terry Cohen	10
Cr Donna Lawson	10
Cr Paul Moules	9
Cr Yvonne Wynne	11

## Council Committees

Council supports and administers the following internal committees and panel and is also represented on a number of external committees and organisations. The elected council delegate for each committee, panel or organisation is indicated in the following tables.

Internal committees and panel:

<b>Table 2: Internal Committees</b>		
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Elected Delegate/s</b>	<b>Alternate Delegate</b>
Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee	Cr Donna Lawson Cr Terry Cohen	
General Managers Performance Review Panel	Cr Doug Hawkins OAM Cr Ken Cudmore Cr Terry Cohen Cr Donna Lawson	
Local Traffic Committee	Cr Ken Cudmore	Cr Jason Allan

External committees and organisations:

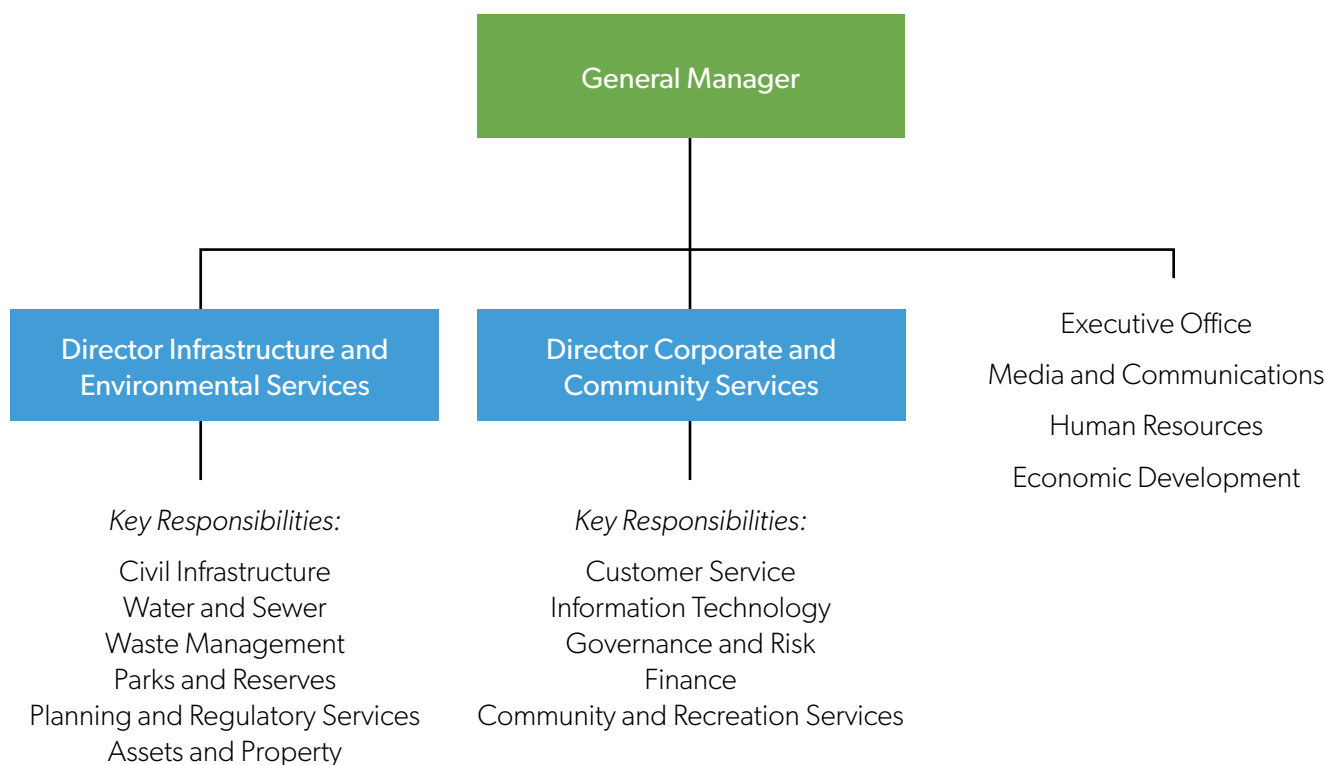
<b>Table 3: External Committees</b>		
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Elected Delegate/s</b>	<b>Alternate Delegate</b>
Australian Railway Monument (ARM) Inc. Management Committee	Cr Yvonne Wynne	Cr Paul Moules
Central Northern Regional Library (CNRL)	Cr Yvonne Wynne	Cr Paul Moules
Mid North Weight of Loads	Cr Ken Cudmore	Cr Paul Moules
Namoi Unlimited	Cr Doug Hawkins OAM	Cr Ken Cudmore
North West Regional Weed Committee	Cr Ken Cudmore	Cr Terry Cohen
Rural Fire Service (RFS) Liaison Committee	Cr Doug Hawkins OAM	Cr Jason Allan
Werris Creek Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee (CCC)	Cr Terry Cohen	Cr Donna Lawson



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# Our Organisation

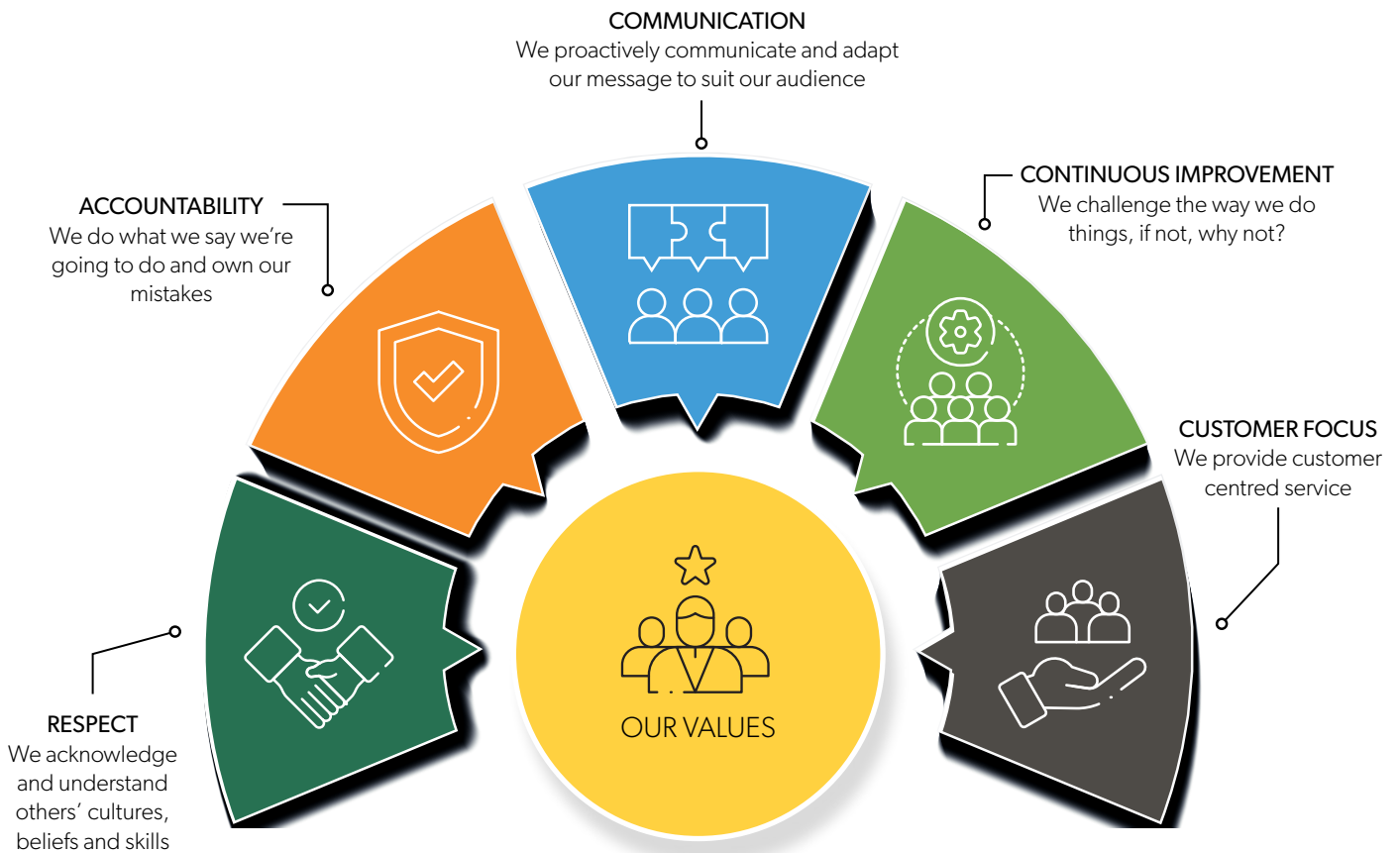
The General Manager is supported by two Directors, each of whom leads a directorate with specific service delivery and operational functions.





# Our Values

Since January 2024 Council held a series of workshops with our employees and collated all responses to deliver the final version of our corporate values as shown below.



## 4. Delivery Plan Reporting



*Quipolly Water Supply, Official Opening Day, Quipolly*

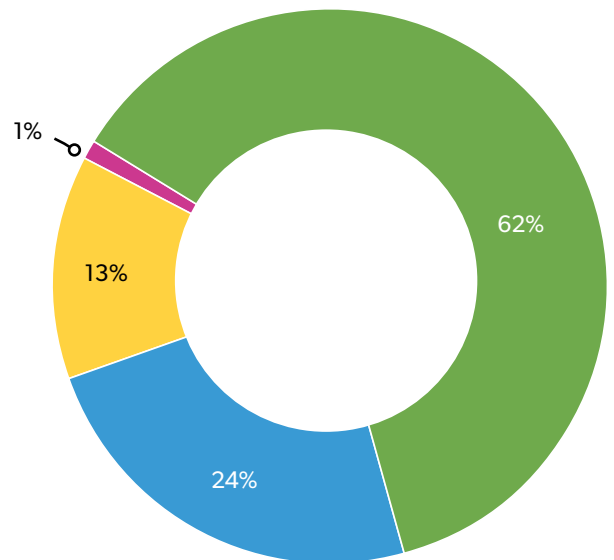
# Delivery Program Overview

The Community Strategic Plan identifies four key outcomes and each of these are supported by various strategies. Our Combined Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2023-2024 details the activities and actions to be undertaken to achieve these strategies. During 2023-2024, Council committed to delivering 75 actions focused on achieving our community’s vision across the four key strategic outcome areas.

Of these actions 62% are Completed, 24% are On Track or Ongoing within their agreed timeframes. 13% are currently Behind Plan, 1% has been cancelled and no actions Off Track for the financial year period.

This section provides a summary of the the most notable of these achievements for each CSP Outcome. Please refer to Section Two, 6. Delivery Program Progress Report for the full details.

●	Complete	46
●	On Track/Ongoing	18
●	Behind Plan	10
●	Off Track	0
●	Cancelled	1
	Total	75



Award recipient at the Council Employee Awards December 2023 Quirindi RSL



# Notable achievements for 2023-2024

## COMMUNITY

### Outcome 1 – A great rural lifestyle with access to quality services

- The Draft Drought Regional Resilience Plan was submitted to the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), for review in May 2024 as per the funding agreement with the Department of Regional NSW.
- The Register of Memorial Trees for Fallen Soldiers has been completed and is currently displayed on the website.
- The Werris Creek Community Garden has officially opened and is operating in the grounds of Werris Creek Library.
- Effective implementation of Council’s Freight Strategy has progressed with routes gazetted for higher productivity vehicles on Coonabarabran Road, Taylors Lane, Werris Creek Road, and Ellerslie Street. The intersection of the Kamilaroi Highway and New England highway has been finalised with access for higher productivity vehicles and now funding has been received, assessment of the Pine Ridge Mooki River bridge is currently underway.





- Both the Gurton Street and Bridge Road bridges have now been completed.
- Significant progress has been made to improve telecommunications services across the Shire. There are future plans in place to expand coverage.
- The Military Tattoo was held with visitors attending from all over NSW, Qld and even Ireland. A large crowd enjoyed the show along with the Mayor and General Manager from our Sister City, Blacktown City Council, in attendance.
- Council supported the Warrah Creek and Werris Creek communities to stage events on Australia Day and have assisted Premier to prepare their centenary celebrations held in September 2024.
- The Quirindi Aquatic Centre project has seen the old pool demolished and has now progressed to the final design stage. Once endorsed, the project will move into the construction phase in the new year.



*Military Tattoo, Longfield Oval, Quirindi*



## GOVERNANCE

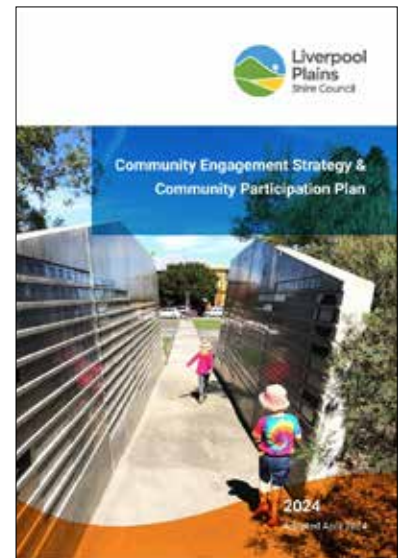
### Outcome 2 - Strong community, Council and business leadership

- Council implemented a new Customer Request Management system in October 2023, bringing greater transparency of all requests received across the organisation.



Annual totals for customer interactions:

- Phone calls – 10,837
  - Front counter – 4,795
  - Visitor Information Centre – 5,104
  - Service NSW Agency – 12,242
  - Customer Requests – 3,178
- Our Community Engagement Strategy was adopted in April 2024 after workshoping with Councillors. The principles of this strategy were employed during the development of the Growth Management Strategy and Drought Resilience Plan.
  - Ten Community Groups shared in \$10,000 in the second round of the 2023-2024 Community Funding Program. Projects included historical displays, sporting events, art shows and the official openings of community facilities. Through these ten grants, more than 150 volunteers will be supported to deliver benefits to more than 6,500 residents and visitors.



Australia Day Awards recipients with Mayor and Councillors



- 
- Council's Inclusion Plan 2024-2026 was adopted by Council and forwarded to the NSW Department of Communities and Justice. Council held community meetings at Werris Creek and Quirindi and sought feedback from a range of community members and community organisations.
  - Members of the Student Representative Council from the Quirindi High School assisted in the planning and delivery of the Youth Week Film and Fun Night and the school holidays Bubble Sports evening.
  - Council vacancies are being filled as soon as practical for roles, with the exception of roles with industry wide shortages.
  - Approval of Council's Risk Appetite was obtained in March 2024 and as a result the Risk Management Strategy was adopted in March 2024.
  - Premer and Currabubula Local Advisory Groups have remained active during the previous council term and Council has continued to use the network of Local Advisory Group members to seek input on major projects, policies and plans including:
    - Growth Management and Housing Strategy
    - Inclusion Plan 2024-2026
    - Combined Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2024-2025 and Schedule of Fees and Charges 2024-2025
    - Regional Drought Resilience Plan.



Canola crop

## ENVIRONMENT

### Outcome 3 - A sustainable environment

- The Asset Management Policy has been reviewed and updated, along with the Asset Management Plans for the Aerodrome, Buildings, Transportation and Parks and Recreation.
- The Quipolly Water Treatment Project achieved the status of “Early Use” completion to enable the delivery of drinking water to the community.
- Willow Tree Landfill Project delivery contract pricing has been reported through Council. Fees and charges for the new landfill are now included in 2024-2025 Fees and Charges Schedule.
- Enhanced publication of the Annual Dam Safety Report will be undertaken to provide to Council’s website for future reports.
- Water supplies generally complied with the Drinking Water Management System throughout the year. Minor items of non-compliance were attended to with appropriate actions from the Incident Response protocols.
- The Whitehaven mine at Werris Creek ceased operations in June 2024 and is currently in the rehabilitation phase. Council is continuing to engage with Whitehaven and the NSW State Government to ensure that the lost economic activity is replaced with other relevant and compatible activities.
- Council actively seeks to expand and develop the Werris Creek Industrial Precinct to support the local farming industry gaining better access to markets both domestic and international.
- Henry Street water main rail crossing replacement: Undertaken in partnership with ARTC (Australian Rail Track Corporation), the two existing mains under the rail at Henry Street Quirindi dating back to the early days of the Quirindi Town Water Supply in the early 1990’s were replaced with a single pipe constructed to contemporary engineering standards to address the risk to council of a burst main in a difficult location with liability considerations also.



*New Gurton Street Bridge, Quirindi*



## ECONOMY

### Outcome 4 - A thriving economy

- Regular liaison with our Local Advisory Groups identified a number of key community events. Funding from the Community Funding Program supported a number of these new and established community events.
- Following the Council workshop in March 2024 with Regional NSW, a follow up meeting is scheduled for July 2024 focussed on the Werris Creek Industrial Precinct.
- Engagement with the Department of Planning on the proposed amendments to the Manufactured Homes Estate, Caravan Parks, Camping Grounds and Moveable Dwellings Regulation was exhibited in December 2023.
- Draft Growth Management & Housing Strategy has been publicly exhibited with substantial stakeholder engagement and the holding of six public meetings.



Sheep dog trials



New boom gate, Quirindi Caravan Park



# SECTION TWO

## 1. Statutory Reporting



*New Council signage, Werris Creek Road, Currabubula*

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# Overview

Liverpool Plains Shire Council's general reporting requirements are set out in section 428 of the *Local Government Act 1993 (the Act)* and Part 9, Division 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation)*. The Act and Regulation can be accessed from [www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au).

This section also meets Council's reporting requirements under the *Companion Animals Act 1998* and *Companion Animals Regulation 2008*, as well as the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

## General Reporting Requirements

### Rates and Charges Written Off

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, section 132*

Council is required to include in the Annual Report the amount of rates and charges written off during the year. As part of the sale of land for unpaid rates, the uncollected rates written off during 2023-2024 was \$8,490.54.

Table A, below, details the rates and charges written off by Council in the reporting period :

Table A: Rates and Charges Written Off	
Category	Amount \$
Charges	0.00
Interest	3,736.09
Pensioner Rebates – Mandatory	284,099.10
Pensioner Rebates – Voluntary	0.00
Rates - Other	15,075.37
<b>Total</b>	<b>302,910.56</b>

### Overseas Visits

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a)*

Details, (including purpose) of overseas visits by councillors, council staff or other persons representing council (including visits sponsored by other organisations).

The Mayor and General Manager travelled to Suseong-gu, Republic of Korea from 19 April to 28 April 2024 under a grant from the Australia-Korea Foundation through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The visit was in conjunction with our Sister City, Blacktown City Council.

The purpose of the visit was to strengthen bilateral relations between Liverpool Plains Shire Council (LPSC) and Suseong-gu, Daegu Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea through cultural exchange, strategic collaboration, and economic development. Liverpool Plains Shire Council aimed to increase public awareness, develop partnerships, and increase capacity for effective engagement with the Republic of Korea.

The grant funding received from the Australia Korea Foundation was \$35,000.00 with expenses totalling \$12,435.59 for both the Mayor and General Manager's travel to South Korea. The balance of the funding is for a reciprocal visit to Council from the South Korea delegation in the future.

## Councillor Expenses and Provision of Facilities

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a1)(i),(ii), (iii), (iiia), (iv), (v), (vi), (vii), (viii)*

Council's Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities Policy allows for the payment of expenses incurred by, and provision of facilities to, Councillors in relation to their roles as elected representatives and members of the governing body of Council.

The total amount of fees paid to the Councillors in 2023-2024 was \$119,639.76.

Table B, below, details the amount spent on providing facilities and expenses for Councillors during the reporting period.

<b>Table B: Councillor Expenses and Provision of Facilities</b>	
<b>Category</b>	<b>Amount \$</b>
Provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to Councillors	0.00
Telephone calls made by Councillors	897.25
Attendance of Councillors at conferences and seminars	5,306.89
The provision of induction training and professional development for Mayor and other Councillors	3,857.27
Other training of Councillors and provision of skill development	0.00
Interstate visits by Councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses	0.00
Overseas visits by Councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses	6,217.90
Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a Councillor in the performance of his or her civic functions, being expenses payable in accordance with the Guidelines for the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities for the mayor and councillors	0.00
Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child of, or an immediate family member of a Councillor	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,279.31</b>

## Mayor and Councillor Professional Development

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 186*

Under section 232(1)(g) of the Act, the Mayor and Councillors have a responsibility to make all reasonable efforts to acquire and maintain the skills necessary to perform their roles. Our General Manager is required under the Regulation to ensure the delivery of an ongoing Professional Development Program to assist our Councillors in acquiring and maintaining the skills necessary to perform their roles.

The Regulation provides that the Mayor and Councillors must make all reasonable efforts to participate in the activities offered to them as part of the Professional Development Program. We are required to report on the participation of the Mayor and each Councillor in the Professional Development Program during the year.

Our Councillor Induction and Professional Development Policy is modelled on the model policy published by the Office of Local Government.



Throughout the year Councillors are provided with the opportunity to attend the following professional development:

- LGNSW Water Management Conference
- LGNSW Annual Conference
- LGNSW Destination and Visitor Economy Conference
- Floodplain Management Australia National Conference
- NSW Local Roads Congress
- ALGWA NSW Conference
- Code of Conduct Refresher – SINC Solutions Pty Ltd.

Details of our Councillor Professional Development Program for the reporting period are contained in *Table C*, below:

<b>Table C: Councillor Professional Development - 2023-2024</b>			
<b>Conference/Meeting</b>	<b>Provider</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Delegate</b>
Country Mayors Meetings	Country Mayors Association of NSW	Generally monthly	Cr Doug Hawkins OAM
LGNSW Annual Conference	Local Government NSW	12 to 14 November 2023	Cr Doug Hawkins OAM Cr Jason Allan Cr Donna Lawson
LGNSW Destination and Visitor Economy Conference	Local Government NSW	28 to 30 May 2024	Cr Jason Allan
NSW Local Roads Congress	Local Government NSW	3 June 2024	Cr Ken Cudmore

## Contracts

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a2), (i), (ii)*

Council is required to disclose the details of each contract awarded for amounts greater than \$150,000, including the name of the contractor, the nature of goods or services supplied, and the total amount payable under the contract.

As detailed in *Table D*, below, Council awarded thirty-six contracts during the reporting period for an amount greater than \$150,000:

<b>Table D: Major Contracts</b>		
<b>Contractor</b>	<b>Contract</b>	<b>Amount \$ (inc. GST)</b>
AGL Sales Pty Ltd	Small Sites Electricity supply	594,320
Albury Quarries Pty Ltd	Blasting & Crushing Services (SPT422324GUN)	1,046,403
Atarfil Australian Pty Ltd	HDPE Membrane Liner	166,917
Boral Construction Materials Group	Supply of Road resurfacing materials	1,527,348

<b>Table D: Major Contracts</b>		
Boral Construction Materials Group	Supply of concrete & Ready-Mix Concrete	1,009,852
BP Australia Pty Ltd	Fleet Fuel	575,441
Bridge Check Australia Pty Ltd	Gurton Steet and Bridge Road Project	580,240
Civica Pty Ltd	ERP System and Support	385,411
Controlled Blasting Services Pty Ltd	Blasting & Crushing Services (SPT422324GUN)	215,184
Craftcrete Pty Ltd	Station St Kerb and Gutter Replacement	155,139
DW Clarke Transport Pty Ltd	Gravel Cartage	192,661
Finn Valley Plant & Civil Pty Ltd	Watermain Replacement Henry Street	424,963
Geofabrics Australasia Pty Ltd	Membrane for Landfill Construction	155,637
Gongues Constructions Pty Ltd	Quipolly Water Treatment Project	7,744,962
Grinners Diggers Pty Ltd	Wet and Dry Plant Hire	262,372
Hoswell Constructions	Plains Fitness Renovation	164,149
Hunter H2O Holdings Pty Ltd	QWP Project management	513,051
Hunter H2O Holdings Pty Ltd	Critical interface analysis	269,082
Inquik Pty Ltd	Gurton Steet and Bridge Road Project	409,280
Interflow Pty Ltd	Waste water mains Lining & Sewer Mains Lining	1,071,102
Mac Demo NSW Pty Ltd	Quirindi Swimming Pool Demo	255,929
Marheine Group	Wet and Dry Plant Hire	178,795
Merinda Recyclers (Quirindi) Unit T	Landfill and Waste Recycling Operations	1,402,025
Mighty Midget Earth Worx	Gravel Cartage	164,185
MSP Contracting & Earthmoving Pty Ltd	Wet and Dry Plant Hire	157,105
Peel Valley Traffic Control	Traffic Control Services	454,165
Pitt & Sherry (Operations) Pty Ltd	Werris Creek Industrial Gateway Operations	734,666
Regional Quarries Australia Pty Ltd	Supply of Aggregates	460,426
JR Richards & Sons	Waste Collections Services	685,712
RNR Earthworks Pty Ltd	Wet and Dry Plant Hire	161,268
Roadwork Industries Pty Ltd	Road Resurfacing	237,948
Rollers Australia Pty Ltd	Wet and Dry Plant Hire	284,038
Shell Energy Retail Pty Ltd	Large Sites Power Supply	185,224
Smada Electrical Services Pty Ltd	Longfield Oval Lighting Upgrade	601,145
The Stabilising Pty Ltd	Provision for Road Stabilising	966,198
WTC Group Aust Pty Ltd	Kamilaroi Highway Flood Immunity and Drainage	487,406
<b>Total</b>		<b>24,879,748</b>

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## Modern Slavery Act

*Local Government Act 1993 (Act), section 428 (4), (c) and (d)*

No issues have been raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner during 2023-2024 concerning the operations of Council and identified by the Commissioner as being a significant issue.

Through Council's Procurement Policy, reasonable steps have been undertaken to ensure that procurement throughout Council is not the product of modern slavery within the meaning of the Modern Slavery Act 2018.

Employees will implement the Anti-Slavery Commission's new modern slavery due diligence requirements from 1 July 2024.

## Legal Proceedings

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a3)*

The table below provides a summary of the expenditure incurred in relation to legal proceedings taken by or against Council during the 2023-2024 period. Also included is the state of progress for each category of legal proceeding.

Table E: Legal Proceedings Expenses		
Item	Status	Expenditure \$
Debt Recovery	Complete	117,124.89
Industrial Relations	Nil	0.00
Other	Complete	8,308.60
Planning and Environment	Ongoing	8,286.48
Property	Ongoing	8,286.48
<b>Total</b>		<b>139,703.09</b>

## Subsidised Private Works

*Local Government Act 1993 (Act), section 67, 67(2)(b), 67(3)*

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a4)*

Council is required to provide a summary of resolutions during the reporting period under section 67 of the Act concerning work carried out on private land, including details of such work if the cost of the work has been fully or partly subsidised by Council.

During the reporting period, Council did not undertake any subsidised works on private land .



## Financial Assistance to Others

Local Government Act 1993 (Act), section 356

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a5)

Under section 356 of the Act, Council can provide financial assistance to others, through cash donations, sponsorships and reductions in charges. All financial assistance provided by Council must be disclosed in the Annual Report.

As detailed in Table F, below, Council provided \$33,788.50 in financial assistance to others during the reporting period, inclusive of cash donations, sponsorships and reductions in charges.

<b>Table F: Financial Assistance</b>		
<b>Community Funding Program</b>		
<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Event/Purpose</b>	<b>Amount \$</b>
Spring Ridge Country Club	Firecracker and Bonfire Night	1,000.00
Werris Creek Rugby League Football Club	Sporting event /game day kits	1,000.00
Quirindi Polo Club	150yr Polo Carnival	1,000.00
Quirindi CWA	Christmas in July Disability Disco + October Disability Disco	1,000.00
Quirindi District Tennis Club Inc.	Official Opening of New Tennis Club House	1,000.00
Quirindi RSL/Golf Club	Signage	750.00
Quirindi Historical Society.	Display and archive equipment	1,250.00
Currabubula Red Cross	Art Show	1,000.00
Liverpool Plains Business Chamber	Business Breakfast	1,000.00
Motherland Ltd	Mother's Day Fundraiser	1,700.00
Challenge Community Service	Tool storage shed	1,700.00
Quirindi District Cricket Club	Cricket balls	1,700.00
Quota International of Quirindi	Gazebo + signage	1,700.00
Werris Creek Community Garden	Storage Shed + Water tank	1,700.00
Lions Club of Premer & District	Premer 100yr Celebration	1,500.00
<b>Total for Community Funding Program</b>		<b>19,000.00</b>
<b>Community Fees Waived</b>		
<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Event/Purpose</b>	<b>Amount \$</b>
Walhallow Local Aboriginal Land Council	14 August 2023 - YES23 Referendum use of Royal Theatre	160.00
Quirindi Community Food Pantry	23 March 2024 Easter Parade use of Bell Park	268.00
Quirindi Golf Club	August 2023 Reduction of Water access charge	10,750.50
Preparation at McMasters Hall	October 2023 Waste transfer station fees	100.00

<b>Table F: Financial Assistance</b>		
<b>Community Fees Waived (continued)</b>		
<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Event/Purpose</b>	<b>Amount \$</b>
Quirindi Polocrosse Club	2022-2023 user fees discount went to Council on 27 March 24	1,000.00
Toastmasters	2023-2024 user fee discount for the Community Hub	1,230.00
Rotary	August 2023 user fee discount for the Community Hub	110.00
Quirindi Palliative Care	May 2024 user fee discount for the Community Hub	120.00
Liverpool Plains Business Chamber	August 2023 and May 2024 user fee discount for the Community Hub	150.00
<b>Total for Community Fees Waivered</b>		<b>14,788.50</b>
<b>Total Financial Assistance</b>		<b>33,788.50</b>

## Delegated External Bodies

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a6)*

Council is required to include in the Annual Report a statement of all external bodies that exercise functions delegated by the Council. No external bodies exercised functions delegated by Council during the reporting period.

## Controlling Interest in Companies

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a7)*

Council is required to include in the Annual Report a statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which it holds a controlling interest.

Council did not hold a controlling interest in any companies during the reporting period.

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## Participation in Corporations, Partnerships, Joint Ventures or Other Bodies

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a8)*

Council is required to include in the Annual Report a statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or no incorporated) in which it participates.

During the reporting period, Council participated in the following corporations, partnerships and other organisations:

- Central Northern Regional Library
- Country Mayors Association
- Local Government NSW
- Namoi Joint Organisation (Namoi Unlimited)
- StateCover Mutual Limited
- StateWide Mutual Limited.

## Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a9)*

Council is required to include in the Annual Report a statement of all activities undertaken to implement its endorsed Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Management Plan 2022-2026.

During the reporting period, the following actions were undertaken:

- Recruitment: EEO principles are included in merit-based selection training for hiring managers and panel members to ensure a fair and equitable recruitment process.
- Recruitment: Interviewing format was updated for a number of roles to include pictures of tasks for applicants to respond to as opposed to a standard question and answer process.
- Induction: All new and commencing staff received information on their rights and responsibilities for promoting EEO and preventing bullying and harassment through the Employee Induction Program.
- Flexibility: A new Flexible Working Arrangement Policy was created and distributed to all staff, to assist with making work options accessible.
- Wellbeing: Council provides an Employee Assistance Program, providing staff and their immediate family members access to a free, professional counselling service.



## Total Number of Persons Who Performed Paid Work

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(d) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv)

Total number of persons who performed paid work on Wednesday 14 February 2024 was 117. Table G represents the breakdown of the total number of persons employed in the following categories:

Table G: Total Number of Persons	
Category	No. of Persons
Persons employed by the council on a permanent full-time, permanent part-time or casual basis or under a fixed-term contract	104
Persons employed by the council as senior staff members	3
Persons engaged by the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, wholly or principally for the labour of the person	9
Persons supplied to the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, as an apprentice or trainee	1

## Remuneration Package for the General Manager

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1) (b)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v)

For the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, Council employed one (1) staff member in the position of General Manager.

The General Managers total remuneration package for 2023-2024 is detailed in Table H below:

Table H: Total General Manager Remuneration Package	
Description	Remuneration \$
Total value of the salary component of the package	271,687.01
Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of the salary component	0.00
Total amount payable by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the general manager may be a contributor	27,413.00
Total value of any non-cash benefits for which the general manager may elect under the package	0.00
Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits.	17,708.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>316,808.01</b>

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## Total Remuneration Packages for Senior Staff

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(c)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v)*

During this year, Council had two senior staff as defined by the Local Government Act comprising of two Directors. For the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, Council employed two (2) staff members in positions designated by Council as Senior Officers for the purposes of section 332 of the Act, see *Table I* below:

<b>Table I: Total Senior Staff Remuneration Package</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<b>Remuneration \$</b>
Total value of salary components of their packages	425,807.44
Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of salary components of their packages	0
Total amount payable by the council by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which any of them may be a contributor	43,587.00
Total value of any non-cash benefits for which any of them may elect under the package	0.00
Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits	22,593.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>491,987.44</b>

## Stormwater Management Services

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(e)*

Council has not implemented a Stormwater Management Plan and did not levy a Stormwater Management Charge in the reporting period.

## Coastal Protection Services

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(e1)*

Council has not implemented a Coastal Management Plan and did not levy an annual charge for coastal protection services in the reporting period.

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## Development Contributions

*Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (EPA Reg) cl218A(1)*

*EPA Reg 218A (2)(a),(b),(c),(d),(e),(f),(g)*

*EPA Reg 218A(3)(a),(b)*

Under the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and accompanying Regulation, Development Contributions provide funding for local infrastructure including community facilities, libraries, new open spaces, open space embellishment and traffic management projects.

Council continues to plan, manage and monitor development contributions to ensure infrastructure is being developed when needed. In this financial year Council expended nil contributions and received the following contributions:

(a) - S7.11 Contributions \$408,560.09

(b) - S7.12 Contributions \$134,110.28

## Companion Animal Management

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(f)*

Council is required to report on its activities in enforcing and ensuring compliance with the Companion Animals Act 1998 ("Companion Animals Act") and Companion Animals Regulation 2008.

Council's pound collection data for 2023-2024 is summarised in *Table J*, below:

<b>Table J: Summary of Pound Data</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Cats</b>	<b>Dogs</b>	<b>Total</b>
Seized	1	34	35
Surrendered	53	103	156
Returned to owner	0	6	6
Taken to pound	113	195	308
Released to owner	3	50	53
Rehomed via Council sale	13	27	40
Rehomed via rehoming organisations	61	92	153
Other	0	12	12
Euthanised	22	13	35

It is mandatory for all dog attack data to be lodged with the Office of Local Government in accordance with the Companion Animals Act. This legislation requires a dog attack to be reported within 72 hours of the incident. In the 2023-2024 reporting period, three dog attack incident's that involved people or animals were recorded.

The Companion Animals Act provides that microchipped animals be held for a period of 14 days and unidentified animals for seven days. Council releases animals to shelters where those animals are considered to be suitable for rehoming. Council has developed strong relationships with a number of re-housing programs as evident by the Pound Data return.



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Council employs one (1) full-time equivalent Ranger and (2) casual Rangers for weekends, both roles include local laws compliance and companion animals' functions. The total expense for this service during the reporting period was \$193,134.

Our Ranger attended Council's stall at the Quirindi Show to promote changes to the registration process and to answer any questions participants may have regarding registration. Council rangers promote desexing of cats and dogs to people who adopt animals from the pound or while surrendering puppies or kittens. We suggest they contact agencies who may be able to assist them with some of the cost of desexing, for example the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals NSW (RSPCS) or the Animal Welfare League NSW (AWL) if they are unable to meet the full cost themselves.

Under the Companion Animals Act, Council must provide at least one off-leash area where dogs can be exercised off-leash during certain hours. Council has eight designated off-leash areas throughout the Liverpool Plains Shire as follows:

- Currabubula Recreation Grounds - Currabubula
- David Taylor Park – Werris Creek
- First Fleet Memorial Picnic Area - Wallabadah
- Golland Sporting Fields, RSL Park and Rose Lee Park - Quirindi
- Premer Sports Grounds - Premer
- Willow Tree Recreation Ground - Willow Tree.

Please refer to the LPSC website for further details:

[www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Services/Pets-and-animals/Off-leash-dog-exercise-areas](http://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Services/Pets-and-animals/Off-leash-dog-exercise-areas).

## Planning Agreements

*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, section 7.5(5)*

Council is required to detail in the Annual Report the particulars of compliance with, and the effect of, any planning agreements in place.

Council did not have any planning agreements in place during the reporting period.

## Environmental Upgrade Agreements

*Local Government Act 1993, section 54P(1)*

Council is required to detail in the Annual Report the particulars of any environmental upgrade agreements entered into during the year.

Council did not enter into any environmental upgrade agreements during the reporting period.

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## Inspection of Private Swimming Pools

*Swimming Pools Act 1992 (SP Act), s 22F(2)*  
*Swimming Pools Regulation 2018, clause 23*

Council is required to undertake a program of private swimming pool inspections and detail in the Annual Report the number of inspections carried out in the year that were of a tourist and visitor accommodation; of premises with two or more dwellings; and that resulted in certificates of compliance and non-compliance being issued.

As detailed in *Table K*, below, Council undertook the following inspections in 2023-2024:

<b>Table K: Inspections of Private Swimming Pools</b>	
<b>Inspections</b>	<b>Number</b>
Of tourist and visitor accommodation	0
Of premises with more than two dwellings	0
That resulted in issuance of a certificate of compliance under section 22D of the Act	1
That resulted in issuance of a certificate of non-compliance under clause 21 of the Regulation	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>

## Inclusion Plan Reporting

*Disability Inclusion Act 2014, section 13(1)*

Council is required to develop and implement an Inclusion Plan setting out how it will improve access for people with a disability and support them in participating in full in the community. Council adopted our new Inclusion Plan in April 2024 and an update on our progress in implementing this plan is shown below:

The Inclusion Plan 2024-2026 builds on our community's vision for a lifestyle that is inclusive of all cultures with access to quality services and facilities. Previously, this document has been referred to as the Disability Inclusion Action Plan, the renaming of the document reflects a holistic approach to Inclusion and recognises that barriers to full inclusion can be physical, non-physical, visible and invisible.

The Inclusion Plan 2024-2026 is produced in Easy English and features Infographics throughout. The Inclusion Plan 2024 – 2026 includes a range of suggested actions.

1. Learning more about the barriers experienced by community members and the staff of Liverpool Plains Shire Council. Establishing an Inclusion Advisory Group and working with LPSC's Joint Consultative Committee, we will build our understanding of the barriers to full participation and develop our expertise in removing these barriers.
2. Actions ranging from the design of our outdoor spaces, public events and communication methods reflect the recommended themes of Positive attitudes and behaviours; Access to mainstream services; Liveable Communities and Meaningful Employment.
3. Removing the entry fees for people in carers roles, reduces the barriers encountered by carers to fully support the people they assist. Carers can be defined as NSW Companion Card Holders and Commonwealth Concession Card Holders (Carers Pension recipients).

We will be guided by our Inclusion Advisory Group and the Joint Consultative Committee to continue to develop and improve an Inclusive approach. In preparing the Inclusion Plan 2024-2026 best practice advice was sought from the NSW Department of Communities and Justice, the Disability Council of NSW and the Council for Intellectual Disability.

The Inclusion Plan 2024 – 2026 reflects best practice advice as it:

- Adopts a broad and intersectional approach to Inclusion
- Embeds inclusive approaches in all areas of the Community Strategic Plan
- Applies universally inclusive design practices to the built environment, programs and services
- Focuses on outcomes
- Is available in accessible formats
- Targets meaningful employment for people.

The Inclusion Plan 2024-2026 was adopted in April 2024. Since that time, Council has:

- Asked Community Funding Program applicants to show how their idea reflects an inclusive approach
- Hosted a Sensory tent at the Military Tattoo
- Woven accessibility into all aspects of the design for the new Quirindi Aquatic Centre.

## Public Interest Disclosures Reporting

*Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022*

*Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011, clause 4*

Liverpool Plains Shire Council is required to report annually on its obligations under section 31 of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994* and Clause 4 of the *Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011*. The table below meets our obligations under this legislation.

Table L: Statistical Information on Public Interest Disclosures	
Number of public officials who made PIDs directly	0
Total number of PIDs received by Liverpool Plains Shire Council	0
Of the total received, the number in each of the following categories:	0
• Corrupt conduct	0
• Maladministration	0
• Serious or substantial waste	0
• Government intervention contravention	0
• Local government pecuniary interest contravention	0
<b>Number of PIDs finalised in this reporting period</b>	<b>0</b>

The revised policy, adopted in September 2023, reflects the requirements of the new *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022*. This policy is closely aligned to the NSW Ombudsman’s model and Council’s *Code of Conduct*.





Weed Stand at Ag-Quip – August 2023



# 2. Capital Works Report



*Quipolly Water Treatment Plant, Quipolly Dam*



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Liverpool Plains Shire Council is required to provide a Capital Works Report under the Capital Expenditure Guidelines, issued by the Office of Local Government pursuant to section 23A of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

During 2023-2024, Council delivered a Capital Works Program totalling \$20.23 million. Two major projects were delayed through this financial year being the Quirindi Sewerage Treatment Plant upgrade (\$6.12 million) and the Werris Creek Industrial Precinct project (\$12.58 million), totalling \$18.7 million.

## Roads and Transport Infrastructure

**Total \$8,858,950**

### Gravel road re-sheeting

**\$1,210,836**

Council's program of gravel re-sheeting works includes:

- Bundella Rd 15km
- Seven Creeks Road 5km
- Greys Road 2.5km
- Knights Road 2km
- Cattle Lane North 2km
- 4D Road 1.5km.

### Causeway

**\$57,805**

Presses Road Causeway was replaced during 2023-2024.





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## Resealing

**\$801,138**

Council undertook a number of resealing works on local roads during the 2023-2024 year. As indicated by its name, this work seals the road surface to prevent water from entering the underlying pavement, thereby reducing the likelihood the road will need costly rehabilitation and reconstruction in the near future.

Reseals were undertaken on:

- Waverly Road 4km
- Werris Creek Road 2.28km
- Warrah Creek Road 5km
- Borambil Creek Road 3.124km
- Harrisons Plains Road 2km
- Warrah Ridge Road 5.7km
- Cansdell Street
- Milner Parade
- Gordon Street
- Doyle Street
- Kingston Street
- Coonabarabran Service Road.

## Road infrastructure under construction

**\$3,081,370**

Council has successfully completed various road rehabilitation and heavy patching works across the region. These projects were funded through different sources, including Transport for NSW Block Grant Allocation, Special Rate Variation (SRV), and the Regional and Local Roads Repair Program. Below is a detailed breakdown of the completed works.

### Road Rehabilitation Projects Funded by Transport for NSW (Block Grant Allocation)

The following rehabilitation works have been completed under the Transport for NSW Block Grant Allocation:

- Werris Creek Road 1.75km
- Waverly Road 0.75km.

### Road Rehabilitation Projects Funded by Special Rate Variation (SRV)

The Council has also completed road rehabilitation projects funded through the SRV scheme:

- Pialloway Road 1.2km
- Lowes Creek Road 0.75km
- Seven Creeks Road 1.0km
- Cattle Creek Road 0.75km.



## Heavy Patching Works under the Regional and Local Roads Repair Program

In addition to the rehabilitation projects, the following heavy patching works have been completed under the Regional and Local Roads Repair Program:

- Blackville Road 366m<sup>2</sup>
- Borambil Creek Road 3,800 m<sup>2</sup>
- Harrisons Plains Road, patching completed (area not specified)
- Inverkip Road 6,500 m<sup>2</sup>
- Wallabadah Road 331 m<sup>2</sup>
- Warrah Ridge Road 5,400 m<sup>2</sup>
- Coonabarabran Road 14,000 m<sup>2</sup>.

## Stormwater Infrastructure

**Total \$73,787**

Council has undertaken the renewal of the footpath in Dewhurst Street, Werris Creek.

## Waste Management Infrastructure

**Total \$120,535**

Remediation of Carroona, Spring Ridge, Pine Ridge, and Premer landfills are completed.

Development approval for the Willow Tree landfill was achieved in April 2024, with contractor engaged to commence works.

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## Buildings, Parks and Reserves Infrastructure

Total \$2,265,697

Council undertook the following capital works on its buildings, parks and reserves in the 2023-2024 year:

- The final construction and fit out of the Infield Clubhouse at the Quirindi Showgrounds completed in August 2023 and is now utilised by many local community organisations.
- Improved access and modernisation of the Plains Fitness Centre was completed from grant funding received.
- David Taylor Oval, Werris Creek received an upgrade to the basketball court as well as the installation of gym equipment, water tanks, landscaping, signage and fencing.
- In collaboration with community organisations a mobile scoreboard was secured for use at Longfield Ovals.
- A \$685,00 Stronger Country Communities Funding Grant provided the resources for the installation of new lighting for Longfield Ovals.
- The Werris Creek Swimming Pool Balance Tank received a much-needed upgrade for improved water quality, as well as the installation of a Disability Lift, Storage Shed and a Bush Kitchen for use by patrons.
- As of 30 June 2024, the construction of the new Milner Parade Tennis Clubhouse was 99% completed, with the final fit out occurring the following week. Grant funding was received for these works.
- Further works were completed at the Quirindi Caravan Park to improve the comfort and security of patrons.
- Werris Creek Depot also received new security fencing.
- Fencing was also installed at the Quirindi Landfill around the Earn and Return Station, creating security for patrons.
- New security lighting was erected at Nancy Gray Pavilion at the Quirindi Showgrounds/Racecourse, as well as some minor upgrades to the Changing Places Room.
- Dust Suppression was installed around the Quirindi Rodeo Arena.
- King George V Park, Willow Tree received a major septic system upgrade, ensuring that the health and safety of visitors and patrons is safeguarded.
- The Quirindi Aquatic Centre project has seen the old pool demolished and has now progressed to the final design stage. Once endorsed, the project will move into the construction phase in the new year.





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## Water and Sewer Infrastructure

**Total \$8,276,827**

### Quipolly Water Treatment Plant

Operation of the Quipolly Water Treatment Plant commenced in April 2024 with drinking water delivered to Werris Creek residents from that date, ending an era for the old water treatment plant which had serviced the town. The new plant is proving very effective in removing taste and odour issues regularly experienced in water distributed from the old plant.

### Wastewater Mains Rehabilitation Program

Completion of a two-year sewer main rehabilitation program for both the Quirindi and Werris Creek systems has resulted in over 2.5 kms of mains being relined and up to 100 junctions rehabilitated.

### Henry Street water main rail crossing replacement

The project to upgrade the resilience and capacity of critical water distribution mains in the Quirindi supply where they cross the railway line has been completed. These complex projects involved specialist trenchless technology under the railway carried out in co-ordination with Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) during planned rail shut down periods.

### Spring Ridge Rising Main Replacement

Council replaced 2.4km of rising main along Goran Lake Road to improve reliability of the water supply for Spring Ridge.

## Other Capital

**Total \$631,033**

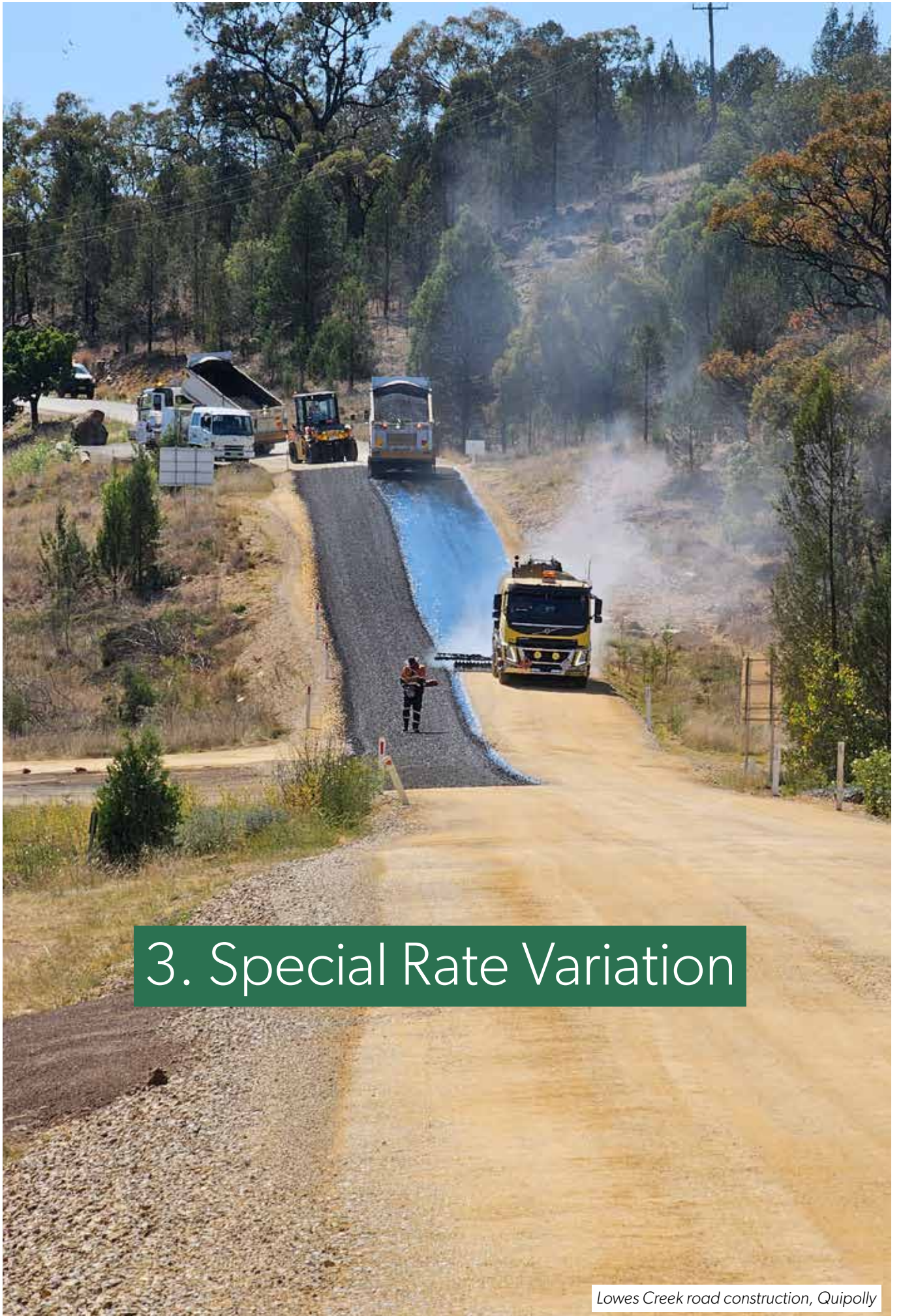
### Business System Remediation Project

Significant progress has been made during the financial year to upgrade and modernise the core software programs used at Council. Some items on the initial list have been deferred to the improvement phase.



*Solar streetlights, Wallabadah*





### 3. Special Rate Variation

*Lowes Creek road construction, Quipolly*



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# Special Rate Variation

Liverpool Plains Shire Council is required under sections 508(2) and 508A of the *Local Government Act 1993* to report on Special Rate Variation (SRV) expenditure during 2023-2024. Council's reporting currently covers two SRV's, see below.

In 2014-2015, Council successfully applied to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for an SRV of 12.5 per cent, comprising three components:

1. A 6.5 per cent increase for capital works on roads and associated infrastructure
2. A 3.7 per cent increase to improve financial sustainability, upgrade infrastructure and reduce backlogs, and
3. The rate peg of 2.3 per cent.

Council must detail in its Annual Report for each year from 2014-2015 to 2023-2024:

- The actual revenues, expenses and operating balance against the projected revenues, expenses and operating balance
- Any significant variations from its proposed expenditure as forecast in the Long-Term Financial Plan and any corrective action taken or to be taken to address any such variation
- Expenditure consistent with Council's application, and the reasons for any significant differences from the proposed expenditure, and
- The outcomes achieved as a result of the actual program of expenditure.

In 2019-2020, Council applied to IPART for a compounded SRV of 25.9 per cent to be implemented at 8 per cent for three years. IPART approved a temporary SRV of 8 per cent for per year for two years (compounded = 16.64%). Council was successful with its application to IPART in February 2023 to convert this temporary SRV into a permanent increase to commence from 2023-2024.

The expenditure of both SRV's was focused on meeting Council's asset renewal targets on its road assets. Council utilised \$1.82 million of SRV funds in the 2023-2024 financial year on the following program, see *Table 1*.





<b>Table 1: Special Rate Variation Projects. Total budget \$1,821,000</b>	
<b>Project</b>	<b>Actual Expenditure \$</b>
<b>Road Rehabilitation</b>	
Coonabarabran Road	312,503
Seven Creeks Road	241,432
Piallaway Road	283,295
Warrah Ridge Road	164,176
Cattle Creek Road	156,999
Bundella Road	152,371
Lowes Creek Road	108,452
Gordon Street	24,900
Milner Parade	15,311
Doyle Street	10,672
Cansdell Street	3,828
<b>Road Resheeting</b>	
Weblands Road	141,758
4D Road	60,867
Cattle Lane North	41,267
<b>Kerb &amp; Guttering</b>	
Dewhurst Street	73,787
<b>Bridges</b>	
Gurton Street	29,381
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,821,000</b>



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*Enjoying the Military Tattoo*

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# Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

Council has an obligation under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA) to submit annual reports to the Information and Privacy Commissioner NSW (IPC) by 31 October each year, in order to meet the requirements under *section 125(1)* of the GIPA Act and *Clause 8 schedule 2* of the GIPA Regulation.

## **Review of proactive release program**

Council continually reviews its proactive release program to identify the kinds of information that we make publicly available. This occurs through publication on Council's website or through inspection and/or provision of information in response to a written application.

## **Number of access applications received**

During the reporting period, Council received one (1) formal application from a member of the public (other). Access was granted in full.

## **Number of refused applications for Schedule 1 information**

During the reporting period, no formal access applications were refused.



<b>Table 1: Number of Applications by Type and Applicant Outcome*</b>										
	<b>Access Granted in Full</b>	<b>Access Granted in Part</b>	<b>Access Refused in Full</b>	<b>Information Not Held</b>	<b>Information Already Available</b>	<b>Refuse to Deal with Application</b>	<b>Refuse to Confirm/Deny whether information held</b>	<b>Application Withdrawn</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
<b>Media</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Members of Parliament</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Private Sector Business</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Not for Profit Organisations or Public Sector Groups</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Members of the Public (by Legal Representative)</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Members of the Public (Other)</b>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>% of Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

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

# 5. Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Performance Report



*Silo Art night show, Quirindi*

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# About this report

This report documents the operation and activities of Liverpool Plains Shire Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee and Internal Audit function for the 2023-2024 financial year.

Under clause 7.2 of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Charter; the Committee is required to report regularly, and at least annually, to the governing body of Council on the management of risk and internal controls.

As the Committee's achievements are closely linked to the organisation's Internal Audit activities, it is appropriate that both are recounted in the same report.

Clause 9.1 of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Charter provides that:

*The Chairperson, in consultation with the General Manager, will initiate a review of the performance of the Committee every two (2) years. The outcomes of this review will be presented to both the Committee and Council.*

In preparing this Annual Report, the Chairperson undertook a review of the performance of the Committee and is satisfied that all committee members exercised a very high level of professionalism and dedication to the duties and responsibilities outlined in the committee's charter. In addition, an ARIC survey was conducted in June 2023. The detailed report will be presented to the Committee at the November 2024 meeting.

# About the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee has been established in accordance with the requirements under section 428A of the *Local Government Amendment (Governance and Planning) Act 2016*.

The objective of the Committee is to promote good corporate governance through the provision of independent objective assurance to Council on:

- (a) Compliance
- (b) Risk management
- (c) Fraud control
- (d) Financial management
- (e) Governance
- (f) Implementation of the Community Strategic Plan; Delivery Program and strategies
- (g) Service reviews
- (h) Collection of performance management data by Council, and
- (i) Any other matters prescribed by the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.

The Committee operates under the *Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Charter* adopted by Council at its Ordinary Meeting held 24 May 2023. The Charter sets out the objective, authority, composition, roles and responsibilities, and reporting and administrative arrangements of the Committee.

Membership of the Committee comprises two Councillor representatives and three Independent External Members, all of whom are appointed to the Committee by resolution of Council.



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The two Councillor representatives are appointed by Council. The current Councillors were appointed for the full Council term, 4 December 2021 until 14 September 2024. The Committee's three Independent External Members, including the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, are appointed for a three-year term.

## Councillor Representatives

Council wishes to recognise and thank Councillors Terrance Cohen and Donna Lawson for their service to the Committee.

## Independent External Members

The Committee's three Independent External Members are Mr Michael O'Connor, Mr Tony Harb and Mr Les Hullick.

Mr Les Hullick was appointed to the Committee on 27 July 2022 for a three (3) year term. Mr Michael O'Connor and Mr Tony Harb initially appointed to the Committee on 28 August 2020 for a three (3) year term and on 23 August 2023 were reappointed to the Committee for a final three (3) year term.

### Michael O'Connor - Chairperson

Mr O'Connor is a qualified auditor and experienced manager in the Local Government, financial services and disability services sectors, with expertise in performance audit and risk management.

He currently serves on four (4) other councils' Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees, including as chairperson of one of those committees.

Mr O'Connor is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and member of the Institute of Internal Auditors Australia.

### Tony Harb – Deputy Chairperson

Mr Harb is the Managing Director of InConsult, a professional services firm with experience in risk management, business continuity, fraud and corruption prevention, and internal audit.

Prior to establishing InConsult, Mr Harb worked in the private sector, including positions at one of the Big Four accounting firms and one of the nation's largest insurance companies. He currently serves on one other council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.

Mr Harb is a Chartered Accountant and holds a Bachelor of Business and Master of Business Administration and is a member of the institute of Internal Auditors Australia.

### Les Hullick – External Member

Mr. Hullick has had extensive experience in local government including seventeen (17) years as General Manager both in rural and metropolitan councils. He’s had ten (10) years’ experience as Chief Financial Officer as well as other senior executive roles including two (2) years as Senior Auditor at Fairfield City Council. He also spent ten (10) years as a consultant/contractor to Local Government mainly in the areas of Governance and compliance.

He currently sits on six (6) Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees. Les is a graduate of Charles Sturt University in Local Government with post graduate qualifications in Policy Making and Local Government Management and Accounting and Finance for Management.

He is prequalified as an independent member under the NSW Prequalification Scheme: Audit and Risk Committee Independent Chairs and Members.

## Committee Performance

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee met four (4) times during 2023-2024.

Over the four meetings, the Committee reviewed the Internal Audit Program and Council’s Audited Financial Statements, as well as receive progress reports detailing Council’s progress in implementing its Performance Improvement Action Plan issued by the Office of Local Government.

The Committee also received briefings on major projects resourced for delivery in the organisation’s combined Delivery Program and Operational Plan and considered how the risks of those projects were being managed by Council.

**Table 1: Participation in Committee Meetings 2023-24**

Member	Role	22/9/23	15/12/23	8/3/24	31/5/24
Mr Michael O’Connor	Independent (Chair)	Present	Present	Present	Present
Mr Tony Harb	Independent (Deputy Chair)	Present	Present	Present	Present
Mr Les Hullick	Independent	Present	Present	Present	Present
Cr Terry Cohen	Councillor	Apology	Present	Apology	Present
Cr Donna Lawson	Councillor	Present	Present	Present	Present

**Table 2: Business Papers and Reports reviewed**

Meeting Date	Reports Reviewed
22 September 2023	7
5 December 2023	12
8 March 2024	6
31 May 2024	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>

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## Internal Audit

Internal Audit plays a key role in helping Council to achieve its objectives by testing how effectively controls are operating across specific systems, processes and activities in order to manage the associated risks.

## Internal Audit Plan

During 2023-2024, two (2) Internal Audits were carried out, Fraud and Corruption Prevention and Fleet Management. The Committee also developed an Audit Plan for 2024-2025 and 2025 – 2026.

## External Audit

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee receives an annual report from the External Auditor, being the Audit Office of New South Wales, on the status of Council's financial statements.

Representatives from the Audit Office, as well as its representative service provider firm, are invited to attend all Committee meetings as observers and advisers with regard to the External Audit process.

During the 2023-2024 year, the External Auditor attended one meeting of the Committee, being the meeting held 31 May 2024, to discuss the 2023-24 External Audit Engagement.

The Committee will review the Engagement Closing Report for the year ending 30 June 2024 and request regular reports from Management on their progress in implementing any agreed actions identified.

## Conclusion

Liverpool Plains Shire Council has taken significant steps to establish our Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee and is committed to strengthening its governance and risk management frameworks.



*Horses grazing at lookout*



## 6. Delivery Program Progress Report



*Quirindi Library streetscape*

# Combined Delivery Program/Operational Plan Progress Detail

## Outcome 1: A great rural lifestyle that is inclusive of all cultures with access to quality services and facilities

### 1.1: We value beautiful landscapes, dynamic towns and villages and safe communities

1.1.1: Liaise with all relevant state, federal and community organisations to support partnerships and facilitate safety initiatives

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.1.1.1	Meet with key community groups to identify potential partnerships	No. of partnerships initiated	●	Manager Community and Recreation Service	100%	Meetings have been held with Student Representative Council, Nungaroo Local Aboriginal Lands Council Elders Group, Liverpool Plains Interagency Network, Werris Creek Community Garden, Quirindi Dementia Support Group and Arts North-West.	Annually
1.1.1.2	Partner with Gunnedah Shire Council on drought resilience funding	1. Apply for funding 2. Implement program subject to successful application	●	Manager Community and Recreation Service	100%	Liverpool Plains and Gunnedah Shire Councils have engaged Seftons & Associates to deliver the community engagement activities and prepare the Regional Drought Resilience Plan. The community engagement activities were completed in April and included four stakeholder meetings, ten community pop up sessions and an online survey. Written submissions were received from community members/organisations. The Draft Regional Resilience Plan was submitted to the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), for review in May as per the funding agreement with the Department of Regional NSW.	Q4

1.1.2: Preserve and celebrate the character, heritage and culture of our region

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.1.2.1	Provide Cemetery services	1. As per legislative requirements 2. Develop a Cemetery Strategy	●	Customer & Visitor Services Coordinator	100%	Continuing to provide cemetery services as required.	Annually
1.1.2.2	Developing the Register of Memorial Trees for Fallen Soldiers	1. Validate register information 2. Register published on Council's website	●	Manager Assets and Property	100%	The Register of Memorial Trees for Fallen Soldiers has been completed and is currently displayed on the website.	Q1

● Completed ● On Track/Ongoing ● Behind Plan ● Off Track ● Cancelled



**1.2: Our community is embracing and inclusive of all cultures. Recreation facilities support our communities sporting, health, and physical activity needs. We build on our strong community spirit, resilience, and sense of belonging**

1.2.1: Identify opportunities to partner with Aboriginal organisations and the community to recognise and retain Aboriginal heritage and culture

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.2.1.1	Facilitate working groups to ensure Aboriginal heritage and cultural sensitivity is applied during the planning stage of projects	Provide Local Aboriginal Land Council sensitivity training to Council's Planning and Project staff	●	General Manager	20%	Seeking pricing and availability for consultant to deliver.	Q2

1.2.2: Identify, seek and obtain grant funding for various community social needs

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.2.2.1	Funding opportunities identified to provide community events and programs	1. Australia Day Celebrations 2024 . Seniors Festival 2024 2. International Women's Day 2024 3. Youth Week 2024 4. Spring Ridge Fitness Program 2024	●	Manager Community and Recreation Service	100%	Liverpool Plains Shire Library Services has secured funding for an Indigenous Elders Technology Training Program, continuation of the Tech Savvy Seniors Program and STEM activities for children. The Community Services team secured funding for Youth Week activities, delivered in partnerships with students from Quirindi High School. Eastside Long Day Care Centre has secured funding through the NSW Government's Starting Stronger program to support activities in the two - three-year-old and preschool programs.	Annually

1.2.3: Deliver and support events and festivals that promote engaged citizenship and foster civic pride

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.2.3.1	Facilitate Australian Citizenship ceremonies, as required by Department of Home Affairs	No. of Citizenship Ceremonies held	●	Executive Operations Coordinator	100%	A Citizenship Ceremony was held on 23 August 2023 and Australia Day 26 January 2024.	Bi-Annual


● Completed ● On Track/Ongoing ● Behind Plan ● Off Track ● Cancelled



Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.2.3.2	Identify key partnerships to deliver engaged citizenship and foster civic pride	1. Werris Creek Community Garden	●	Manager Community and Recreation Service	100%	The Werris Creek Community Garden has officially opened and is operating in the grounds of Werris Creek Library. In partnership with Go Co, a home delivery library service has been introduced. Through this service, people with limited mobility outside the home can select books, audio books, DVD's or magazines from the library's collection and have them delivered to and collected from their home. In March 2024, the Liverpool Plains Library Service launched 1,000 books before school. The initiative encourages and rewards children and their family and friends, to read as often and as widely as possible. 1,000 books before School is a partnership with Friends of Quirindi and Werris Creek libraries. Plains Fitness continued its partnership with Quirindi High School. Through the partnership, students are supported to build a develop healthy habits, including regular exercise.	Q4
1.2.3.3	Support the delivery of annual Anzac Day and other Commemorative Services	Commemoration services held	●	Executive Operations Coordinator	100%	Council supported the Anzac Day Celebrations that took place throughout the Shire on 25 April 2024.	Q3
1.2.3.4	Deliver or transition to support where possible, an annual program of community events aimed at celebrating and connecting the community	1. Australia Day Celebrations 2024 2. Seniors Festival 2024 3. International Women's Day 2024 4. Youth Week 2024 5. Volunteer Open Day Event 2024 6. Military Tattoo 2024	●	Executive Operations Coordinator	100%	Council supported the Anzac Day Celebrations that took place throughout the Shire on 25 April 2024.	Q3



● Completed   
● On Track/Ongoing   
● Behind Plan   
● Off Track   
● Cancelled

### 1.2.4: Implement Recreation Strategy 2019-2030 actions

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.2.4.1	Advance the implementation of Council's Recreation Strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upgrade lighting at Longfield Oval</li> <li>Progress replacement of Quirindi Aquatic Centre</li> <li>Assist the Quirindi Equestrian Club in the development of a layout plan for their facility</li> <li>Separate vehicles, pedestrians, and equestrian facilities at Currabubula Rec Ground</li> </ol>		Director Infrastructure & Environmental Services	90%	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lighting at Longfield oval installed, power upgrade to be finalised.</li> <li>Quirindi Aquatic Centre contractor appointed and underway.</li> <li>Meeting with Quirindi Equestrian Club attended by Council was held in Feb 2024 with layout items on agenda. Plan not completed at this stage.</li> <li>Signage installed at Currabubula Recreation Ground to delineate areas.</li> </ol>	Q4

### 1.3: Our health services meet our needs. Education services meets our needs and provide school, tertiary study and career pathways that support the community

1.3.1: Advocate, facilitate and promote human services by working in partnership with philanthropic, local community groups and key departmental stakeholders across Education, Health, Recreation, and Infrastructure portfolios

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.3.1.1	Provide accredited childcare services to the Liverpool Plains community through the Eastside Long Day Care Centre	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain accreditation as required</li> <li>Quality Improvement Plan reviewed</li> </ol>		Childcare Centre Coordinator	100%	Eastside Long Day Care participated in the annual Self-Assessment, incorporating the Quality Improvement Plan. Following submission of the Self-Assessment documentation, a site visit was conducted by a representative of the NSW Department of Education. Eastside was found to be meeting the National Quality Standards, in all seven of the national standard requirements.	Q2
1.3.1.2	Contractual obligations met for accredited services provided	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centrelink Services (Werris Creek)</li> <li>Service NSW (Quirindi)</li> </ol>		Library Services and Community Development Coordinator	100%	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centrelink services are being provided as per contractual agreement by library staff.</li> <li>New contract signed for upcoming 2024-2025 year.</li> <li>Three new staff completed training to remain compliant.</li> <li>On average 10 people per month accessed services via the library otherwise not available in the community.</li> </ol>	Annually

 Completed 
  On Track/Ongoing 
  Behind Plan 
  Off Track 
  Cancelled

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.3.1.3	Provide library services via the Central Northern Regional Library (CNRL) network	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CNRL Contractual obligations met</li> <li>2. No. meetings</li> <li>3. Collaboration on events/programs</li> <li>4. Participation in training</li> </ol>	●	Library Services and Community Development Coordinator	100%	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Central Northern Regional Library (CNRL) contractual obligations are being met.</li> <li>2. No CNRL meetings held January-June 2024.</li> <li>3. CNRL presented school holiday activity at Werris Creek Library on 19 January and at Quirindi Library on 22 April and scheduled to present at Werris Creek Library on 10 July.</li> <li>4. Attended the CNRL Regional Training Day 6 June.</li> </ol>	Annually

#### 1.4: Our transport and telecommunications expand to improve support for our business, lifestyle and remote working

1.4.1: Develop a local transport strategy that addresses needs of the community and liaise and partner with other government stakeholders to facilitate optimum, achievable transport outcomes

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.4.1.1	Advocate for the extension of rail services from Newcastle (Scone) to Tamworth to include a daily return service	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facilitate meetings with local State Member</li> <li>2. Seek meeting with NSW Minister Transport</li> <li>3. Seek meeting with NSW Trains</li> </ol>	●	General Manager	100%	Letter written to the Minister in February 2024 requesting that the extension of the rail service be considered.	Q1
1.4.1.2	Complete replacement of timber bridges on Gurton Street and Bridge Road	Project milestones met	●	Director Infrastructure & Environmental Services	100%	Both projects have now been completed.	Q1

● Completed  
 ● On Track/Ongoing  
 ● Behind Plan  
 ● Off Track  
 ● Cancelled



#### 1.4.2: Maintain Council assets in accordance with asset management plans

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.4.2.1	Effective management of regional roads	1. No. of km's of rehabilitated road per annum 2. m2 achieved through major maintenance	●	Manager Civil Infrastructure	100%	Council completed all of the Block Grant funding before the end of the financial year: Rehabilitation - 43,200 m2 Reseal - 45,100 m2  Rehabilitation: Coonabarabran Road - Completed Werris Creek Road - Completed Gap Road - Completed Waverley Road - Completed  Reseals: Waverly Road - Completed Werris Creek Road - Completed	Annually
1.4.2.2	Effective management of sealed local roads	1. No. of km's of rehabilitated road per annum 2. m2 achieved through major maintenance	●	Manager Civil Infrastructure	100%	Council has been actively maintaining our sealed road network. The following rehabilitation works have now been completed:  1. Warrah Ridge Road 2. Borambil Creek Road 3. Lowes Creek Road 4. Cattle Creek Road 5. Seven Creek Road 6. Pialloway Road  The following local roads have been re-sealed: 1. Warrah Creek Road 2. Borambil Creek Road 3. Harrisions Plains Road 4. Warrah Ridge Road 5. Cansdella Street 6. Milner Parade 7. Gordon Street 8. Doyle Street 9. Kingston Street 10. Coonabarabran Service Road	Annually
1.4.2.3	Unsealed road re-sheeting undertaken	1. No. of km's of rehabilitated road per annum 2. km's achieved in routine maintenance	●	Manager Civil Infrastructure	100%	Council has successfully graded 35 km of gravel roads and maintained the gravel road network as per the defined level of service. The re-sheeting and grading program has also been completed.	Annually

● Completed  
 ● On Track/Ongoing  
 ● Behind Plan  
 ● Off Track  
 ● Cancelled

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.4.2.4	Develop routine maintenance program and incorporate assessment of building infrastructure renewal	1. Pest Control 2. Fire Inspection 3. Test & Tag 4. Air Conditioning Testing 5. Carpet Cleaning 6. Septic/Pump Testing	●	Manager Assets and Property	100%	Staff have implemented the maintenance program, which incorporates regular assessment of facilities.	Annually
1.4.2.5	Undertake asset revaluations	Buildings and Land	●	Manager Assets and Property	100%	The Buildings and Operational Land Revaluation has been completed.	Q2
1.4.2.6	Enhance asset management maturity levels to support decision making	1. Capture asset data for updating Asset Management Plans 2. Develop building asset condition processes and procedures	●	Manager Assets and Property	90%	Asset Management Plans for the Aerodrome, Buildings, Transportation and Parks and Recreation have been reviewed and updated. Asset Management Plans for Water, Sewer, Fleet and Plant are currently under review and estimated to be complete by 31 August 2024. The Asset Management Policy was also reviewed and updated. An Asset Management Strategy has been developed and is currently under review.	Annually

#### 1.4.3: Lobby for improved services and infrastructure, such as rail and road, and develop a regional strategy for improved services

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.4.3.1	Seek opportunities for external funding for Council maintained roads	Reduction in reporting infrastructure backlog ratio	●	Director Infrastructure & Environmental Services	100%	Funding received for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yarraman Creek Bridge replacement for resilience</li> <li>• Borah Creek Road funded with Local Roads &amp; Community Infrastructure in 2024-2025</li> <li>• Funding applications submitted for footpaths to the pool in Werris Creek, Golland Fields in Quirindi, and to link Walhallow to Carroona.</li> </ul>	Annually
1.4.3.2	Liaise with State and Federal members to lobby for improved internet and telecommunications for the region	No. meetings participated	●	General Manager	80%	Nbn presentation to Councillors in March 2024 outlining progress made to date and future plans to expand broadband in the Liverpool Plains shire.	Annually

● Completed  
● On Track/Ongoing  
● Behind Plan  
● Off Track  
● Cancelled

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.4.3.3	Effective implementation of Council's Freight Strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening access for higher productivity vehicles as identified in the strategy map</li> <li>Funding opportunities sought for Pine Ridge Mooki River bridge assessment</li> <li>Funding opportunities for Caroon Intersection of Williewarina and Coonabarabran roads</li> <li>Progress in planning by Transport New South Wales for the intersection the New England Hwy and Kamilaroi Hwy</li> <li>Participate in Farm Gate access program with NSW State Government</li> </ol>	●	Director Infrastructure & Environmental Services	100%	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Routes have been gazetted for higher productivity vehicles on Coonabarabran Road, Taylors Lane, Werris Creek Road, and Ellerslie Street.</li> <li>Funding received for Pine Ridge Mooki River bridge assessment, currently underway.</li> <li>Nil funding opportunities identified throughout the year. Safer Local Roads &amp; Infrastructure Program is a new program for this purpose.</li> <li>Intersection of Kamilaroi Highway and New England highway has been finalised with access for Higher Productivity Vehicles.</li> <li>Council is a participant in Farm Gate Access program.</li> </ol>	Q4

1.4.4: Develop a strategic plan that encompasses all pedestrian facilities and coordinates investment to provide safe, convenient, and connected active transport options and infrastructure

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
1.4.4.1	Undertake a review of Council's Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek external funding</li> <li>Deliver actions within sourced funding</li> </ol>	●	Manager Assets and Property	20%	Funding was not obtained for this financial year. Focus area in 2024-2025.	Q1
1.4.4.2	Develop a business case for the Kokoda Trail project between Werris Creek and Quirindi	Business plan developed only if external funding is procured	●	Director Infrastructure & Environmental Services	70%	Design underway for a concept plan and pricing.	Q4


● Completed ● On Track/Ongoing ● Behind Plan ● Off Track ● Cancelled




## Outcome 2: Strong community, Council and business leadership

### 2.1: Our Council, community and business leaders work together effectively


2.1.1: Obtain funding for specific community projects and review current community funding arrangements

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.1.1	Maintain a register of grant-ready capital and operational projects	Project Register reviewed/quarterly		General Manager	20%	During 2023-2024, the focus was on current grant funded projects and ensuring that these were completed and acquitted. Council has been relatively successful in securing a number of grants. It was considered that being able to demonstrate that current grants were well-managed would stand Council in good stead for future applications.	Quarterly

2.1.2: Council facilitates community engagement

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.2.1	Council promotes and actively participates in the regions Local Advisory Groups	No. of meetings attended		Manager Community and Recreation Service	100%	Premer and Currabubula Local Advisory Groups have remained active during the current council term. Council has continued to use the network of Local Advisory Group members to seek input on major projects, policies and plans including the Growth Management and Housing Strategy, Inclusion Plan 2024-2026, the Combined Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2024-2025, the Schedule of Fees and Charges 2024-2025 and the Regional Drought Resilience Plan.	Q4

2.1.4: Provide funding to the community in an equitable and sustainable manner that delivers benefits for both Council and local people

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.4.1	Administer the Community Funding Program (Events and Infrastructure)	1. The program is advertised to local community groups 2. All approved funding is acquitted		Manager Community and Recreation Service	100%	Ten community groups shared in \$10,000 in the second round of the 2023-2024 Community Funding Program. Projects included historical displays, sporting events, art shows and the official openings of community facilities. Through these ten grants, more than 150 volunteers will be supported to deliver benefits to more than 6,500 residents and visitors.	Bi-Annual

 Completed  On Track/Ongoing  Behind Plan  Off Track  Cancelled

2.1.5: Commit to best practice community engagement initiatives including online platforms and other emerging technologies pursuant to applicable Office Local Government (OLG) Guidelines and responsive complaint management processes

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.5.1	Comprehensive review of Council's Community engagement strategy to encompass all types of engagement across Council	Community Engagement Policy to be adopted and implemented across Council	●	General Manager	80%	"Council has adopted a Community Engagement Strategy. The principles of this strategy were employed during the development of the Growth Management Strategy and Drought Resilience Plan.  Council continues to explore other innovative methods of community engagement."	Q1

2.1.7: Promote open and shared communication throughout the entire organisation and improve staff knowledge, practices and processes whilst investigating opportunities for traineeships

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.7.1	Develop an accessible, contemporary intranet which supports improved communication and work practices within the organisation	Intranet replacement project completed	●	Business Systems Administrator	50%	Significant progress has been made during the financial year to upgrade and modernise the core software programs used at Council. The priority of some items on the initial list have been adjusted based on operational requirements.	Q4
2.1.7.2	Deliver an effective Customer Services program	1. Revise Customer Service Charter 2. No. of Customer Requests serviced 3. Recognise and implement service enhancements	●	Manager Customer Service	80%	Council has been adjusting to operating with the new Customer Request system since its implementation in October 2023. This brings greater transparency across the organisation and Council plans to formalise the framework to enhance the customer experience. Annual totals for customer interactions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone calls – 10,837</li> <li>• Front counter – 4,795</li> <li>• Visitor Information Centre – 5,104</li> <li>• Service NSW Agency – 12,242</li> <li>• Customer Requests – 3,178</li> </ul>	Q4

● Completed ● On Track/Ongoing ● Behind Plan ● Off Track ● Cancelled

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.7.3	Manage Council's Governance obligations in line with Departmental requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identified open access information is published to Council's website</li> <li>2. Process Government Information (Public Access) Act (GIPA) applications in accordance with legislation</li> <li>3. Submit Council's GIPA statistics to the IPC</li> <li>4. Maintain Council's Delegations Register in line with legislative requirements</li> <li>5. Review and update Council's external policy register</li> <li>6. Review and update Council's internal policy register</li> </ol>	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	Coordinator Governance and Risk	100%	<p>Council's Policy Register is continually monitored through the Management Committee and the Audit Risk &amp; Improvement Committee (ARIC). Senior staff are aware of the progress.</p> <p>GIPA responses are being met.</p> <p>Compliance Framework is progressing well with the approval of ARIC.</p>	Annually

#### 2.1.8: Provide strong direction for the community through the development and delivery of the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.8.1	Facilitate the effective delivery of the Operational Plan 2024-2025	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prepare the draft 2024-2025 Budget</li> <li>2. Prepare the draft 2024-2025 Revenue Policy</li> <li>3. Prepare the draft 2024-2025 Fees and Charges</li> <li>4. Review Council's Long-Term Financial Plan</li> <li>5. Prepare the draft 2024-2025 Operational plan</li> <li>6. Annual adoption of the Operational Plan by 30 Jun 24</li> </ol>	<span style="color: green;">●</span>	Management Accountant/Integrated Planning & Reporting	100%	<p>All Operational Plan documents for 2024-2025 have been completed and adopted or endorsed by Council as required. The following documents are now available to view on Council's website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combined Delivery Program 2022-2026 and Operational Plan 2024-2025</li> <li>• Fees and Charges Schedule 2024-2025</li> <li>• Long-Term Financial Plan 2024-2034.</li> </ul>	Q4

● Completed  
 ● On Track/Ongoing  
 ● Behind Plan  
 ● Off Track  
 ● Cancelled



Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.8.2	Regularly monitor Delivery Program progress and performance against adopted plans, and provide updates to the community	Progress reports presented to Council mid-year and annually	●	Management Accountant/Integrated Planning & Reporting	100%	Council has provided two six-monthly progress reports to inform our community of the progress made towards achieving our Delivery Program 2022-2026.	Bi-Annual

#### 2.1.9: Operate in a financially responsible manner and improve long-term financial sustainability

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.9.1	Coordinate and produce the Annual Report 2022-2023, including the audited Financial Statements	1. Audited statements signed and lodged by 31 Oct 23 2. Report adopted and provided to the Office of Local Government by 30 November 2023	●	Financial Accountant	100%	The Audited Financial Statements were adopted at the Mar 2024 Council meeting and submitted the Office of Local Government as required under legislation. They were subsequently placed on public exhibition and Council noted the presentation of these documents at the Apr 2024 Council meeting.	Annually
2.1.9.2	Monitor Council's progress against the financial strategy parameters as set out in the Long-Term Financial Plan	Financial Strategy parameters reported through the Quarterly Budget Review Statement	●	Chief Financial Officer	100%	All quarterly Budget Review Statements have been adopted by Council in accordance with the Local Government Act.	Quarterly

#### 2.1.10: Provide systems and processes to identify and manage all risks of Council both operational and strategic

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.10.1	Facilitate and coordinate Council's Audit and Risk Program	1. Facilitate four meetings of Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee 2. Develop and implement a Risk Management Framework	●	Coordinator Governance and Risk	100%	Risk Management Strategy submitted to Council in June 2024. Risk Appetite approved by Council in March 2024. Insurance Renewals completed and processed by due date. Audit Risk & Improvement Committee meetings held per the Meeting Plan.	Quarterly

● Completed ● On Track/Ongoing ● Behind Plan ● Off Track ● Cancelled

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.10.2	Facilitate and coordinate Council's Continuous Improvement Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participate in the StateWide Mutual Continuous Improvement Pathway (CIP) Program</li> <li>2. Review the Internal Audit Program for the 2023-24 financial year</li> <li>3. Facilitate Council's Service Delivery Plan's</li> <li>4. Facilitate and review Council's Business Continuity Plan</li> </ol>	●	Coordinator Governance and Risk	100%	<p>The Continuous Improvement Program (CIP) was completed, Council achieved a better result compared to 2022-2023. The Internal Audit Program commenced in 2023-2024 and the audits progressed well. Currently waiting on the final report.</p> <p>Business Continuity Plan (BCP) review was commenced in 2023-2024 through the Statewide Mutual Board Initiative. Result was better than expected. Services reviews commenced. There were initial delays with systems.</p>	Annually
2.1.10.3	Deliver an effective Risk, Safety and Insurance program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facilitate regular meetings of the Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committee and Joint Consultative Committee (JCC)</li> <li>2. Operate the Work Health and Safety program</li> <li>3. Manage insurance renewal and claims</li> </ol>	●	Coordinator Governance and Risk	100%	<p>Workplace Health &amp; Safety (WHS) Committee has met the requirements of the policy and meetings.</p> <p>Insurance renewals completed and processed by due date.</p>	Annually

2.1.11: Develop a strong organisational culture and provide a contemporary, professional and safe work environment to attract, develop and retain a high-performing workforce

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.11.1	Implement the Business and Customer Systems Remediation Project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Upgrade of core Finance and Planning software</li> <li>2. Rollout of Customer Request and Cemetery software</li> <li>3. Rollout of Corporate Planning software</li> <li>4. Rollout of integration to NSW Planning Portal</li> </ol>	●	Manager Customer Service	90%	<p>Significant progress has been made in the financial year to upgrade and modernise the core software programs used at Council. Some items on the initial list have been deferred to the improvement phase.</p>	Q4

● Completed ● On Track/Ongoing ● Behind Plan ● Off Track ● Cancelled

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.11.2	Deliver an effective Human Resources program	1. Facilitate recruitment of vacant positions 2. Deliver Council's Training program 3. Facilitate regular meetings of Staff Consultative Committee	●	Manager Human Resources	100%	Vacancies are filled as soon as practical for roles, with the exception of roles with industry wide shortages. Training program implemented with the last half of the year focused on leadership development. Consultative Committee Meeting held quarterly. Engagement Survey and Leadership 360 surveys conducted. Corporate Values drafted.	Annually

#### 2.1.12: Implement systems and processes to safeguard against business interruption from internal and external risks

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.12.1	Deliver an effective Information Technology program	1. Manage Council's managed services contract 2. Plan and update Council's IT Business Continuity Plan and sub-plans 3. Review Council's IT assets 4. Develop a Technology Roadmap	●	Manager Customer Service	75%	Council has taken a measured approach to safeguard vital computer systems and deliver effective internal and external technology solutions.	Q4
2.1.12.2	Progress Council's Cyber Security maturity level	1. Review and update the Agency Information Guide 2. Undertake assessment for Council's Cyber Security maturity 3. Facilitate training for key users to advance Council's Cyber Security maturity	●	Manager Customer Service	75%	Council continues to monitor cyber security and has plans to further improve its cyber security posture.	Q3

● Completed ● On Track/Ongoing ● Behind Plan ● Off Track ● Cancelled



2.1.13: Service Delivery Reviews are undertaken to improve Council's financial sustainability

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.13.1	Service Delivery review undertaken	1. Royal Theatre 2. Eastside Long Day Care Centre	●	Manager Community and Recreation Service	75%	Consultants have been engaged for the Eastside Long Day Care and Royal Theatre Service reviews. Both service reviews are in the research phase.	Q2

2.1.14: Implement recommendations from the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.1.14.1	Improve accessibility to Council services and buildings	1. Seek funding to upgrade Council buildings public access to computers 2. Include disability inclusion considerations into facility design 3. Review existing programs and services to identify greater opportunities for inclusion 4. Deliver accessibility upgrades to Council offices	●	Manager Community and Recreation Service	100%	The Inclusion Plan 2024-2026 has been adopted by Council and forwarded to the NSW Department of Communities and Justice. Council held community meetings at Werris Creek and Quirindi and sought feedback from a range of community members and community organisations. Quirindi and Werris Creek Libraries host seven public access computers. The public access computers provide affordable and reliable access to online services and technologies for residents.	Q4

● Completed ● On Track/Ongoing ● Behind Plan ● Off Track ● Cancelled


## 2.2: Our leaders represent the diversity of our community

### 2.2.2: Implement VendorPanel across the organisation to drive efficiency in procurement and engage local suppliers

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.2.2.1	Enhance Procurement practices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update the Contract Register on Council's website at the end of each quarter</li> <li>2. Develop procurement data analytics functionality</li> <li>3. Rollout procurement training across Council</li> <li>4. Enhance vendor partnerships with increased utilisation of VendorPanel</li> </ol>		Procurement & Contracts Coordinator	100%	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council's Contract Register is regularly updated and uploaded on Council's website.</li> <li>2. Both the Procurement Policy and Contract Management Policy was formulated and approved by Council. Subsequent to this the Procurement Procedure and Contract Management Procedure was drafted and approved by Council's Executive Leadership Team (ELT).</li> <li>3. Training for all relevant staff was conducted to familiarise everyone with the new Procurement Policy as well as the new Civica Altitude system.</li> <li>4. VendorPanel training was conducted for all relevant staff to familiarise them with the platform and to encourage them to use the platform for their procurement needs.</li> </ol>	Quarterly

## 2.3: We encourage our youth to become involved in the community as the leaders of tomorrow.

### 2.3.1: Council be an employee of choice for youth

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.3.1.1	Investigate options to involve youth in Council activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate consultation with local youth groups</li> <li>2. Actively seek to engage young people in planning for Youth week activities and School Holiday Programs</li> </ol>		Library Services and Community Development Coordinator	100%	<p>Meetings with students from Quirindi High School were held to investigate interest in establishing a Youth Council. There was minimal interest from the students, however there was interest in being involved in planning and organising youth week and school holiday activities, and this avenue was pursued successfully.</p> <p>Members of the Student Representative Council assisted in the planning and delivery of the Youth Week Film and Fun Night and the school holidays Bubble Sports evening.</p>	Quarterly

 Completed 
  On Track/Ongoing 
  Behind Plan 
  Off Track 
  Cancelled

## 2.4: We partner with State and Federal Government, the private sector and community organisations in the provision of facilities and services

### 2.4.1: Demonstrate support of the State Emergency Service (SES), Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA) and Rural Fire Service (RFS) volunteers

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.4.1.1	Support Fire Rescue NSW, Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Service and Volunteer Rescue Association through the Emergency Services Levy	1. Levy/paid 2. Provide services to RFS in accordance with the service level agreement	●	Director Infrastructure & Environmental Services	100%	Completed.	Quarterly

### 2.4.2: Meet all statutory requirements regarding development approval processes

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
2.4.2.1	Provide planning information	1. Respond to planning enquiries 2. Issue of Planning Certificates and diagrams 3. Issued within 5 days of receipt/>90% 4. No. of development applications determined within timeframes >80%	●	Manager Planning and Regulation	100%	All statutory requirements regarding the development approval process have been met.	Annually




● Completed  
 ● On Track/Ongoing  
 ● Behind Plan  
 ● Off Track  
 ● Cancelled



## Outcome 3: A sustainable environment

### 3.1: Our infrastructure is well planned and maintained and will meet our needs now and, in the future.

3.1.1: Develop long-term strategies to plan and maintain current and future infrastructure

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
3.1.1.1	Development of flood study for Werris Creek	Identify opportunities for external funding to complete action		Director Infrastructure & Environmental Services	100%	No funding opportunities identified.	Q2
3.1.1.2	Review and develop Resourcing Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Asset Management Policy</li> <li>2. Asset Management Strategy</li> <li>3. Asset Management Plan - Aerodrome</li> <li>4. Asset Management Plan - Buildings and Recreation</li> <li>5. Asset Management Plan - Transportation</li> <li>6. Asset Management Plan - Water &amp; Sewer</li> <li>7. Plant Replacement Program - Fleet</li> <li>8. Workforce Management Strategy</li> </ol>		Manager Assets and Property	90%	<p>Asset Management Policy has been reviewed and updated.</p> <p>Asset Management Strategy has been drafted and currently under review.</p> <p>Asset Management Plans for the Aerodrome, Buildings, Transportation and Parks and Recreation have been reviewed and updated.</p> <p>Asset Management Plans for Water, Sewer and Fleet and Plant are currently under review and estimated to be complete by 31 August 2024.</p>	Q4
3.1.1.3	Prepare site specific Operational Management Plans to ensure they are managed to community expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plains Fitness Centre</li> <li>2. Royal Theatre</li> <li>3. Quirindi and Werris Creek Aquatic Centre's</li> </ol>		Recreation Centre Co-Ordinator	100%	<p>Operational Management Plans are being developed for these sites.</p> <p>Service Review at the Royal Theatre has been commenced.</p>	Q2

 Completed
  On Track/Ongoing
  Behind Plan
  Off Track
  Cancelled

### 3.1.3: Increase awareness of infrastructure responsibilities and costings

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
3.1.3.1	Publish costings for Quipolly Water Project delivery	Quipolly Water Project costings published once completed	●	Manager Water Services	100%	The project achieved the status of completion to enable an 'Early Use' status and is effectively operating and delivering drinking water to the community.	Q1
3.1.3.2	Publish costings for the Willow Tree Landfill Project delivery	Willow Tree Landfill Project costings published once completed	●	Manager Civil Infrastructure	100%	Contract pricing reported through Council. Costs of new landfill now included in 2024-2025 Fees and Charges.	Q4

## 3.2: We have access to affordable, clean water supplies

### 3.2.2: Endorse best practice regulated operation of water and sewerage systems

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
3.2.2.1	Implement best practice management plans	1. Liquid Trade Waste Policy adopted 2. Developer Servicing Plan adopted	●	Manager Water Services	70%	Best Practice plans are continually reviewed and adjusted. An annual completion of best practice plans is not a milestone project. A draft Liquid Trade Waste policy has been prepared, however requires consultation that may not be achieved by years end.	Q1
3.2.2.2	Provision of potable water supplies	Maintain compliance to the Drinking Water Management System (DWMS)	●	Manager Water Services	100%	Water supplies generally complied with the Drinking Water Management System throughout the year. Minor items of non-compliance were attended to with appropriate actions from the Incident Response protocols.	Annually
3.2.2.3	Publish the Annual Dam Safety Report	Maintain compliance with the NSW Dam Safety Act 2015 and Regulation 2019	●	Manager Water Services	100%	Enhanced publication of the Annual Dam Safety Report will be undertaken, and future reports will be available on Council's website.	Annually
3.2.2.4	Operate the Sewerage Treatment Plants in accordance with license conditions	Maintain compliance with Wastewater Treatment Environmental Protection Licenses (EPA)	●	Manager Water Services	100%	Both Sewerage Treatment Plants have operated in compliance with their Environmental Protection licenses.	Q1

● Completed  
 ● On Track/Ongoing  
 ● Behind Plan  
 ● Off Track  
 ● Cancelled

### 3.3: We actively manage impacts on our natural environment

#### 3.3.1: Identify and benchmark waste management systems to ensure best practice and consistent fees

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
3.3.1.1	Completion of the Waste Management Strategy program	1. Completion of the Willow Tree Landfill 2. Remediation of all existing landfills 3. Construction of Quirindi Waste Transfer Station	●	Manager Civil Infrastructure	50%	Willow Tree landfill contractor has been engaged and is scheduled to commence in September 2024. Remediation of the Spring Ridge, Caroona, Pine Ridge, and Premer landfills have been completed.	Q4

#### 3.3.2: Develop partnerships and manage waste effectively

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
3.3.2.1	Provision of Council's Waste management facilities	Contracts renewed for the operation of Council's Waste management facilities	●	Manager Civil Infrastructure	40%	Delays with the Willow Tree landfill construction has delayed this action. Works are now underway with contractors now confirmed for the Willow Tree program.	Q2


#### 3.3.7: Increase awareness of the environmental impact of poor waste management

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
3.3.7.1	Develop and implement Waste Management education programs	No. of programs delivered	●	Manager Civil Infrastructure	0%	Nil action taken during 2023-2024, going forward, the plan is to develop a campaign with Northern Inland Region Waste and JR Richards.	Q1


● Completed   
 ● On Track/Ongoing   
 ● Behind Plan   
 ● Off Track   
 ● Cancelled

### 3.4: Our local farming is sustainable

#### 3.4.1: Identify and recognise a balance between mining and farming



Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
3.4.1.1	Advocate for sustainable farming and mining practices within the shire	Facilitate meetings with State and Federal members		General Manager	20%	The Whitehaven mine at Werris Creek ceased operations in June 2024 and is in the rehabilitation phase. Council is engaging with Whitehaven and the NSW State Government to ensure that the lost economic activity is replaced with other relevant and compatible activities. Council is also actively seeking to expand and develop the Werris Creek Industrial Precinct to support the local farming industry gaining better access to markets both domestic and international.	Q1

#### 3.4.2: Encourage farmers to investigate value-adding opportunities for their business

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
3.4.2.1	Provide and promote information on planning changes to farm-stay accommodation for agritourism	1. Promotions undertaken 2. No. of farm-stay accommodation Development Assessments received		Manager Planning and Regulation	100%	Action confined to providing intending applicants with appropriate information.	Annually

### 3.5: We protect our environment and reduce our environmental footprint

#### 3.5.1: Council works in partnership with the NSW Government and industry to achieve the NSW Government's Net Zero Target

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
3.5.1.1	Delivering renewable energy solutions across Council facilities	1. Kw. of solar installed 2. LED bulb replacement		Director Infrastructure & Environmental Services	80%	Contract underway for solar with 76kw underway. Pricing received for LED lighting upgrades and underway.	Q4
3.5.1.2	Electric vehicle charging stations installed within the shire in accordance with the NSW Government's Electric Vehicle Strategy	1. External funding received 2. No. of charging stations installed		Director Infrastructure & Environmental Services	20%	Submissions for funding close 2 August 2024. Three submissions are being prepared for the Quirindi Library, Willow Tree Visitor Information Centre (VIC) as high priority locations, and Currabubula Recreation Ground due to part funding from Currabubula Local Advisory Group (LAG).	Q4

 Completed
  On Track/Ongoing
  Behind Plan
  Off Track
  Cancelled



## Outcome 4: A thriving economy

### 4.1: Our agricultural economy is thriving, and we must pursue secondary industry to support all potential growth areas across the broader regional economy

4.1.1: Advocate for employment opportunities within the Shire

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
4.1.1.1	Advocate for industry and employment development opportunities arising from the State Government's Namoi Regional Job Precinct	Identify regional employment opportunities	●	General Manager	70%	A Council workshop was held with Regional NSW in March 2024. A follow up meeting is scheduled in July 2024 focussing on the Werris Creek Industrial Precinct.	Q1

### 4.2: We grow our population, diversity and employment opportunities

4.2.1: Utilise membership of Namoi Unlimited to advocate a whole-of-region approach to economic and business development

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
4.2.1.1	Council actively participates in the Namoi Joint Organisation (JO)	No. of meetings attended	●	Executive Operations Coordinator	100%	Council continues to participate in the NAMOI Joint Organisation however, at its Ordinary Meeting on 14 February 2024 Council resolved to support the Board in writing to the Minister for Local Government seeking to dissolve the Namoi Joint Organisation on 30 June 2024, this was due to the NSW Government no longer providing funding.	Annually

4.2.2: Review existing business, infrastructure and industries to identify opportunities to value-add

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
4.2.2.1	Deliver the Werris Creek Industrial Precinct Upgrade	Project milestones met	●	Director Infrastructure & Environmental Services	50%	Project scope changed at June 2024 Council meeting.	Q4

● Completed ● On Track/Ongoing ● Behind Plan ● Off Track ● Cancelled

#### 4.2.3: Undertake a targeted campaign to attract new residents to the Shire

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
4.2.3.1	Development and distribution of New Residents Packs	No. of packs issued	●	Marketing and Communications Officer	80%	The New Residents Pack has been drafted however requires more work to get it to finalisation ready for the public.	Annually

### 4.3: Our town centers are attractive and vibrant places. We foster new residential and business development built on our local strengths

#### 4.3.1: Review Local Environment Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP)

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
4.3.1.1	Review Council's Planning controls	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise and adopt the Growth Management Strategy</li> <li>Review and amend the Local Environment Plan as required</li> <li>Review and update the Development Control Plan</li> </ol>	●	Manager Planning and Regulation	85%	<p>Local Environment Plan (LEP) amendment reinforcing subdivision minimum has been made.</p> <p>Draft Growth Management &amp; Housing Strategy has been publicly exhibited with substantial stakeholder engagement and the holding of six public meetings. A detail report was prepared providing an assessment of all submissions and recommendations going forward for Council's consideration.</p> <p>Development Control Plan (DCP) review being reactivated as more resources become available.</p>	Completion Period Annually

#### 4.3.2: Identify opportunities and lobby to reduce red tape to make investments viable in our Shire

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
4.3.2.1	Engage in current legislative issues	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make submissions to legislative reviews</li> <li>Engage in workshops/forums/conferences</li> </ol>	●	Manager Planning and Regulation	90%	<p>Engagement with the Department of Planning on the proposed amendments to the Manufactured Homes Estate, Caravan Parks, Camping Grounds and Moveable Dwellings Regulation that was exhibited in December 2023.</p> <p>Review of internal process to make processing of applications more efficient.</p>	Completion Period Annually

● Completed   
 ● On Track/Ongoing   
 ● Behind Plan   
 ● Off Track   
 ● Cancelled

**4.4: Our planning reflects the diversity of our towns and villages and enables future development. We develop our business community to support small and medium-sized business and remote working**

4.4.1: Actively promote cultural, community and recreational facilities

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
4.4.1.1	Empower communities to deliver arts and cultural activities which increases the livability of Liverpool Plains (Arts and Cultural Plan)	1. No. of partnerships 2. No. of participants in public art projects 3. No. of participants in creative pathways projects	●	Manager Community and Recreation Service	0%	Due to conflicting priorities (resource funding and staff resources) the Arts and Cultural Plan has not been able to be supported.	Q4

**4.5: We develop our visitor economy**

4.5.1: Visitor Economy Strategy implemented

Action Code	Action Name	Performance Measure	Traffic Lights	Responsible Officer Position	Progress	Comments	Completion Period
4.5.1.1	Ongoing liaison with each village to determine when signature events are being held	1. No. of meetings with village groups 2. No. of partnership projects	●	Manager Community and Recreation Service	100%	Regular liaison with Local Advisory Groups has identified a number of key community events. The Community Funding Program has supported a number of new and established community events.	Annually

● Completed ● On Track/Ongoing ● Behind Plan ● Off Track ● Cancelled

# SECTION THREE

## 1. State of our Shire Report



General Manager's 'Day in your shoes' with Stores and Purchasing, Quirindi Depot.



# State of our Shire Report 2022 -24



[liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au](http://liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au)



**Liverpool  
Plains**  
Shire Council

## **Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of this land, the people of the Kamilaroi Nation.

We pay our respects to the Aboriginal Elders, both past and present.

We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to Liverpool Plains Shire.

## **Community Images**

The photographs featured have been obtained from many sources including professional photographers and Council officers.

## **Copyright – Liverpool Plains Shire Council**

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## **Disclaimer**

Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that this document is correct at the time of publishing.

*Front Cover image – Quirindi Silo Art*

## **Prepared by Liverpool Plains Shire Council**

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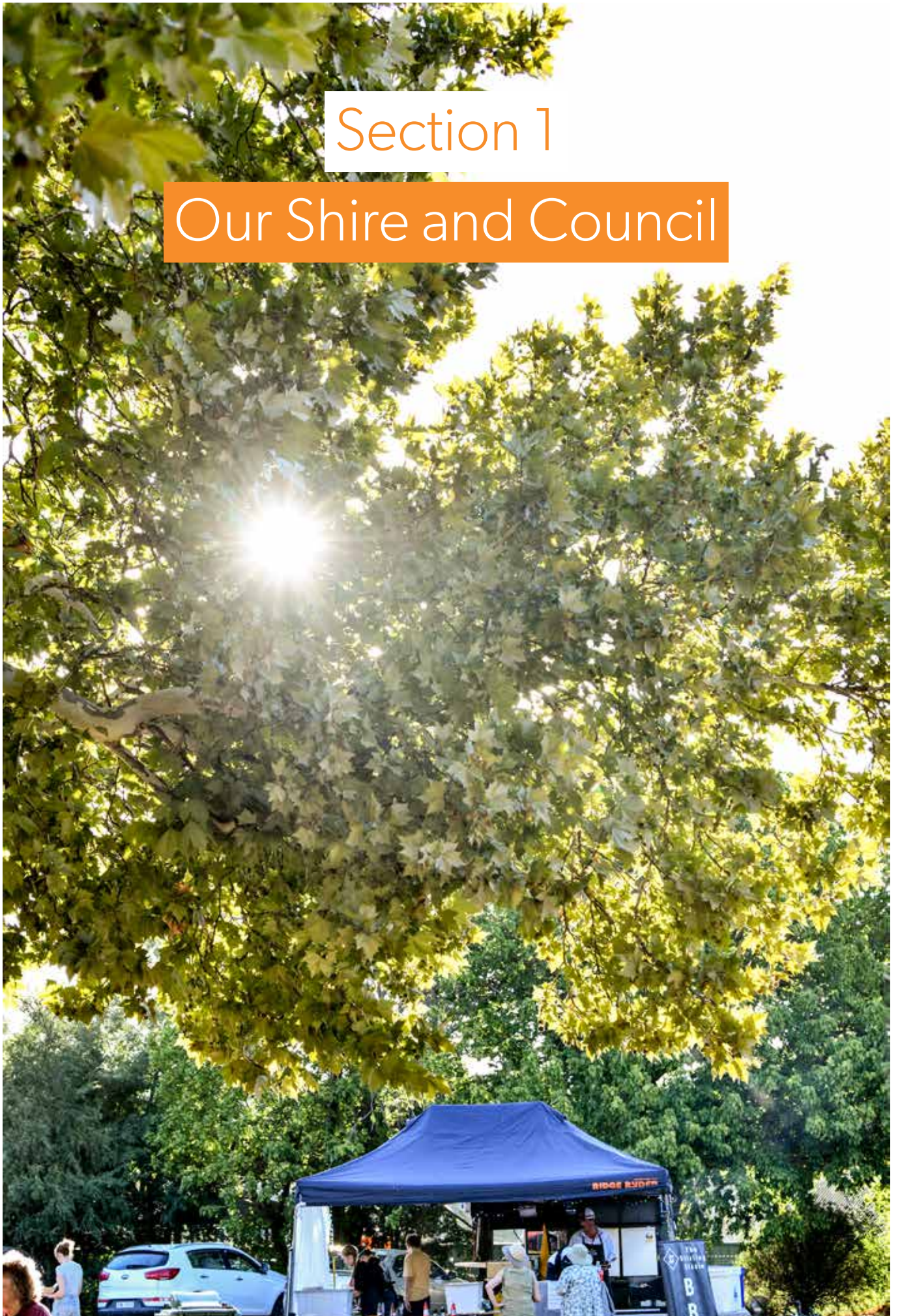
## Our Vision

*"We aspire to have a great rural lifestyle that is inclusive of all cultures with access to quality services and facilities. Strong community, council and business leadership, whilst encouraging a thriving economy and a sustainable environment to carry us into the future."*



# Section 1

## Our Shire and Council





# Our Shire

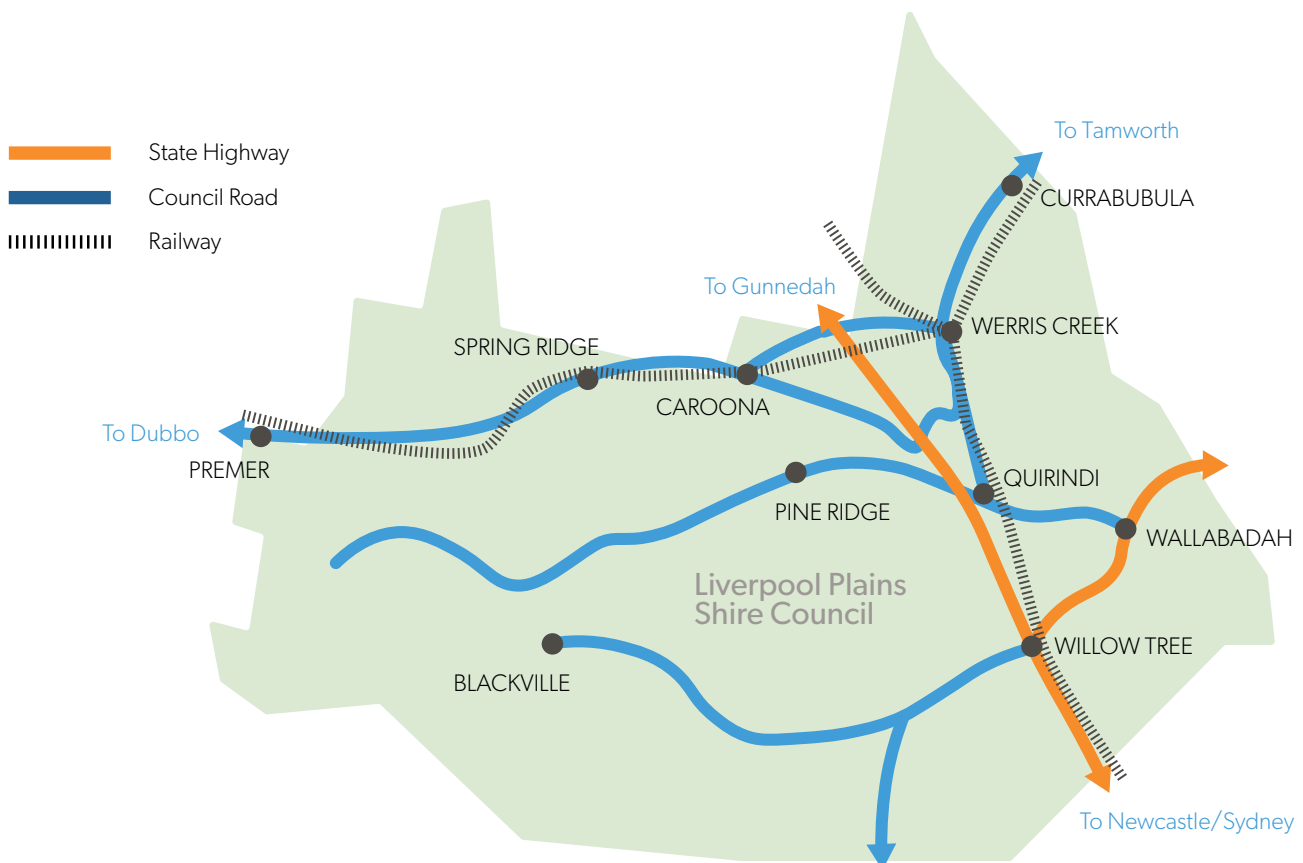
Located in the New England North-West Region of NSW, the Liverpool Plains Shire extends across the traditional lands of the Kamilaroi Aboriginal people.

The Liverpool Plains sits at the junction of the New England and Kamilaroi Highways, approximately 350 kilometres north of Sydney, 250 kilometres north-west of Newcastle and 60 kilometres south of Tamworth.

The population centres of Quirindi and Werris Creek are located at the heart of the Shire and are supported by several smaller villages and hamlets as follows:

- Blackville
- Carroona
- Currabubula
- Pine Ridge
- Premer
- Spring Ridge
- Wallabadah
- Willow Tree

The Liverpool Plains Shire Council comprises of 5,086 square kilometres and is located on the north-west slopes and plains region of New South Wales.



# Our Community

MALE **50.2%** FEMALE **49.8%**

**\$1,165**  
MEDIAN WEEKLY  
HOUSEHOLD INCOME

**25.5%** EMPLOYED IN  
THE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

**2.3** PEOPLE  
IS AVERAGE  
HOUSEHOLD SIZE

**7,667**  
TOTAL POPULATION

**52%**  
LABOUR FORCE  
OF WORKING AGE

**12%**  
PARENTS BORN  
OVERSEAS

**34.6%**  
HAVE GAINED TERTIARY  
QUALIFICATIONS

**19%** OF ELIGIBLE  
WORKFORCE VOLUNTEER

**32%** HAVE LONG-TERM  
HEALTH CONDITIONS

**47**  
MEDIAN AGE

**14.9%**  
IDENTIFY AS ABORIGINAL  
THREE LARGEST  
ANCESTRIES ARE  
AUSTRALIAN,  
ENGLISH, AUSTRALIAN  
ABORIGINAL



**2** MOTOR VEHICLES  
PER DWELLING AVERAGE

# Our Council

Liverpool Plains Shire Council is constituted under the *Local Government Act 1993* and was proclaimed on 17 March 2004 following the merger of the former Quirindi Shire with parts of Gunnedah Shire and the former Murrurundi Shire and Parry Shire. We are bounded by Gunnedah Shire in the north, Tamworth Region in the east, Upper Hunter Shire in the south and Warrumbungle Shire in the west.

Our workforce is diverse, reflecting the varied nature of the work we undertake and services we provide. During 2023-2024, our workforce comprised 108 full-time equivalent employees.

Council services include:





---

# Our Councillors

Our governing body comprises seven Councillors, and the day-to-day management of our organisation rests with our General Manager.

As our governing body, our Councillors are responsible for developing and endorsing the Integrated Planning and Reporting processes through the delivery and implementation of the strategies, projects and actions contained within the framework.

Council wishes to acknowledge and thank the outgoing Councillors for their contribution to the community during their 2022-2024 term of Council.

Council welcomes our new Councillors for the 2024-2028 term.

Our Councillors 2022-2024
Doug Hawkins OAM – Mayor
Ken Cudmore – Deputy Mayor
Jason Allan
Terry Cohen
Donna Lawson
Paul Moules
Yvonne Wynne

Our Councillors 2024-2028
Ken Cudmore - Mayor
Donna Lawson – Deputy Mayor
Jason Allan
Shawn Cain
Terry Cohen
James Robertson
Charlie Simkin

# Planning for our Future

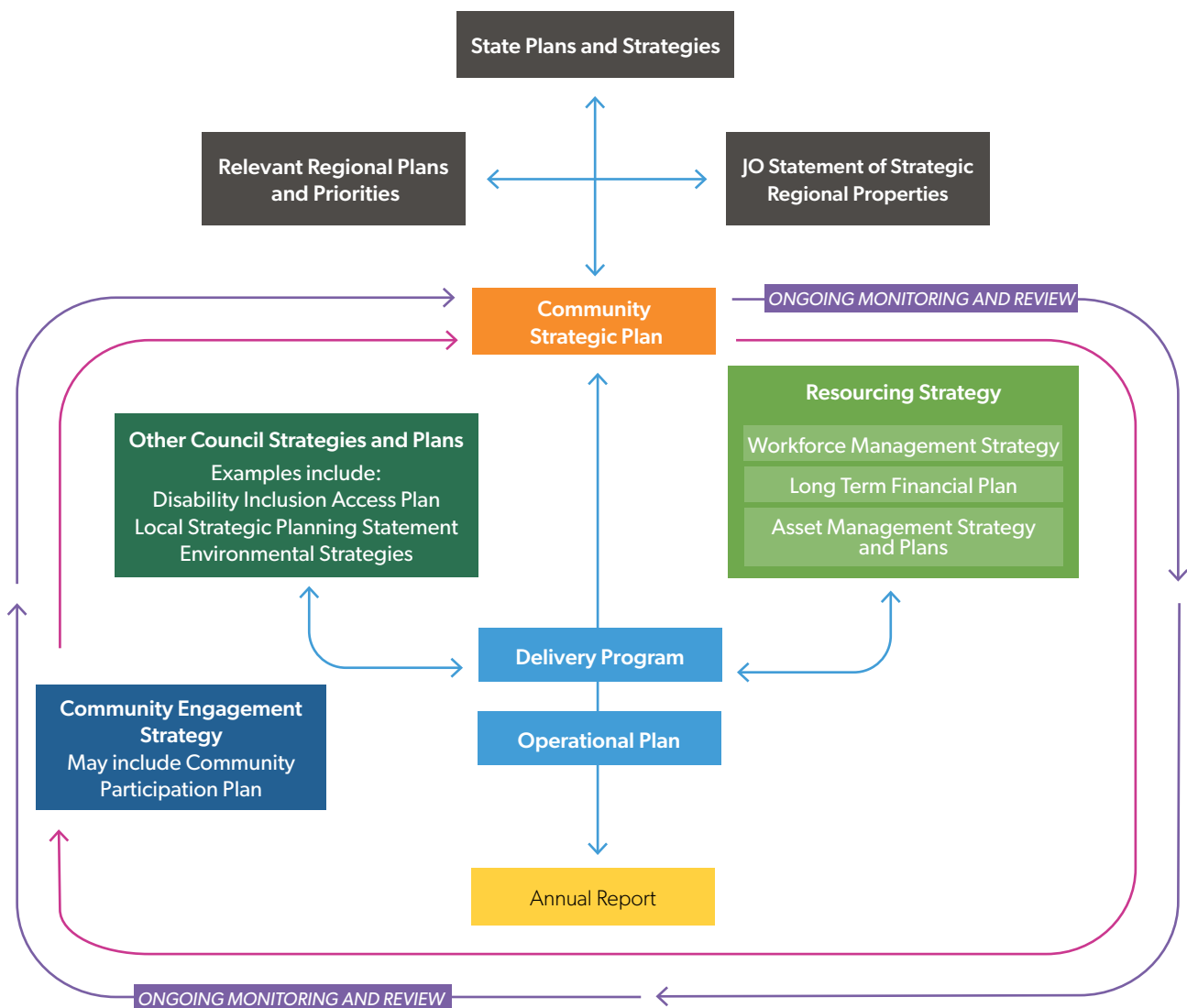
## Our strategic approach

The NSW Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework is a legislative requirement for all NSW councils. Council is required to develop a series of strategies and plans that are community focused and provide sustainability for future generations.

Utilising the framework depicted below, these documents detail how Council plans to deliver on our communities' priorities.

Our strategies and plans under this framework include:

- Community Strategic Plan (10+years)
- Community Engagement Strategy (4 years)
- Resourcing Strategies and Plans (4-10 years)
- Delivery Program (4 years)
- Operational Plan (1 year)



---

# Our Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032

Our current Community Strategic Plan (CSP) identifies the main priorities and aspirations for the Liverpool Plains Shire's future as part of a strategic and integrated planning framework that includes a four-year Delivery Program, an annual Operational plan and several Resourcing Strategy's.

While Council has a custodial role in initiating, preparing and maintaining this plan on behalf of our community, we are not wholly responsible for its implementation. Other partners, such as State Government agencies, non-government organisations, business and industry, community groups and individual members of the community, all have a role to play in delivering the strategies of the CSP.

The plan contains four community pillars, with each outcome supported by strategic outcomes which are delivered through our Delivery Program strategies and Operational Plan actions and projects.

## Our four community pillars are:



### COMMUNITY

A great rural lifestyle with access to quality services



### GOVERNANCE

Strong community, council and business leadership



### ENVIRONMENT

A sustainable environment



### ECONOMY

A thriving economy

---

The CSP is a living document and is reviewed at the start of each ordinary election cycle. Council considers local or regional issues, as well as new opportunities and challenges that may have arisen since the Community Strategic Plan was adopted in June 2022.

The plan is now under review with a new CSP to be endorsed by the incoming Council in June 2025. Once determined, the plan informs the development of the new Delivery Program, the review of the Resourcing Strategy's and the Operational Plan that all outline the actions to be undertaken during the 2024-2028. See overview below:

## Resourcing Strategies and Plans 2025-2029

Our suite of resourcing strategies and plans articulate how council will implement and resource the CSP with sufficient resourcing over time, with money, assets and people.

The Resourcing Strategy consists of three components:

- Long-Term Financial Planning (money)
- Workforce Management Planning (assets)
- Asset Management Planning (people).

These strategies focus on matters that are within Council's responsibility and considers, in general terms, matters that are the responsibility of others. They articulate how Council will allocate resources to deliver the objectives under our responsibility.

## Delivery Program 2025-2029

Our Delivery Program is a statement of commitment to the community from Council members that identifies the strategies that Council will undertake during their term-of-office to achieve the community outcomes identified in the Liverpool Plains Community Strategic Plan.

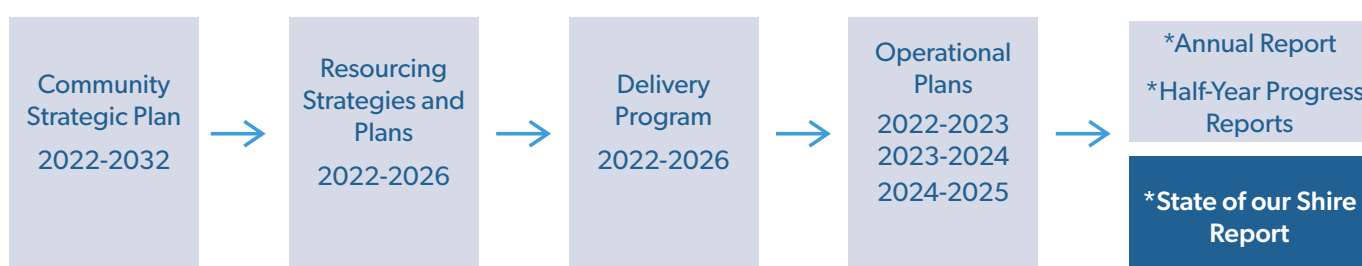
## Operational Plans

Our Operational Plans provide greater detail on the actions, projects and services planned for each current financial year. Other information provided in these plans includes the Annual Capital and Operational Budgets, Capital Program, Revenue Policy and Fees and Charges for each of the financial years.

## Reporting our progress

Reporting is a key element of the IP&R framework. We use a variety of tools to report our progress in achieving our Community Strategic Plan outcomes through the implementation of the Delivery Program strategies. The following diagram represents the flow of the IPR Framework documents that guide the delivery of the Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032 objectives through the following documents:

## The flow of IPR plans and reports





# About the State of our Shire Report

The State of our Shire Report is presented to the second meeting of a newly elected council for noting. This report covers the shortened term of the previous council and objectively track's Council's progress against the Community Strategic Plan (CSP).

This report provides information that sets the scene for our new council and includes achievements to date as well as highlighting some of the future work to be undertaken. The report is to assist the new council to undertake a review of the CSP, which is an essential component of IPR cycle. It reports against the high-level strategies and priorities of the CSP and has a community focus, rather than a council one.

The following section details our progress and challenges towards achieving each of the four Community Strategic Plan outcomes.

## How to read this report

The following table is a summarised example of the layout of this section:

Outcome 1- Community			
Strategic Theme = 'You said...' section			
We value beautiful landscapes, individual dynamic towns and villages and safe communities Our health services meet our needs. Education services meets our needs and provide school, tertiary study and career pathways that support the community	Our community is embracing and inclusive of all cultures. Recreation facilities support our communities sporting, health and physical activity needs. We build on our strong community spirit, resilience and sense of belonging	Our health services meet our needs. Education services meets our needs and provide school, tertiary study and career pathways that support the community	Our transport and telecommunications expand to improve support for our business, lifestyle and remote working
Achievements & Challenges = 'So we...' section			
Identifies our achievements where we have or are progressing towards achieving our goals or if something needs attention, or is not being achieved or faces significant challenges			
CSP measures of success			
Indicators showing how our Shire is progressing towards achieving our community's aspirations as outlined in the Community Strategic Plan			

## Section 2

# Our Progress and Challenges





## COMMUNITY

### A great rural lifestyle with access to quality services and facilities

#### You said ...



*We value beautiful landscapes, individual dynamic towns and villages and safe communities.*

*Our community is embracing and inclusive of all cultures. Recreation facilities support our communities sporting, health and physical activity needs. We build on our strong community spirit, resilience and sense of belonging.*

*Our health services meet our needs. Education services meets our needs and provide school, tertiary study and career pathways that support the community.*

*Our transport and telecommunications expand to improve support for our business, lifestyle and remote working.*

#### So we...



Implemented our Child Safe Standards Policy across the whole of Council and provided training to staff. Recommend that Council continue to include child safe standards training for all staff on an annual basis.



Upgraded the lighting at Longfield Oval with the assistance of user groups. The project has been welcomed by all users, resulting in increased utilisation of the grounds, which is anticipated to continue as users take advantage of better lighting.



Consulted with members of the local community, organisations and societies to gain the correct information for inclusion into the Register of Memorial Trees for Fallen Soldiers. While the register is still under construction any available information is currently displayed on Council's website.



Installed new stable facilities at the Currabubula Recreation Grounds, with the assistance of the Currabubula Pony Club and the Local Advisory Group. Additional signage has also been installed to assist with the delineation of areas of the multipurpose facility.



Replaced the septic system at the King George V Park in Willow Tree to allow for the increased usage of the facilities, thereby resolving any potential environmental hazards to the community.



Replaced the Milner Parade Tennis Clubhouse which is now functional and welcomed by users as a great new addition to the sporting network across the shire.



Continue to provide cemetery services to the community and, with the assistance of volunteer groups at various grounds, maintain the cemeteries to the service level standard.



Made further improvements to the Quirindi Showgrounds during 2023-2024, with the completion of the Infield Clubhouse, which is a fantastic new facility for current users, and has the potential as an alternative venue for functions.



Continue to support annual community events such as ANZAC Day, Australia Day and Remembrance Day. Council staff coordinate with local community groups to assist with the successful flow of each of these events.



Are committed to the maintenance of Council parks and grounds through consistent upkeep of recreational areas, playgrounds and public spaces.



Assisted with procuring grant funding for road parking upgrades for the Silo Art project. Provided availability of the Council Chambers roof to support the light show and worked closely with the Silo Art Committee to facilitate the opening event by arranging the street closure.



Maintain 14 well-equipped sporting facilities and 14 playgrounds, ensuring they are in excellent condition for community use. These facilities cater to a wide range of sports and recreational activities, offering residents access to safe, clean, and functional spaces for physical fitness, team sports, and leisure.



Effectively manage and maintain a fleet of 132 vehicles, not including mowers and whipper snippers. Council's fleet consists of a variety of essential equipment, including heavy machinery such as graders, trucks, and excavators, as well as lighter utility vehicles used for day-to-day operations. Regular maintenance schedules are in place to ensure all vehicles are in optimal working condition, maximizing their lifespan and minimizing downtime. By adhering to strict service protocols, Council ensures that its fleet operates efficiently and safely, supporting a wide range of public works, infrastructure projects, and community services.



Have almost 2,000 people visit our libraries in Quirindi and Werris Creek each month. Visitors to the libraries include people taking advantage of the collection of books, audio books, DVD's, magazines and even baking equipment. Our library staff are committed to providing the highest quality of service to regular and new patrons and visitors. Staff regularly peruse our collection to assist patrons to find books and resources that will be of interest to them. To ensure that they continue to offer the best service, Library staff regularly participate in training programs, to keep up to date with best practice in collection management and services to readers.

Our libraries host activities including Story Time, Tech Savvy Seniors, Trivia afternoons, craft activities and school holiday programs. We have partnered with Tamworth Family Support Services, North West Legal Service, Winanga-Li and allied health services to provide our residents with the opportunity to access a range of services.

Werris Creek Library hosts a Services Australia Kiosk. Hosting this facility provides the Werris Creek community with convenient access to a range of online services. Library staff regularly undertake training to ensure they are able to provide assistance to users of the Services Australia Kiosk.

Quirindi Library and Community Hub were officially opened in October 2021, following a significant upgrade. The Community Hub offers a meeting space for up to 40 people and a wet area to accommodate craft and art activities. The Community Hub hosts up to 20 events each month, demonstrating its value to the community.





The upgrade to the Quirindi Library increased the library's floor space, introduced more natural light and greater versatility. The forecourt to the library provides patrons with a shaded outdoor space to socialise or access the library's free Wi-Fi and charge their hand-held devices.

Werris Creek Library received funding from the State Library of NSW's Infrastructure Fund to upgrade the furniture and to install new signage. The new furniture includes study benches, comfortable armchairs and storage for community groups. The new furniture is light and multifunctional, making it easy for staff and community groups to reconfigure the space to accommodate meetings, school holiday programs and community activities.

Liverpool Plains Shire Library Services has launched two new partnerships. In partnership with Go Co, residents who are registered with MyAged Care have access to a home delivery service. Library staff coordinate the selection and packaging of the reader's requests and Go Co volunteers deliver and collect the packages. This important service enables people with limited mobility outside the home to continue their passion for reading.

1,000 Books before School has been developed in partnership with the Friends of Quirindi and Werris Creek Library. 1,000 Books before School encourages and rewards children to develop an interest in reading and for visits to the library to be a regular outing. Launched in March 2024, the program has over 100 children taking part and we expect this number to grow.



We received funding through the NSW State Government's Resources to Regional Program to upgrade the facilities at Quirindi Pool. Quirindi Pool closed its doors in March 2023 and is currently closed while the upgrade is in progress.

During the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 seasons, around 2,000 people visited our pools each month. During the 2023-2024 season, Werris Creek welcomed visitors from across the shire, and visitor numbers to the pool were similar to previous seasons where both pools were open.

People of all ages take advantage of our public pools for many reasons; to maintain fitness, to rehabilitate, to meet with friends, to cool off, to learn to swim, to compete. Our public pools are also used by families and community organisations for celebratory gatherings, schools host regular sports days, swimming carnivals and learn to swim programs, and swimming clubs host their regular club nights and squad training.

Council recognises the important role public pools can play promoting healthy lifestyle choices to young people and Council subsidises half of the pool entry fee for all students that live within the shire.



Offer two rounds of funding access to Liverpool Plains Shire Council's Community Funding Program each year. Each round provides a total of \$10,000 to support community groups to provide events and services to residents and visitors. Every year, approximately 150 volunteers provide benefits to 6,000 residents and visitors.



We received funding through the NSW State Government's Stronger Country Community Fund to upgrade the Plains Fitness bathrooms to be fully accessible and to provide 24/7 access to members. The upgrade was completed in October 2023, and the 24/7 access was added to the suite of services available to members in December 2023. As part of the upgrade the fitness area of the gym was reconfigured, doubling the space available for cardio and weight activities.

In September 2024, membership at Plains Fitness had tripled to 275 members with their offering of one-on-one personal training sessions, group fitness classes and self-directed workouts.



Welcome, care for and educate children from 8am to 6pm five days a week, 51 weeks of the year at Eastside Long Day Care centre. This is the only long-day centre within the Liverpool Plains shire area. Long Day Care is a critical service for children and parents and guardians. At Eastside, children have access to the quality education experiences, tailored to reflect the Australian Government's Early Learning Years Framework. Of equal importance are the opportunities that Eastside provides to parents and guardians. While their children enjoy the educational and social opportunities available at Eastside, parents and guardians are able to attend work, or further their own education confident their children are growing, experiencing and enjoying their time in Eastside's care.



Will celebrate our Eastside Long-Day Care centre's 20th anniversary and mark the difference it has made for up to 30 families each day, for 20 years.



Through partnerships with Quirindi High School, allied health services, NDIS providers, and sporting associations, Plains Fitness has delivered targeted programs to meet the unique needs of our residents. The partnership with Quirindi High School assists young people to embed good fitness practices in their day-to-day routine. The Young at Heart program enables our senior residents to participate in group fit classes. NDIS providers utilise Plains Fitness staff's expertise and equipment to make fitness available to all.



Look forward to an expanded telecommunications experience from the upgrades to the nbn Fixed Wireless tower in the Quirindi area, which will benefit households and businesses across Australia, including in the Hunter New England, providing access to faster speeds and extending the coverage of the nbn Fixed Wireless network.



Acknowledge the improvements being made to our Shire's connectivity through the upgrading of the Telstra mobile network.



Partnered with Gunnedah Shire Council to develop a Regional Drought Resilience Plan with funding received from the NSW State Government. The Draft Regional Drought Resilience Plan was prepared following community consultation in April 2024. Four community stakeholder meetings, eleven pop up sessions, an online survey and a mail out to all residents of both shires was undertaken to seek input from residents, businesses and community groups across both shires. The final report will be presented to NSW State Government in November 2024.

## CSP measures of success:

1. Growth in the diversity of our population.
  - Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data released in 2021 indicates our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander proportion of residents represents 14.8% of our community which is significantly higher than the state average of 3.4%.
  - This data also shows the following population diversity for country of birth across our shire and shows significantly less population diversity than the NSW average, see below table.

Country of birth, top responses				
All people	Liverpool Plains	%	New South Wales	%
Australia	6,276	83.1	5,277,497	65.4
England	105	1.4	231,385	2.9
New Zealand	61	0.8	118,527	1.5
India	24	0.3	208,962	2.6
Philippines	18	0.2	106,930	1.3
China (excludes SARs and Taiwan)	13	0.2	247,595	3.1

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)  
<https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA14920>

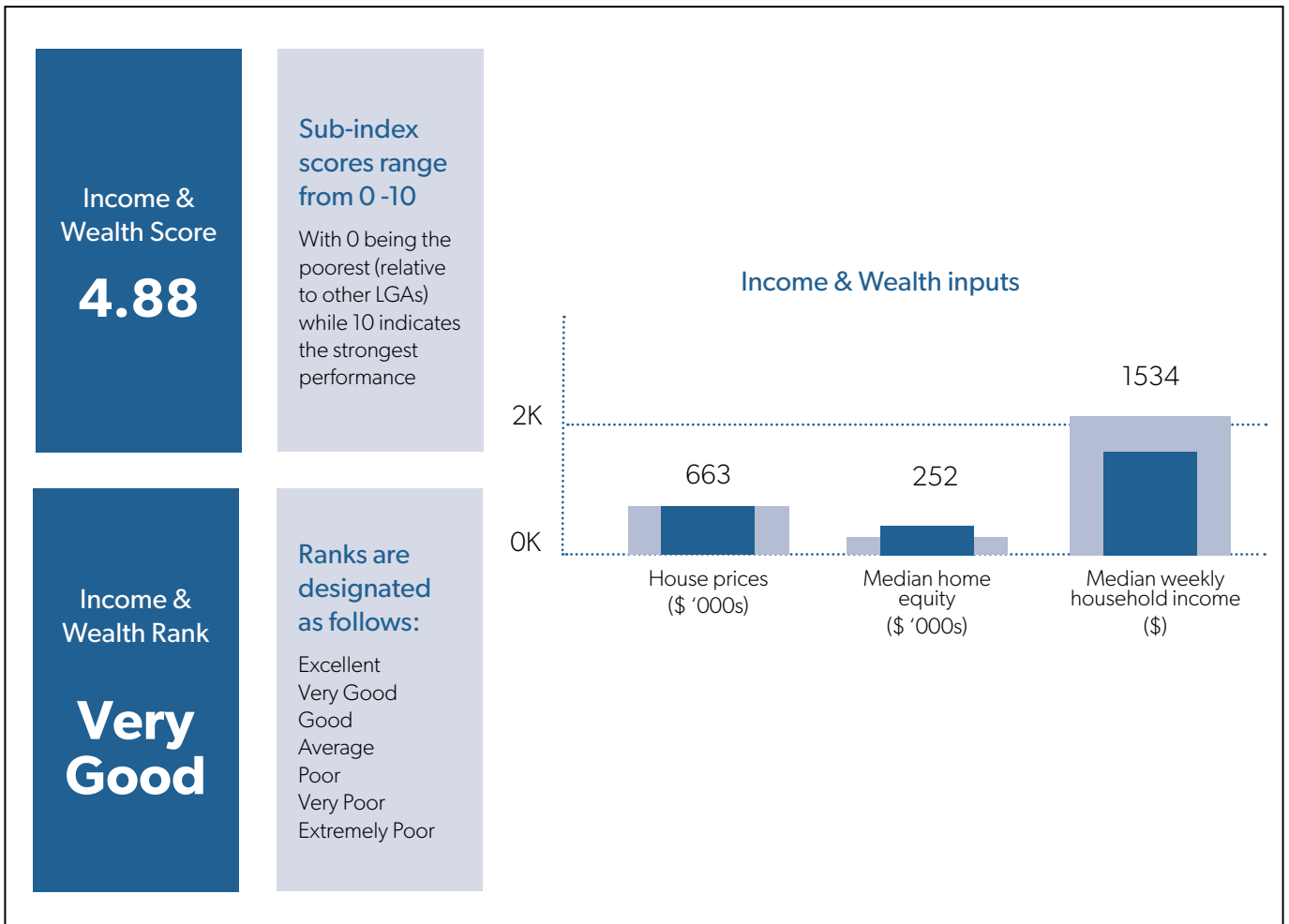
2. We improve in the index of disadvantage from Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA).
  - SEIFA is a suite of four summary measures that have been created from Census information. Each index summarises a different aspect of the socio-economic conditions in an area, and therefore summarises a different set of social and economic information.
  - In 2016, the SEIFA Index of Relative Socioeconomic Disadvantage score for the region was 914 – indicating that the Liverpool Plains local government area was more disadvantaged than the Australian score of 1000. The current SEIFA utilises Australian Bureau of Statistics (BBS) data from 2021 and indicates an improvement of 926. Careful consideration needs to be given to how Council advocates, on behalf of the community, through other levels of government and the private sector to influence better outcomes for the shire.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)  
<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/2033.0.55.0012016?OpenDocument>  
[https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/32dcbb18c1d24f4aa89caf680413c741/#data\\_s=id%3Awidget\\_36\\_output\\_config\\_1%3A0%2Cid%3AdataSource\\_12-187d549b75f-layer-11%3A42](https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/32dcbb18c1d24f4aa89caf680413c741/#data_s=id%3Awidget_36_output_config_1%3A0%2Cid%3AdataSource_12-187d549b75f-layer-11%3A42)

3. We create more local jobs.

- A targeted recruitment program over the last twelve months was undertaken to fill vacancies within Council. There have been some new positions identified that are required to meet service levels as outlined in our organisation structure.
- Council considers all local contractors in our tendering process.
- ABN data from 2021 is no longer a reliable indicator of local job statistics. Once new survey information becomes available Council will review further. Alternatively, the Liverpool Plains Shire Income and Wealth Score shown below has been updated recently and shows where our shire is ranked across NSW as determined by the SGS Cities & Regions Wellbeing Index, see below:

Source: SGS Economics and Planning (SGS)  
<https://sgsep.com.au/projects>





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4. Facilities are well maintained and utilised.

- Council implemented a robust routine maintenance program, as well as a forward maintenance plan that is intended to maintain Council's facilities to a suitable condition for use. Our facilities play a vital role in supporting the local community, from our parks and recreation areas to community halls and public amenities. There have been changes in the use of a number of facilities over the past three years, specifically an increase at Quirindi Showgrounds and Longfield Park.
- Each facility is unique, with some that have agreements in place with local community groups to assist both Council and users to ensure that they meet the needs of residents and visitors. These spaces are widely utilised for a variety of community events, sports, and social gatherings, fostering a sense of connection and well-being across the shire.

5. Our population grows to 10,000.

- ABS data showed minimal growth prior to 2021 of less than 1% of growth for the shire. Current estimated population in 2023 is 7,667, an estimated increase of 1.53% (116) since 2021.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/regional-population/latest-release#interactive-maps>



## GOVERNANCE

### Strong community, Council and business leadership

You said ...



*Our Council, community and business leaders work together effectively.*

*Our leaders represent the diversity of our community.*

*We encourage our youth to become involved in the community as the leaders of tomorrow.*

*We partner with State and Federal Government, the private sector and community organisations in the provision of facilities and services.*

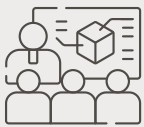
So we ...



Successfully obtained a permanent Special Rate Variation of 18.1% to be used exclusively to maintain Council roads throughout our shire, with the details reported annually through the Annual Report.



Implemented a Corporate Reporting platform to provide better Integrated Planning and Reporting framework, (IPR), outcomes for the community through the capture of progress metrics for the Delivery Program Progress Reporting and the building of the Operational Plan actions and projects. As this platform is refined and utilised, Council anticipates further improvements to IPR reporting to the community.



Adopted the new Procurement and Contracts Policies, implemented business system upgrades and provided training to employees to ensure they have the requisite skills and knowledge to adhere to Council's procurement processes.



Completed the Annual Statewide Mutual Continuous Improvement Pathways (CIP) document, focusing on Business Continuity Planning, Playgrounds and Building Assets during 2023-2024. The CIP is a voluntary program to help Council review the effectiveness of their ongoing systems.



Upgraded our business system to allow the Finance Team to commence improvements to financial processes and the promotion of long-term financial sustainability through regular financial reporting and long-term financial strategies.



Hold regular meetings of the Work Health and Safety (WHS) Committee and Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) with information that ensures genuine opportunities for consultation.



Completed our Annual Training plan to meet the organisational needs of Council. Procurement, Customer Service Charter and Cultural Awareness training to be included in the updated plan.



Implemented a Workplace Health and Safety duty of care program.



Are reviewing our Workforce Planning Strategy to including succession planning and consider what people, with what skills, experience and expertise are required to implement the new Delivery Program.



Are addressing our Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Plan accountabilities in conjunction with Council's Inclusion Plan.



Implemented a forward planning maintenance program which includes a regular assessment of facilities as well as better planning for routine maintenance for the Property and Assets department.



Maintained a partnership with Service NSW to operate the local Quirindi Service NSW Agency that ensures community members are not required to travel outside of the Shire to access these services. The agency has recorded the following transaction numbers:

- 2022-2023 - 13,542
- 2023-2024 - 13,149



Recommend a review of our current volunteers, what roles they are completing, when their competency was last assessed and determine how we can partner best with our volunteers for council.



Plan to investigate an online bookings system for Council sporting fields and facilities.



Reduced the number of Policies overdue for review by 35% and implemented monthly reporting to Management and the Executive on the status of our Policy Register, with a continued expectation that this will follow into the coming year bringing all of Council's Policies up to date by the end of 2025.



Implemented systems and processes to safeguard against business interruption from internal and external risks by:

Upgrading core business systems to up-to-date versions to increase stability and reliability. The upgraded systems increase efficiency, allow greater functionality, and enhanced business processes.

Implementing a new customer request system to deliver reference numbers and increased levels of communication with customers. Council responded to the following number of customer requests:

- 2022-2023 - 2077
- 2023-2024 - 3178



Strive to increase customer service satisfaction levels by:

- Increasing resources within the Customer Service team and emphasising improvements to our customer's experience through their transactions with Council
- Providing an additional customer service centre at the Visitor Information Centre at Willow Tree to provide another location where residents can conduct Council business.



Will undertake a Customer Service Survey and utilise these results to review and update our Customer Service Charter to form the basis of improvements to our customer request system.



Were selected as a pilot for the National Automated Access Scheme for assessing heavy vehicle access across its network.



Have introduced our 'Your Say Liverpool Plains' online engagement platform to seek community responses and input to a range of Council projects and initiatives.



Maintained our oversight of Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement actions. Council held four (4) meetings per year with the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee and considered on average 34 agenda items each year.



Are increasing the range of self-service options available to residents on Council's website and plan to develop online mapping for points of interest.



Were chosen to be involved in the development and initial trial of AssetAI. This has enabled a proactive approach to identifying defects, significantly reducing inspection time. As a result, we have successfully lowered the number of defects from 2,000 to 600 in just one month.



Developed a Risk Management Framework for implementation to manage the ongoing risks associated with Council.

## CSP measures of success:

1. Customer/Community satisfaction with council services increase.
  - Council has not conducted a community satisfaction survey in this term and cannot provide a current rating of the community's perceptions of Council performance at this time. Enhancing Customer Experience is a focus area for Council and we have commenced efforts towards reliably measuring customer satisfaction levels for individual interactions.
2. There is an increase in community participation and feedback from a diverse range of sources including increased use of the Council's website and social media platforms.
  - Council has continued to encourage community engagement utilising a mix of traditional and digital platforms. The feedback received through all channels has been invaluable in informing Council decision making on individual projects.
3. Strategic partnerships are identified and developed, and our financial sustainability goals are met.
  - Council has partnered with the following external organisations that provide benefits for our community:
    - Australian Railway Monument (ARM) Incorporated Management Committee
    - Central Northern Regional Library (CNRL)
    - Mid North Weight of Loads
    - Namoi Unlimited
    - North-West Regional Weed Committee
    - Rural Fire Service (RFS) Liaison Committee
    - Werris Creek Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee (CCC).



- 
- Financial sustainability continues to be a significant challenge for Council due to the impact of external factors such as:
    - Reduction in real terms of the Financial Assistance Grant due to the freeze in indexation
    - The long-term impacts of the NSW Government local government rate peg mechanism
    - Increased funding required to prevent the growth of backlogs in infrastructure asset maintenance and renewal
    - Environmental challenges including climate adaptation and resilience
    - Uncertainty around future State and Federal Government grants and funding opportunities.

Liverpool Plains Shire Council does not have a large number of ratable properties to proportion the rate burden across. With the anticipated closure and de-valuation of the Werris Creek Coal Mine site, Council will need to determine the most fair and equitable method of apportioning the loss of rate income across the remaining rating categories. Further we must deliver water, sewerage and waste services in line with relevant guidelines and regulations while ensuring the cost to provide these services remain within the community's capacity to pay.



## ENVIRONMENT

### A sustainable environment

#### You said ...



*Our infrastructure is well planned and maintained and will meet our needs now and, in the future.*

*We have access to affordable, clean water supplies.*

*We actively manage impacts on our natural environment.*

*Our local farming is sustainable.*

*We protect our environment and reduce our environmental footprint.*

#### So we...



Completed the revaluation of Operational Land and Buildings in December 2023. This has provided Council with a more detailed and comprehensive understanding of each of our properties and land. Revaluations have also been completed for Parks and Reserves, Water and Sewer assets.



Developed a Heavy Haulage Contribution Plan to ensure heavy haulage developments contribute towards addressing the reduced life of road pavements they cause.



Maintain Biosecurity Officers to ensure NSW State and Regional priority weeds are managed on all public and private land. These officers provide:

- High level engagement with Department of Primary Industry Regionals NSW
- Continued education and awareness programs
- High level of surveillance and monitoring of weeds.



Successfully maintained 559 km of sealed roads and 835 km of unsealed roads. Recent efforts include re-sheeting 27 km of roads, sealing 26 km of local and regional roads, and sealing 5 km of highway. In addition, 43,200 m<sup>2</sup> of road surface has been rehabilitated. These actions have ensured well-maintained pavements for the community, despite ongoing flood events.



Have a dedicated compliance function to address illegal dumping and abandoned vehicles and prohibited activities in public places.



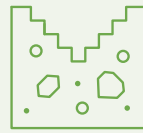
Are actively updating detailed asset information into our Asset Management System after each revaluation is performed to ensure a more accurate reflection of the assets and their conditions. This is an ongoing process as determined by the revaluation schedule and new assets being recognised in the Fixed Asset Register.



Replaced the Gurton Street and Bridge Road bridges. This means that the Council no longer has any timber bridges within its boundaries.



Received funding for a bridge load assessment at Mooki Bridge at Pine Ridge. This is currently underway and will enhance our current road network.



Have complied with all conditions imposed under an audit from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at our Warrah Ridge quarries.



Implemented Council's Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan for all new development to ensure:



Awarded the contract for the Quipolly Water Project in mid-2021. After a six-month detailed design and approval period, construction commenced onsite in Dec 2021 with the installation of the pipeline starting at Werris Creek. Work was carried out on the project for the next 2 years culminating in the first production of compliant drinking water to the town of Werris Creek in Mar 2024.

- The protection of, and necessary upgrades to, Council assets
- Facilitate environmentally sustainable developments
- Facilitate the creation of a desirable built environment.

The project continued throughout the difficult period of COVID with effects on supply delivery timeframes, escalated costs, and worker movement restrictions. Expenditure was reported monthly throughout the project and resulted in achieving delivery under budget. The project delivered new and renewed infrastructure such as a new Water Treatment Plant, interconnecting pipelines between the Quirindi and Werris Creek water supplies, increased storage in Werris Creek, improved dam intake operation, and destratification of the Quipolly Dam water source to prevent algae growth.



Successfully received funding of \$2.317M from the Infrastructure Betterment Fund by Transport for NSW to replace the Yarraman Creek Bridge to a higher level of resilience for future flooding events.



Operate two declared dams (Quipolly and Old Quipolly) following the introduction of updated legislation for NSW Dam owners to comply with in relation to dam safety, Council has been undertaking the required studies and actions in compliance with the new Act. To date, Council has undertaken six studies to determine safety levels, and responses to address those findings.

The requirement of ongoing assessment for the life of the dam continues with some of Council's systems to date having now been audited by the regulator.

The management of Council's dams in compliance with the Act provides comfort for those who would be affected by a dam failure that the dam is being competently operated for their safety.

The new facilities provide controls to produce consistent quality water supply with enhanced removal of contaminants and improved drought resilience following the integration of the different water sources (surface and groundwater).

## CSP measures of success:

1. Agriculture remains a significant contributor to the local economy.
  - Data from the NSW Department of Primary Industries shows that the Liverpool Plains shire has the third largest Gross Value of agricultural commodities within the New England/North-West Planning Region from 2020-2021.

### About Liverpool Plains Local Government Area

Liverpool Plains Local Government Area is located 260 km north of Sydney CBD.

Population  
**7,551**

Total Gross Value of agricultural commodities<sup>1</sup>  
**\$343.28M**

Area  
**5,082 km<sup>2</sup>**

Total employment related to agriculture  
**640**

Agricultural commodities produced<sup>2</sup>  
**24**

Total agricultural businesses  
**324**

Agricultural commodity diversity<sup>2</sup>  
**35% of 69 agricultural commodities**  
produced in NSW

Area used for agricultural production  
**4,509km<sup>2</sup> (89%)**

1. Farm gate Gross Value at 2020/21.

2. Based on reported Gross Value of agricultural commodities over \$5,000 at 2020/21.



Source: Department of Primary Industries (DPI)

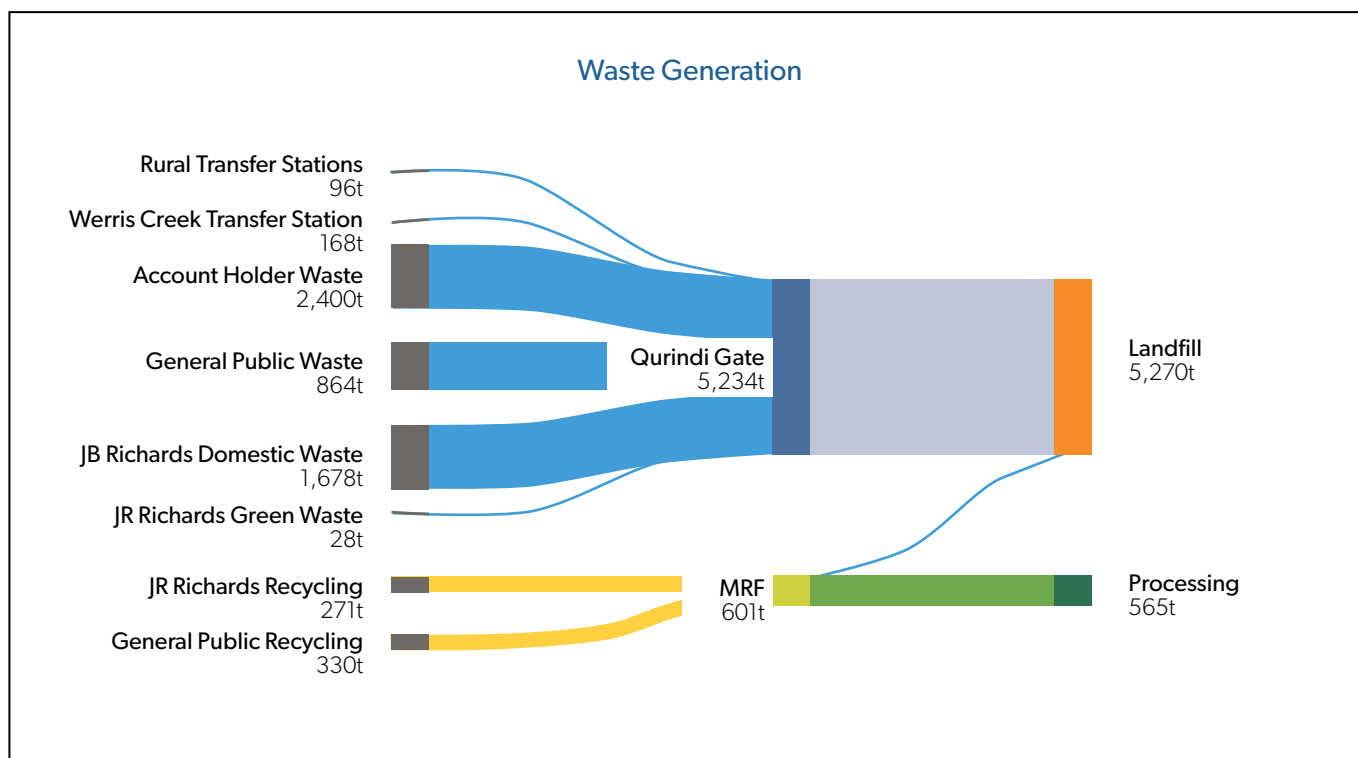
<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/lup/agriculture-data-for-planning/dashboard>

2. Water quality is improved, water storage has increased, and the quality and quantity of water meets demand.
  - Water quality has improved through the completion of the Quipolly Water Project through the implementation of a multi-faceted treatment process. Additional storage capacity has been built into the water network through two new reservoirs as part of the Quipolly Water Project.



3. Waste management services are compliant with all environmental legislation.

- Council has remediated a number of small rural landfills to reduce the groundwater contamination from these sites. The Willow Tree Landfill has received development approval for construction in line with current environmental requirements. Reporting of waste tonnages has been completed annually. Input into Quirindi Landfill are shown below:





## ECONOMY

### A thriving economy

#### You said ...



*Our agricultural economy is thriving, and we must pursue secondary industry to support all potential growth areas across the broader regional economy.*

*We grow our population, diversity and employment opportunities.*

*Our town centres are attractive and vibrant places. We foster new residential and business development built on our local strengths.*

*Our planning reflects the diversity of our towns and villages and enables future development. We develop our business community to support small and medium-sized business and remote working.*

*We develop our visitor economy.*

#### So we ...



Drafted a Growth Management & Housing Strategy to identify opportunities for growth.

This was undertaken by:

- Extensive agency and public consultation with a three-month exhibition period and six public meetings
- Extensive review of public submissions
- Preparation is underway of the final draft for Council's review and adoption.



Extended visitor experiences and increase the visitor economy through:

- The upgrade of the Quirindi Caravan Park facilities of an automatic boom gate and new power bollards to enhance the guest experience. The number of nights booked, and occupancy rates are:  
2022-2023 - 3992 (40.5%)  
2023-2024 - 4720 (47.8%)
- Assisting visitors with their enquiries relating to local attractions across the region at the Visitor Information Centre, visitor numbers are:  
2022-2023 - 5267  
2023-2024 - 5104
- Provide six Freedom Camping Grounds located across the Shire. These are a popular stopping point for travellers, bringing increased revenue to the villages.



Have undertaken extensive consultation with Regional NSW in relation to options to facilitate and protect existing and future intensive agricultural establishments such as feed lots and poultry farms.



Held extensive consultation with the New England Renewable Energy Zone project team to ensure protection and enhancement of road assets and the siting of workers camps to ensure residual benefits to local community.



Participate in the NSW Farm Gate Access Program to provide easier last mile access for farmers.



Updated Council's Local Environmental Plan to include Agri-Tourism usages across the rural area.



Approved 1,101 access applications for heavy vehicles onto Council's network.



Gazetted key routes for A-Double truck access to silos within the Liverpool Plains shire.



Approved over \$100 million in development applications.

## CSP measures of success:

1. Increases in residential development.
  - The number of dwellings approved each year has been relatively consistent, with an average of 21 per year between 2020-21 and 2023-24.
2. The planning process and community applications are easier to understand and take less time to process.
  - It became compulsory to lodge all development applications on the NSW Planning Portal on 1 July 2021. This has proved to be a challenge and will remain a focus area as Council waits for improvements to the functionality of the portal.
3. Visitor experiences are extended, and the visitor economy is increased.
  - There are many attractions such as the Quirindi Silo Art, the annual Sunflower Trail and agritourism operators which draw visitors to the region, however Council does not specifically measure tourism data. The Liverpool Plains region is incorporated in Destination NSW Country and Outback area which lists 'attractions' and 'value' as the major draw cards for visitors to this area.

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# Our Financial Performance and Sustainability

While many Local Governments face differing financial sustainability challenges, councils in rural and regional Australia are faced with the significant challenges of maintaining and replacing aged assets, whilst keeping rates and charges affordable for their communities.

As with other similarly sized councils, Liverpool Plains Shire Council does not have a large number of rateable properties to disperse the rate burden across. Further, we must deliver water, sewerage and waste services in line with relevant guidelines and regulations, while ensuring the cost to provide these services remain within our community's capacity to pay.

Achieving a balanced budget under present conditions is challenging, due to the impact of various factors that sit outside council control, which include:

- Reduction in real terms of the annual Financial Assistance Grant allocation from the Australian Government over the past 10 years, due to the freeze in CPI indexation
- Meeting rising community expectations in key service areas
- Increased internal costs of services, buildings and wages
- Essential investment in our digital systems and cyber security to enable business efficiency and contemporary standards of customer experience
- The long-term impacts of the NSW Government's local government rate peg mechanism, which despite minor changes, continues to hinder council in delivering essential services to an ageing population as increases to external costs (such as construction, energy and insurance) grow faster than local government revenue is permitted to grow
- Increased funding required to prevent the growth of backlogs in infrastructure asset maintenance and renewal
- Environmental challenges, including climate change adaptation and resilience
- The impact of cost shifting from other tiers of government to local government. Achieving compliance with new and/or amended legislation often comes with additional costs for local councils, including the ongoing dispute with the NSW State Government regarding the 'ownership and control' of Rural Fire Service (RFS) assets.
- Council has been successful in securing external funding to support important infrastructure projects, however, is heavily reliant on external grant funding with Liverpool Plains Shire Council Own Source Operating Revenue Ratio at 36.3% in the 2022-2023 year versus a benchmark of >60%
- Uncertainty around future State and Federal Government grants and funding opportunities
- Rapidly escalating audit costs imposed on local government
- Maintenance and operating of new facilities such as the Quipolly Water Treatment Plant and the Public facilities such as the aquatic centres in Werris Creek and Quirindi
- The escalation of emergency services budgets and the Emergency Services Levy (ESL) costs imposed on councils far exceeds the rate peg over the past ten years.



We continue to report our financial performance against the Office of Local Government's (OLG's) performance indicators with results published each year as part of our audited financial statements, see below table:

Measure / Benchmark	Financial Year			
	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
<b>Operating Performance Ratio</b> Greater than 0%	-35.3%	-33.9%	-19.4%	-4.2%
<b>Own Source Operating Revenue Ratio</b> Greater than 60%	62.3%	54.2%	42.1%	36.3%
<b>Unrestricted Current Ratio</b> Greater than 1.5 times	4.3	4.5	8.1	3.4
<b>Debt Service Ratio</b> Greater than 2 times	9.0	10.8	15.0	16.2
<b>Rates, Annual Charges, Interest and Extra Charges Outstanding Percentage</b> Less than 10%	10.4%	10.0%	7.8%	7.4%
<b>Cash Expense Cover Ratio</b> Greater than three months	19.2	16.9	12.7	19.6
<b>Infrastructure Renewals Ratio</b> Greater than 100%	51.5%	44.6%	84.9%	84.9%
<b>Infrastructure Backlog Ratio</b> Less than 2%	2.1%	2.9%	2.5%	8.4%
<b>Assets Maintenance Ratio</b> Greater than 100%	106.7%	109.2%	83.2%	94.0%

Note: Green font indicates an acceptable benchmark whereas red font applies to benchmarks not meeting OLG requirements.

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# Towards the Future

Over the 2022-2024 term, Liverpool Plains Shire Council has continued to face complex and varied challenges, and these will continue into the years ahead. Our aim is to ensure that the six key priorities identified are captured in the new Community Strategic Plan and are addressed in the four-year Delivery Program. Challenges on the other hand are captured to inform our community of both short-term and longer-term difficulties that face not only council, but our wider community.

## Key Priorities for Council

### 1. Community engagement

An integral component of the IPR Framework is community engagement. The last comprehensive Community Survey was undertaken during March-April 2022 after the last council election with the utilisation of external contractors. Due to the previous shortened election cycle and cost of external providers, Council determined to focus on implementing and rolling out an online engagement platform that seamlessly integrates with our existing website software with the first engagement survey rolled out being the review of our Community Strategic Plan during October- November 2024. The next scheduled survey will be our Customer Service Survey that will utilise the results obtained to review and update our Customer Service Charter and will form the basis of improvements to our customer request system.

Council is planning to schedule regular community engagement opportunities to allow our community to 'Have Your Say'. This feedback is collated to provide us with the opportunity to analyse the data to inform our decision-making processes.

### 2. Rate revenue

Council's overall rates yield is determined by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for NSW (IPART) with their annual information paper for 2025-2026 providing for a 4% increase. Liverpool Plains Shire Council rates are determined on a combination of land value of each property and a fixed base rate amount for each rating category. With the anticipated closure and de-valuation of the Werris Creek Coal Mine site, Council will need to determine the most fair and equitable method of apportioning the loss of rate income across the remaining rating categories.

### 3. Workforce planning

Introduce a revised Workforce Management Strategy for Council that includes succession planning and takes into consideration what people, with what skills, experience and expertise are required to implement the new Delivery Program over the next four years. The strategy will also consider how Council can best engage trainees, cadets and apprentices to provide future local employment opportunities for our shire into the future.

### 4. Ageing assets

Council's buildings and infrastructure renewals ratio continues to fall below the benchmark set by the Office of Local Government (OLG). Over the last three years Council's renewal ratio has landed between 85% and 82% which is well below the benchmark of >100.00%. Ongoing underfunding of renewals will lead to increases in maintenance spends, ultimately increasing the whole of life costs for assets under Council's management.

Council currently funds renewals for roads, water, and sewerage assets commensurate with the requirements within the adopted asset management plans. Buildings, parks & gardens, stormwater and other structures are currently underfunded. Reviews of our asset management plans are underway, with consideration required regarding the level of service that is sustainable into the future. As construction costs continue to rise faster than rate peg, the funding gap will likely continue to increase.

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The long-term impact on underfunding renewals will be an erosion in the level of service that assets provide to businesses and communities. For example, this can lead to increased costs for farmers to get their product to market and a reduction in important community services such as sports facilities, pools, and libraries.

## **5. Volunteers**

Volunteers play an essential role for Council through their contributions of time and expertise in service to our community. As Council has a duty of care to ensure all our volunteers 'go home in the shape they came to work in', we plan to undertake a review our current volunteers to determine what roles they are completing, when their competency was last assessed and how we can best partner with our volunteers to continue to provide positive outcomes for our community.

## **6. Waste management**

Council continues to work on improvements to our management of waste within the local government area. The rehabilitation of Quirindi and Werris Creek landfills are a key priority to minimise our ongoing impact to the environment.

Council has obligations from the NSW Government relating to waste. Food Organics & Garden Organics bins (FOGO) are currently legislated to be required by 2030, Council does not currently have a contract in place for the management of FOGO collection or treatment. Currently it goes to landfill. The NSW Government also has a target for a reduction in waste per person by 10% by 2030. Council currently accepts approximately 5,300t to landfill per year, with only 565t being recycled. Work is needed to ensure we can meet the targets set by the NSW Government.

This will require consideration into the whole of Council's Waste Management Strategy, and a possible review of it. How we fund the delivery of waste needs to be linked to our costs in the delivery of the service. It is one of a few services where Council is able to set pricing for full cost recovery.

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## Key Challenges for our Shire

### Financial sustainability

- The long-term impacts of the rate peg system, which despite minor changes, continues to hinder council in delivering essential services to an ageing population as the real cost of servicing our shire is not recognised.
- Uncertainty around future State and Federal Government grants and funding opportunities.
- The impact of cost shifting from other tiers of government to local government. Local government is the only tier of government without formal constitutional status, leaving councils at the mercy of NSW Government legislation. Achieving compliance with legislation often comes with additional costs for local councils. For example, the vesting of Rural Fire Service (RFS) assets requiring councils to record these assets in their financial statements and absorb the depreciation expense for these assets as well as the costs of inspecting, recording and booking these assets in their accounts.
- The escalation of emergency services budgets and the Emergency Services Levy (ESL) costs imposed on councils far exceeds the rate peg over the past ten years.
- Rapidly escalating audit costs imposed on local government.

### Planning and housing

- Housing affordability, other levels of government to invest in public and social housing and for new housing to include a proportion of affordable housing in perpetuity.
- Enable and plan for place-based solutions, with appropriate infrastructure, to meet the State's housing needs.
- Find solutions that address the unique housing pressures in rural and regional NSW.
- Address issues with operation of the mandatory NSW Planning Portal that are affecting approval timeframes.

### Infrastructure

- While Council has achieved a permanent Special Rate Variation (SRV) in 2022-2023, the resulting revenue increase of approximately \$1.1M is not sufficient to maintain the existing service levels of our road network within the shire.
- Backlog of asset renewals and maintenance.
- Ongoing operational costs of delivering and maintaining new infrastructure.
- Inflation and high interest rates driving the cost of building and maintaining assets upwards.
- How to implement initiatives and investment to make asbestos disposal simpler, cheaper and safer for our community.
- The cost of addressing dam safety requirements and determining what to do with the Old Quipolly Dam site.
- Increasing compliance and regulatory requirements place further cost burdens onto asset maintenance.

### Resilience to natural disasters

- Anticipated natural disaster increases in both instances and intensity due to climate change to be factored into council operations and strategic planning.
- Lobby for increase financial support and funding for restoration, remediation and betterment of local community infrastructure, including water and sewerage assets, in advance of disasters where the risks are identified and in the recovery stage.



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- Develop and fund a plan to support emergency management capability in councils in line with the State Disaster Mitigation Plan and foreshadowed disaster adaptation plans.
  - At what point does Council consider the cost of implementing mandatory climate-related reporting requirements that commence from January 2025 for Australia's largest companies.

## **Environment and economy**

- Investigate funding opportunities to plan for anticipated mandatory health-based water quality requirements.
- Potential emissions reduction monitoring requirements.
- Costs of implementing the Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) mandate.
- Review the Waste Management Strategy and secure funding to advance the rehabilitation of both the Quirindi and Werris Creek landfill sites.
- While the agriculture sector continues to be strong in terms of yields and revenue, it is not anticipated to create many new jobs.
- The Hunter Gas Pipeline and Renewable Energy Zone to the north, with a new transmission line running through the shire, while both are controversial, may have the potential to create commercial opportunities for the shire.
- Development of the Werris Creek Intermodal has future economic potential however the funding to complete the supporting infrastructure is still uncertain.

## **Community and employment**

- Ageing population requiring better access to health care and medical services.
- Limited higher education and employment opportunities resulting in our youth moving away from the shire to pursue careers.
- Investigate funding streams that support councils' significant role in the early childhood sector through its Eastside Long Day Care facility.
- Technology and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Address skills development for both new and existing staff in the critical shortage areas of water, planning support and early childhood education.
- Workforce management to plan to engage trainees, cadets and apprentices to provide local employment opportunities for our shire now and into the future.
- Engaging with minority groups across our shire to have a more prominent voice in decision-making.



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