



AGENDA & BUSINESS PAPERS

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with the provision of the *Local Government Act 1993* that a meeting of Uralla Shire Council will be held in the Council Chambers, 32 Salisbury Street, Uralla.

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

22 October 2024

Commencing at 4:00 PM



Statement of Ethical Obligations

The Mayor and Councillors are bound by the Oath/ Affirmation of Office made at the start of the Council term to undertake their civic duties in the best interests of the people of Uralla Shire and to faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the *Local Government Act* or any other Act, to the best of their skill and judgement.

It is also a requirement that the Mayor and Councillors disclose conflicts of interest in relation to items listed for consideration on the Agenda or which are considered at this meeting in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice.

Toni Averay

General Manager

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7 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

7.1 Confirmation of Minutes Ordinary Meeting held 24 September 2024

Department: General Manager's Office

Prepared By: Executive Assistant

Authorised By: General Manager

Reference: UINT/24/17099

Attachments: 1. Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held 24 September 2024 [↓](#)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held 24 September 2024 as a true and correct record.



MINUTES of

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Held on 24 September 2024 at 4:00pm

Attendance at Meeting:

Councillors: Mayor R Bell (Chair)

Cr S Burrows

Cr L Doran

Cr T O'Connor

Cr L Petrov

Cr A Blakester

Cr D Mailler

Cr J Philp

Cr K Arnold

Nil

Apologies:

Ms T Averay, General Manager

Dr R Abell, Director, Corporate & Community

Mr M Raby, Director, Infrastructure & Development

Mr M McLindin, Group Manager Civil Services

Mr M Ahammed, Manager Finance & IT

Ms W Westbrook, Executive Assistant

Staff:

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

24 SEPTEMBER 2024

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AUDIO FROM MEETING [HERE](#)

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

24 SEPTEMBER 2024

1 OPENING & WELCOME

The Chair declared the meeting opened at 4:00pm.

2 PRAYER

The Chair recited the Uralla Shire Council prayer.

3 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Chair read the acknowledgement of country.

4 WEBCAST INFORMATION

The Chair advised the meeting was recorded, with the recording to be made available on Council's website following the meeting and reminded the attendees from making defamatory statements.

5 APOLOGIES & APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS**APOLOGIES**

Nil

LEAVE APPLICATION**RESOLUTION 01.09/24**

Moved: Cr Leanne Doran

Seconded: Cr Sarah Burrows

That Council receive and note the leave of application from Mayor Robert Bell.

For: Crs Robert Bell, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov, Adam Blakester, David Mailler, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

6 DISCLOSURE & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/S

Nil

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

24 SEPTEMBER 2024

7 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**7.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES ORDINARY MEETING HELD 27 AUGUST 2024****RESOLUTION 02.09/24****Moved:** Cr Tom O'Connor**Seconded:** Cr Leanne Doran

That Council adopts the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held 27 August 2024 as a true and correct record.

For: Crs Robert Bell, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov, Adam Blakester, David Mailler, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0**8 URGENT, SUPPLEMENTARY, AND LATE ITEMS OF BUSINESS (INCLUDING PETITIONS)**

Nil

9 WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DELEGATES

Nil

10 PUBLIC FORUM

Nil

11 MAYORAL MINUTE

Nil

12 NOTICE OF MOTION/QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil

13 REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Nil

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

24 SEPTEMBER 2024

14 REPORTS TO COUNCIL**14.1 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR****RESOLUTION 03.09/24****Moved:** Cr Tom O'Connor**Seconded:** Cr Leanne Doran

1. That the Returning Officer calls for and announces the nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor.

Then:

2. That should there be more than one nomination for the position, the method of election of the Deputy Mayor be by way of secret/open ballot.

Following the declaration of the vote:

3. That Cr O'Connor be appointed as Deputy Mayor for the period from 24 September 2024 for term of one year till 23 September 2025.

For: Crs Robert Bell, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov, Adam Blakester, David Mailler, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0**14.2 LGNSW ANNUAL CONFERENCES AND VOTING ENTITLEMENTS****RESOLUTION 04.09/24****Moved:** Cr Sarah Burrows**Seconded:** Cr Lone Petrov

That Council delegate the Mayor, or designated representative, to attend LGNSW annual conferences and exercise voting entitlements for this term of Council.

For: Crs Robert Bell, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov, Adam Blakester, David Mailler, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

24 SEPTEMBER 2024

14.3 COUNCIL MEETINGS SCHEDULE OCTOBER 2024 - SEPTEMBER 2025

RESOLUTION 05.09/24

Moved: Cr Sarah Burrows

Seconded: Cr Jen Philp

That Council:

1. Adopts the Ordinary Meeting cycle for 2024-2025 as follows:

Tuesday 22 October 2024

Tuesday 26 November 2024

Tuesday 17 December 2024

Tuesday 25 February 2025

Tuesday 25 March 2025

Tuesday 22 April 2025

Tuesday 27 May 2025

Tuesday 24 June 2025

Tuesday 22 July 2025

Tuesday 26 August 2025

Tuesday 23 September 2025

Commencing at 4:00pm

2. Endorses the schedule for monthly Councillor information sessions as detailed in this report, noting these are not decision-making forums, where possible to commence from 5:00pm.
3. Notes that informal weekly meetings are held between the Mayor and the GM, to which all Councillors are invited if available.
4. Notes that separate community engagement sessions/workshops will be scheduled from time to time to share public information and to gain community feedback.

For: Crs Robert Bell, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov, Adam Blakester, David Mailler, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

24 SEPTEMBER 2024

14.4 APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLOR DELEGATES ON COMMITTEES AND EXTERNAL BODIES

RESOLUTION 06.09/24

Moved: Cr Adam Blakester

Seconded: Cr Sarah Burrows

That Council appoints Councillor delegates to each of the committees and external bodies identified in Table A.

COUNCIL COMMITTEES (Table A)	
Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC)	Cr A Blakester
Australia Day Committee	Cr S Burrows Cr T O'Connor
GM Performance Review Committee	Mayor Deputy Mayor Cr K Arnold
S355 Bundarra Hall Committee	Cr L Doran Cr J Philp
S355 Uralla Township Environs Committee	Cr L Petrov Cr K Arnold
EXTERNAL	
Arts North-West Strategic Advisory Council (SAC)	Cr A Blakester General Manager (alternate)
Central Northern Regional Library	Cr L Petrov
Rural Fire Service Liaison Committee	Cr J Philp General Manager
(Department of Planning) - Northern Regional Planning Panel	General Manager Cr S Burrows (Panel Member) Cr D Mailler (Panel Member) Cr T O'Connor (Alternate Panel Member) Cr L Doran (Alternate Panel Member)
(TfNSW) - Uralla Local Traffic Committee	Cr D Mailler
MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS	
Community Safety Precinct Committee (Not currently active)	Mayor
Country Mayors Association	Mayor
Coalition of Renewable Energy Mayors (CoREM)	Mayor General Manager

2. The appointment term for delegates be confirmed as the elected Council term.

For: Crs Robert Bell, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov, Adam Blakester, David Mailler, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

24 SEPTEMBER 2024

14.5 MEMBERSHIP - AUSTRALIA DAY S355 COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION 07.09/24

Moved: Cr Tom O'Connor

Seconded: Cr Sarah Burrows

That Council accepts the membership applications from the following applicants:

- i. Mr Steve Williams;
- ii. Ms Amanda Williams; and
- iii. Ms Wendy Westbrook

and appoints the applicants as members of the Australia Day s355 Committee.

For: Crs Robert Bell, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov, Adam Blakester, David Mailler, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

14.6 LOANS AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

RESOLUTION 08.09/24

Moved: Cr Tom O'Connor

Seconded: Cr Leanne Doran

That Council notes that the total loan position as of 31 August 2024 is \$1,283,532.

For: Crs Robert Bell, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov, Adam Blakester, David Mailler, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

14.7 INVESTMENTS AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

RESOLUTION 09.09/24

Moved: Cr Lone Petrov

Seconded: Cr Tom O'Connor

That Council notes the cash position as of 31 August 2024 consisting of:

- cash and overnight funds of \$5,155,769;
- term deposits of \$23,550,000;
- total convertible funds of \$28,705,769 (\$5,155,769 + \$23,550,000) (including restricted funds).

For: Crs Robert Bell, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov, Adam Blakester, David Mailler, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

24 SEPTEMBER 2024

14.8 DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24 - REFERRAL TO AUDIT**RESOLUTION 10.09/24****Moved:** Cr Tom O'Connor**Seconded:** Cr David Mailler**That Council:**

- i. Endorses the Draft General Purpose Financial Statements and Special Purpose Financial Statements for the financial year ending 30 June 2024 and refers them to the Auditors pursuant to section 413 of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*; and
- ii. Writes to the Minister for Local Government noting Council's ongoing concerns about the continuing requirement to account for RFS assets in Council's financial statements and requesting an update on the review of the Red Fleet.

For: Crs Robert Bell, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov, Adam Blakester, David Mailler, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0**14.9 REGISTER RESOLUTIONS ACTIONS STATUS AS AT 16 SEPTEMBER 2024****RESOLUTION 11.09/24****Moved:** Cr Sarah Burrows**Seconded:** Cr Leanne Doran**That Council notes the Resolution Actions Status Report as at 16 September 2024.**

For: Crs Robert Bell, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov, Adam Blakester, David Mailler, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

CARRIED 9/0**15 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS**

Nil

16 COMMUNICATIONS OF COUNCIL DECISIONS**17 CONCLUSION OF MEETING**

The meeting was closed at 5:32pm.

8 URGENT, SUPPLEMENTARY, AND LATE ITEMS OF BUSINESS (INCLUDING PETITIONS)

9 WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DELEGATES

Nil

10 PUBLIC FORUM

Nil

11 MAYORAL MINUTE

Nil

12 NOTICE OF MOTION/QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil

13 REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Nil

14 REPORTS TO COUNCIL

14.1 State of the Shire Report - End of Term 2021-2024

Department:	Corporate & Community
Prepared By:	Executive Support Officer
Authorised By:	Director Corporate & Community
Reference:	UINT/24/16913
Attachments:	1. State of the the Shire Report - End of Term 2021-2024 ↓ 2. Uralla Community Strategic Plan 2022-2031 ↓
LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK	
Goal:	4. We are an independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	4.1. Informed and collaborative leadership in our community

SUMMARY

This report presents the End of Term 2021-24 State of the Shire Report. The State of the Shire Report is an opportunity for the outgoing Council to reflect on progress towards achieving the priorities of the *Community Strategic Plan 2022 2031(CSP)* during its term in office. A copy of the CSP is attached to this report.

The aim of a CSP is to set out the long-term aspirations of the community. While Council facilitates the development of the CSP, the vision, outcomes and objectives belong to the whole community. It is important to note that local businesses, community groups, other levels of government, non-government organisations and residents all contribute to the achievement of our desired future.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. Notes the contents of *The State of Shire End of Term 2021-2024 Report*; and
2. Submits the Report with the Financial Statements for year end 2024 to the NSW Office of Local Government.

REPORT

Background:

The State of Shire Report – End of Term 2021-2024 Report is required under the *Local Government Act 1993* and is an opportunity for the outgoing Council to reflect on the progress towards achieving the priorities of the *Community Strategic Plan 2022-2031* during its term in office.

The aim of a Community Strategic Plan is to set out the long-term aspirations of the community. Council facilitates the development of the CSP. However, the vision, outcomes and objectives belong to the whole community and recognise that business, other levels of government, non-government organisations and the community must contribute in order to achieve our desired future.

The State of Shire Report – End of Term 2021-2024 Report is framed around the four CSP pillars:

- Society
- Economy

- Environment
- Leadership

Issues:

Council embarked on a significant community engagement exercise in the development of the CSP, with residents sharing their aspirations and hopes, and prioritising our community objectives for the future, , over its 10-year timeframe. The CSP will be refreshed in 2024/25 in line with the new Council term and will be adopted by Council in June 2025.

It should be noted that assessment of some of the measures outlined in the CSP are reliant on data from the 5-yearly ABS National Census. In acknowledging that the 2021 census data is the only available for this report, alternative data has been provided in some instances to demonstrate current trending.

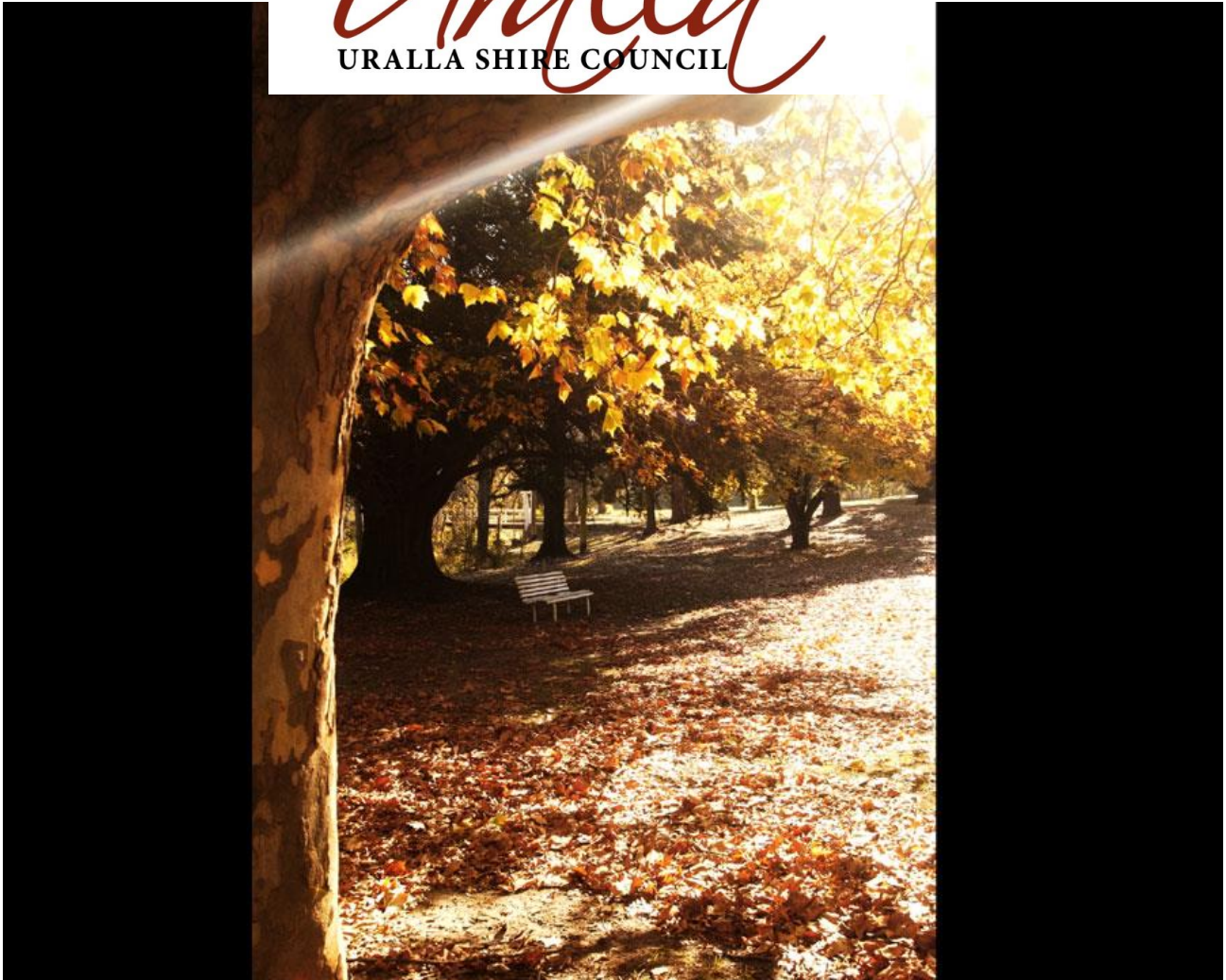
Sustainability Assessment:

The State of the Shire report presents information to show the delivery against the State objectives set out in the Uralla Community Strategic Plan (CSP) during the term of Council in the following areas:

- Society
- Economy
- Environment
- Leadership

CONCLUSION:

The State of the Shire Report is an opportunity for the outgoing Council to reflect on progress towards achieving the priorities of the Uralla Community Strategic Plan 2022-2031 (CSP) during its three-year term (Dec 2021-Sept 2024) in office.



State of the Shire Report 2024



State of the Shire Report 2024

Introduction

The **State of the Shire Report** provides an update on Uralla Shire Council's progress towards achieving its aspirations set in the Community Strategic Plan. This report is a requirement under the *Local Government Act 1993*, and forms part of Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework. The End of Term Report is defined by the NSW Premier & Cabinet Division of Local Government as a 'report on Council's achievements in implementing the Community Strategic Plan over the previous **four years**'. However this Report covers the period 2021 to 2024 because, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council's term was reduced to a three years tenure.

How do we work to meet the goals set in the Community Strategic Plan?

Council's four year Delivery Program and one year Operational Plan identify the major projects, programs and services and work towards delivering the goals set in the Community Strategic Plan. These documents form part of a suite of strategic documents that outline the priorities and actions to meet the Community Vision.

Community Strategic Plan – What the Community wants

This document provides the vision as to where the people of Uralla Shire want to be in 2031. It outlines the key outcomes and strategies which form the basis of our planning. The document is reviewed at the start of each new Council term.

Delivery Program – How Council proposes to deliver

This document is a four year outlook (the length of Council's new term from September 2024). It establishes major projects and performance measures outlining how Council will address and measure progress towards the strategies contained in the Community Strategic Plan. It allocates high level resources to achieve the projects over a four year period. Council is required to report back to its community on a six-monthly basis. The document is updated annually in conjunction with the yearly Operational Plan.

Operational Plan - What Council proposes to do

The Operational Plan is a one year outlook, it includes actions Council will undertake in the financial year to address the Delivery Program projects. It includes a one year capital works program and allocates resources



necessary to achieve the actions in the financial year. Council reports quarterly to its community on the status of the Operational Plan.

Resourcing Strategy

The Strategy includes:

- a ten year Long Term Financial Plan,
- a four year Workforce Management Plan
- an Asset Management Framework

The Strategy contains information on the time, funding, assets and people required by Council to progress the projects within the Delivery Program and move towards achieving our community outcomes. This document is also reviewed at the beginning of the new term of Council.

Annual Report

Council is required to report annually to the Office of Local Government. Each year's 'Annual Report' contain statutory reporting requirements, including: the achievement of actions and Key Performance Indicators identified in the four year delivery program, a summary of Council's audited financial performance, contributions and grants awarded and details of overseas visits on official Council business by the Mayor and Councillors.

How do we know if we have succeeded?

Council relies on information and feedback from the community. The Organisation has reviewed service levels and program delivery in a number of areas resulting in some data sources being collected. Other indicators rely on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data which is collected every five years, and on benchmarking with other Councils to compare our performance. This information is used to report back to the Community on a quarterly basis.



The 2022 – 2031 Community Strategic Plan

The current CSP was established with four key themes; each supported by Strategic Objectives and Strategies. These are included as follows:








Theme

SOCIETY	
Strategic Objective: We have an accessible, inclusive and sustainable community	
Strategies	
1.1 A growing community with an active volunteer base and participation in community events	<p>Rotary ZNet Southern New England Landcare Unique Street Stall – is this new under the term? Recognition of volunteers - Aus Day? McMaugh Gardens? Community event participation</p>
1.2 A safe, active and healthy shire	<p>Our valuable community service provision by Council's Tablelands Community Support team, the Tablelands Community Transport team and the McMaugh Gardens team and volunteers continues to provide an otherwise unachievable level of local community benefit.</p> <p>The \$100,000 grant from Friends of McMaughs has enabled McMaugh Gardens to make significant upgrades for better care of residents and staff. Key improvements include new overbed tables, high-back lounge chairs, bifold doors in the lounge, new concrete pathways, and additional air conditioning units. A transition to an online clinical platform (MANAD) has replaced paper records, enhancing efficiency. A grant for the Electronic National Residential Medication Chart will improve medication safety and reduce administrative tasks.</p> <p>Further upgrades involve new carpet and furnishings, a new rostering system, and workforce enhancements, including more part-time personal care assistants and 24/7 registered nurses. The facility has also strengthened medication room security and introduced an incident management system. These efforts reflect a commitment to quality care and facility improvement, supported by donations of care equipment.</p> 



	<p>These teams continue to deliver non-profit transportation, in-home and in-facility care and respite to many Uralla shire residents and helps to keep families together.</p> <p>Through collaboration with a local youth employment program supporting younger residents in our community, Tablelands Community Support has increased the local care workforce.</p> <p>NAIDOC celebrations and volunteer awards were hosted by Council staff and the team at Tablelands Community Support who work with the local Elders group and elderly community in Uralla.</p>  <p>During this term of Council, the Uralla Sporting Complex has continued its continual improvement pathway with drainage improvements and significant tree work taking place, which adds to the previous works to replace chain wire fencing around the courts, the provision of drinking water fountain and BBQs, and the previously upgraded kitchen facilities in the clubhouse.</p> <p>The Uralla Swimming Pool also continues to be upgraded with better infrastructure. Open space upgrade work continued in Bundarra, with more to come as there has been significant planning conducted during the period regarding the playground complex and future footpath upgrades.</p> <p>A number of playgrounds have been improved with continuing works, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alma Park • Sunny Jim McKay Park • Porter Park • BMX Track • Kentucky Playground • Barry Munday Reserve, Invergowrie (ongoing) <p>Council is a NSW Rural Doctors Network Bush Bursaries and Country Women's Association Scholarship sponsor; Council has applied significant effort to create the opportunity for new General Practitioner services to open locally and there is expected to be some very good news in the near future.</p> <p>Council has a Food Premise Inspection Program with 34 premises inspected on an annual basis. The primary goal for inspections is ensure high standards for food preparation and service. The inspection is Council's main tool for detecting issues and providing advice to the establishment owners.</p>
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<p>1.3 A diverse and creative culture that celebrates our history.</p>	<p>Our libraries have delivered a variety of programs and services that have kept our community engaged. Programs include storytelling, school holiday craft, film night and book club and many other events. The Library in Uralla also has wall space for local artists to exhibit their work.</p>  <p>NAIDOC week continued to be celebrated each year; storytelling and live entertainment from local indigenous groups have taken place. Visitors from pre-school and staff have been invited to participate in the activities that have been organised in the Uralla library</p> <p>Seniors week</p> <p>Our seniors have had the opportunity to attend the "Tech Savvy Seniors" programs as part of the Seniors Week. The programs were tailored to be socially and culturally inclusive.</p>

**Youth week**

Council conducted an extraordinarily successful 'Mayor's Youth Forum' in 2024 which saw every local school visited and ended with youth councillors (complete with a junior mayor) meeting to discuss youth issues and experience the processes of a council meeting.



1 Library Storytime in honor of NAIDOC Week

Kids Pool Week

A significant series of events for our younger cohort was conducted over a week of festivities and fun at the Pool. We were fortunate to have received support funding from the NSW Government and the entire event was heavily patronised and well received. We will be doing our best to seek similar funding in future in order to continue the program.

The Openings of the Upgraded Parks

The Winter Solstice on 22 June 2024 marked the opening and final commissioning of the upgraded Rotary Park, Pioneer Park, and The Glen with significant community interest.





The night of the opening was marked with a Stargazing Event at the Glen to commemorate the completion of the Constellations of the South art installations. The event proved to be a major drawcard which attracted hundreds of people from across the age spectrum and set the standard for future community events.



Council continued to support a number of other local festivals and occurrences including the ANZAC Day dawn service and march, Thunderbolt's Festival, the Uralla Lanterns Festival, the now permanent and widely loved Fairy Festival, Seasons of New England, and Citizenship Ceremonies which take place on Australia Day each year.

A significant effort has also been applied to create a new Christmas community event which is planned for November 2024 and will continue across future years.



	<p>Summary of Event Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hugely successful summer pool party in January ▪ Australia Day activities in Alma Park ▪ In April, Youth Week 2024 & Mayor's Youth Forum engaging every school in our LGA ▪ May sold out Kung Fu Panda free film screening in Armidale ▪ In June, opening of Fibonacci, Rotary, Constellations ▪ June Court House Open Day ▪ June Winter solstice event at The Glen ▪ July NAIDOC week smoking ceremony, flag raising and Elders' lunch ▪ August, High Country Friends Ukelele group performing at Uralla Court House ▪ September, unveiling the new memorial plaque at Bundarra Cemetery ▪ In school holidays this year we have run over 40 free events and activities for young people
<p>1.4 Access to and equity of services</p>	<p>Council adopted its Disability Inclusion Action Plan in 2017. This framework sets up the key strategies and actions to be delivered by Council in its commitment to disability access and inclusion within the Local Government Area.</p> <p>Today it still guides Council operations in relation to disability access and inclusion, and focuses on improved outcomes for all community members. Highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspects of the Development Application process, such as provision of individualised advice • Development of social procurement framework to facilitate employment opportunities for local people with disability • Provision of disability and community transport services <p>Council, via its Community Transport team continued to make excellent use of its 12 seat Mercedes bus with a wheelchair hoist which continued to support Council's services provided through Aged and Community Care. This bus is also used by McMaugh Gardens, Tablelands Community Support and Tablelands Community Transport. The service continues to receive very positive feedback from residents and clients.</p> <div data-bbox="948 1039 1302 1301" data-label="Image"> A photograph showing a white car parked in a designated disabled parking space. The space is marked with yellow diagonal lines and a blue wheelchair symbol on the asphalt. </div> <div data-bbox="512 1601 1082 1856" data-label="Image"> A photograph of a white Mercedes-Benz van parked on a grassy area. The van has 'COMMUNITY TRANSPORT' and 'URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL' branding on its side. </div>



ECONOMY	
Strategic Objective: We drive the economy to support prosperity	
Strategies	
2.1 An attractive environment for the business sector	<p>Significant community consultation to inform Council's Housing Strategy continued with a result expected shortly.</p> <p>The Strategy will provide the Shire with up to date and clear guidance regarding the future preferred types and locations of residential development. This will be especially important in pre-empting and planning for issues which may arise due to the New England Renewable Energy Zone projects.</p> <p>Council funded what became an excellent documentary and drawcard production on the Uralla area and its excellent tourism offerings which coincided with the opening of the upgraded parks.</p> <p>The excellent 30-minute show premiered (Channel Seven) in the second half of 2024 and will re-screen at intervals in the future.</p>
2.2 Growing and diversified employment, through growth in existing and new businesses	<p>The New England Renewable Energy Zone has the potential to positively impact on local employment rates as its very significant construction and commissioning phase begins.</p>  <p>Whilst Council does not have any direct control over the process, we have made significant advancements as an 'advocate for Uralla' and by positioning itself as an 'enabler' with both EnergyCo (the NSW Government Department with carriage of the project) and also with all current or potential REZ developers.</p> <p>Council continues to meet regularly with all relevant parties to advance its mission to minimise impacts and maximise benefits for all sectors of the Shire community.</p> <p>Examples include exploratory and facilitating meetings with potential solar panel recyclers and other emerging industries which will be required into the future to support the each solar and wind development during both their construction and later, operational phases.</p>



**2.3 Communities
that are well
serviced with
essential
infrastructure**

Significant advancements regarding Water Security and Water Quality have been achieved, again with significant NSW Government support, which should see Council's Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan completed with the next 12 months.

That four-year body of work will culminate with a clear view of what needs to be done to achieve water security for the Shire for the next 30 years.

The Old Uralla Courthouse refurbishment was conducted and finished during the period and the result is now an excellent community multi-purpose centre which can support a range of uses and activities.



Further key public space upgrades occurred at Pioneer Park, The Glen and Rotary Park utilising the Public Spaces Legacy Program, which saw a great result with high public acceptance and significant community involvement at the opening events.

Additional BBQ facilities and picnic settings have been constructed throughout the Shire including those at the new Glen and Rotary Parks

New public car parking was created at both the Glen and Rotary Park including access for recreational vehicles

Further Public Space will continue with the re-direction of funding under the Stronger Country Communities Round 5.



Major contribution to the community of Bundarra was the installation of a Sewerage Management Scheme.



Significant road upgrades included:

- Tolleys Gully Bridge – completed February 2023





Council undertakes a construction and maintenance program that aims to enhance the current level of infrastructure with improvement to road network and drainage assets. A number of local road improvement projects have been completed including sections of Gostwyck Road, Bergen Road, Hawthorne Drive, Northeys Road and Kingstown Road. Council is also undertaking a program of work along the main Regional Road through the shire by upgrading sections of Thunderbolts Way with rehabilitation of the road south of Dangars Lagoon towards Salisbury Plains, a new bridge at Tolleys Gully on an improved alignment, rehabilitation of the road at Two Mile Creek and Scrubby Gully sections.

The unsealed rural network is routinely graded to address defects from wet weather and minimise damage from pavement saturation. In the urban areas of the shire road pavements are patched and kept safe for vehicles and cyclists, while the urban footpaths are maintained for the benefit of pedestrians

Council has continued to advocate for the return of Thunderbolts Way to State Government ownership.

Significant repair work within the Shire to regional roads caused by storms 2022:

Invegowrie
Arding
Rocky River
Kingstown
Balala

Clean up after the BIG Wet





ENVIRONMENT	
Strategic Objective: We are good custodians of our environment.	
Strategies	
3.1 To preserve, protect and renew our beautiful natural environment	<p>Council continued its ongoing work on improving our environment by providing plans and actions to safeguard Uralla Shire's roadside bushland whilst safer roads are developed, allowing remnant vegetation to be preserved. The remnant vegetation along many roadsides is a most valuable, and in some cases the only remaining examples of the original flora which covered the original landscape.</p>  <p>Several successful pest animal control programs were delivered to reduce the impact of rabbits and foxes on public lands. A concerted and successful effort to control weed infestation risks was continued throughout the period via Council's ongoing direct support of the New England Weeds Authority.</p> <p>Significant Environmental management actions completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An onsite inspection of the Wooldridge Fossicking reserve was completed to examine the extent of environmental degradation after the recent rainfall events and 4wd damage. Placement of boulders on the tracks outside of areas where vehicles are permitted to prevent further 4wd damage. • A Tree Management Policy was developed. <p>The Conservation and Ecological Restoration of Racecourse Lagoon is one major environmental project Council has been implementing for the past year. Council secured funding to plant 7500 different plant species around the Uralla Racecourse Lagoon through the NSW Environment Trust Fund. Z-NET Uralla, Landscape Foundation Australia and Southern New England Landcare (SNEL) are key collaborators for the on-going tree planting project.</p> <p>Council in conjunction with Local Land Services and Southern New England Landcare organise a field day at the Racecourse Lagoon to educate land holders about the importance of Upland Wetlands.</p>



	 <p>Associate Professor Debbie Bower, Conservation Biologist and head of the Laboratory of Applied Zoology and Ecosystem Restoration at UNE talking to participants at the fiend day.</p> <p>Council has developed both Urban Tree Management Policy and Guidelines which has improved urban tree planting within the shire.</p> <p>Zero Net Cities (ZNET) has been very instrument in volunteering tree planting exercised for the past years. They are currently in the process of planting 500 trees for the recreation area of the Racecourse Lagoon tree planting project</p>
3.2 Maintain a healthy balance between development and the environment	<p>New housing rates experienced highs during 2022 and 2023. The final 2024 result will not be known with certainty until early 2025.</p> <p>Council met with many local developers who had previously received development approvals, which had then not been actioned, to identify what barriers had impacted the respective developer's decision not to proceed. Any reasons which related to Council's own 'service' have been corrected. In the main however the reasons given by developers were primarily based on external drivers. Council was successful in receiving funding support from the NSW Government to recruit additional resources to deal the workload REZ-related impacts on its own operations.</p> <p>The funding (which applies over the next three years) has facilitated the fulltime recruitment of a strategic planner to assist with REZ development demands and to project managed a renewed housing strategy which takes into account the potential housing impacts of REZ worker accommodation.</p> 



	<p style="text-align: center;">Approved Dwellings in Uralla Shire</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Year Updated 31 September 2024</p> <p>The funding also supports some additional senior level engineering resource to also deal with an expected increase in heavy vehicle use of the road network which will naturally lead to a higher than usual need for maintenance and renewal.</p> <p>Council has continued to engage, on an as required basis, a heritage consultant to assist with the maintenance of the Shire excellent heritage which continues to underpin the high visitation rates we continue to experience.</p> <p>To further protect the heritage domain Council a system of heritage minor works consents which assist both developers and the community to achieve excellent heritage outcomes.</p>
<p>3.3 Avoid, reduce, reuse (repair), and recycle (recover) wastage to minimise waste disposal</p>	<p>Council's waste service delivery continued during the period with some appropriate growth in the number of properties serviced directly.</p> <p>A new analysis and plan for residual waste options (post the existing landfill life) has been completed and will be utilised by the new Council to determine an appropriate way forward for the Shire.</p> <p>A new recycling service has been designed, but not yet initiated, as we await a market approach.</p> <p>Enhancements were made to our outlying waste transfer stations with more works to come in the future.</p>
<p>3.4 Secure, sustainable and environmentally sound water-cycle infrastructure and services</p>	<p>A significant body of strategic review work has been ongoing across the entire period utilising both Water NSW and NSW Health input to clarify what the Shire will need to do to prepare itself across the next 30 years of changing climate and its implications for our water supply.</p> <p>This work includes the Shire's Water Security Plan for the next 30 years, and a potential Groundwater Backup Supply Plan for water emergencies such as contamination or drought.</p>



	<p>This work will be ending towards the middle to late next year (2025) and will require significant community input in order to finalise the Shire's position in regard to options and costs.</p> <p>A further significant effort has been conducted during 2024 to optimise the operation of the Uralla Water Treatment Plant and process to achieve a consistent high quality output of drinking water. Much was learned and the lessons are being deployed.</p>
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LEADERSHIP	
Strategic Objective: We are an independent Shire and well-governed community	
Strategies	
4.1 Informed and collaborative leadership in our community	<p>Significant staff turnover at senior levels of Council has taken place over the last term of Council. In response to that, Council expended significant effort into attracting and recruiting people with the ability and willingness to open the door for genuine community feedback and discussion on everything from potholes to finances.</p> <p>The overall result has been a significant improvement (with more still to be done) in growing a mutually supportive relationship between the community and its Council.</p>  <p>Several formal consultative mechanisms remain in place including for example: the Bundarra School of Arts 355 Committee which meets monthly to provide Council with important feedback and ideas regarding assets and infrastructure in that area. Similarly, the Uralla Township and Environs Committee has continued to meet monthly for the same reasons.</p> <p>Both committees have changed the outcomes of Council projects and plans through their advocacy</p>
4.2 A strategic, accountable and representative Council	<p>Council continued to audio cast its meetings throughout the Council term. Archived audio recordings of Council meetings are available via Council's website.</p> <p>Council continues to publish information via its Facebook page and has strengthened its staffing, expertise and capacity to communicate across the Shire both with and between our community.</p> <p>Council has expanded its engagement program to increase community awareness and understanding of decisions and gain insight into community opinion through newsletters, social media, workshops, information sessions and Listening Posts.</p>



	<p>A new Audit Risk and Improvement Committee was appointed during the term with a new charter from the NSW Government.</p> <p>The objective of the Committee in Uralla (and every other shire) is to provide professional <u>independent external</u> advice and assistance to Council to identify weaknesses, improve operations and functions, ensure compliance to legislation, manage risk and be accountable for its external responsibilities.</p> <p>An Internal Audit function has been active inside Council across the period with the purpose of providing independent, objective assurance, and consulting services designed to add value and improve Uralla Shire Council's operations. The mission of internal audit has not changed and remains to enhance and protect organisational value by providing risk-based and objective assurance, advice, and insight.</p> <p>The internal audit function helps Uralla Shire Council accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes.</p>
4.3 An efficient and effective independent local government.	<p>During the period Council moved to an internal Governance Manager model which oversees Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework, Policy and Register.</p> <p>The role also oversees the continual update of all Council policies to ensure ongoing currency and positive impact.</p> <p>Council has achieved an excellent outcome in Workers Compensation Insurance costs by ensuring that its operations are effectively risk managed and appropriate effort is applied to the identification, assessment and control of risks. This effort has been rewarded with a six figure annual reduction in its cost of insurance based on its improved performance.</p> <p>During the period Council underwent a high pressure, but successful transition to a more supportive, cloud based, IT platform. This reasonably newly installed system is still being bedded in at the time of this report, but it has already garnered significant process improvement.</p>



Council and Senior Staff Leadership Team During the Term



The following Councillors served during the term 2021-2024:

Popularly elected Mayor: Robert Bell

- Cr Robert Crouch (Deputy Mayor)
- Cr Tom O'Connor
- Cr Tara Toomey
- Cr Sarah Burrows
- Cr Lone Petrov
- Cr T Bower
- Cr L Doran
- Cr B McMullen

Council wishes to particularly thank its staff, volunteers and contractors who are the heart of our work and have succeeded to deliver the most important services that our community needs and uses. We are proud of the results we have been able to achieve, and we would like to acknowledge the efforts of Council's workforce, led by the General Managers Kate Jessep 2021-2023 and Toni Averay 2023-2024), in contributing to the organisation's success.



URALLA SHIRE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-
2031

Community Strategic Plan 2022-2031 - Adopted 24 May 2022



Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land and recognise their sacred connection to Country. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Community Strategic Plan 2022-2031 - Adopted 24 May 2022

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

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Community Strategic Plan 2022-2031 - Adopted 24 May 2022

INTRODUCTION

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Mayor Robert Bell

I bring to you the 2022 – 2031 Uralla Shire Community Strategic Plan. It is the people's plan, and offers a combined vision for the Shire's progression over the next 10 years.

This plan reflects the feedback – from around 1700 individual conversations and submissions – that Council has received since the beginning of 2021. I'd like to thank all those who have put forward their ideas.

The creation of the document is coordinated by Uralla Shire Council, in its role as caretaker of the Shire, and seeks to capture both the State and Regional context as relevant to our Shire and the aspirations of the community.

*As we strive forward, may we always hold dear and protect the values that make this part of the world so wonderful.
The heritage, the environment, and the community spirit...along with the potential.*



The Community Strategic Plan has a 10 year outlook, and it is refreshed with each new term of Council, to help guide us in our strategic decision making.

From this, too, Council develops its four year Delivery Plan and the annual Operational Plan and Budget.

Every project undertaken is also cross-checked against the Community Strategic Plan, to keep our operations aligned with this bigger picture. You will see these strategies referenced at the top of every report to a Council meeting.

As we strive forward, may we always hold dear and protect the values that make this part of the world so wonderful.

The heritage, the environment, and the community spirit...along with the potential.

Mayor Robert Bell

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2031

AT A GLANCE

VISION: In 2031 the Uralla Shire community will be vibrant with a growing economy supporting a sustainable quality of life that values its heritage



SOCIETY

Strategic Objective: We have an accessible, inclusive and sustainable community

Strategies:

- 1.1 A growing community with an active volunteer base and participation in community events
- 1.2 A safe, active and healthy shire
- 1.3 A diverse and creative culture that celebrates our history.
- 1.4 Access to and equity of services



ECONOMY

Strategic Objective: We drive the economy to support prosperity.

Strategies:

- 2.1 An attractive environment for the business sector
- 2.2 Growing and diversified employment, through growth in existing, sunrise and new businesses
- 2.3 Communities that are well serviced with essential infrastructure



ENVIRONMENT

Strategic Objective: We are good custodians of our natural environment.

Strategies:

- 3.1 To preserve, protect and renew our beautiful natural environment
- 3.2 Maintain a healthy balance between development and the environment
- 3.3 Avoid, reduce, reuse (repair), and recycle (recover) wastage to minimise waste disposal
- 3.4 Secure, sustainable and environmentally sound water-cycle infrastructure and services



LEADERSHIP

Strategic Objective: We are a prosperous and well-governed community

Strategies:

- 4.1 Informed and inspired leadership in our community
- 4.2 A strategic, accountable and representative Council
- 4.3 A local government area that is not subject to amalgamation because it is efficiently and effectively run.

COUNCIL'S MISSION: Uralla Shire Council listens to and facilitates the aspirations of the community.

PART 1

REGIONAL AND STATE CONTEXT

PART 1: REGIONAL AND STATE CONTEXT**1.1 SUMMARY**

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is the highest-level plan that a council will prepare. The purpose of the Plan is to identify the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future and to plan strategies for achieving these goals. In doing this, the planning process will consider the issues and pressures that may affect the community and the level of resources that will realistically be available to achieve the community's aims and aspirations.

While a council has a custodial role in initiating, preparing and maintaining the Community Strategic Plan on behalf of the local government area, it is not wholly responsible for its implementation¹.

Other partners, such as state agencies, non-government organisations, business and industry, joint organisations and community groups may also be engaged in delivering the strategies of the Plan².

1.2 SOCIAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES

The CSP must be based on the social justice principles³. The concept of social justice involves finding the optimum balance between our joint responsibilities as a society and our responsibilities as individuals to contribute to a just society⁴. There are four interrelated principles of social justice; access, equity, rights and participation.

- **Access** (*greater equality of access to goods and services*)
- **Equity** (*overcoming unfairness caused by unequal access to economic resources and power*)
- **Rights** (*equal effective legal, industrial and political rights*)
- **Participation** (*expanded opportunities for real participation in the decisions which govern their lives*)⁵

1.3 ALIGNMENT WITH STATE AND REGIONAL PLANS

The Community Strategic Plan is required to align with state and regional plans⁶.

1.3.1 NSW PREMIER'S PRIORITIES

These priorities represent the government's commitment to making a significant difference to enhance the quality of life of the people of NSW⁷.

They aim to tackle many of the issues that have been put in the too hard basket, for too long⁸. Each priority has an ambitious target⁹. They have been set with the purpose of delivering on the government's key policy priorities, being:

- *a strong economy,*
- *highest quality education,*
- *well-connected communities with quality local environments,*
- *putting the customer at the centre of everything we do, and*
- *breaking the cycle of disadvantage*¹⁰

1.3.2 REGIONAL NSW PRIORITIES

The State Government has set the following vision:

Regional NSW is an economic powerhouse and the backbone of the state's economic success¹¹.

A 20-year Economic vision for Regional New South Wales (February 2021) identifies the following relevant to Uralla Shire:

EMERGING SECTORS

Renewable energy and gas

The NSW Government is working toward a reliable, affordable and sustainable energy future that supports a growing economy, giving energy-intensive industries such as manufacturing the certainty to set up in regional locations.

Technology-enabled primary industries

Boosting internet capacity and extending access to mobile services that will improve connectivity and lift productivity and growth in regional businesses.

FUTURE INDUSTRIES

Critical minerals

Technological change is driving global demand for critical minerals and, as demand grows, there are significant economic opportunities for NSW.

Ecotourism

Regional NSW's offering spans outback, country, coastal, island and subtropical regions and is home to sites of unique Aboriginal cultural and historical significance.

Recycling and waste management

The NSW Government is investigating opportunities to grow regional NSW's circular economy, leveraging the availability of lower cost land and a rapidly changing global waste management system.

High quality food products

Regional NSW's highly productive farmland and diverse growing conditions provide opportunities to maximise the potential of the state's agricultural production by driving value-add in the food technology sector.

NEW INVESTMENT AREAS

Visitor economy infrastructure

To support regional economies to leverage their existing endowments to attract additional visitors, focusing on eco-tourism and place-based investments.

PART 1

REGIONAL AND STATE CONTEXT

1.3.2 REGIONAL NSW PRIORITIES (CONTINUED)**Affordable and accessible energy**

To induce investment in manufacturing and other energy intensive industry, including support for domestic gas as well as continued support for Renewable Energy Zones.

50 new priorities

To accelerate economic potential through investments in common user infrastructure, digital connectivity, tourism, education and skills, and major place-based investments such as Special Activation Precincts and Renewable Energy Zones.

The most relevant to USC include:

Infrastructure: freight linkages

- **NSW Transport** – via NEJO: North West pilot project: Customer Journey Resilience

The Regional Digital Connectivity

- **Mobile Coverage** – to eliminate mobile black spots where people live and work through investment in resilient mobile phone infrastructure and emerging technologies to deliver future-proof regional mobile coverage
- **Gig State** – to bring metro-level internet speeds to regional NSW through investment in network infrastructure including data hubs; and
- **Farms of the Future** – to enable farmers and agribusinesses to use agricultural technologies (ag tech) for increased productivity and resource management such as water monitoring

Renewable energy zones

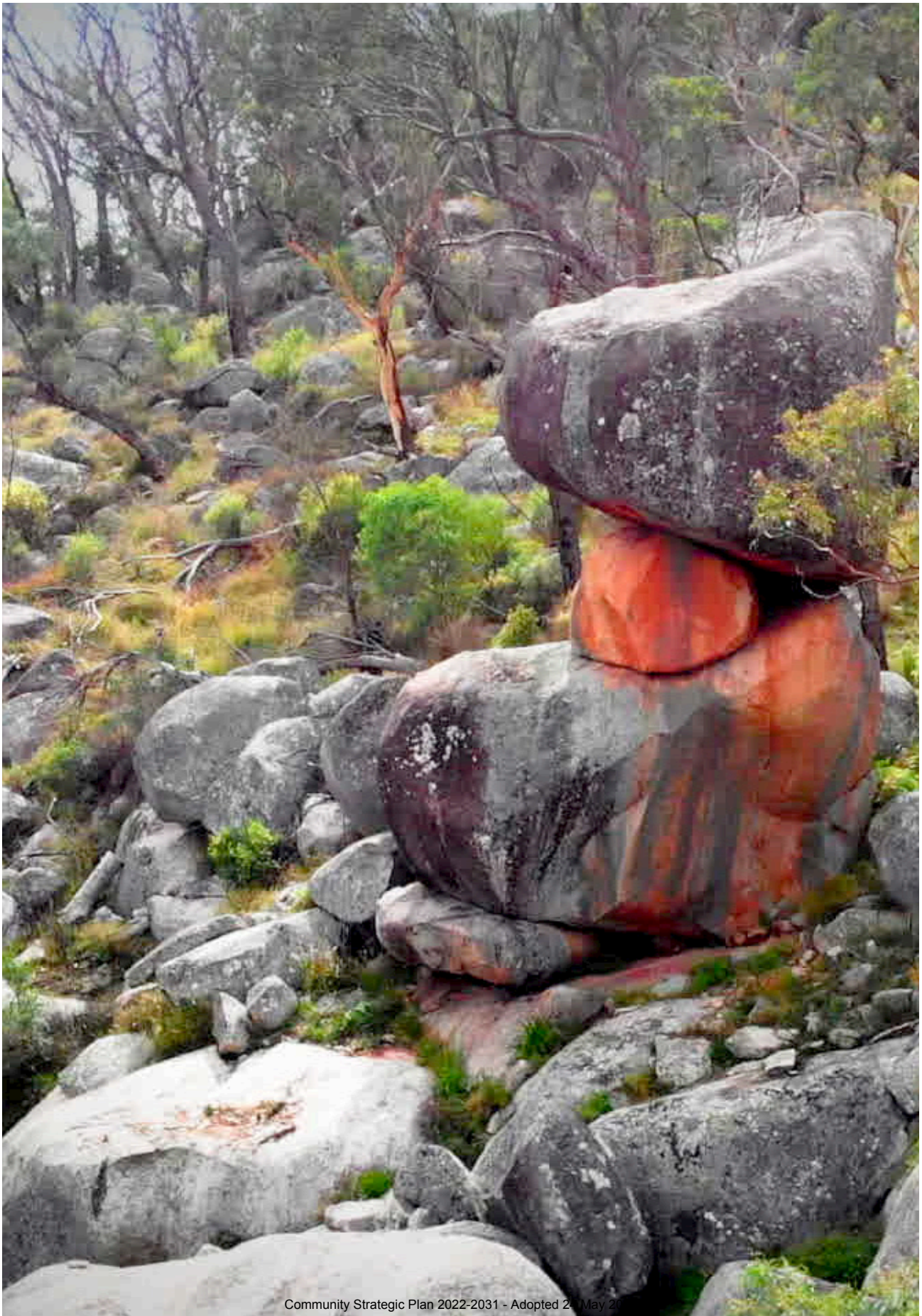
\$120 million for Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) in the Central West, New England and South West regions to unlock a significant pipeline of large-scale renewable energy and storage projects, which will support up to \$23 billion of private sector investment and up to 2,000 construction jobs each year.

To date, \$40 million has been committed to the Central-West Orana region pilot and a further **\$79 million has been committed for the New England REZ¹²**.

1.3.3 NEW SOUTH WALES ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN

The New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) has a statutory objective to improve, protect and foster the best interests of Aboriginal people in NSW¹³. The NSWALC has set five goals to achieve this in its Strategic Plan 2018-2022¹⁴:

- *Secure our land and water rights*
- *Protect our culture and heritage*
- *Pursue economic independence and prosperity for our people*
- *Support our people*
- *Secure our future¹⁵*



Community Strategic Plan 2022-2031 - Adopted 20 May 2022

PART 1

REGIONAL AND STATE CONTEXT

1.3.4 NEW ENGLAND NORTH WEST REGIONAL PLAN 2041

The New England North West Regional Plan 2036¹⁶ is the NSW Government's strategy for guiding land-use planning decisions for the New England North West. The first New England North West Regional Plan 2036 had four goals:

- *A strong and dynamic regional economy*
- *A healthy environment with pristine waterways*
- *Strong infrastructure and transport networks for a connected future*
- *Attractive and thriving communities¹⁷*

The State Government reported good progress against the plan in its Regional Planning Monitoring Report 2019¹⁸.

Consistent with the State Government's directions, Uralla Shire Council developed its first Local Strategic Planning Statement¹⁹ (LSPS) in 2020-2021 and this Community Strategic Plan aligns with the LSPS.

The draft New England North West Regional Plan 2041 was on public exhibition at the time of preparing this Uralla Shire Community Strategic Plan. It contains 22 objectives, many of which translate into the LSPS. The Community Strategic Plan goals and objectives are consistent with the new Regional Plan.

1.3.5 NEW ENGLAND JOINT ORGANISATION

Uralla Shire is a member of the New England Joint Organisation (NEJO)²⁰ which has set the following strategic priorities²¹:

- *Sustainable economic growth*
- *Educated, healthy and connected communities*
- *Investment in critical infrastructure*

Strategy	Recent outcomes²²
Drive Economic Sustainability	Marketing campaigns for Uralla Shire through High Country Tourism and the Great Artesian Drive. Successful application from the Bushfire Communities Recovery & Resilience Fund for a targeted economic development strategy and communication process.
Educated, Healthy and Safe Communities that are Well Connected	Regional liaison with NSW Government Board. General Managers Advisory Committee liaison. Board meeting with Hunter New England Health service and Commonwealth Primary Health Network – advocacy re rural GPs and Allied health skills and services.
Attract investment in Critical Infrastructure	Roads Network Strategy was completed and adopted. Successful application for additional Capacity Building Funding to secure business case development for seven (7) key roads identified by each LGA.

PART 1

REGIONAL AND STATE CONTEXT

1.3.6 SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND HIGH COUNTRY REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (REDS) 2018 - 2022

This REDS²³ is for the Uralla Shire Council, Armidale Regional Council and Walcha Council local government area community of interest. The REDS identifies the following opportunities:

- *Improving the productivity of the livestock industry*
- *Expanding the horticultural sector*
- *Growing Ag Tech industries*
- *Growing specialised industry and manufacturing*
- *Maintaining and expanding opportunities for micro-businesses and lifestyle/tree change professionals*
- *Growing tourism (the Visitor Economy)*
- *Maintaining and growing education and training*
- *Leveraging local advantages for renewable energy*

RED Strategy	Uralla Shire - snapshot of progress
1. Strengthen the region's connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive involvement in the New England Joint Organisation • Member of the New England Regional Energy Zone. • General Manager's Monthly Meetings – Uralla Shire Council, Walcha Council and Armidale Regional Council
2. Secure the inputs for growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing sustainability education and promotion of Zero Net Energy goal • Establishment of the Uralla Shire Business Chamber • Implementation of the Planning Portal. • Facilitation of Developer Information Sessions • Increased Council's Building Certifier service to two days per week
3. Strengthen, consolidate and grow key sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of productive agricultural land and water resources addressed in the State of the Environment Report 2017-2021 showcasing successful progression towards achievement of the environmental goals and actions toward improving environmental outcomes.
4. Enhance an attractive, desirable lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uralla Shire promotion of New England High Country tourism across the member councils footprint, promotion of nature trails and sound trails, tourist drives, Clubs & Cars and Caravan & RV – motorcycle events, additional free/primitive camping options, additional farm-stay / BNB style accommodation options. • Further development of food, wine, accommodation options. • Support of ageing population through Uralla Shire Council's Tablelands Community Support, Tablelands Community Transport and McMaugh Gardens Aged Care services and facility upgrades. • Support services to vulnerable community members
5. Effective marketing and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved support for use of telecommunications through Tech Savvy Seniors Programs facilitated by Uralla Shire Council Library. • Destination marketing of Uralla Shire through New England High Country promotional campaigns. • Online Uralla Shire interactive map and directory. • Uralla Shire promotional videos and travel writer promotional articles

PART 2

PART 2: BUILDING THE STRATEGIC PLANSHIRE
SNAPSHOT²⁶

LAND

**ANIWAN
(&KAMILAROI
ON WESTERN BORDER)**

POPULATION

6,150

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE

2.4

AREA

3260 km²

POPULATION

MALE

51.6%

POPULATION

FEMALE

48.4%**LARGEST EMPLOYMENT SECTORS**

1. Agriculture, forestry and fishing
2. Education and training
3. Construction

ROAD NETWORK**923 km****MADE UP OF**

1. 456 km sealed roads
2. 467 km unsealed roads

OF WHICH

3. 779 km are local roads
4. 144 km are regional roads

FEDERAL ELECTORATE

NEW ENGLAND

STATE ELECTORATE

NORTHERN TABLELANDS

Community Strategic Plan 2022-2031 - Adopted 24 May 2022

PART 2

BUILDING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

2.2 REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 - 2021

Council adopted the Uralla Shire Community Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021 at its Ordinary Council meeting 27 June 2017²⁴.

This document is available on the website at uralla.nsw.gov.au

2.3 END OF TERM REPORT AND STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Council reviewed its contribution to the delivery of the Community Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021 in its [Uralla Shire Council End of Term Report](#) and [Uralla Shire State of the Environment Report](#) as presented to the Ordinary Council meeting 23 November 2021²⁵.

These documents are available on the website uralla.nsw.gov.au.

2.4 ANNUAL REPORTS AND REVIEWS

Each year Council reviewed its progress, on a quarterly basis, against actions to deliver the Annual Operational Plan. Council then reported to the community each financial year on its progress against the Delivery Program and Annual Operational Plans in its Annual reports:

- [2016 - 2017 Annual Report](#)
- [2017 - 2018 Annual Report](#)
- [2018 - 2019 Annual Report](#)
- [2019 - 2020 Annual Report](#)
- [2020 - 2021 Annual Report](#)

2.5 COMMUNITY INPUT

Over the past 12 months, Council has been gathering and documenting community input through a combination of different consultation activities, designed to be accessible to a cross-section of the Uralla Shire community.

Consultations have included:

- Listening posts held in Bundarra, Invergowrie, Kentucky, Kingstown, Uralla
- Drop-in sessions at Bundarra and Uralla
- Postcards located at general stores throughout the Shire
- Written submissions to strategic documents such as the Local Strategic Planning Statement, Long Term Financial Plan, Proposed Project list, Development Control Plan, road priorities

Approximately 1700 individual responses were recorded and analysed for consideration in the drafting of this Community Strategic Plan.

Key themes and drivers to develop the community vision, goals and strategies have emerged.

PART 2

BUILDING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

2.5 COMMUNITY INPUT (CONTINUED)

Creating unity across the Shire

- Building connections between villages
- Expand NBN and mobile coverage
- Developing Shire-wide signage
- Strengthen 'Uralla Shire' identity for townships
- Opportunities for community transport

Managing extremes of weather and water

- Effects of droughts
- Impact of floods, erosion
- Damage to road infrastructure: road surfaces, causeways
- Need for proactive management of waterways

Harness emerging industries, support existing industries

- Seasonal workers, remote work
- Farming, paddock to plate
- Retaining skills and training
- Supporting small businesses
- Supporting affordability, cost of living

Outdoor lifestyles

- Value parks, gardens and open spaces throughout the Shire, worth investing in their upkeep
- More bike tracks, footpaths to encourage walking and riding
- Activities for young people
- Celebrating, enhancing and protecting natural environment

Representative community views are shown under each goal at section 3.3.

A summary of community engagement activities is at 3.5.



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PART 2

BUILDING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

2.6 OPPORTUNITIES AND KEY DRIVERS

In 2020-2021 Council developed, in consultation with the community, the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)²⁷ which identified:

- *The heritage and character of our towns and villages is part of our identity*
- *A sunny and windy location - good for renewables*
- *Accessible centres*
- *Growth in things that grow*
- *Affordable alternative*

Uralla Shire is proudly 'rural'. The community values the area as it is, but also wants to create more opportunities for the future. Growth in agriculture, tourism and industry are most likely to bring these opportunities over time, with key opportunities over the next 20 years including the following.

The key drivers relevant to the Community Strategic Plan are likely to include:

- Climate (great weather and seasons)
- Breadth of business innovation
- Regenerative Farming
- "Tree-change" opportunities
- Lower land values enable business innovation
- Artisan business culture
- New England Regional Energy Zone
- Legacy effects of the pandemic
- Interest rates
- International markets, trade agreements and taxation policies



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PART 2

BUILDING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

2.6 OPPORTUNITIES AND KEY DRIVERS (CONTINUED)

- Labour markets / employment levels
- Technology developments
- Freight routes
- Primary production practices
- Transition to electric/alternate fuel vehicles
- Wealth gap
- Housing affordability and availability
- Climate change – La Nina / El Nino, drought, flood, bushfires,– requirement to adapt business and lifestyle practices; changes to public infrastructure to build resilience (water security, power security)
- Consumer Price Index (CPI) greater than wage increases; and, specifically for local government, cost shifting by State and Federal Government such as:
 - o Extra capital grants with no new money for increased operating costs
 - o Underground petroleum tank inspection responsibility with no funding
 - o Rate-capping below actual fixed cost increases

2.7 ROLE OF COUNCIL

Council has many overlapping and varying roles depending on the nature of the service or activity. The roles of Council are summarised as follows:

ENABLER	Information channel
	Advocate
	Facilitator
PROVIDER	Agent
	Part Funder
	Regulator
LEADER	Strategic Planning
	Policy Setter
	Educator

PART 2

BUILDING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

2.8 ROLE OF COMMUNITY GROUPS

The community has a range of diverse groups with overlapping roles. Community members are part of many different community groups and also live within a community of interest that is not defined by local government boundaries but their individual lifestyle and choices. A broad summary of the types of groups and roles of the groups within our community include:

Residents	citizens, parents, children, brothers and sisters, business owners, workers, voters, leaders
Business owners	employers, drivers of the economy, providers
Workers	generators of economic output, enablers
Not-for profits	service providers, community wellbeing promoter, advocates
Service groups	service providers, community wellbeing promoter, advocates
Sporting clubs	community health and wellbeing facilitator; contributor to vibrancy
Arts groups	community wellbeing promoter; contributor to vibrancy
Tourists/visitors	contributor to the economy and vibrancy
Interest groups	advocates of a specific cause or outcome; culture influencer
Federal Government	The federal government raises money to run the country by collecting taxes on incomes, goods and services, and company profits, and spends it on national matters ²⁸ . Includes: post, telecommunications; trade and commerce; international trade; immigration; defence
State Government	State and territory governments also raise money from taxes but receive more than half their money from the federal government and spend it on state and territory matters. Includes: public transport, roads, schools, hospitals, public housing
Council	Local councils collect taxes - rates - from all local property owners and receive grants from federal, state and territory governments, and spend this on local matters. Includes: asset management, rubbish collection and recycling, parks, sports fields and swimming pools, pet control, parking, libraries, development regulation, transport infrastructure



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COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

PART 3: URALLA SHIRE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2022 - 2031**3.1 COMMUNITY VISION & COUNCIL'S MISSION****COMMUNITY
VISION**

In 2032 the Uralla Shire community will be vibrant with a growing economy supporting a sustainable quality of life that values its heritage.

**COUNCIL'S
MISSION**

Uralla Shire Council listens to and facilitates the aspirations of the community.

3.2 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The strategic objectives for the community must address social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues identified by the community (commonly referred to as “the quadruple bottom line” (QBL)²⁹). The strategic objectives set out the high-level aspirations of the community for each pillar which collectively contribute to the vision.

**SOCIETY****Strategic objective :**

We have an accessible, inclusive and sustainable community

**ECONOMY****Strategic objective :**

We drive the economy to support prosperity and growth

**ENVIRONMENT****Strategic objective :**

We are good custodians of our natural environment

**LEADERSHIP****Strategic objective :**

We are an independent Shire and well-governed community

PART 3

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

3.3 STRATEGIES, ROLES AND MEASURES OF SUCCESS

3.3.1 SOCIETY

Strategic Objective: We have an accessible, inclusive and sustainable community

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO THE COMMUNITY?

Uralla Shire is a highly liveable place with an agreeable climate, beautiful landscape and a strong sense of community. This creates an environment that attracts highly skilled and creative people who drive innovation and economic growth.



WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID

“Knowing your neighbours,
you're part of a community”

“Peaceful lifestyle, country values”

“Shopkeepers and small businesses
who go above and beyond”

“Attracting younger families, more
activities for children and youth”

“Ageing in place”

HOW DOES THE COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTE?

- Be open to change
- Attend and participate in festivals and events
- Use local facilities and services
- Participate in local healthy lifestyle activities
- Participate in a community or sporting group
- Be aware of your safety and look out for the safety of others
- Report crimes and anti-social behaviour to the police
- Obey load limits on roads and bridges
- Drive to the conditions of the road

Strategies	What success looks like	Council role
1.1 A growing community with an active volunteer base and participation in community events	Population growth Good volunteerism levels Community events	Provider, partner, advocator
1.2 A safe, active and healthy shire	More people participating in sport and recreation activities (formal and informal). Crime rates steady or reduced.	Provider, partner, advocator
1.3 A diverse and creative culture that celebrates our history.	More people participating in art and cultural activities. Indigenous history is shared and celebrated. Heritage listed built form is protected.	Partner, advocator, regulator
1.4 Access to and equity of services	Increase in the number of households and businesses with reliable broadband access. Advocate for and support better medical services (medical, dental, community transport, disadvantaged and disability support services other).	Provider, partner, advocator

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

3.3.2 ECONOMY

Strategic Objective: We drive the economy to support prosperity

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO THE COMMUNITY?

The Uralla Shire's role as a live-work destination is underpinned by its strong and growing agricultural economy, enhanced road links, and its growing visitor economy.



WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID

“*Our transport networks keep us connected to the wider world – roads, trains, planes”*
“Diversifying local economies, vibrant businesses”
“Cheap, clean energy”
“Technological innovation in our primary industries”

HOW DOES THE COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTE?

- Shop locally to support the local economy
- Create opportunities for traineeships, work experience and apprenticeships
- Report safety and maintenance issues regarding infrastructure to appropriate bodies
- A proactive business chamber
- Personal investment in growing industries

Strategies	What success looks like	Council role
2.1 An attractive environment for the business sector	High business occupancy. Increased visitor numbers. Increase in the number of business.	Provider, partner, advocator
2.2 Growing and diversified employment, through growth in existing and new businesses	Employment is >95% (Unemployment <5%). Increase in number of local jobs (FTE). Increased training opportunities (trainees and apprentices).	Provider, advocator
2.3 Communities that are well serviced with essential infrastructure	Maintain current level of infrastructure	Provider, advocator

PART 3

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

3.3.3 ENVIRONMENT

Strategic Objective: We are good custodians of our environment.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO THE COMMUNITY?

Our community places a very high cultural value on the natural environment and other outdoor environments, as these features underpin our lifestyle. An integrated community developing a vibrant and sustainable future that is built upon the foundations

**WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID**

“Water is emerging as a force of change. Annual rainfalls vary greatly. We need to look at new ideas for managing our waterways and water supply.”

“Land of contrasts”

“Uniquely beautiful”

“Lots of places to explore, great to get outdoors”

HOW DOES THE COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTE?

- Reduce consumption of fossil fuels, water and consider alternate fit-for-purpose sources and renewable resources
- Install energy efficient fixtures and appliances at home
- Participate in recycling and minimise waste going to landfill
- Plant and or retain vegetation and trees on private property
- Consider alternative transport options, particularly for short distances
- Report environmental vandalism

Strategies	What success looks like	Council role
3.1 To preserve, protect and renew our beautiful natural environment	Maintenance of environmental protection zones, restoration of native biodiversity and effective control of priority weeds. Healthy wildlife	Provider, partner, advocator
3.2 Maintain a healthy balance between development and the environment	Increased development facilitated. Increased number of dwellings.	Provider, partner, advocator
3.3 Avoid, reduce, reuse (repair), and recycle (recover) wastage to minimise waste disposal	Reduced tonnage of waste to landfill.	Provider, educator
3.4 Secure, sustainable and environmentally sound water-cycle infrastructure and services	Water supply adequate Healthy waterways	Provider, advocator

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

3.3.4 LEADERSHIP

Strategic Objective: We are an independent Shire and well-governed community

WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO THE COMMUNITY?

Our community relies on the leadership of all of its community groups (see section 2.8 above) to apply good governance, act in the interests of the community as a whole and advocate on behalf of the community. Relationships, transparency, accountability and respect are all essential to sustainable community leadership.

**WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID**

“*Proud to be independent, to have our own identity as a Shire.”*

“Strengthen the connection between villages.”

“Represent all our residents, support rural people, and farmers.”

HOW DOES THE COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTE?

- Volunteer and take part in community groups
- Stand for election to Council and represent your region
- Regularly visit Council's website and read/ listen to local media to keep up-to-date with Council's activities
- Contribute to community engagement programs
- Provide feedback to community groups and organisations regarding services and customer service

Strategies	What success looks like	Council role
4.1 Informed and collaborative leadership in our community	Service groups, sporting groups and not-for-profit associations continue to meet and undertake activities. Council shares achievements via media releases, newsletters and annual reports.	Provider, partner, advocator
4.2 A strategic, accountable and representative Council	Advocacy for the community at higher levels of government. Increased community participation in Council engagement activities. Transparent processes and governance.	Provider, partner, advocator
4.3 An efficient and effective independent local government.	A financially sustainable Council.	Partner, advocator

PART 3

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

3.4 **OVERVIEW** OF INTEGRATED PLANNING & REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Council uses the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework to guide, plan, prioritise and report on Council activities. In September 2021, the Office of Local Government drafted new [guidelines](#) to support the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework; the guidelines were updated to reflect legislative changes.

Councils operate in a complex environment, with responsibilities under 67 different Acts, and direct relationships with more than 20 state and commonwealth agencies. Local Government planning connects with the wider spheres of regional, state and federal planning and there is a natural flow between the planning systems, with each level ultimately informing the others.

Council has identified key strategic planning work that needs to be undertaken to support the Community Strategic Plan – for example the Disability Inclusion Action Plan. These plans sit below the Community Strategic Plan in the IPR hierarchy and reflect the principles, values and objectives of the Community Strategic Plan. The plans may, in turn, inform the Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plan, as appropriate. Beyond the Community Strategic Plan, there are state and regional planning frameworks that may inform, and be informed by, the work undertaken by councils through IPR. The Framework allows Council to draw on various plans together so that they dovetail, inform and interact seamlessly. The outcome is to get the maximum benefit for Council's efforts by planning holistically for the future. The main components of the Framework are outlined below:

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

This is the highest level of strategic planning undertaken by Council, with a ten-year plus timeframe. All other plans must support achievement of the Community Strategic Plan objectives.

RESOURCING STRATEGY

This Strategy shows how Council resources its strategic priorities, identified through IPR. The Resourcing Strategy includes 3 inter-related elements:

- ✓ Long-Term Financial Planning
- ✓ Workforce Management Planning
- ✓ Asset Management Planning

DELIVERY PROGRAM

The Delivery Program is generally a four year plan that aligns with Councillors' term. This document is Council's commitment to the community about what it will deliver during its term in office to achieve the Community Strategic Plan objectives.

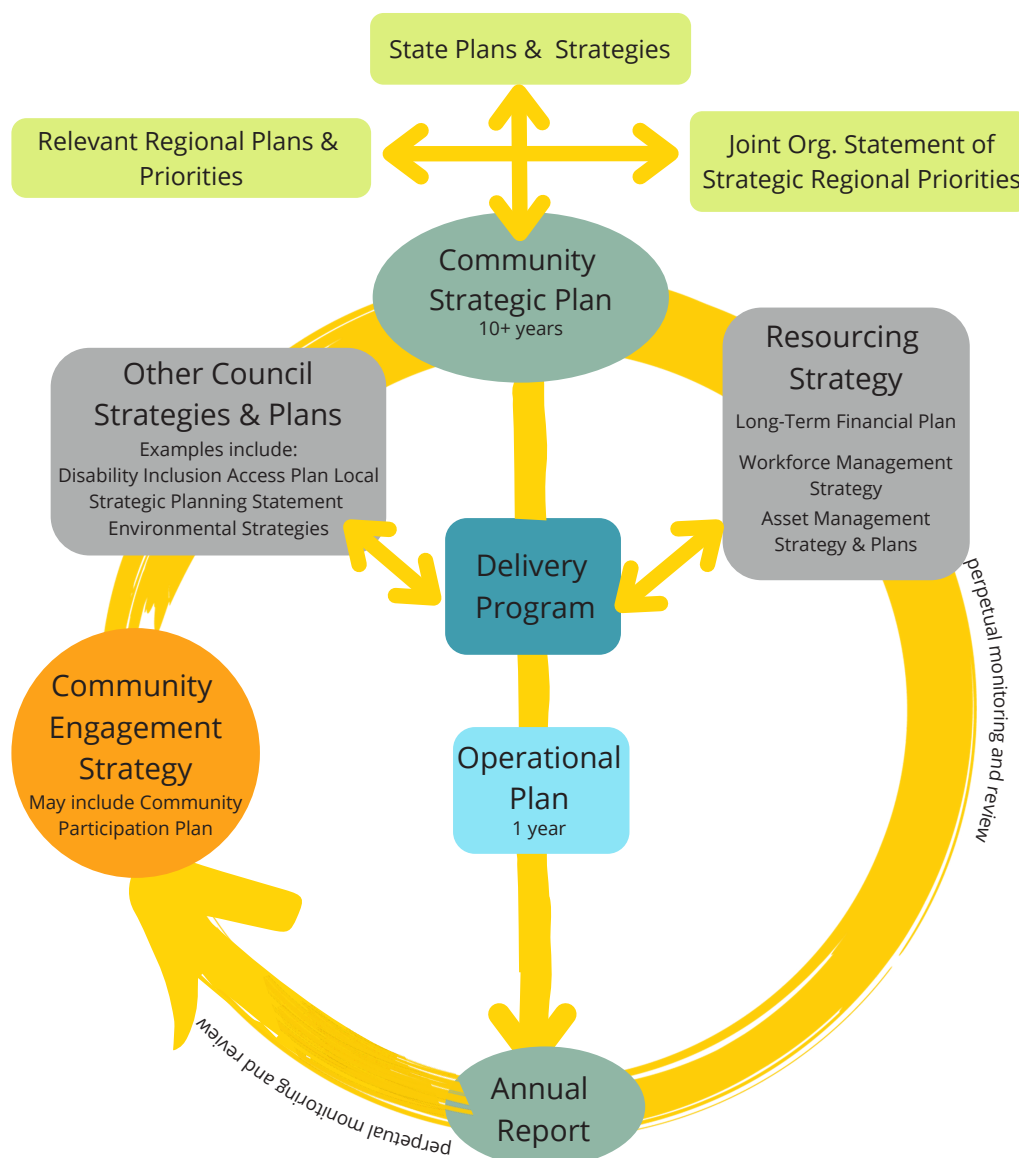
OPERATIONAL PLAN

The Operational Plan is a one year plan and shows the individual projects and activities a Council will undertake in a specific year. It includes Council's annual budget and Statement of Revenue Policy.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

ANNUAL REPORT

The Annual Report informs the community on the work undertaken by Council in a given year to deliver on the commitments of the Delivery Program via that year's Operational Plan. Council also reports on its financial and asset performance against the annual budget and longer-term plans.



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PART 3

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

3.5 COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Council noted the following communications and engagement plan for the review of the CSP and development of the next version of the CSP at its 23 November 2021 Ordinary Meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT PLAN OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The Community Strategic Plan is the Community's document – a combined vision for the future from which the Development and Operational Plans can be developed. A robust engagement plan will enable it to effectively stimulate and capture ideas to contribute to the next reiteration of this plan.

AIM

1. Create a range of opportunities for community input
2. To generate and capture interest in future planning for Uralla Shire
3. To test, validate and re-create current goals for the contemporary setting
4. To meet requirements for public exhibition


SCOPE OF ENGAGEMENT

To harness the vision of Uralla Shire residents and ratepayer community for their Shire.

LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT

For the majority of Stakeholders, the proposed level of engagement is centred on INVOLVE (incorporating inform and consult).

For Councillors, the proposed level of engagement is COLLABORATE (incorporating inform, consult and involve).



Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision-making including the development of alternatives and identification of the preferred solution

STAKEHOLDER MATRIX

Stakeholder	Involvement
All Uralla Shire LGA residents and ratepayers	Phases 1 – 2
Councillors	Phases 1 - 2
355 Committees	Phase 2 with specific notification
Community groups, eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Chamber • Wider business community • Service Organisations • Schools and preschools • Churches • Sporting clubs 	Phases 1 – 2 with specific notification in phase 2
Owners of General Store	Phase 1 – 2
Uralla Council Staff	Phase 1 – 2

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

Consultation for the Community Strategic Plan will be held over two phases. Phase one includes drawing on the extensive community input over multiple and wide ranging community engagements over the last year.

The key engagement actions for each phase are listed below.

Phase	Date (*approx.)	Action	Communication
Phase 1 – Developing the Vision	February – October 2021	Community input from all of this year including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feb-April Listening posts - LSPS - Operational plan & budget - DCP - LTFF - Road priorities - Proposed projects list 	Listening posts; Community engagement on range of topics – surveys; submissions; drop-in sessions
	12 October 2021	Mention at GM workshop seeking input on structure of November workshop session	- Face-to-face
	30 October 2021	Listening Post at Thunderbolts Festival	- Media release - Social media - Advertisement in Armidale Express (whole of Shire) - Webpage
	9 November 2021	Councillor planning session	
	23 November 2021	Engagement and Communication Plan overview	- Business Paper

		<i>submitted to Ordinary Meeting of Council</i>	
	Various during October/November	<i>Team-based vision workshops</i>	- <i>Internal</i>
	1 December 2021 – mid-January	<i>'Postcards: View from out of town' project Infographic posters throughout the Shire, visually depicting vision Postcards provided for residents and ratepayers to submit feedback</i>	- <i>Media release</i> - <i>Promote in November & December newsletters</i> - <i>Web page</i> - <i>Social media</i> - <i>Postcards delivered to all General Stores and around towns (eg cafes)</i>
	February 2022	<i>Draft Strategic Plan to February meeting of Council for endorsement to proceed place on public exhibition</i>	- <i>Uploaded to website</i> - <i>Social media</i>
Phase 2 - Draft Community Strategic Plan on public exhibition	1 – 31 March	<i>Draft document on 28 day public exhibition</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>'Pick-up' copies: Customer service centre, Bundarra and Uralla libraries and Visitor Information Centre, Bundarra, Kingstown, Kentucky, and Invergowrie General Stores</i> <i>Email copies to stakeholder groups</i> 	- <i>Public notice</i> - <i>Media release</i> - <i>Social media</i> - <i>Web page</i> - <i>Advertisement</i> - <i>Short video message</i>

SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

All phase 1 activities were completed by 15 January 2022, with approximately 1700 individual responses received via written submission or face-to-face conversation.

Feedback was summarised and grouped into themes.

Themes are reflected in section 2.6 of the Draft Community Strategic Plan, and inform the strategies listed in Part 3.

Phase 2 is currently underway, with the public exhibition of this draft and associated communications.

Appendix 1

A key part of setting any goal is to also to commit to measuring when and how well those goals have been met. Baseline measures and performance indicators are set out below for the strategies listed in section 3.7 of this plan. These measures provide a qualitative and/or quantitative baseline information so that progress can be reported in Council's End of Term Report as to the success of each strategy.

Strategic Objective 1: We have an accessible, inclusive and sustainable community			
Strategies:	Performance Indicators	Baseline Measure	Data Source
1.1 A growing community with an active volunteer base and participation in community events	1.1.1 Population growth	6,048 - Uralla Shire population ¹	<i>Australian Bureau of Statistics</i>
	1.1.2 Good volunteerism levels	29.6% - Voluntary work through organisation or group ²	<i>Australian Bureau of Statistics</i>
	1.1.3 Community events	10 - Community events held/year	<i>Uralla Shire Directory</i>
		9 - Monthly programs delivered at Uralla Library	<i>Uralla Shire Council website</i>
		\$15,017 - Council funded community grants and donations	<i>Uralla Shire Council website</i>
1.2 A safe, active and healthy shire	1.2.1 More people participating in sport and recreation activities (formal and informal).	3 - Sport and recreation facilities	<i>Uralla Shire Council website</i>
		21 - Parks/Community Reserves	
		8 - Sport and recreation clubs	
	1.2.1 Crime rates steady or reduced.	Crime rate by Offense Group – Major offenses (per 100,000 population) ³	<i>NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics</i>
		a. 0 - Murder b. 316.0 - Domestic violence related assault c. 166.3 - Non-domestic violence related assault d. 49.9 - Sexual assault e. 66.5 - Indecent assault, act of indecency or other sexual offense f. 0 - Robbery (any type) g. 199.6 - Break and enter dwelling h. 99.8 - Break and enter non-dwelling i. 66.5 - Motor vehicle theft j. 99.8 - Steal from motor vehicle k. 33.3 - Steal from retail store l. 183.0 - Steal from dwelling m. 0 - Steal from person n. 332.7 - Fraud o. 598.8 - Malicious damage to property	
1.3 A diverse and creative culture that celebrates our history.	1.3.1 More people participating in art and cultural activities.	12 - Artist of the Month programs delivered at Uralla Library per year	<i>Uralla Shire Council website</i>
		3500 - Library members	<i>USC operational data</i>
		6 - Youth week activities delivered	<i>Uralla Shire Council website</i>
	1.3.2 Indigenous history is shared and celebrated.	1 - Annual NAIDOC celebration	<i>Annual report</i>
		Indigenous representation and inclusion – Australia Day event	
		14 - Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners at Council meetings	<i>Uralla Shire Council meeting minutes</i>

¹ 2016 data. 2021 census data estimated date of release – June 2022

² 2016 data. 2021 census data estimated date of release – June 2022

³ Data per calendar year - as at December 2020

		1 - Permanent indigenous heritage and artefact display at Uralla Visitor Information Centre	USC operational data
	1.3.3 Heritage listed built form is protected.	55 - Heritage listed items of State/Local Significance	Uralla Local Environmental Plan 2012
		<1 - Number of years since last review of Heritage Guidelines - Uralla Development Control Plan	Uralla Shire Council website Development Control Plan March 2021
1.4 Access to and equity of services	1.4.1 Increase in the number of households and businesses with reliable broadband access.	75.7% - Internet accessed from private dwelling ⁴ NOTE: ABS has removed question from census	Australian Bureau of Statistics
		100% - Private dwellings in NBN service availability area	NBN Co website
	1.4.2 Advocate for and support better medical services (medical, dental, community transport, disadvantaged and disability support services other).	4 - Medical services/clinics/pharmacies	Uralla Shire Directory
		2 - Aged care facilities	
		3 - Community transport and disability support services	
		35 - Permanent accommodation rooms at McMaugh Gardens Aged Care Facility	Uralla Shire Council website
		11 - Permanent accommodation rooms at Grace Munro Centre Aged Care Facility	Grace Munro Centre website

Strategic Objective 2: We drive the economy to support prosperity.

Strategies:	Performance Indicators	Baseline Measure	Data Source
2.1 An attractive environment for the business sector	2.1.1 High business occupancy.	95% - Occupancy/operating businesses in business zone	USC operational data
	2.1.2 Increased visitor numbers.	6,075 - Visitors recorded at Uralla Visitor Information Centre	USC operational data
	2.1.3 Increase in the number of business.	236 - Number of businesses operating in Shire	Uralla Shire Directory
2.2 Growing and diversified employment, through growth in existing and new businesses	2.2.1 Employment is >95%. (Unemployment <5%)	89.6% - Employment rate ⁵	Australian Bureau of Statistics
		5.2% - Unemployment rate ⁶	
	2.2.2 Increase in number of local jobs (FTE).	16.1km - Average commuting distance to place of work ⁷	Australian Bureau of Statistics
		4.7 - Median commuting distance to place of work ⁸	
	2.2.3 Increased training opportunities (trainees and apprentices).	2.4 - Trainees (FTE) employed by Uralla Shire Council	USC operational data
		2.4 - Uralla Shire Council staff enrolled in traineeship program (FTE)	
		2 - Training organisations in Uralla Shire	Uralla Shire Directory
2.3 Communities that are well serviced with essential infrastructure	2.3.1 Maintain current level of infrastructure.	70% - Transport assets maintained to condition standards (1-3)	USC operational data
		83% - Building infrastructure assets maintained to condition standards (1-3)	
		66% - Water infrastructure assets maintained to condition standards (1-3)	
		51% - Sewer infrastructure assets maintained to condition standards (1-3)	

⁴ 2016 census data. Question not included in 2021 census.

⁵ 2016 data. 2021 census data estimated date of release – October 2022

⁶ 2016 data. 2021 census data estimated date of release – October 2022

⁷ 2016 data for New England North West Region (Uralla LGA data unavailable). 2021 census data estimated date of release – Early to mid-2023

⁸ 2016 data for New England North West Region (Uralla LGA data unavailable). 2021 census data estimated date of release – Early to mid-2023

		87% - Stormwater drainage assets maintained to condition standards (1-3)	
Strategic Objective 3: We are good custodians of our environment.			
Strategies	Performance Indicators	Baseline Measure	Data Source
3.1 To preserve, protect and renew our beautiful natural environment	3.1.1 Maintenance of environmental protection zones, restoration of native biodiversity and effective control of priority weeds.	5 - Annual bush regeneration activities undertaken	<i>USC operational data</i>
		3 - Community awareness campaigns	
		5 - Annual weed control programs undertaken	
	3.1.2 Healthy wildlife	2 - Active wildlife rescue organisations	<i>Uralla Shire Directory</i>
		25 - Reportable dog attacks	<i>USC Annual Report</i>
3.2 Maintain a healthy balance between development and the environment	3.2.1 Increased development facilitated.	23 - Approved new dwellings in Uralla Shire (per calendar year)	<i>USC operational data</i>
		\$40,015,740 - Total development value (per calendar year)	
	3.2.2 Increased number of dwellings.	2,734 - Private dwellings in the Shire ⁹	<i>Australian Bureau of Statistics</i>
3.3 Avoid, reduce, reuse (repair), and recycle (recover) wastage to minimise waste disposal	3.3.1 Reduced tonnage of waste to landfill.	684 tonnes - Mixed recycling and green waste collected through kerbside services, diverted from landfill	<i>USC operational data</i>
		4038 tonnes - Mixed recycling and green waste received at waste management facilities collection and drop off, diverted from landfill	
		38.7% - Recycling rate of kerbside collection services	
		80.0% - Recycling rate at waste management facilities collection and drop off	
3.4 Secure, sustainable and environmentally sound water-cycle infrastructure and services	3.4.1 Water supply adequate	Taylors Pond (Bundarra) water supply:	<i>Uralla Shire Council website Uralla/Bundarra drinking water operational data</i>
		a. 112kL/day - Average daily water usage	
		b. >365 days - Average days to empty based on current demand	
		Kentucky Creek Dam (Uralla) water supply:	
	3.4.2 Healthy waterways	a. 635kL/day - Average daily water usage	<i>NSW EPA website</i>
		b. >365 days - Average days to empty based on current demand	
		0 - NSW EPA issued penalty notices	

⁹ 2016 data. 2021 census data estimated date of release – June 2022

Strategic Objective 4: We are an independent Shire and well-governed community.			
Strategies:	Performance Indicators	Baseline Measure	Data Source
4.1 Informed and collaborative leadership in our community	Service groups, sporting groups and not-for-profit associations continue to meet and undertake activities.	48 - Community groups, organisations and not-for-profit associations	<i>Uralla Shire Directory</i>
		54 - Number of Council media releases per year	<i>Uralla Shire Council website</i>
	Council shares achievements via media releases, newsletters and annual reports.	12 - Number of Council newsletters per year	
		Annual report - published and compliant with legislation	<i>Uralla Shire Council Annual Report 2020-21</i>
4.2 A strategic, accountable and representative Council	Advocacy for the community at higher levels of government.	12 - Council membership/participation in external boards, committees, and organisations	<i>Uralla Shire Council Annual Report 2020-21</i>
		12 - Community representations at Council meetings	<i>Uralla Shire Council meeting minutes</i>
	Increased community participation in Council engagement activities.	6 - Community Listening Posts	<i>Uralla Shire Council website</i>
		5 - Localities in Shire at which Community Listening Posts held	
	Transparent processes and governance.	11/11 (100%) - ordinary Council meetings held per annum and open to the public	<i>Uralla Shire Council website</i>
		3/3 (100%) - extraordinary Council meetings held per annum and open to the public	<i>Uralla Shire Council Annual Report 2020-21</i>
4.3 An efficient and effective independent local government.	A financially sustainable Council.	(8.92)% - Operating performance ratio	<i>Uralla Shire Council Annual Report 2020-21</i>
		55.42% - Own source operating revenue ratio	
		2.22x - Unrestricted current ratio	
		11.26x - Debt service cover ratio	
		9.00% - Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage	
		11.88 mths - Cash expense cover ratio	

END NOTES

¹Office of Local Government, Integrated Planning & Reporting Guidelines, September 2021, p 12.

²Ibid p 13.

³Ibid.

⁴National Pro Bono Resource Centre, Occasional Paper: What is Social Justice? p 2. [accessed 1 December 2021: https://probonocentre.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Occ_1_What-is-Social-Justice_FINAL.pdf]

⁵Australian Government Department of Health, 'Basic principles of social justice', *Working with Young People: Facilitators Guide*, 7.1 [accessed 1 December 2021: <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/drugtreat-pubs-front4-fa-toc~drugtreat-pubs-front4-fa-secb~drugtreat-pubs-front4-fa-secb-7~drug-treat-pubs-front4-fa-secb-7-1>]

⁶Loc cit 1 p13.

⁷NSW Government, Premier's Priorities [accessed 30 November 2021: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/premiers-priorities>]

⁸Ibid

⁹Ibid

¹⁰Ibid

¹¹A 20-year Economic vision for Regional New South Wales (February 2021) [accessed 30 November 2021: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/a-20-year-economic-vision-for-regional-nsw-refresh>]

¹²Ibid p 17.

¹³Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 No 42 (NSW) pt 7 s 105.

¹⁴NSW Aboriginal Land Council Strategic Plan 2018-2022 [accessed 30 November 2021 https://alc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/strat-plan-2018_2022-.pdf]

¹⁵Loc cit, n9, pp 5-6.

¹⁶New South Wales Government, Draft New England North West Regional Plan 2041, [accessed 7 February 2022: https://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/mysppau/uploads/redactor_assets/documents/5fc85029db39b-50be6e747bffa0ba69d8f38f28c63e203e95ecc21b484c4943/10379/Draft_New_England_North_West_Regional_Plan_2041.pdf]

¹⁷New South Wales Government, New England North West Regional Plan 2036, [accessed 7 February 2022: <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Plans-for-your-area/Regional-Plans/New-England-North-West/New-England-North-West-Regional-Plan>]

¹⁸New South Wales Government, Regional Planning Monitoring Report 2019, [accessed 7 February 2022: <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/-/media/Files/DPE/Reports/Plans-for-your-area/Regional-plans/New-England-North-West/new-england-north-west-regional-planning-monitoring-report-2019-12-17.pdf>]

¹⁹Uralla Shire Council, Local Strategic Planning Statement (revision2.0), [accessed 7 February 2022: <https://www.uralla.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/council-services/building-development/uralla-shire-local-strategic-planning-statement-lsps-june-2021.pdf>]

²⁰<https://nejo.nsw.gov.au/>

²¹New England Joint Organisation, Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 [accessed 1 December 2021: <https://nejo.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/NEJO-Strategic-Plan-2018-21.pdf>]

²²NEJO Annual Performance Statement 2020-2021 [accessed 31 January 2022: <https://nejo.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/NEJOAnnualPerformanceStatement2020-2021.pdf>]

²³NSW Government Southern New England High Country Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) 2018-2022 [accessed 30 November 2021: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-05/Southern%20New%20England%20High%20Country%20REDS%C2%A0.pdf>]

²⁴<https://www.uralla.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/council/ipampr-amp-governance/community-strategic-plan-2017-2027.pdf> | UINT/19/407

²⁵UINT/21/13236

²⁶Note: The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) advises: 2021 Census Data will be released in a staged approach from June 2022. [accessed: 3 December 2021: <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/2021-census-data-release-plans/2021-census-data-release-timeline>]

²⁷Uralla Shire Council Local Strategic Planning Statement (2021) [accessed 30 November 2021: <https://www.uralla.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/hptrim/land-use-and-planning-planning-key-records-including-leps-and-masterplans-local-area-land-use-uralla-local-strategic-planning-statement-lsps-records-of-lsps-development-public-consultation-adoption/uralla-shire-local-strategic-planning-statement-lsps-adopted-29-september-2020-resolution-x04.0920-currentstrategies.pdf>]

²⁸Parliamentary Education Office The roles and responsibilities of the three levels of government [accessed 3 December 2021: <https://peo.gov.au/understand-our-parliament/how-parliament-works/three-levels-of-government/the-roles-and-responsibilities-of-the-three-levels-of-government/>]

²⁹Loc cit n1 p 14.

³⁰Noted by Council at its Ordinary Meeting 23 November 2021 OM 05.11/21 UINT/21/12293



V1

**URALLA SHIRE
COMMUNITY
STRATEGIC PLAN
2022 - 2031**

Phone
6778 6300

Email
council@uralla.nsw.gov.au

Website
www.uralla.nsw.gov.au

Community Strategic Plan 2022-2031 - Adopted 24 May 2022

14.2 Loans as at 30 September 2024

Department:	Corporate & Community
Prepared By:	Senior Finance Officer
Authorised By:	Director Corporate & Community

SUMMARY

This report provides Council with a reconciliation of borrowings as at the end of the reporting month.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes that the total loan position as of 30 September 2024 is \$1,278,455.

REPORT

This report is provided to inform Council of the reconciliation of borrowings on a monthly basis. A reconciliation of borrowings for the month of September confirmed that the loan position as of 30 September 2024 is \$1,278,455.

The table below has been modified to provide details of interest applied and instalments paid since the last report.

Uralla Shire Council Loans at 30 September, 2024

Loan no.	Purpose	Balance as at 31 Aug 2024	Interest Applied	Instalment Paid	Balance as at 30 Sept 2024
165	MGH Property	16,375	119	751	15,743
187	Undergrounding Power and Main Street Upgrade	22,589	190	2,510	20,269
188	Paving and Power Undergrounding	9,343	75	548	8,870
189	Bridge Construction	124,215	999	2,650	122,563
190	Bridge construction & industrial land development	1,111,010	-	-	1,111,010
Total		1,283,532	1,383	6,460	1,278,455

Conclusion

I, Mustaq Ahammed, Manager Finance & IT hereby certify that the above borrowings have been made in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) (Chapter 15, Part 12 – sections 621 to 624) and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (the Regulation) (Section 230)*.

14.3 Investments as at 30 September 2024

Department:	Corporate & Community
Prepared By:	Senior Finance Officer
Authorised By:	Director Corporate & Community

SUMMARY

This Report contains a summary of bank accounts, term deposits, cash management accounts and investments in structured credit instruments. The investments have been made in accordance with Section 625 of Local Government Act 1993, Regulation 212 of the NSW Local Government (General) Regulations 2021, and Council's Investment Policy 2019.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the cash position as of 30 September 2024 consisting of:

- cash and overnight funds of \$3,195,469;
- term deposits of \$24,350,000;
- total convertible funds of \$27,545,469 (\$3,195,469 + \$24,350,000) (including restricted funds).

REPORT

Current term deposits of \$24,350,000 spread over the next twelve months will receive a range of interest from 5.00% to 5.49% with an average rate of 5.24%. Council's General Fund bank balances (refer to the Schedule of Cash at bank and Term deposits below) have been reconciled to the bank statement as of 30 Sep 2024.

An additional table has been added to this report to provide movement of term deposits with different banks.

KEY ISSUES

Official cash rate

The current official cash rate as determined by the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) is 4.35% as at the date of this report. The timing of potential interest rate changes will be guided by the incoming data and the RBA Board's assessment of the outlook for inflation and the labour market. The changes in interest rates have resulted in higher investment returns this year.

McMaugh Gardens - Bond Liability

As per the Department of Health's prudential guidelines, the council is advised to disclose the amount of McMaugh Garden's bond liability in the investment report.

McMaugh Garden's Bond liability status as of 30 September 2024 is shown below:

Opening Balance as at 01/07/2024	Bond Addition	Bond Release	Closing Balance as at 30/09/2024
4,025,000	775,275	250,000	4,550,275

Restricted and Unrestricted Cash, Cash Equivalents, and Investments

Of the amount of cash disclosed in this report, not all the cash is available for unrestricted use by Council. Most of the cash has been set aside to meet external restrictions, being those funds that have been provided for specific purposes such as developer contributions, government grants, loans, water supplies, sewer services and Aged Care Bonds. Additionally, a portion of the cash has been set aside to cover future commitments that Council has made relating to asset renewals, remediation works or leave provisions.

Most of the Council's cash is externally restricted and not available for day-to-day operational expenditure. As per unaudited financial statements for the year ending 30 June 2024, the amount of unrestricted cash reported in the draft financial statements is \$1,879,186. Council updates its restriction status at the end of each quarter, and the updated restriction status is provided with the quarterly budget review statements.

CASH AT BANK AND TERM DEPOSITS ARE PRESENTED IN THE TABLE BELOW

Uralla Shire Council

Operating/Business/Investments accounts as at 30 September, 2024

Institution	Account	Closing Balance 31 August 2024
National Australia Bank	Main Account	\$49,101
National Australia Bank	Trust Account	\$31,296
Regional Australia Bank	Cash Account	\$27,758
Professional Funds (0.15% above RBA cash rate)	Cash Account	\$3,087,314
Total Cash and Overnight Funds		\$3,195,469
Term Deposits	Investments	24,350,000
Total funds available as at 30 September, 2024		\$27,545,469

Movement of Term Deposit Investments by Bank

Name of the Bank	S&P Rating	Allowable Investment Limit %	Max Investment Allowed	Opening Investments 01/09/24	Movement during the Month	Closing Investments 30/09/24	% of Actual Investment
National Australia Bank	AA-	30%	7,305,000	7,300,000	-	7,300,000	30%
Bank of Queensland	A-2	30%	7,305,000	3,000,000	- 500,000	2,500,000	10%
Westpac Banking Corporation	A-1+	30%	7,305,000	6,000,000	- 800,000	5,200,000	21%
Commonwealth Bank	A-1+	30%	7,305,000	-	-	-	0%
Regional Australia Bank	A-2	30%	7,305,000	4,050,000	2,300,000	6,350,000	26%
Suncorp	A-1	30%	7,305,000	3,000,000	-	3,000,000	12%
Total				23,350,000	1,000,000	24,350,000	100%

List of Term Deposits as at 30 September, 2024

Name of the Bank	Term	Interest rate	Maturity	Investment
				Amount
Westpac Banking Corporation	11 months	5.37%	01/10/2024	700,000
National Australia Bank	5 months	5.13%	01/10/2024	500,000
National Australia Bank	7 months	5.00%	03/10/2024	500,000
National Australia Bank	11 months	5.34%	08/10/2024	700,000
Regional Australia Bank	12 months	5.20%	13/10/2024	700,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	12 months	5.49%	14/11/2024	1,500,000
Bank of Queensland	12 months	5.40%	04/12/2024	500,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	12 months	5.34%	04/12/2024	1,000,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	12 months	5.34%	04/12/2024	1,000,000
Regional Australia Bank	12 months	5.40%	05/12/2024	800,000
Regional Australia Bank	12 months	5.40%	05/12/2024	750,000
Suncorp	12 months	5.22%	13/12/2024	1,000,000
Suncorp	12 months	5.22%	13/12/2024	500,000
National Australia Bank	6 months	5.15%	23/12/2024	500,000
Suncorp	10 months	5.05%	13/01/2025	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	12 months	5.15%	29/01/2025	1,000,000
Suncorp	12 months	5.10%	07/02/2025	500,000
National Australia Bank	12 months	5.15%	11/02/2025	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	8 months	5.30%	13/03/2025	500,000
Bank of Queensland	9 months	5.30%	04/04/2025	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	11 months	5.15%	17/04/2025	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	10 months	5.30%	23/05/2025	500,000
Regional Australia Bank	9 months	5.02%	30/05/2025	800,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	11 months	5.27%	02/06/2025	1,000,000
Bank of Queensland	11 months	5.28%	02/06/2025	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	12 months	5.45%	02/07/2025	500,000
National Australia Bank	12 months	5.45%	04/07/2025	600,000
Regional Australia Bank	11 months	5.05%	22/07/2025	500,000
Regional Australia Bank	11 months	5.05%	22/07/2025	1,000,000
Regional Australia Bank	12 Months	5.00%	21/08/2025	800,000
Regional Australia Bank	12 months	5.00%	28/08/2025	1,000,000
Total				24,350,000

CERTIFICATION:

I, Mustaq Ahammed, Manager – Finance & IT, hereby certify that the above investments have been made in accordance with the Section 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, and section 625 of the Local Government Act 1993, and Council’s investment policy.

14.4 Monthly Finance Report for September 2024

Department:	Corporate & Community
Prepared By:	Manager Finance
Authorised By:	Director Corporate & Community
Reference:	UINT/24/14265

Attachments:	1. Monthly Financial Statements-September 2024 ↓
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LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	4. We are an independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	4.1. Informed and collaborative leadership in our community 4.2. A strategic, accountable and representative Council

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Council's financial performance up to the reporting date, along with analytical comments on significant variances with the budget.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the attached Monthly Finance Report for September 2024.

REPORT

This report provides for the information of Councillors the Income Statement and CAPEX Summary, including a breakdown by fund, for the month ending 30 September 2024.

URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL
INCOME STATEMENT & CAPEX SUMMARY
Financial Statements for the month ending Sep 2024

	Amounts in '000		
	Actuals to September	Proportionate Budget	Budget for Full Year
Income from continuing operations			
Rates and annual charges	8,340	8,333	8,435
User charges and fees	939	1,016	6,055
Other revenues	50	58	668
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	2,091	1,827	9,968
Interest and investment income	392	194	777
Net loss/(gain) from the disposal of assets	-	-	-
Total income from operational activities	11,812	11,428	25,903
Expenses from continuing operations			
Employee benefits and on-costs	3,133	3,219	12,878
Materials and services	1,993	1,765	6,493
Borrowing costs	12	32	129
Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses	47	48	802
Audit fees	- 45	40	161
Other expenses	321	315	836
Total expenses from continuing operations	5,462	5,421	21,300
Operating result prior to consideration of capital grants and deprecia	6,350	6,007	4,604
Less: Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	1,842	1,587	6,349
Operating result after depreciation	4,507	4,420	- 1,745
Add: Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	970	925	5,450
Overall result with capital grants	5,477	5,345	3,705
	Actuals to September	Proportionate Budget	Budget for the Year
Capital Expenditures			
Employee benefits and on-costs	231	449	1,798
Materials and services	1,035	2,695	10,559
Total Capex	1,266	3,144	12,357

URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL
INCOME STATEMENT AND CAPEX BY FUND
Financial Statements for the month ending Sep 2024

	General Fund		McMaugh Gardens		Water Fund		Sewer Fund	
	Actuals to September	Proportionate Budget	Actuals to September	Proportionate Budget	Actuals to September	Proportionate Budget	Actuals to September	Proportionate Budget
Income from continuing operations								
Rates and annual charges	6,601	6,596	-	-	662	659	1,077	1,077
User charges and fees	648	719	269	277	9	5	13	14
Other revenues	47	57	4	1	-	-	-	-
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	1,042	898	1,049	929	-	-	-	-
Interest and investment income	379	107	-	33	9	34	4	21
Net loss/(gain) from the disposal of assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total income from operational activities	8,716	8,377	1,322	1,240	680	699	1,094	1,112
Expenses from continuing operations								
Employee benefits and on-costs	1,666	2,195	1,135	841	258	99	74	85
Materials and services	1,612	982	177	250	149	453	55	80
Borrowing costs	11	32	1	1	-	-	-	-
Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses	47	48	-	-	-	-	-	-
Audit fees	- 45	40	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other expenses	321	315	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total expenses from continuing operations	3,612	3,612	1,314	1,092	408	552	129	166
Operating result prior to consideration of capital grants and depreciation	5,104	4,765	8	149	272	147	966	947
Less: Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	1,508	1,262	57	55	155	156	122	115
Operating result after depreciation	3,596	3,503	- 49	94	117 -	9	843	832
Add: Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	495	637	-	-	475	288	-	-
Overall result with capital grants	4,091	4,140	- 49	94	592	279	843	832
Capital Expenditures								
	Actuals to September	Proportionate Budget	Actuals to September	Proportionate Budget	Actuals to September	Proportionate Budget	Actuals to September	Proportionate Budget
Employee benefits and on-costs	191	427	-	2	40	21	-	-
Materials and services	996	2,153	7	48	26	364	5	130
Total Capex	1,187	2,580	7	50	67	385	5	130

Analytical comments on the variance of monthly financial statements as of 30th Sep 2024**1) Interest and Investment Income**

The positive variance in interest income is due to continuation of higher interest rates in the market. The original budget for interest income was conservatively set at 3.6%, while the current average interest earnings are at 5.24%. The adjustment will be made in the budget through QBR3, considering the money market conditions in the upcoming months.

2) Materials and Services

The main reason for the increase in material service costs over the budget is higher-than-expected IT expenses up to September. These additional IT costs are due to delayed project expenses, which were budgeted for 2023-24 but paid in 2024-25. The delayed project costs include a Telstra bill of \$57k, an Open Cities subsite license of \$23k, and Altitude and managed service costs \$90k.

3) Borrowing Cost

The variance in the borrowing cost is mainly due to the timing of the payment of instalments and interest, as well as the Council's decision not to avail of the loan for Garbage Truck, which was initially anticipated, and the cost of the loan was budgeted as interest on the loan. Interest expense for the garbage truck loan included in the original budget will be adjusted through QBR.

4) Audit Fee

The negative value in audit fees is due to the reversal of accruals of audit fees related to the financial year 2023/24. This negative balance will be nullified upon the actual payment of audit fees on completion of the audit.

5) Depreciation

Depreciation has increased mainly due to the reduction of the useful life of Tip Remediation Asset. Depreciation budget for this particular asset was projected \$347k, however, the recent assessment of the asset has significantly changed its useful life. As a result, the revised depreciation for this asset will increase to \$1.2 mil in 2023-24. The adjustment will be given through QBR.

6) Capital Expenditure

As per discussion with the Engineering Team, the planned capital works for the past three months have not occurred as expected, which resulted in underspending on capital expenditures.

14.5 Debt Recovery Update

Department:	Corporate & Community
Prepared By:	Manager Finance
Authorised By:	Director Corporate & Community
Reference:	UINT/24/16873

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	4.	We are an independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	4.2.	A strategic, accountable and representative Council

SUMMARY

At the Ordinary meeting of 25 June 2024, it was noted as part of the budget review process that outstanding rates had been increasing. Debt recovery initiatives were subsequently implemented and the total amount of rates arrears as at 30 September 2024 has been reduced by \$357,672 to \$983,468.

This report provides an update on the actions taken by officers to recover the outstanding debts to date following the review of Council's debt recovery process.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the debt recovery update report.

REPORT

Historical background:

Historically, a debt collection agency was engaged to assist with debt recovery for the Council. However, during the COVID lockdowns, debt recovery processes were paused by many Councils, including Uralla Shire Council (USC).

In June 2024 it was identified that rate arrears had increased significantly over the past few years. As a result, Council initiated the debt recovery process in accordance with the USC Debt Recovery Policy 2020 (the Policy). The process involves a reminder letter to ratepayers with outstanding debt, with a follow-up reminder letter 14 days later if required. Any ratepayers with a debt greater than \$1,000 are then referred to a debt recovery agency.

Outcome of Reminder Letters:

The first reminder letter was sent on 16 July 2024 to 498 property owners with outstanding rates exceeding \$100. A second reminder was issued on 8 August 2024 to 309 property owners with outstanding rates over \$100 as of 31 July 2024. Since follow-up efforts began in July, the council has recovered \$357,672. Additionally, 27 payment arrangements totalling \$106,333 have been finalised. By 30 September 2024, arrears from the 2023-24 period had decreased to \$983,486 (refer Table below: Movements of Arrear Rates as of 30 September 2024).

Movement of arrear rates as of 30 September 2024

Outstanding Range (Amount)	Number of Owners	Number of Properties	Arrear as of 30 Jun 2024	Payment Received	Legal Fees Added	Arrear as of 30 Sep 2024
\$100,000 and above	1	13	102,224	-	-	102,224
Between \$50,000 and \$99,999	-	-	-	-	-	-
Between \$20,000 and \$49,999	2	3	63,859	2,366	-	61,493
Between \$10,000 and \$19,999	25	33	366,545	30,640	5,732	330,173
Between \$5,000 and \$9,999	31	35	331,941	98,717	6,210	227,015
Between \$1,000 and \$4,999	92	101	391,684	157,354	1,468	232,862
Between \$500 and \$999	29	32	63,652	42,610	-	21,042
Between \$100 and \$499	29	31	34,643	25,985	-	8,658
	209	248	1,354,550	357,672	13,410	983,468

Next Steps in the Debt Recovery Process:

Council has engaged SR Law, an authorised Local Government debt collection agency with significant experience in regional local government, to assist with the next phase of the debt recovery process in accordance with the current Debt Recovery Policy (2020) and the Hardship Policy (2020), mindful of the impact of financial stress on the wellbeing of Uralla shire ratepayers.

By 4 November 2024, SR Law will review each ratepayer cohort (*referred to as 'Outstanding Range' in the above table*), and recommend an appropriate debt recovery approach based on the cohort size, duration of the arrears, number of properties involved per ratepayer, and the cost to service the debt recovery. Recommendations could range from a Letter of Demand to a letter offering a payment plan solution on SR Law letterhead. Council will review SR Law recommendations and provide instructions.

Ratepayers who have already entered into a payment plan (currently numbering 27, or 13% of ratepayers with debts) will continue to be managed by the Finance team.

SR Law will also provide a quote for consultation to draft revisions of the Debt Recover Policy (2020) and the Hardship Policy (2020) in accordance with current best practice for small/regional Councils.

The draft revised policies are to be presented at the December Audit and Risk Improvement Committee (ARIC) prior to a final report to Council.

CONCLUSION

In partnership with SR Law, Council will adopt a case management approach towards debt recovery of rate arrears. SR Law has commenced the legal phase of debt recovery, on behalf of Council. The wellbeing of ratepayers will be factored into the debt recovery process with information provided about financial counselling and other available support services. Monthly reporting to Council on the status of debt recovery progress will continue.

Community Engagement/Communication

Community consultation of the revised Debt Recovery Policy once reviewed. Ongoing positive and supportive communication with ratepayers who have outstanding rates.

Policy and Regulation

- Uralla Shire Council Debt Recovery Policy 2020
- Local Government Act 1993
- Local Government Regulations (General) 2005
- Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting
- Australian Accounting Standards.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

There is a negative impact on cash flow management when outstanding debts are not collected on time.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

A new procedure for the debt recovery is required to be implemented.

Legal and Risk Management

Incorrect contact details for ratepayers due to address changes and the council not notified. The risk is mitigated through phone calls, email, and other forms of research to establish correct contact details and update the council database.

14.6 Renewable Benefit Sharing Policy

Department:	Infrastructure & Development		
Prepared By:	Planning Officer Strategic		
Authorised By:	Director Infrastructure & Development		
Reference:	UINT/24/16907		
Attachments:	1. Draft Amended - Renewable Energy Community Benefit Policy 2024 ↓		
LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK			
Goal:	2.	We drive the economy to support prosperity	
	3.	We are good custodians of our environment	
Strategy:	2.2.	Grow and diversify employment, through existing and new businesses	
	3.2.	Maintain a healthy balance between development and the environment	

SUMMARY

At its Ordinary Meeting held on 23 July 2024 Council resolved to make minor amendments and re-exhibit the draft Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Policy.

The policy was exhibited from 23 August 2024 until 20 September 2024 and one (1) submission was received.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the submission received.
2. Adopts the Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Policy without further amendment.

REPORT

The policy was amended to require a contribution from projects related to battery storage and any other technologies associated with renewable energy, to clarify how funds would be administered, and include specific mention of Uralla’s local housing strategy currently under development.

Submission Summary	Officer Response
Regarding Part 6. The submission raised concerns about the long-term role of the Community Advisory Body, suggesting it should remain active until the Fund is exhausted, unless the community agrees to its dissolution. The submitter suggested that the Advisory Body should continue its role in community consultation and providing advice on the use of funds, as long as volunteers are available.	Officer acknowledges the concern and considers that it is implicit in the policy that the Community Advisory Body will operate insofar as funds are available for allocation. The policy states: “A Community Advisory Body will provide advice to Council on the projects to which community benefit funds will be allocated.”

CONCLUSION

Further amendments to the policy do not need to be considered at this stage.



Policy:

**Renewable Energy
Community Benefit
Sharing**

2023

UINT/23/11320

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

Date Adopted by Council	28 November 2023	Resolution No.	17.11/23
Document Owner	<i>Executive Director Infrastructure & Development</i>		
Document Development Officer			
Review Timeframe	<i>All policies are to be reviewed within a 4 year period, insert here the number of years (not greater than 4 years) for the review timeframe of this document</i>		
Last Review Date:	28 November 2023	Next Scheduled Review Date	November 2025

Document History

Doc No.	Date Amended	Details/Comments eg Resolution No.
UINT/23/13320	19 September	Creation of Draft Policy
UINT/23/18399	28 November	Adopted by Council 17.11/23
UINT/23/18399	26 March 2024	Adjustments made and presented to Council
UINT/23/18399	26 March 2024	Adopted by Council with changes 39.03/24
UNIT/24/10778	23 July 2024	Adjustments made and presented to Council
UNIT/24/10778	22 August 2024	Amendments made by Council 01.07/24

Further Document Information and Relationships

List here the related strategies, procedures, references, policy or other documents that have a bearing on this Policy and that may be useful reference material for users of this Policy.

Related Legislation*	<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (EP&A Regulation)</i>
Related Policies	
Related Procedures/Protocols, Statements, documents	

Note: Any reference to Legislation will be updated in the Policy as required. See website <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/> for current Acts, Regulations and Environmental Planning Instruments.



Policy: Renewable Energy Community Benefit 2023

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Policy: Renewable Energy Community Benefit 2023

1. PLANNING AGREEMENTS

Uralla Shire Council will use the planning agreement provisions of the EP&A Act to deliver the objectives of the Policy.

A planning agreement is a voluntary agreement between Council and a developer, who has made the development application, under which the developer is required to dedicate land free of cost; pay a monetary contribution; provide any other material benefit to be used or applied towards a public purpose.

2. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Section 1.3 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act)* provides the legislative basis for the Policy.

Part 7 Division 7.1 Subdivision 2 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A)* provides the legislative framework for planning agreements.

Part 9 Division 1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* provides further requirements relating to the making, amending and revocation of planning agreements, giving public notice and other procedural arrangements.

3. OBJECTIVES

The Renewable Energy Community Benefit Policy (Policy) will support the promotion of benefit sharing strategies associated with the development of state significant and regionally significant renewable energy projects in the Uralla Shire Council Local Government Area (LGA) that:

- Secure off-site benefits for the community so that renewable energy development delivers a net community benefit;
- Ensure that the wider community shares in the benefits resulting from renewable energy development in the local government area; and
- Ensure that the costs and benefits of renewable energy development will be equitably distributed within the community and inter-generationally.

4. COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Community benefit excludes that which is required to mitigate adverse impacts of development including (but not limited to) host and adjoining landowner payments required to obtain consent or prescribed by legislation.

The financial value of community benefit will vary from project to project, however, the minimum community benefit threshold for Uralla Shire Council is \$850 per MW per annum for solar energy development, and \$1050 per MW per annum for wind energy development, and 1.5% Capital Investment Value and/or a dollar amount per MW per annum for storage and other infrastructure as negotiated with project developers, paid over the life of the development and indexed to CPI.

***Policy: Renewable Energy Community Benefit 2023***

Community benefit payments will be directed to Council's Community Benefit Restricted Fund. A dedicated Community Advisory Body will be established to advise Council on how these funds should be allocated.

5. PUBLIC PURPOSE

The public purpose that funds will be applied to includes works to embellish public spaces, the provision of spaces for public recreation and community facilities, the provision of affordable housing (in line with an adopted Local Housing Strategy), and works to rehabilitate or conserve biodiversity values, or some other public purpose if the Council reasonably considers that the public interest would be better served by applying the funds towards that other purpose.

6. GOVERNANCE AND INTER-GENERATIONAL EQUITY

Council will ensure a governance structure that as far as possible reflects the needs and concerns of the immediate communities of impact and the broader local government area to assist with determining the public purpose for funds.

Councils will manage funds to ensure that they benefit future generations as well as the present generation.

A Community Advisory Body will provide advice to Council on the projects to which community benefit funds will be allocated.

14.7 Draft Terms of Reference - Renewable Energy Community Benefit Community Advisory Body

Department:	Infrastructure & Development
Prepared By:	Planning Officer Strategic
Authorised By:	Director Infrastructure & Development
Reference:	UINT/24/16924

Attachments:	1. ZNET Uralla - Comments on Renewable Energy Community Advisory Body draft - redacted ↓
	2. Draft Terms of Reference – Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Advisory body 12 August 2024 ↓

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	4. We are an independent shire and well-governed community
	2. We drive the economy to support prosperity
	1. We have an accessible inclusive and sustainable community
Strategy:	4.2. A strategic, accountable and representative Council
	4.1. Informed and collaborative leadership in our community
	2.3. Communities that are well serviced with essential infrastructure
	1.1. A growing community with an active volunteer base and participation in community events

SUMMARY

This report discusses the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Renewable Energy Community Benefit Advisory Body which was exhibited from 14 August to 11 September 2024 with only one submission received.

The proposed Advisory Body, once formed, is envisaged to oversee the allocation of funds from Uralla Shire's Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Restricted Fund. The sole submitter's response to the draft Terms of Reference has raised significant concerns regarding the complexity, feasibility, and ultimate workability of the proposed volunteer responsibilities.

On a related front Uralla has recently been awarded selection for the *Striking a New Deal* initiative. This initiative offers Council 12 months of expert engagement support and assistance.

Based on Council's future access to the *Striking a New Deal Initiative*, which was not at Council's disposal at the time the current Terms of Reference were compiled, this report now recommends that Council consider delaying the Advisory Body's establishment. That would allow time for a review of the ToR to include deeper and broader community engagement utilising the *Striking a New Deal* expert resources.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Delay the establishment of the Community Advisory Body until the Striking a New Deal project is substantially progressed.**
2. **Review and revise the draft Terms of Reference on the basis on broader, more substantive community and stakeholder engagement as part of the Striking a New Deal project.**

REPORT

At its Ordinary Meeting on 23 July 2024, Council resolved to exhibit the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Renewable Energy Community Benefit Community Advisory Body (CAB).

The purpose of the CAB is to advise Uralla Shire Council on the allocation of funds from the Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Restricted Fund, ensuring that renewable energy projects benefit both current and future generations in Uralla Shire.

The draft Terms of Reference (ToRs) were exhibited from 14 August - 11 September 2024 and one (1) submission was received.

Communication and Engagement

The draft Terms of Reference (ToRs) were exhibited from 14 August - 11 September 2024 and one (1) submission was received.

The draft was shared by email with previous submitters to the Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Policy and posted online. It was also highlighted in a Facebook post. However, there was no further promotion of the ToR. One reason for this limited engagement is the challenge of conveying the complex story of the Advisory Body's role through available communication channels.

It is recommended that a more strategic communication effort is needed, one that places the Advisory Body within the broader context of the Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), the Benefit Sharing Policy, Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPAs), and related matters. This could involve a dedicated webpage, newsletter series, targeted engagement with local media, or other methods.

The lack of community engagement and input (despite significant efforts by Council to engage) with the design of the Community Advisory Body is problematic.

The Advisory Body is expected to play a broad consultative role, helping the community understand the positive and negative impacts of the Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) and guiding the design of engagement processes for funding proposals.

Striking a New Deal (SaND) project

In August, as the draft ToR was exhibited, Uralla and Walcha's joint application for the *Striking a New Deal* initiative was successful. The SaND project will partner with one rural or regional body to provide in-kind community engagement and participation support for 12 months. Our application received letters of support from ZNET, the Uralla Business Chamber, and ReD4NE.

The initiative, funded by [Boundless Earth](#) and led by [The Next Economy](#), [RE-Alliance](#), and [Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal](#), aims to support regions affected by energy transitions.

Between August 2024 and August 2025, SaND project will co-design and assist Uralla and Walcha Councils in delivering community and stakeholder engagement programs that help achieve better social and economic outcomes from local energy projects.

In Uralla, the focus will be on activating our community benefit sharing program, with the Advisory Body playing a key governance role. Since the draft ToR envisions the CAB overseeing high-impact, long-term projects, it is logical to align its design with the SaND project.

This project bears some resemblance to the 1995 Creative Village Project in which Uralla was supported by the Arts Council, as well as design academics and students from the University of NSW, to undertake significant community engagement. Arguably, the Creative Village project set key strategic directions for placemaking for the following 20 years.

Scope of responsibility

Feedback from the sole submitter raised concerns about the workload, feasibility, and achievability of the CAB's proposed responsibilities. Specifically, they noted:

"[Undertaking the responsibilities outlined in the draft ToR] is quite an onerous and complex task for volunteers and will certainly require much more than 4 meetings p.a. in at least the first 2 years.

We also wonder whether the scope of responsibilities proposed are fair, reasonable, realistic and feasible for a group of volunteers?

We propose that the scope of the responsibility needs to be re-thought and better balanced with the responsibilities of Council (organisation staff, Mayor and Councillors)."

It is clear that expectations for the CAB are very high and that its currently proposed responsibilities are very extensive. The concerns raised by the submitter may reflect that the current approach is premised on unrealistic expectations. Given that the timing and amount of community benefit payments are still uncertain there is no immediate need to establish the CAB. This allows time for further development of the governance framework and for increasing community understanding of the benefit sharing opportunity.

It may be several years before payments are received, and so far, the only Voluntary Planning Agreements that have been negotiated are with Neoen (Thunderbolt Wind Farm) and Vestas (Winterbourne Wind Farm).

For those reasons this report recommends that Council:

- Delay the establishment of the Community Advisory Body until the Striking a New Deal project is substantially progressed.
- Reviews and revises the draft Terms of Reference on the basis of broader, more substantive community and stakeholder engagement as part of the Striking a New Deal project.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the establishment of the CAB requires careful consideration to ensure its structure and responsibilities are both manageable and productive for volunteers and are aligned with the broader goals of the community benefit sharing program. The community development support provided by the SaND project is an opportunity to refine this governance framework to better position our community benefit sharing program for long-term success.



FROM: ZNET Uralla
TO: Uralla Shire Council
RE: Renewable Energy Sharing Community Advisory Body
DATE: Sept 7th 2024

Dear Council,

Firstly, we would like to congratulate you on your decision to establish the Uralla Shire Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Restricted Fund as well as the Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Community Advisory Body.

Our comments on the draft proposals are as follows.

USRECBSRF:

In 6: it is not stated that the Advisory body would be an ongoing body until the end of the Fund unless its dissolution was agreed to by the community.


It is our position that for as long as there are volunteers available, an Advisory Body should be active in community consultation and advising on the use of funds.

REBSCAB:

1. In 18. Amendments to the Terms of Reference and Dissolution- if council does terminate the term of an Advisory Body, considering the above comment, an 18.5 should be added stating "Council would then commence to issue EOIs to the community in order to instigate a new Advisory Body."
2. This is quite an onerous and complex task for volunteers and will certainly require much more than 4 meetings p.a. in at least the first 2 years.
We also wonder whether the scope of responsibilities proposed are fair, reasonable, realistic and feasible for a group of volunteers?
We propose that the scope of the responsibility needs to be re-thought and better balanced with the responsibilities of Council (organisation, staff, Mayor and Councillors).
3. In 3.4.2 "The Advisory Body may recommend funds from the Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Restricted Fund be used for activities that build the capacity of the Advisory Body to fulfill its objectives."
We recommend that, where possible, council resources are utilised in the first instance, and diligence is applied to the requests for expenditure of the fund by the Advisory Body.
4. Quorum 9.6
9.6.1 The quorum required for a meeting to commence will be a majority of current voting members.

ADD-5 of the 9 members to be considered a quorum if 9 members are elected.
REMOVE- (half the number of current members plus one).

Kind regards,
Carol Shantal
President
ZNET Uralla





**DRAFT Terms of
Reference:**

**Renewable Energy Benefit
Sharing Community
Advisory Body**

2024

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

Date Adopted by Council		Resolution No.	
Document Owner	Director – Infrastructure & Development		
Document Development Officer	Planning Officer; General Manager		
Review Timeframe	Three (3) months following each general local government election		
Last Review Date:		Next Scheduled Review Date	September 2028

Document History

Doc No.	Date Amended	Details/Comments eg Resolution No.
0.1	4 July 2024	Draft prepared, circulated for staff input
0.2	9 July 2024	Draft to council recommending consultation with current committee members and public exhibition for community input
0.3	12 August 2024	Amended in accordance with Council Resolution 30.07/24

Further Document Information and Relationships

List here the related strategies, procedures, references, policy or other documents that have a bearing on this Policy and that may be useful reference material for users of this Policy.

Related Legislation*	Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (NSW) Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)
Related Policies	Uralla Renewable Energy Community Benefit 2023 Uralla Shire Council Code of Conduct Uralla Shire Council Code of Meeting Practice
Related Procedures/ Protocols, Statements, documents	Section 355 Committee Handbook 2022 NSW Draft Benefit Sharing Guideline (November 2023)

Note: Any reference to Legislation will be updated in the Policy as required. See website <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/> for current Acts, Regulations and Environmental Planning Instruments

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Terms of Reference: Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Community Advisory Body 2024

Introduction

The purpose of this Terms of Reference (ToR) is to establish the framework and guidelines for the Community Advisory Body ('the Advisory Body') of the Uralla Shire Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Restricted Fund ('the Community Benefit Fund'). This body is tasked with advising the Council on the allocation of funds from the Community Benefit Fund ensuring that these funds are used to support projects that benefit both the current and future generations of Uralla. By providing a transparent, representative, and accessible forum for community engagement, the Advisory Body will play a crucial role in advising council of community views regarding legacy projects to be funded through renewable energy benefit payments. This document outlines the aims, objectives, scope, roles, and responsibilities of the Advisory Body, as well as the principles and processes that will govern its operations.

Background

Uralla Shire is part of the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), where 8 gigawatts of renewable energy projects are forecast to be delivered over the next decade. Many new wind, solar, transmission and storage projects will be developed within Uralla Shire both in and out of the REZ. As a host community, Uralla will experience increased demands on infrastructure and services, along with social and economic changes as new residents and businesses move in. We expect an influx of renewable energy workers and associated industries, along with new economic opportunities.

Council has adopted a policy requiring community benefit contributions. These contributions will be formalised through Voluntary Planning Agreements with renewable energy developers. Council has established the Uralla Shire Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Restricted Fund to manage these contributions. The allocation of these funds will be decided in consultation with the community.

The Community Advisory Body is established to advise Council on how to allocate the community benefit funds. The Advisory Body will strive to ensure that the funds are used in ways that reflect the needs and aspirations of both existing and future generations of Uralla residents, responsibly stewarding the legacy of renewable energy investment in the shire.



Terms of Reference: Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Community Advisory Body 2024

1. Establishment

- 1.1. The Community Advisory Body (hereafter “the Advisory Body”) of the Uralla Shire Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Restricted Fund (hereafter “the Fund”) is established under section 355(b) of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) pursuant to Council resolution 39.03/24 made 26 March 2024.

2. Purpose & Objectives

- 2.1. The Advisory Body is established to provide recommendations to Council on the public purpose/s to which the Fund shall be put.
- 2.2. The objectives of the Advisory Body are to:
 - 2.2.1. Provide a transparent, representative, and accessible forum for community engagement on the allocation of funds from the Renewable Energy Community Benefit Restricted Fund.
 - 2.2.2. Provide clear recommendations to Council for proposals that:
 - 2.2.2.1. Ensure that renewable energy development in Uralla Shire contributes to the prosperity and wellbeing of future generations
 - 2.2.2.2. Ensure there is broad community benefit from renewable energy development in Uralla Shire
 - 2.2.2.3. Represent an integrated, longer-term vision for larger scale legacy public purpose projects for the fund
 - 2.2.2.4. Demonstrate broad community support

3. Tasks & Deliverables

3.1. Recommendations to Council

- 3.1.1. The Advisory Body is tasked with providing clear and robust recommendations to the Council regarding community benefit sharing proposals for the fund.

3.2. Framework and assessment criteria for proposals

- 3.2.1. The Advisory body is tasked with developing a framework and criteria against which proposals may be recommended for funding from the Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Restricted Fund
- 3.2.2. This framework should be developed in collaboration with elected Councillors and Council officers.

3.3. Development of recommendations:



Terms of Reference: Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Community Advisory Body 2024

3.3.1. The Advisory Body shall determine appropriate method/s for:

3.3.1.1. Soliciting and/or receiving proposals for community benefit sharing

3.3.1.2. Providing a conduit for engagement, as it relates to developing proposals for the fund, between the Advisory Body and:

- Council and Council officers
- Government departments and agencies, academia and other technical experts
- Community organisations, business chambers, industry and/or professional peak bodies, environmental and other non-government organisation
- Project developers and their contractors
- Key stakeholders from training, economic and/or community development, tourism, indigenous, health, environment sectors
- The wider community

3.4. Capacity building

3.4.1. Capacity-building activities may be programmed by Council or the Advisory Body to aid in improvement of proposal development and community engagement. Members may request information or learning activities for this purpose.

3.4.2. The Advisory Body may recommend funds from the Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Restricted Fund be used for activities that build the capacity of the Advisory Body to fulfill its objectives.

4. Exclusions

4.1. The Advisory Body shall bear no responsibility for the financial management of the Uralla Shire Renewable Energy Community Benefit Sharing Restricted Fund.

4.2. The Advisory Body shall bear no responsibility for the creation or administration of Voluntary Planning Agreements.

5. Term of the Community Advisory Body

5.1. The Advisory Body shall operate from the date Council approves the appointment of nominated members and will conclude after (4) four calendar years, unless terminated earlier in accordance with these Terms of Reference.

5.2. Council may choose to reappoint the Advisory Body for a further term or renew the membership in accordance with these Terms of Reference.

5.3. In the first term of the Advisory Body, (5) five members shall have (2) two year terms, and others will have (4) four year terms to ensure continuity.



Terms of Reference: Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Community Advisory Body 2024

6. Membership

- 6.1. Membership of the Advisory Body shall consist of:
 - 6.1.1. Nine (9) residents of Uralla Shire of which:
 - 6.1.1.1. At least two (2) shall be resident in Uralla township
 - 6.1.1.2. At least one (1) shall be resident in a rural part of Uralla Shire
 - 6.1.1.3. At least one (1) member shall be under the age of thirty (30)
 - 6.1.1.4. At least one (1) member shall be of Aboriginal or Torres Straits Island descent and/or representing a recognised First Nations body e.g. Local Land Council
 - 6.1.2. Up to two (2) non-voting councillor representatives
 - 6.1.3. Council may vary the requirements of clause 6.1.1 having regard for the intention of the quotas specified and clause 6.2
- 6.2. Council shall aim to appoint members to the Advisory Body from diverse backgrounds and representatives from different facets of the community.
- 6.3. Advisory Body membership is for the term of the Council. Following a general election of councillors, the existing Advisory Body membership continues until such time as the Council appoints new Advisory Body members.
- 6.4. Members may serve a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms.
- 6.5. A person remains a member for the duration of the Advisory Body term until:
 - 6.5.1. Their appointed term ends; or
 - 6.5.2. That person ceasing to be a member upon:
 - 6.5.2.1. Delivering, in writing (letter or email), a resignation to the Advisory Body Secretary or a meeting of the Advisory Body; or
 - 6.5.2.2. Being absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the Advisory Body without leave of absence from the Advisory Body; or
 - 6.5.2.3. Receiving written notification from Council that the person's membership with the Advisory Body has been terminated; or
 - 6.5.3. Death.
- 6.6. An Advisory Body member who is an Office Bearer (Chair and Secretary) to the Advisory Body may resign from the position and remain a member of the Advisory Body.
- 6.7. Casual vacancies shall be filled in accordance with clause 7.2



Terms of Reference: Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Community Advisory Body 2024

- 6.8. Non-voting technical experts and/or observers may be appointed to the Advisory Body ongoing or on an *ad hoc* basis by invitation of voting membership or the Council, or the General Manager as delegate of the Council.

7. Appointment of Members and Office Bearers

7.1. Appointment of members

- 7.1.1. Advisory Body members shall be appointed by Council through a public Expression of Interest (EOI) process.

- 7.1.2. Nominees to the Advisory body shall:

- 7.1.2.1. Demonstrate a capacity to undertake the responsibilities and obligations of Advisory Body membership;
- 7.1.2.2. Have an expressed interest in progressing community benefit from renewable energy development;
- 7.1.2.3. Be able to look beyond personal and/or sectoral interests;
- 7.1.2.4. Be able to be impartial and whole of community focused;
- 7.1.2.5. Demonstrate their ability to represent community interest and provide feedback to the community;
- 7.1.2.6. Be a well-regarded individual of good standing in the community.

- 7.1.3. Nominations will be reviewed by an independent selection panel comprising of the General Manager, the Mayor, and a Senior Council officer and recommendations made to Council.

- 7.1.3.1. Councillors to be given a list of all applications and the panel's recommendations.

7.2. Vacancies

- 7.2.1. The Advisory Body Chairperson shall promptly advise Council of any casual vacancy.

- 7.2.2. The filling of any vacancy shall be approved by the Council with regard to the criteria outlined at clause 7.1.2

- 7.2.3. A casual vacancy may be filled through a review of earlier expressions of interest or a call for new expressions of interest to invite nominations from the public.

- 7.2.4. Interested persons may nominate for a vacant position regardless of whether expressions of interest have been called. Nominations shall be presented to Council for determination.

7.3. Leave of Absence

- 7.3.1. Any member who is absent for three (3) or more consecutive meetings without apology or leave of the Advisory Body shall have their position declared vacant and clause 7.2 shall be invoked.



Terms of Reference: Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Community Advisory Body 2024

7.4. Advisory Body Chairperson

7.4.1. At the first meeting of the Advisory Body's term the Advisory Body shall elect one of its members as Chairperson. The method of election shall be decided by the Advisory Body.

7.4.2. To be nominated for chairperson, a member must demonstrate sufficient qualifications and experience to take on the role as determined by the Advisory Body.

7.5. Advisory Body Secretary

7.5.1. At the first meeting of the Advisory Body's term the Advisory Body shall elect one of its members as Secretary. The method of election shall be decided by the Advisory Body.

8. Member roles and responsibilities

8.1. Community Advisory Body Members will have the following responsibilities:

8.1.1. Participate in the deliberations of the Advisory Body, with regard to the objectives of the Advisory Body and its establishment;

8.1.2. Solicit, receive, develop and/or assess benefit sharing proposals that meet the adopted criteria and align with community needs and existing Council plans and policies;

8.1.3. Offer informed and impartial recommendations to Council on the allocation of community benefit funds;

8.1.4. Act as a liaison between the community and Council, gathering input from residents and stakeholders to inform decision-making;

8.1.5. Disclose any potential conflicts of interest and recuse themselves from discussions or decisions where appropriate;

8.1.6. Adhere to the guiding principles and objectives outlined in the ToR, ensuring decisions contribute to the long-term prosperity and wellbeing of Uralla's community;

8.1.7. Ensure transparency in all activities, including documenting and reporting on Advisory Body's recommendations and decisions; and

8.1.8. Observe confidentiality when it is required.

8.2. Councillor representatives to the Advisory Body shall facilitate communication between the Advisory Body and Council by:

8.2.1. Presenting relevant minutes of Council to the Advisory Body;

8.2.2. Reporting on the Advisory Body's activities to Council; and

8.2.3. Referring any matters requiring clarification by the Advisory Body to the General Manager or to Council by way of a Councillor Delegates Report or Notice of Motion.

8.3. The role of the Chairperson is to:



Terms of Reference: Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Community Advisory Body 2024

-
- 8.3.1. Facilitate Advisory Body meetings, ensuring they are conducted efficiently and inclusively;
 - 8.3.2. Ensure that discussions and decisions comply with the ToR and any relevant policies or regulations; and
 - 8.3.3. Serve as the primary spokesperson for the Advisory Body in communications with the Council and the public.
 - 8.4. The role of the Secretary is to:
 - 8.4.1. Prepare and distribute the agenda prior to meetings; and
 - 8.4.2. Take minutes during the meetings and distribute them in accordance with clause 9.3
 - 8.5. The role of non-voting technical advisors and /or observers is to:
 - 8.5.1. Present information to the group, facilitate workshops aimed at building the capacity of the Advisory Body to fulfil its objectives;
 - 8.5.2. Offer specialised knowledge and expertise to inform Advisory Body's decision-making processes;
 - 8.5.3. Assist in the evaluation of project proposals by providing technical assessments and feasibility analyses; and
 - 8.5.4. Participate in discussions and provide advice in a way that adds value to the discussion and does not impede the operation or effectiveness of the group.

9. Meetings

9.1. Meeting location and frequency

- 9.1.1. Meetings of the Advisory Body will generally be determined by the Advisory Body, held quarterly with a minimum of four (4) meetings per year. Additional meetings can be convened as required.
- 9.1.2. Meetings will be scheduled at times and locations that are convenient for both members and advisors.
- 9.1.3. Meetings may be held in person or online. Council Chambers will be made available for meetings with Secretariat and administrative support provided by Council officers under the direction of the General Manager.

9.2. Attendance

- 9.2.1. Advisory Body members are expected to attend all quarterly meetings.
- 9.2.2. If a member cannot attend a meeting they should notify the chairperson in advance and seek leave of absence.

9.3. Minutes



Terms of Reference: Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Community Advisory Body 2024

9.3.1. Draft minutes to be supplied to Advisory Body members within 3 working days and members have 3 working days to reply.

9.3.2. Minutes and recommendations from the Advisory Body must be provided to the next Ordinary meeting of Council.

9.4. Meeting Procedure

9.4.1. The Uralla Shire Council [Code of Meeting Practice](#) (2022) shall guide the meeting procedures of the Advisory Body, except where varied by these Terms of Reference.

9.4.2. Advisory Body meetings are exempt from webcast requirements as described in clause 5.19 of the Code of Meeting Practice.

9.5. Presiding Member

9.5.1. The Chairperson shall preside at all Advisory Body meetings at which they are present.

9.5.2. In the absence of the Chairperson at a meeting or in the event of a conflict of interest in which the Chairperson has recused him or herself from discussion, the Advisory Body shall elect a temporary Chairperson.

9.6. Quorum

9.6.1. The quorum required for a meeting to commence will be a majority of current voting members (half the number of current members plus one).

9.6.2. A meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled if there is no quorum after 15 minutes.

9.7. Public Access

9.7.1. Members of the public, community organisations, Government representatives, civil society organisations, and businesses including but not limited to energy developers and generators may apply to the Chairperson to make a presentation to a meeting of the Advisory Body insofar as it relates to the purpose and objectives of the Advisory Body

9.7.2. Meetings of the Advisory Body shall be open to the public, except any item on the agenda closed under s10A of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW).

9.7.3. Advisory Body business agendas and minutes shall be published to the Council website

10. Decision-making process

10.1. The Advisory Body will adopt a consensus model for decision-making. This process aims to ensure that all members have an opportunity to participate in discussions and that decisions reflect the collective agreement of the group.



Terms of Reference: Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Community Advisory Body 2024

10.2. If consensus cannot be reached after thorough discussion and modification, a position may be carried by a ratio of two (2) votes in favour for one (1) vote against.

10.3. A voting member of the Advisory Body present at any meeting shall have one (1) vote on any matter.

11. Code of Conduct; Conflict of Interest; Removal of Members

11.1. The [Uralla Shire Council Code of Conduct](#) applies to all Advisory Body members.

11.2. Council may remove a member found to be in breach of the [Uralla Shire Council Code of Conduct](#)

11.3. Advisory Body members and councillor representatives are to declare conflicts of interest when any such interest arises.

11.4. Declarations of conflict of interest shall be recorded in the minutes and Advisory Body members shall abstain from voting on any matter relating to the declared conflict of interest.

12. Reporting

12.1. The Advisory Body shall report to Council through the provision of its Minutes.

12.2. To assist Council in its decision-making, recommendations made to Council shall:

12.2.1. Describe benefits and disadvantages;

12.2.2. Identify whole-of-life costs and who will bear ongoing maintenance and/or replacement responsibility where possible; and

12.2.3. Identify the deliberations the Advisory Body made in forming its decision. If there are differing views within the Advisory Body, these opinions be communicated to Council to assist Council in understanding the complexities of the issue at hand.

13. Delegated Authority

13.1. The Advisory Body does not have any delegated functions pursuant to section 377 of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* and does not have the power to direct Council officials.

14. Correspondence

14.1. The Advisory Body is not permitted to issue official correspondence to government officials, government departments, restricted fund contributing renewable energy developers or their contractors.

14.2. All official correspondence must be signed by the General Manager.



Terms of Reference: Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Community Advisory Body 2024

15. Media and Publicity

- 15.1. All media requests received must be referred to the Mayor or General Manager, who may delegate media liaison to the Advisory Body Chair.
- 15.2. Advisory Body members are permitted to speak to the media on any matters in their capacity as an Advisory Body member with prior approval from the General Manager.
- 15.3. In its function as forum for community engagement, media and social media releases may be issued the Advisory Body with the prior approval of the General Manager.

16. Confidentiality

- 16.1. Should Advisory Body members receive information that is confidential or commercially sensitive, it must be clearly marked as such.
- 16.2. Advisory Body members must not disclose confidential or commercially sensitive information discussed during a confidential session of an Advisory Body meeting or any other confidential forum (such as, but not limited to meetings, workshops or briefing sessions), and observe the [Uralla Shire Council Code of Conduct](#) as it relates to use and security of confidential information

17. Operational Support

- 17.1. Uralla Shire Council will support the Advisory Body through the provision of:
 - 17.1.1. A meeting place with virtual facilities
 - 17.1.2. Insurance coverage for volunteers
 - 17.1.3. Secretariat and administration services to be provided by Council officers under the direction of the General Manager

18. Amendments to the Terms of Reference and Dissolution

- 18.1. These Terms of Reference may be altered by Council resolution.
- 18.2. The Council may, at any time and either at its own initiative or upon request of the Advisory Body, alter, delete, or add provisions to these Terms of Reference.
- 18.3. The Council may, by resolution, terminate the term of the Advisory Body at its discretion.
- 18.4. In such event that the Council terminates the Advisory Body, the Council will provide formal notice to the Advisory Body in writing including the reason for the termination.



Terms of Reference: Renewable Energy Benefit Sharing Community Advisory Body 2024

19. Interpretation

- 19.1. Any ambiguity or difficulty in interpretation of these Terms of Reference shall be referred to the Council for direction.

20. Dispute Resolution

- 20.1. Where the Advisory Body is unable to reach a determination on any issue, the Advisory Body must refer that issue to the Chairperson for determination.
- 20.2. Where the Advisory Body resolves that it is dissatisfied with the resolution of that dispute by the Chairperson it may, by notice in writing, request the General Manager review the issue.
- 20.3. Should the Advisory Body be dissatisfied with the decision by the General Manager it may, by notice in writing to the General Manager, request that the matter be referred to Council for determination of the dispute by resolution of Council, whose determination of the dispute shall be final and binding upon the Advisory Body.

14.8 Further Appointments needed for Councillor Delegates on External Committees

Department:	General Manager's Office
Prepared By:	Executive Assistant
Authorised By:	Director Infrastructure & Development
Reference:	UINT/24/16252
Attachments:	1. New England Bush Fire Management Committee call for Representative ↓
LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK	
Goal:	4. We are an independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	4.1. Informed and collaborative leadership in our community

SUMMARY

Council has received further requests for staff and Councillors to be appointed to external committees, namely: the New England Bush Fire Management Committee and the Thunderbolt Community Consultation Committee. This report recommends Council appoints representatives.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council appoint:

- i. Cr to be the representative on the New England Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC) for the full term of Council.
- ii. Cr to be the representative on the Thunderbolt Community Consultative Committee (TCCC) for the full term of Council.

REPORT

New England Bushfire Management Committee

The New England Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC) has requested Council nominate a relevant staff member and a Councillor to work with the BFMC for bush fire management purposes.

The General Manager has nominated our Manager Civil Infrastructure as the staff representative given his expertise and local knowledge of the Shire.

Council have been invited to nominate a Councillor with expertise in bush fire management to support the review and updates of the Bush Fire Management Plan, Operational Coordination Plan, Fire Access and Fire Trail Plan along with annual Works Plan within Uralla Shire.

Thunderbolt Community Consultation Committee

The Thunderbolt Community Consultation Committee (TCCC) is a State-led process and a condition of the State Significant Development consent for the Thunderbolt Wind Farm. The Committee has resumed regular quarterly meetings after Neoen received their consent for Thunderbolt Wind Farm. Cr Burrows is currently on the register as Council's representative and has been invited to continue as a non-voting of the TCCC.

The TCCC is chaired by Wej Prentice who is drawn from a pool of chair people employed by the State for State Significant Development or Infrastructure processes. The Committee is made up of a representative from Walcha and Uralla Shire Councils respectively and around six community representatives.

The role of the committee is to provide a conduit for Neoen to provide information about the Thunderbolt Wind Farm project and receive feedback. The process does not overlap with any existing community engagement program of Neoen or Council.

CONCLUSION

Councillor delegates appointed to committees and external bodies represent Council and provide advice back to Council. Minutes of committee meetings are reported back to Council through Councillor Delegate Reports to ordinary meetings following each respective committee meeting.

The following, Table A, was resolved by Council with the relevant delegates for Committees and external bodies in the Ordinary Meeting held 24 September 2024.

COUNCIL COMMITTEES (Table A)	
Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC)	Cr A Blakester
Australia Day Committee	Cr S Burrows Cr T O'Connor
GM Performance Review Committee	Mayor Deputy Mayor Cr K Arnold
S355 Bundarra Hall Committee	Cr L Doran Cr J Philp
S355 Uralla Township Environs Committee	Cr L Petrov Cr K Arnold
EXTERNAL	
Arts North-West Strategic Advisory Council (SAC)	Cr A Blakester General Manager (alternate)
Central Northern Regional Library	Cr L Petrov
Rural Fire Service Liaison Committee	Cr J Philp General Manager
(Department of Planning) - Northern Regional Planning Panel	General Manager Cr S Burrows (Panel Member) Cr D Mailler (Panel Member) Cr T O'Connor (Alternate Panel Member) Cr L Doran (Alternate Panel Member)
(TfNSW) - Uralla Local Traffic Committee	Cr D Mailler
MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS	
Community Safety Precinct Committee (Not currently active)	Mayor
Country Mayors Association	Mayor
Coalition of Renewable Energy Mayors (CoREM)	Mayor General Manager

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

Committees are a mechanism for community engagement and provide an avenue for community feedback to Council on relevant issues.

Policy and Regulation

Committees are governed by respective Terms of Reference for each committee.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

Costs associated with Committee meetings are absorbed into Council's existing budget. There are no attendance fees.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

Not relevant

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

Council staff support Committees with administration and meeting spaces.

Legal and Risk Management

Committees and members of committees are required to adhere to relevant Terms of Reference.

Performance Measures

Committee meeting minutes are reported to Council and actions updated to subsequent meetings.

Project Management

Committees are overseen by relevant officers who attend as appropriate and provide technical advice on identified issues.

NEW ENGLAND BUSH FIRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Address all correspondence to:

Executive Officer
New England Bush Fire Management Committee
P O Box 195
ARMIDALE NSW 2350
Email: newenglandteam@rfs.nsw.gov.au

Your reference
Our reference: R24/4281

27 September 2024

The General Manager
Ms Toni Averay
Uralla Shire Council
P O Box 106
URALLA NSW 2358

Dear Toni

Invitation for membership of New England Bush Fire Management Committee

I am writing to invite you to nominate a representative from your organisation for the New England Bush Fire Management Committee (BFMC).

BFMCs are groups of people with technical expertise, experience and local knowledge who work together for bush fire management purposes, and who can collaboratively develop better bush fire management decisions than anyone acting alone.

The BFMC is responsible for preparing, reviewing and updating a Bush Fire Risk Management Plan, the Operations Coordination Plan, Fire Access and Fire Trail Plan and Annual Works Plan, within the local area.

The *Rural Fires Regulation 2013* Section 14 states that the Bush Fire Co-ordinating Committee must invite the following persons to become members of a Bush Fire Management Committee –

- (a) *2 persons nominated by each local authority whose area comprises land in the Bush Fire Management Committee's area, being*
 - (i) *1 senior representative of the local authority, for example, the Mayor or a councillor of a local authority that is a council, and*
 - (ii) *1 person with responsibilities for the performance of the local authority's functions in relation to the environment or bush fire management,*

Based on the recent Local Government Elections it is considered timely to invite you to confirm Councils representatives (1 x Primary and 1 x Alternative) on the New England BFMC. The next general meeting will be held on Tuesday 12 November at the New England Fire Control Centre, 41 Shand Drive, Armidale commencing at 10.00am. Please confirm your Council's

representatives in writing/email to the Executive Officer as soon as practicable and prior to the above date so that appropriate correspondence and notification of events can be sent to the appropriate delegates. Your assistance in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

If you have any enquiries or would like further information about the BFMC and its operations, please do not hesitate to contact me at the New England Fire Control Centre on 6771 7700.

I look forward to hearing from you.



Paul Metcalfe
Executive Officer
New England Bush Fire Management Committee

14.9 Integrated Water Cycle Management Project (Strategic Water Planning Study)

Department:	Infrastructure & Development
Prepared By:	Project Officer Water & Sewer
Authorised By:	Director Infrastructure & Development
Reference:	UINT/24/17002
Attachments:	1. GANTT Chart Strategic Water Program ↓ 2. DRAFT Uralla Shire Council Press Release Oct 2024 ↓
LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK	
Goal:	3. We are good custodians of our environment
Strategy:	3.4. Secure, sustainable and environmentally sound water-cycle infrastructure and services

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the status of the critical Integrated Water Cycle Management Project (Strategic Water Planning Study) which is being funded under the Safe and Secure Water Program of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (the Department).

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the status report for the Integrated Water Cycle Management Project

REPORT

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the status of the critical Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy Project (Strategic Water Planning Study) which is being funded under the Safe and Secure Water Program of the Department of Climate Change, Energy the Environment and Water.

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 21 May 2024 Council considered a report and resolved:

- That Council notes the funding available under the Deed of Agreement which includes a review of water supply options within the scope of the Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) plan as submitted by Public Works Advisory and the completion date of December 2024 as required by the Department of Climate Change, Energy and Environment and Water.*
- That Council authorises the expenditure of up to a maximum of \$551,806 (\$496,625 being grant funded and \$55,180 being Council funded) for the engagement of Public Works Advisory to carry out the tasks agreed between the Department of Climate Change, Energy and Environment and Water, Public Works Advisory, and the Council to deliver:*
 - Mandatory milestone studies valued at \$405,603; and,*
 - Optional studies valued at \$146,203 subject to approval by the Department of Climate Change, Energy and Environment.*
- That Council authorises the expenditure of \$398,544 (\$358,689 being grant funded and \$39,854 being Council funded) to deliver:*

- *project management valued at \$187,689; and,*
- *the engagement of a communication consultant valued at \$72,000; and, chemical treatment studies valued at \$99,000.*

The now agreed scope of works (refer attached GANTT Chart) is to be completed in accordance with the Department's Regulatory and Assurance Framework 2022 and based on methodologies developed by NSW Public Works Advisory (PW).

Working with Council Officers and the Department, PW has developed a detailed plan and costing to undertake the scope of the work to develop the Water Strategy. The Department has signed the Deed of Agreement (17 April 2024) and has accepted the PW scope of work and its costings and offered a grant to Council to utilise PW to undertake the specific tasks as set out in their final Proposal dated 20 October 2023.

The Department has also provided additional grant funding to Council for the employment of a Project Manager; a communications and community engagement consultant; and a support Consultant to undertake further investigations into water quality issues and required treatments.

The grant offered by the Deed of Agreement by the Department is up to \$855,315.00 (GST exclusive) based on a projected total project cost of \$950,350.00, or actual project costs whichever is the lesser. Council's requirement will be to fund 10% of the end cost (expected to be \$950,350). Council's maximum expenditure exposure will be \$95,035 if the entire project budget is expended.

Background

Consultants SMEC and NSW Public Works completed a quantitative assessment of Uralla's water security in 2013 and 2015. Water security is determined in terms of the reliability of the bulk water supply to meet projected demand for water. The 2015 study states *"modelling indicates that the Uralla water supply system would need to be augmented to provide a secure yield which matches the dry year demand."*

The Department of Primary Industry and Environment (DPIE) encouraged revision of earlier water security assessments to incorporate the record-breaking drought of 2018-20 and the latest methods to assess climate change impacts. This modelling is essential to re-calculate the actual secure yield of Kentucky Creek Dam and the size of required source augmentation or new water supplies.

Water security assessment is a key part of the Integrated Water Cycle Management plan (IWCM) for which Council is eligible for 90% funding from the Department of Climate Change, Energy and Environment and Water (DCCEEW). NSW Public Works Advisory is the ideal body to undertake the IWCM as it is highly experienced in development of these plans and as a state government agency can be engaged under s55(3)(b) of the Local Government Act without tender.

Subsequently, a Deed of Agreement, dated 5 March 2024, was signed by the General Manager. The Deed of Agreement includes the participation of Public Works to undertake the tasks, as agreed with by Council staff, as set out in its proposal (Strategic Planning Uralla Shire Council) dated 20 October 2023 and in compliance with a set of Milestones. The Deed of Agreement was subsequently signed by the Department's Director of Grants Programs on 17 April 2024.

Current situation

In accordance with the funding Deed of Agreement Council has undertaken the following steps:

- Employed a full-time Project Manager to manage the project (commenced 22 April 2024).
- Commissioned PW to undertake the mandatory tasks as set out in its proposal dated 20 October 2023 (Note: the Deed provides funding for an additional 6 Provisional Items including a workshop and presentation of the draft strategy to Council). The program on delivering on the mandatory Items are illustrated in the attachment (GANTT Chart).

- Commissioned a Public Relations consultant, Becscomm Pty Ltd to undertake a comprehensive community engagement program to involve the various community groups in the process. The work entails a comprehensive program of stakeholder and community engagement activities, attendance at the PW workshops and community and Council briefing sessions and reporting.
- Organised a workshop (25th September) with representatives of the Department of Climate Change and NSW Health at which some 12 representatives, including three independent consultants and Znet, attended to review and discuss the arsenic incident dating from November 2019 to February 2020 as a first step to managing the potential for further arsenic contamination in the short term and to ensure that longer term mitigation measures are included in the Strategic Water Planning Study.
- Council has advertised and held interviews for a support communications resource to assist with the community engagement and communication program. It is anticipated that the successful candidate will commence work soon.

All the above activities are funded within the Deed of Agreement. The program of work and tasks being undertaken by PW and the community engagement is being coordinated and managed by the Project Manager. The communication and involvement with the community will be greatly assisted by the support communications person.

The work with PW has commenced with Council staff providing, in recent weeks, a comprehensive set of information on the water and sewer system, community usage and the treatment processes and its performance (ref GANTT Chart of work and its timing).

In relation to the risk of arsenic contamination of the water supply some essential studies have been identified including the sampling of the sediment in the dam and in surface and groundwater and are underway. Proposed studies include the review of management of sediment going into the dam, identifying short term opportunities for managing arsenic contamination and the scoping of studies for managing the longer-term risk.

In conjunction with the Department's Advanced Operational Support team, studies have been undertaken at the Kentucky Water Treatment Plant to improve performance of the processes while at the same time efforts have been aimed at improving drinking water and aesthetic quality.

Bathymetric studies are nearing completion which will provide improved information and a more accurate yield of the Kentucky Dam supply. A similar study is likely to be undertaken for the Bundarra Water Supply scheme storages.

Staff have prepared a press release, to accompany the adoption of the recommendations of Council, to communicate the commencement of the Strategic Water Planning Study.

Next Steps

The important Milestones to be achieved under the Deed of Agreement and which align with the Tasks set out in the attached GANTT Chart:

1. Milestone 3 – Issues Paper: Submit a draft issues paper to the Department for review – 18 April 2025
2. Milestone 4 – Water Security Assessment: Submit Draft Water Security Assessment to the Department for review – 25th June 2025.
3. Milestone 7 – Submit Options Report to Department for Review – 25th June 2025.

To achieve these important milestones the following Workshops and Meetings have been identified:

- Workshop 1 – Water Security from Monday 17th of March 2025 onwards
- Workshop 2 – Presentation of draft Issues Paper findings from Monday 07th of April 2025 onwards
- Online Technical Options Review Meeting Wednesday 25th of June 2025
- Workshop 3 – Presentation of draft strategy report findings from Monday 15th of September 2025 onwards

As part of the work program Council and Public Works have negotiated the following deliverables and the timeframe.

Deliverables

- Draft Water Security report Friday 14th of March 2025
- Draft Issues Paper report Friday 4th of April 2025
- Final Issues Paper report Friday 18th of April 2025
- Draft Options Assessment Report Tuesday 24th of June 2025
- Final Options Assessment Report Wednesday 25th of June 2025
- Draft Strategy Report Friday 29th of August 2025
- Final Strategy Report Monday 15th of September 2025
- Drought and Emergency Response Contingency Plan Monday 29th of September 2025

The various reports prepared by PW and Becscomm will:

- identify risks in managing town water and sewerage services and offer opportunities for improvement.
- provide a comprehensive 30-year strategy for resourcing with appropriate community input.
- ensure any necessary capital works are essential and appropriately sized for the provision of appropriate, affordable, and cost-effective urban water services that meet community needs and protect public health and the environment into the future.
- inform and support Council's Asset Management Planning by identifying the appropriate capital investment plan and by attracting co-funding (grants) under SSWP Stream 1 for essential high priority capital works.

NSW DCCEEW has put together a training material package to educate new Councillor's on their obligations for water and sewerage management. The material is located here:

<https://water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/our-work/local-water-utilities/councillor-training>

CONCLUSION

Water security requires solutions that work locally and are cost-effective at scale. To survive a severe drought a community needs access to a large storage of water at the start of the drought. Solutions are capital-intensive and will require external funding. Bodies in control of funding expect Council to take an evidence-based approach to options development and feasibility assessment. The Strategic Water Planning Study is the appropriate vehicle for progressing such an evidence-based exploration of options including viability and high-level costings and the community acceptance and willingness to pay.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

Informed community engagement of water supply options will include information on viability of each option to provide better water security, construction and operational costs, regulatory requirements, and risks. These will be addressed within the Strategic Water Planning Study.

Policy and Regulation

Nil.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

Council is eligible for further funding for capital works emanating from the IWCMP under the Safe and Secure Water Program (SSWP). A review of water supply options will give high-level cost estimates for design and construction works.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

Development of alternate water supply will be capital-intensive, requiring access to capital grants. It is important to demonstrate to funding bodies that a rational, evidence-based approach has been taken in options development and a business case consistent with Treasury guidelines.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

Nil. Succession planning is a known issue in the Water & Sewer operations team, but this is normally considered in the W&S Strategic Business Plan rather than the IWCMP.

Legal and Risk Management

Secure water supply and quality to the communities of Uralla and Bundarra are a key risk especially with variations resulting from climate change.

Performance Measures

Completion of assessment of alternate water supply options and a level of community acceptance.

Project Management

A dedicated project manager has been employed to manage both the IWCM and the groundwater projects; 90% funding is available under the IWCM and 100% funding under the groundwater project.

ID		Task Mode	Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	Predecessors	2024		Qtr 3, 2024		Qtr 4, 2024			Qtr 1, 2025			Qtr 2, 2025			Qtr 3, 2025			Qtr 4,	
								May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
1			Project Start-up	106 days	Mon 5/08/24	Mon 30/12/24																			
2			Information gathering	4 wks	Mon 5/08/24	Fri 30/08/24																			
3			Initial information review	4 wks	Mon 2/09/24	Fri 27/09/24	2																		
4			Data gathering site visit	2 days	Tue 1/10/24	Wed 2/10/24	3FS+1 day																		
5			Review information	1 day	Thu 3/10/24	Thu 3/10/24	4																		
6			Formal start-up meeting	1 day	Fri 25/10/24	Fri 25/10/24	5FS+3 wks																		
7			Issues Paper	141 days	Fri 4/10/24	Fri 18/04/25																			
8			Population and water cycle analysis inc. water demand and sewer load forecasts	15 wks	Fri 4/10/24	Thu 16/01/25	5																		
9			Capacity Assessment - hydraulic modelling and reuse schem	6.4 wks	Fri 17/01/25	Mon 3/03/25	8,5																		
10			Performance assessment - HBT, DWMS and Circular 18	4 wks	Fri 17/01/25	Thu 13/02/25	2,8																		
11			Performance and capacity assessment of sewerage schemes	6 wks	Fri 17/01/25	Thu 27/02/25	8																		
12			Secure yield modelling	4 wks	Fri 31/01/25	Thu 27/02/25	8FS+2 wks																		
13			Preparation of 30-year baseline asset renewal plan	6 wks	Fri 4/10/24	Thu 14/11/24	5																		
14			Water security draft report	2 wks	Fri 28/02/25	Thu 13/03/25	12																		
15			Workshop 1 - Presentation of water security report	2 days	Fri 14/03/25	Mon 17/03/25	14																		
16			Draft Issues paper	2.6 wks	Tue 18/03/25	Thu 3/04/25	8,9,10,11,12,13,14,																		
17			Workshop 2 - completion of Issues Paper	3 days	Fri 4/04/25	Tue 8/04/25	16																		
18			Issues Paper report	1.6 wks	Wed 9/04/25	Fri 18/04/25	17																		
19			Options Assessment	72 days?	Tue 18/03/25	Wed 25/06/25																			
20			Water security options assessment study	10 wks	Tue 18/03/25	Mon 26/05/25	15																		
21			Options evaluation and assessment - system capacity, demand management, effluent reuse	5.4 wks	Mon 21/04/25	Tue 27/05/25	18																		
22			Draft Options Assessment Report	4 wks	Wed 28/05/25	Tue 24/06/25	21,20																		
23			Technical Review Meeting	1 day	Wed 11/06/25	Wed 11/06/25	22FS-10 days																		
24			Final options assessment report	1 day?	Wed 25/06/25	Wed 25/06/25	22																		
25			Scenario creation and analysis	35 days	Thu 12/06/25	Wed 30/07/25																			
26			Financial modelling	3 wks	Thu 12/06/25	Wed 2/07/25	23																		
27			First Cut Developer Charges	3 wks	Thu 12/06/25	Wed 2/07/25	23																		
28			Scenario development and assessment	4 wks	Thu 3/07/25	Wed 30/07/25	27,26																		
29			Strategy Report - including financial plan	33 days	Thu 31/07/25	Mon 15/09/25																			
30			Draft Strategy Report	4.4 wks	Thu 31/07/25	Fri 29/08/25	28																		
31			Workshop 3 - presentation of draft Strategy	1 day	Mon 1/09/25	Mon 1/09/25	30																		
32			Final Strategy Report	10 days	Tue 2/09/25	Mon 15/09/25	31																		
33			Drought and Emergency Response Contingency Plan	4 wks	Tue 2/09/25	Mon 29/09/25	31																		
Project: Uralla SC, IWCM Program Date: Wed 2/10/24				Task		Project Summary		Manual Task		Start-only		Deadline													
				Split		Inactive Task		Duration-only		Finish-only		Progress													
				Milestone		Inactive Milestone		Manual Summary Rollup		External Tasks		Manual Progress													
				Summary		Inactive Summary		Manual Summary		External Milestone															
Page 1																									

Draft Uralla Shire Council Press Release

NSW State Government Grant; Safe and Secure Water Program Grant

Uralla Shire Council is pleased to announce that it has received a grant of up to \$855,315 from the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water under the Safe and Secure Water Program to develop a comprehensive 30-year water strategy for our community.

The funds will enable the Council to undertake several studies to identify the major risks that Council faces in the long-term management of its water supply and wastewater systems and to identify options to improve reliability and sustainability.

Under the terms of the grant Deed of Agreement, Uralla Shire Council will be required to contribute 10% towards the cost of the work.

At the recent meeting of the Council held on 29th October Council noted the appointment of NSW Public Works to undertake the water strategy study items, which are aimed at providing a plan to achieve a sustainable water supply over the next 30 years.

Council also noted the appointment of a Project Manager to oversee the work, to coordinate plan and manage subconsultants and to manage the investigation of both short- and long-term risks and actions to minimise the risk of arsenic contamination of the water supply.

An important part of the program is to include input and feedback from the community and stakeholders into planning decisions for the water and wastewater services of the towns of Uralla and Bundarra.

To assist Council with rolling out a program of community and stakeholder consultation, Council has engaged specialist engagement consultancy Becscomm Pty Ltd. Becscomm is experienced in delivering large engagement programs for local and state government projects across NSW and ACT.

The community and stakeholder engagement program will include activities such as a survey, meetings with key stakeholders and community groups and a community information session to capture community and stakeholder feedback. Feedback from these activities will inform Council's decision making for future planning for water and wastewater services.

A central component of the studies will be investigating water supply challenges including undertaking a water security assessment.

Council acknowledges the difficulties faced by the community during the 2019 to 2020 drought and will build on the independent community consultation and engagement undertaken during this period including the lessons learnt as a Council.

In 2023, Council resolved to engage Public Works Advisory to undertake the technical investigations and studies.

Public Works has a proven record when it comes to strategic planning for several NSW Local Councils. The Strategic Planning Document is an essential element for Councils in obtaining grant funding for capital works programs.

In addition, Council will also be working closely with NSW Health on water quality concerns and will be identifying opportunities to ensure that our water supply remains compliant with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines. Similarly, engagement with the NSW Environmental Protection Authority

(EPA) will occur with regards to the performance of Council's wastewater system with a view to meeting or exceeding the environmental regulator's operating requirements.

The water strategy aims to ensure that there is a sound evidence base to justify the necessary capital works essential for the provision of appropriate, affordable and cost-effective urban water services and that Council's service provisions will continue to meet the communities needs and protect public health and the environment for the next 30 years and beyond.

The \$1 billion Safe and Secure Water Program is currently funding more than 250 projects across NSW that are in various stages of delivery.

Further information can be obtained by contacting the Council.

14.10 Civil Infrastructure Works Report

Department:	Infrastructure & Development
Prepared By:	Manager Civil Infrastructure
Authorised By:	Director Infrastructure & Development

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	2.	We drive the economy to support prosperity
	4.	We are an independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	2.3.	Communities that are well serviced with essential infrastructure
	4.1.	Informed and collaborative leadership in our community
	4.2.	A strategic, accountable and representative Council
	4.3.	An efficient and effective independent local government

SUMMARY

This report presents an update for works on grant funded projects and specific maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the Civil Works Report for October 2024

REPORT

This report informs Council of the works progress on grant funded projects and specific routine maintenance work in the Shire.

Main Road Maintenance	
MR73 Thunderbolts Way	Bitumen patching of road surface defects is routinely undertaken, particularly monitoring defects to the south of Uralla. Road shoulder grading was completed from Bundarra to Yarrowyck during wet weather when other work types could not be attempted. Further shoulder grading is planned to control vegetation and assist surface drainage off the traffic lanes.
MR124 Bundarra Road	Bitumen road surface defects have been patched. Roadside vegetation control has been cleared in the Invergowrie area with further work required to improve intersection sight lines. Sweeping of loose aggregate build up has been carried out at appropriate side road intersections.
MR132 Barraba Road	Maintenance grading has been completed and patching of the bitumen surface sections where necessary.

Sealed Roads Maintenance	
Urban streets	Routine pothole patching has been carried out in Uralla and Bundarra streets. Dirt build up has been removed from intersections and gutters have been swept to keep drainage clear.
Rural sealed roads	Pothole patching, drainage maintenance and roadside slashing has been undertaken across the road network.

Unsealed Roads Maintenance Grading	
Rural unsealed roads	General maintenance grading has been undertaken in the southern Glenburnie, Wollun and Kentucky areas and Baldersleigh Road and Georges Creek Road in the north.
Bendemeer Road	Intensive work was undertaken to clear obstructed culverts along Bendemeer Road south of Kingstown and along Warrabah Road. Cleaning drainage culverts is critical to minimise any water damage to the pavement surface on gravel roads which was the case on Bendemeer Road. As the site conditions were extremely wet, further shaping and clearing will be included with next grading work if the areas are dry.

Construction underway	
MR73 Thunderbolts Way (Two Mile Creek project)	Guardrail has been replaced on the Two Mile Creek culvert to make the structure safe and compliant. Further work to finish drainage outlets is being programmed with pipes and box culverts ordered.
MR73 Thunderbolts Way (Scrubby Gully project)	Guardrail installations are complete. Wet ground conditions have prevented work to finish culvert headwall and verge embankment backfilling. This will be planned during summer.
MR73 Thunderbolts Way (Laura Creek project)	Survey is complete and design being finalised for rehabilitation of curve sections both sides of Laura Creek bridge. Pipes and box culverts have been ordered for widening of drainage structures.
Kingstown Road (Kentucky Creek Blackspot project)	Guardrail has been installed with pavement widening either side of Kentucky Creek. Large granite rock was removed for safety and to help drainage of the pavement. Embankment protection has been carried out with jute mesh and grass seeding undertaken to regenerate the surface cover on the batters. Safety signage has been installed on the curve and further signage adjustments are being planned. Drainage pit restoration will also be carried out with the remaining funds of the grant.
Terrible Vale Road rehabilitation 8 to 10km	Drainage widening, including some box culverts, is almost complete with some headwalls to be poured. Earthworks have commenced for formation widening.
Hawthorne Drive	Drainage widening of pipe culverts is complete. Vegetation clearing has been done with bulk of material mulched for reuse by Council. Earthworks have commenced on table drain clearing and formation widening.

Bridges	
Rural bridges	Bridge surface drainage has been cleared and cleaning under approach guardrails done such as Munsies Bridge at Gostwyck and others around Bundarra. Further work will be programmed.

Signage	
Signage renewal	Several damaged or misaligned signs have been corrected. Several parking signs in Uralla has been updated with further signs ordered to clarify parking limitations. Additional signage has been installed on several rural grant funded projects to comply with funding requirements including Northeys Road, Hawthorne Drive and Terrible Vale Road.

Town and Parks	
Uralla	Maintenance of playground equipment is ongoing.
	Weed spraying is being undertaken to control growth on sports reserves and roadsides, and along pathways in reserves.
	Arrangements have been made to commence, during October, more intensive maintenance in the CBD area along Bridge Street including median island garden enhancement, weed control in gutters and tree maintenance.
Bundarra	Mowing parks and verges in the town area is routinely undertaken including passive areas on the town approaches.
	Improvements to pram ramps are being investigated.

MAJOR PROJECTS – PROGRAM TARGETS AND STATUS				
Project	Source of Funds	Budget	Target Date for Completion	Status
Kingstown Road, Uralla (9.5 to 10.05km)	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 3	\$252,330	30-Dec-23	Completed
Northeys Road, Uralla (1 to 1.5km)	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 3	\$134,752	30-Dec-23	Completed
Northeys Road, Uralla (1.5 to 2.5km)	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 3	\$277,585	30-Dec-23	Completed
Northeys Road, Uralla (2.5 - 3.25km)	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 3	\$212,232	30-Dec-23	Completed
Gostwyck Road, Uralla (2-2.25,2.5-3.75,5.25-5.75,6.25-6.75km)	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 3	\$410,992	30-Dec-23	Completed
Gostwyck Road, Uralla (8.25 - 9.25km)	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 3	\$277,587	30-Dec-23	Completed
Various Roads Resheeting Uralla Shire Council rural LGA (Hardens)	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 3	\$278,725	30-Dec-23	Completed
Thunderbolts Way MR73, North of Uralla – Ferndale Segment Ch27.7km to 29.2km (1,500m x 8m) (0 at Uralla St, North)	Regional and Local Roads Repair Program	\$780,000	30-Jun-25	Completed
Warwick St, Uralla 2 sections, McCrossin Street to Rock Abbey Road (550m x 6m), & Barleyfields Intersection (600m x 7m)	Regional and Local Roads Repair Program	\$487,500	30-Jun-25	Completed
Bergen Road, Kentucky 1km x 5m comprising 2 discrete sections	Regional and Local Roads Repair Program	\$325,000	30-Jun-25	Completed

Project	Source of Funds	Budget	Target Date for Completion	Status
Mihi Road Mihi, Intermittent patch gravelling 1km	Regional and Local Roads Repair Program	\$86,908	30-Jun-25	Completed
Bundarra Pram Ramps	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 4 A	\$30,106	30-Jan-25	Project scoping underway
Park Street Pathway	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 4 A	\$75,000	30-Jan-25	Project to be scoped.
John Street Pathway	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 4 A	\$75,000	30-April-25	Project to be scoped.
King Maitland Street Roundabout	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 4 A	\$390,000	30-May-25	Project scoping underway
Noalimba Avenue Footpath	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 4 A	\$26,000	30-April-25	Project to be scoped.
Terrible Vale Road Culvert Crossing	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 4 B	\$100,000	30-April-25	Consultant scope being compiled
Rocky River Culvert Crossing	Local Roads Community Infrastructure Phase 4 B	\$243,847	30-April-25	Awaiting results of geotechnical investigation
Kingstown Road Heavy Patching 37 to 42km	Roads to Recovery 2019-24 Program	\$369,837	30-Jun-24	Completed
Terrible Vale Road rehabilitation 8 to 10km	Roads to Recovery 2019-24 Program	\$519,659	30-Nov-24	Project commenced, 5% complete
Hawthorne Drive rehabilitation 5.75 to 7.5km (Northeys Rd to Arding Rd)	RERRP program	\$500,000	1-Dec-2024	Project commenced, 5% complete
Plane Avenue Shared Pathway (Rowan Ave to Sports Complex)	Get NSW Active program	\$120,000	20-Dec-2024	Preconstruction commenced
Gostwyck Road rehabilitation 2.5 to 4.0km	RERRP program	\$500,000	1-April-2025	Planning commenced
Faulkner Street Drainage extension	Council Funding	\$60,000	20-Dec-2024	Materials ordered
Hill Street Drainage extension	Council Funding	\$10,000	28-Feb-2025	Materials ordered
Thunderbolts Way MR73, Two Mile Creek	Restart NSW Project 2724	\$797,591	30-Jun-25	90% complete
Thunderbolts Way MR73, Scrubby Gully	Restart NSW Project 2724	\$1,972,262	30-Jun-25	80% complete
Thunderbolts Way MR73, Laura Creek	Restart NSW Project 2724	\$1,172,929	30-Jun-25	No site works 2% complete

CONCLUSION

The Civil Works Report provides Council with information on the progress of works to the start of October 2024.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

Council's progress on works is conveyed to the community through Facebook, website information, Councillor Bulletins and Council reports.

Staff also liaise with the community directly on customer requests for maintenance issues and whenever capital works may impact on property matters.

Policy and Regulation

Procurement Policy

Transport Asset Management Plan

Stormwater Asset Management Plan

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

The capital works program is undertaken in accordance with the adopted annual budget and grant funding programs. The program aims to follow the long-term financial plan renewing infrastructure at appropriate time and condition intervals of the assets to keep the network operating at a satisfactory level.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

Civil infrastructure works are undertaken as specified in individual Asset Management Plans or within the adopted budget values. Desired minimum level of service is a satisfactory condition focussing on improvement of level 4 and 5 condition assets.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

Council staff and equipment is utilised on works to maximise efficiency of works. Council's staff resources have been particularly stretched in recent months due to leave absences.

Legal and Risk Management

Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)

Roads Act, 1993 (NSW)

Work Health & Safety Act 2011 (NSW)

Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 (NSW)

Performance Measures

Performance is measured in the delivery of completed works and within the budget allocation.

Project Management

The infrastructure works program is managed by the Infrastructure and Development Department.

14.11 Register Resolutions Actions Status as at 16 October 2024

Department:	General Manager's Office
Prepared By:	Executive Assistant
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/24/17100
Attachments:	1. Resolution Actions Status Report October 2024 ↓
LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK	
Goal:	4. We are an independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	4.1. Informed and collaborative leadership in our community

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the Resolution Action Status updates.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the Resolution Actions Status Report as at 16 October 2024.

REPORT

Following every council meeting, the resolutions of Council which require action are compiled. This document is referred to as the Resolutions Action Status Report.

The purpose of the Resolutions Action Status Report is to enable Council to monitor progress of resolutions until they are actioned.

Once resolutions have been completed they are removed automatically from the report.

CONCLUSION

The Resolutions Action Status Report is presented to Council at each Ordinary Meeting.

RESOLUTION ACTIONS STATUS REPORT					Printed: 16 October 2024 2:44 PM
MEETING DATE	ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	MOTION	COMMENTS	
Council 23/11/2015	14.1	Bergen Road Land Acquisition and Exchange for Road Works	RESOLUTION 01.11/15 Moved: Cr K Ward Seconded: Cr L Cooper That the Council approve for the exchange of land associated with the reconstruction of Bergen Road and authorise the General Manager to complete all documentation. Unanimous	18 Jul 2023 Transferred from old system., Notice of road closure gazetted. Plan of subdivision - in progress as at Dec 2015, Solicitor contact numerous time for update - awaiting update. 06 Sep 2023 Publication of Government Gazette in Feb 2023. Solicitor following up with Surveyor for signatures, will then proceed to Deed for sign off. 11 Sep 2023 Solicitor has made contact with Surveyor - Deed of Settlement expected to progress end of September 2023 if planned meeting goes to plan. 18 Oct 2023 Contact has been made with the Solicitor - awaiting update. 13 Dec 2023 A face to face meeting in January 2024 has been requested with APJ from the GM to review what the hold up continues to be in closing this matter. 16 Jan 2024 Meeting held with solicitors resulting in , - finalising of the land registration requires signatures - GM following up on Walcha Council to support progress;; - Surveyor can then prepare for Council's signature for registration with Land Registry Services 21 Feb 2024 Solicitor is now to update the Plans in preparation for execution by USC and by owner, Once the documents are executed solicitor can lodge them with the LRS for registration and thereafter proceed with the dedication of public road to the public. 17 Apr 2024 No change since last report 07 May 2024 Contact made with Solicitor for follow on Progress - awaiting response	

RESOLUTION ACTIONS STATUS REPORT		Printed: 16 October 2024 2:44 PM
	<p>28 May 2024</p> <p>Solicitor advised the finalisation of the plans with the surveyor and have now received and liaised with Walcha Council for the avoidance of any doubt regarding the small parcel of land that falls into their Shire. Written confirmation has been received from Walcha Council advising no issue with proceeding as planned. The Land Registry Services Registration is now proceeding. We await their confirmation before we can execute the documents to proceed with full registration. We expect this to happen mid July 2024.</p> <p>10 Jul 2024</p> <p>Followed up with APJ solicitors on actions to date - actively seeking Acquisition Deed to close off the matter.</p> <p>17 Jul 2024</p> <p>Solicitors met with owner to gain agreement. Plans show an area the owner is not familiar with. A further meeting will be set for Surveyor to run through the original plans and explain to the owner. We are confident this will lead to signing off on the final documents that will then be presented to Lands Registry Services. Targeting August 2024 meeting. Meeting is planned for Wed 14 August 2024.</p> <p>22 Aug 2024</p> <p>Update from APJ Law received on 22/8/24. Documents ready for execution. GM signature required to enable documents to be sent to Crown Lands for final action.</p> <p>27 Aug 2024</p> <p>Surveyor will arrange collection of the documents from Solicitor APJ office and will liaise with Crown Lands for execution to allow first title creation., Council will need to apply an exempt subdivision number under the provisions of https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/epi-2008-0572#sec.2.75-2.75(A) – widening of a public road., Document set prior to lodgement to Crown Lands, and Land Registry Services., Simon Vivers to action</p> <p>16 Sep 2024</p> <p>Awaiting further information from Crown Lands.</p>	

RESOLUTION ACTIONS STATUS REPORT

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			16 Oct 2024
			The surveyor has advised that Crown Land approval/signature is not required for lodging the plan and is proceeding to lodge with Land Registry Services. APJ Law will then arrange the gazettal for the road closure.
Council 19/12/2023	14.4	Project Updates - Public Spaces Legacy Program	20 Mar 2024 Item 2 - "Advertise Uralla" Update - This has been presented to UTEC for comment/input and is awaiting return from UTEC.
			17 Jul 2024
			USC awaiting UTEC result.
			21 Aug 2024
			Awaiting final advice from UTEC.
			16 Oct 2024
			Director Infrastructure and Development attended October UTEC meeting and discussed this issue. UTEC are deciding whether they continue with the design or hand it back to Council. Council officers are on standby to progress. Further update after next UTEC meeting.
RESOLUTION 10.12/23 Moved: Cr Tom O'Connor Seconded: Cr Lone Petrov That Council <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the update and status reports for the Rotary Park Project; the Pioneer Park Project; and the Glen Project; and 2. Ask the General Manager to circulate the 'Advertising Uralla' draft content to Councillors for their information prior to finalising for display at The Glen. For: Crs Robert Bell, Robert Crouch, Tim Bower, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Bruce McMullen, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov and Tara Toomey Against: Nil			
			CARRIED 9/0

RESOLUTION ACTIONS STATUS REPORT

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Council
23/04/2024

14.2

Draft Policy - Keeping of
Animals (Urban Areas) (2024)**RESOLUTION 08.04/24****Moved:** Deputy Mayor Robert Crouch**Seconded:** Cr Leanne Doran**That Council:**

1. Endorses the Draft Policy - Keeping of Animals Policy (Urban Areas) for Public Exhibition for a period of 28 days for the purposes of receiving public submissions, subject to the following amendments:
 - a) Page 5, Clause 6.5: Delete 'Construction of kennel facilities must comply with the Building Code of Australia'.
 - b) Insert into Part 4 'Statement': Any animal housing structures shall be structurally adequate and comply with Building Code of Australia if required.
 - c) Delete all references to *Schedule 2 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* references in the draft Policy where it relates to specific animals/birds, noting that these provisions apply as noted in Clause 5 on Page 2 of the draft Policy.
2. Notify the following groups of the revised policy and the opportunity to provide feedback upon commencement of Public Exhibition:
 - ☐ Uralla & Bundarra Pony Clubs;
 - ☐ New England Exhibition of Poultry Association;
 - ☐ Uralla & Bundarra Showground Land Managers; and
 - ☐ Any other group likely to be impacted by the Draft Policy.
3. Receives a further report following the public exhibition period subject to the receipt of submissions and/or if the draft policy is proposed to be amended.
4. Authorises the adoption of the Draft Policy - Keeping of Animals (Urban Areas) if no submissions are received, and no changes are made.

For: Crs Robert Bell, Robert Crouch, Tim Bower,
Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor,
Lone Petrov

Against: Tara Toomey

17 Jul 2024

Public exhibition feedback presented to Councillor Workshop July 2024. Councils feedback from workshop currently being incorporated into the draft policy to be presented in October Meeting.

22 Aug 2024

Officers preparing amendments to policy for report to October Council meeting.

16 Oct 2024

Proposed amendments to the draft policy following exhibition are still being finalised and will be reported to the November Ordinary Meeting.

RESOLUTION ACTIONS STATUS REPORT					Printed: 16 October 2024 2:44 PM
CARRIED 7/1					
Council 23/07/2024	14.4	Funding of Stage 2 Artworks - Pioneer Park	<p>RESOLUTION 28.07/24</p> <p>Moved: Cr Bruce McMullen Seconded: Cr Leanne Doran</p> <p>That Council requests the funding partner vary the Funding Agreement for the Stronger Country Communities Round 5A Grant to reallocate the available funding in accordance with the recommended SCCF Round 5A Project List in this report.</p> <p>For: Crs Robert Bell, Robert Crouch, Tim Bower, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Bruce McMullen, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov and Tara Toomey</p> <p>Against: Nil</p>	<p>16 Sep 2024</p> <p>Director Infrastructure and Development advises communication with the funding body is underway.</p> <p>16 Oct 2024</p> <p>No further update this month.</p>	
CARRIED 9/0					
Council 23/07/2024	15.2	The Uralla Landfill Master Plan and Residual Waste Options Assessment	<p>RESOLUTION 39.07/24</p> <p>Moved: Deputy Mayor Robert Crouch Seconded: Cr Lone Petrov</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes and receives the Talis Uralla Landfill Master Plan and the Residual Waste Options Assessment 2. Delegates authority to the General Manager to open negotiations with both Armidale Regional Council and Tamworth Regional Council regarding future potential access to their respective landfills and the potential gate fees. 3. Receives a future report and advice following further staff analysis and research of the issues raised in the Talis report. 4. Creates a protected Waste Reserve Fund. 5. Assesses the financial implications of the Talis report and incorporates appropriate issues into Council's Long Term Financial Plan 	<p>21 Aug 2024</p> <p>Officers working with key personnel in Armidale Council to identify opportunities.</p> <p>04 Sep 2024</p> <p>Council officers are still working on external service providers like Armidale Regional Council or Tamworth Council on the future of our residual waste.</p> <p>16 Oct 2024</p> <p>1. Manager Environment and Waste (MEW) and Group Manager Infrastructure Services visited officers in Armidale Regional Council regarding on Monday 14 October 2014 regarding the possibility of Uralla using Armidale's regional landfill for residual waste disposal. It was revealed that Armidale is currently exceeding their allowable yearly tonnages of 15,000 tonnes of waste landfilled. However, Armidale will seek a licence variation to increase their tonnages to facilitate support to Uralla. The process can easily take up to a year to complete.</p>	

RESOLUTION ACTIONS STATUS REPORT					Printed: 16 October 2024 2:44 PM
<p>6. Undertakes best-practice re-profiling at the Uralla Landfill in order to maximise the remaining life of that facility.</p> <p>7. Investigate the Curby soft plastic scheme or similar as part of the further staff analysis.</p> <p>8. Notes that community engagement and education including with schools will be an important part of any future waste management solution.</p> <p>For: Crs Robert Bell, Robert Crouch, Tim Bower, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Bruce McMullen, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov and Tara Toomey</p> <p>Against: Nil</p> <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED 9/0</p>					<p>2. MEW has contacted EPA regarding the possibility of creating new landfill cells at the Uralla Landfill to manage our residual waste while we work through the different options available. EPA requires an engineering design of the cells showing how leachate will be handled before approvals can be given. Officers are reviewing the landfill site to identify a possible area for the new cell.</p>
Council 23/07/2024	15.3	Interim Collection Contract	Kerbside Waste	<p>RESOLUTION 40.07/24</p> <p>Moved: Cr Sarah Burrows</p> <p>Seconded: Cr Leanne Doran</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Accepts the tender from JR Richards and Sons to provide kerbside waste collection in Invergowrie, Bundarra, Uralla, Kentucky, and Walcha for a period of six months and thereafter for a further six months subject to satisfactory performance. Delegates authority to the General Manager to enter the Contract. Notes the assessed cost of \$353,630.64 for delivering the service for the six months contract based on current hourly rate of \$184.76 and total estimated 319 hours per month. <p>For: Crs Robert Bell, Robert Crouch, Tim Bower, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Bruce McMullen, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov and Tara Toomey</p> <p>Against: Nil</p>	<p>21 Aug 2024</p> <p>Working on contract for Waste provider.</p> <p>04 Sep 2024</p> <p>Still working on getting a written contract in place to commence agreement</p> <p>16 Oct 2024</p> <p>Contract is being finalised and will be executed imminently. Kerbside services are not impacted. It is noted that service performance has improved in recent months.</p>

RESOLUTION ACTIONS STATUS REPORT

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CARRIED 9/0

Council
23/07/2024

15.4

Proposed Purchase of Side
Loader Waste Vehicle**RESOLUTION 41.07/24****Moved:** Cr Tom O'Connor**Seconded:** Cr Leanne Doran**That Council:**

1. Receives the contracted vehicle unless an alternative buyer can be arranged before the contracted vehicle's delivery to Council.
2. Delegates authority to the General Manager to negotiate with any party for the purposes of divesting Council of the contracted vehicle at lowest possible cost to Council.
3. If required to receive the vehicle prior to arranging an alternative buyer, delegates authority to the General Manager to utilise sufficient cash reserves to acquit the purchase contract.

For: Crs Robert Bell, Robert Crouch, Sarah Burrows,
Leanne Doran, Bruce McMullen, Tom O'Connor
and Lone Petrov

Against: Crs Tim Bower and Tara Toomey

CARRIED 7/2

22 Aug 2024

External buyer being sought through waste management network.

04 Sep 2024

Supplier has alerted MEW about a potential buyer from Norther Territory but yet to make any official contact with the said potential buyer.

16 Oct 2024

1. Side loader has been fully paid for and stored in the warehouse of Superior Pack in Sydney., 2. A potential buyer has contacted Manager Fleet, Stores & Workshop and has been given all the necessary specifications for consideration. A further update will be provided to Council as soon as known.

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14.12 New England Weeds Authority update

Department:	General Manager's Office
Prepared By:	General Manager
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/24/16838
Attachments:	1. Draft Cashflow NEWA October 2024 ↓
LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK	
Goal:	4. We are an independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	4.3. An efficient and effective independent local government
	4.2. A strategic, accountable and representative Council

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the state of affairs at the New England County Council (with the operational arm being the New England Weeds Authority, NEWA). Earlier this year, the Minister for Local Government suspended the NEWA Board and appointed an Administrator, Mr John Rayner, to undertake an urgent review of NEWA's financial position and report back to the Minister in August. Mr Rayner's appointment was recently extended to November 2024.

During the course of Mr Rayner's review and in consultation with the member Councils (Armidale, Uralla, Walcha and Glen Innes) it became apparent that the NECC is financially unsustainable, has significant debts that cannot be met, and that member Councils had to cover the outstanding debt until assets can be reviewed and potentially liquidated and a future operating model for weed management determined.

On 25 June 2024, Council noted a confidential update on the NECC/NEWA and resolved to provide additional financial support in the 2024 Budget by way of a contingent liability of \$250,000 to cover potential additional expenses, in addition to Council's budgeted annual contribution.

In July, it was agreed and formally resolved by member Councils that the NECC should be dissolved. Council General Managers were authorised to develop working agreements and arrangements for a new model. Details of Council resolutions are included later in this report.

A further operational review was commissioned by the working group and Paul Quealey of Lambourne Partners was appointed. A final report has now been received by Mr Quealey and is provided under cover of a separate confidential report included in the agenda for this meeting.

This report provides Council with a further update and recommends a joint proposal be prepared to the Minister for Local Government to dissolve the New England County Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the report.
2. In conjunction with the other constituent Councils (namely Walcha, Armidale and Glen Innes), prepares a joint proposal to the Minister for Local Government to dissolve the New England County Council and include the requirements of the Office of Local Government (OLG).

3. Includes in the proposal in (2) above, the transfer of responsibilities under the Biosecurity Act from the New England County Council to the four constituent Councils.
4. Authorises the General Manager to work with the other constituent Councils, the New England County Council, and the Office of Local Government to achieve the earliest possible date for the transfer of Biodiversity Act Responsibilities; and to develop and implement all necessary administrative arrangements.
5. Endorses the proposal for Uralla Council to resume standalone biosecurity services with the potential for an MOU with Walcha Council and other Councils to be reviewed by the General Manager.
6. Advises the Audit Office NSW of Council's commitment to continue to provide financial assistance to ensure the financial sustainability of the New England County Council until it is dissolved.
7. Notes a further report will be provided if additional financial assistance is required pending the Minister's determination.

REPORT

The New England County Council, trading as New England Weeds Authority, is a Local Control Authority for priority and invasive weeds under the NSW Biosecurity Act, 2015. It provides the service for the local government areas of Armidale Regional, Walcha, Uralla Shire and Glen Innes Severn.

By Government Gazette on 17th May 2024 the Minister for Local Government suspended the Board of the New England County Council for a period of three months from the date of the gazettal.

The same Government Gazette Notice appointed John Rayner PSM as Interim Administrator for the period during which the Council is suspended by the Order.

The suspension followed serious governance and financial management failures.

The Councillors on the Board at that time retained their positions with the constituent Councils.

The appointment meant that the Interim Administrator took on the role of the Chairperson and Councillors, not the General Manager.

On 16th August 2024 the Minister for Local government extended the period of suspension of New England County Council and extended the term of appointment of the Interim Administrator to 17th November 2024.

The day-to-day operations of the New England Weeds Authority, required under the Biodiversity Act, have continued; staff operations are not directly impacted by the Suspension Orders.

Those operations are substantially financed by the constituent Councils.

Decisions by Constituent Councils

The New England County Council comprises Walcha, Uralla, Armidale and Glen Innes Councils. The Councils have made the following decisions in respect of the NECC (NECC) and the New England Weeds Authority (NEWA).

Glen Innes Severn Council

- At the Council Workshop held on 21st June the General Manager tabled a report on the NECC matter. The report was noted.
- At the Council meeting of 25th July 2024, Council resolved as follows:
 1. *Endorses the winding up of the New England Weeds Authority (NEWA).*

2. Requests the Minister for Local Government to extend the period of administration for a further three months.

3. Supports the General Managers of the member Councils developing future service delivery models noting the importance of maintaining necessary service levels into the future.

Armidale Regional Council

Council resolutions:

- 26th June 2024 *“That Council notes the report of 7 June 2024 from the New England Weeds Authority (NEWA) Interim Administrator Mr John Rayner.”*
- 24th July 2024

That Council:

a) Notes the attached report of 8 July 2024 from the New England Weeds Authority (NEWA) Interim Administrator Mr John Rayner

b) Confirms agreement that the New England Weeds Authority (NEWA) be dissolved, with a target date of November 2024

c) Authorises the General Manager to develop a working agreement and arrangement for future service delivery which includes consideration of a new entity via a Lead Council Model

d) Notes that an Interim Administrator’s Report will be provided to the Minister for Local Government and a decision will be made about whether the Board will be suspended for a further three months from 17 August 2024; and

e) Supports the extension of the Interim Administrator for a further three months beyond 17 August 2024.

Uralla Shire Council

Council decisions

- Following the Confidential Session of the Council Meeting on 25th June 2024, Council resolved *“That Council notes the confidential advice in this report.”*
- 23rd July 2024

That Council:

1. *Notes the attached report of 8 July 2024 from the New England Weeds Authority (NEWA) Interim Administrator Mr John Rayner.*

2. *Agrees that the New England Weeds Authority (NEWA) be dissolved, with a target date of November 2024.*

3. *Authorises the General Manager to develop a working agreement and arrangement for future service delivery in consultation with the other member Councils, including consideration of a new entity via a Lead Council Model.*

4. *Notes that an Interim Administrator’s Report will be provided to the Minister for Local Government on 17 August 2024 and a decision made about whether the Board will be suspended for a further three months.*

5. *Supports the extension of the Interim Administrator for a further period of three months from 17th August 2024”.*

Council’s payments to NEWA this financial year are detailed separately later in this report.

Walcha Council

Council decisions

- 26th June 2024

That Council:

1. *NOTE the current status of New England Weeds Authority based on advice from the appointed Administrator;*
2. *ALLOCATE an additional \$170,000 in the 2024-2025 Budget that may be requested to assist clearing the outstanding financial liabilities of New England Weeds Authority.*

- 31st July 2024

That Council:

1. *NOTES the attached report of 8 July 2024 from the New England Weeds Authority Interim Administrator, John Rayner;*
2. *SUPPORTS that the New England Weeds Authority be DISSOLVED with a target date of November 2024;*
3. *AUTHORISES the General Manager to liaise with other members of the New England Weeds Authority General Managers to develop an arrangement and arrange for future service delivery which includes consideration of a new operating model;*
4. *NOTES that an Interim Administrator's Report will be provided to the Minister for Local Government and a decision will be made whether the Board will be suspended for a further three months from 17 August.*

Review of Current Service and Future delivery options

Mr Paul Quealey, Lambourne Partners, was engaged by the County Council and the constituent Councils to inform the Councils on current operations and recommend future service delivery options.

The review is of value in understanding the current operation of NECC, where efficiencies can be achieved and how these can be transferred to a future operating model.

The review focused on

- identifying desired outcomes and whether they are currently being met or not.
- the value and return provided by each classification of employee
- whether the staff numbers in the streams of biosecurity and weed spraying are appropriate
- whether the current zones to which the biosecurity officers are attached are satisfactory
- comparing in-house costs, and benefits/disadvantages for weed spraying against contract spraying

The review made a number of recommendations to best meet Council obligations under the NSW Biosecurity Act across the New England County Council region, including:

- Walcha Shire and Uralla Shire Council's coordinate the completion of biosecurity management services as a joint venture;
- Armidale Regional Council complete biosecurity management services for its region; and
- Glen Ines Severn Council complete biosecurity management services for its region, with a view to establishing a joint venture with Tenterfield Shire Council in completing biosecurity management services.
- Outside of the above, the only other outcome is the potential for a memorandum of understanding across the Councils to allow for easy personnel and resourcing sharing as and when required for each Council completing biosecurity management services individually.

In respect of the recommendation regarding Walcha and Uralla undertaking a joint venture arrangement, the General Managers of both Councils have reviewed the operational and governance implications of such

a proposal and concluded it would not be the best option at this stage. Rather, it was concluded that each Council should operate its own biosecurity service with a potential MOU to be developed for joint weed spraying and other partnership services as appropriate.

A copy of Mr Quealey's review is included as a separate confidential report in this agenda.

Legal Obligations

Employees

The Local Government Act specifies arrangements for council staff affected by the constitution, amalgamation or alteration of Council areas.

Generally, the Act provides:

- There can be no forced redundancy of affected staff members during the proposal period;
- If a staff transfer occurs employment continues on the same terms and conditions that applied to the staff member immediately before the transfer day;
- Accrued rights of a staff member such as leave and superannuation are not affected by the transfer; and
- There can be no forced redundancy of a transferred staff member for three years.

Proposal

The Local Government Act provides:

- A Council, County Council, a public authority, the Office of Local Government or the Minister may make a proposal to dissolve a County Council. (Sec 383)
- The Minister must give at least 28 days of a proposal made to the Minister that the Minister decided to proceed with.(Sec 384)
- After considering all representations received concerning the proposal, the Minister may recommend to the Governor that the proposal be implemented, with or without modifications, or may decline to recommend that the proposal be implemented.

The NECC Interim Administrator advised in his August report to the Minister as follows:

Having observed behaviours and recent performance, considered information from a range of sources including Audit Office NSW and taking into account the NECC size in terms of staff and budget, as Interim Administrator I do not believe such a small Council can meet its legal, governance and financial management requirements and obligations.

The key stakeholders, being the four constituent Councils have resolved that the New England County Council be dissolved and a new service delivery model be developed.

As Interim Administrator I agree with the decisions taken by the constituent Councils.

It is recognised that a number of organisations and individuals will need to consider and support the proposal put forward including:

- *Constituent Councils,*
- *Department of Primary Industries*
- *Office of Local Government*
- *Minister for Agriculture*
- *United Services Union*
- *Minister for Local Government.*

and the process under Local Government Act will be followed.

As the NECC operation is now substantially funded by the Constituent Councils and considering the timing of the Council elections the November deadline for dissolving NECC is supported. It is appreciated that achieving the deadline is ambitious but necessary.

The Minister, in his letter of reappointment stated:

"I note your proposed action in relation to the future of the county Council and the support of constituent Councils. These are matters you are free to pursue, but I do ask that you ensure consultation with the appropriate unions as part of your work."

Procedural considerations

Over recent years, several county councils have been dissolved and the biodiversity responsibilities transferred to the constituent Councils.

The Office of Local Government (OLG) has advised that consultation must occur between the councils concerned and the Department of Primary Industries at officer level before a proposal to dissolve the county council is finalised. The proposal should include a record of the Department's response.

After the proposal has been finalised and lodged, the Minister for Local Government will write to the Minister for Agriculture seeking the latter's view on it. This is normally done before the Minister for Local Government decides whether or not to proceed with the proposal.

The OLG also advised:

A proposal may be made by a number of councils jointly. However, it is easier if one council makes the proposal to the Minister. In this case, the views of all of the other councils affected can be recorded in the proposal. Those views should be in the form of resolutions passed by those councils.

A Proclamation will include:

- the requirement to transfer and protect staff under the local Government Act;
- how assets are to be distributed;
- how liabilities will be met; and
- other legal provisions which facilitate a seamless transition.

New England County Council-Current Operations

The Interim Administrator has advised:

The County Council is continuing to meet its biodiversity obligations with a minimum of operating staff and reduced administration staff.

Its financial situation is dire and apart from receiving income from a small grant and limited work on private land the NECC is reliant on financial support beyond the annual contributions from the constituent Councils.

The new, unoccupied depot at the airport business park has been listed for sale. It will not be sold before consultation with constituent Councils Hopefully the sale of this property will cover the additional contributions from the Councils.

Other surplus assets will also be sold.

The additional financial contributions from the constituent Councils total \$1.2m to date and based on the most recent cash flow analysis are expected to keep NECC afloat until December this year.

The reliance on financial contributions from the constituent Councils highlights the need to dissolve the County Council at the earliest possible time. The Office of Local Government has been approached in a bid to streamline the process.

At each annual audit the Auditor General's delegate must be able to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence or perform alternative testing procedures to enable the delegate to confirm the Council's ability to continue as a going concern.

Due to the state of the 2022/23 NECC financial statements presented for audit the delegate was unable to conclude on the Council's ability to continue as a going concern.

The Audit Office NSW has suggested that if the constituent Councils are prepared to provide advice of their continued financial commitment to NECC, the delegate may be able to conclude that the NECC has the ability to continue as a going concern.

Financial considerations

Along with the other constituent Councils, Uralla Shire Council has provided additional financial support in the 2024 Budget adopted on 25th June 2024 as follows:

Include a contingent liability of \$250,000 to cover potential additional expenses for the New England Weeds Authority (NEWA), in addition to Council's budgeted annual contribution.

To date two invoiced payments have been made against that contingency - \$119,000 on 13th August 2024 and \$90,000 on 11th September 2024, in addition to the Uralla Shire Council member contributions for the 2024-25 financial year of \$106,000 on 1st July 2024.

Continued financial support by member Councils is essential to meet shared legal obligations until the NECC is dissolved. A cash flow projection as at 10th October (attached to this report) indicates that there are sufficient funds to cover operational costs to the end of the calendar year. A further report will be prepared for Council's consideration if additional assistance is required before the Minister's determination.

It is expected that the proposed future disposal of the newly constructed NEWA operations centre will enable constituent Councils to be reimbursed for their additional financial contributions.

CONCLUSION

As one of four constituent Councils, Uralla Shire Council must make decisions about the future of the New England County Council, while ensuring the continued delivery of statutory biosecurity and weed pest management services within the Shire. This report provides the immediate history and summary of the current challenges facing the New England County Council. The recommendations provide a pathway forward.

The General Manager will work with the General Managers of the other constituent councils to develop and progress appropriate administrative arrangements including distribution and allocation of assets, vehicles and equipment; engagement with unions and staff; creation of relevant employee positions and transfer of NEWA staff where agreed; and development of memorandums of understanding for future joint operations as appropriate.

NEWA DRAFT CASHFLOW						
Date	Project	Funded	Drawdown Funds			Balance
	TSA Project Restricted Funds	\$	75,000.00			\$ 75,000.00
						\$ 75,000.00
	Drawdown October			\$ 30,000.00		\$ 45,000.00
	Drawdown November			\$ 7,500.00	Restricted to Project Works	\$ 37,500.00
Date	Description	August	September	October	November	Bank Balance
	Bank Balance 10.10.2024					\$ 395,883.13
14th October	NEWA Payroll		\$ 38,000.00			\$ 357,883.13
28th October	NEWA Payroll		\$ 95,000.00			\$ 262,883.13
	Utilities/Fuel etc		\$ 50,000.00			\$ 212,883.13
	BAS July - Sept		\$ 60,102.00			\$ 152,781.13
	TSA Drawdown		\$ 30,000.00			\$ 182,781.13
	ATO Payment Plan		\$ 5,682.00			\$ 177,099.13
	Super Qtr Payment		\$ 25,000.00			\$ 152,099.13
	Accounts Payable		\$ 30,000.00			\$ 122,099.13
	Private Works		\$ 25,000.00			\$ 147,099.13
	Armidale Regional Council		\$ 231,000.00			\$ 378,099.13
	PAYG October 2024		\$ 30,000.00			\$ 348,099.13
11th November 2024	NEWA Payroll			\$ 38,000.00		\$ 310,099.13
25th November 2024	NEWA Payroll			\$ 38,000.00		\$ 272,099.13
	Utilities/ Fuel/Administrator etc			\$ 50,000.00		\$ 222,099.13
	PAYG November 2024			\$ 18,000.00		\$ 204,099.13
	Drawdown Funds from TSA			\$ 7,500.00		\$ 211,599.13
	Accounts Payable			\$ 20,000.00		\$ 191,599.13
	ATO Payment Plan			\$ 5,682.00		\$ 185,917.13
						\$ 185,917.13
9th December 2024	NEWA Payroll				\$ 38,000.00	\$ 147,917.13
23rd December 2024	NEWA Payroll				\$ 38,000.00	\$ 109,917.13
	Utilities/ Fuel/Administrator etc				\$ 50,000.00	\$ 59,917.13
	PAYG December 2024				\$ 18,000.00	\$ 41,917.13
	ATO Payment Plan				\$ 5,682.00	\$ 36,235.13

15 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

RECOMMENDATION

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*:

15.1 New England County Council (New England Weeds Authority) Operational Review

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - a of the *Local Government Act 1993*, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors).

15.2 McMaugh Gardens Residential Aged Care Facility Business Review - Consultant Report

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - d(i) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

16 COMMUNICATION OF COUNCIL DECISION

17 CONCLUSION OF MEETING