



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

24 February 2026

Commencing at 4:00 PM

or at the conclusion of a Public Forum



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 16 December 2025

Department: Group Corporate Services

Prepared By: Group Support Officer Corporate Services

Authorised By: General Manager

Reference: UINT/26/2068

Attachments: 1. Minutes of Ordinary meeting held on 16 December 2025 [⇒](#)

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held 16 December 2025 as a true and correct record.

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

9 WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DELEGATES

9.1 Mayor's Activity Report for December 2025 & January 2026

Department:	Group Corporate Services
Prepared By:	Group Support Officer Corporate Services
Authorised By:	Mayor
Strategy:	3.1. Informed and collaborative community leaders

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the Mayor's Activity Report for December 2025 & January 2026.

REPORT

DATE	COMMITTEE/MEETING/EVENT	LOCATION
1 Dec 2025	Hunter New England Health update	Online
1 Dec 2025	Mayor & GM Catch up Meeting	Uralla
2 Dec 2025	ARIC Meeting	Uralla
2 Dec 2025	Information Session - SRV survey results and update on data prepared for application	Online
3 Dec 2025	2AD Interview	Online
3 Dec 2025	TAFE Connects	Uralla
4 Dec 2025	Brendan Moylan MP update Meeting	Uralla
8 Dec 2025	Mayor & GM Catch up Meeting	Uralla
9 Dec 2025	NSW Farmers Regional Telecommunications Roadshow	Uralla Court House
10 Dec 2025	Bundarra Central School End of Year Presentation	Bundarra
11 Dec 2025	GM Performance review	Uralla
11 Dec 2025	Service Awards & Retirement Recognition	Uralla
11 Dec 2025	Staff Christmas Party	Uralla
12 Dec 2025	Kingstown General Store owner meeting	Kingstown
16 Dec 2025	Ordinary Council Meeting	Uralla
17 Dec 2025	2AD Interview	Online
17 Dec 2025	Kentucky School End of Year Presentation	Kentucky
17 Dec 2025	New England North West – Sustainable Communities and Waste Hub	Armidale
18 Dec 2025	Meeting MP Penny Sharpe	Tamworth

19 Dec 2025	Christmas Lights Display Judging	Uralla
7 Jan 2026	Australia Day Committee Meeting	Uralla
12 Jan 2026	Mayor & GM Catch up Meeting	Uralla
19 Jan 2026	Mayor & GM Catch up Meeting	Uralla
20 Jan 2026	Information Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Councillor LEP review workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Draft Growth Management assumptions – Senior Strategic Planner and (Meridian consultants- via teams) - EnergyCo update GM & DID 	Uralla
23 Jan 2026	Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Advisory Committee meeting	Online

CONCLUSION

The Mayor's activity report for December 2025 & January 2026 is presented for the information of Councillors and community.

10 MAYORAL MINUTE

10.1 Mayoral Minute - The Passing of Councillor Lone (Leonie) Petrov

Reference: UINT/26/2834

This Mayoral Minute honours our colleague Councillor Lone Petrov who sadly passed away on Sunday 8 February 2026 following a short illness.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives this Mayoral Minute remembering our beloved colleague, Councillor Lone (Leonie) Petrov, whose presence, insight, kindness, and steady leadership will be deeply missed in this Chamber.

REPORT

Councillor Lone Petrov passed away in hospital on 8th February 2026 surrounded by her loving family.

Lone was a valued and dedicated member of the Uralla community, known for her kindness, her caring nature, and her strong involvement in community life. Her passing will be felt by many across the Uralla Shire. She made a positive difference in the lives of everyone who knew her, and many who didn't.

Councillor Petrov was first elected to Council on 23 December 2021 and was re-appointed in the September 2024 Local Government Elections. During her time in office, she consistently offered thoughtful, balanced, and wise guidance on a wide range of matters in support of the Uralla Shire community.

Our thoughts are with Councillor Petrov's immediate family: her husband Michael, one of our valued Tablelands Community Support volunteer drivers; her children and their partners, Jodie and Andrew, Chris and Jill, and Ryan and Natalie; and her grandchildren Grace, Chloe, Madeline, Oliver, Tobias, Teah and Eli. Lone was also a much-loved sister, sister-in-law, and great-aunt. Lone was devoted to her family and her loss is devastating for them all.

Member for Northern Tablelands Brendan Moylan also paid tribute to Councillor Petrov: "Lone was a very much-loved councillor and a deeply dedicated member of the Uralla community. She will be greatly missed. My thoughts are with her family, friends, and colleagues."

Please stand for a minute's silence as we remember our beloved colleague, Councillor Lone Petrov.



10.2 Mayoral Minute - Congratulations to Brendan Moylan, MP for his new appointment as Shadow Minister for Agriculture and for Prevention of Regional Crime.

Reference: UINT/26/436

Attachments: 1. Congratulations to Hon Brendan Moylan MP [↗](#)

On behalf of Uralla Shire Council, I would like to congratulate our Local State Member, Brendan Moylan MP, on his appointment as Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Shadow Minister for Prevention of Regional Crime.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council congratulates the Hon. Brendan Moylan MP on his appointment as Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Shadow Minister for Prevention of Regional Crime.

REPORT

The recent promotion of Member for Northern Tablelands, **Brendan Moylan, to Shadow Cabinet** is a welcome recognition of his ongoing commitment to highlighting the challenges faced by rural and regional communities, particularly in the areas of agriculture and regional crime.

Brendan has consistently been a strong and effective voice for communities across our region, ensuring that local concerns are clearly articulated and heard at the highest levels.

The elevation of these issues to Shadow ministerial level is not only significant for Uralla Shire, but for rural communities more broadly. It underscores the importance of focused advocacy in areas that have a direct and lasting impact on regional life.

This development represents a positive step towards ensuring that the interests of rural communities are valued, understood, and firmly represented at a State level.

10.3 Mayoral Minute - Council Position Regarding the New England Renewable Energy Zone

Reference: UINT/26/808

The purpose of this Mayoral minute is to confirm Council's position on renewable energy development within Uralla Shire.

RECOMMENDATION**That Council:**

- 1. Notes the Mayoral Minute confirming Council's position on renewable energy development within Uralla Shire.**
- 2. Endorses a community-led approach to renewable energy development that seeks to avoid, minimise and mitigate adverse impacts, while advocating for fair and equitable community benefits.**

REPORT

On 17 December 2021, the Minister for Energy formally declared the New England Renewable Energy Zone (REZ). The purpose of the REZ is to facilitate the coordinated development of large-scale renewable energy projects, primarily wind and solar, supported by new transmission infrastructure to deliver clean, affordable and reliable electricity across New South Wales.

A substantial portion of Uralla Shire falls within the REZ. Renewable energy development was already occurring within the Shire prior to the declaration of the REZ. Since that time, it has become increasingly clear that further renewable energy development will occur across the region, with significant social, economic and environmental implications for the Uralla Shire community.

In consultation with its community, Uralla Shire Council has adopted the *Community Strategic Plan 2025 to 2034 (Plan)*. The Plan sets out Council's long-term vision for a vibrant community with a growing economy and a sustainable lifestyle that values its heritage. This vision is supported by four strategic pillars:

- Community Minded – An accessible, inclusive and empowered community.
- Prosperous – A sustainable economy that supports prosperity.
- Independent – An independent and well-governed community.
- Good Custodians – Good custodianship of our natural and built environment.

The Plan provides the overarching framework for Council's approach to renewable energy development within the REZ. The community is central to Council's engagement with government, industry and other stakeholders in managing both the opportunities and impacts associated with renewable energy development within the Shire.

Council is approaching renewable energy development within the REZ with an open and constructive mindset. At the same time, Council is committed to advocating for the avoidance, minimisation and mitigation of adverse impacts arising from development, while ensuring that the community is supported to share in the benefits generated by renewable energy projects located within the Shire. Council expects that such development should contribute to a strong and enduring legacy for the region.

Council has been working extensively with the community to develop a clear and considered framework to guide how renewable energy development should occur within Uralla Shire, and how any associated benefits should be managed and applied for community benefit. Proactive planning is essential to ensure that local aspirations are reflected in decision-making processes and that the future of the Shire is not determined solely by external interests.

Council's role is to listen to, represent and facilitate the aspirations of its community, while operating within its statutory responsibilities and advocating strongly on behalf of our Uralla Shire community.

11 NOTICE OF MOTION/QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil

12 REPORT OF COMMITTEES

12.1 Aged Care Compliance and Assurance Committee Report

Department:	Group Community Services
Prepared By:	Group Manager Community Services
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/26/3217

Attachments:	1. Unconfirmed ACCA minutes 3 February 2026 ↔
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LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	3. An Independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	3.2. A strategic, accountable, and representative Council

SUMMARY

On 3 February 2026, Council's Aged Care Compliance and Assurance Committee ('Committee') held its third meeting.

The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting are **attached** to this report. This report summarises the matters discussed at the Committee meeting in further detail below.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Aged Care Compliance and Assurance Committee Report.

REPORT

1. Meeting Overview

The Committee met on 3 February 2026 at 2:00 pm. All members were present, with no apologies. Relevant Council staff and two observing councillors attended.

No disclosures of interest were declared, and no late reports were tabled.

2. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 November 2025.

3. Legislative and Regulatory Updates

The Committee noted the legislative and regulatory update provided by staff.

4. Performance Against Aged Care Quality Standards

Discussion focused on Standards 5 and 6 of the Aged Care Quality Standards for McMaugh Gardens and Standard 5 for Community Care Services.

The Committee:

- Noted the review and discussion of these standards.
- Requested a progress report at the next meeting regarding the progress made by Uralla Community Care regarding its policy and procedure review.

5. Compliance and Monitoring Reporting

The Committee:

- Noted the compliance and monitoring report.
- Recommended confirmation of IT system controls for the MEDSIG software program to ensure that there were no certification issues in the future.

6. Complaints and Feedback Analysis

The Committee:

- Received and noted the Complaints and Feedback Analysis report.
- Acknowledged examples of better practice, particularly staff responsiveness to concerns about care and food at McMaugh Gardens.
- Requested a further report clarifying the location and accessibility of feedback forms and anonymous feedback boxes at McMaugh Gardens.

7. Continuous Improvement Initiatives

The Committee:

- Noted information regarding continuous improvement activity.
- Requested a bi-annual report from Community Care on program targets and current progress at meeting those targets.

8. Workforce Development

The Committee:

- Noted the workforce development report.
- Requested bi-annual reporting on mandatory and role-specific training across both aged care services, including staff training completion data.

9. General Business

The Committee:

- Noted actions completed in the Actions Report.
- Agreed to close several action items (7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.6, 7.7, 7.8, 7.10, 7.11, 7.12).

10. Quarterly Report Matters

The Committee:

- Noted recommended actions from the meeting on 2 February 2026.
- Noted positive improvements in service areas.
- Resolved to forward the 3 February meeting minutes to the next ordinary meeting of Council.

11. Clinical Governance

The Committee:

- Noted the revised Clinical Governance Framework for McMaugh Gardens.
- Agreed to work through recommended changes as identified by the Chair.
- Requested a further report following the Chair's review and recommendations regarding the Clinical Governance Framework for McMaugh Gardens.

13 REPORTS TO COUNCIL

13.1 Councillor Vacancy

Department:	Group Corporate Services
Prepared By:	Group Manager Corporate Services
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/26/2941

Attachments: 1. Election Calendar [⇒](#)

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	3. An Independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	3.1. Informed and collaborative community leaders

SUMMARY

A vacancy has arisen following the sad passing of Councillor Lone Petrov on 8 February 2026.

Under the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* ('LG Act'), a councillor vacancy must be filled by by-election unless a countback is available or the vacancy occurs within 18 months of the next ordinary election. As the 2024 Ward A election was uncontested, a countback is not available, and with the next ordinary election more than 18 months away, Council is required to hold a by-election.

This report outlines the legislative requirements, and the process Council must now follow regarding the by-election.

In addition, this report brings to the attention of Council that there is also a vacancy in a councillor appointment to the Central Northern Regional Library Board ('CNRL').

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Engages the NSW Electoral Commission to undertake the by-election required as a consequence of the current vacancy of civil office.
2. Appoints Cr _____ as the delegate to the Central Northern Regional Library Board

REPORT

The sad passing of Councillor Lone Petrov on 8 February 2026 has created a vacancy in civic office. Section 234 of the LG Act sets out the circumstances that give rise to a vacancy, including the circumstances now before Council.

Given the significant financial constraints currently facing Council, staff sought advice from the Office of Local Government ('OLG') on any lawful options that might be available in responding to the vacancy, including whether any alternatives existed to avoid holding a by-election.

OLG has confirmed that, because the 2024 Ward A election was uncontested, a countback is not available, and the LG Act requires the vacancy to be filled by a by-election within three months. OLG further advised that neither section 224A nor section 294 can be applied in this situation, and that while Council may raise the matter with the Minister, the Government is unlikely to support amendments that would allow a vacancy to remain unfilled beyond the existing 18-month threshold. OLG also noted that any legislative amendments could not be made within a timeframe that would avoid the requirement to conduct a by-election.

Legislative Context

The legislative framework governing Council's response to the vacancy is established by the LG Act. Under section 234 of the LG Act, a vacancy in civic office arises immediately upon the death of a councillor. A vacancy may be filled by countback where the councillor was elected under proportional representation and Council resolved at its first meeting after the ordinary election to use that method. However, countback is only available where a contested poll was conducted.

Section 294 of the LG Act provides that Council may apply to the Minister for approval not to hold a by-election where a vacancy occurs within the final 18 months of the Council term. In all other circumstances, a by-election is required unless a valid legislative exemption applies.

Council's ordinary election in September 2024 was uncontested in Ward A, meaning no ballot was held and a countback cannot be undertaken. The next ordinary election is scheduled for September 2028, and the vacancy has occurred more than 18 months before that date. As such, the section 294 exemption does not apply, and Council has no other option but to hold a by-election.

By-election

The process for a by-election is set out below:

- A by-election must be conducted to fill the vacancy in Ward A.
- Only electors enrolled in Ward A (including those on the non-residential roll) will be required to vote.
- Voting will be attendance voting, postal voting as well as Telephone Voting Assistance (TVA) for electors who are blind or have low vision.
- All polling places will be located within Ward A.

The NSW Electoral Commission has provided the attached calendar detailing the key proposed dates for the by election. Technically the by-election can be conducted at any time until Saturday 9 May 2026 (being three months after the vacancy arose). Further, there is an option to extend by a further 28 days, but this can only be done if the Minister is of the opinion that it would be impractical or inconvenient to hold a by-election within the 3-month period. This option requires a formal order published in the Gazette to appoint a subsequent Saturday within that 28 day period.

The NSW Electoral commission has nominated Saturday 18 April as the preferred date to dovetail with other electoral matters in the interest of minimising costs to Council as much as possible. The critical aspect of an election date of 18 April is the latest date from which the Commission can commence advertising for the "close of rolls" (refer to the attached calendar).

Appointment of NSW Electoral Commission

In January 2023, in preparation for the 2024 General Election Council resolved "...Pursuant to s. 296(2) and (3) of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) ("the Act") that an election arrangement be entered into by contract for the NSW Electoral Commissioner to administer all elections of the Council..."

This was the model resolution provided by the Office of Local Government and the Electoral Commission and was intended to establish an electoral arrangement for the General election and any other electoral matter that may arise during the term, including a by-election.

By-election costs

Council is yet to obtain a formal cost estimate from the Commission. Initial advice however was that the cost would be in line with the cost charged at the last election (being a constitutional referendum). This amounted to approximately \$75,000.

The cost of a by-election is not affected by the number of vacancies to be filled unless the vacancies impact more than one ward. In such circumstances it is understood that the cost would increase marginally to reflect management of the additional polling booths.

Other considerations

The vacancy also requires Council to consider any resulting gaps in committee and delegate appointments, as these roles are tied to the office of the councillor. In this instance, Council should consider appointing a new councillor delegate to the CNRL Board to ensure continued representation.

Councillor induction

Under the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* ('LG Regulation'), an induction program must also be delivered for any newly elected councillor who is elected to fill a casual vacancy that arises during the Council term.

Council is required to deliver the induction training course to the newly elected councillor within six months of their election (section 183 of the LG Regulation). This induction must provide information on the functions and obligations of councils and councillors, as well as Council's administrative procedures and operations.

If the successful candidate is a returning councillor, Council must instead provide an induction refresher course within six months, which delivers updated information on these matters (section 183(3)–(4) of the LG Regulation).

Councillor induction is delivered as a mix of in house and external training provision. Quotes have been requested for the external component however it is estimated that the program will cost anywhere up to \$5,000.

CONCLUSION

Council is required to proceed with a by-election to fill the vacancy in Ward A in accordance with the LG Act. Following the election, Council must deliver the required induction or induction refresher program to the successful candidate under the LG Regulation.

Addressing associated governance matters, Council may wish to appoint a new councillor delegate to the CNRL Board at this meeting of Council, or it may wish to defer this appointment to a later date.

These actions ensure compliance with legislative obligations and maintain continuity in Council's representation and governance.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS**Community Engagement/Communication**

Community engagement will be undertaken through the NSW Electoral Commission, which is responsible for managing all statutory public notices and voter information for the by-election. Council will support this process by ensuring local communication channels reinforce key dates, polling locations, and voting requirements for electors in Ward A.

Policy and Regulation

The by-election will be conducted in accordance with the LG Act and relevant electoral regulations. No changes to existing Council policies are required to implement the statutory obligations associated with filling the vacancy.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

Council will be responsible for meeting the full costs of conducting the by-election, and a formal cost estimate has been requested from the NSW Electoral Commission. Initial verbal estimates are \$70,000 to \$80,000. These costs are not budgeted and will need to be managed within Council's existing financial constraints and reflected in the next QBRS as necessary.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

Nil.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

Nil.

Legal and Risk Management

Absent any amendment, Council is required to hold a by-election within three months of the vacancy, by 7 May 2026, subject to an extension of up to 28 days, after seeking approval from the Minister of Local Government under section 293 of the LG Act.

Performance Measures

Compliance with the legislated timeframes and filling of the vacancy.

Project Management

Group Manager Corporate Services will oversee the by-election process

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13.2 Quarterly REZ Update

Department:	Infrastructure & Development
Prepared By:	Senior Strategic Planning Officer
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/26/3177

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	3.	An Independent shire and well-governed community
	4.	Good custodianship of our natural and built environment
Strategy:	3.1.	Informed and collaborative community leaders
	3.2.	A strategic, accountable, and representative Council
	4.2.	Development that respects and enriches our environment

SUMMARY

Uralla Shire Council continues to take a structured and highly proactive approach to achieve appropriate management of the potential impacts and opportunities associated with the NSW Government's critical New England Renewable Energy Zone Project

Council has engaged across multiple fronts: responding to major project applications, coordinating transport and workforce planning, contributing to regional cumulative impact studies, advocating for infrastructure funding, participating in biodiversity and regional leadership forums, and engaging directly with the Uralla community through the Striking a New Deal project.

Regional benchmarking confirms that Uralla is likely to host the largest share of temporary workers across the REZ and faces material constraints in water supply, waste infrastructure, and housing capacity. Council's focus has therefore been on early mitigation — particularly workforce accommodation planning, heavy vehicle route coordination, infrastructure investigations, and strategic land-use planning.

This report establishes a baseline of activity, highlighting efforts undertaken by Council officers over the past 18 months. Future reports will focus more specifically on quarterly movement, changes, emerging risks and priority actions.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes this report.

REPORT**Purpose**

This report provides Councillors with a consolidated update on Council's response to renewable energy development occurring in and around the Shire.

This is the inaugural report and captures approximately 18 months of activity across project assessment, infrastructure coordination, advocacy, regional collaboration and community engagement. Future reports will focus more tightly on quarterly movement and emerging issues.

The reporting cadence aligns with Council's quarterly reporting to EnergyCo.

Major Project Updates

Uralla Shire Council provided advice and comments to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) Major Projects team regarding the following State Significant projects. (Note: this section covers the last 6 months):

Project	Stage	Comments
Thunderbolt Wind Farm (NEOEN)	Modification of Consent	<p>Key changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift from split blades to fixed 90m blades • Extension of construction timeframe to approximately 40 months • Additional roadside vegetation clearing • Installation of microwave tower for communications redundancy <p>Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported the intent of the modification • Noted prolonged workforce accommodation demand in Uralla • Raised concerns about non-standard FIFO/DIDO traffic peaks • Continuing collaboration with EnergyCo on Port-to-REZ route upgrades (“one and done” approach)
Boorolong Wind Farm (Squadron)	Scoping Report & Draft SEARs	<p>426MW proposal with BESS.</p> <p>Uralla impacts primarily relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport routes • Neighbourhood amenity • Regional cumulative impacts <p>Council welcomed inclusion of project design alternatives and shared infrastructure opportunities in the Draft SEARs.</p>
Northern Tablelands Wind Farm (Origin)	Scoping Report & Draft SEARs	<p>600MW proposal (co-located with the New England REZ Transmission Project North Hub).</p> <p>Uralla impacts primarily relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport routes • Neighbourhood amenity • Regional cumulative impacts <p>Council considered the Draft SEARs comprehensive and raised no specific issues at this stage.</p>
Winterbourne Wind Farm (Vestas)	Response to Submissions	<p>Further Information and Response to Submissions, with amended transport impact assessment and detailed workforce accommodation modelling.</p> <p>Council:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged extensively with Vestas and DPHI • Facilitated relationship with potential Temporary Worker Accommodation (TWA) developer • Confirmed potable water capacity • Supported Staces Road TSR extension for OSOM • Indicated expectation that heavy vehicles utilise Staces Road if established <p>Further report to Council forthcoming regarding TWA options on Council-owned land.</p>
<p>NE REZ Network Infrastructure Project (NER-NIP or “NerNip” (EnergyCo)</p>	<p>Amended Scoping Report</p>	<p>Scoping report update for revised transmission corridor, Central Hub A & B.</p> <p>Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not comment on corridor alignment itself • Identified matters for inclusion in the SEARs and detailed consideration through the EIS, particularly regarding relative and cumulative social impacts.

REZ-Wide Infrastructure & Cumulative Impact Studies

EnergyCo commissioned a suite of regional benchmarking studies to understand cumulative impacts across the New England REZ. Council provided detailed infrastructure, demographic and land-use data and participated in multi-council workshops.

Five studies were released publicly in December 2025.

Key findings for Uralla:

- Uralla anticipated to host the largest share of temporary workers across the REZ
- Significant water supply constraints
- Small wastewater treatment deficit
- Significant shortfall in regional waste facilities

These studies establish a baseline and mark a shift from project-by-project assessments toward a potential region-wide coordination of impacts from multiple developments.

EnergyCo is now seeking priority projects from Councils and intends to establish a Regional Steering Committee in 2026 to coordinate whole-of-government responses.

Strategic Advocacy & Regional Coordination

This section outlines the key forums through which Council is engaging beyond individual development assessments.

EnergyCo Monthly Interface

This involves a standing monthly meeting between USC and EnergyCo (often including TfNSW).

Purpose:

- Coordinate OSOM routes and heavy vehicle planning e.g. Staces Road

- Share updates on NER-NIP progress, including Port-to-REZ logistics
- Discuss workforce accommodation planning & other responses to identified cumulative impacts
- Identify cross-agency issues
- Exchange information on community engagement themes

This forum is Council's primary operational interface with the agency coordinating the NE REZ.

DPHI Major Projects Monthly Interface

Meeting between Council officers and DPHI Major Projects team.

Purpose:

- Raise issues emerging through State Significant project assessment processes
- Align expectations around infrastructure capacity
- Coordinate regulatory and infrastructure considerations
- Identify potential sequencing risks

Biodiversity Reference Group

Council has participated for approximately 12 months in a self-nominated reference group convened by Community Power Agency, comprising academics, ecologists, community stakeholders and agency representatives.

Purpose:

- Share biodiversity intelligence
- Identify emerging risks
- Provide constructive, place-based input to EnergyCo and agencies

Notable outcome:

- Relocation of the North Hub to reduce fragmentation of a critical regional habitat corridor.

Current focus:

- Ensuring appropriate consultation in development of the New England Conservation Investment Strategy (now managed by DCCEEW).

Regional Leaders Network (convened by RE-Alliance)

A national network of local government officers, elected representatives and regional development organisations. This includes state-by-state forums that convene quarterly to discuss issues within own jurisdiction.

Purpose:

- Share practice across REZ regions
- Identify emerging systemic issues
- Advocate collectively where appropriate

Notable outcomes:

- Uralla Housing Strategy featured as a national case study
- Officer participation in All-Energy Australia panel (Melbourne)

New England REZ Symposium Working Group

Established following the Resources, Energy and Industry Innovation Forum (Dubbo 2025).

Other participants include neighbouring councils, DPIRD, RDA, UNE and other stakeholders.

Purpose:

- Socialise findings of REZ-wide studies
- Improve knowledge-sharing
- Identify shared regional priorities
- Foster innovation and collaboration

UNE has agreed to host.

Community Engagement and SaND project

Striking a New Deal (SaND) project engaged about 150 residents who participated in interviews, workshops, school sessions and surveys.

Community-identified opportunities:

- Infrastructure upgrades
- Expanded health and care services
- Diverse and affordable housing
- Apprenticeships and training
- Investment in community spaces
- Nature-positive development

Common concerns:

- Pace and coordination of development
- Infrastructure strain
- Loss of identity and cohesion
- Uneven distribution of benefits
- Trust and transparency

This information was formalised in the Community Insights report received by Council at its October 2025 meeting.

A library display has been put in place and Council's Have your Say page has been updated. The Insights report was sent directly to workshop participants. No comments or feedback were received.

These insights are directly informing development of Council's Renewable Energy Action Plan with a further report to Council to follow. The Plan has been delayed by approximately one month.

Forward Outlook

As the REZ progresses from planning into delivery, Council is monitoring and responding to the risk horizon and identifying further strategic opportunities.

Emerging risks:

- Overlapping construction periods and the pace of development
- Infrastructure lag relative to workforce arrival

- Housing displacement pressures
- Water supply constraints
- Waste facility capacity limitations
- Current EnergyCo 3-year funding arrangement to provide resources to Council has not yet been renewed.
- Coordination risks across and between agencies outside of Council.

These risks require ongoing monitoring and early intervention where possible.

Strategic Opportunities

Council has also identified potential opportunities that may warrant further exploration:

- Unlocking or accelerating additional serviced land supply through the appropriate siting of temporary workforce accommodation
- Early investigation of adaptive quarry re-use to augment waste capacity
- Investigating the feasibility of siting a solar panel recycling or circular economy facility in Uralla or the broader region, aligned with initiatives such as the UNSW Sustainable Materials Research and Technology (SMaRT) Centre Trailblazer for Recycling and Clean Energy (TRaCE) program
- Exploring a research partnership with University of Newcastle to examine comparative approaches to energy transition governance across REZ regions

These opportunities remain exploratory but reflect Council's intention to consider longer-term regional value alongside immediate impact management.

Key Outcomes to Date

- Collaborative and successful approach established with EnergyCo regarding Staces Road future heavy vehicle route.
- Progressed to detailed negotiations regarding TWA camp with a further report to be brought to Council.
- EnergyCo funding secured for landfill feasibility investigations.
- EnergyCo funding secured for strategic land-use planning (Housing Strategy and Growth Management Strategy components).
- Establishment of a multi-Council working group to progress a Regional Water Solution.

Works in Progress

- Seek an extension of EnergyCo resource funding beyond the initial 3-year period
- Development of Renewable Energy Action Plan for Uralla Shire
- Formalisation of Regional Steering Committee arrangements
- Ongoing infrastructure capacity modelling

CONCLUSION

Renewable Energy development represents both significant opportunity and material risk for Uralla Shire and its community.

Council's approach to date has been deliberately focussed on: engage early, coordinate regionally, secure funding where possible, and maintain clear lines of communication with both relevant State agencies and

the Uralla Shire community. Many of the levers required to manage cumulative impacts clearly sit beyond the local government ambit, making sustained advocacy and coordination both critical and essential.

The next phase of work will require continued attention to infrastructure timing, workforce accommodation delivery, housing impacts and cross-agency governance. Council will continue to monitor risk horizons and report transparently on progress.

Future quarterly reports will track movement against these priorities and highlight where intervention or advocacy is required.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

As per this report.

Policy and Regulation

N/A

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

Activities directly related to the Renewable Energy Zone are claimable against EnergyCo funding agreement for \$750,000 over three years. This agreement lapses 21 December 2026.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

N/A

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

Council's Strategic Planner is engaged to respond to REZ issues on behalf of Council ongoing. Additional support is provided by Director Infrastructure and Development and Group Manager Infrastructure Services.

Legal and Risk Management

N/A

Performance Measures

N/A

Project Management

Council's Strategic Planner is point of contact for project team and whole-of-Council response.

13.3 Hill Street Affordable Housing Project Advisory Committee – Appointment of Councillor Delegates and Project Update

Department:	Infrastructure & Development
Prepared By:	Senior Strategic Planning Officer
Authorised By:	Director Infrastructure & Development
Reference:	UINT/26/3235

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	1.	We have an accessible inclusive and empowered community
	3.	An Independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	1.1.	A growing, community-minded shire
	1.4.	Access to and equity of services
	3.1.	Informed and collaborative community leaders

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on recent activities related to the Hill Street Affordable Housing Project, including progress on the establishment of the Project Advisory Committee, community engagement actions, and funding developments under the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) Round 3.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes the report.**
- 2. Appoints two Councillor delegates to the Hill Street Project Advisory Committee.**

REPORT

Expressions of Interest – Project Advisory Committee

As noted in the January 2026 report to Council, a total of eight (8) Expressions of Interest were received from community members.

Officers have assessed the submissions and are finalising the selection of community representatives in accordance with the adopted Terms of Reference. Formal appointment of Councillor delegates will complete the membership required to convene the inaugural meeting.

An initial meeting of the Committee is proposed before the end of the March quarter, with a further community information session to be scheduled in the coming months.

Response to Community Petition

On 16 January 2026, Council issued a formal written response to the chief petitioner, Mr Peter Lee. The letter outlines Council's position on the project, the safeguards in place, and the engagement activities undertaken.

The response has been published on the YourSay Uralla project page, with a copy provided to The Uralla Wordsworth.

Housing Australia Future Fund – Round 3

Round 3 of the Housing Australia Future Fund Facility (HAFFF) opened on 30 January 2026. Homes North has advised that:

- Dustin Leaney Architects (architect for the Myoch Community Housing projects) has been engaged to prepare preliminary yield analysis and an initial (not final) concept for the Hill Street site to support funding readiness.
- Homes North has submitted an Expression of Interest for Hill Street as part of a regional portfolio application for the HAFF, enabling them to meet the minimum 50-unit project threshold required under the HAFF.

Within the first week of the round opening, industry news reported that applications to deliver ~30,000 social and affordable homes were submitted, exceeding available funding for the round. While applications have yet to be assessed, this indicates the significant demand and high competitiveness of HAFF funding.

Next Steps

Upcoming priorities include:

- Finalising and appointing community representatives to the Project Advisory Committee.
- Council's appointment of two Councillor delegates (per this report).
- Convening the first meeting of the Advisory Committee (anticipated March 2026).
- Scheduling the next community information session once early concept material becomes available.
- Continuing discussions with Homes North and Homes NSW as design, governance, and funding processes progress.

CONCLUSION

The project continues to advance through key governance, engagement, and funding preparation stages. Establishment of the Project Advisory Committee remains the immediate priority, alongside Homes North's preparation of HAFF application materials and preliminary design analysis.

Councillor delegates to the Project Advisory Committee will provide future updates to Council.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS**Community Engagement/Communication**

Per Council's *Community Engagement Strategy 2025* the objective of the Hill St community engagement will be to 'inform' – to provide balanced, accurate and relevant information about Council decisions and plans. This is facilitated, in part through the Project Advisory Committee.

Policy and Regulation

This Affordable Housing project aligns with Council's *Local Housing Strategy 2025*.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

The financial implications of the land transfer have been previously reported to Council.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

N/A at this stage.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

Council's Strategic Planner will be involved in this project, along with other Council staff as required.

Legal and Risk Management

Subject to future legal agreements with DCJ and Homes North.

Performance Measures

N/A at this stage.

Project Management

Council's Strategic Planner will be involved in this project, along with other Council staff as required.

13.4 Draft Buildings Asset Management Plan

Department:	Infrastructure & Development
Prepared By:	Manager Assets
Authorised By:	Director Infrastructure & Development
Reference:	UINT/25/32580

Attachments:	1. Submission Summary and Responses ⇨
	2. Draft Buildings Asset Management Plan 2025 - Tracked change version ⇨
	3. Draft Buildings Asset Management Plan 2025 - Amended ⇨

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	1. We have an accessible inclusive and empowered community
	3. An Independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy:	1.4. Access to and equity of services
	3.2. A strategic, accountable, and representative Council
	3.3. An efficient and effective independent local government

SUMMARY

In October 2025, Council considered the Draft Buildings Asset Management Plan and resolved to place the document on public exhibition (Resolution 150/10.25). One submission was received. This report outlines proposed changes made to the Plan following consideration of the submission, and recommends Council adopts the amended Plan.

RECOMMENDATION**That Council:**

- 1. Receives and notes the submission summary and responses received during the public exhibition of the Draft Buildings Asset Management Plan.**
- 2. Adopts the amended Buildings Asset Management Plan.**

REPORT

The Draft Buildings Asset Management Plan (**BAMP**) was placed on public exhibition in accordance with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting (**IP&R**) obligations. The exhibition period resulted in the receipt of one formal submission. The submission raised several matters including:

- interpretation of asset conditions;
- the clarity of 'levels of service' messaging;
- the relationship between the BAMP and the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP);
- community consultation practices and modelling;
- climate considerations; and

- the inclusion of specific building assets.

Officers have reviewed the submission in detail and incorporated relevant amendments and clarifications into an improved BAMP, which is considered to provide greater clarity for readers.

A summary of the submission and the officer responses is provided in Attachment 1. A tracked-changes version of the Draft BAMP, showing all refinements, is provided in Attachment 2, with the final amended version provided as Attachment 3.

The refinements made in response to the submission are largely clarifications and minor corrections, with additional changes from a broader review to improve the BAMP's readability and transparency.

CONCLUSION

The submission and review produced useful clarifications that improve the BAMP. Officers recommend Council adopts the amended plan and notifies the submitter.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

Details on Levels of Service have been derived from prior community consultation and the Community Strategic Plan.

Policy and Regulation

Local Government Act 1993, Section 403 – Resourcing Strategy, Section 406 – Integrated Planning and Reporting.

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Section 196A – Integrated Planning and Reporting.

USC Asset Management Policy and Strategy 2025

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

The Draft Buildings Asset Management Plan informs the Long-Term Financial Plan.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

The Draft Buildings Asset Management Plan provides the mechanism for life cycle management of Councils' building assets.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

Plan relies on an alignment to the workforce strategy allowing workforce resources.

Legal and Risk Management

Effective asset management is a requirement of the *Local Government Act 1993*. Asset Management Plans assist in managing and controlling identified risks of owning and operating infrastructure assets.

Performance Measures

The Draft Buildings Asset Management Plan outlines the asset class performance requirements to meet the Community Strategic Plan deliverables.

Project Management

Director Infrastructure and Development, Manager Assets

13.5 Identification of Non-Confidential Components – December 2025 Waste Strategy Report

Department:	Infrastructure & Development
Prepared By:	Group Manager Infrastructure Services
Authorised By:	Director Infrastructure & Development
Reference:	UINT/26/3225

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	3.	An Independent shire and well-governed community
	4.	Good custodianship of our natural and built environment
Strategy:	3.2.	A strategic, accountable, and representative Council
	4.3.	A circular economy

SUMMARY

At the December 2025 Council meeting, the Waste Management – Comparative Evaluation of Landfill Options report was considered in confidential session under Section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993, as it contained information that could confer a commercial advantage on parties with whom Council is conducting, or proposes to conduct, business.

Council resolved that the General Manager provide a further report to the February 2026 meeting identifying those components of the December 2025 report that are suitable for public release.

This report identifies the elements of the December 2025 report that are non-confidential and can be released without compromising Council's future commercial position.

RECOMMENDATION**That Council:**

- 1. Notes the identification of the non-confidential components of the December 2025 Waste Management report.**
- 2. Authorises the release of the non-confidential components as outlined in this report.**
- 3. Retains the remaining commercial, financial, and specific information as confidential in accordance with Section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993.**

BACKGROUND

The Waste Management report considered by Council in December 2025 was dealt with in confidential session as it contained commercially sensitive information, including:

- Detailed cost estimates and financial modelling;
- Commercial future arrangements with potential operators;
- Negotiation and funding strategies; and
- Site-specific information relating to potential future landfill locations.

These matters fall within the grounds of Section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993, which permits a meeting to be closed where information:

“...would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.”

Accordingly, information that could influence commercial negotiations, reveal pricing assumptions, identify sensitive sites, or disclose funding and partnership strategies has been retained as confidential. All other high-level strategic, operational, and governance information is considered suitable for public release.

REPORT

The existing landfill at the Uralla Waste Management Facility (UWMF) is approaching the end of its operational life. While short-term operational measures have been implemented to extend capacity, a long-term residual waste solution will be required to ensure continued service delivery for the community.

Council must therefore determine a sustainable and compliant long-term waste disposal strategy. This is consistent with previous strategic planning documents, including the Waste Management Strategy and the Landfill Master Plan, which identified the need to plan for replacement landfill capacity.

Waste volumes within the region are also expected to increase in the coming years due to regional development, including major infrastructure and energy projects. These developments are anticipated to generate additional construction and operational waste streams, placing increased demand on existing disposal infrastructure.

At a strategic level, two principal options have been identified for the long-term management of residual waste:

- Expansion of the landfill at the existing Uralla Waste Management Facility; and
- Development of a new landfill facility at an alternative site (location not disclosed in the public version).

These options were identified following earlier strategic investigations, which also assessed:

- Access to regional landfill facilities,
- Long-distance transport of waste; and
- Potential future waste-to-energy solutions.

Those investigations concluded that inter-regional or interstate disposal options were either cost-prohibitive or operationally uncertain, reinforcing the need to consider local or regional landfill solutions.

Strategically, expansion of the existing UWMF landfill would provide a medium-term solution for the Shire's domestic waste disposal requirements, while development of a new regional landfill facility would provide a significantly longer-term solution and the capacity to manage additional regional waste streams, including those created by a future REZ construction phase.

Neither option is currently feasible for Council to fund from its own financial resources. Any future landfill development will therefore be likely dependent on securing State or Federal funding, or other forms of external investment.

Council continues to progress a range of operational and strategic waste initiatives, including measures to extend the life of the existing landfill, detailed airspace surveys, and targeted facility improvements. Work is also underway to establish new long-term waste transport and processing contracts, transition to a full Food

and Garden Organics (FOGO) service, and upgrade transfer station infrastructure to improve service efficiency and capacity.

CONCLUSION

The waste strategy review confirms that the existing landfill is approaching the end of its operational life and that a long-term residual waste solution will be required. Strategic investigations have identified two principal pathways: expansion of the existing facility as a medium-term solution, or development of a new regional landfill as a longer-term option.

Neither option is currently affordable within Council's existing financial capacity, and any future landfill development will be dependent on securing external State or Federal funding.

In the interim, Council is progressing operational measures, service contract renewals, and strategic planning initiatives to maintain compliance, extend the life of existing infrastructure, and position Council to respond to future regional waste demands.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

Implementation of the waste strategy will involve ongoing community engagement, particularly in relation to service contract changes and the transition to a full Food and Garden Organics (FOGO) system. Education and behavioural change programs will be delivered to support improved waste separation, reduced contamination, and increased resource recovery. Community consultation will also occur as part of any future infrastructure planning or service changes.

Policy and Regulation

The strategy aligns with Council's adopted Waste Management Strategy and relevant State policy, including the NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041. All proposed actions are consistent with the requirements of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997, EPA landfill guidelines, and the Local Government Act 1993. Any future landfill development will be subject to the appropriate planning, environmental, and licensing approvals.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

Current financial modelling indicates that Council does not have the capacity to self-fund major landfill development works from its own revenue base. The Long-Term Financial Plan includes an allowance for future landfill infrastructure on the basis that a significant proportion of the capital cost would be funded through external State or Federal grant programs.

Accordingly, progression of any landfill expansion or new facility remains dependent on securing that external funding. In the interim, operational improvements and service contract renewals are being managed within existing budget allocations and the adopted Long Term Financial Plan.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

Waste infrastructure is incorporated within Council's Asset Management Plans. The strategy supports a staged approach to asset renewal and replacement, including extending the operational life of the existing

landfill, improving transfer station assets, and planning for future disposal infrastructure. Future landfill works will be integrated into the Asset Management Strategy once funding pathways are confirmed.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

Implementation of the waste strategy will require targeted training and upskilling of staff, particularly in landfill operations, environmental compliance, data management, and contract supervision. Council's Workforce Management Strategy identifies these capability areas and provides a framework to support future service and infrastructure changes.

Legal and Risk Management

The strategy reduces regulatory and operational risks by maintaining compliance with EPA licence conditions, landfill closure obligations, and waste transport regulations. Interim operational measures and contingency disposal arrangements help ensure continuity of service while longer-term solutions are investigated. Any future infrastructure projects will be subject to appropriate legal, procurement, and environmental approval processes.

Performance Measures

Nil

Project Management

Waste strategy initiatives are being delivered under Council's Project Management Framework using a staged implementation approach. Current projects include landfill life-extension measures, facility upgrades, and procurement of new waste transport and processing contracts. Progress is monitored through Council's regular reporting processes to ensure alignment with strategic objectives, budgets, and timeframes.

13.6 Report on Uralla Courthouse Operating Costs

Department:	Group Community Services
Prepared By:	Group Manager Community Services
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/26/929

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal:	2.	A sustainable economy that supports prosperity
Strategy:	2.3.	Well serviced communities

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to outline the ongoing operating, maintenance, and staffing-related costs associated with the Uralla Courthouse. The report provides Council with a clear and transparent understanding of the annual overheads required to operate the facility, together with the medium to long-term financial implications.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Notes the operating and maintenance cost profile of the Uralla Courthouse; and**
- 2. Endorses the ongoing operation of the facility as a low-cost community asset, subject to regular monitoring of operating expenses and the inclusion of projected long-term maintenance requirements in Council’s Long-Term Financial Plan.**

REPORT

The Uralla Courthouse is a Council-owned community and heritage asset utilised as a hireable venue and forming part of Council’s property portfolio.

Key asset information

Replacement cost:	\$1,628,000
Carrying value at fair value:	\$1,162,000
Total accumulated depreciation	\$466,000 – annual depreciation of \$22,000
Overall condition rating	Condition 2, indicating the asset is in good condition: rating influenced by long-life components

Annualised operating and maintenance cost

Based on six months of actual expenditure in FY26, the estimated annual operating and maintenance cost for the Uralla Courthouse is approximately \$14,000 per year.

This estimate includes the following direct and attributable overheads:

- Cleaning;
- Electricity;
- Fire equipment servicing;
- Insurance;

- Air conditioning servicing;
- Pest control;
- Water charges (still charged internally);
- Council rates (still charged internally);
- Overheads recognising admin costs allocated to the building in the budget, approximately \$3,000 per annum; and
- Minor repairs and reactive maintenance, with an allowance of approximately \$3,000 per annum.

These costs represent the baseline expenditure required to keep the building operational, compliant, and suitable for public use.

Staffing and Venue Operations

Venue assistant wages are fully recovered through hire fees associated with use of the courthouse because they are casual workers who are employed on an as needed basis. Under this model:

- No hire results in no staffing cost to Council.
- Staffing costs scale directly with venue usage.
- There is no fixed wage overhead borne by Council.

Accordingly, venue assistant staffing does not contribute to the fixed operating cost of the asset.

Customer Service and Booking Administration

The operating cost estimates outlined in this report do not accurately include the internal cost of Council staff time associated with finance, managing venue bookings, enquiries, invoicing, and administrative coordination.

These functions are undertaken within existing staffing resources and are not separately costed to the Uralla Courthouse. As a result, the financial figures presented reflect direct, attributable operating and maintenance costs only and do not represent a full activity-based costing of internal administrative support.

This cost is estimated at \$3,000, a small portion of the overall Halls and Community Centres general ledger overheads budget for FY26 of \$52,477. The bulk of this transaction goes to Uralla Community Care and at present cannot be broken down accurately.

This approach is consistent with Council's treatment of internal functions across departments.

Capital and Depreciation Context

The Courthouse currently attracts annual depreciation of approximately \$22,000. Recent grant-funded capital works have significantly improved the condition of short-life building components.

As a result:

- Medium-term capital expenditure requirements are effectively nil.
- No major capital renewal is anticipated for approximately 20 years.

Although no capital expenditures are forecast for approximately 20 years, it remains prudent to recognise consumption and plan to have the required funds in the future, so Council does not face a future financial shock through a sudden "financial cliff", or sudden decision to retire the asset.

Future Maintenance Outlook

While capital expenditure is not anticipated in the medium term, maintenance costs are expected to increase in the longer term as the building ages.

In approximately 10 years, Council should expect increased maintenance expenditure associated with:

- Internal and external painting.
- Floor coverings.
- Other ageing finishes and fit-out elements.

These costs are typical for a building of this type and can be managed through Council's long-term financial planning processes and asset management plans.

Financial Summary

The current cost profile of the Uralla Courthouse can be summarised as follows:

- Fixed annual operating and maintenance cost: approximately \$11,000.
- Administration overheads of approximately \$3,000. Customer service administration: absorbed into overheads but not separately costed.
- Venue assistant wages: fully offset by hire fees.
- Medium-term capital expenditure: nil.
- Long-term maintenance increases: expected but manageable.

Overall, the courthouse represents a low-cost operational asset with limited ongoing financial exposure to Council.

CONCLUSION

The Uralla Courthouse can be operated with relatively low and stable overheads. Grant-funded capital works have reduced capital pressure and improved asset condition, allowing Council to focus on routine operating and maintenance costs.

The current operating model ensures that staffing costs associated with venue operations are cost-neutral, while administrative booking functions are managed within existing resources. Future maintenance requirements are foreseeable and can be addressed through planned, long-term financial management.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

The continued operation of the Uralla Courthouse supports community access to an affordable, local venue for civic, cultural and private functions. Maintaining transparent communication regarding hire availability, fees, and building condition will reinforce community confidence in Council's stewardship of heritage and community infrastructure. Periodic reporting on utilisation and operating costs will support accountability and informed community discussion regarding ongoing value.

Policy and Regulation

The operating model aligns with the asset management and community facilities principles of Council, including:

- Maintaining heritage assets for community benefit.
- Applying user-pays principles where appropriate (hire fee recovery of staffing costs).
- Consistent treatment of internal overhead allocation across Council service areas.

The facility must continue to meet compliance requirements including building safety, fire safety, accessibility, and workplace health and safety obligations.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

The courthouse presents a predictable and low operating cost profile, with:

- Approximately \$14,000 annual operating and maintenance costs.
- No medium-term capital renewal requirements.
- Long-term maintenance increases expected but foreseeable and plannable.

Implications for the Long-Term Financial Plan include:

- Continued provision for annual depreciation (approx. \$22,000).
- Forward planning for increased maintenance expenditure from approximately year 10 onwards.
- Avoidance of future financial shocks through early lifecycle funding recognition.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

The building's Condition 2 rating and recent grant-funded works indicate strong current asset performance. Strategic implications include:

- Maintaining routine preventative maintenance to preserve condition.
- Monitoring lifecycle deterioration of finishes and fit-out elements.
- Maintaining updated condition assessments to support long-term renewal forecasting.

The asset currently represents low renewal risk within Council's broader property portfolio.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

The current operational model has minimal workforce impact:

- Venue assistants are engaged on an as-needed casual basis.
- Staffing costs are fully cost-recovered via hire fees.
- Administrative functions are absorbed within existing workforce capacity.

No additional staffing growth is required under the current operating model, supporting workforce sustainability.

Legal and Risk Management

Key risks and controls include:

- Public liability and building insurance coverage.
- Compliance with fire safety and building certification requirements.
- Maintaining building condition to reduce WHS and public safety risks.
- Financial risk mitigation through low fixed costs and cost-recovery staffing model.

Ongoing monitoring of compliance servicing and maintenance programs is required to minimise risk exposure.

Performance Measures

Performance measurement requirements are expected to be limited at this time. Monitoring is likely to focus on general indicators such as operating cost trends, asset condition, and utilisation levels, to support ongoing oversight of the facility.

Project Management

No major capital projects are currently required. Project management implications are limited to:

- Planning and scheduling future lifecycle maintenance works.
- Managing minor reactive maintenance efficiently.
- Coordinating any future grant-funded upgrade opportunities.

Future renewal planning should be integrated into Council's capital works programming to ensure funding readiness.

13.7 Draft Plan of Management for Community Land - Bundarra - Grace Munro Site

Department: Group Community Services**Prepared By:** Group Manager Community Services**Authorised By:** Group Manager Community Services**Reference:** UINT/26/2905

Attachments: 1. Draft Plan of Management for 2 Thunderbolts Way, Bundarra - Grace Munro Aged Care Facility [↗](#)

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK**Goal:** 1. We have an accessible inclusive and empowered community**Strategy:** 1.1. A growing, community-minded shire1.4. Access to and equity of services

SUMMARY

Council has previously resolved to negotiate a lease with Grace Munro Aged Care Centre Ltd ('GM Ltd') for the continued operation of the aged care facility at 2 Thunderbolts Way, Bundarra (Lot 24 in DP 753646) ('Land').

As the Land is classified as community land under the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* ('LG Act'), Council must adopt a Plan of Management ('PoM') before granting a long-term lease. A Draft PoM has been prepared proposing to categorise the Land as "General Community Use". The Draft PoM reflects the current use of the Land and has been reviewed by GM Ltd, which has raised no objection.

Council is now asked to resolve to place the Draft PoM on public exhibition and to hold the required public hearing in accordance with sections 36, 40 and 40A of the LG Act.

Following completion of the statutory process, the Draft PoM will be reported back to Council for consideration of adoption.

RECOMMENDATION**That Council:**

1. Resolves to place the Draft Plan of Management for Lot 24 in DP 753646, 2 Thunderbolts Way, Bundarra, on public exhibition in accordance with sections 36, 40 and 40A of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*.
2. Appoints an independent person to preside at the required public hearing.
3. Schedules a public hearing to be held at the Bundarra School of Arts Hall in late April or early May 2026.
4. Receives a further report regarding the Draft PoM following completion of the statutory process for consideration of adoption.

REPORT**Background**

At its Ordinary Meetings in February and April 2025, Council resolved to negotiate a short-term lease with GM Ltd for the continued occupation and operation of the not-for-profit aged care facility located on the Land.

Following those negotiations, a lease was prepared on the same terms as the existing month-to-month arrangement. The lease has been provided to the GM Ltd Board but has not yet been executed. Council is awaiting execution of the new lease.

In order to grant a long-term lease over the Land, Council must first adopt a PoM. The Land is classified as "Community Land" under the LG Act.

Section 35 of the LG Act requires that all community land be the subject of a PoM. A PoM must categorise the land and set out the management objectives and permitted uses of the land, including the circumstances in which leases or licences may be granted.

Draft Plan of Management

The Draft PoM (attached to this report) proposes to categorise the Land as "General Community Use" pursuant to section 36(4) of the LG Act.

The core objectives for management of "Community Land" categorised as "General Community Use" are to promote, encourage and provide for the use of the land, and to provide facilities on the land, to meet the current and future needs of the local community and the wider public:

- (a) in relation to public recreation and the physical, cultural, social and intellectual welfare or development of individual members of the public, and
- (b) in relation to purposes for which a lease, licence or other estate may be granted in respect of the land (other than the provision of public utilities and works associated with or ancillary to public utilities).

Current use of the Land

The Centre is located on the northern portion of the Land and is accessed via Dawkins Street, Bundarra. The building is leased to GM Ltd, which operates a residential aged care facility within part of the premises. Community health services delivered by NSW Health also operate from the Centre.

The southern portion of the Land, beyond the fenced area used by GM Ltd, is vegetated and extends towards the Gwydir River. This area is maintained by Council in accordance with its maintenance schedule.

Consultation with GM LTD

The Draft PoM was provided to GM Ltd for comment in September 2025 and again in February 2026.

On 12 February 2026, Council received feedback from GM Ltd confirming that there was nothing objectionable in the proposed Draft PoM and that it generally reflects the current use of the Land on which the Centre is situated.

GM Ltd also sought clarification as to whether the Draft PoM would permit a pharmacy to operate from the portion of the Centre currently occupied by NSW Health. It is considered that such a use would be consistent with the proposed categorisation of the Land as "General Community Use" and would not be inconsistent with the Draft PoM.

Next Steps

If Council resolves to place the Draft PoM on public exhibition, the following statutory requirements apply:

- The Draft PoM must be publicly exhibited for a minimum of 28 days.
- Submissions must be accepted for a period of not less than 42 days after the Draft PoM is first exhibited.

Sections 36(4), 40 and 40A of the LG Act require that, following the exhibition period, a public hearing be held in relation to the proposed categorisation.

After the public hearing and close of submissions:

- Council staff must consider all submissions received;
- if amendments to the Draft PoM are substantial, the amended Draft PoM must be publicly exhibited again;

- if amendments are not substantial, further public exhibition is not required; and
- a further public hearing is not required (even if the amendment to the Draft PoM are considered to be substantial).

Following completion of this process, the Draft PoM will be reported back to Council for consideration of adoption.

Public Hearing Requirements

Council must appoint an independent person to preside at the public hearing. Pursuant to section 47G of the LG Act, the person appointed must not be:

- a councillor or employee of the Council; or
- a person who has been a councillor or employee of the Council within the previous five years.

The report prepared by the person presiding at the hearing must be made publicly available within four days of being received by Council.

The hearing must be conducted in a manner that is fair to all participants and enables all relevant views to be heard.

Practice Note 1: *Public Land Management* (Department of Local Government, March 2000) recommends that:

- the public hearing be advertised in a newspaper circulating in the area at least 28 days prior to the hearing;
- the advertisement state that any person may make written and or oral submissions at or before the hearing;
- any person be permitted to make written and or oral submissions;
- Council may set a time limit for oral submissions prior to commencement of the hearing; and
- if a time limit is set, it be applied equally to all speakers, including councillors and Council representatives.

It is proposed that the public hearing be held at the Bundarra School of Arts Hall, with a date scheduled for late April or early May 2026.

It is proposed that Uralla Shire Council formally approach Inverell Shire Council to seek the nomination of a suitably qualified and experienced staff member to act as the independent chairperson of the public hearing.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

Public exhibition of the Draft PoM will provide the community with an opportunity to review and make submissions in accordance with sections 36 and 40 of the LG Act.

The statutory public hearing will provide an additional forum for community input regarding the proposed categorisation of the Land as "General Community Use".

Community engagement will include public notice in a newspaper circulating in the local government area, publication on Council's website, and direct notification to relevant stakeholders. This process supports transparency and community participation in decision making relating to community land.

Policy and Regulation

Adoption of a PoM is a statutory requirement under section 35 of the LG Act for land classified as "Community Land".

The Draft PoM establishes the categorisation of the Land and defines permissible uses, leasing arrangements and management objectives in accordance with the LG Act.

Once adopted, the PoM will provide the regulatory framework that enables Council to grant longer-term leases over the Land, subject to compliance with the LG Act.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

There are costs associated with public exhibition, advertising and the appointment of an independent chairperson to preside at the public hearing. These costs are expected to be met within existing operational budgets.

The proposal is not expected to have a material impact on the Long Term Financial Plan.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

The Land and associated buildings are Council-owned assets classified as “Community Land”.

The Draft PoM supports the continued use of the Centre for community and aged care purposes and provides a framework for its future management.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

The proposal will require staff resources to manage the public exhibition process, coordinate the public hearing and prepare a further report to Council following consideration of submissions.

These responsibilities fall within existing governance and property management functions and are not expected to require additional staffing resources.

Legal and Risk Management

The adoption of a PoM is a statutory prerequisite to the granting of a long-term lease over community land under the LG Act.

Failure to comply with the procedural requirements of the LG Act, including public exhibition and the holding of a public hearing, would expose Council to legal risk and potential challenge. Undertaking the prescribed statutory process mitigates legal risk and ensures that any future lease is validly granted.

The appointment of an independent and suitably qualified person to preside at the public hearing is required under section 47G of the LG Act and further reduces governance risk.

Performance Measures

Completion of the PoM process and compliance with statutory requirements demonstrates sound governance and regulatory compliance.

Adoption of a PoM will also support Council’s strategic objective of maintaining and facilitating community infrastructure that meets local needs.

Project Management

The process involves defined statutory steps, including public exhibition, receipt of submissions, conduct of a public hearing and reporting back to Council.

The matter will return to Council for consideration of the public consultation process at which time Council may determine to formally adopt a PoM for the Land.

13.8 2025-2026 Half yearly Operational Plan progress report

Department:	Group Corporate Services
Prepared By:	Group Manager Corporate Services
Authorised By:	General Manager
Reference:	UINT/26/3091

Attachments: 1. Half Yearly Progress Report Operational Plan 2026 [↗](#)

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

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a mid-year update on progress toward delivering the 2025/2026 Operational Plan and to outline any areas where performance has varied from planned expectations. While Council has maintained steady delivery across the majority of annual actions, with most activities progressing on target, a small number of items require exception noting due to emerging delays, later-year scheduling, or external constraints. This report identifies those actions that are not on target, not yet commenced this quarter, or unable to be achieved within the financial year. The report also provides a high-level summary of the achievements that have characterised Council's performance during the first half of 2025/2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the 2025/2026 Operational Plan half yearly progress report.

REPORT

Section 405 of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* requires councils to adopt an Operational Plan each year, setting out the specific activities to be undertaken as part of that year's Delivery Program. The Delivery Program outlines Council's four-year commitments to delivering services and implementing the strategies and goals identified in the Community Strategic Plan, and serves as Council's primary accountability framework.

The Operational Plan sits within this structure and details the annual actions that contribute to achieving the Delivery Program's objectives. Each action is assigned to a responsible officer who reports on progress every six months, ensuring transparent monitoring of Council's performance across the financial year.

The following graph depicts the Operational Plan actions status as at 31 December 2025.

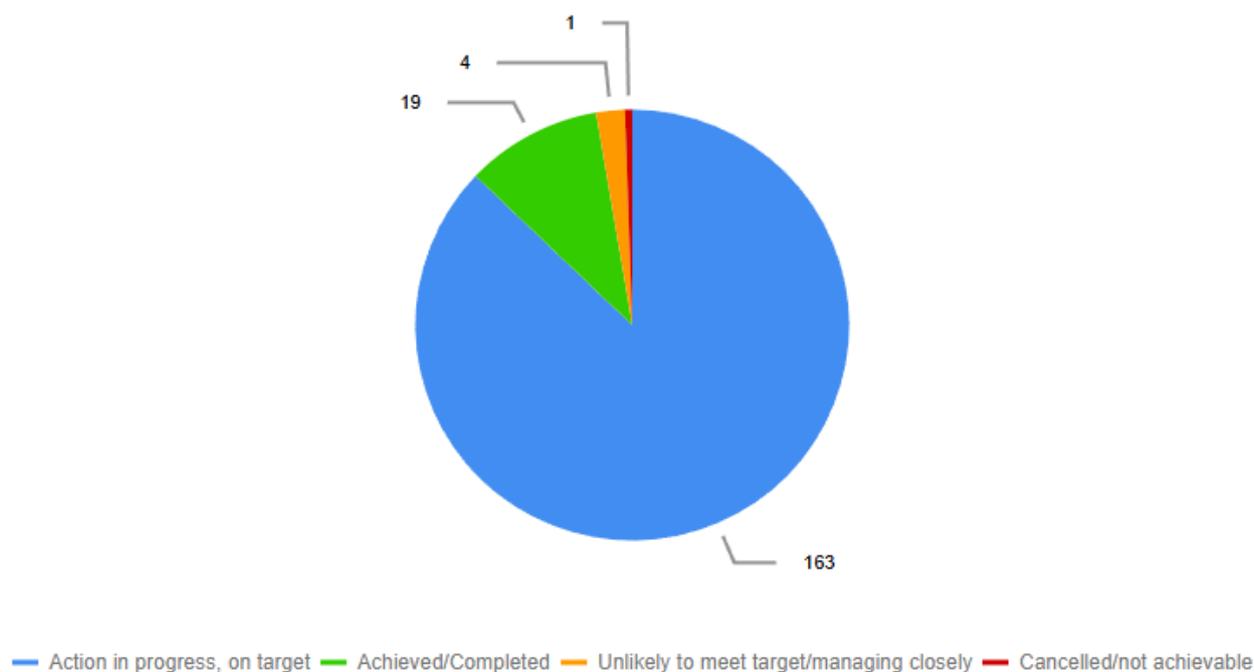


Figure 1 - Operational Plan progress as 31 December 2025

The significant snowstorm and subsequent super-cell event had a substantial impact on Council's work program, diverting resources for at least a month as staff were necessarily redeployed to undertake urgent remediation and repair of essential infrastructure. These recovery works are ongoing, with teams continuing to address outstanding damage in the more remote and lower-traffic areas of the Shire. This unplanned workload has required adjustments to several scheduled activities within the Operational Plan. Council will continue to manage these impacts over the remainder of the year.

Action status overview:

Not Achievable (Cancelled / Not able to be achieved)

- 3.1.5.3 – Partner with Armidale and Walcha Councils to deliver community disaster recovery education (subject to grant funding).
Responsible officer comment: The joint grant application was unsuccessful, and funding has not been secured, meaning delivery cannot proceed in 2025/26. Council will monitor future funding rounds and consider alternate delivery models or regional collaborations.

Not on Target (Being Closely Managed)

- 2.2.1.1 Develop and leverage networks with business, community and tourism operators to support growth and development of the local visitor economy
Responsible officer comment: In January 2026 the NSW Govt produced the State's new Visitor Economy Strategy which will be a foundational input to the local strategy. This work is now underway.
- 2.3.1.9 – Develop a Council Facility Security Strategy.
- 3.2.2.1 Investigate grant opportunities for solar and battery grants for our buildings to augment Council's power requirements
Responsible officer comment: Progress on analysing the facility requirements has slowed due to organisational resources being redirected toward the Retain and Invest Strategy. Although one grant opportunity emerged, Council was unable to apply because it could not meet the required

50% co-contribution. While securing the requested grant is unlikely at this stage, Council should still complete documentation of the facility's requirements within the current financial year.

4. 3.3.1.3 Investigate increased recycling opportunities in public spaces

Responsible officer comment: Council is awaiting the outcomes of the Recycling RFT scheduled for release in March 2026. As a result, advice and recommendations on public-space recycling opportunities will not be available until the 2026/27 financial year. Consequently, this Action will need to be carried over to the 2026/27 Operational Plan.

5. 4.3.2.3 Establish a Council intranet platform

Responsible officer comment: Limited resourcing has prevented the implementation of an intranet platform in 2025/26. A project plan will be completed for proposed delivery in 2026/27. However, an intranet service has already been established to support organisational procurement, which will be used as the model for expanding broader intranet pages across the organisation.

Not yet commenced in this quarter (Timing-dependent / programmed later in the year)

Whilst planning for the below activities has commenced delivery of the service or function is not scheduled until the third and fourth quarter of the financial year.

10. 1.4.1.3 – Convene a Consumer Advisory Forum (≥2 annually).

Responsible officer comment:: The forum is scheduled for later in the FY; no Q2 session was held. Preparatory actions are underway to meet annual requirements.

11. 1.4.4.1 – Citizenship Ceremonies (Department of Home Affairs).

Responsible officer comment: No ceremonies were held during in Q1 or Q2; Australia Day services occur just after Q2. Arrangements are in place with the Department for timely facilitation.

12. 1.4.4.2 – Australia Day Activities (January 2026).

Responsible officer comment: The program was on track in Q2 and delivered in January. Post-event reporting will confirm outcomes and learnings.

13. 1.4.4.3 – NAIDOC Week events (5–12 July 2026).

Responsible officer comment: Activity falls outside Q2; planning will occur later in the year. The event remains scheduled and resourced.

14. 4.3.2.1 – IT Business Continuity tabletop drill (report to ARIC).

Responsible officer comment: A facilitated tabletop exercise is scheduled for late April 2026, post-Q2. Findings will feed into the Disaster Recovery Plan and ARIC reporting.

15. 4.2.3.1 – Corporate Risk Appetite Statement (adoption < Dec 2026).

Responsible officer comment: Not due in Q2; work will commence in the next planning window. A draft will be prepared for Councillor input prior to adoption.

16. 4.2.2.9 – Desktop scenario test of Business Continuity Plan (report to ARIC).

Responsible officer comment: Not yet due; the drill and reporting will occur later in the FY. The schedule will be coordinated with ARIC cycles.

17. 4.3.4.9 – Annual Staff Recognition Awards (once annually).
Responsible officer comment: Year-end delivery is planned; no Q2 commencement required. The program framework remains in place with timing to be confirmed.
18. 4.3.4.10 – Organisation-wide “Culture” Morning (once annually).
Responsible officer comment: Scheduled for year-end; no Q2 commencement. The facilitated program will align with broader workforce initiatives.

Achievements (Q2 2025/26)

Community & Social

- Volunteer programs maintained across McMaugh Gardens, transport, library, parks and gardens; volunteer acknowledgement delivered successfully.
- Inclusive engagement with Elders and planning for Seniors Week and Youth Week strengthened community cohesion.
- Uralla Christmas Street Fair delivered with strong community response and a positive post-event outcome.

Infrastructure & Asset Services

- Footpath renewals and upgrades progressed (Park Street, John Street), and storm damage repairs accelerated following snow/wind events.
- Road upgrading and renewal advanced on Thunderbolts Way, Hawthorne Drive and Gostwyck Road; reseal programming completed for late summer.
- Stormwater network CCTV verification moved forward, improving future renewal planning.

Water & Sewer

- 100% compliance with Australian Drinking Water Guidelines and EPA licence conditions across Uralla and Bundarra water and sewer operations.

Environment & Waste

- Waste and transfer stations remained compliant; recycling market approach (RFT) scheduled to open in March 2026.

Governance, Finance & Organisation

- OLG compliance and reporting met for July–December 2025; internal audit (Fleet & Plant) completed with actions underway.
- SRV community engagement program delivered July–November 2025 with December Council resolution to proceed to IPART application.
- Cyber awareness training delivered to staff and Councillors.

CONCLUSION

Progress on the Operational Plan remains on track, with the majority of annual actions progressing as planned across community services, infrastructure, environment, water and sewer, and governance. Variations arising from timing dependencies, resource constraints, external approvals, and adverse weather events have been identified in this report, with revised milestones and next steps allocated to responsible officers.

As Council moves into Q3 and Q4, the focus will shift to finalising on-track actions, advancing items with updated timelines, and leveraging funding and partnership opportunities to support delivery.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS**Community Engagement/Communication**

Operational Plan status reports are provided every six months.

Policy and Regulation

The *Local Government Act 1993*.

Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Handbook for local government in NSW.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

The delivery of actions in the Operational Plan is provided via Council's annual budget.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

Asset Management Plans form part of the IP&R suite of documents, and form part of some of the actions in the Operational Plan.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

The Workforce Plan is aligned with the Delivery Program and Operational Plan and forms part of the IP&R suite of documents.

Legal and Risk Management

Periodic reporting identifies whether strategies are working. This is an opportunity to assess any risks in relation to projects or activities.

Performance Measures

This report outlines the progress of key actions from the Operational Plan 2025-2026

Project Management

Group Manager Corporate Services

13.9 Loans as at 31 January 2026

Department:	General Manager's Office
Prepared By:	Senior Finance Officer
Authorised By:	Chief Financial Officer
Strategy:	3.2. A strategic, accountable, and representative Council

SUMMARY

This report provides the 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 31 January 2026 is \$1,090,450.

REPORT

This report outlines the Council's borrowing position as at end of the reporting month. As per reconciliation for borrowings as of 31 January 2026, the loan balance stood at \$1,090,450.

The table below details the loan's opening balance, interest applied, instalments paid since the last report, and the closing balance at month-end.

Loan no.	Purpose	Balance as at 30-Nov-2025	Interest Applied	Instalment Paid	Balance as at 31-Jan-2026
165	MGH Property	6,311	84	1,503	4,892
188	Paving and Power Undergrounding	2,348	29	1,096	1,280
189	Bridge Construction	99,653	1,415	5,301	95,768
190	Bridge construction & industrial land development	988,510	-	-	988,510
	Total	1,096,822	1,528	7,900	1,090,450

CONCLUSION

I, Mustaq Ahammed, Chief Financial Officer hereby certify that the above borrowings have been made in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993* (sections 621 to 624) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (section 230).

13.10 Investments as at 31 January 2026

Department:	General Manager's Office
Prepared By:	Senior Finance Officer
Authorised By:	Chief Financial Officer
Strategy:	3.2. A strategic, accountable, and representative Council

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 (NSW)*, section 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 (NSW)*, and Council's *Investment Policy 2019*.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes:

- 1. The cash position as of 31 January 2026 consisting of:**
 - cash and overnight funds of \$4,465,402
 - term deposits of \$19,000,000; and
 - total of cash and term deposits amount to \$23,465,402 as of 31 January 2026.
- 2. Restrictions are reconciled on a quarterly basis. As of 31 December 2025, total cash and investments were \$24,003,827 comprising \$ 17,906,150 in external restrictions and \$ 4,985,028 in internal restrictions, leaving an unrestricted balance \$ 1,112,649. This compares to an unrestricted cash balance of \$ 2,644,164 as of 30 September 2025.**

REPORT

Of the cash disclosed in this report, not all funds are available for unrestricted use by Council. A significant portion is subject to external restrictions, including developer contributions, government grants, loans, water supply and sewer services, and refundable accommodation deposits (reported as McMaugh Gardens Bond Liability).

In addition, part of the cash is internally restricted to meet Council's future commitments, such as asset renewals, remediation works, and employee leave provisions.

The \$2.0 million decrease in term deposits as at 31 January 2026 relates to a matured term deposit with NAB at the end of the month, which was temporarily transferred to Professional Funds. The amount was reinvested with CBA in the first week of February.

Council's current investment portfolio earns interest rates ranging from 4.01% to 4.95%, with an average return of 4.29%. The Reserve Bank of Australia increased the cash rate by 25 basis points to 3.85 per cent on 3 February 2026 due to increase in inflation during the second half of 2025.

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. Accordingly, McMaugh Garden's Bond Liability status as of 31 January 2026 is provided below:

Particulars	Amount
Opening Balance as at 30/11/2025	5,750,000
Add: Bond received during the period	
Less: Bond released during the period	
Closing Balance as at 31/01/26	5,750,000

Breakdown of Council's Cash and Investments as of 31 January 2026

Institution	Account	Closing Balance 31 Jan 2026
National Australia Bank	Main Account	\$132,285
National Australia Bank	Trust Account	\$31,297
Regional Australia Bank	Cash Account	\$29,172
Professional Funds (0.15% above RBA cash rate)	Cash Account	\$4,272,648
Total Cash and Overnight Funds		\$4,465,402
Term Deposits	Investments	19,000,000
Total funds available as at 31 January, 2026		\$23,465,402

Movement of Term Deposit Investments by Each Bank Since Last Report

Name of the Bank	S&P Rating	Allowable Investment Limit %	Max Investment Allowed	Opening Investments 30/11/2025	Movement during the Month	Closing Investments 31/01/26	% of Actual Investment
National Australia Bank	A-1+	30%	5,700,000	7,200,000	(1,500,000)	5,700,000	30.0%
Bank of Queensland	A-2	30%	5,700,000	2,500,000	-	2,500,000	13.2%
Westpac Banking Corporation	A-1+	30%	5,700,000	5,600,000	-	5,600,000	29.5%
Commonwealth Bank	A-1+	30%	5,700,000	2,500,000	-	2,500,000	13.2%
Regional Australia Bank	BBB+	10%	1,900,000	700,000	-	700,000	3.7%
Suncorp	A-1+	30%	5,700,000	2,500,000	(500,000)	2,000,000	10.5%
Total				21,000,000	- 2,000,000	19,000,000	100%

List of Term Deposits as of 31 January 2025

Name of the Bank	Term	Interest Rate	Maturity Date	Investment Amount
National Australia Bank	12 months	4.75%	11/02/2026	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	12 months	4.60%	13/03/2026	500,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	12 months	4.62%	18/03/2026	700,000
Regional Australia Bank	6 months	4.20%	4/04/2026	700,000
Bank of Queensland	6 months	4.25%	7/04/2026	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	12 months	4.35%	7/04/2026	700,000
National Australia Bank	12 months	4.25%	17/04/2026	1,000,000
Bank of Queensland	8 months	4.15%	18/05/2026	500,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	10 months	4.12%	22/05/2026	500,000
National Australia Bank	12 months	4.20%	25/05/2026	500,000
National Australia Bank	11 months	4.05%	1/06/2026	600,000
Bank of Queensland	12 months	4.10%	2/06/2026	1,000,000
Suncorp	12 months	4.13%	12/06/2026	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	12 months	4.05%	2/07/2026	500,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	12 months	4.12%	22/07/2026	1,000,000
Suncorp	19 months	4.95%	13/08/2026	1,000,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	12 months	4.09%	25/08/2026	400,000
National Australia Bank	12 months	4.05%	25/08/2026	400,000
Commonwealth Bank	12 months	4.01%	2/09/2026	1,000,000
National Australia Bank	12 months	4.25%	2/10/2026	500,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	11 months	4.48%	3/11/2026	1,000,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	11 months	4.45%	4/11/2026	1,000,000
Westpac Banking Corporation	11 months	4.45%	4/11/2026	1,000,000
Commonwealth Bank	12 months	4.35%	27/11/2026	1,000,000
Commonwealth Bank	12 months	4.35%	27/11/2026	500,000
Total				19,000,000

CONCLUSION

I, Mustaq Ahammed, Chief Financial Officer, hereby certify that the above investments have been made in accordance with section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, section 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, and Council's *Investment Policy 2019*.

13.11 Monthly Finance Report for January 2026

Department: General Manager's Office**Prepared By:** Corporate Accountant**Authorised By:** Chief Financial Officer

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

1. Monthly Financial Statements- January 2026 ⇒ **Attachments:****Goal:** 3. An Independent shire and well-governed community**Strategy:** 3.2. A strategic, accountable, and representative Council3.1. Informed and collaborative community leaders

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 January 2026.

REPORT

This report provides for the information of Councillors the Income Statement and CAPEX Summary, including a breakdown by fund, for the month ending 31 January 2026.

13.12 Second Quarterly Budget Review 2025-26 (QBR)

Department: General Manager's Office**Prepared By:** Chief Financial Officer**Authorised By:** General Manager**Reference:** UINT/26/3530

Attachments: 1. Second Quarterly Budget Review Statements 2025/26 [⇒](#)

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK**Goal:** 3. An Independent shire and well-governed community**Strategy:** 3.2. A strategic, accountable, and representative Council

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present to Council a review of the budget for the second quarter of the 2025/26 financial year.

RECOMMENDATION**THAT Council:**

1. Received and notes the second quarter budget review summary for the 2025/26 financial year; and
2. Adopts the adjustments to budget allocations.

BACKGROUND:

It is a statutory requirement that Council's responsible accounting officer prepares and submits a budget review statement to Council on a Quarterly basis each financial year (LGGR 2005 cl.203 (1)). Also, in compliance with the Local Government (General) Regulation, Council's responsible accounting office must include with the budget review report an opinion on the financial position of Council and any recommendations for remedial action if required. As such, the second quarterly review for the 2025/26 financial year has been prepared and attached for Council's review.

REPORT

This report presents the second quarterly budget review for the 2025/26 financial year and outlines the required adjustments arising from operational developments during the second quarter. Council prepares its reports in its usual format to meet community expectations, and provides reports in the format recommended by the Office of Local Government.

In August 2025, Council was significantly impacted by a severe snowstorm that caused substantial environmental damage and disrupted community access and mobility. Council acted promptly to undertake essential emergency and recovery works, funding these activities from its own resources. The unplanned works have resulted in expenditure of approximately \$1.56 million. Reimbursement claims have been lodged with the NSW Reconstruction Authority and are currently under assessment. While reimbursement is expected, any delay in receiving these funds will place additional pressure on Council's cash reserves and adversely affect operating performance.

Additional expenditure has also arisen from new regulatory requirements and unforeseen circumstances that were not anticipated during the preparation of the 2025/26 budget. Examples include the costs associated with conducting a by-election and the installation of live-streaming technology in the Council Chambers. As these types of expenses are unpredictable, in future, considerations need to be given to maintaining a contingency provision within the budget framework.

As reported in the first quarterly review, Council's water infrastructure is ageing and approaching the end of its useful life. As a result, there has been an increase in water main breaks in recent months. In response, Council has increased its investment in water network renewals, as well as additional repair and maintenance works during this quarter.

Due to the unplanned expenditure on snowstorm recovery works, additional regulatory and operational costs, and the Water Fund's increased investment in water main replacements and repair works, Council's cash position is declining rapidly. On a positive note, the sale of the garbage truck will bring \$300k cash in a couple of days, which will provide a modest improvement to cash position. However, unless reimbursement for snowstorm recovery costs and the recovery of expenditures relating to the groundwater and IWCM projects are received within the current financial year, Council's available cash reserves are expected to decline materially by year end.

Major Revisions

The second Quarterly Budget Review Statement (QBR2) primarily incorporates the \$1.56 million in expenditure incurred in relation to the snowstorm recovery works. At this stage, no corresponding revenue has been recognised, given the uncertainty surrounding the timing and outcome of the reimbursement process.

The \$437k adjustment to depreciation is primarily attributable to the revaluation of transport assets in 2024/25, which comprise the largest component of Council's asset portfolio. At the time of budget preparation, sufficient information was not available to accurately estimate the additional depreciation arising from the revaluation.

In addition, due to an increased number of water main breaks, Council has incurred additional costs for the replacement, repair, and maintenance of water infrastructure. The total budget adjustment for these works amounts to \$400k in QBR2.

Council received \$1 million under AGRN 1030/34 in 2023/24. The fund was initially allocated across eight projects and scheduled to be expended in 2024/25. During preparation of the 2025/26 budget, Council identified \$700k to be carried forward into 2025/26, with the remaining \$300k expected to be spent in 2024/25. However, following finalisation of the 2024/25 financial year, it was confirmed that only \$58k of the \$300k had been expended. The unspent balance of \$242k has therefore been carried forward into 2025/26 to accurately reflect Council's cash flow.

CONCLUSION

The attached presents the new QBR2 templated suggested by the Office of Local Government and the reports used by the council in the past.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

Report of budget reviews to the Council's ordinary meeting.

Policy and Regulation

- *Local Government Act 1993;*
- *Local Government Regulations (General) 2005;*
- *Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting;* and
- Australian Accounting Standards.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

This report is a review of the annual budget up to the end of the second quarter. Changes to the budget are as outlined in the attached statements.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

N/A

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

N/A

Legal and Risk Management

Council is required by legislation (*clause 203 of the Regulations*) to prepare quarterly budget review statements for the first three quarters of each year, including an opinion by the Responsible Accounting Officer as to whether the financial position of the Council is satisfactory.

Corporate Governance – the second quarter budget review complies with legislative requirements. This risk is assessed as low.

Financial Management – the second quarter budget review in line with the original budget adopted by Council in June 2025. This risk is assessed as moderate.

Performance Measures

The second of three required budget reviews.

Project Management

N/A

13.13 Thunderbolt's Festival

Department: General Manager's Office**Prepared By:** General Manager**Authorised By:** General Manager**Reference:** UINT/26/2628

Attachments: 1. Rotary Club Uralla Letter to Mayor & General Manager [⇒](#)2. USC Event Management Plan - Template [⇒](#)

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK**Goal:** 3. An Independent shire and well-governed community**Strategy:** 3.1. Informed and collaborative community leaders

SUMMARY

Council has been advised by Rotary Club of Uralla they are no longer able to coordinate and run Thunderbolt's Festival as a Rotary event.

RECOMMENDATION**That Council:**

1. **Writes to Uralla Rotary acknowledging their withdrawal from future Thunderbolt's Festival events and their past contribution.**
2. **Notes the advice in this report regarding cash and in-kind support provided by Council for previous Festivals.**
3. **Confirms that Council's premier event is the annual Christmas Street Party and Council has no capacity to take on any additional events.**

REPORT

Thunderbolt's Festival has been a feature event in the Uralla Shire community since 1998. The festival was originally coordinated and delivered by Uralla Shire Council.

In 2016, responsibility for organising the event was transferred to the community, with the Rotary Club of Uralla assuming the lead role.

Rotary has now advised Council that its long-standing key members are no longer able to continue leading, supporting, or coordinating the event.

While Rotary has indicated that the Thunderbolt's Festival committee's financial position is currently sound, the actual cost of delivering the event remains unclear, as Council does not have any acquittal information from previous years.

A total of \$26,475+ in cash funding was provided by Council and other sponsors for the 2025 event as follows:

- Uralla Shire Council – \$12,000 cash plus in-kind support
- ACEN – \$11,000
- Phoenix Foundry – \$1,000
- Top Pub – \$1,000
- Uralla Bowling Club – \$500
- Bolt Inn – \$500
- EnergyCo – \$275
- Motor Mates – \$200
- Other local businesses – Amount unknown

Council in-kind support

In addition to the \$12,000 cash contribution, Council also contributed significantly to the event with in-kind support, costed conservatively at approximately \$13,648. This support included:

- Preparation of parks and gardens in addition to normal maintenance program, including mowing, edging, pruning, irrigation checks and presentation works in the lead-up to the event.
- Preparation, cleaning and servicing of public amenities, including Alma Park toilets and surrounding facilities, prior to and following the event.
- Traffic management and safety barricades, including planning, implementation and removal of road closures on the New England Highway and Hill Street/Queen Street, and installation of detour and event signage.
- Council staff time to prepare and coordinate the Traffic Management Plan and associated approvals.
- Council staff time to set up event infrastructure, including placement of bins, signage, barricades and other equipment.
- Council staff time to dismantle infrastructure, undertake clean-up and restore parks, streets and facilities after the event.
- Provision and use of Council plant and vehicles, including utes, trucks and other equipment, for transport of materials, bins, barriers and signage.
- Additional waste management services, including supply of extra bins, collection and disposal, and general litter collection at Alma Park and surrounding streets.
- Council staff time to plan the event, undertake risk assessments, coordinate approvals and liaise with stakeholders, emergency services and Transport for NSW.
- Council staff time liaising with the event's insurer and organisers to confirm that adequate public liability and other required insurance cover was in place for the event.

- Council staff time to promote the event, distribute advertising material and provide customer service support.
- Administrative support, including processing event bookings, approvals, internal reviews and coordination across Council departments.
- Waiving of fees for use of Council land and facilities, including Alma Park, and associated utility costs such as electricity and water.

Further intangible costs include the opportunity cost losses associated with the deferral and rescheduling of planned Council works and programs to accommodate event-related activities.

Council staff capacity

Council's premier event is the annual Christmas Street Party, for which Council has secured grant funding for an additional two years.

Council staff do not have the capacity to take on any more events without additional dedicated resourcing and funding.

CONCLUSION

Dedicated resourcing would be required for Council staff to assume the role of organising future festivals such as the Thunderbolt's Festival.

Should another community group volunteer to organise future Thunderbolt's Festivals, Council officers will seek direction from Council on relevant cash and in-kind support funding in the upcoming 2026/27 and future Budget deliberations.

Note key requirements for any new Thunderbolt's Festival organiser would be \$20m public liability insurance and completion of Council's event application form – copy **attached** to this report.

COUNCIL IMPLICATIONS

Community Engagement/Communication

Correspondence has been received from Uralla Rotary advising that they are withdrawing from organising future Thunderbolt's Festival events.

Policy and Regulation

Public Liability insurance of \$20m is required for any public event and the completion of Council's event application form.

Financial/Long Term Financial Plan

Should another community group be identified to assume the role of Thunderbolt's Festival organiser, Council officers will seek direction from Council on relevant cash and in-kind support funding in the upcoming 2026/27 and future Budget deliberations, noting that in-kind support impacts on operational and capital program service delivery.

Asset Management/Asset Management Strategy

Regular maintenance of Council assets including Alma Park is scheduled in Council's normal works program. Additional works are programmed for events such as Thunderbolt's Festival.

Workforce/Workforce Management Strategy

Council staff do not have capacity to take on the role of organising future Thunderbolt's Festivals without additional dedicated resourcing.

Legal and Risk Management

Any public event requires \$20m public liability insurance to be in place. A thorough risk management assessment is also required.

Performance Measures

Not applicable

Project Management

Council staff do not have capacity to take on the role of organising future Thunderbolt's Festivals without additional dedicated resourcing.

13.14 Register Resolutions Actions Status as at 18 February 2026

Department: Group Corporate Services
Prepared By: Group Support Officer Corporate Services
Authorised By: General Manager
Reference: UINT/26/2069

Attachments: 1. Resolutions Actions Status Report as at 18 February 2026 [⇨](#)

LINKAGE TO INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Goal: 3. An Independent shire and well-governed community
Strategy: 3.1. Informed and collaborative community leaders
 3.2. A strategic, accountable, and representative Council

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 18 February 2026.

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/Extraordinary Meeting.

14 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*:

14.1 Uralla Depot Asbestos Remediation and proposed amenities refurbishment

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - d(ii) 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 information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council.

14.2 Third Party Agreement - EnergyCo and Uralla Shire Council

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.

15 COMMUNICATION OF COUNCIL DECISION**16 CONCLUSION OF MEETING**