



3 December 2025

To All Councillors

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993, that the next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held in the Council Chambers, on Wednesday, 10 December 2025 at 6.30pm, for the purposes of transacting the undermentioned business.

AGENDA:

PAGE NO.

- (1) **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL LAND OWNERS**
- (2) **OPENING PRAYER**
- (3) **RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE , OR ATTENDANCE BY AUDIO-VISUAL LINK**
- (4) **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 19 November 2025 6
- (5) **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**
DI12/2025 Disclosures Of Interest 39
- (6) **PETITIONS**
- (7) **PUBLIC ADDRESS**
- (8) **CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF ALL REPORTS BY ENGLOBO**
- (9) **MAYORAL MINUTES**
MM15/2025 Minutes of the Council Initiated Awards Committee held 19 November 2025..... 40
- (10) **MOTIONS OF URGENCY**
MOU12/2025 Motions of Urgency..... 41
- (11) **RESCISSION MOTIONS**
RM1/2025 PE31/2025 - DA 8/2025/536/1 - Proposed Telecommunications Tower Facility (Mobile Telephone Infrastructure) 42
- (12) **GENERAL MANAGER'S UNIT**
‡ GMU6/2025 Appointment of Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Independent Member 44

(13) PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

PE34/2025	Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program 2025/2026 Applications	48
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(14) CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY

CC84/2025	Authorisation for sale of surplus Council land - Part Lot 378 DP 1002112	55
CC85/2025	Financial Sustainability and Scheduling of January 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting	58
‡ CC86/2025	Annual Code of Conduct Complaints Report	60
CC87/2025	Ward Boundaries - Variation in Enrolments - Update.....	62
‡ CC88/2025	Disclosures of Interests in Written Returns	65
‡ CC89/2025	Investment Report - November 2025.....	68
‡ CC90/2025	Resolutions Tracking Report	73

(15) WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

WI14/2025	Unsealed Roads and Costs	74
WI15/2025	Petition - Provision of Public Amenities at Crawfordville Park, Millfield.	86
WI16/2025	Quotation - Q2026-08 Doyle Street Bridge Replacement	89
WI17/2025	Adoption of the Asset Management Strategy & Asset Management Plans.....	94

(16) BUSINESS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

BN18/2025	Suspension of all Non-Legislated Net Zero Expenditure to Support Financial Sustainability.....	97
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(17) COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

(18) REPORT OF THE CONFIDENTIAL SESSION OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING ON 10 DEC 2025

‡ - Denotes that Report is for notation only.



Principles for Local Government

Exercise of functions generally

The following general principles apply to the exercise of functions by Councils:

- a) Councils should provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making.
- b) Councils should carry out functions in a way that provides the best possible value for residents and ratepayers.
- c) Councils should plan strategically, using the integrated planning and reporting framework, for the provision of effective and efficient services and regulation to meet the diverse needs of the local community.
- d) Councils should apply the integrated planning and reporting framework in carrying out their functions so as to achieve desired outcomes and continuous improvements.
- e) Councils should work co-operatively with other Councils and the State government to achieve desired outcomes for the local community.
- f) Councils should manage lands and other assets so that current and future local community needs can be met in an affordable way.
- g) Councils should work with others to secure appropriate services for local community needs.
- h) Councils should act fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the local community.
- i) Councils should be responsible employers and provide a consultative and supportive working environment for staff.

Council's Values

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Respect
- Excellence
- Teamwork

Our Community's Vision

Cessnock will be a cohesive and welcoming community living in an attractive and sustainable rural environment with a diversity of business and employment opportunities supported by accessible infrastructure and services which effectively meet community need.

Cessnock – thriving, attractive and welcoming.

Our Community's Desired Outcomes

- A connected, safe and creative community.
- A sustainable and prosperous economy.
- A sustainable and healthy environment.
- Accessible infrastructure, facilities and services.
- Civic Leadership and effective governance.



Council Code of Conduct

Council adopted its current Code of Conduct on 23 October 2024. This Code provides details of statutory requirements and gives guidance in respect of the way in which pecuniary and conflict of interest issues must be disclosed. Councillors took an oath or affirmation at the commencement of their term of office under section 233A of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) and are therefore obligated under Council's Code of Conduct to disclose and appropriately manage their conflicts of interest.

Generally, the Code outlines the following issues:

1. Councillors are under an obligation at law to disclose any interest they may have in any matter before the Council as soon as practicable and to refrain from being involved in any consideration or to vote on any such matter where required and out outlined in the Code of Conduct.
2. Councillors must disclose any interest in any matter noted in the business paper prior to or at the opening of the meeting.
3. The nature of the interest shall be included in the disclosure.
4. Councillors shall immediately and during the meeting disclose any interest in respect of any matter arising during the meeting which is not referred to in the business paper.
5. All disclosures of interest shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
6. All disclosures of interest shall as far as is practicable be given in writing.
7. Any member having a pecuniary or non-pecuniary significant conflict of interest shall leave the meeting and remain absent while the subject of the interest is being considered by Council.
8. The meeting shall not discuss any matter in which a Councillor has a pecuniary or non-pecuniary significant conflict of interest while the Councillor is present at the meeting.



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**MINUTES OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF THE CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON WEDNESDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2025,
COMMENCING AT 6.30PM**

PRESENT: His Worship the Mayor, Councillor D Watton (in the Chair) and Councillors Dunne, Hill, Jurd, Lea, Madden, Mason, Palmowski, Pascoe and Hawkins.

IN ATTENDANCE: Interim General Manager (Director Planning and Environment)
Acting Director Planning and Environment (Development Services Manager)
Acting Director Corporate and Community Services (Chief Finance Officer)
Director Works and Infrastructure
Acting Development Services Manager (Development Engineering Coordinator)
Acting Strategic Planning Manager
Communications & Engagement Manager
Help Desk Support Officer
Senior Business Support Officer – Council Services

The Prayer was presented by Reverend Nicole Baldwin

**APOLOGY / LEAVE
OF ABSENCE:**

MOTION

Moved:
Seconded:

Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Jurd

278

RESOLVED that the apology tendered on behalf of Councillor King for unavoidable absence, be accepted and leave of absence granted.

That the leave of Absence previously granted for Councillor Dixon for the period 5 November 2025 to 23 November 2025, and Councillor Harrington for the period 3 November 2025 to 28 November 2025 be noted.

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Dunne
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor Lea
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton

Total (10)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES:

MOTION	Moved:	Councillor Pascoe
	Seconded:	Councillor Jurd

279

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 15 October 2025 and the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Council held 22 October 2025, as circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a correct record.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST NO. DI11/2025

SUBJECT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

RECOMMENDATION

That Councillors now disclose any interests and reasons for declaring such interest in the matters under consideration by Council at this meeting.

PE31/2025 - DA 8/2025/536/1 Proposed Telecommunications Facility (Mobile Telephone Infrastructure) - Councillor Jurd declared a Pecuniary Interest - Significant Conflict for the reason that she has a potential monetary implication. Councillor Jurd advised that she will leave the chamber and will take no part in discussion and voting.

CC71/2025 - Community, Sporting and Environment Grant 2025-26 - Councillor Palmowski declared a Non Pecuniary Interest - Significant Conflict for the reason that she is a committee member of the Greta Branxton Football Club. Councillor Palmowski advised that she will leave the chamber and take no part in discussion and voting.

CC73/2025 - Classification of Land _ Lot 6 & 7 DP1308673 1 Chapell Street & 1 Bendeich Drive North Rothbury - Councillor Palmowski declared a Non Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that she owns property within the estate of Huntlee in North Rothbury. Councillor Palmowski advised she will remain in the chamber and take part in discussion and voting as the conflict will not influence her in carrying out her public duty.

CC71/2025 - Community, Sporting and Environment Grant 2025-26 – Councillor Madden declares a Non Pecuniary - Significant Conflict for the reason that he is the vice president of the Kearsley Community Sporting Association who trade as the Kearsley Crushers who applied for a grant for a new marker. Councillor Madden advised that he will leave the chamber and take no part in discussion and voting.

PETITIONS

Nil

ADDRESS BY INVITED SPEAKERS

The following people addressed the meeting of Council:

Alex Hardy	Prosperity	Presenting	CC79/2025 - Annual Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2025	80	
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CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC79/2025

SUBJECT: ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor Pascoe ***Seconded:*** Councillor Madden
280

RESOLVED

That the Annual Financial Statements, incorporating the Auditor's Reports for the year ended 30 June 2025, be received and the information be noted.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	Councillor Jurd
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (9)	Total (1)

CARRIED

Speakers	Company	For / Against	Report	Page No.	Duration
Jessica Jurd		Against	PE31/2025 - DA 8/2025/536/1 Proposed Telecommunications Facility (Mobile Telephone Infrastructure)	40	3 mins

EXTENSION OF TIME

Moved:

Councillor Lea

Seconded:

Councillor Hawkins

281

RESOLVED

That an extension of one minute be granted to Jessica Jurd to complete her presentation

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Dunne
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor Lea
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton

Total (10)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

EXTENSION OF TIME

Moved:

Councillor Mason

Seconded:

Councillor Madden

282

RESOLVED

That an extension of one minute be granted to Jessica Jurd to complete her presentation

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Dunne
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor Lea
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton

Total (10)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mark Baade	Waveconn Operations	For	PE31/2025 - DA 8/2025/536/1 Proposed Telecommunications Facility (Mobile Telephone Infrastructure)	40	3 mins
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EXTENSION OF TIME

Moved: Councillor Lea
Seconded: Councillor Pascoe

283

RESOLVED

That an extension of one minute be granted to Mark Baade to complete his presentation

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Dunne
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor Lea
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton

Total (10)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Councillor Jurd left the meeting, the time being 6.59pm

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT NO. PE31/2025

SUBJECT: DA 8/2025/536/1
PROPOSED TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY (MOBILE TELEPHONE INFRASTRUCTURE)

Councillor Jurd declared a Pecuniary Interest - Significant Conflict for the reason that she has a potential monetary implication . Councillor Jurd left the chamber and took no part in discussion and voting.

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Hill **Seconded:** Councillor Lea

284

RESOLVED

1. That:

- (i) Development Application No. 8/2025/536/1 proposing a Telecommunications Facility (Mobile Telephone Base Station) at 25 Cessnock Street Cessnock be approved pursuant to Sections 4.16 and 4.17 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* subject to the conditions contained in this report.

(ii) The reasons for the decision (having regard to any statutory requirements applying to the decision), and consideration of community views are as follows:

- The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, is consistent with the objectives of the Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 (CLEP 2011).
- The proposed development is, subject to the recommended conditions, consistent with the objectives of the Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 (DCP 2010); any variations to prescribed standards within this Plan have been adequately addressed.
- The proposed development is considered to be of an appropriate scale and form.
- The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, will not result in unacceptable adverse impacts upon the natural or built environments.
- Any issues raised in submissions have been taken into account in the assessment report and where appropriate, conditions of consent have been imposed to reasonably mitigate potential impacts. Council has given due consideration to community views when making the decision to determine the application.

(iii) The details contained above be publicly notified pursuant to Section 2.22 and Clause 20(2) of Schedule 1 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

2. That Council notify in writing the persons who made a submission with regard to the proposed development, of Council's decision

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	Councillor Mason
Councillor Hill	Councillor Watton
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Total (7)	Total (2)

CARRIED

CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF ALL REPORTS BY ENGLOBO OR INDIVIDUALLY WITH NOMINATED EXCEPTIONS

Councillor Jurd returned to the meeting, the time being 07.12 PM

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Palmowski

285

RESOLVED

That having read and considered the reports in the agenda related to items

OFFICERS REPORTS

CC72/2025	Cessnock City Library Strategy and Summary 2025-35.....	59
CC75/2025	Schedule of Ordinary Meetings of Council for 2026.....	68
CC80/2025	Financial Hardship Policy	84
CC CC81/2025	Investment Report - October 2025	87
CC83/2025	Placement of the Long Term Financial Plan (2026-2036) on Public Exhibition.....	

Council adopt the recommendations as printed in the business papers for those items.

FOR	AGAINST
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Councillor Dunne
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor Lea
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton

Total (10)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MAYORAL MINUTES

MAYORAL MINUTES NO. MM13/2025

**SUBJECT: MULTI GOVERNMENT FORUM ON HOMELESSNESS, MENTAL
HEALTH, AND RELATED SOCIAL ISSUES**

MOTION Moved: Councillor Watton

286

RESOLVED

That Council write to the Member for Cessnock, Mr Clayton Barr MP, the Member for Paterson, Mrs Meryl Swanson MP, the Member for Hunter, Mr Dan Repacholi MP, the Member for Maitland, Jenny Aitchison MP and the Member for Upper Hunter Mr Dave Layzell MP requesting the establishment of a Cessnock Regional Services Forum to address the provision of support services for those less fortunate in our community.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MAYORAL MINUTES NO. MM14/2025

**SUBJECT: HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE -
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT -
INVITATION TO MAKE SUBMISSION TO INQUIRY INTO LOCAL
GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Watton
287
RESOLVED

1. That Council provides a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport in regards to the Committees new inquiry into local government funding and financial sustainability as it affects Cessnock City Council by 3 February 2026.
2. That Council provides a copy of the submission to the Federal Member for Hunter, Dan Repacholi MP and the Federal Member for Paterson, Meryl Swanson MP

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOTIONS OF URGENCY

MOTIONS OF URGENCY NO. MOU11/2025

SUBJECT: MOTIONS OF URGENCY

Nil

GENERAL MANAGER'S UNIT

GENERAL MANAGER'S UNIT NO. GMU4/2025

**SUBJECT: AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT
 2024-2025**

MOTION Moved: Councillor Jurd **Seconded:** Councillor Lea
288
RESOLVED

That Council receives and notes the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Annual Report for the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	Councillor Jurd
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (9)	Total (1)

CARRIED

GENERAL MANAGER'S UNIT NO. GMU5/2025

SUBJECT: INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Pascoe **Seconded:** Councillor Hill
289

RESOLVED

That Council adopts the Internal Audit Charter.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT NO. PE32/2025

SUBJECT: LAND DEDICATION, PLANNING AGREEMENT AND WORKS IN KIND POLICIES

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Jurd **Seconded:** Councillor Hill
290
RESOLVED

1. That Council place the Draft Land Dedication Policy, Draft Works in Kind Policy, revised Draft Planning Agreement Policy, and associated guidelines on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.
2. That Council resolve to remove the requirement for tendering under section 55(1) of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) for all Works in Kind and Planning Agreements.
3. That Council adopt the Draft Land Dedication Policy, Draft Works in Kind Agreement Policy and revised Draft Planning Agreement Policy the day after the public exhibition period concludes, if no unresolved submissions are received.
4. That Council receive a further report after the public exhibition period, if there are unresolved submissions.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC71/2025

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY, SPORTING AND ENVIRONMENT GRANT 2025-26

Councillor Palmowski declared a Non Pecuniary Interest - Significant Conflict for the reason that she is a committee member of the Greta Branxton Football Club. Councillor Palmowski left the chamber and took no part in discussion and voting.

Madden declares a Non Pecuniary - Significant Conflict for the reason that he is the vice president of the Kearsley Crushers who trade as the Kearsley Community Sporting Association who applied for a grant for a new marker. Councillor Madden left the chamber and took no part in discussion and voting.

Councillors Palmowski and Madden left the meeting, the time being 7.45pm

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Jurd **Seconded:** Councillor Lea
291

RESOLVED

1. That Council provides funds through the Community Facilities Grant Scheme to:
 - Branxton Community Hall Section 355 Committee in the amount of \$9,975
 - Marthaville Section 355 Committee in the amount of \$1,654
 - North Cessnock Community Hall section 355 committee in the amount of \$6,212
 - North Rothbury Tidy Town Committee in the amount of \$2,086
 - Prelude Australia Kurri Kurri (comprising of four projects) in the amount of \$18,527
 - Weston Civic Centre Section 355 Committee in the amount of \$614
2. That Council transfers \$9,068 of unspent funds from the Sporting Facilities Grant Scheme to allow Council to fund all recommended Community Facilities Grant Scheme applications.
3. That Council provides funds through the Sporting Facilities Grant Scheme to:
 - Branxton District Netball Club in the amount of \$3,575
 - Coalfields Cross Country Running Club in the amount of \$1,654
 - Greta Branxton Football Club in the amount of \$5,991
 - Kearsley Community Sporting Association in the amount of \$1,814
 - Kurri Kurri Tennis Club in the amount of \$2,600
 - Wollombi Valley Tennis and Sports Association in the amount of \$1,428
4. That Council provides funds through the Community and Cultural Development Grant Scheme to:
 - ArtsNational Hunter in the amount of \$2,821
 - Barkuma Neighbourhood Centre in the amount of \$3,000
 - Branxton Community Hall in the amount of \$1,500
 - Carries Place in the amount of \$2,500
 - Cessnock District Rescue Squad Inc. in the amount of \$3,000
 - Cessnock Family Support Service Inc in the amount of \$1,056
 - Cessnock Senior Citizens Association Incorporated in the amount of \$1,500

- Kiray Putjung Aboriginal Corporation in the amount of \$3,000
- Sculpture in the Vineyards Inc in the amount of \$3,000
- Sunnyfield Disability Services in the amount of \$1,774
- The Rotary Club of Cessnock in the amount of \$1,019
- Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service in the amount of \$830

5. That Council provides funds through the Sustainable Communities - Tidy Towns Environment Grant Scheme to:
- Native Animal Trust Fund (Hunter Wildlife Rescue) in the amount of \$3,672
 - Cessnock Community Garden Association Inc. in the amount of \$1,000
6. That the General Manager writes to all applicants advising them of the outcome of their application and thanking them for their ongoing support and commitment to the enhancement of Council facilities, community and cultural development and the environment of the local government area.

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Dunne
 Councillor Hill
 Councillor Jurd
 Councillor Lea
 Councillor Mason
 Councillor Pascoe
 Councillor Hawkins
 Councillor Watton
Total (8)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Councillors Palmowski and Madden returned to the meeting, the time being 7.53pm

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC72/2025

SUBJECT: CESSNOCK CITY LIBRARY STRATEGY AND SUMMARY 2025-35

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Palmowski
292

RESOLVED

That Council adopts the Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35 and the Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC73/2025

SUBJECT: CLASSIFICATION OF LAND _ LOT 6 & 7 DP1308673 1 CHAPELL STREET & 1 BENDEICH DRIVE NORTH ROTHBURY

Councillor Palmowski declared a Non Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that she owns property within the estate of Huntlee in North Rothbury. Councillor Palmowski remained in the chamber and took part in discussion and voting.

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe
293

RESOLVED

That Council classify Lot 6 & 7 DP1308673 1 Chapell Street & 1 Bendeich Drive, North Rothbury, primarily used as a drainage reserve, as operational land.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC74/2025

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF REVISED CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Jurd **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe
294

RESOLVED

1. That Council resolves to fix the general order of business in accordance with section 8.1 of the Code of Meeting Practice.
2. That Council authorises the person presiding at a meeting to exercise a power of expulsion, in accordance with section 5.34 of the Code of Meeting Practice.
3. That Council notes that no submissions were received during the public exhibition period of the Code of Meeting Practice.
4. That Council rescinds the Code of Meeting Practice 2024 and adopts the Code of Meeting Practice 2025, with effect from 31 December 2025.
5. That Council note our dissatisfaction with the timing of these new Code of Meeting practice standards and the effect this may have on sitting elected members during this term of Council.

FOR

Councillor Dunne
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor Lea
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton
Total (9)

AGAINST

Councillor Madden

Total (1)

CARRIED

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC75/2025

SUBJECT: SCHEDULE OF ORDINARY MEETINGS OF COUNCIL FOR 2026

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Palmowski
295

RESOLVED

That Council adopts the schedule of Ordinary Meetings of Council for 2026:

18 February 2026	18 March 2026	15 April 2026
20 May 2026	17 June 2026	15 July 2026
19 August 2026	16 September 2026	21 October 2026
18 November 2026	9 December 2026	

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Dunne
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor Lea
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton

Total (10)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC76/2025

SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe
296

RESOLVED

1. That Council receives and notes the Annual Report for 2024-25.
2. That Council notes the Annual Report will be posted on Council's website.
3. That Council notes the link to the Annual Report will be forwarded to the Minister for Local Government as required by Section 428 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

FOR

Councillor Dunne
Councillor Hill
Councillor Lea
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton

Total (9)

AGAINST

Councillor Jurd

Total (1)

CARRIED

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC77/2025

SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 2025 REVIEW OF THE 2025-29 DELIVERY PROGRAM

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Jurd **Seconded:** Councillor Lea
297

RESOLVED

1. That Council notes the progress in implementing the 2025-29 Delivery Program as at 30 September 2025.
2. That Council approves changes to the Operational Plan actions and targets as outlined in the report.

FOR

Councillor Dunne
Councillor Hill
Councillor Lea
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton

Total (9)

AGAINST

Councillor Jurd

Total (1)

CARRIED

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC78/2025

**SUBJECT: QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW STATEMENT - QUARTER 1, 30
SEPTEMBER 2025**

MOTION Moved: Councillor Jurd **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe
298

RESOLVED

1. That Council receives the September 2025 Quarterly Budget Review Statement in accordance with Clause 203 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.
2. That Council approves proposed changes to the 2025-26 operating and capital budgets as presented in the Quarterly Business Report September 2025.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC80/2025

SUBJECT: FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICY

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Palmowski
299

RESOLVED

That Council adopts the updated Financial Hardship Policy.

FOR	AGAINST
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Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC81/2025

SUBJECT: INVESTMENT REPORT - OCTOBER 2025

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Palmowski
300

RESOLVED

That Council receives the Investment Report for October 2025 and notes that:

- **Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy, which is in accordance with the Ministerial Investment Order.**
- **Council's month end cash and investments balance was \$80,026,811.**

FOR	AGAINST
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Councillor Dunne	
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Councillor Hill	
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Councillor Jurd	
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Councillor Lea	
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Councillor Madden	
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Councillor Mason	
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Councillor Palmowski	
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Councillor Pascoe	
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Councillor Hawkins	
--------------------	--

Councillor Watton	
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Total (10)	
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	Total (0)
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CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC82/2025

SUBJECT: RESOLUTIONS TRACKING REPORT

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Pascoe **Seconded:** Councillor Hill
301

RESOLVED

That Council receives the report and notes the information in the Resolutions Tracking Report.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC83/2025

**SUBJECT: PLACEMENT OF THE LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN (2026-2036)
ON PUBLIC EXHIBITION**

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Palmowski
302

RESOLVED

1. That Council place the Updated Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2026-2036 on public exhibition for a minimum 28 days
2. That Council note that the LTFP must be adopted prior to lodging a Special Variation application with IPART;
3. That Council receive a post-exhibition report summarising submissions and proposed amendments prior to adoption.

FOR	AGAINST
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Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE NO. WI12/2025

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF DRAFT WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICY

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Hawkins
303

RESOLVED

That Council adopt the Waste Management Policy.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE NO. WI13/2025

SUBJECT: MINUTES OF THE FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 11 SEPTEMBER 2025

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe
304

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the Floodplain Risk Management Advisory Committee meeting held 11 September 2025 be adopted as a resolution of the Ordinary Council.

FOR	AGAINST
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Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	

Total (10)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

BUSINESS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

BUSINESS WITH NOTICE NO. BN17/2025

SUBJECT: TRANSFER OF REGIONAL ROADS TO STATE GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Palmowski
305
RESOLVED

1. That Council notes that Buchanan Road is currently classified as a Regional Road managed by Cessnock City Council/Maitland City Council, which now carries significantly increased volumes of traffic most notably of heavy and emergency vehicles, as it forms a critical connector between the Hunter Expressway and Maitland Hospital, as well as surrounding industrial and residential growth areas.
2. That Council notes that the continuous route of Hart Road, Gingers Lane, Frame Drive and Orange Street is currently classified as a Regional Road managed by Cessnock City Council, which now carries significantly increased volumes of commuter and freight traffic, as it provides a key connection between the Hunter Expressway and Cessnock via Cessnock Road at Abermain.
3. That Council notes that the former NSW Liberal–National Government made a commitment in 2019 to transfer up to 15,000 kilometres of regional roads, including Buchanan Road, to state ownership, but failed to deliver on this commitment, with zero kilometres transferred by the change of government in 2023.
4. That Council recognises that the management of these roads by Council imposes unsustainable financial, maintenance and safety burden on Cessnock City Council and local ratepayers.
5. That Council writes to the NSW Minister for Roads and Minister for Regional Transport and the Minister for Local Government seeking:
 - a. The immediate re-assessment of these roads for reclassification to State Road status under the Transport for NSW Road Recategorisation Framework announced in August 2025; and
 - b. A commitment that the NSW Government assume ongoing maintenance and renewal responsibility for these critical connector routes.
6. That Council provides a copy of this resolution to the Member for Cessnock and the Member for Maitland to seek their support.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dunne	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

COUNCILLOR REPORTS

MAYORAL SUMMARY – 16 October to 19 November 2025

DATE	ACTIVITIES
16 October	Advocacy NSW Parliament
17 October	2CHR post Ordinary Meeting Interview
21 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CWA Hunter River Group - 99th Annual Meeting & conference • Hunter Jobs Alliance - Hunter Coal Dialog Project
22 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Sustainability Workshop • Extra Ordinary Meeting of Council
23 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kiray Putjung Aboriginal Corporation – Meeting • ABC Interview • PCYC Volunteers Afternoon Tea
25 October	Postie Bike Grand Prix - Opening Ceremony
26 October	Postie Bike Grand Prix Activities
27 October	Korreil Wonnai Meeting
29 October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the Mayor – Ward B • Energy Ombudsman + Cessnock Council
30 October	Weston Bears – Site Visit
31 October	Kurri Kurri Gymnastics Club 40th Year Celebrations
3 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunter Transmission Project – Hunter Central Coast Regional Reference Group • Resident Visit
5 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAFE Kurri Kurri Campus tour • Audit & Risk & Improvement Committee
7 November	Kurri Kurri Public School - Assembly & Mural Unveiling
10 November	Quarterly Police, Mayor & MP Catch up
11 November	Greta RSL Remembrance Day Service
12 November	Councillor Briefing
19 November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunter Valley Wine & Tourism Alliance Meeting • Council Initiated Awards Committee • Ordinary Meeting

The Meeting Was Declared Closed at 8.26 pm

CONFIRMED AND SIGNED at the meeting held on 10 December 2025

.....**CHAIRPERSON**

.....**GENERAL MANAGER**

Disclosures Of Interest

Report No. DI12/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Corporate Governance Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That Councillors now disclose any interests and reasons for declaring such interest in the matters under consideration by Council at this meeting.

SUMMARY

The provisions of Chapter 14 of the Local Government Act, 1993 regulate the way in which Councillors and nominated staff of council conduct themselves to ensure that there is no conflict between their private interests and their public trust.

The Act prescribes that where a member of Council (or a Committee of Council) has a direct or indirect financial (pecuniary) interest in a matter to be considered at a meeting of the Council (or Committee), that interest must be disclosed as soon as practicable after the start of the meeting and the reasons for declaring such interest.

As members are aware, the provisions of the Local Government Act restrict any member who has declared a pecuniary interest in any matter from participating in the discussions, voting on that matter, and require that member to vacate the Chamber.

Council's Code of Conduct provides that if members have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest, the nature of the conflict must be disclosed. The Code also provides for a number of ways in which a member may manage non pecuniary conflicts of interest.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Mayoral Minute

Report No. MM15/2025

General Manager's Unit



MAYORAL MINUTE No. MM15/2025

**SUBJECT: MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL INITIATED AWARDS COMMITTEE
HELD 19 NOVEMBER 2025**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the recommendations of the Council Initiated Awards Committee for Cessnock City Council Australia Day Awards

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The Council Initiated Awards Committee (The Committee) met on 19 November 2025 to consider the nominations for Cessnock City Council's Australia Day Awards. Each year, we celebrate Australia Day by hosting an awards ceremony to recognise those in our community who make a difference.

The residents of the Cessnock Local Government Area are invited to nominate fellow citizen/s and/or organisations for Cessnock City Australia Day Awards. These awards aim to recognise outstanding achievement during the past year and/or contribution to the local community over a number of years.

Nominations for the 2026 Australia Day Awards closed 10 November 2025 with 15 nominations being received.

The Committee's recommendations for Cessnock City Councils Australia Day Awards are detailed in the enclosed confidential meeting minutes at **Enclosure 1**.

ENCLOSURES

- 1 Committee Recommendations - *This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) (j) of the Local Government Act, as it deals with Council Policy.*

Motions of Urgency

Report No. MOU12/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *MOTIONS OF URGENCY*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Corporate Governance Manager*

RECOMMENDATION

That Councillors now indicate if there are any matters of urgency which they believe should be conducted at this meeting of Council.

SUMMARY

Under Clause 9.3 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice, business may be transacted at a meeting of Council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the Councillors. This can only happen if a motion is passed to have the business transacted at the meeting, the Mayor rules that the business is of great urgency and the business notified in the agenda for the meeting has been disposed of.

Only the mover of such a motion can speak to the motion before it is put.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Rescission Motions

Report No. RM1/2025

General Manager's Unit



RESCISSION MOTIONS No. RM1/2025

SUBJECT: PE31/2025 - DA 8/2025/536/1 - PROPOSED TELECOMMUNICATIONS TOWER FACILITY (MOBILE TELEPHONE INFRASTRUCTURE)

The undersigned lodge the following motion of rescission:

That resolution to Report No. PE31/2025 (Motion 284) from Ordinary Council Meeting on 19 November 2025:-

1. That:

- (i) Development Application No. 8/2025/536/1 proposing a Telecommunications Facility (Mobile Telephone Base Station) at 25 Cessnock Street Cessnock be approved pursuant to Sections 4.16 and 4.17 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* subject to the conditions contained in this report.**
- (ii) The reasons for the decision (having regard to any statutory requirements applying to the decision), and consideration of community views are as follows:**

 - The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, is consistent with the objectives of the Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 (CLEP 2011).**
 - The proposed development is, subject to the recommended conditions, consistent with the objectives of the Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 (DCP 2010); any variations to prescribed standards within this Plan have been adequately addressed.**
 - The proposed development is considered to be of an appropriate scale and form.**
 - The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, will not result in unacceptable adverse impacts upon the natural or built environments.**
 - Any issues raised in submissions have been taken into account in the assessment report and where appropriate, conditions of consent have been imposed to reasonably mitigate potential impacts. Council has given due consideration to community views when making the decision to determine the application.**
- (iii) The details contained above be publicly notified pursuant to Section 2.22 and Clause 20(2) of Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.**

Rescission Motions

Report No. RM1/2025

General Manager's Unit



- 2. That Council notify in writing the persons who made a submission with regard to the proposed development, of Council's decision**

be rescinded and that:-

Development Application No. 8/2025/536/1 proposing a Telecommunications Facility (Mobile Telephone Base Station) at 25 Cessnock Street Cessnock be refused as it is deemed not to be in the public interest.

Sgd: Mark Mason

Sgd: Quintin King

Sgd: Daniel Watton

Date: 21 November 2025

Received: 21/11/2025 – 9/07am

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report

General Manager's Unit
Report No. GMU6/2025
General Manager's Unit



SUBJECT: *APPOINTMENT OF AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE INDEPENDENT MEMBER*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Internal Auditor*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to appoint an Independent Member of Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council endorses Steve Embry as an Independent Member of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2029 in accordance with section 5.3 of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Charter.
2. That Council thanks William Middleton, retiring Independent Member for his knowledge, expertise and dedicated service to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.

BACKGROUND

Council has an established Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) in compliance with section 428A of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (Regulation) and the Office of Local Government's *Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW*.

The appointment term of current Independent Member William Middleton will expire in December 2025 resulting in a vacancy for an Independent Member of the Committee.

Under the current guidelines for Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee's:

- members cannot serve a term of more than 8 years and
- appointments to the Committee should be staggered to ensure the knowledge of the council's operations, financial reporting structure and other important aspects are not lost to the audit, risk and improvement committee when members change.
- No more than one member should leave the committee because of rotation in any one year.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

Recruitment Process

In October 2025, Council undertook the recruitment process to appoint an independent member to the ARIC in accordance with the Charter.

General Manager's Unit

Report No. GMU6/2025

General Manager's Unit



The selection criteria and process for the recruitment and appointment of the Independent Member was undertaken as directed by the Interim General Manager utilising merit based selection principles. The selection panel to manage the recruitment process included the Internal Auditor (panel coordinator), Director Corporate & Community Services and the Chief Financial Officer.

Forty five applications were received during the recruitment process. The top ten applications and four identified interview candidates were provided to the Independent Chair for feedback. The selection panel undertook a rigorous selection process based on Council's recruitment protocol and one candidate has been selected.

The position is for a term of four years from January 2026 to December 2029 in alignment with the Office of Local Governments Risk Management and Internal Audit Guidelines.

Recommendation for Appointment

In undertaking the appointment of a new Independent Member, the interim General Manager has consulted with both the Mayor and non-voting Council Member, in accordance with section 5.3 of the Charter and section 216D of the Regulation.

Mr Steve Embry has been identified as meeting the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 216D of the Regulation, bringing extensive experience across key areas of local government, including:

- Information Technology
- Corporate Governance
- Internal Audit
- Disaster Response
- Financial Management and Sustainability
- Risk Management
- Corporate Strategy
- Continuous Improvement and Business Excellence

Based on this breadth of expertise, the Interim General Manager recommends Mr Embry's appointment as the new Independent Member of the Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee (ARIC) under Section 5.3 of the Charter, for a four-year term from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2029. Mr Embry's extensive background in local government, combined with his strong communication skills and strategic oversight, makes him a highly suitable candidate for this role. This recommendation is further supported by the Independent Chair.

OPTIONS

Nil

CONSULTATION

General Manager
Mayor Watton
ARIC non-voting Councillor Mason
Independent Chair – Shane Hubble

General Manager's Unit

Report No. GMU6/2025

General Manager's Unit



STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The ARIC is a crucial part of the organisation's governance framework. This supports the Community's desired outcome of: *"Lead – We have strong leadership and effective governance."*

b. Other Plans

N/A

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

The appointment of the Independent Member was conducted in accordance with section 5.3 of the ARIC Charter.

b. Financial Implications

Funds are available within the Operational Plan and internal audit budget.

c. Legislative Implications

[Section 428A](#) to the *Local Government Act 1993* mandates Councils to have an Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.

[Section 216D](#) (Division 6A) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* requires Council to appoint a person as an Independent Member of the ARIC who satisfies the eligibility criteria as outlined in the Regulation.

d. Risk Implications

The ARIC is a statutory requirement, and not maintaining its full and proper membership may result in non-compliance with legislative and regulatory obligations.

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

General Manager's Unit

Report No. GMU6/2025

General Manager's Unit



CONCLUSION

The Interim General Manager recommends Council endorses Mr Steve Embry's appointment as the new Independent Member of the ARIC under Section 5.3 of the Charter, for a four-year term from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2029.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

SUBJECT: ***VISITOR ECONOMY GRANTS AND SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM 2025/2026 APPLICATIONS***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Economic Development and Tourism Manager***

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the applications received for the 2025/2026 Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program and to seek Council's endorsement to offer conditional funding to attract and support significant events, conferences, and tourism development projects within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the following funding applications under the 2025/2026 Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program:

Grants:

- **Hunter Valley Wine Country Content Development - \$20,000**
- **Wollombi Valley Sculpture Festival - \$8,700**
- **Theatre in the Vines - \$9,560**

Sponsorships:

- **Natmeet XVI - \$5,000**

BACKGROUND

At its Ordinary Meeting of 18 May 2022, Council resolved (GMU12/2022, resolution 118):

- 1. That Council endorses the creation of the Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program with an annual budget allocation of \$50,000 from the existing Tourism Related Activities budget.***
- 2. That Council endorses the Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program Guidelines.***

This report responds to that resolution by presenting the applications received under the Program for the 2025/26 Financial Year.

Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program

A comprehensive review of the Program was undertaken in August 2025 to strengthen transparency, equity, and governance in funding decisions. As a result, the Program has been updated to:

- Provide clearer guidance and eligibility requirements for applicants.
- Strengthen accountability through acquittal of previous funding.
- Maximise economic, social, and tourism benefits for the Cessnock Local Government Area.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE34/2025

Planning and Environment



The revised Program aims to support sustainable growth of the visitor economy by assisting local businesses and organisations to deliver initiatives that contribute to a thriving, inclusive and welcoming region for visitors, residents, and investors.

Applications opened on Monday 22 October for a total funding pool of \$50,000. The application period closed at 5:00 pm, Wednesday 19 November. All submissions were assessed against the eligibility requirements (Table 1) and Assessment Criteria (Table 2).

2025/2026 Applications Received

Council received ten applications seeking funding for a total value of \$138,260.

Using the eligibility and assessment criteria, each application was evaluated for economic impact, strategic alignment, capacity to deliver, and value for money. A summary is provided in Table 3.

Table 1 - Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program Eligibility Requirement

Eligibility Requirement	Yes/No
Applicant contacted the Economic Development Team to discuss	
Project delivered in the Cessnock LGA	
Applicant holds an active ABN	
Applicant is financially viable	
Public Liability Insurance (\$20M) provided	
Capacity to deliver within 12 months	
Previous Council funding acquitted (if applicable)	
Project fits eligible category (Visitor Economy/Event/Project/Sponsorship)	
Co-contribution meets minimum requirement	
Funding request ≤ \$20,000	
Project not in excluded category	
Meets deadline	

Table 2 - Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program Assessment Criteria

Category	Criteria	Weighting
Economic Impact	Demonstrated potential to attract visitors	10%
Economic Impact	Likely to increase overnight stays	10%
Economic Impact	Contribution to tourism spend	10%
Economic Impact	Visitor economy benefits measurable	10%
Strategic Alignment	Supports Council strategies	10%
Strategic Alignment	Strength of evidence	10%
Capacity to Deliver	Applicant experience & capability	10%
Capacity to Deliver	Project planning & resourcing	10%
Value for Money	Financial viability & realistic budget	5%
Value for Money	Level of co-contribution	5%
Value for Money	Partnerships / leverage of other funding	5%
Value for Money	Value of recognition opportunities	5%

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE34/2025

Planning and Environment

**REPORT/PROPOSAL**2025/2026 Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program Applications

Council received ten (10) grant applications under the 2025/2026 Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program to the value of \$138,260.

Using the Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program Eligibility Requirements shown in **Table 1** and the Assessment Criteria in **Table 2**, the applications were reviewed for their economic impact, strategic alignment, capacity to deliver and value for. An overview of the grant applications is shown in **Table 3 below**.

Table 3 - Applications

Applicant / date and time submitted	Project Title / Event Details / Location / Total cost / Funds Requested / Co Contribution
Applications deemed eligible:	
<u>Applicant 1:</u> Sculpture in the Vineyards 19.11.2025 11:20	Wollombi Valley Sculpture Festival - Significant Event 12–29 September 2026 NSW's longest-running regional sculpture festival showcasing leading and emerging artists. The two-week program aims to encourage multi-day visitation through a spread of weekday and weekend events, attracting over 3,000 visitors. Total cost \$165,215 Co-contribution (cash) \$156,515 In-kind \$30,000 Funds requested \$8,700
MX-5 Car Club 19.11.2025 15:05	Natmeet XVI – Sponsorship 3-8 May 2026 at Rydges Hunter Valley A national gathering of MX-5 car owners designed to showcase the Hunter Valley region, attracting approx. 180 mid-week visitors. Total cost \$147,000 Co-contribution (cash) \$123,250 In-kind \$23,750 Funds requested \$5,000
Hunter Valley Wine & Tourism Association 19.11.2025 15:24	Content Development - Tourism Development Project 1 January – 31 December 2026 This project will deliver a high-quality video and still-image content library showcasing experiences, events, landscapes, and businesses across the Cessnock LGA. The new assets will strengthen destination marketing, enhance operator visibility, support precinct dispersal, and improve digital conversion. Total cost \$24,000 Co-contribution (cash) \$4,000 In-kind \$0 Funds requested \$20,000

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE34/2025

Planning and Environment



<p>Around Hermitage Association</p> <p>19.11.2025 16:55</p>	<p>Theatre in the Vines - Significant Event 5 February – 27 November 2026</p> <p>A quarterly series of four dinner-and-theatre events featuring Shakespeare, theatre and opera across participating vineyards including Glandore Estate Wines, De Iullius Wines, Theleme Wines and a fourth venue TBC. Designed to activate mid-week visitation, attracting approx. 70 attendees per show (280 total).</p> <p>Total cost \$68,360 Co-contribution (cash) \$58,800 In-kind \$6,000 Funds requested \$9,560</p>
<p>Applications deemed ineligible:</p>	
<p>Gartelmann Wines</p> <p>19.11.2025 11:54</p>	<p>Lovedale Boutique Winery Long Lunch - Significant Event 16 – 17 May 2026 at Gartelmann Wines & The Deck Café Lovedale</p> <p>A progressive long lunch for approx. 150 guests showcasing boutique wines and local produce from the Lovedale area. Designed to increase mid-week and weekend visitation.</p> <p>Total cost \$10,000 Co-contribution (cash) \$5,000 In-kind \$0 Funds requested \$5,000</p> <p>Outcome: Did not meet eligibility requirements</p>
<p>Hunter Valley Wildlife Park</p> <p>15.11.2025 15:39</p>	<p>Community Day - Significant Event 28 June 2026 at Hunter Valley Wildlife Park</p> <p>A subsidised community-focused event offering reduced entry fees, free disability tickets and free wildlife experiences for local residents.</p> <p>Total cost \$69,892 Co-contribution (cash) \$17,000 In-kind \$52,892 Funds requested \$20,000</p> <p>Outcome: Did not meet eligibility requirements</p>
<p>Kelman Vineyard</p> <p>19.11.2025 13:54</p>	<p>Vines and Vibes-silent disco in the vines - Significant Event</p> <p>"Vines & Vibes" is a multi-channel silent disco event offering a contemporary cultural experience.</p> <p>Total cost \$19,982 Co contribution (cash) NIL (in-kind) \$6,000 Funds requested \$20,000</p> <p>Outcome: Did not meet eligibility requirements</p>

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE34/2025

Planning and Environment



Get Raw Energy Pty Ltd 11.11.2025 14:30	Wellbeing at Work Regional Summit - Significant Event March 2027 at Rydges Hunter Valley A two-day wellbeing and leadership summit targeting regional employers. Not deliverable within the funding timeframe. Total cost \$80,000 Co-contribution (cash) \$40,000 In-kind \$20,000 Funds requested \$20,000 Outcome: Did not meet eligibility requirements
Canvas Group 19.11.2025 17:45	Hunter Valley DXP: AI-Powered 'Smart Central Nervous System' for Enhanced Visitor Experiences - Tourism Development Project The Digital Experience Portal (DXP) unifies Hunter Valley content, personalises itineraries, and aggregates real-time information from local businesses. Designed to boost mid-week spend, increase regional dispersal, and create a revenue stream for Council. Total cost \$100,000 Co-contribution (cash) \$70,000 In-kind \$10,000 Funds requested: \$20,000 Outcome: Did not meet eligibility requirements
Voco Kirkton Park 19.11.2025 21:31	HV PCO Famil Quarterly (Tourism Development Project) A curated two-night, three-day PCO famil showcasing the Hunter Valley's hotels, local produce, wines and unique experiences. Total cost \$25,000 Co-contribution (cash) \$5,000 In-kind \$10,000 Funds requested \$10,000 Outcome: Did not meet eligibility requirements

RECOMMENDATIONS

After assessing the applications, three (3) projects are recommended for grant funding:

- Hunter Valley Wine Country Content Development - \$20,000
- Wollombi Valley Sculpture Festival - \$8,700
- Theatre in the Vines - \$9,560

The following project is recommended for sponsorship funding:

- Natmeet XVI – \$5,000

OPTIONS

N/A

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE34/2025

Planning and Environment



CONSULTATION

- Community and business via grant program promotion
- Economic Development Officer
- Finance Business Partner
- Industry Development Destination Sydney Surrounds North (DSSN)

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The report aligns with the following Delivery Program 2022 – 2026 actions:

- THRIVE: We have a diverse and resilient economy
 - 2.1 Diversify and grow our economy,
 - 2.2 Develop sustainable employment opportunities, and
 - 2.3 Increase tourism and visitation opportunities.

b. Other Plans

This report aligns with the following plans:

- Greater Cessnock Jobs Strategy 2036;
- Cessnock City Council Economic Growth Agenda; and
- Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan 2030.

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Nil

b. Financial Implications

An annual budget allocation of \$50,000 is available for the Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program. **Table 4** shows the funding allocation for proposed and accepted funding offers.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE34/2025

Planning and Environment

**Table 4 – Proposed Financial Year (FY) Funding Allocation**

Applicant	Funding Stream	FY25/26
Hunter Valley Wine Country Content Development	Grants – Tourism Development Project	\$20,000
Wollombi Valley Sculpture Festival	Grants – Significant Event	\$8,700
Around Hermitage Association Theatre in the Vines	Grants – Significant Event	\$9,560
MX-5 Car Club Natmeet XVI	Sponsorship	\$5,000
	Financial Year Proposed Funding	\$43,260

c. Legislative Implications

Nil

d. Risk Implications

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatment	Proposed Risk Ranking
Reputation – Council fails to support projects that grow the visitor economy	C1 Low	Adopt the recommendation	D1 Low
Reputation – Council is unable to deliver assigned actions from the Hunter Valley DMP	C1 Low	Adopt the recommendation	D1 Low

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The 2025/2026 Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program resulted in ten grant applications totalling \$138,260 being received by Council. Of these applications four events, conferences and projects are proposed to be financially supported to a value of \$43,260.

This report seeks Council endorsement to offer Visitor Economy Grants and Sponsorship Program funding to recommended applicants.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC84/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: ***AUTHORISATION FOR SALE OF SURPLUS COUNCIL LAND
- PART LOT 378 DP 1002112***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Chief Finance Officer***

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council authorisation to sell land identified as surplus to operational drainage requirements to an adjoining land owner. Under provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a resolution of Council is required to authorise the sale of public land.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council authorise sale of part Lot 378 DP 1002112 subject to the purchaser bearing all costs associated with the transfer of the land including but not limited to the survey, registration, valuation, legal costs and registration of covenant.
2. That Council grant authority to the General Manager or delegated officer to negotiate the sale with reference to a current market valuation and execute all relevant documentation to affect the transaction.
3. That Council note the net proceeds of the sale are to be credited to the Property Investment Fund and allocated in accordance with the Property Investment & Development Policy.

BACKGROUND

Council was approached by a developer on behalf of an owner of land at 51 Mills Crescent, Cessnock adjoining a Council-owned drainage reserve with a proposal to acquire an easement to drain water into the Black Creek stormwater channel. After investigations Council staff determined the best course of action was for the proponent to purchase the required portion of Council's land (**Enclosure 1**). As part of negotiations the proponent was also required to remove a shed which was constructed on the land without owners' consent and agree that no structures are built on the acquired land in the future.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The subject property was identified for purchase by an adjoining owner due to their requirement for drainage. After consultation with the internal asset owner, 134.5m² was identified as surplus to Council requirements and potentially able to be sold and consolidated with the proponent's development site. It was further discovered a shed and fencing had been erected on Council's drainage reserve many years ago after a building permit approval was obtained before the legal requirement for landowner's consent.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC84/2025

Corporate and Community Services



Subject to Council authorisation of the land disposal, it has been formally agreed between the parties that Council will engage a solicitor to issue the proponent with an invoice in the amount of \$19,512.73 plus GST, being the agreed purchase price less the quoted cost to remove the shed. The sale and transfer will commence once payment has been confirmed by our legal representative with the full cost being borne by the purchaser.

OPTIONS

1. Council authorises sale of the surplus portion of drainage reserve, subject to conditions outlined in the recommendation. **Option 1 is Recommended**
2. Council retains the land. Not recommended - the land is surplus to requirements.

CONSULTATION

Chief Financial Officer
Infrastructure Manager
Stormwater and Flood Mitigation Coordinator
Principal Property Specialist

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The Strategic Property Review is a key Delivery Program initiative which identifies and evaluates opportunities to add value to Council's property asset portfolio and implements approved strategies related to disposal, redevelopment or adaptive reuse of surplus Council properties. Disposal of surplus and under-utilised land is consistent with Delivery Program financial sustainability objectives including generation of revenue and reduction of maintenance costs.

b. Other Plans

Nil

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

The report recommendation is in accordance with the objectives and requirements of the Property Investment and Development Policy 2018 and the net proceeds of any land resolved to be sold which is the subject of the report recommendation will be transferred to the Property Investment Fund.

b. Financial Implications

After deduction of direct selling costs, the net proceeds from sale of the land would be transferred to the Property Investment Fund and allocated in accordance with the objectives and requirements of the Property Investment and Development Policy 2018.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC84/2025

Corporate and Community Services



c. Legislative Implications

s.377(h) of the *Local Government Act 1993* stipulates that only by resolution may a Council delegate to the General Manager the compulsory acquisition, purchase, sale, exchange or surrender of any land or other property.

d. Risk Implications

Nil

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The land recommended for sale has been determined to be surplus to Council requirements. Consistent with ongoing financial sustainability objectives, the land sales will generate revenue, reduce recurrent maintenance costs and facilitate removal of encroachments at no cost to Council.

ENCLOSURES

[1](#) ➞ Enclosure 1 _ Lot 378 DP 1002112 _ Plan

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC85/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SCHEDULING OF JANUARY 2026 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Chief Finance Officer*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to schedule an additional meeting for Council to consider financial sustainability updates.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council amends the schedule of Ordinary Meetings of Council for 2026 to include an Ordinary Council meeting on 14 January 2026.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on 19 November 2025, Council

- a) adopted the 2026 meeting schedule; and**
- b) resolved to place the Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) on public exhibition, noting that the LTFP must be adopted prior to any application for Special Variation, and that Council would receive a post-exhibition report summarising submissions and proposed amendments prior to adoption.**

REPORT/PROPOSAL

In order to facilitate this process, and provide the community with advanced notice in relation to meeting dates, it is recommended that Council amend its schedule of Ordinary Council meetings for 2026, with the addition of meeting in January 2026, rather than using the options for holding an Extraordinary meeting as per the Code of Meeting Practice, which would result in shorter notification periods for the community.

In consideration of the principles of ensuring that the business of Council is conducted openly and transparently with due notice to the public, it is proposed to schedule a January 2026 meeting date, which regardless of any decision by Council for a Special Variation application, adopting the Ordinary Council meeting date in advance ensures due notice is given to the community.

OPTIONS

1. Council adopts the recommendation. This is the recommended option.
2. Council does not adopt the recommendation. This is not recommended as it may lead to the calling of an extraordinary meeting which would have a reduced notice period for members of the public.

CONSULTATION

Executive
Corporate Governance Manager

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC85/2025

Corporate and Community Services



STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This reports links to the Community Strategic Plan theme of “*Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*”.

b. Other Plans

N/A

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Council advertises its meeting schedule in advance to the public and adoption of this recommendation ensures that the additional meeting can be advertised appropriately.

b. Financial Implications

There are no additional costs for advertising the additional meeting as this will be incorporated into current allocations.

c. Legislative Implications

Section 9(1) of the *Local Government Act* requires Council to give notice to the public of the time, date and place of each of its meetings.

d. Risk Implications

Adopting the additional meeting means that Council can advertise in advance ensuring that Council can give appropriate notice to the public.

e. Environmental Implications

N/A

f. Other Implications

N/A

CONCLUSION

This report seeks Council’s adoption of an additional ordinary Council meeting in January 2026.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC86/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *ANNUAL CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS REPORT*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Corporate Governance Manager*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to report Council's annual Code of Conduct complaints statistics for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 in accordance with Office of Local Government (OLG) requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the Annual Code of Conduct Complaints Report for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025.

BACKGROUND

Part 11 of the Procedures for the Administration of the Code of Conduct (Procedures) requires the Complaints Coordinator to provide a report to Council on Code of Conduct complaints and statistics for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The annual Code of Conduct statistics report is provided in the format required by the OLG.

OPTIONS

N/A

CONSULTATION

General Manager

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This report links to the Delivery Program; *Action 5.3. – Ensure we are accountable and responsive to the community.*

b. Other Plans

Part 11 of the Procedures requires an Annual Code of Conduct Complaint Report to the Council and to the OLG.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC86/2025

Corporate and Community Services



IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

The Code of Conduct complaints statistics are submitted to the OLG and made publicly available on its 'Your Council' website.

b. Financial Implications

The total cost of dealing with Code of Conduct complaints, including staff costs, for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 was \$1,456.45.

c. Legislative Implications

Noting and submitting Code of Conduct complaints statistics to the OLG ensures compliance with legislative requirements.

d. Risk Implications

Following the reporting requirements reduces the risk of damage to public confidence in local government associated with complaints and breaches of the Code of Conduct.

e. Environmental Implications

N/A

f. Other Implications

N/A

CONCLUSION

The report is provided for Council's information in accordance with the Procedures.

ENCLOSURES

[1](#) Annual Code of Conduct Statistics

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC87/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: ***WARD BOUNDARIES - VARIATION IN ENROLMENTS - UPDATE***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Corporate Governance Manager***

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide information to Council in regards to Ward Boundaries and electoral numbers in each ward.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council acknowledges that a ward elector enrolment variation of greater than 10% currently exists with the variation as at 30 October 2025 being 12.52%.
2. That Council notes the current variation and monitors until 2027 at which time Council will commence the process to alter the ward boundaries for effect at the 2028 Council election.

BACKGROUND

The Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA) is currently divided for election purposes into four Wards, with each Ward represented by three Councillors and a popularly elected Mayor. The last local government election was held in September 2024.

Section 211 of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires councils to keep ward boundaries under review and if, during a term of office, the Council becomes aware that an elector enrolment variation of greater than 10% exists, and the difference remains at the end of the first year of the following term of office, the Council must alter the ward boundaries so that each ward contains a number of electors that does not vary by more than 10% from the number of electors in each other ward.

The last ward boundary alterations were made in 2023 and implemented for the 2024 election.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

Following review of the ward boundary variances, the NSW Electoral Commission (NSWEC) have recommended that Council continue to monitor the variances and commence the formal review process approximately 18 months prior to the next election (from April 2027) to ensure that ward boundaries are formulated on the most up to date data possible.

The variances occur because the LGA continues to experience significant development, including an increase in registered voters.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC87/2025

Corporate and Community Services



Details of ward enrolments are shown below:

Ward enrolments over time					
<i>Note: percentage variance is calculated in accordance with Local Government Act</i>					
Ward	26 Sep 2019	20 Sep 2022	20 June 2023	26 Sept 2024	30 Oct 2025
A	11241	12005	12264	12310	12790
B	9988	10306	10590	12582	12727
C	11231	12695	13148	12856	13624
D	10326	11594	12009	11759	12108
Total	42786	46600	48011	49507	51249
Highest	11241	12695	13148	12856	13624
Lowest	9988	10306	10590	11759	12108
Variance	1253	2389	2558	1097	1516
%	11.15%	18.82%	24.15%	9.32%	12.52%

NSWEC requirements in regards to ward boundary adjustments require a Council resolution of the proposed adjustments, legislated public submissions period of 42 days and submission of the proposed adjustment to the NSWEC for consideration and final authorisation. For the 2028 Council election the process needs to be completed by December 2027 to allow for those changes to be effective for the 2028 election.

The NSWEC website provides information on Ward Boundary review and process for change: https://roll.elections.nsw.gov.au/lq/index.htm#Ward_Boundaries

OPTIONS

N/A

CONSULTATION

NSW Electoral Commission

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This report is linked to the Community's desired outcome under the Community Strategic Plan of *Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*.

b. Other Plans

N/A

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Nil

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC87/2025

Corporate and Community Services



b. Financial Implications

Nil

c. Legislative Implications

Section 211 of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires Council's to keep the ward boundaries under review and to consult with the NSWEC in regards to proposed ward boundary adjustments.

d. Risk Implications

This is currently a monitoring process and any proposed changes will require further consideration by Council in the future.

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

This report acknowledgment that there is a variation of more than 10% in ward enrolments and that this will need to be resolved prior to the next general election.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC88/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS IN WRITTEN RETURNS*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Corporate Governance Manager*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to table returns received from designated persons for the period 1 August 2025 to 30 October 2025 in accordance with the Code of Conduct (the Code).

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the tabling of the disclosures of interests written returns for the period 1 August 2025 to 31 October 2025 in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.

BACKGROUND

Part 4 of the Code governs matters concerning disclosures of interests in written returns. Clause 4.24 of the Code requires the General Manager to keep a register of returns lodged by Councillors and designated persons and to table them at a meeting of Council.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

In accordance with Clause 4.21 of the Code, a Councillor or designated person must make and lodge a return within three months of becoming or ceasing to be a Councillor or designated person, 30 June each year, and or becoming aware of an interest they are required to disclose.

Clause 4.8 of the Code provides that designated persons are:

- (a) *The General Manager;*
- (b) *Other senior staff of Council for the purposes of section 332 of the LG Act;*
- (c) *A person (other than a member of the senior staff of Council) who is a member of staff of Council or a Delegate of Council and who holds a position identified by Council as the position of a designated person because it involves the exercise of functions (such as regulatory functions or contractual functions) that, in their exercise, could give rise to a conflict between the person's duty as a member of staff or Delegate of Council and the person's private interest;*
- (d) *A person (other than a member of the senior staff of Council) who is a member of a committee of Council identified by Council as a committee whose members are designated persons because the functions of the committee involve the exercise of Council's functions (such as regulatory functions or contractual functions) that, in their exercise, could give rise to a conflict between the member's duty as a member of the committee and the member's private interest.*

OPTIONS

N/A

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC88/2025

Corporate and Community Services



CONSULTATION

Designated persons were provided the [Self-Help Guide](#) from the Office of Local Government to assist them in the completion of their returns.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

Completion of the written returns for the period links to the community's desired outcome of "Civic Leadership and Effective Governance", and in particular, it links to:

- Strategic direction 5.3.7 within the Delivery Program 2022-2026 – *continue to manage Council governance functions and statutory requirements*, and
- Strategic action 5.3.7b within the Operational Plan 2023-2024 – *carry out governance functions, provide advice and conduct education programs to comply with legislation and best practice including in relation to delegations, legislative interpretation, compliance, complaints, UCCs, GIPA, PPIPA, Copyright, PIDs, Fraud and Corruption Prevention, policies, etc*

b. Other Plans

N/A

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Clause 4.24 of the Code requires the General Manager to keep a register of returns lodged and clause 4.25 requires the General Manager to table such returns at the first meeting of Council after the last day the returns are required to be lodged.

b. Financial Implications

N/A

c. Legislative Implications

N/A

d. Risk Implications

Failure by a Councillor or designated person to lodge a written return of interest may constitute a breach of the Code.

e. Environmental Implications

N/A

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC88/2025

Corporate and Community Services



f. Other Implications

Tabling the register of returns and allowing access demonstrates Council's commitment to openness and transparency, and is a crucial element of civic leadership and effective governance.

CONCLUSION

Tabling of the register of returns satisfies Council's requirements under the Code.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC89/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *INVESTMENT REPORT - NOVEMBER 2025*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Chief Finance Officer*

SUMMARY

Section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), Clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation) and Council's Investment Policy (the Policy) requires a monthly report to Council detailing all money invested.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the Investment Report for November 2025 and notes that:

- **Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy, which is in accordance with the Ministerial Investment Order.**
- **Council's month end cash and investments balance was \$82,311,452.**

BACKGROUND

A monthly report to Council detailing money invested as per the Act, Regulation and Policy.

REPORT

Statement by the Responsible Accounting Officer

The Responsible Accounting Officer has certified that this report is produced in accordance with Clause 212 of the Regulation and that all investments have been made in accordance with the Act, Regulation and Policy.

General Investment Commentary

Council officers monitor and manage the cash and investment portfolio by taking into consideration credit ratings of financial institutions, interest rates offered for periods of investment, counterparty exposures and cash flow requirements.

Following assessment of projected cash flow requirements, surplus funds are invested in accordance with the Policy. Investment returns of the portfolio to the end of November 2025 are exceeding budget.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC89/2025

Corporate and Community Services



Investment Portfolio Information

Table 1 Total cash and investments held by Council as at 30 November 2025

Invest No	Financial Institution Investment Held With	Invest Type	Interest Coupon Term	Maturity	Current Coupon Rate	Par Value \$'000
	Commonwealth Bank	CASH			3.25%	4,574
	Commonwealth Bank	At Call			3.60%	20,041
	Commonwealth Bank	At Call			3.25%	754
1243	AMP Bank	At Call			2.00%	565
1533	National Bank	TD	270	10-Feb-26	4.33%	2,500
1534	Bank of Queensland	TD	275	05-Mar-26	4.20%	6,000
1535	Bank of Queensland	TD	183	03-Dec-25	4.30%	2,500
1536	Bank of Queensland	TD	218	07-Jan-26	4.30%	5,000
1537	Suncorp Bank	TD	365	03-Jun-26	4.14%	4,000
1538	Suncorp Bank	TD	299	21-Apr-26	4.24%	2,500
1539	AMP Bank	TD	183	03-Dec-25	4.45%	2,500
1540	Bank of Queensland	TD	218	28-Jan-26	4.37%	2,000
1541	Suncorp Bank	TD	272	30-Mar-26	4.30%	3,000
1542	National Bank	TD	365	10-Sep-26	4.20%	2,000
1543	Suncorp Bank	TD	243	01-Jun-26	4.30%	3,000
1544	Bank of Queensland	TD	243	01-Jun-26	4.23%	2,000
1545	Teachers Mutual Bank	FRN	1096	03-Oct-28	4.54%	1,000
1546	Suncorp Bank	TD	216	09-Jun-26	4.32%	3,000
1547	Suncorp Bank	TD	245	22-Jul-26	4.28%	5,000
1548	Police Bank Limited	FRN	1096	03-Nov-28	4.69%	750
1549	Commonwealth Bank	TD	154	28-Apr-26	4.22%	5,000
1463	Treasury Corporation	Growth Fund				4,627
TOTAL						82,311

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC89/2025

Corporate and Community Services



Table 2 Level of funds held and the percentage invested with financial institutions

Financial Institution	Credit Rating	Institution Maximum	Amount \$'000	% of Portfolio
Commonwealth Bank	AA-	40%	5,000	8.87%
National Australia Bank	AA-	40%	4,500	7.99%
Suncorp Bank	AA-	40%	20,500	36.36%
AMP Bank	BBB+	15%	2,500	4.43%
Bank of Queensland	A-	40%	17,500	31.04%
Teachers Mutual Bank	BBB+	15%	1,000	1.77%
Police Bank	BBB+	15%	750	1.33%
Treasury Corporation	Unrated	30%	4,627	8.21%
TOTAL			56,377	100.00%

In accordance with the Policy, figures in Table 2 above exclude cash and at call balances in Council's main operating account held with the Commonwealth and AMP banks.

Investment in NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp)

TCorpIM Funds are unit trusts. Distributions are made annually and are automatically reinvested into the fund to buy additional units. As this investment is held for medium to long-term capital appreciation, gains or losses will only be realised on redemption of the investment.

The November 2025 unrealised loss of \$21,435.16 or- 0.46% (3.43% annualised).

Table 3 NSW Treasury Corporation Performance Summary (October 2025)

	10 years (% pa)	7 years (% pa)	3 years (% pa)	1 year %	FYTD %	1 month %
IM Medium Term Growth Fund	4.45	4.67	7.48	10.05	3.85	0.99
Benchmark: CPI + 2.0% p.a. (over rolling 5 years)	4.82	5.29	5.85	5.16	2.01	0.50
Return above benchmark p.a.	(0.37)	(0.62)	1.63	4.89	1.84	0.49

Table 4 Investment types, risk, amount and percentage invested compared to total.

Investment Type	Risk Assessment		Amount	% Of
	Capital	Interest	\$'000	Portfolio
Term Deposits	Low	Low	50,000	60.74%
Cash/At Call Deposits	Low	Low	25,934	31.51%
Floating Rate Note	Low	Low	1,750	2.13%
Capital Growth Fund	Medium	Medium	4,627	5.62%
TOTAL			82,311	100.00%

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC89/2025

Corporate and Community Services



Table 5 Comparison of interest rates, earnings and balances this year to last year

Performance Measures	This Year	Last Year
Investment Portfolio Average Interest Rate (year to date)	3.65%	5.37%
BBSW Average Interest Rate (year to date) *	3.66%	4.49%
Actual Investment Interest Earned (for the current month)	\$251,889	\$232,135
Actual Investment Interest Earned (year to date) ^	\$1,417,810	\$1,387,642
Revised Budget Investment Interest (year to date)	\$1,145,833	\$1,041,667
Original Budget Investment Interest (annual)	\$2,750,000	\$2,750,000
Revised Budget Investment Interest (annual)	\$2,750,000	\$2,750,000
TCorp unrealised movement (year to date)	3.43%	3.52%

Investment and Cash Balances (Par Value) #	This Year	Last Year
Opening Balance as at 1 July	\$97,128,204	\$83,084,775
Closing Balance as at 30 November	\$82,311,452	\$64,246,979

* BBSW 90-day Bank Bill Reference Rate (performance measure as per Council's Investment Policy)

^ Excludes TCorp unrealised returns

Excludes Section 355 Committee cash held

Graph 1 Actual interest earned compared to revised budget and actual interest last year

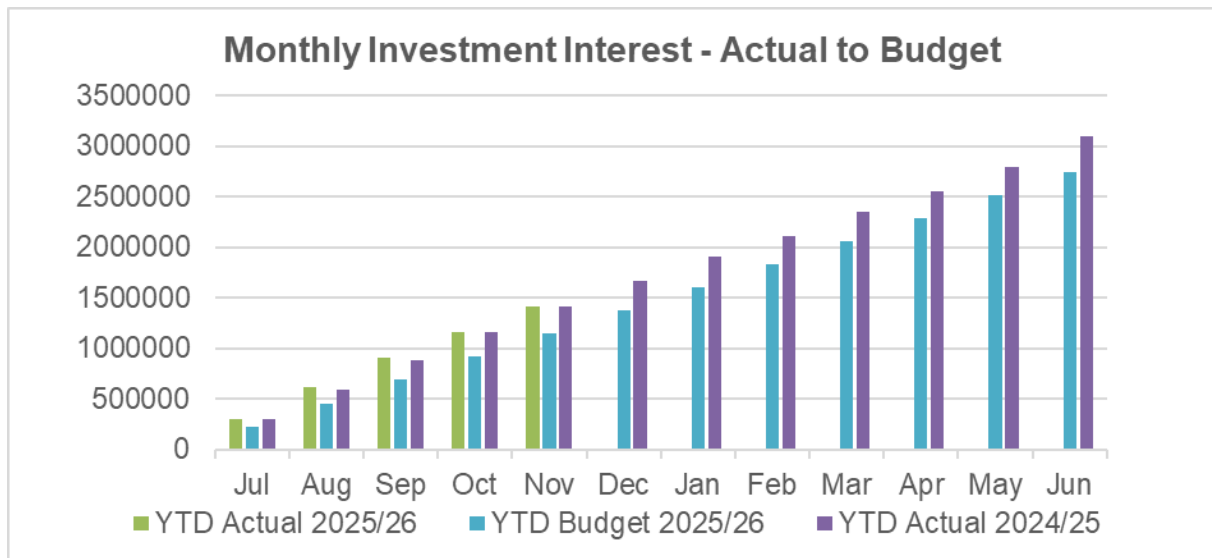


Table 6 Internal and external restrictions over cash and investments held

Given the short time frame at the end of the month for the Agenda preparation, reserve movements have yet to be calculated for the end of November. An updated table will be provided in the December and January investment reports to be presented to Council in February 2026.

CONSULTATION

- Director Corporate and Community Services
- Chief Financial Officer
- Finance staff

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC89/2025

Corporate and Community Services



STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

Investment returns are an integral part of funding for future services and community expectations within the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. This report is a part of Council's governance framework – providing feedback on the progress against the investment policy and budget. This is in line with the community's desired outcome of: "*Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*" and more specifically links to strategic direction:

5.3.2: Our Council's processes are efficient and transparent;

5.3.3: Our Council is financially sustainable.

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy.

b. Financial Implications

Investment returns are included in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Amendments are affected through the Quarterly Budget Review process. Investment portfolio performance is detailed within the report with comparisons to prior year and budget.

A portion of the portfolio and its associated investment income is restricted as it relates to funds from developer contributions, payments in advance for grant projects, Domestic Waste Management, and stormwater management income to be applied to specific purposes and not available for general operational projects.

c. Legislative Implications

This report meets Council's statutory obligations under the Act and Regulation.

d. Risk Implications

Investment risks are detailed within this report.

e. Other Implications

There are no environmental, community, consultative or other implications to this report.

CONCLUSION

The report details investments held at month end and meets Council's reporting obligations.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC90/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *RESOLUTIONS TRACKING REPORT*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Corporate Governance Manager*

SUMMARY

The enclosure contains pending actions from previous meetings as well as completed actions for period 13 November 2025 to 1 December 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the report and notes the information in the Resolutions Tracking Report.

ENCLOSURES

- [1](#) ➡ Outstanding
- [2](#) ➡ Completed

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI14/2025

Works and Infrastructure



SUBJECT: *UNSEALED ROADS AND COSTS*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Infrastructure Manager
Asset Planning Manager*

SUMMARY

This report responds to Council resolution BN 7/2025, providing detailed information on the Local Government Area's (LGA) unsealed road network. It outlines the number and classification of unsealed roads, maintenance responsibilities and practices, budgetary commitments, current and potential funding avenues, and legal limitations.

It also addresses concerns regarding ratepayer entitlements, Council's maintenance responsibilities, and future asset management planning.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council notes the report on the unsealed roads network review.
2. That Council notes the estimated annual cost required to maintain all unsealed roads.
3. That Council notes the grant opportunities available that may help maintain and/or upgrade our unsealed road network.
4. That Council endorse a revised Unsealed Roads Maintenance Program that reflects current service levels.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting of 19 March 2025, Council considered Notice of Motion BN 7/2025 - Report on Unsealed Roads and Costs and resolved as follows:

1. *That the General Manager provide a report to Council on the unsealed road network review, including information on Unsealed Road Maintenance Schedule, Council's Asset Management Framework and budget in line with the Long Term Financial Plan.*
2. *Currently what grants are available to help with our unsealed road program.*

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA) has an extensive and diverse unsealed road network. These roads form essential links across rural and urban environments, providing access for residents, local industry, and emergency access. As a reactive asset class, unsealed roads present a unique and complex set of management challenges.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI14/2025

Works and Infrastructure



Council currently manages approximately 314 km of unsealed roads. These are classified as follows:

- 123 Urban Local Roads
- 111 Rural Local Roads
- 28 Urban Laneways
- 3 Rural Collector Roads
- 1 Rural Sub-Arterial Road

Of this total network, 278.1 km are actively maintained by Council, while 36 km remain outside the routine maintenance schedule. The most significant unmaintained section is Yango Track and Big Yango Road, accounting for 21.5 km and currently under review for handover to NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. The remaining 14.5 km consists of roads with very low traffic volumes, or roads that are required to be upgraded by a developer as a condition of development consent before they can be considered for inclusion in the unsealed road maintenance schedule.

Limitations of the Report

This report is based solely on Council's asset data and uses the following definition to determine its scope: "An unsealed road is defined as a formed road located within a Council-owned strip of land known as the road reserve". This scope excludes unsealed roads that fall outside Council ownership or responsibility, including:

- Crown Roads (except those maintained by Council)
- Private Access Tracks
- Unformed Road Reserves without constructed assets

An Unformed Road is commonly defined as an unsealed road that follows the natural terrain, typically presenting as a flat track with two-wheel paths and close vegetation. It involves minimal or no earthworks and may also include road reserves where no constructed path exists.

A Formed Road is commonly defined as a road that has been constructed above the natural surface using local or imported materials. The surface is graded, shaped and compacted to provide access and drainage.

Over the past six years, approximately 13.59 kilometers of unsealed Crown road reserves have been transferred from Crown Lands to Council ownership. In many instances, these transferred road reserves do not contain any formed road assets, drainage infrastructure, or constructed surfaces, which presents considerable challenges for Council in terms of asset management, maintenance planning, and public safety. The ongoing transfer of these unformed and unsealed roads places an increasing road management burden on Council.

It is important to note that Council has no statutory obligation under the *Local Government Act 1993* or the *Roads Act 1993* to maintain or construct a road where no formed road currently exists within a Council-owned road reserve.

Works and Infrastructure**Report No. WI14/2025****Works and Infrastructure****Asset Management Framework**

Council's Asset Management Framework establishes the structure and processes that guide the management, maintenance, and reporting of unsealed roads within the broader infrastructure portfolio.

Under the framework, maintenance refers to all actions necessary to keep an asset as close as practicable to its intended service condition, including activities such as grading, resheeting, drainage clearing, table drain reinstatement, shoulder restoration and vegetation control.

Council applies an asset hierarchy to structure data and support decision-making for maintenance and planning. The hierarchy defines both the asset class and component for financial reporting and the service level hierarchy used to prioritise maintenance activities.

Service Hierarchy	Definition
Urban / Rural Sub-Arterial (Regional Roads)	Intermediate links between the State-controlled arterial network and local roads managed by Council.
Urban / Rural Collector Roads	Connect regional roads to the local access road system.
Urban / Rural Local Roads	Provide direct access to residential and local commercial properties.
Laneways	Provide rear or service access to adjoining land uses.

This hierarchy ensures consistency in maintenance prioritisation, funding allocation, and reporting across the network.

Maintenance Practices

Council takes a strategic and cost-effective approach to the management of its unsealed road network. Recognising the dynamic nature of these assets, where road condition is heavily influenced by weather patterns, traffic types, traffic volumes and topography. Council's maintenance framework is designed to prioritise safety, serviceability, and cost-efficiency across the network.

To ensure regular oversight and equitable service delivery, the LGA is divided into two principal maintenance zones; North and South. Each zone is further subdivided into six distinct areas, forming a total of twelve service sectors across the LGA.

Council undertakes at least biannual inspections of each area to monitor road conditions, plan proactive works, and assess priority interventions. Generally, this results in each area being formally inspected once every six months, supporting a consistent and cyclic maintenance model.

It is important to note that the program is subject to weather conditions and extreme events requiring reallocation of resources on a priority basis. This may result in limited-service for some sub-areas during that time.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI14/2025

Works and Infrastructure



Scheduled Inspection Periods:

- **Area 1:** July and January
- **Area 2:** August and February
- **Area 3:** September and March
- **Area 4:** October and April
- **Area 5:** November and May
- **Area 6:** December and June

Routine unsealed road maintenance is carried out using Council's in-house resources, comprising 3 teams. These are generally allocated as follows:

- 1 Minor team dedicated to rural unsealed roads
- 2 Major teams used for maintaining both rural and urban unsealed roads, laneways, shoulder grading, and drainage reshaping. These 2 Teams are also a shared resource between the sealed and unsealed network.

Maintenance activities include:

- Patrol Grading: Focuses on restoring rideability, forming crossfalls, and improving drainage.
- Resheeting: Involves the application and compaction of 100mm to 150mm of fresh gravel to rehabilitate deteriorated surfaces.
- Pothole repairs: which may involve complete "rip and reform" treatments to address deeper defects.

Financial Considerations

In the 2024/25 financial year, Council spent:

- \$1.6 million on unsealed road maintenance, and
- \$358,000 on gravel resheeting works.

While this funding enables essential maintenance activities, it remains insufficient to sustain existing service levels across the unsealed road network in the long term.

To incorporate all 36 km of currently unmaintained roads into Council's maintenance program, the estimated one-off upgrade cost would be approximately \$3.96 million, based on a unit rate of \$110,000 per kilometer. Once upgraded, these roads generally require twice-yearly routine maintenance, increasing the annual cost to around \$396,000 (36 km x \$5,500/km x 2).

In addition, periodic gravel overlay works at a rate of \$95,000 per kilometer which would amount to \$3.42 million if undertaken across the full 36 km. When annualised over different cycles, the overlay adds between \$342,000 and \$570,000 per year, depending on whether a 10-year, 8-year, or 6-year cycle is adopted. This results in a total indicative annual cost ranging from \$738,000 to \$966,000 per year, inclusive of ongoing twice-yearly maintenance.

These figures highlight that, in addition to the initial capital upgrade, the long-term financial impact on Council will depend significantly on the overlay frequency selected, with higher overlay frequencies creating higher ongoing costs.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI14/2025

Works and Infrastructure



Property Access and Ratepayer Enquiries

Residents often inquire about access and maintenance in relation to their rates. It is important to note that rates fund a wide range of essential community services across the entire LGA.

Rates are not a fee-for-service for individual roads, like tolls—they are a shared contribution that supports the many facilities and services provided by Council.

Beyond roads, rate revenue helps fund:

- Community facilities such as halls, libraries, and cemeteries
- Parks and recreation areas including sports grounds, ovals, playgrounds, and aquatic centres
- Environmental planning and sustainability programs, including the LEP, DCP, biodiversity protection, trees management and stormwater & catchment management
- Waste services, including collection, disposal, and removal of illegal dumping
- Footpath and sealed road maintenance across the LGA

So, while some residents may feel their particular road is overlooked, their rates contribute to a broader network of services and infrastructure that benefits the entire community.

Grant Funding Opportunities

Council actively pursues grant funding opportunities to improve the condition of its unsealed road network and to support the upgrade or sealing of roads with strategic importance. Current and potential funding sources include:

- Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program
- Regional and Local Roads Repair Program
- Roads to Recovery Program
- NSW Essential Public Asset Restoration Program (EPAR)

The Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program can be used to upgrade and seal existing unsealed roads. It is project-specific and must be applied for on an individual road basis, with funding generally requiring a 50% Council co-contribution.

Regional and Local Roads Program is triggered by specific events (eg storm damage), while the Roads to Recovery Program provides annual funding to support general road repair needs, based on the higher priority and greater benefits of our sealed network compared to the unsealed network, funds from Roads to Recovery Program are dedicated to the maintenance and upgrade of the sealed road network.

The NSW Essential Public Asset Restoration Program (EPAR) provides funding to councils in declared disaster areas to restore essential public assets, primarily roads and related infrastructure. Only damage directly caused by the disaster is eligible, with pre-existing defects excluded. This funding helps reduce the financial burden on Council following major storm or flood events.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI14/2025

Works and Infrastructure



Operational Risks and Network Sustainability

Unsealed roads are inherently vulnerable to environmental factors, particularly during wet seasons and after extreme weather events. Council's asset management and maintenance schedules aim to reduce the frequency and severity of these disruptions, but some degree of risk is unavoidable due to resource limitations and geographic scale.

The overall condition of the unsealed road network is inspected as part of the five-yearly asset revaluation process, with Works & Operation team also conducting spot inspections to inform the development of capital works programs. Condition is measured using a 1 – 5 grading system as shown below:

Condition Grading	Description of Condition
1	Very Good: free of defects, only planned and/or routine maintenance required
2	Good: minor defects, increasing maintenance required plus planned maintenance
3	Fair: defects requiring regular and/or significant maintenance to reinstate service
4	Poor: significant defects, higher order cost intervention likely
5	Very Poor: physically unsound and/or beyond rehabilitation, immediate action required

Table 1: Condition Grading System

Overall condition of the unsealed road network managed by Council is shown in the Figure 1. It shows that approximately 14% of the network has a condition rating in poor/very poor condition (condition 5).

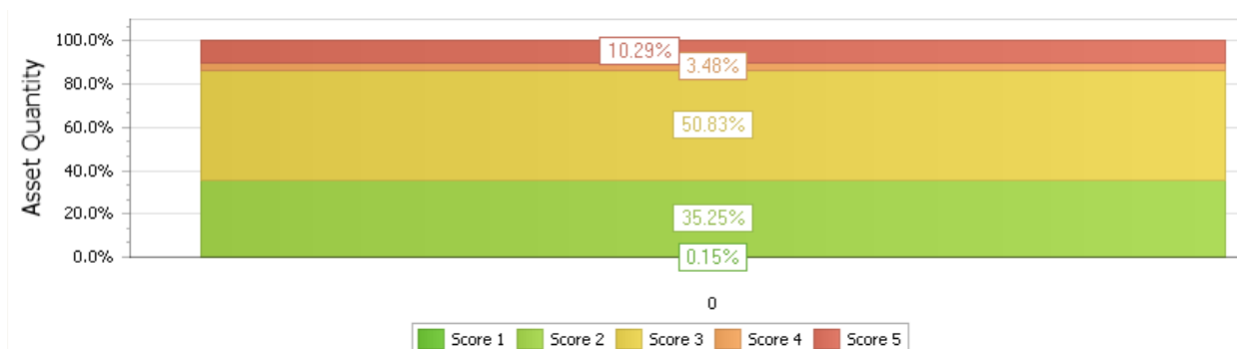


Figure 1: Asset Condition Profile

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI14/2025

Works and Infrastructure



The data captured in December 2023 and January 2024, by the external surveyor indicates that only 6% of the network exceeds the national average intervention threshold of IRI 8, compared to the surveyor's national average of 26% at the time of inspection. Additionally, 70–80% of the network has good gravel coverage, based on RACAS assessments of subgrade visibility and gravel thinning. This data is represented in Figure 2 and Figure 3.

Avg Speed	IRI	Length m	% of Network	Average All	Average NSW
100	2	9	0%	1%	0%
100	3	18,874	7%	7%	3%
95	4	87,092	32%	16%	12%
90	5	79,014	29%	20%	20%
85	6	43,386	16%	18%	20%
80	7	23,233	9%	13%	15%
75	8	8,742	3%	9%	12%
70	9	5,824	2%	6%	7%
65	10	2,324	1%	4%	4%
60	11	730	0%	3%	3%
55	12	10	0%	1%	2%
50	Over 12	58	0%	3%	1%
		269,296	1	1	1

Figure 2: Unsealed roads International Roughness Index (IRI)

Gravel Def Length m	% of Network	Average of Others
'90-100	192,142	71%
'80-90	11,991	4%
'70-80	8,678	3%
'60-70	7,911	3%
'50-60	6,273	2%
'40-50	4,793	2%
'30-40	3,901	1%
'20-30	2,725	1%
'10-20	6,637	2%
'0-10	24,262	9%
269,313	1	1
Average	8.46	
Round	8.00	
Result	'70-80	

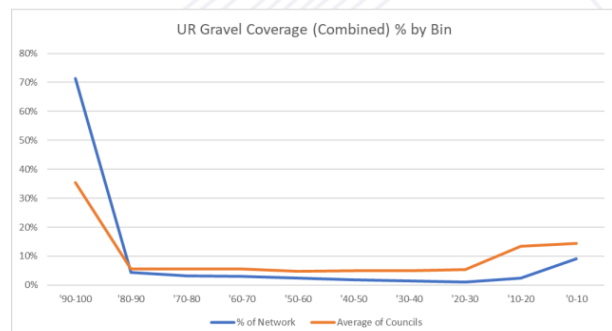


Figure 3: Unsealed Roads Gravel Coverage

This data shows that the Council's current program is structured to respond to risks efficiently and equitably, supported by:

- Real-time customer request systems (phone, website, email)
- Prioritisation based on intervention thresholds

The continued use of evidence-based practices, combined with community engagement and strategic grant funding, provides a sustainable pathway forward for managing the unsealed road network.

CONSULTATION

- **Asset Management Team** – supplied data on asset condition, network extant and alignment with the Asset Management Plan.
- **Infrastructure Team** – assets owners

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI14/2025

Works and Infrastructure



- **Works and Operations Team** – contributed operational insights regarding maintenance practices, plant utilisation, and budgetary allocations/costing.
- **Finance Team** – provided data for spending on maintenance and resheeting.
- **Program Team** – assisted in reviewing grant and funding opportunities.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

Council's vision: "Cessnock – Creating a Resilient, Sustainable and Diverse Community"—is underpinned by five key community outcomes outlined in the Community Strategic Plan being:

1. Live
2. Thrive
3. Protect
4. Move; and
5. Lead.

This report aligns with the following strategic directions as they relate specifically to the management of the unsealed road network:

Community Goal	Strategic Objective	Alignment with this Report and the Asset Management Plan (AMP)
Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities	4.2 Improve our road network	- Council continues to pursue external funding to maintain and upgrade the unsealed road network.

b. Other Plans

Nil

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Council's Existing Unsealed Roads Policy provides the conditions for the sealing of existing Council gravel roads.

Council's Crown Roads Transfer Policy sets out the circumstances under which a Crown Road may be transferred to Council.

Note: Crown Land has transferred a number of unsealed roads to Council in accordance with the Administration of Crown Roads Policy and associated Guidelines published on their website. (See page 71)

Works and Infrastructure**Report No. WI14/2025****Works and Infrastructure**

Reviewing the existing unsealed roads policies and adopting a new policy position that covers all of Council's roads and their asset condition. Enforcing Council's Engineering standards to establish a benchmark for handover and/or transfer. This approach will protect Council from inheriting the costs of upgrading roads that are unformed, substandard, or otherwise costly to maintain.

b. Financial Implications

In the 2024/25 financial year, Council spent \$1.6 million for unsealed road maintenance and \$358,000 for resheeting works. While this funding facilitates essential maintenance, it is materially insufficient to sustain current levels of service across the unsealed road network over the long term.

To include all 36 km of unmaintained roads in the maintenance program, would require a one-off cost of \$3.96 million. Ongoing twice-yearly maintenance would add \$396,000 per year, while periodic gravel overlays would cost \$3.42 million (annualised to \$342k–\$570k depending on cycle length).

This brings the total annual program cost to between \$738k and \$966k, highlighting long-term financial impacts. Without additional funding, Council will face ongoing challenges in maintaining an equitable and sustainable standard across the entire unsealed road network.

c. Legislative Implications

Legislative requirements that impact the delivery of the roads and road infrastructure assets are outlined below:

Legislation	Requirement
<i>Local Government Act 1993</i>	<p>Sets out role, purpose, responsibilities and powers of local governments including the preparation of a long-term financial plan supported by asset management plans for sustainable service delivery.</p> <p>The purposes of this Act are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) to provide the legal framework for an effective, efficient, environmentally responsible and open system of local government in New South Wales, (b) to regulate the relationships between the people and bodies comprising the system of local government in New South Wales, (c) to encourage and assist the effective participation of local communities in the affairs of local government, (d) to give councils: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ability to provide goods, services and facilities, and to carry out activities, appropriate to the current and future needs of local communities and of the wider public; • the responsibility for administering some regulatory systems under this Act; • a role in the management, improvement and development of the resources of their areas. (e) to require councils, councillors and council employees to have regard to the principles of ecologically sustainable development in carrying out their responsibilities.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI14/2025

Works and Infrastructure



Legislation	Requirement
Local Government Act Annual Report Section 428(2)(d)	(d) A report of the condition of the public works (including public buildings, public road and water sewerage and drainage works) under the control of council as at the end of that year; together with (i) An estimate (at current values) of the amount of money required to bring the works up to a satisfactory standard; and (ii) An estimate (at current values) of the annual expense of maintain the works at that standard; and (iii) The Council's programme for maintenance for that year in respect of the works.
Civil Liabilities Act	<i>Part 5 - liability of public and other authorities</i> ; covers Councils' obligation to provide a duty of care to its residents within their available funding and/or resources.
Public Works Act	Sets out the role of Council in the planning and construction of new assets.
Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) Act	Facilitates the adoption of nationally consistent road rules in NSW, the Australian Road Rules. It also makes provision for safety and traffic management on roads and road related areas including alcohol and other drug use, speeding and other dangerous driving, traffic control devices and vehicle safety accidents.
Road Transport (General) Act	Provides for the administration and enforcement of road transport legislation. It provides for the review of decisions made under road transport legislation. It makes provision for the use of vehicles on roads and road related areas and also with respect to written off and wrecked vehicles.
Roads Act 1993	Sets out rights of members of the public to pass along public roads, establishes procedures for opening and closing a public road, and provides for the classification of roads. It also provides for declaration of the RMS and other public authorities as roads authorities for both classified and unclassified roads, and confers certain functions (in particular, the function of carrying out roadwork) on the RMS and other roads authorities. Finally, it provides for distribution of functions conferred by this Act between the RMS and other roads authorities, and regulates the carrying out of various activities on public roads.
Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Discrimination Regulations	The Federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (D.D.A.) provides protection for everyone in Australia against discrimination based on disability. It encourages everyone to be involved in implementing the Act and to share in the overall benefits to the community and the economy that flow from participation by the widest range of people.
Native Vegetation Act	This Act regulates the clearing of native vegetation on all land in NSW, except for excluded land listed in Schedule 1 of the Act. The Act outlines what landowners can and cannot do in clearing native vegetation.
AS 1742	Australian Standard 1742 which refers to a variety of road and traffic issues.

Works and Infrastructure**Report No. WI14/2025****Works and Infrastructure**

Legislation	Requirement
NSW Road Rules	A provision of road rules that are based on the Australian Road Rules so as to ensure that the road rules applicable in this State are substantially uniform with road rules applicable elsewhere in Australia.

d. Risk Implications

The management of unsealed roads presents operational and strategic risks, particularly given the limitations in funding and the environmental sensitivity of these assets. Key risks include:

- Deterioration of road conditions due to reduced maintenance cycles, leading to accessibility issues and increased safety hazards for road users.
- Public liability exposure resulting from road-related incidents where maintenance has not met reasonable intervention standards.
- Reputational risk to Council arising from community dissatisfaction related to unmaintained or low-service roads.
- Operational risk, where unsealed roads become impassable during extreme weather events, disrupting emergency access and local transport.

These risks are mitigated through Council's programmed inspection regime, prioritised intervention model, and community request processes. However, residual risks remain where financial and resourcing constraints prevent timely maintenance or upgrades.

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Unsealed roads provide access for rural residents, emergency services, and agricultural operations. Delayed maintenance or poor road conditions can contribute to community frustration and limit accessibility, particularly in remote areas.

Failure to maintain roads to an acceptable standard may increase Council's exposure to claims, particularly where roads are a known risk and no remedial action has been taken.

CONCLUSION

The management of unsealed roads within Cessnock LGA remains a significant operational and financial challenge for Council. With over 314 km of unsealed roads, including 36 km currently outside the maintenance program, the network requires substantial ongoing investment to remain safe, functional, and resilient. Current funding levels, while facilitating essential works, are insufficient to sustain desired service standards in the future.

The recommendations outlined in this report—to rescind the 2019 Unsealed Roads Maintenance Program, adopt a revised maintenance schedule, and require that any new roads meet Council's engineering standards prior to inclusion into maintenance program—will establish a clear, strong, and more sustainable policy framework. This approach will protect Council from inheriting substandard or high-liability assets, ensure all roads comply with engineering and safety requirements, and provide the community with a transparent and consistent framework for managing unsealed roads.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI14/2025

Works and Infrastructure



ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI15/2025

Works and Infrastructure



SUBJECT: *PETITION - PROVISION OF PUBLIC AMENITIES AT CRAWFORDVILLE PARK, MILLFIELD.*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Open Space and Community Facilities Manager*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to table a petition that is requesting the provision of public amenities at Crawfordville Park, Millfield.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council notes the petition calling for accessible public toilets at Crawfordville Park, Millfield.
2. That the outcome of the cleaning services review be considered prior to any additional public amenities being serviced by Council.
3. That the Interim General Manager notify the petition organiser of the outcome of Council's decision.

BACKGROUND

Council Officers have been liaising with residents of Millfield regarding the provision of public toilets at Crawfordville Park, Bennett Street Millfield. Community members first established a petition in 2023 after the skatepark was established at the site, and more recently lodged the petition on 1 September 2025 with 49 signatures, to assist in demonstrating demand for a public toilet at the park. The petition is provided at **Enclosure 1**.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

Council's Public Amenities Strategy (2023) recommends considering the provision of new public amenities at Crawfordville Park. Council staff have undertaken preliminary planning and investigation work for the establishment of a new amenities block at the site, however the construction of a new amenities block is likely to cost over \$250,000 plus additional ongoing maintenance and renewal costs.

The development of new public amenities at Crawfordville Park is not identified within Council's 2025 – 2029 Delivery Program and Council staff would be required to secure grant funding for this project.

Crawfordville Community Hall, which is centrally located at Crawfordville Park includes external toilets that currently service the Hall, and would have the ability to also service the park. Prior to 2019, these toilets were open to the public, however they were closed due to vandalism.

Reopening the existing toilets at Crawfordville Hall to the general public is considered to be a more financially viable option than construction of a new amenities block. However, this would require approximately \$6,000 per annum for cleaning the toilets twice weekly. There is currently no budget available or resourcing to complete this.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI15/2025

Works and Infrastructure



Council officers have commenced a cleaning services review. This review will assess the capacity of existing cleaning staff to service additional facilities, inform future service levels, resource requirements and operational impacts of maintaining additional assets. It is recommended that no new public amenities or facilities that require scheduled cleaning be brought online until the review is complete. The service review is expected to be finalised by the second quarter of 2026.

CONSULTATION

- Open Space and Community Facilities staff met with the petition organiser on site at Crawfordville Park to discuss options and limitations for providing public toilets.
- Discussions have been held with Council's Building Project Coordinator to identify potential costs involved in both the construction and operation of a new amenities block, and/or the reopening of the existing toilets to the general public.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

Nil

b. Other Plans

Council's Public Amenities Strategy (2023) recommends considering the provision of new public amenities at Crawfordville Park.

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Nil

b. Financial Implications

The cost of constructing a new public amenities building at Crawfordville Park is estimated to be upwards of \$250,000, plus approximately \$6,000 per annum in cleaning and maintenance costs. In addition, there would be ongoing depreciation expenditure and a requirement to renew the facility as it meets the end of its effective life.

The cost of reopening the existing public toilets attached to Crawfordville Hall to the general public is estimated at \$6,000 per annum for cleaning and servicing. The ongoing costs do not include any rehabilitation costs caused by damage and graffiti.

Chief Finance Officer Commentary:

Neither of these options are included in the Long Term Financial Plan currently under exhibition. Should Council ultimately determine to undertake either of these options, Council officers will need to reduce services and may also have to adjust other capital works priorities throughout the LGA that have already been adopted to provide the necessary funding.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI15/2025

Works and Infrastructure



c. Legislative Implications

Nil

d. Risk Implications

Nil

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

This report presents a petition to Council for public accessible amenities to be provided at Crawfordville Park, Bennett Street Millfield. The report discusses Council's strategic plans for the site and options for providing public amenities as well as the financial impacts of this. Council staff will be commencing a cleaning services review, which will inform future service levels, resourcing requirements, and the operational implications of maintaining additional assets. The service review is expected to be finalised by the second quarter of 2026.

ENCLOSURES

[1](#) ➡ Petition - Need for Public Toilets Crawfordville Park Millfield

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI16/2025

Works and Infrastructure



SUBJECT: *QUOTATION - Q2026-08 DOYLE STREET BRIDGE REPLACEMENT*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Infrastructure Manager*

SUMMARY

Evaluation and selection of Quotation for Quotation No. Q2026-08 – Doyle Street Bridge Replacement.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council accepts the quotation submitted by Coffs Harbour City Council t/a Coastal Works Pty Ltd for Doyle Street Bridge Replacement (Q2026-08) in the lump sum amount of \$2,756,636 (including GST).
2. That Council notes this procurement is being undertaken as a direct engagement under Section 55 of the Local Government Act 1993 for Coastal Works (Coffs Harbour City Council) to deliver the Construction-Only component of Doyle Street Bridge Replacement.

BACKGROUND

The Doyle Street Bridge is a key infrastructure asset within Council's transport network, serving both local and regional traffic. The bridge has reached the end of its serviceable life, with structural deterioration and increased maintenance necessitating a full replacement to ensure ongoing safety and reliability.

Council previously engaged a contractor to undertake bridge maintenance and minor rehabilitation works on Doyle Street Bridge. While the previous contractor delivered services in accordance with contract requirements, ongoing structural issues have highlighted the need for a comprehensive replacement rather than incremental repairs.

In response to this need, Council issued a quote seeking a suitably qualified contractor to undertake construction of the Doyle Street Bridge Replacement. The quote process has been conducted in accordance with Council's procurement policies and under Section 55 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act). This report provides an evaluation of the submission received and recommends awarding the contract to the preferred supplier.

REPORT

This report outlines the procurement process for the Doyle Street Bridge Replacement and provides the basis for recommending contract award.

Council sought direct quotations via Vendor Panel from Coastal Works Pty Ltd for Doyle Street Bridge Replacement under Section 55 of the Act. Coastal Works Pty Ltd was selected for quotation due to their proven capability and strong performance on a similar bridge project for Council (Watagan Creek Road Bridge Replacement).

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI16/2025

Works and Infrastructure



The Coastal Works Pty Ltd proposal meets Council's requirements for methodology, program, safety, and value for money. Detailed pricing and evaluation information is provided in the confidential enclosure.

It is recommended that Council engage Coastal Works Pty Ltd for Doyle Street Bridge Replacement project.

Request for Quotation

The Request for Quotation (RFQ) documents were prepared by Council officers, and reviewed by the Tender Audit Panel (TAP) before quotations were called. The form of contract selected was GC21 – *General Conditions of Contract*. The RFQ called for a Lump Sum quotation for Doyle Street Bridge Replacement.

Invitation

Quotations were invited on 13 August 2025 on Council's Vendor Panel.

Addenda

No addenda were issued via VendorPanel Portal

Closure

Tenders closed 2pm Tuesday 23 September 2025.

TIME FRAME

The contract is expected to commence in Quarter 1 2026. The duration of the contract is estimated to be 30 weeks.

LOCAL CONTENT

N/A

OPTIONS

Option1:

Accept quotation submitted by Coastal Works Pty Ltd for the Doyle Street Bridge Replacement. This is the **preferred option** as Coastal Works Pty Ltd has demonstrated strong performance on previous Council projects and offers a compliant, value-for-money proposal with a clear program for delivery.

Option 2:

Decline offer and seek alternative service providers. This option is **not recommended**, as recommencing procurement would significantly delay the project, impact the delivery program, and may result in higher costs due to market escalation and additional procurement time.

CONSULTATION

The following teams were consulted during the tender process:

1. Project Management
2. Safety & Risk
3. Procurement

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI16/2025

Works and Infrastructure



STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

Acceptance of the tender will contribute to achieving the following objectives of:
2025 -2029 Delivery Program:

- Objective 4 Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities.
- Objective 4.1 Better transport links

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

The tender process has been carried out in accordance with:

- *Cessnock City Council Procurement Policy,*
- *Cessnock City Council Procurement Guidelines,*
- *Tendering Guidelines for NSW Local Government 2009, and*
- *NSW Government – Code of Practice for Procurement 2005.*

b. Financial Implications

The quotation from Coastal Works Pty Ltd for Doyle Street Bridge Replacement totals \$2,756,636 (inc GST), which can be delivered within available funds.

c. Legislative Implications

The tender process has followed the legislative provisions, referenced in *Cessnock City Council Procurement Policy* and *Cessnock City Council Procurement Procedure*, as follows:

- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*

In particular, reference is made to Part 7, Division 4, Clause 178 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (Acceptance of tenders)*:

1. After considering the tenders submitted for a proposed contract, the Council must either:
 - (a) accept the tender that, having regard to all the circumstances, appears to it to be the most advantageous, or
 - (b) decline to accept any of the tenders.
2. A Council must ensure that every contract it enters into as a result of a tender accepted by the Council is with the successful tenderer and in accordance with the tender (modified by any variation under clause 176). However, if the successful tender was made by the Council (as provided for in section 55 (2A) of the Act), the Council is not required to enter into any contract in order to carry out the requirements of the proposed contract.
3. A Council that decides not to accept any of the tenders for a proposed contract or receives no tenders for the proposed contract must, by resolution, do one of the following:

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI16/2025

Works and Infrastructure



- (a) postpone or cancel the proposal for the contract,
 - (b) invite, in accordance with clause 167, 168 or 169, fresh tenders based on the same or different details,
 - (c) invite, in accordance with clause 168, fresh applications from persons interested in tendering for the proposed contract,
 - (d) invite, in accordance with clause 169, fresh applications from persons interested in tendering for contracts of the same kind as the proposed contract,
 - (e) enter into negotiations with any person (whether or not the person was a tenderer) with a view to entering into a contract in relation to the subject matter of the tender,
 - (f) carry out the requirements of the proposed contract itself.
4. If a Council resolves to enter into negotiations as referred to in sub clause (3) (e), the resolution must state the following:
 - (a) the Council's reasons for declining to invite fresh tenders or applications as referred to in sub clause (3) (b)–(d),
 - (b) the Council's reasons for determining to enter into negotiations with the person or persons referred to in sub clause (3) (e).

d. Risk Implications

To minimise Council's exposure to business risks, the RFQ required:

- Satisfactory financial capacity, and
- Adequate levels of insurances.
- Modern Slavery

The authenticity of the Contractor's certificates of currency for the following insurance policies will be verified:

- Workers Compensation,
- Public Liability (\$20M or greater),
- Comprehensive Motor Vehicle,
- Professional Indemnity, and
- Insurance of the Works.

Risks identified in relation to safety, environment and quality are mitigated by the RFQ requirement for adherence to the following system standards:

- *AS/NZS ISO 45001:2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems*
- *AS/NZS ISO 14001:2015 - Environment Management Systems*
- *AS/NZS ISO 9001:2008 - Quality Management Systems*

Regarding safety, the RFQ requires the Contractor to prepare and implement a Site Specific Safety Management Plan including:

- Traffic Management Plan to manage broader traffic implications such as heavy vehicles and delays,
- Traffic Control Plans to manage interactions between public and construction traffic and a staging plan to maintain access to the weighbridge and landfill,

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI16/2025

Works and Infrastructure



- Requirements for on-site workers to have current general construction induction cards (white card) and licences/tickets and inducted to the site, and
- Safe Work Method Statements, kept on site, and discussed at daily tool box talks.

e. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The quotation from Coastal Works Pty Ltd in lump sum amount of **\$2,756,636 (including GST)** offers the best value for money for **Doyle Street Bridge Replacement**. The contract sum and contingency are fully funded from the available project budget identified in this report.

ENCLOSURES

- 1 ➡ Doyle St Bridge _ Tender Evaluation Methodology
- 2 ➡ Doyle St _ Quotation Evaluation Matrix - *This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) (di) of the Local Government Act, as it deals with commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.*

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI17/2025

Works and Infrastructure



SUBJECT: ***ADOPTION OF THE ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY & ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANS***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Asset Planning Manager***

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to recommend the adoption of the Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plans, as supporting documents for the updated Long Term Financial Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plans.

BACKGROUND

The Asset Management Strategy (AMS) and Asset Management Plans (AMP) have recently been reviewed and revised to support the development of the updated Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) currently on exhibition. The updates based on adopted June 2025 data reflect increased replacement costs and revised asset condition ratings following the revaluation of drainage systems and associated road infrastructure. Additionally, a more detailed review of projected maintenance expenses has been undertaken.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The revised AMS and AMPs incorporate a base case/current funding scenario, to reflect a spending scenario that is required to maintain a financially responsible level of service.

OPTIONS

Option 1 (Recommended):

That council endorse the recommendation.

Option 2: Not recommended.

That Council does not adopt the Asset Management Strategy and Plans.

If the AMS and AMPs were not adopted, it may affect the success of Councils' application to IPART for a Special Variation. The asset information in the current endorsed strategy and plans support the current LTFP and do not accurately reflect the financial sustainability priorities identified in the update LTFP (currently on exhibition).

CONSULTATION

- Corporate and Community Services
 - Financial Planning team
- Planning and Environment
 - Strategic Planning

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI17/2025

Works and Infrastructure



- Works and Infrastructure
 - Infrastructure
 - Works and Operations
 - Open Spaces and Community Facilities

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

Outcome 5 – Lead: ‘We have strong leadership and effective governance’
DP Strategy 5.3 – Ensure we are accountable and responsive to our community

b. Other Plans

The AMS and supporting AMPs apply to all physical assets owned or controlled by Council, assets which are critical to Council’s service delivery, and assets which are incorporated in the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program.

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

The AMS and supporting AMPs demonstrate how the guiding principles within Councils adopted Asset Management Policy will be applied across Council’s asset portfolio. These documents all form part of Councils’ Integrated Planning and Reporting framework.

b. Financial Implications

Adopting the AMS and AMPs does not have a direct financial implication, however the modelling contained within these documents used to inform Councils’ asset condition and appropriate levels of service identifies that Council’s current financial trajectory is not sustainable without additional revenue. The preferred scenario indicates that the proposed Special Variation is required to maintain essential infrastructure, reduce the backlog, and place Council on a sustainable long-term financial footing.

c. Legislative Implications

Nil

d. Risk Implications

If the AMS and AMPs are not adopted by Council it creates significant strategic and financial risks. These documents underpin the updated Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP). Without them, Council cannot clearly identify capital works priorities, manage the growing maintenance backlog, or demonstrate what service levels can be delivered sustainably.

Current analysis shows Council cannot maintain existing service levels or fund infrastructure lifecycle costs within the available budget over the 10-year horizon. There is a risk of misalignment with the adopted LTFP which may lead to inefficient allocation of future operational budgets to Council’s assets — particularly within the road network.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI17/2025

Works and Infrastructure



e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The review of the AMS and AMP as part of the supporting document for the development of the recently updated LTFP provide a clear projection in regards to Councils' financial trajectory. Adoption of the strategy and plans to provide the supporting detail behind the LTFP is consider important for transparency to the community.

ENCLOSURES

- [1⇒](#) Asset Management Strategy
- [2⇒](#) Roads - Asset Management Plan
- [3⇒](#) Bridges & Major Culverts - Asset Management Plan
- [4⇒](#) Stormwater - Asset Management Plan
- [5⇒](#) Buildings - Asset Management Plan
- [6⇒](#) Open Space - Asset Management Plan

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN18/2025

General Manager's Unit



NOTICES OF MOTION No. BN18/2025

SUBJECT: ***SUSPENSION OF ALL NON-LEGISLATED NET ZERO EXPENDITURE TO SUPPORT FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY***

COUNCILLOR: ***Quintin King***

MOTION

- 1. That Council suspend all current and future expenditure, programs, projects, and activities related to achieving net zero emissions that are not required under any State or Federal legislation.**
- 2. That Council direct the General Manager to immediately cease all non-legislated net zero initiatives and associated operational or capital spending.**
- 3. That Council redirect any savings realised toward stabilising council's financial position and supporting core service delivery.**

It is my intention to move the above motion at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council on 10 December 2025.

RATIONALE

Council has previously received a report (Report No. PE19/2023 – 17 May 2023) indicating that the transition to net zero emissions for council operations is forecasted to require over \$15 million in additional expenditure over the next 25 years.

Given council's current financial sustainability challenges, it is prudent and responsible to prioritise essential services and legislatively required obligations. Discretionary spending that imposes significant long term financial commitments such as non – legislated net zero initiatives should be suspended to ensure council's ongoing viability and ability to deliver core community services.

This motion seeks to immediately stop all non – mandated net zero expenditure and ensure council focuses its limited resources where they are most needed.

DELIVERY PROGRAM:

6. Civic leadership: "Ensure council is financially sustainable and effectively manages its assets and resources."

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

N/A asking to cut

Sgd: Quintin King

Date: 1 December 2025

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN18/2025

General Manager's Unit



Director's Commentary

This Notice of Motion refers to a forecast “additional expenditure of over \$15 million over the next 25 years” for Council's transition to net zero. It is important to clarify that this figure does not originate from the Climate Change Resilience Plan. The figure is drawn from the financial implications section of the PE19/2023 report that states in full:

Implementation of actions contained within the Plan will be considered through Council's annual budgeting process (Operational Plan) and allocated operational/staff funding or capital funding. Some actions, such as the implementation of food organics and garden organics processing (Action W2), have already been forecast in the Delivery Program 2022-2026. Other actions will require additional financial or business case assessment and have the potential to attract external grant funding. This is currently relevant for actions in relation to electric vehicle charging infrastructure and renewable energy uptake as Federal and NSW State Government Policy have accelerated grant funding recently. These grant funding streams are focused on infrastructure where community benefits or partnerships can be established or demonstrated and actions within the Plan aim to facilitate and enhance Council's prospects of gaining grant funding.

Ironbark Consulting prepared a Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory for Council operations and provided potential options for transition to net zero emissions by 2050. The transition to net zero emissions by 2050 for Council operations modelling forecasts an additional expenditure of over \$15M over the next 25 years. The modelling also predicts the transition will result in over \$6M of savings, above the additional expenditure, and result in a positive cost-benefit to Council operations. These figures are predicted over a 25-year period and are likely to change, but with advancement of technology in renewable energy systems savings to Council are likely to increase.

Estimated cost figures have been provided within the Plan where available. However, economic modelling by Deloitte Access Economics and industry bodies such as the Australian Business Roundtable have shown the impacts from climate change are likely to cost Australia up to \$73bn a year by 2060 if emissions continue. The cost of implementation of the strategy is likely to be a more cost-effective approach for Council to mitigate potential impacts and contribute to the transition to net zero emissions.

The adoption of the Plan will also enhance Council's ability to attract grant funding for climate change resilience projects. The Plan will significantly assist Council's competitiveness in the rapidly evolving climate change policy landscape and grant funding streams attached to these policy changes.

In summary this notes that:

- The costs are theoretical and only become true costs once incorporated in the Delivery Program and in this way the ending of the Program has no actual impact on Council's current spending
- The Climate Change Resilience Program enhances the prospects for grants in these areas
- The potential cost is \$15m over 25 years, however it is also predicted to provide an additional savings above that spend of \$6m over 25 years
- Advancement of technology in this space is likely to see an increase in the cost benefit
- Economic modelling shows an increase in general for costs if emissions continue.

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN18/2025

General Manager's Unit



While suspending the current plan may not reduce current committed capital for these programs, nor lead to any additional expenditure it would likely prevent Council from realising future savings and avoided expenditure in key operational areas. That is, it would in effect be additional expenditure being imposed on future operations.

As an example of some of the initiatives and the savings realised:

Street Lighting

The Plan notes a program to replace Street Lighting with LED globes for a capital cost of \$2m. Much of this program has been complete with savings in direct electricity expenditure of approximately \$350,000 per year. If these upgrades were to be stopped then future savings are foregone and electricity costs for lighting remain much higher.

The next iteration of smart lighting will continue to provide additional cost benefits by being able to manage brightness of lights depending on traffic and weather conditions, to not only enhance safety but also provide further cost savings.

Solar Power

Solar Power behind the meter, i.e. where it is used by the facility first before going to the grid, is a vastly successful cost mitigation strategy. Solar panels have an effective life in the order of 20 years with a payback period of between 3 to 4 years for each solar installation.

Generally, Council saves approximately \$350 per KW installed which equates to \$2,000 per 5kw system. Most of Council's systems are larger.

Further to that, Council continues to leverage grants for these programs that reduces Council's initial contribution which further reduces the payback period and subsequent overall savings for the systems.

FOGO Waste Diversion

The true benefit of FOGO is in that the rubbish is diverted from our waste cell effectively extending the life of the cell. The capital cost of the new waste cell under construction is approximately \$80m with an effective life of 20 years. This amounts to \$4m per year. Waste diversion such as FOGO and other Climate Change Plan initiatives reduce this yearly burden. For instance if Council is able to increase the life of the waste cell to 30 years, the yearly cost now drops to \$2.6m (in 2025 dollars). This is a remarkable saving, plus also delays the future cost of waste treatment solutions for the city.

Energy Efficiency Audits

These are programs to review where Council could make savings in high energy areas through leveraging new technology, systems or protocols. A 10% saving across Council facilitates energy saving could exceed \$100k per year.

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN18/2025

General Manager's Unit



Potential for Methane Energy Extraction

As the current cell meets the end of its useful life, the rubbish underneath will continue to be monitored for 30 years. One of the gases produced is Methane which is currently flared in an environmentally approved manner. The potential exists to be able to use this methane to generate power. Practice is to work with a provider to build a small power station that can be used to generate revenue or alternatively reduce power costs at the waste facility. This also has the potential to generate \$150,000 per year in avoided costs.

Summary

In summary, the \$15 million referenced is from conceptual modelling in an earlier report and is not from the Climate Change Resilience Plan. The Plan contains modest costed actions though these are still required to sit within the ordinary budget, Delivery Program and LTFP processes. It does not create financial commitments outside these frameworks.

Suspending the Plan would not reduce current expenditure; however, it would result in foregone future savings in electricity, solar performance, landfill life extension, and methane capture with the potential to provide unrealised future savings and avoided costs. Suspending the plan would also have a significant effect in reducing the opportunity for grants in these areas which Council can utilise to minimise our own capital contribution.

For these reasons, a blanket suspension of the Plan is not supported from a financial sustainability perspective. A targeted, case-by-case assessment through the annual budgeting and business case process provides a more appropriate and financially responsible approach.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report