



12 November 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, 19 November 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

Leave of absence has been granted to:

Councillor Dixon - 5 November 2025 to 23 November 2025 Inclusive

Councillor Harrington - 3 November 2025 to 28 November 2025 Inclusive

(4) CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Council held on 22 October

2025..... 25

(5) DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

DI11/2025 Disclosures Of Interest 30

(6) PETITIONS

(7) PUBLIC ADDRESS

The following person has been invited to address the meeting of Council:

Speakers	Company	Report	Page No.	Duration
Alex Hardy	Prosperity	CC79/2025 - Annual Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2025	80	7 mins

(8) CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF ALL REPORTS BY ENGLOBO

(9)	MAYORAL MINUTES	
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	CC71/2025 Community, Sporting and Environment Grant 2025-26.....	50
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(16)	COUNCILLORS' REPORTS	

‡ - 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, 15 OCTOBER 2025, COMMENCING
AT 6.30PM**

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Interim General Manager (Director Planning and Environment)
Acting Director Planning and Environment (Development Services Manager)
Director Corporate and Community Services
Director Works and Infrastructure
People and Culture Manager
Strategic Planning Manager
Communications & Engagement Manager
Principal Community Engagement Officer
Help Desk Support Officer
Council Services Team Leader

The Prayer was presented by Pastor Courtney Watton

The Mayor acknowledged the sudden passing of Council employee, Graham Hill

**LEAVE OF
ABSENCE:**

MOTION

Moved:
Seconded:

Councillor Jurd
Councillor Palmowski

250

RESOLVED that a Leave of Absence be granted to Councillor Dixon from 5 November 2025 to 23 November 2025.

That a Leave of Absence be granted to Councillor Harrington from 3 November to 28 November 2025.

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Dixon
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor King
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton
Councillor Lea

Total (12)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES:

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Harrington
 Seconded: Councillor Jurd

251

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 17 September 2025, as circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a correct record.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (12)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST NO. DI10/2025

SUBJECT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

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

CC65/2025 - Drainage Easement Request – George Jeffery Park Kearsley - Councillor Madden declared a Non Pecuniary Less Than Significant Conflict for the reason that he is the Vice President of the Kearsley Crushers Rugby League football club who use George Jeffery Park as their home ground. Councillor Madden advised that he will remain in the Chamber and take part in discussion and voting as the conflict has not influenced him in carrying out his public duty.

PETITIONS

Nil

ADDRESS BY INVITED SPEAKERS

Nil

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

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Dixon **Seconded:** Councillor Jurd
252
RESOLVED

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

OFFICERS REPORTS

‡ GMU3/2025	Christmas Closure 2025	39
‡ CC66/2025	Annual Disclosures of Interests in Written Returns	66
‡ CC67/2025	Investment Report - September 2025.....	69
WI11/2025	Update of Council's Cemetery Policy.....	75

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

FOR	AGAINST
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Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (12)	

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MAYORAL MINUTES

MAYORAL MINUTES NO. MM12/2025

SUBJECT: VACANCY IN CIVIC OFFICE - RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR ROSA GRINE

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Watton
253
RESOLVED

That Council notes the vacancy in civic office and that the NSW Electoral Commission is currently conducting a countback process to fill the casual vacancy in Ward D.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (12)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOTIONS OF URGENCY

MOTIONS OF URGENCY NO. MOU10/2025

SUBJECT: MOTIONS OF URGENCY

Nil

GENERAL MANAGER'S UNIT

GENERAL MANAGER'S UNIT NO. GMU3/2025

SUBJECT: CHRISTMAS CLOSURE 2025

MOTION

Moved: Councillor Dixon

Seconded: Councillor Jurd

254

RESOLVED

That Council notes its offices, including Libraries and Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) will close from 12 noon Wednesday, 24 December 2025 and reopen on Monday, 5 January 2026.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (12)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT NO. PE26/2025

SUBJECT: DRAFT INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRIBUTIONS PLANS - POST EXHIBITION

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Harrington **Seconded:** Councillor Jurd
255

RESOLVED

1. That Council adopt the draft Cessnock City Wide Section 7.11 Infrastructure Contributions Plan and the draft Cessnock Section 7.12 Infrastructure Contributions Plan.
2. That Council notify in writing the persons who made a submission with regard to the draft plan, of Council's decision.
3. That Council write to the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, and the NSW Treasurer, requesting that the current development contributions caps be reviewed and increased to reflect current construction and infrastructure delivery costs, or alternatively, that the caps be indexed annually to account for inflation and cost escalation, whichever is higher. Further, that a copy of this correspondence be provided to Local Government NSW and the Hunter Joint Organisation, seeking their support in advocating for this review on behalf of member councils.
4. That Council undertake biennial reviews of the Infrastructure Contributions Plans to ensure actual development activity and contribution revenue remain in line with predicted growth and budget forecasts with findings reported to Council at a Councillor briefing.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (12)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT NO. PE27/2025

**SUBJECT: DRAFT VINEYARDS PLACE STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT
CONTROL PLAN - POST EXHIBITION**

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Palmowski **Seconded:** Councillor Dixon
256

RESOLVED

1. That Council adopt the Draft Cessnock Vineyards District Place Strategy and Draft Cessnock Vineyards District Development Control Plan chapter.
2. That Council notify submission makers of the Council's decision.
3. That Council write to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure seeking its endorsement of the Draft Cessnock Vineyards District Place Strategy.

FOR

Councillor Dixon
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor King
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Watton
Councillor Lea

Total (10)

AGAINST

Councillor Madden
Councillor Hawkins

Total (2)

CARRIED

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT NO. PE28/2025

SUBJECT: DRAFT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN CHAPTERS - 'TOURIST ACCOMMODATION ON RURAL AND CONSERVATION LANDS' AND 'SIGNAGE AND OUTDOOR ADVERTISING' - POST EXHIBITION

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Jurd **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe
257

RESOLVED

1. That Council adopt Draft Chapter 'D4 Tourist Accommodation on Rural and Conservation Lands' and Draft Chapter 'D5 Signage and Outdoor Advertising' of the Cessnock Development Control Plan.
2. That Council notify in writing the submission makers of Council's decision.

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Dixon
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor King
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton
Councillor Lea

Total (12)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC65/2025

SUBJECT: DRAINAGE EASEMENT REQUEST - GEORGE JEFFERY PARK KEARSLEY

Councillor Madden declared a Non Pecuniary Less Than Significant Conflict for the reason that he is the Vice President of the Kearsley Crushers Rugby League football club who use George Jeffery Park as their home ground. Councillor Madden remained in the Chamber and took part in discussion and voting.

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Harrington **Seconded:** Councillor Jurd
258

RESOLVED

1. That Council consents to granting an easement for drainage purposes burdening Council land, being George Jeffery Park (lot 2882 DP 1158212) and benefiting 80 Caledonia Street, Kearsley (lot 156 DP 755215);
2. That Council delegates the General Manager to negotiate compensation payable for the easement in accordance with independent valuation.
3. That Council authorises the General Manager to execute all documentation related to granting the easement and compensation payable.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (12)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC66/2025

SUBJECT: ANNUAL DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS IN WRITTEN RETURNS

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Dixon **Seconded:** Councillor Jurd
259
RESOLVED

That Council notes the tabling of the annual disclosures of interests in written returns the period 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025, in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (12)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC67/2025

SUBJECT: INVESTMENT REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2025

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Dixon **Seconded:** Councillor Jurd
260
RESOLVED

That Council receives the Investment Report for September 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 \$93,412,710.**

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (12)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC68/2025

SUBJECT: RESOLUTIONS TRACKING REPORT

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Jurd **Seconded:** Councillor King
261
RESOLVED

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

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (12)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE NO. WI11/2025

SUBJECT: UPDATE OF COUNCIL'S CEMETERY POLICY

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Dixon **Seconded:** Councillor Jurd

262

RESOLVED

1. That Council places the draft Cemetery Policy 2025 on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.
2. That, if no relevant submissions are received during the public exhibition period, the draft Cemetery Policy 2025 be considered final and adopted.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (12)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

BUSINESS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

BUSINESS WITH NOTICE NO. BN13/2025

SUBJECT: IMPLEMENTATION OF AN EMAIL NOTIFICATION SYSTEM FOR RESIDENTS

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Jurd **Seconded:** Councillor Harrington
263

RESOLVED

That Council, investigate an opt-in notification system for residents based on their location. This system would provide timely information regarding:

1. **Development Applications, Residents would receive updates on DAs in their area, ensuring they are informed about proposed developments that may affect their community, while helping with the cost of notifications, we could reach a bigger area, while keeping it cheaper.**
2. **Upcoming Events: Notifications about local events, community gatherings, and Council initiatives would be shared to encourage participation and engagement.**
3. **Promote the new system through existing Council communication channels to maximise participation.**

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	
Total (12)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

BUSINESS WITH NOTICE NO. BN14/2025

SUBJECT: INVESTIGATION OF COLLABORATION WITH CESSNOCK JAIL FOR COST SAVING INITIATIVES

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Jurd **Seconded:** Councillor King
264

RESOLVED

1. That the General Manager investigate and provide a report to Council on logistics, resource implications, potential benefits and/or limitations of a collaboration with Cessnock Correctional Centre for the provision of selected maintenance services and procurement opportunities for goods able to be produced at the Centre.
2. The Correctional Services be invited to a future public forum on services they provide.

FOR	AGAINST
-----	---------

Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	

Total (12)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

BUSINESS WITH NOTICE NO. BN15/2025

SUBJECT: ADVERTISING, SPONSORSHIP AND NAMING RIGHTS PROGRAM

Councillor Pascoe left the meeting, the time being 7.40pm

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor King **Seconded:** Councillor Jurd
265

RESOLVED

That the General Manager investigate and report to Council on implications, resource requirements, projected returns on investment and any logistical impacts for existing users of relevant Council facilities for an advertising, sponsorship and potential naming rights program for Council facilities.

Councillor Pascoe returned to the meeting, the time being 7.42pm

FOR	AGAINST
------------	----------------

Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Councillor Lea	

Total (12)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

BUSINESS WITH NOTICE NO. BN16/2025

SUBJECT: CHARLTON STREET - NEW PARKING RULE

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor King **Seconded:** Councillor Jurd

1. That Council revoke the new front to kerb parking rule recently changed on Charlton Street Cessnock.
2. That Council seek alternative solutions to meet the intended purpose of the change.

AMENDMENT **Moved:** Councillor Palmowski **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe

That the General Manager investigate alternative solutions to address concerns in relation to pedestrian safety and parking arrangements on Charlton Street and report to Council before the end of 2025.

Councillor King moved a Motion of Dissent from the Mayor's ruling in regard to accepting the Amendment.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Jurd	Councillor Dixon
Councillor King	Councillor Harrington
	Councillor Hill
	Councillor Madden
	Councillor Mason
	Councillor Palmowski
	Councillor Pascoe
	Councillor Hawkins
	Councillor Watton
	Councillor Lea
Total (2)	Total (10)

The Motion of Dissent was **PUT** and **LOST**.

AMENDMENT **Moved:** Councillor Palmowski **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe

That the General Manager investigate alternative solutions to address concerns in relation to pedestrian safety and parking arrangements on Charlton Street and report to Council before the end of 2025.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Hill	Councillor Dixon
Councillor Palmowski	Councillor Harrington
Councillor Pascoe	Councillor Jurd
Councillor Hawkins	Councillor King
Councillor Lea	Councillor Madden
	Councillor Mason
	Councillor Watton
Total (5)	Total (7)

The Amendment **PUT** and **LOST**.

The Motion was then **PUT** and **CARRIED**.

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor King **Seconded:** Councillor Jurd
266
RESOLVED

- 1. That Council revoke the new front to kerb parking rule recently changed on Charlton Street Cessnock.**
- 2. That Council seek alternative solutions to meet the intended purpose of the change.**

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	Councillor Hill
Councillor Harrington	Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Jurd	Councillor Pascoe
Councillor King	Councillor Lea
Councillor Madden	Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Watton	
Total (7)	Total (5)

CARRIED

COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor Hill briefly spoke on the positive of Councillors recent tour of Council facilities.

Councillor King advised that the Austar Committee meeting had been cancelled due a high number of apologies.

The Meeting Was Declared Closed at 8.19pm

CONFIRMED AND SIGNED at the meeting held on 19 November 2025

.....**CHAIRPERSON**

.....**GENERAL MANAGER**

**MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF THE CESSNOCK CITY
COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON WEDNESDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2025,
COMMENCING AT 5.30PM**

PRESENT: His Worship the Mayor, Councillor D Watton (in the Chair) and Councillors Dixon, Harrington, Hill, Jurd, King, Lea, Madden (via AV Link), Mason, Palmowski, Pascoe and Hawkins.

IN ATTENDANCE: Interim General Manager (Director Planning and Environment)
Acting Director Planning and Environment (Development Services Manager)
Director Corporate and Community Services
Director Works and Infrastructure
Chief Financial Officer
Corporate Governance Manager
Communications & Engagement Manager
Principal Community Engagement Officer
Help Desk Support Officer
Council Services Team Leader

**ATTENDANCE BY
AV LINK:**

MOTION

Moved:

Councillor Lea

Seconded:

Councillor Hill

267

RESOLVED that Council permit Councillor Madden to attend the 22 October 2025 Extraordinary Council meeting by audio-visual link.

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Dixon
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor King
Councillor Lea
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton

Total (12)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST NO. PPD11/2025

SUBJECT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Nil

MAYORAL MINUTES

Nil

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC70/2025

SUBJECT: ENDORSEMENT OF CONSULTATION FOR FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Harrington **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe
268

RESOLVED

1. That Council notes the updated report from the independent advisor.
2. That Council endorses notification to IPART that Council is considering a Special Variation application.
3. That Council endorses commencement of community consultation on Financial Sustainability and Special Variation.
4. That Council endorses the fact sheet and survey as provided under supplementary enclosure for the purpose of consultation.

Councillor Jurd left the meeting, the time being 5.43pm

Councillor Jurd returned to the meeting, the time being 5.44pm

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	Councillor Jurd
Councillor Harrington	Councillor King
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (2)

CARRIED

The Meeting Was Declared Closed at 5.54pm

CONFIRMED AND SIGNED at the meeting held on

.....**CHAIRMAN**

.....**GENERAL MANAGER**

Disclosures Of Interest

Report No. DI11/2025

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. MM13/2025

General Manager's Unit



MAYORAL MINUTE No. MM13/2025

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

RECOMMENDATION

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

REPORT/PROPOSAL

Cessnock City Council continues to witness increasing demand for community support services as population growth and socioeconomic pressures intensify across the region. Local providers report escalating complexity in the cases they encounter, including:

- Homelessness and housing insecurity
- Alcohol and drug dependency
- Domestic and family violence
- Complex trauma and mental-health challenges

While a number of valued service providers currently operate within the Cessnock LGA, many are working beyond their capacity, facing limited resourcing, high referral volumes, and insufficient access to specialist programs.

It is evident that without greater inter-agency coordination and advocacy, existing efforts will not keep pace with community need.

Council is asking the NSW Government, as the lead service provider, to establish a Cessnock Regional Services Forum that would, inter alia:

- Provide an open forum for agencies, practitioners, and government representatives to share local intelligence and identify service gaps.
- Facilitate cross-sector collaboration and map overlapping areas of responsibility.
- Establish a foundation for unified advocacy to State and Federal Governments on funding and infrastructure priorities.
- Strengthen Council's understanding of how best to support existing service networks through planning, land use, and community development functions.

RATIONALE

The Cessnock LGA is geographically large, demographically diverse, and contains communities facing higher than average social disadvantage indicators. The region's rapid population growth continues to outpace the expansion of support infrastructure.

Mayoral Minute

Report No. MM13/2025

General Manager's Unit



Ultimately, this initiative aligns with Council's strategic objectives of fostering resilient communities, supporting inclusive growth, and advocating on behalf of residents for the services they need and deserve.

The forum will enable a proactive, solutions focused approach to social wellbeing - ensuring that Cessnock remains a caring, safe, and inclusive community as it grows. The purpose of the forum is to bring together key local service providers, the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), health and housing agencies, and specialist welfare and trauma-support organisations to identify current needs, service gaps, and opportunities for collaboration across the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA).

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report

Motions of Urgency

Report No. MOU11/2025

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.

General Manager's Unit
Report No. GMU4/2025
General Manager's Unit



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

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Internal Auditor*

SUMMARY

This report provides information to Council on the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee's activities during the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

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

BACKGROUND

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) Charter requires the Independent Chair to report annually to Council. This report covers the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee for Cessnock City Council is established in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (NSW). It is an independent advisory committee and forms part of the mandatory governance mechanisms for local councils which continuously reviews and provides independent advice to the council on how it is functioning and managing risk.

The scope and responsibilities of the Committee are outlined in its Charter, which was adopted by Council (19 June 2024) and reviewed annually.

The scope of the Committee's work, as outlined in its Charter includes:

- compliance;
- risk management;
- fraud control;
- financial management;
- governance;
- implementation of the strategic plan, delivery program and strategies;
- service reviews;
- collection of performance measurement data by the Council; and
- internal audit.

This report consolidates the work of internal audit and risk over the past 12 months and includes key areas over which the Committee had oversight.

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee is committed to supporting an internal audit function that operates as an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve Council's operations.

General Manager's Unit

Report No. GMU4/2025

General Manager's Unit



As required by the Committee Charter, the annual report (*Enclosure 1*) has been prepared covering Committee's work for the period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

OPTIONS

Nil

CONSULTATION

- Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
- Governance Team
- Executive Leadership Team

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee 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

Nil

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

In accordance Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Charter the Committee is required to provide:

- provide an annual assessment to the Council and the General Manager on the Committee's work and its opinion on how Council is performing (section 12.3).
- an Annual Report of the Committee, which will include attendance records, and a summary of key items of business (section 18.19).

b. Financial Implications

Nil

c. Legislative Implications

Local Government (General) Amendment (Audit, Risk and Improvement under the Local Government Act 1993, section 216K Terms of reference—the Act, Sch 6, cl 19B:

- (5) An Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee must exercise its functions in accordance with the adopted terms of reference.

General Manager's Unit

Report No. GMU4/2025

General Manager's Unit



d. Risk Implications

Nil

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Charter requires the Independent Chair to report annually to the Council. This report covers the activities of the Committee for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

ENCLOSURES

- [1](#) ➡ Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Annual Report 2024-2025
- [2](#) Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Strategic Workplan 2024-2028 - *This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) (j) of the Local Government Act, as it deals with Council Policy.*
- [3](#) Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2025-2029 - *This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) (j) of the Local Government Act, as it deals with Council Policy.*

General Manager's Unit

Report No. GMU5/2025

General Manager's Unit



SUBJECT: *INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Internal Auditor*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the revised Internal Audit Charter following the release of the Global Internal Audit Standards in January 2025.

The revised internal audit charter effectively integrates the Global Internal Audit Standards and the model provided by the Office of Local Government, ensuring that the internal audit function is well-positioned to operate with independence, objectivity, and a risk-based focus.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Internal Audit Charter.

BACKGROUND

In December 2023 the Office of Local Government issued and regulated the Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government guidelines (Guidelines) which come into effect 1 July 2024. The regulation required Council to adopt an Internal Audit Charter which gave consideration to the OLG Model. Council adopted the Internal Audit Charter 19 June 2024. The Internal Audit Charter is required to be reviewed annually.

In late 2024 the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) released the Global Internal Audit Standard which are designed to establish a universal framework for the internal audit profession and to ensure consistency, quality, and credibility across the global internal auditing community. The release of the Global standards also included a new model internal audit charter. The Global Internal Audit Standards came into effect 9 January 2025.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The Internal Audit Charter (**Enclosure 1**) has been reviewed taking into consideration the Model Internal Audit Charter released by the IIA in compliance with Global Internal Audit Standards.

Commentary on the tracked changes is included in **Enclosure 2** for the Councillors reference. Please note the following colour key when reviewing the tracked changes Charter:

- Red font – indicates wording taken from the OLG Model Charter
- Purple font – indicates wording taken from the 2023 IIA Model Charter
- Highlighted yellow – indicates updated wording taken from the 2024 Model Charter in compliance with the Global Internal Audit Standards.

The revised internal audit charter effectively integrates the Global Internal Audit Standards and the model provided by the Office of Local Government, ensuring that the internal audit function is well-positioned to operate with independence, objectivity, and a risk-based focus.

General Manager's Unit

Report No. GMU5/2025

General Manager's Unit



OPTIONS

Nil

CONSULTATION

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
Executive Leadership Team
Corporate Governance

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This report is linked to the Community's desired outcome under the Community Strategic Plan of: *"Lead – We have strong leadership and effective governance."*

b. Other Plans

Nil

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Nil

b. Financial Implications

Nil

c. Legislative Implications

The Guidelines, effective 1 July 2024, requires Council to adopt an Internal Audit Charter to guide how internal audit will be undertaken by the council that is informed by the Model Internal Audit Charter.

Councils must *consider* the model charter approved by the Departmental Chief Executive. This requirement has been regulated by the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Audit, Risk and Improvement)* under the *Local Government Act 1993* - section 216O Internal audit charter—the Act, Sch 6, cl 8A:

- (1) A council must adopt an internal audit charter setting out how the council will exercise its internal audit functions.
- (2) The adoption must occur by resolution of the council.
- (3) The council must consider a model internal audit charter approved by the departmental Chief Executive before adopting an internal audit charter.
- (4) An internal audit charter must be consistent with the Act and this regulation.
- (5) The council must exercise its internal audit functions in accordance with the adopted internal audit charter.

General Manager's Unit

Report No. GMU5/2025

General Manager's Unit



d. Risk Implications

Not implementing risks Council breaching legislation.

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee endorsed the Internal Audit Charter on 4 September 2025 and recommend to Council that the Internal Audit Charter be adopted.

ENCLOSURES

- [1](#) Internal Audit Charter
- [2](#) Internal Audit Charter (tracked changes)

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE31/2025

Planning and Environment



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

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Acting Development Services Manager*

APPLICATION NUMBER:	8/2025/536/1
PROPOSAL:	Telecommunications Facility (Mobile Telephone Base Station)
PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:	Lot 13, DP 259523
PROPERTY ADDRESS:	25 Cessnock Street Cessnock NSW 2320
ZONE:	MU1 – Mixed Use
OWNER:	Strand Cessnock Pty Ltd & Mr G J & Mrs N M & Mr B Moore
APPLICANT:	Waveconn Operations Pty Ltd

RECOMMENDATION

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

REASON FOR REPORT

Development Application No. 8/2025/536/1 is being referred to Council for determination as it has been called-up by three (3) Councillors.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is in receipt of Development Application No. 8/2025/536/1 proposing a Telecommunications Facility (Mobile Telephone Base Station) at 25 Cessnock Street Cessnock.

Specifically, the proposed development includes:

- The construction of a 30-metre-tall monopole tower and compound (8m x 8m) located approximately 21 metres from Cessnock Street;
- A triangular headframe mounted at the top of the monopole to accommodate five (5) Optus panel antennas;
- A new transmission antenna (900mm in diameter) mounted to the monopole at a height of 26 metres, to link the proposed facility to the rest of the Optus network;
- A new 2-bay Optus equipment cabinet (2.32m H x 0.75m D x 2.14m L), connected to the monopole by a cable tray; and
- Security fencing with double gates for access.

The Development Application has been assessed against the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021*, relevant Environmental Planning Instruments and Council policies. The outcome of this assessment is detailed further in Enclosure 1.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE31/2025

Planning and Environment



The Development Application was publicly exhibited between 11 August 2025 and 25 August 2025. Twenty (20) submissions were received during the exhibition period representing 20 households. Of the 20 submissions received, 19 were opposed to the proposal, and 1 was in support of the proposal.

Of the 20 submissions received, 14 were not considered to meet the minimum requirements of an individual submission. As a result, the Development Application is considered to formally have 6 objections; however; notwithstanding all matters raised in all the received submissions have been considered in the assessment report.

The concerns raised by the public to the proposed development relate to the need for the facility, alternate locations and collocation, health and safety, visual appeal of the proposal, decreased property values and noise.

The concerns raised have been considered as part of the assessment of the application. Additional information was submitted by the applicant to respond to issues raised. It is considered that the proposal will not result in any significant adverse impacts on the surrounding natural or built environment providing the development is managed in accordance with the recommended conditions of consent.

A detailed assessment of the Development Application has been undertaken which has assessed the merits of the application and considered the issues of concern raised and is attached to this report as Enclosure 1.

Based on the assessment, it is recommended that the Development Application be approved subject to the conditions of consent provided in Enclosure 2.

ENCLOSURES

- [1⇒](#) Record of Assessment
- [2⇒](#) Conditions of Consent

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

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Acting Strategic Planning Manager***

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement to publicly exhibit the Draft Land Dedication Policy, Draft Works in Kind Agreement Policy, the revised Draft Planning Agreement Policy and associated guidelines. The Planning Agreement Policy is currently adopted and has been reviewed.

These draft policies are essential to establishing a clear and consistent governance framework to support Council negotiate land transfers, planning agreements, and works in kind arrangements. By clearly articulating Council's objectives, criteria and requirements, these draft policies will provide greater clarity and certainty for Council, developers and the community, ultimately supporting more transparent and efficient outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION

- 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.**

BACKGROUND

As part of the current framework and ongoing efforts to improve the management and governance of its local infrastructure contributions, two new policies and associated guidelines have been drafted:

- Draft Land Dedication Policy (**Enclosure 1**);
- Draft Land Dedication Guideline (**Enclosure 2**);
- Draft Works in Kind Agreement Policy (**Enclosure 3**); and
- Draft Works in Kind Guideline (**Enclosure 4**).

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE32/2025

Planning and Environment



These draft policies and associated guidelines aim to strengthen Council's approach to infrastructure contributions by addressing potential risk and financial management issues. The draft documents provide clear guidance and requirements for managing land dedication to Council and works in kind agreements.

The Planning Agreement Policy (**Enclosure 5**) and Planning Agreement Guideline (**Enclosure 6**) were adopted in 2017 and reviewed in 2020. This current review addresses the Land Dedication Policy, Benefit Sharing on renewable energy, and the inclusion of a clause relating to procurement.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

Draft Land Dedication Policy

Council's Draft Land Dedication Policy and Draft Land Dedication Guideline have been developed to guide the assessment of proposals to dedicate land to Council and to address the associated financial impacts of dedicated land. The Draft Policy and Guideline will generally apply to land that is proposed to be dedicated to Council, but is not specifically identified in an adopted Council's infrastructure contribution plans, voluntary planning agreement, other third-party approval (e.g. Huntlee) and subdivision approvals, and is determined by Council to be excess to its strategic requirements.

Historically, Council has accepted land dedications linked to private developments, even when the land was not strategically required for community use or was unsuitable for development due to environmental or infrastructure constraints. This has resulted in an increasing long-term financial and maintenance burden for Council.

Looking ahead, the volume of land proposed for dedication through private subdivisions is expected to grow significantly, further compounding this burden. While green space contributes positively to urban amenity, it also entails ongoing maintenance costs for Council. Importantly, Council is not obligated to accept land unless there are appropriate mechanisms, such as planning agreements, in place to manage these future liabilities.

The Draft Land Dedication Policy and Guideline establish clear criteria for the acceptance of dedicated land. Specifically, Council will only accept land if:

- it is in the public interest to do so and there are no suitable alternatives;
- the land is acceptable in its current condition; and
- Council is satisfied with the terms of the land transfer.

To meet these requirements, land dedication proposals will generally be managed through a Planning Agreement, which will typically include:

- a requirement for the landowner to maintain the land at their own cost for a minimum of five years; and
- the payment of a maintenance fee to Council to offset the maintenance cost for a finite period beyond the initial maintenance period.

The Draft Policy does not necessarily infer that Council will refuse land dedication, but establishes general terms for the transfer of land to Council, including a charge to maintain the land for a finite period of time.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE32/2025

Planning and Environment



Council engaged external consultants, GLN Planning, to provide land dedication rates for certain categories of dedicated land. The rates have been included in Appendix 1 of the Draft Land Dedication Guidelines to be used by Council to calculate the baseline Maintenance Fee for Dedicated Land and relied upon in negotiating planning agreements in relation to dedicated land.

The Draft Land Dedication Policy and Guideline will strengthen Council's approach to land dedication proposals and will offset the potential financial risk of accepting land from developers that is not strategically required by Council.

Draft Works in Kind Agreement Policy

Works in Kind Agreements are entered into by council and developers or landowners to construct infrastructure from the works schedule of a contributions plan in lieu of the monetary contributions payment conditioned in a development consent. Council often encourage developers to enter into such agreements as they can deliver the infrastructure early and often at a lower cost than Council could achieve.

Works in Kind Agreements operate under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (Act)* and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulations (Regulations)*. The draft Works in Kind Agreement Policy establishes clear requirements for developers and Council to negotiate and enter into Works in Kind Agreements to ensure a fair and transparent process.

These agreements are a useful tool in Urban Release Areas for developers and councils. If developers construct infrastructure in accordance with the contribution plan it can often bring forward infrastructure much earlier and at a lower cost than if it would be delivered by Council. This in turn provides a new piece of required infrastructure for the benefit of the community. It is also beneficial for the developer as it reduces their monetary contribution obligation to Council.

As Council has already adopted the works schedule from the contribution plans, there is no requirement to report Works in Kind Agreements to Council, nor is there a need to enter into the tender process. The agreement formalises a developer to construct a piece of infrastructure already approved by Council.

By recommending exhibition of this Draft Policy, Council will provide clear and transparent requirements for negotiating Works in Kind Agreements.

Draft Planning Agreement Policy

Planning Agreements are entered into by Council and developers or landowners that have sought a change to an environmental planning instrument, or made, or via a development application or application for a complying development certificate under which the developer is required to dedicate the land free of cost, pay a monetary contribution, provide other material benefit or a combination of all to be used or applied towards a public purpose.

A planning agreement is an excellent tool in urban release areas particularly where there is only one developer and they can deliver all infrastructure. Once an agreement is entered into there will be no need for the Council to levy contributions in the development consent.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE32/2025

Planning and Environment



Benefit Sharing for renewable energy is a new consideration that Council's must contemplate when assessing State significant infrastructure applications such as solar, wind and battery energy storage system. The essence of benefit sharing is to provide opportunities for the community to share in the benefits of projects and for the applicant of the project to enhance their social license to build and operate the project. A new paragraph has been added in the planning agreement policy to address how Council negotiates such projects.

As with works in kind agreements, planning agreements operates under the Act and Regulations. However, unlike works in kind agreements, planning agreements must be reported and publicly notified in accordance with the Act and Regulations.

The review of the policy has recommended minor grammatical changes, inclusion of further definitions and the inclusion of a new clause relating to the procurement requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*. All changes have been highlighted in yellow.

OPTIONS

1. Support the recommendation.

This is the recommended option.

2. Not support the recommendation, for the following reasons:

(To be provided by Council).

This option is not recommended. Council's existing policy framework is not sufficient, and does not effectively regulate land dedication proposals, or provide sufficient public guidance and transparency regarding works in kind agreements or planning agreements.

CONSULTATION

Preparation of the Draft Land Dedication Policy and Guideline involved consultation with representatives from the following sections of Council:

- Executive Leadership Team;
- Open Space and Community Facilities;
- Finance;
- Strategic Property;
- Infrastructure and Works; and
- Development Services.

The Draft Works in Kind Policy and amended Draft Planning Agreement Policy were reviewed by Governance and the Local Infrastructure Contributions Steering Group.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The review aligns with Delivery Program Action 4.1.7, continue implementation of the section 7.11 City Wide Infrastructure Contribution Plan.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE32/2025

Planning and Environment



b. Other Plans

- Community Strategic Plan
- Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Urban Growth Management Plan
- City Wide Contribution Plans

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

This Report has regard to the provision of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and associated Regulations.

b. Financial Implications

The Draft Land Dedication Policy is expected to have positive financial outcomes for Council by ensuring a sustainable funding mechanism is in place to support the ongoing maintenance of dedicated land which is surplus to Council requirements.

The adoption of the Works in Kind Agreement and amendment to the Planning Agreement establishes a framework for both Council and developers to ensure:

- Sound management of monetary contributions of significantly high value;
- Accountability for the negotiation and implementation of capital projects; and
- Consideration and management of recurrent expenditure for ongoing maintenance and operational management of land and works dedicated to Council.

The Policy ensures the complete lifecycle of infrastructure management is considered and disclosed to the community up front.

c. Legislative Implications

The draft policies consider the requirements of Part 7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, and Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*, which relate to development contributions.

In addition, the Draft Land Dedication Policy considers the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*, relating to the classification of Council land, plans of management, and the dedication of land for public reserves; and s.9 of the *Roads Act 1993*, relating to the dedication of land to Council for the purpose of a public road.

d. Risk Implications

Requiring developers to pay a maintenance fee to Council for the upkeep of dedicated land for a period of time may lead some developers to seek alternative land maintenance arrangements, such as community title schemes. These alternatives may pose challenges for Council if developers later abandon projects, cease trading, or enter administration, potentially leaving no party responsible for the ongoing land maintenance.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE32/2025

Planning and Environment



In addition, there is a risk that Council may be obligated to accept land free of charge and without a land maintenance payment, if a development application proposing land dedication to Council is approved by the Land and Environment Court and the commissioner of that Court determines that Council has not established a strong case to refuse the land dedication.

It is therefore essential that the maintenance fee levied by Council is balanced; it should fairly and adequately reimburse Council for the cost of maintaining the land over a defined period, without being so burdensome that it discourages land dedication altogether.

To ensure a fair and sustainable approach, Council engaged a specialist development contributions consultant, GLN Planning, to determine equitable land dedication rates and appropriate maintenance timeframes for consideration in future land dedication proposals.

The most significant risk management implications for Council in relation to Planning Agreements and Works in Kind Agreements are:

- The openness, transparency and general probity for negotiating, executing and implementing Planning Agreements which include significant implications for Council's governance and reputation as well as the integrity of the content of the Planning Agreements themselves;
- the accountability for the negotiation and management of significant monetary values of contributions submitted by developers, works in kind, delivery of infrastructure, land dedications and biodiversity offsetting;
- ensuring the achievement of high quality outcomes for the planning and public;
- benefits of the local community both existing and future; and
- generally meeting internal and external auditing and financial accountability requirements.

e. Environmental Implications

The Draft Land Dedication Policy is expected to have positive environmental outcomes by providing Council with an additional source of funding to maintain environmental land, which has been dedicated to Council.

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

This report seeks Council's endorsement to publicly exhibit the Draft Land Dedication Policy, Draft Works in Kind Agreement Policy, and revised Draft Planning Agreement Policy. These policies establish a clear and consistent governance framework to guide Council's negotiation of land transfers, planning agreements, and works in kind arrangements.

The Draft Land Dedication and Works in Kind Agreement Policies are newly developed documents that aim to enhance Council's management of land dedications and local infrastructure delivery. They provide clear guidance on requirements, helping to address financial and risk management issues, while promoting transparency and accountability in negotiations.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE32/2025

Planning and Environment



The Planning Agreement Policy was adopted in 2017 and reviewed in 2020. This review has addressed a range of minor issues and the inclusion of a clause relating to procurement identified since its original adoption and ensuring the policy remains current and effective.

Collectively, these draft policies will support more transparent, efficient, and equitable outcomes for Council, developers, and the community, and are a key step in strengthening Council's overall approach and governance to land dedication and infrastructure planning and delivery.

ENCLOSURES

- [1⇒](#) Draft Land Dedication Policy
- [2⇒](#) Draft Land Dedication Guideline
- [3⇒](#) Draft Works in Kind Agreement Policy
- [4⇒](#) Draft Works in Kind Agreement Guideline
- [5⇒](#) Draft Planning Agreement Policy
- [6⇒](#) Draft Planning Agreement Guideline

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC71/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *COMMUNITY, SPORTING AND ENVIRONMENT GRANT
2025-26*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Open Space and Community Facilities Manager
Community & Cultural Development Manager
Environment and Waste Services Manager*

SUMMARY

A total of \$96,000 was made available for community groups to apply for funding under Council's Community, Sporting and Environment Grant to support and enrich the lives of people across the Cessnock Local Government Area. In accordance with the Community, Sporting and Environment Grant Guidelines, the Grant Panel has assessed the 29 applications received and this report to Council tables recommendations for funding.

RECOMMENDATION

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

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Corporate and Community Services



- 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.

BACKGROUND

The Community, Sporting and Environment Grant is made up of five different schemes. This report considers four of those five. The fifth is the Schools Environment Scheme which opens for applications annually in line with the new school year.

The Community Facilities Grant Scheme assists Section 355 volunteer management committees and community groups with completing minor capital works and/or purchasing equipment for Council's community assets to subsequently improve the use of these facilities. The 2025-26 budget for the Community Facilities Grant Scheme of \$30,000.

The Sporting Facilities Grant Scheme targets improvements to sporting facilities and/or the purchasing of minor plant that have long term benefits to the user groups and Council. The 2025-26 budget for the Sporting Facilities Grant Scheme is \$30,000.

The Community and Cultural Development Grant Scheme provides grants to not-for-profit community, arts and cultural groups to undertake projects, activities and events which have a focus on community wellbeing, cultural or artistic development, and improvements to Council owned cultural facilities. The 2025-26 budget for the Community and Cultural Development Grant Scheme is \$25,000.

The Sustainable Communities - Tidy Towns Committees throughout the Cessnock Local Government Area work tirelessly to improve and maintain our local community areas. The 2025-26 budget for the Sustainable Communities/Tidy Towns Grant Scheme is \$11,000.

REPORT

Applications under the 2025-26 Grant Scheme opened in August 2025 and was advertised via local media, on Council's website and directly promoted to Section 355 volunteer management committees, licensees, sporting and community user groups. In addition, the Scheme was promoted across community networks throughout the year as enquiries were received.

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



Applications received across the Grant Schemes this round comprised:

- 9 applications for the Community Facilities Grant Scheme
- 6 applications for the Sporting Facilities Grant Scheme
- 12 applications for the Community and Cultural Development Grant Scheme
- 2 applications for the Sustainable Communities – Tidy Towns Grant Scheme.

All applications were deemed eligible in accordance with the Community, Sporting and Environment Grant Guidelines adopted by Council at the Ordinary Council meeting of 18 June 2025. Copies of the full applications and supporting documentation were assessed by the Grant Panel in accordance with these guidelines.

A summary of the applications received and funding recommendations are provided in Tables 1 - 4 below.

Table 1 – 2025-26 Recommended Eligible Grant Applications – Community Facilities Grant Scheme

	Facility/Organisation	Description	Total Cost*	Funding Sought*	Funding Assessed*
1	Braxton Community Hall Section 355 Committee	Purchase of 200 (weight compliant) chairs	\$19,950	\$9,975	\$9,975
2	Marthaville Section 355 Committee	Purchase and installation of an air conditioner	\$3,308	\$1,654	\$1,654
3	North Cessnock Community Hall Section 355 Committee	Purchase and installation of water drinking station for adjoining North Cessnock Park	\$12,424	\$6,212	\$6,212
4	North Rothbury Tidy Towns	Purchase replacement tennis net and re-mark tennis and pickleball courts at Aryfield Miners Memorial Park North Rothbury	\$4,172	\$2,086	\$2,086
5	Prelude Australia	Replace enclosed patio area that currently leaks water at Kurri Prelude	\$17,273	\$8,636	\$8,636
6	Prelude Australia	Replace carpet in community area at Kurri Prelude	\$4,804	\$2,402	\$2,402
7	Prelude Australia	Replace vinyl flooring in community area at Kurri Prelude	\$8,445	\$4,223	\$4,223
8	Prelude Australia	Replace old fence with colourbond fencing in the back playground area of Kurri Prelude	\$6,532	\$3,226	\$3,266
9	Weston Civic Centre Section 355 Committee	Purchase and installation of 4 large industrial fans	\$1,228	\$614	\$614
TOTAL			\$78,136	\$39,068	\$39,068

*excluding GST.

Table 2 – 2025-26 Recommended Eligible Grant Applications – Sporting Facilities Grant Scheme

	Facility/Organisation	Description	Total Cost*	Funding Sought*	Funding Assessed*
1	Branxton District Netball Club	Purchase of 18 portable bench seats for players and coaches and purchase of 2 safety pads for light poles for Miller Park Netball Courts Branxton	\$1,164	\$582	\$582
2	Coalfields Cross Country Running Club	Purchase of an electronic timing system to be used during cross country events at Council owned parks and sporting fields	\$7,150	\$3,575	\$3,575
3	Greta Branxton Football Club	Purchase and delivery of portable soccer goals to be used at Miller Park Branxton	\$11,982	\$5,991	\$5,991
4	Kearsley Community Sporting Association Inc.	Purchase of line marker for use of George Jeffery Park Kearsley	\$3,627	\$1,814	\$1,814
5	Kurri Kurri Tennis Club	Remediation (sand and grooming) works on Kurri Tennis Courts	\$5,200	\$2,600	\$2,600
6	Wollombi Valley Tennis and Sports Association Inc.	Purchase and installation of 4 outdoor ceiling fans at Wollombi Tennis Clubhouse	\$2,856	\$1,428	\$1,428
TOTAL			\$31,979	\$15,990	\$15,990

*excluding GST.

Table 3 – 2025-26 Recommended Eligible Grant Applications – Community and Cultural Development Grant Scheme

The funding amount received was above the available budget of \$25,000. However, it was determined that there was local benefit in each application. Therefore, it was decided to cap amounts at no more than \$3,000 in accordance with the guidelines.

	Facility/Organisation	Description	Total Cost*	Funding Sought*	Funding Assessed*
1	ArtsNational Hunter	Assistance to deliver a free and engaging lecture by a professional from the arts sector as part of Seniors Festival 2026 at Performance Arts Culture Cessnock.	\$6,456	\$3,228	\$2,821 Reduced funding amount to exclude alcohol.

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Corporate and Community Services



	Facility/Organisation	Description	Total Cost*	Funding Sought*	Funding Assessed*
2	Barkuma Neighbourhood Centre	Creation of a more inclusive play space for families and visitors at Binarri Jinama-Gu, and increase Barkuma's capacity to host community events.	\$29,108	\$12,168	\$3,000
3	Branxton Community Hall	Purchase catering for three events to be held during Seniors Festival 2026. Events include Movie Afternoon, a Senior's Prom and a concert.	\$3,000	\$1,500	\$1,500
4	Carries Place	Purchase items required to facilitate the Carrie's Place Coffee Van at four events in the Cessnock LGA.	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$2,500
5	Cessnock District Rescue Squad Inc.	Replacement of outdated height safety vertical rescue equipment.	\$14,008.90	\$7,004.45	\$3,000
6	Cessnock Family Support Service Inc	Assistance with implementing initiatives associated with the services Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan to enhance cultural safety for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander families and community members.	\$2,987.45	\$1,256.00	\$1,056 Reduced funding amount to exclude cleaning.
7	Cessnock Senior Citizens Association Incorporated	Purchase new professionally written choral scores for the Cessnock City Singers along with professionally recorded backing tracks with the required licenses.	\$3,000	\$1,500	\$1,500
8	Kiray Putjung Aboriginal Corporations	Engage Stone Tool and Bush Medicine Facilitators to enhance NAIDOC	\$7,000	\$3,500	\$3,000

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



	Facility/Organisation	Description	Total Cost*	Funding Sought*	Funding Assessed*
		Week Family Fun Day.			
9	Sculpture in the Vineyards Inc	Assistance to deliver Sculpture in the Vineyards Festival in September 2026.	\$13,750	\$5,000	\$3,000
10	Sunnyfield Disability Services	Deliver the Inclusive Joy project which brings together older people and people with disability to create opportunities for meaningful connection, mutual support and shared activities.	\$3,600	\$1,800	\$1,774 Quote submitted by the applicant was \$1,774.
11	The Rotary Club of Cessnock	Assistance to host a free morning tea at Marthaville Arts & Cultural Centre during Seniors Festival 2026 to deliver the event Scone Time.	\$2,038	\$1,019	\$1,019
12	Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service	Purchase one Ops-Core FAST XP Helmet with a built-in communication headset to be worn by rescue crew during live missions launched from base in Belmont.	\$5,386	\$3,000	\$830 Reduced funding as the project includes use by other areas outside of the Cessnock LGA.
		TOTAL	\$95,334	\$43,475	\$25,000

*excluding GST.

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Corporate and Community Services

**Table 4 – 2025-26 Recommended Eligible Grant Applications – Sustainable Communities – Tidy Towns Grant Scheme**

	Applicant	Project	Total Cost*	Co-contribution	Grant Requested	Funding Proposed
1	Native Animal Trust Fund (Hunter Wildlife Rescue)	Purchase community engagement materials to run a pilot program in the Cessnock LGA where residents pledge to reduce preventable harm to wildlife (specifically entanglement and mange in wombats)	\$6,172	\$2,500 volunteer hours	\$3,672	\$3,672
2	Cessnock Community Garden Association Inc.	Water Wise project to install irrigation in community garden	\$2,001	\$1,001 (including volunteer hours for installation plus \$100.66 for materials)	\$1,000	\$1,000
		TOTAL	\$8,173	\$3,501	\$4,672	\$4,672

*excluding GST.

OPTIONS

N/A

CONSULTATION

The Community, Sporting and Environment Grant Panel met on 17 September, 22 September and 10 October to assess the applications received. The panel consisted of representatives from the business units associated with each of the Grant Schemes, being Open Space and Community Facilities; Community and Cultural Development; and Waste and Environment. Consultation occurred with applicants during the assessment process where required.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The Cessnock Community Strategic Plan 2040, includes Outcome 1 – Live, We are connected, safe and creative.

The Delivery Program 2025-2029 includes action 1.3.2 'Implement accessible, creative and innovative projects and programs in our area'.

b. Other Plans

Nil

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

The Scheme is administered in accordance with the Community, Sporting and Environment Grant Guidelines adopted by Council on 18 June 2025 and link for the guidelines is below.

<https://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/Council/Forms-and-documents/Forms/Community-Sporting-and-Environment-Grant-Forms>

Projects of a capital or maintenance nature (i.e., not for the purchase of equipment) on Council owned land need to submit either a "Working on Council Land" application, Development Application or Development Application/Construction Certificate for assessment before commencing. Funding for projects not yet approved is provided on the condition that works do not commence until Council issues the required approval.

b. Financial Implications

The budget allocated to the Community Facilities Grant Scheme is \$30,000. The total amount of funding requested was \$39,068. In order for all eligible grant applications to be funded, it is recommended that \$9,068 be transferred from unspent funds within the Sporting Facilities Grant Scheme.

The budget allocated to the Sporting Facilities Grant Scheme is \$30,000. The total amount of funding requested was \$15,990. It is recommended that \$9,068 be transferred to the Community Facilities Grant Scheme in order to fund all projects.

The total budget for the Sustainable Communities – Tidy Towns program in 2025-26 is \$11,000. The total amount of funding requested was \$4,672. It is recommended all projects be funded.

c. Legislative Implications

Nil

d. Risk Implications

Projects that involve a public liability component are required to provide Council with a Certificate of Currency for Public Liability.

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The Grant Scheme allows Council to support worthwhile community, sporting, cultural and environmental projects in the Local Government Area.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC72/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: ***CESSNOCK CITY LIBRARY STRATEGY AND SUMMARY
2025-35***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Community & Cultural Development Manager***

SUMMARY

The public exhibition process is now complete for the Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35 and the Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35. With there being no submissions received, this report to Council seeks adoption of the Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35 and the Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35.

RECOMMENDATION

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

BACKGROUND

The Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35 and the Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35 were developed by Jan Richards Consulting.

Council at its Ordinary Meeting held on 17 September 2025 resolved:

That Council place the Draft Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35 and the Draft Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35 on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The key to library services remaining relevant, vibrant and commensurate with customer needs is based on research, review, consultation, analysis of solid data and planning. As an outcome, the strategy for Cessnock City Library is built around the following five strategic pillars:

- Spaces
- People
- Collections
- Connections
- Programs

The 31 actions listed in the strategy outlines a roadmap that honours the library's proud history while embracing innovation, equity and opportunity. The actions in the strategy also reaffirms a commitment to inclusivity, literacy, digital access, cultural celebrations and lifelong learning.

OPTIONS

N/A

CONSULTATION

The Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35 and Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35 were publicly exhibited from 25 September 2025 to 22 October 2025 and no submissions were received. This report now seeks Council adoption of both documents.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The Cessnock Community Strategic Plan 2040, includes Outcome 1 – Live, We are connected, safe and creative.

The Delivery Program 2025-2029 includes action 1.3.2 ‘Implement accessible, creative and innovative projects and programs in our area’.

b. Other Plans

The strategy also has links to the adopted 2031: A Vision for the Future, Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan, Cessnock Local Government Area. This plan includes an analysis for the current and future need of library space at Cessnock Library Branch and Kurri Kurri Library Branch. It also includes the current and future need for a service within the Greta, Branxton and North Rothbury planning area.

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

NIL

b. Financial Implications

The development of the strategy was funded by the State Library of NSW Local Priority Grants Program 2024/2025. Many of the actions in the strategy can be resourced using existing operational budgets. However, new and upgraded infrastructure projects will be either grant funding dependent or subject to development infrastructure contributions.

c. Other Implications

There are no legislative, risk, environmental or other implications associated with this report.

CONCLUSION

With the public exhibition process now complete, and there being no submissions received it is recommended that Council adopts the Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35 and Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35.

ENCLOSURES

[1](#)

Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35

[2](#)

Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC73/2025

Corporate and Community Services



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

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Acting Chief Financial Officer***

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to classify land recently dedicated to Council for a drainage reserve as operational land in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act).

RECOMMENDATION

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

BACKGROUND

As part of an ongoing residential development in North Rothbury, a private developer proposed the dedication of 1.14 hectares of land to Council for stormwater run-off and drainage purposes (**Enclosure 1**). A plan of subdivision was registered creating lot 6 & 7 DP1308673 and transferred to Council as a dedicated Drainage Reserve (**Enclosure 2**).

Sections 31(2) and 31(2A) of the Act require acquired land to be classified as community or operational land by resolution of Council. The Act requires land newly acquired by councils to be classified within three months. If no resolution is passed within three months of acquisition, the land defaults to a community land classification. All community land is categorised for specific types of community use and a Plan of Management for the prescribed use must be developed and adopted by Council.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

Land classification is a statutory requirement and classification as operational or community should reflect the purpose for which the land is held. An operational classification does not preclude the land being used for other purposes.

Use of the subject land has been determined as primarily for Council operational purposes and is consistent with other drainage reserve lands dedicated to Council for this purpose. In accordance with s34 of the Act, a Council resolution is required to formally classify the land after the mandatory period of 28 days public notice. No submissions were received.

OPTIONS

N/A

CONSULTATION

On 2 September 2025, Council gave 28 days mandatory public notice of the proposal to classify public land in accordance with the Act seeking community engagement and feedback.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC73/2025

Corporate and Community Services



Council Officers consulted:

- Infrastructure Manager
- Principal Property Specialist
- Chief Financial Officer
- Senior Property Officer

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

- 5. Civic Leadership and effective governance
- Objective 5.3 Ensuring Council is accountable and responsive to the community

b. Other Plans

Community Strategic Plan 2036 objective - Strategic Property Management

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Nil

b. Financial Implications

Nil

c. Legislative Implications

The Act requires Council resolve to classify newly acquired land. If no resolution is passed within three months of acquisition, the land defaults to a community land classification.

d. Risk Implications

Failing to classify land results in default to a community land classification. Under the Act, all community land is categorised for specific types of community use and a Plan of Management for the prescribed use must be developed and adopted by Council. Where land is held primarily for an operational purpose such as public parking, drainage or maintenance access, these uses do not meet any of the core objectives for use and management of community land, and as such, should be classified as operational land.

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



CONCLUSION

The subject land will primarily be used for operational purposes and should be classified accordingly. Operational land classification is one of two statutory options for Councils under the Act.

ENCLOSURES

- 1➡ Classification of land _ Lot 6 & 7 DP1308673 1 Chapell Street & 1 Bendeich Drive, North Rothbury _ Aerial
- 2➡ Classification of land _ Lot 6 & 7 DP1308673 1 Chapell Street & 1 Bendeich Drive, North Rothbury _ Sub Division Plan

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC74/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: ***ADOPTION OF REVISED CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Corporate Governance Manager*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with proposed revisions to the Code of Meeting Practice (COMP) following the public exhibition period.

RECOMMENDATION

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.

BACKGROUND

The [Model Code of Meeting Practice](#) (Model Code) is prescribed under the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation).

All NSW councils are required to adopt a Code of Meeting Practice (COMP) that incorporates the mandatory provisions of the Model Code. The Model Code provides a uniform set of meeting rules for councils across the State to help ensure accessible, orderly, effective and efficient meetings. Councils may determine whether to adopt non-mandatory provisions and may also adopt supplementary provisions specific to our Council provided they are not inconsistent with the mandatory provisions.

On 29 August 2025, the Minister published the new Model Code with the mandatory provisions required by Councils to be adopted no later than 31 December 2025.

In accordance with the Act, Council placed the revised COMP on public exhibition for a period of 42 days. As at the close of the statutory period to receive submissions, 3 November 2025, no submissions were received.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC74/2025

Corporate and Community Services



REPORT/PROPOSAL

Council's proposed COMP (**Enclosure 1**) has been revised in accordance with the new Model Code, the Act, and the Regulation. It incorporates the mandatory provisions of the prescribed Model Code. It also incorporates some of the non-mandatory provisions of the Model Code and additional supplementary provisions that represent preferred practice at this Council.

The supplementary provisions continue to represent the overall principles of open and transparent governance while reflecting local arrangements specific for our community. Members of the community were invited to have input into the provisions through the public exhibition process. Where timeframes were in the previous version of the COMP, these have been retained in the revised COMP.

Key changes

A tracked changes document is provided to assist Councillors and the community to understand the changes between the current COMP and the revised COMP. Numbering has been updated to maintain consistency with the Model Code (excluding those provisions relating to joint organisations). Council's supplementary provisions are identified by number and letter.

Following the public exhibition period, no further significant changes have been. A minor supplementary provision has been made to provide clarity around standing when attending via audio-visual link.

Fixing the order of business

Clause 8.1 of the COMP provides that "*the general order of business is as fixed by resolution of the Council*".

Power of expulsion

Clause 5.34 of the COMP provides that "*On the adoption of this Code and at the commencement of each Council term, the Council must determine whether to authorise the person presiding at a meeting to exercise a power of expulsion.*"

This is a new mandatory clause of the Model Code.

OPTIONS

The mandatory provisions of the Model Code must be adopted by Council. The options below are therefore prepared in relation to the non-mandatory and supplementary provisions of the proposed COMP. In the event that a COMP is inconsistent with the Model Code, or not adopted by the due date, the Model Code prevails.

Option 1 – Council adopts recommendation. **This is the preferred option.**

Option 2 – Council amends the revised COMP before adopting it. Council may amend the non-mandatory and/or supplementary provisions only. Significant amendments to the proposed COMP will require a further period of public exhibition. This will mean Council's revised COMP will not meet the OLG's deadline of 31 December 2025 and the Model Code will come into effect.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC74/2025

Corporate and Community Services



CONSULTATION

Executive Leadership Team
Corporate Governance Team
Community – public exhibition period of 42 days

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

Adoption of a COMP in accordance with the minimum mandatory requirements of the Model Code is consistent with the community's desired outcome of *Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*.

b. Other Plans

N/A

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

The adoption of the revised COMP will be published on Council's website and govern meetings from 1 January 2026.

b. Financial Implications

The changes have no direct impact upon Council's adopted budget or forward estimates.

c. Legislative Implications

Council's revised COMP is reviewed in accordance with section 360 of the Act, the Regulation, and incorporates the mandatory provisions of the prescribed Model Code.

d. Risk Implications

If Council does not adopt a revised COMP incorporating the prescribed mandatory requirements, the Model Code will prevail where there is inconsistency. This means that Council may not be able to run meetings in the manner it prefers while meeting its legislative obligations.

There is also a risk associated with including supplementary provisions. This is because a supplementary provision may be interpreted as being in conflict with the intent of the Model Code. The possible consequence of this is that the OLG or the Minister may direct Council to remove the relevant supplementary provisions, and the mandatory provisions of the Model prevail.

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC74/2025

Corporate and Community Services



f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

Council is required to adopt an updated COMP incorporating the new mandatory Model Code by 31 December 2025.

ENCLOSURES

[1](#) ➡ Code of Meeting Practice _ Tracked changes from 2025 Model Code

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC75/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *SCHEDULE OF ORDINARY MEETINGS OF COUNCIL FOR 2026*

AUTHOR: *Corporate Governance Manager*

SUMMARY

This report outlines the proposed schedule of Ordinary Meetings of Council for the 2026 calendar year.

RECOMMENDATION

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	

BACKGROUND

Council is required to adopt an annual schedule of meeting dates in accordance with section 365 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act). This requires Council to meet a minimum of 10 times per year, each time in a different month.

In accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice, meetings are scheduled on the third Wednesday of each month, with the exception of December where the meeting is held on the second Wednesday and there is no scheduled meeting in January. Council can amend the frequency and/or times of meetings by resolution, or can change the pattern by amending its Code of Meeting Practice.

Should there be urgent business arising outside of any scheduled calendar of meetings, and that business is outside the delegations of the General Manager and Mayor, an Extraordinary Council Meeting can be called in accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice.

REPORT

Council needs to set meeting dates for 2026, and the recommendation to this report sets out the dates proposed for monthly meetings. There are no conflicts with public holidays or the 2026 Local Government NSW Annual Conference scheduled for 23-25 November 2026.

OPTIONS

1. Council adopts the recommended meeting dates. This is the recommended option.
2. Council adopts alternate meeting dates. This is not recommended as this would make Council inconsistent with its Code of Meeting Practice.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC75/2025

Corporate and Community Services



CONSULTATION

Executive

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

STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Any proposed changes to the pattern of meetings would require a change to the Code of Meeting Practice.

b. Financial Implications

N/A

c. Legislative Implications

Section 365 of the Act requires Council to meet at least 10 times each year, each time in a different month. Section 9(1) of the Act requires Council to give notice to the public of the time, date and place of each of its meetings.

d. Risk Implications

If Council does not adopt a meeting schedule, Council may be in breach of the provisions of the Local Government Act.

e. Other Implications

N/A

CONCLUSION

This report seeks Council's adopted of the meeting schedule for 2026.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC76/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Chief Finance Officer*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the *Cessnock City Council Annual Report 2024-25* in accordance with Section 428(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993* which requires Council to prepare an Annual Report within five months of the end of the financial year.

RECOMMENDATION

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*.

BACKGROUND

The contents of the Annual Report are specified in Sections 428 of the *Local Government Act 1993* and in clauses 132 and 217(1) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.

In addition, there are a number of other requirements in associated legislation that are required to be incorporated in the Annual Report, including *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*, *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* and matters relating to planning agreements.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

It is a requirement of the *Local Government Act 1993* that within five months after the end of each financial year, a council must prepare a report (its annual report) for that year.

Council's Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and is attached.

A copy of the Annual Report will be posted on Council's website and the link forwarded to the Minister prior to the 30 November deadline, as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*.

OPTIONS

N/A

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC76/2025

Corporate and Community Services



CONSULTATION

Information in the report is sourced from the quarterly reports on the Delivery Program and staff from across the organisation provided information for inclusion in the Annual Report. The Executive, managers and staff provided feedback and reviewed on the draft the Annual Report.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The annual report is part of Council's governance framework contributing towards the community's desired outcome of: *Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*.

b. Other Plans

N/A

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

N/A

b. Financial Implications

Under the provisions of Division 2 of Part 3 (Financial Management) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council's audited financial reports and the auditor's reports for the year 2024-25 will be presented to Council and the public after audit sign off and reported on Council's website.

c. Legislative Implications

The preparation of the Annual Report is a statutory requirement under Section 428 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

d. Risk Implications

N/A

e. Other Implications

N/A

CONCLUSION

The Annual Report for the 2024-25 financial year will be submitted to the Minister for Local Government as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*.

ENCLOSURES

[1](#) 2025_Annual Report Cessnock City Council _2024-2025

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC77/2025

Corporate and Community Services



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

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Acting Chief Financial Officer***

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to note the Quarterly update on the progress against Council's 2025-29 Delivery Program incorporating the Operational Plan 2025-26.

RECOMMENDATION

- 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.**

BACKGROUND

Section 404(5) of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires the General Manager to provide regular progress reports to Council with respect to progress against the principal activities detailed in its Delivery Program with reports to be provided at least every six months.

The Quarterly Budget Review Statement required under clause 203 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, provides financial information in regards to estimates of income and expenditure and is separately reported to Council.

Council adopted the 2025-29 Delivery Program and incorporated Operational Plan 2025-26 in June 2024. The Delivery Program outlines the activities that Council will undertake to implement the strategies identified in the Community Strategic Plan and is the single point of reference for all principal activities undertaken by an elected Council during its term in office.

At the end of each quarter a report is prepared to assess Council's progress against 2025-29 Delivery Program actions and the Capital Works Program.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The 2025-26 Operational Plan is a one-year plan and was developed to implement the adopted actions from the 2025-29 Delivery Program.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC77/2025

Corporate and Community Services



Some of the highlights for the September quarter are provided below:

- Our Kurri Kurri netball facility amenities building is complete to lock up and the 12 new netball courts have been spray sealed.
- Construction of the upgraded amenities and grandstand at Weston Bears Park is well underway with block work, internal sheeting, roof, external cladding, plumbing, mechanical and hydraulics complete.
- The new material handler has arrived onsite at our Cessnock Waste Facility and is awaiting final safety review and documentation before commencing work. Further offsite sorting of segregated waste arranged and ready to commence once safety documents are finalised and operator training is complete.
- Construction has now been completed for Sawyers Gully Road at the Old Maitland Road intersection with works commencing between culvert and Frame Drive intersection.
- Cessnock Pool grandstand has been painted and new electronic noticeboards have been installed at Cessnock and Branxton Pool.
- Person Centred Emergency Preparedness (PCEP) work booklets have been procured, to support people to develop their personalised emergency plans. Work plan for utilisation of these booklets has been developed with 4 PCEP sessions is proposed for Seniors Week Festival in March 2026.
- Our Performance Arts Culture Cessnock, 2026 Season program has been developed and is now on sale.
- A review of our digital engagement platform and draft recommendations have been made.

2025-29 Delivery Program Objectives

At the conclusion of the First Quarter, 5 (3%) of the 158 Actions from the 2025-26 Operational Plan) were Completed with 134 (85%) currently In Progress. The 'In Progress' Actions will continue to be monitored and reported as part of the quarterly review process. There were no Actions at Risk, 4 (2%) Not Progressing and 14 (9%) which are Not Due to Start at the time of reporting.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC77/2025

Corporate and Community Services



Table 1 shows the overall status of actions at 30 September 2025.

Table 1

	LIVE We are connecte d, safe and creative	THRIVE We have a diverse and resilient community	PROTECT We have a healthy and sustainable environme nt	MOVE We have accessible and reliable infrastructu re, services and facilities	LEAD We have strong leadership and effective governanc e	Total	%
In Progress	42	13	35	17	26	133	84
Complete	1	2	0	-	2	5	3
Not Due to Start	3	4	2	-	5	14	9
Not Progressing	-	-	1	2	1	4	2
At Risk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Deferred	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
No update provided	-	-	1	1	-	2	2
	46	19	39	20	34	158	100

Details of the projects have been included in **Enclosure 1**.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC77/2025

Corporate and Community Services

**2025-26 Delivery Program Capital Works**

At 30 September 2025, 5 of the 78 projects from the 2025-26 Capital Works Program were Completed, 2 were Not Progressing, 35 were In Progress and 18 projects are Not Due to Start. 13 New Projects were added to our program.

Table 2 shows a summary the overall status of projects at 30 September 2025.

Table 2

Program	In progress	Complete	Not due to start	Deferred	Not progressing	New Projects	Total
Administration equipment & systems	2	1	1	-	-	-	4
Airport	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Aquatic Facilities	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Bridges	-	-	1	-	-	1	2
Buildings	3	-	1	-	-	1	5
Cemeteries	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Depot Management	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drainage	4	-	-	-	-	-	4
Fleet Management	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Floodplain Management	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
Infrastructure Contributions Plans	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Libraries	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Other Infrastructure	1	1	1	-	-	1	4
Other Open Space & Recreation	6	-	3	-	-	4	13
Pathways	2	-	1	-	-	4	7
Plant & Equipment	1	-	3	-	-	-	4
Traffic Facilities & Road Safety	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Tourist Connections & Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Town Centres	1	-	1	-	-	1	3
Roads	8	-	-	-	2	1	11
Waste Management	3	1	1	-	-	-	5
Total	35	5	18	-	2	13	73

Detailed information on the Capital Works Program is also included in **Enclosure 1**.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC77/2025

Corporate and Community Services



OPTIONS

N/A

CONSULTATION

The General Manager, Directors, Managers and Coordinators provided the information for this report and its enclosures.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This report is part of the organisation's governance framework – providing feedback on the progress against the key plans adopted by Council. This is in line with the community's desired outcome of: *"Civic Leadership and Effective Governance."*

b. Other Plans

Nil

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Nil

b. Financial Implications

The quarterly budget review forecasts are reported separately to Council.

c. Legislative Implications

This report satisfies the requirements of Section 404 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

d. Risk Implications

Nil

e. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The review of the 2025-29 Delivery Program against the Operational Plan 2025-26, for the Quarter ended 30 September 2025, is submitted for Council's consideration.

ENCLOSURES



2025-26 Operational Plan Quarter 1 Review Report

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC78/2025

Corporate and Community Services



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

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Acting Chief Financial Officer*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the Quarterly Budget Review Statement (QBRs) for the 1st quarter September 2025 for Council's information.

RECOMMENDATION

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.

BACKGROUND

Section 203 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation) requires the QBRs to be prepared and submitted to Council. A separate report to Council contains information in regard to Council's Delivery Program and reporting under Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements.

The QBRs for September 2025 is presented to Council for consideration and contains all necessary Quarterly Budget Review Statements. The QBRs was presented to the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee at the 5 November 2025 Committee meeting.

REPORT

The budget review process involved responsible budget managers reviewing income and expenditure patterns and, after consultation with finance staff, proposing any required changes. Changes may have been from unforeseen circumstances or elements beyond the control of Council, additional funding opportunities, or from Council resolutions.

General Budget Commentary

The QBRs Q1 September 2025 is provided at **Enclosure 1** and shows a projected operating surplus of \$72m for the year ending 30 June 2026, or a forecast net operating deficit of \$20m excluding capital grants and contributions income.

The QBRs also shows a revised capital works program forecasting changes that increase the current program of \$78.5 by \$3.6m. September YTD spend on the capital works program is \$15m with the largest spend on the new landfill development and road renewal projects.

For details on all proposed budget changes refer to the notes in the QBRs attachment.

New Reporting guidelines

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC78/2025

Corporate and Community Services



New guidelines implemented in September 2025 have established mandated and standardised requirements to be included in a QBRS presented to the councillors, the community and the Office of Local Government. These requirements have resulted in a change to the tables presented in the QBRS report and the inclusion of a summary of developer contributions.

Cash and Investments

As can be seen in the attached enclosure, Council YTD unallocated reserves are in the positive. This is due to the prepayment of the financial assistance grant released from reserves in July. There will be a continued focus on cash management throughout the year with impacts being strongly felt each month prior to a rates payment. As per the financial sustainability review this is another key indicator for the need for a Special Variation.

Responsible Accounting Officer Statement

Section 203 (2) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* requires that the budget review statement include, or be accompanied by, a report from the Responsible Accounting Officer. This report is required to indicate whether the Responsible Accounting Officer (RAO) believes that the statement indicates that the financial position of the Council is satisfactory, having regard to the original estimate of income and expenditure, and, if that position is unsatisfactory, recommendations for remedial action.

The RAO statement is:

It is my opinion that the Quarterly Budget Review Statement for Cessnock City Council for the quarter ended 30 September 2025 indicates that Council's projected financial position at 30 June 2026 will be satisfactory at year end, having regard to the projected estimates of income and expenditure and the original budgeted income and expenditure and remains in line with Council's financial strategy. This is predicated on a successful Council resolution applying for a special rate variation as outlined in the financial sustainability review and IPART's acceptance of a council application.

CONSULTATION

The following staff provided input into the preparation of this report and its enclosures:

- General Manager
- Directors
- Managers
- Senior finance staff

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This report is a crucial part of the organisation's governance framework – providing feedback on the progress against the budget adopted by Council. This is in line with the community's desired outcome of: "*Civic Leadership and Effective Governance.*"

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC78/2025

Corporate and Community Services



IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

N/A

b. Financial Implications

The QBRS is presented in accordance with the adopted budget strategy. The detailed review of all operational and capital budgets is a continuous process.

c. Legislative Implications

Section 203 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* requires the Responsible Accounting Officer to prepare and submit to Council a QBRS that shows revised estimates of income and expenditure for the year.

d. Risk Implications

The following are some of the risks that may impact achievement of the projected full year operating statement deficit:

- Losses on disposal of asset values as a result of assets being upgraded or renewed prior to the end of their effective lives;
- Unrealised losses associated with the managed fund held with TCorp;
- Increased operational employee costs due to lower capitalisation of labour; and
- Increased costs associated with materials including electricity and fuel.

e. Other Implications

N/A

CONCLUSION

The Quarterly Budget Review Statement for September 2025 is submitted for approval.

ENCLOSURES

- 1 ➡ QBRS 1 September 2025

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC79/2025

Corporate and Community Services



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

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Acting Chief Financial Officer***

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2025 to Council and the public in accordance with Section 419 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

RECOMMENDATION

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

BACKGROUND

Section 413(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) requires Council to prepare General Purpose Financial Reports for the financial year ending 30 June. Following audit, the Annual Financial Statements for 2024-25 are required to be presented to Council and the community.

REPORT

Following audit finalisation, the financial statements are now presented to the Council and the community for information. The Annual Financial Statements 2024-25 including Audit Reports are included as an enclosure and are available on Council's website.

The draft Financial Statements were presented to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee on 4 September 2025 and Council resolved on 17 September 2025 (Report No. CC58/2025) to formally refer the statements for audit. The Statement by Councillors and Management was signed in accordance with that resolution by the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, the General Manager and the Responsible Accounting Officer.

Following audit, the Annual Financial Statements for 2024-25, the Engagement Closing Report and Report on the Conduct of the Audit are presented to the Council for information. The Statements were lodged with the Office of Local Government on 28 October 2025 before the required deadline.

The Audit Office of NSW has issued an unqualified audit opinion with respect to the year ended 30 June 2025. The full Auditor's Report is contained within the financial statements.

As per previous financial periods, Council continues the practice of recognising Rural Fire Service land and buildings which are owned by Council but not recognising Rural Fire Service plant and equipment within Council's financial accounts. As reported and accepted by Council in report CC58/2002 on 20 July 2022, this is as in Council's opinion the criteria for recognition of the RFS assets per the AASB Accounting Standards is not met. Council's opinion remains that it does not have control of Rural Fire Service plant and equipment, a position that is wide spread across the local government sector.

Audit, Improvement and Risk Committee

The Annual Financial Statements and Audit Reports were presented for final review to the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee at its meeting on 15 October 2025. Following review and discussion with management and the external auditors regarding the statements and changes since the draft version, the Committee received and endorsed the reports to be presented at the Ordinary Council Meeting of 19 November 2025.

Financial Report Requirements

The financial statements set out the financial performance, financial position and cash flows of Council at each year ending 30 June. The financial statements are supported by detailed notes to the financial statements.

Council is required under Section 413(1) of the Act to prepare financial reports each year and refer them for audit. The financial reports must include a general purpose financial report, any other matter prescribed by the regulations and a statement in the approved form by the Council as to its opinion on the general purpose financial reports.

The Statement by Councillors and Management was authorised by a resolution of Council on 17 September 2025 and was signed in accordance with that resolution by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, the General Manager and the Responsible Accounting Officer

These financial reports are also required to be lodged with the Office of Local Government (OLG) by 31 October 2025, with the audited financials being lodged on 28 October 2025.

Financial Report Summary

The financial statements report the financial activities of the council for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

The Income Statement shows income and expenditure for the council incurred over the financial year. The Income Statement reports:

- Net Operating surplus of \$38.1m (LY: \$88.9m)
- Net Operating deficit before capital income (\$33.8m), (LY:(\$15.6m))
- Total Comprehensive Surplus \$260.2m (LY: \$3.5m)

The large amount of capital income in terms of grants and dedicated assets, that exceeded \$71m, continues to place stress on expenditure items and will continue to do so in the future. Depreciation and net loss from the disposal of assets had a total cost of \$43.6m this year (LY: \$33.2m) and is one of the major drivers leading to a net operating deficit before capital income in conjunction with significant capital grants, dedications and developer contributions.

Council overall has a strong cash position ending the year with a cash balance of \$96.7m. Over the same period council spent \$70.4m on Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment. (LY: \$71.5m)

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC79/2025

Corporate and Community Services



Restrictions on cash and investments are divided into externally restricted assets where the funds are restricted in their use by externally imposed requirements, and internally restricted assets where the funds are restricted in their use by resolution or policy of Council. Full disclosure of the restricted assets held and balances are shown in Note C1-3 of the financial statements.

Councillors should note the negative unrestricted cash balance. Recent reported investment reports have shown how this has improved into the positive however this is still a key risk and something that indicates a need for future unrestricted income to meet required cash levels.

Current assets recorded at \$115.7m at 30 June 2025, increasing from \$101.4m in 2023-24.

Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment increased to \$1,567.6m in 2024-25 from \$1,295.1m as a result of investment into Council's infrastructure, found assets and the indexation of assets, refer Note C1-6.

Liabilities also increased on prior year to \$111.2m from \$84.6m predominantly as a result of a prepaid capital grants that will reduce as the works are completed as well as the additional loan approved by council throughout the year.

Net total assets have increased during the year to \$1,572.2m from \$1,311.9m.

Full disclosure of the Statement of Financial Position is shown in Notes C1 to D1 of the financial statements.

Public Notice

A summary of Council's financial statements has been published on Council's website giving notice that the financial statements and auditor reports will be presented to the Ordinary Council Meeting to be held 19 November 2025. This is in accordance with OLG Circular 20-12/17 April 2020 / A696830 which removed the requirement to publish in newspapers. The financial statements will be made available for public inspection on Council's website and at Council's offices. Written submissions on the financial statements may be lodged up until 5.00pm 26 November 2025.

Given the ongoing financial sustainability information being provided to the community, Council has not included the "Making Sense of the Financial Statements" document this year as a supplement to the Statements.

CONSULTATION

Executive Leadership Team
Senior Finance Staff
Asset Management Staff
Audit Risk and Improvement Committee
The Audit Office of NSW

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC79/2025

Corporate and Community Services



IMPLICATIONS

Policy / Procedural / Financial / Legislative / Risk Implications

Council's General Purpose Financial Reports have been prepared in accordance with Section 413 of the Act.

This report supports meeting Council's statutory obligations in accordance with provisions of the Act for the presentation of the financial statements and auditors reports to Council (Section 419), the public notice of the presentation (Section 418) and time for preparation and submission of audited financial statements (Section 416).

The Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025 including auditor reports were lodged with the OLG on 28 October 2025.

OPTIONS

N/A

CONCLUSION

Following audit, Council's Annual Financial Statements for 2024-25 are required to be lodged with the OLG and presented to Council and the community.

ENCLOSURES

- 1 ➡ Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC80/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICY*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Acting Chief Financial Officer*

SUMMARY

Council maintains a suite of financial management policies that guide how it manages hardship, rebates, and debt recovery in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2021. These policies ensure fairness, transparency, and compliance while assisting the community in times of financial stress.

The Financial Hardship Policy has been comprehensively reviewed as part of the proposed Special Variation (SV) program and in accordance with the scheduled review timeline. The review introduces expanded hardship provisions to provide targeted assistance to both pensioner and non-pensioner ratepayers, and also for valuation-driven rate increases.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the updated Financial Hardship Policy.

BACKGROUND

Council last reviewed and adopted this Policy in June 2024. In accordance with the prescribed policy review timeline and as part of a potential SV process, a comprehensive review has been undertaken. The review ensures consistency with the Office of Local Government (OLG) Debt Management and Hardship Guidelines (2018) and enhances the range of affordability measures available to ratepayers.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

Attached to this report is the updated Financial Hardship Policy (Revision 5 – November 2025) for Council's consideration.

Key Changes in the Revised Policy

The Financial Hardship Policy (Revision 5, November 2025) includes the following updates:

1. Hardship Assistance due to Valuation Changes:
Introduces new provisions under section 601 of the Local Government Act 1993 allowing temporary rate relief where a property's ordinary rate increases by at least 5% above the previous year (after excluding the IPART rate peg) due to revaluation. Relief is capped at one-half of the increase, up to \$200, with an annual aggregate cap of \$20,000 across all applicants.
2. Hardship Assistance by Deferring Rates and Charges for Aged Pensioners:
Establishes a formal mechanism for pensioners in financial hardship to defer payment of rates and annual charges, with repayment triggered upon sale, transfer, or change of occupancy. This ensures long-term affordability while preserving Council's revenue integrity.

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



3. Hardship Assistance for Non-Pensioners (Rates Assistance Program):
Introduces a Rates Assistance Program for non-pensioner owner-occupiers experiencing temporary hardship. Eligible ratepayers may apply through a qualified financial counsellor for a once-off credit of up to \$250, with a total annual funding cap of \$15,000.

OPTIONS

Council may:

1. Adopt the updated Financial Hardship Policy; or
2. Request further amendments prior to adoption.

CONSULTATION

Director of Corporate and Community Services
Chief Financial Officer
Finance Coordinator
Rates and Debt Management Staff

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This report is a part of the organisation's governance framework and is in line with the community's desired outcome of: "*Civic Leadership and Effective Governance.*"

b. Other Plans

Revenue Policy
Operational Plan

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Polices have been reviewed as required and presented to Council for adoption.

b. Financial Implications

The introduction of capped hardship assistance programs (valuation-based and non-pensioner relief) will have minimal budget impact while improving affordability outcomes for ratepayers. The maximum impact on budget is \$35,000 annually.

c. Legislative Implications

Local Government Act 1993
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021
Valuation of Land Act 1916 (NSW)

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC80/2025

Corporate and Community Services



d. Risk Implications

Revised provisions mitigate financial and reputational risks by offering clear, equitable pathways for ratepayers experiencing hardship.

e. Environmental Implications

N/A

f. Other Implications

N/A

CONCLUSION

The updated Financial Hardship Policy provides a comprehensive, fair, and transparent framework for supporting residents facing genuine financial hardship. It strengthens Council's affordability measures under the SRV program and aligns with best practice across the local government sector. Adoption of the revised policy will ensure consistent and compassionate application of hardship relief while maintaining Council's long-term financial sustainability.

ENCLOSURES

- 1 ➡ Financial Hardship Policy _ With Tracked Changes _ Reviewed - October 2025
- 2 ➡ Financial Hardship Policy _ Reviewed - Without Tracked Changes - October 2025

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC81/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *INVESTMENT REPORT - OCTOBER 2025*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Acting Chief Financial 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 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.**

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 October 2025 are exceeding budget.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC81/2025

Corporate and Community Services

Investment Portfolio Information**Table 1** Total cash and investments held by Council as at 31 October 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%	1,519
	Commonwealth Bank	At Call			3.60%	21,541
	Commonwealth Bank	At Call			3.50%	754
1243	AMP Bank	At Call			2.00%	564
1527	Suncorp Bank	TD	302	19-Nov-25	5.05%	5,000
1528	Suncorp Bank	TD	245	05-Nov-25	4.70%	3,000
1532	National Bank	TD	209	25-Nov-25	4.32%	5,000
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
1463	Treasury Corporation	Growth Fund				4,648
TOTAL						80,026

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

Financial Institution	Credit Rating	Institution Maximum	Amount \$'000	% of Portfolio
National Australia Bank	AA-	40%	9,500	17.07%
Suncorp Bank	AA-	40%	20,500	36.84%
AMP Bank	BBB+	15%	2,500	4.49%
Bank of Queensland	A-	40%	17,500	31.45%
Teachers Mutual Bank	BBB+	15%	1,000	1.80%
Treasury Corporation	Unrated	30%	4,648	8.35%
TOTAL			55,648	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.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC81/2025

Corporate and Community Services

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 October 2025 unrealised return was a gain of \$38,088.74 or 0.99% (3.91% annualised).

Table 3 NSW Treasury Corporation Performance Summary (September 2025)

	10 years (% pa)	7 years (% pa)	3 years (% pa)	1 year %	FYTD %	1 month %
IM Medium Term Growth Fund	4.54	4.31	7.87	8.29	2.83	1.19
Benchmark: CPI + 2.0% p.a. (over rolling 5 years)	4.75	5.20	5.75	4.49	1.09	0.36
Return above benchmark p.a.	(0.21)	(0.89)	2.12	3.80	1.74	0.83

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	62.48%
Cash/At Call Deposits	Low	Low	24,378	30.46%
Floating Rate Note	Low	Low	1,000	1.25%
Capital Growth Fund	Medium	Medium	4,648	5.81%
TOTAL			80,027	100.00%

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)	4.98%	5.22%
BBSW Average Interest Rate (year to date) *	3.55%	4.50%
Actual Investment Interest Earned (for the current month)	\$276,411	\$276,978
Actual Investment Interest Earned (year to date) ^	\$1,185,077	\$1,165,803
Revised Budget Investment Interest (year to date)	\$916,667	\$916,667
Original Budget Investment Interest (annual)	\$2,750,000	\$2,500,000
Revised Budget Investment Interest (annual)	\$2,750,000	\$2,750,000
TCorp unrealised movement (year to date)	3.91%	2.31%

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 31 October	\$80,026,811	\$64,544,401

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

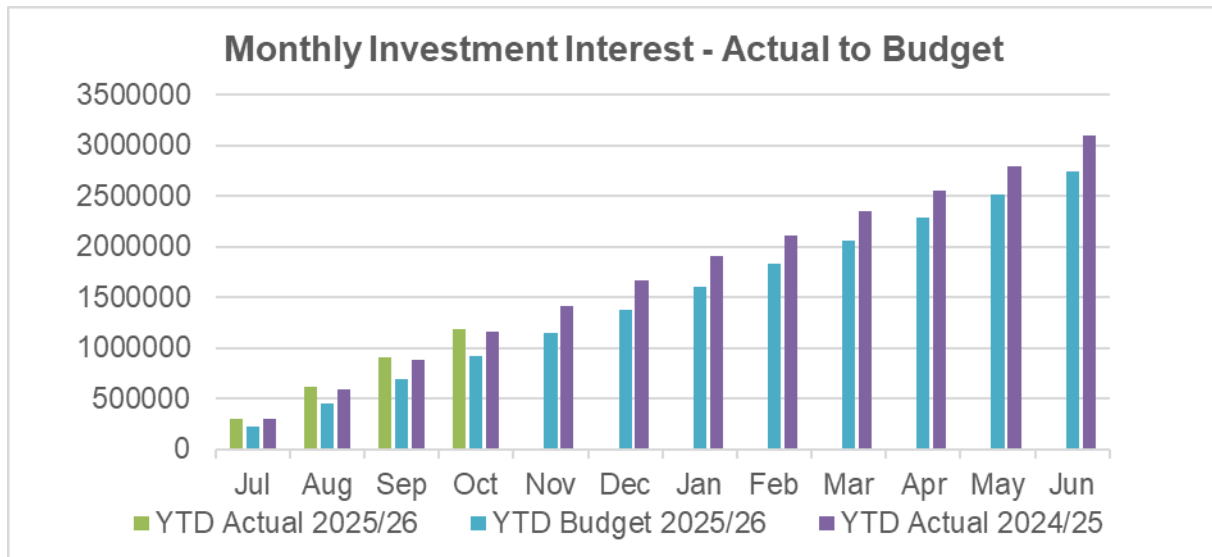
^ Excludes TCorp unrealised returns

Excludes Section 355 Committee cash held

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC81/2025

Corporate and Community Services

**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

Month End Totals \$'000	Oct 2025	Sept 2025	Aug 2025	Jul 2025
External Restrictions	77,431	85,511	89,117	81,418
Internal Restrictions	2,246	7,020	8,198	7,349
Total Restrictions	79,677	92,531	97,315	88,767
Unrestricted	349	882	853	94
Total Cash & Investments	80,026	93,413	98,168	88,861

CONSULTATION

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

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.

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



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 Councils reporting obligations.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC82/2025

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 8 October 2025 to 4 November 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. WI12/2025

Works and Infrastructure



SUBJECT: ***ADOPTION OF DRAFT WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICY***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Environment and Waste Services Manager*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's adoption of the draft Waste Management Policy following public exhibition.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Waste Management Policy.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting of 17 September 2025 Council resolved (WI9/2025):

1. *That Council places the draft Waste Management Policy 2025 on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.*
2. *That, if no relevant submissions are received during the public exhibition period, the draft Waste Management Policy 2025 be considered final and adopted.*

This report provides a summary of the public exhibition period and community submissions.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The draft Policy was placed on public exhibition from Tuesday 23 September 2025 to Friday 24 October 2025. Full details of the promotion of the draft Policy exhibition are summarised in the Consultation section of this report.

Council received 5 submissions during the exhibition period (none of which required significant changes) and a summary is provided in Consultation section. Councils' website analytics showed there were 34 downloads of the draft Policy from the website during the consultation period.

The following minor edits/additions (in bold) have been made in the draft Policy following questions raised by Councillors and community:

Section 3.3.5 Have fees and charges in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993(NSW) (Act) while being **fair and equitable open and transparent** to all members of the community.

Section 4.4.11: Compostable liners will be provided to each domestic premises **within the Waste Collection Service Area** for use in the FOGO service.

Section 11 Definitions: DWMS Domestic Waste management Services provided to residential premises **within the Waste Collection Service Area**.

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OPTIONS

Nil

CONSULTATION

Hard copies of the draft Policy were exhibited at Council's Administration Building, Kurri Kurri and Cessnock Libraries and electronic copies were available via Council's Together Cessnock engagement portal. The exhibition was promoted on Council's social media pages and the October Environment and Waste Newsletter (having 1,000 subscribers).

In summary, interactions through the Together Cessnock portal included:

- 145 Aware participants (i.e., visited at least one webpage).
- 34 Informed participants (i.e., visited multiple pages or reviewed documents).
- 5 Engaged participants (i.e., provided comments).

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A summary of the survey responses showed:

Summary of Comments	Summary of Response
<i>I'm more than happy with the bin collections and the fact the red lid bin is still collected weekly and the added bonus is the mattress being included in the voucher that's a great idea</i>	Nil – supportive of Policy
Waste Vouchers: The Owners are the persons that are responsible for the ... it is NOT the Council who should make Waste Vouchers available It is still the responsibility of the Owners as they are the ones that have to pay the Council Rates etc	Waste Vouchers: Owners are still able to access vouchers if required but the Policy aims to make it simpler for tenants. Waste vouchers can only be used for domestic household waste generated in the property. Any clean-ups required to be undertaken by a landlord may be considered commercial waste and so not permissible.
Keep weekly Waste Bin Pick up	Waste Collection Frequency is remaining weekly.
<i>Soft plastic and ReycleSmart program not included in the Policy.</i>	Nil – increasing recycling streams is covered in the Strategy and not applicable to the Policy until implemented.
<i>I think waste vouchers could still be sent to rate payers whom don't want or can't download the app. Special circumstances for older residents.</i>	NA - the policy outlines the conditions of use for vouchers but not how they are provided. Vouchers can be printed on request.
<i>Suggested:</i> - Wording section 3.3.5 change "fair and equitable" to "open and transparent". - Supportive of section 4.4.2 fortnightly collection opt-in; section 4.4.9vi mattresses on recycling vouchers; and providing renters with direct access to vouchers. - Hesitant re section 4.4.8 removal of recycling/FOGO bins for persistent contamination. - Voucher use by businesses under section 4.4.9viii needs to be on website. - Hesitant re section 9 on accepting waste from outside LGA especially if waste levy area change is successful. - Suggested avoid waste programs should be included.	Accepted Noted Advised that this was a last resort and used to open communications with residents. Already is but placement could be made clearer – staff to review website page. Advised levy is based on origin of waste and not site received. If levy area changes, then Policy would be reviewed. This is covered in the Strategy action 1.3.1

In addition, Councils Waste Team conducted the following drop-in sessions for community members wishing to discuss any specific issues. Staff responded to questions regarding ongoing supply of kitchen caddy liners and upsizing of recycling bins. Overall people were happy waste bins were still be collected weekly but were open to the idea of the opt-in fortnightly service.

Works and Infrastructure**Report No. WI12/2025****Works and Infrastructure**



Date	Time	Location
24 September 2025	3 - 4.30pm	Outside Kurri Kurri Library
1 October 2025	12 – 1.30pm	Outside Huntlee Coles
9 October 2025	10.30am – 12pm	Cessnock Village Plaza (i.e. Woolworths)

STRATEGIC LINKS**a. Delivery Program**

The draft Policy is directly related to Objective 3.3 Better Waste Management and recycling of the delivery Program.

b. Other Plans

2018 National Waste Policy – Less Waste More Resources
NSW Waste & Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041: Stage 1: 2021-2027
Regional Circular Materials Strategy – Hunter and Central Coast 2022 – 2027
Cessnock Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2026-31

IMPLICATIONS**a. Policy and Procedural Implications**

The adoption of the proposed Waste Management Policy, and the rescission of the existing policy, will result in an amendment to Council's Policy Register and any relevant forms and other documents.

b. Financial Implications

Nil

c. Legislative Implications

NA

d. Risk Implications

NA

e. Environmental Implications

NA

f. Other Implications

Nil

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI12/2025

Works and Infrastructure



CONCLUSION

The Waste Management Policy provides crucial guidance in relation to waste management procedures for staff and the community with clear processes on how waste management services and charges are administered.

ENCLOSURES

[1](#)  Waste Management Policy 2025

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI13/2025

Works and Infrastructure



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

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Asset Planning Manager*

SUMMARY

The minutes of the Floodplain Risk Management Advisory Committee (the Committee) are presented to Council for consideration for adoption as a resolution of the Ordinary Council.

RECOMMENDATION

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

BACKGROUND

Council's various teams are currently working on a range of flood studies and drainage improvement projects, which are presented to the Floodplain Risk Management Advisory Committee for information and endorsement.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The Minutes from the Committee meeting held 11 September 2025 are provided to Council and this report seeks endorsement to adopt the recommendations as a resolution of Council.

Listed matters and the recommendations are summarised below and *Enclosure 1* provides the full Minutes of the Meeting for Councils information.

FLOCLM10/2025 - ENDORSEMENT OF GRETA FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY AND PLAN (FRMSP) REPORTS

RECOMMENDATION

That the Floodplain Risk Committee endorse the Flood study reports with flood extent maps and flood mitigation measures.

FLOCLM11/2025 – DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS BLIGH STREET, DAVIS STREET AND PORTLAND STREET, MILLFIELD

RECOMMENDATION

That the Floodplain Risk Management Committee endorse the overland flow channel and road culvert upgrade as the preferred drainage strategy for Portland Street, Millfield, and recommend Council proceed with staged implementation of the works.

FLOCLM12/2025- CESSNOCK LGA FLOOD STUDY - STATUS REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

That the Floodplain Risk Management Committee familiarise themselves with this project and ensure a sound understanding of its purpose and scope.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI13/2025

Works and Infrastructure



FLOCLM13/2025 - BLACK CREEK 1 FLOOD STUDY UPDATE AND FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY AND PLAN

RECOMMENDATION

That the Floodplain Risk Management Committee familiarise themselves with this project and ensure a sound understanding of its purpose and scope.

FLOCLM14/2025 - SAWYERS GULLY FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted.

FLOCLM15/2025- REVIEW FLOOD PLANNING FRAMEWORK

RECOMMENDATION

The report be noted.

FLOCLM16/2025 - BLACK CREEK STAGE TWO (NULKABA TO BRANXTON) FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY AND PLAN (FRMSP) PROJECT UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted

CONSULTATION

The Committee is an advisory committee.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

NIL

b. Other Plans

NIL

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

The Committee operates as per the adopted Charter and in accordance with Council policies.

b. Financial Implications

The following projects are grant funded by DCEEW and partially funded by Council:

1. Greta Flood Study
2. Black Creek Stage 1 Flood Study
3. Black Creek Stage 2 Flood Study
4. Sawyers Gully Flood Risk Management Study
5. Flood Planning Framework

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI13/2025

Works and Infrastructure



The following projects are funded by Council:

1. Portland Street, Millfield – Drainage Improvements
2. Cessnock LGA Overland Flood Study

c. Legislative Implications

The Floodplain Risk Management Advisory Committee has endorsed the Greta Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan (FRMSP) Reports. Data and flood mapping will be used for the creation of Flood Certification and the assessment of Development Applications.

d. Risk Implications

NIL

e. Environmental Implications

N/A

f. Other Implications

N/A

CONCLUSION

The minutes of the Committee meeting are presented to Council for adoption.

ENCLOSURES

- [1](#) Floodplain Risk Management Advisory Committee Minutes 11 September 2025

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN17/2025

General Manager's Unit



NOTICES OF MOTION No. BN17/2025

SUBJECT: ***TRANSFER OF REGIONAL ROADS TO STATE GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP***

COUNCILLOR: ***Mitchell Lea***

MOTION

That Council:

- 1. 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 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. 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. 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. Recognises that the management of these roads by Council imposes unsustainable financial, maintenance and safety burden on Cessnock City Council and local ratepayers.**
- 5. 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. Provides a copy of this resolution to the Member for Cessnock and the Member for Maitland to seek their support.**

It is my intention to move the above motion at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council on 19 November 2025.

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN17/2025

General Manager's Unit



RATIONALE

Cessnock City Council continues to maintain critical sections of regional road infrastructure that now function well beyond local purpose and capacity. Two distinct but strategically linked corridors, Buchanan Road and the Hart Road–Gingers Lane–Frame Drive–Orange Street (Abermain Connector), are prime examples of this imbalance.

Both routes provide essential connectivity carrying heavy vehicle, commuter and emergency traffic that directly supports State infrastructure and regional economic activity. Yet both remain under Council ownership and funding responsibility.

The result is an inequitable and unsustainable situation in which local ratepayers continue to fund roads that clearly serve State-level functions.

Buchanan Road connects John Renshaw Drive, the Hunter Expressway interchange and the growing industrial and residential areas around Buchanan. It now serves as a major ambulance and emergency services corridor between Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and Maitland Hospital, the region's principal acute-care facility.

Ambulances regularly use Buchanan Road to access Maitland Hospital's Emergency Department. The route's geometry, shoulder width and pavement condition are increasingly unsuitable for high-speed emergency traffic.

For Cessnock City Council, Buchanan Road represents:

- A primary ambulance route to Maitland Hospital, supporting hundreds if not thousands of emergency transports each year. Delays or poor road conditions pose real patient-outcome risks.
- Narrow shoulders, heavy vehicle use, and high travel speeds expose road users to elevated risk.
- The freight and emergency function far exceeds what a local road budget can reasonably sustain.

The Abermain connector corridor links the Hunter Expressway to Cessnock Road at Abermain, serving as a key commuter and freight route for our rapidly growing area.

- The corridor is the most direct access for residents commuting to the Expressway and several key employment precincts. Daily traffic volumes continue to increase sharply with regional housing growth.
- It provides an industrial freight path to the Expressway and supports transport logistics nearby industrial lands.
- Maintenance demand and liability fall on Council despite the corridor serving regional and State transport functions.

The Abermain Connector should be considered for State Road reclassification to ensure consistent funding, engineering standards and integration with the regional transport network.

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN17/2025

General Manager's Unit



The NSW Government's new "Always Open" Road Recategorisation Framework (2025) allows councils to lodge data-backed submissions for reclassification. These roads satisfy the key criteria:

- State-level transport function.
- Strategic regional connectivity.
- High maintenance and safety cost to council.

A change in classification will help ensure appropriate investment, design and maintenance standards for a route serving both freight and emergency functions.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

N/A

DELIVERY PROGRAM:

Operational Plan 2024-2025 Objective 4.1, 4.2, 4.3

Sgd: Mitchell Lea

Date: 11 November 2025

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN17/2025

General Manager's Unit



DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY

Background

Council initiated discussions with Roads and Maritime Services related to road reclassification for roads accessing the then under construction Hunter Expressway back in 2012 (Report No. QS34/2012 & QS84/2012). In 2013, a Council report (Report No. QS78/2013) recommended supporting the reclassification proposed by Roads and Maritime Services with the exception that Buchanan Road as well as Government Road and Hart Road be classified as State Roads.

In 2019 Council endorsed (Report No. WI10/2019) concurrence with Roads and Maritime Services to reclassify the connection route from the Hunter Expressway to Cessnock Road via Hart Road, Gingers Lane, Frame Drive and Orange Street from Local Roads to Regional Roads.

Roads and Maritime Services (not Transport for NSW) reclassified the above connection route and Buchanan Road as Regional Roads, and Government Road as a Local Road.

Increased Traffic Volumes

Traffic volumes have increased significantly across the LGA, especially along these corridors since the Hunter Expressway opened in 2014. Within Council report WI16/2015, Table 1.1 identifies the changes in traffic volumes at certain locations pre and post opening of the Hunter Expressway. As a relative comparison, Buchanan Road had daily traffic volumes of 6,330vpd, Hart Road at the Loxford Interchange had 2729vpd and no counts were provided for Frame Drive post opening. The latest traffic counts (between April and October 2025) show average daily traffic volumes along Buchanan Road to be approximately 12,300vpd, Hart Road to be approximately 9500vpd (2019 counts) and along Frame Drive to be approximately 11,200vpd. Heavy vehicle movements make up approximately 30-50% of these volumes.

Council's regional road network maintenance costs

Council receives partial funding through the Regional Road Block Grants toward maintenance costs on Regional Roads. While these grants have increased from \$1.4M in 2021/22 to \$1.8M this financial year, Council's contribution has fluctuated between \$330,000 to \$966,000 depending on the extent of maintenance works required across the network.

Council undertakes maintenance activities on the State Road network within the LGA. These works are fully funded through Regional Maintenance Council Contracts (RMCC) by the State Government.

Councils proposed recategorisation approach

Council has recently (in 2023) undertaken a comprehensive condition assessment of its entire road network to help inform the Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) for network maintenance and renewal priorities. This information is also important for prioritising a list of roads which can be assessed against Transport's prioritisation principles for submission when the renewed approach for road recategorisation is implemented.

While Buchanan Road and the Hart Road, Gingers Lane, Frame Drive and Orange Street corridor would be eligible for recategorisation from Regional to State Road status they represent only 11.6km out of a potential 78.4km eligible for recategorisation within the LGA.