Vincent Street
CESSNOCK

12 November 2025

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 2025

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2025 ANNUAL REPORT



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FOREWORD

I am delighted to present the 2025 Cessnock Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) Annual Report to Council.

The ARIC performs a vital role in the governance of a Council. The ARIC charter outlines the overall responsibilities, covering internal and external audit, risk management, governance and compliance. A report schedule captures this breadth of responsibilities and ensures the work of ARIC is methodically planned and executed to meet all legislative requirements.

The Cessnock ARIC has worked well over the past twelve months to not only meet these responsibilities and requirements, it has also completed and presented a significant body of work in the ARIC strategic workplan, committee report card and performance measures that will form the end of term report. The ARIC strategic workplan presents a comprehensive and structured approach to the work ARIC will be undertaking as well as outlining the performance measures, how ARIC reports to Council, audit program and strategic risks. I believe the Cessnock ARIC has effectively implemented all new legislative requirements.

This 2025 Cessnock ARIC annual report presents a summary and evaluation of the work the ARIC performed to meet its responsibilities during the year, provides an overview of the work of the internal audit function, and a current status against the performance measures. ARIC maintains a keen focus on internal and external audits and on following through management action items to ensure constant improvement.

It is worth noting that ARIC has been made well aware that Council is currently undertaking a significant financial sustainability journey. It is also noted that Council's governance structure appears well supported from the top down.

The ARIC members continue to have a diverse range of professional skills and experience. The ARIC is also well supported by an extremely competent Executive Assistant and Internal Auditor. I thank members for their commitment in preparing for and actively participating in ARIC meetings.

I look forward to working through the ARIC strategic workplan in the year ahead.

Shane Hubble
Independent Chair
Cessnock ARIC

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INTRODUCTION

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (Committee) plays an important role in Cessnock City Council's governance framework.

The objective of the Committee is to provide independent assurance to Council by monitoring, reviewing and providing advice about Council's governance processes, compliance, risk management and control frameworks, external accountability obligations and overall performance.

OVERVIEW

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. This new Charter has been developed in alignment with the Model published by the Office of Local Government (NSW).

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.

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee Composition 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025

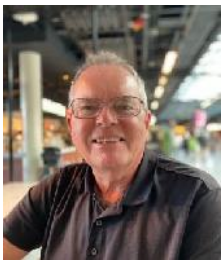
Independent Members



Shane Hubble – Independent Chair

Appointed April 2024 – Current
Appointed Independent Chair – December 2024

Shane has over 20 years' experience working as a corporate governance, enterprise risk and internal audit specialist. The majority of these years have come from a combination of working with international entities, local government and professional service firms. Shane is a professional member of the Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand as a chartered accountant and enterprise risk specialist; certified fellow of the Institute of Internal Auditors as a certified internal auditor; and fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia.



William Middleton – Independent Member

Appointed December 2020 - Current

Bill is an experienced Audit Director with a demonstrated history of working in senior public sector management. Bill currently serves as an independent audit committee member on a number of Local Government and Health Audit and Risk Committees. Bill has strong finance and accounting experience and is skilled in Enterprise Risk Management, Audit, Analytics and Accounting.



Martin Matthews – Independent Member

Appointed April 2024 - Current

Martin is a specialist in external audit, internal audit, and risk management with extensive experience in the provision of financial due diligence and accounting advice. Martin holds a Bachelor of Commerce (Merit) UNSW and is a Registered Company Auditor, Member of the Institute of Internal Auditors and Fellow of the Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand.



Jennifer Hayes – Independent Chair

Appointed March 2017 – Term end 31 December 2024

Jenni has over 20 years' experience in corporate leadership roles in the fast moving consumer goods, primary health, utilities and education sectors, in Australia, New Zealand and Europe. As a Graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) and qualifications that include Master of Business, Jenni holds extensive skills and experience in financial leadership, corporate governance and risk management in a diverse range of Executive and Non-executive Director positions.

Councillor Members



Councillor Mark Mason – Non Voting Councillor Member
Appointed October 2024

Councillor Mason was elected to Council in September 2024 and appointed to the Committee in October 2024. Councillor Mason is a business professional with 18 years of experience in banking and finance.



Mayor Jay Suvaal
Appointed February 2022 – Term End September 2024

Mayor Suvaal was elected to Council in September 2016, elected Mayor in December 2021 and appointed to the Committee in February 2022. Mayor Suvaal is an experienced professional with extensive experience in governance, project management, stakeholder and political engagement, marketing and media management, and policy development.



Councillor Paul Paynter
Appointed February 2022 – Term End September 2024

Councillor Paynter was elected to Council in December 2021 and appointed to the Committee in February 2022. Councillor Paynter is a business professional representing Ward D (Kurri Kurri, Mulbring, Heddon Greta and Cliftleigh).

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE

The Committee met five times in 2024 – 2025 on the following dates:



Name	Position	Role	Eligible	Attended
Jennifer Hayes	Independent	Chair	3	3
Shane Hubble	Independent	Member/Chair	5	4
William Middleton	Independent	Member	5	4
Martin Matthews	Independent	Member	5	5
Cr Mark Mason	Councillor	Member	4	4
Mayor Jay Suvaal	Councillor	Member	1	-
Cr Paul Paynter	Councillor	Member	1	-

Other Attendees at Committee meetings include:

- General Manager
- Director Planning & Environment
- Director Corporate & Community Services
- Director Works & Infrastructure
- People & Culture Manager
- Chief Financial Officer
- Internal Auditor
- Audit Office of NSW
- Council staff as requested to present to the Committee

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COMMITTEE REPORT CARD

The following table outlines the activities of the Committee during the reporting period under the areas of responsibilities defined within the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Charter.
Key:

✓ Compliant ● Additional requirements identified for 2025-2026

Responsibility		Compliance
ARIC Charter	✓	The Charter is reviewed at least annually. The Charter was last reviewed in February 2025 with administrative updates to membership being completed.
ARIC Composition	✓	Each Council is required to appoint an ARIC that comprises of an independent chairperson and at least two independent members that meet the independence and eligibility criteria prescribed by the Local Government Regulation and detailed in the Guidelines.
ARIC Meetings	●	A quorum was met at every meeting. 5 meetings were held as outlined in Committee Attendance. *In Camera sessions to be included in the 2025-2026 Workplan*
Broad range of skills and experience	✓	The ARIC consists of a diverse range of extensive experience across financial & risk management, internal audit, local government and commercial activities
ARIC Responsibilities	✓	The ARIC Charter outlines the Committees responsibilities which have been incorporated to the ARIC Strategic Workplan and Annual Workplan.
Functional separation	✓	The Committee has no executive powers and is advisory in its capacity. Members have access to the General Manger and senior staff.
Sufficient time allocated to tasks	✓	The ARIC agenda facilitated adequate time to discuss all internal audit reports, external audit reviews, financial statements, and an update on the progress of the implementation of audit actions (tabled at each meeting) as well as Governance, risk management & financial management activities.
Probity	✓	Members declared conflicts of interest if they arose.
Risk management	●	Risk management key activities are reported at each meeting of the Committee. Reports received during the year included: • Insurance Renewals • Return to Work Audit • Work, health & safety • Periodic risk update on disaster recovery, and Statewide Mutual's Continuous Improvement Program. • Enterprise Risk Management Framework *Risk registers to be included in Annual Workplan for 2025-2026*
Control framework	✓	The Committee effectively reviewed controls, policies and procedures through internal audit reports and high-level briefings received.
Corporate Governance	✓	The Committee received and reviewed a number of Governance updates including Ethical Behaviour Framework (Code of Conduct, Gifts & benefits, Disclosures of interests & other matters in written returns, Conflicts of interest, Secondary employment, Delegations, Legislative Compliance, GIPA, Privacy Management Plan, Controlled Document Framework, Complaints Management Framework, Fraud, Control and Corruption Prevention, Information Technology and Cyber Security.
Fraud, Control and Corruption Prevention	✓	Council has an effective Fraud and Corruption Control Framework in place that was reviewed by ARIC.

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Responsibility		Compliance
Implementation of the Strategic Plan, Delivery Program & Service Reviews	◉	The Committee received and reviewed the following reports: • 6 month Annual Reports • Community Strategic Plan 2040 • Delivery Program 2025-2029 • Long Term Financial Plan • Annual Budget *Services reviews to be included in the 2025-2026 Annual Workplan*
Internal audit	✓	The Committee reviewed and approved the internal audit coverage and Council's internal audit plan, ensuring it considered the risk management plan. Consideration was given to the identification of significant issues identified in audit reports and action taken on issues raised, including identification and dissemination of better practices. The Committee monitored the implementation of internal audit actions agreed by management.
External audit	✓	The Committee has continued to review Council's financial position and commitment towards achieving financial sustainability. The Committee met in August and October 2024 to receive briefings on Council's financial statements in respect of the year ended 30 June 2024. The management report of Significant Financial Matters for the year ended 30 June 2024 was reviewed, including the Engagement Closing Report and Conduct of the Audit Report at the February meeting.
External accountability	✓	The Committee acts as a forum for communication between the Council, the General Manager, senior management, internal audit, external auditors and the Audit Office of NSW.
Financial management	✓	The Committee received the Quarterly Budget Review report at each meeting along with an annual report on Credit Card Management, accounting position papers and updated policies.
Reporting to Council	✓	Councillors receive a copy of the confidential Committee Business Papers via the HUB. All Councillors who are not Committee members are invited to attend meetings as an observer. Following each meeting, a confidential memo is provided to Councillors to provide an overview of the meeting including key discussion point and recommendations made by the Committee. The memo is circulated within two weeks of the meeting. The Committee's Annual Report is prepared and presented to Council each year.
Self assessment	✓	The Committee completed the annual self-assessment to determine the extent to which it is achieving its overall objective to provide independent assurance and assistance to Council on risk management, control, governance, and legal and regulatory obligations; and assess the performance of Council's internal audit function.

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PERFORMANCE MEASURES

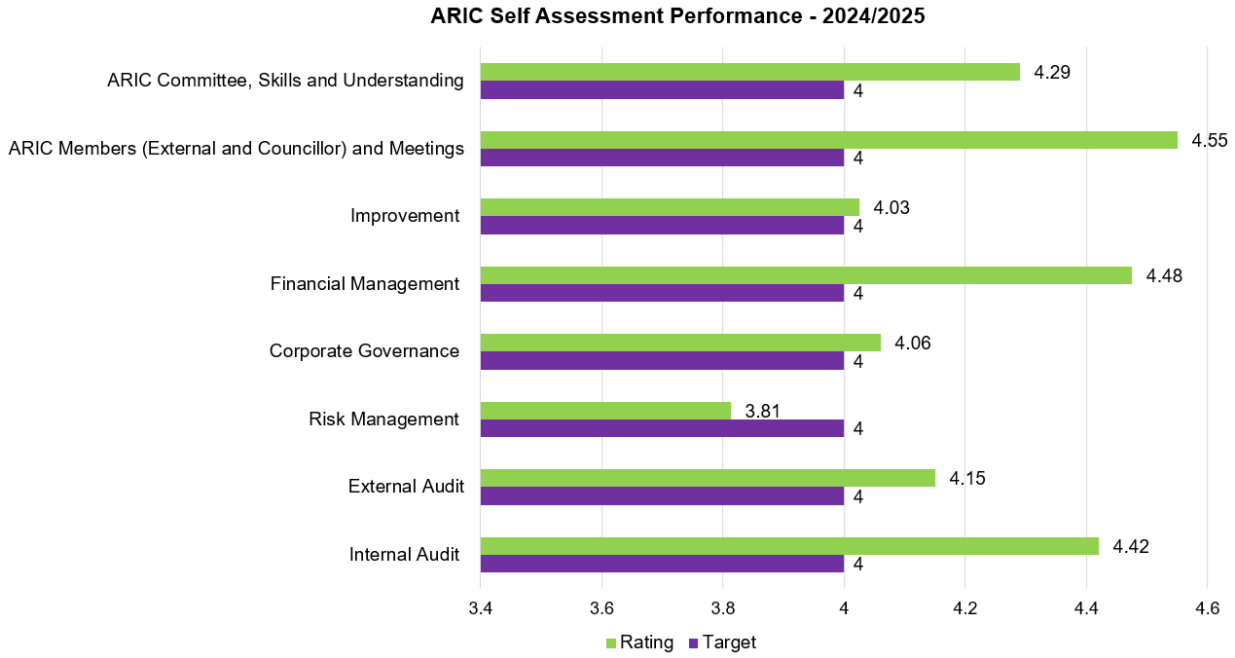
Key Performance measures were introduced for the ARIC in the ARIC Strategic Plan 2024-2028, effective from 1 July 2024.

All Key Performance measures have been reviewed and assessed with a current status provided in this report that will be used as a baseline for future reporting.

What we want to achieve	Target	Achieved
Committee members (as a group) hold the experience and capability to undertake the responsibilities in schedule 1 of the ARIC Charter.	100%	100%
Minimum 4 meetings	4	5
Member attendance at meetings	80%	83%
External Auditor representation at each ARIC meeting *(Prosperity)*	80%	80%
Appointments Staggered to ensure continuity of the Committee 1 new appointment in any one year.	1	1
In camera closed session held with internal auditor	1	-
In camera closed session held with external auditor	1	-
Review progress of annual workplan at each quarterly meeting.	4	4
Review the ARIC Annual Workplan on an annual basis	1	In Progress
Review the ARIC Strategic Workplan on an annual basis.	1	In Progress
Strategic Workplan endorsed at the start of each Council Term by the new Council	1	1
Quarterly Reporting to Council – Memos issued after each meeting held within 3 weeks of the meeting.	4	4
Minutes circulated to Committee Members withing two weeks of each meeting *(minutes placed on the Hub)*	4	4
Annual Reporting to Council – ARIC Annual Report	1	1
End of Term ARIC Report - End of Term ARIC Report to Council at the last meeting before the election.	-	Not yet due
ARIC Self-Assessment Survey – Completed by Members	100%	100%
ARIC Self-Assessment Survey – Completed by non-committee members (Attendees)	80%	57%
ARIC Self Assessment Survey performance > Good	4	4.22
Assessment of Report completion against Annual Workplan (Annual Workplan is tracked and reported quarterly to the Committee) **Appendix B**	80%	88%
Internal Audit update on all current agreed audit actions presented at each quarterly meeting and reviewed.	4	4
Quality Assurance Improvement Program / Annual Internal Audit Report reported annually to ARIC	1	1

ARIC SELF ASSESSMENT PERFORMANCE REVIEW

In accordance with the Committee's Charter, the Committee completed a self-assessment for 2024/25 which was designed to assess the Committee's performance in the following areas:



Overall the Committee has maintained an overall "good performance" (>4) in achieving its objectives under the Committee Charter.

Key Focus Areas

From the above assessment and from reviewing information provided to ARIC over the past year, the following focus areas for the Committee have been identified for the next two years:

- **Cyber Security & Information Management -** Strengthening cyber controls and data governance in response to growing digital reliance.
- **Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) -** Enhancing the risk management framework and ensuring effective risk processes are in place.
- **Financial Sustainability & Long-Term Planning -** Monitoring financial health, with a focus on potential Special Rate Variations (SRVs) and adapting to changing economic conditions.
- **Internal Audit & Audit Action Implementation -** Driving a strategic internal audit agenda, ensuring timely implementation of audit recommendations, and improving operational efficiency.
- **External Audit Engagement -** Ensuring timely and effective engagement with external auditors.

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INTERNAL AUDIT

The role of Internal Audit is to provide independent assurance to Council's operations. It assists Council by evaluating and assessing the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. Council's internal audit function is resourced by an in-house Internal Auditor.

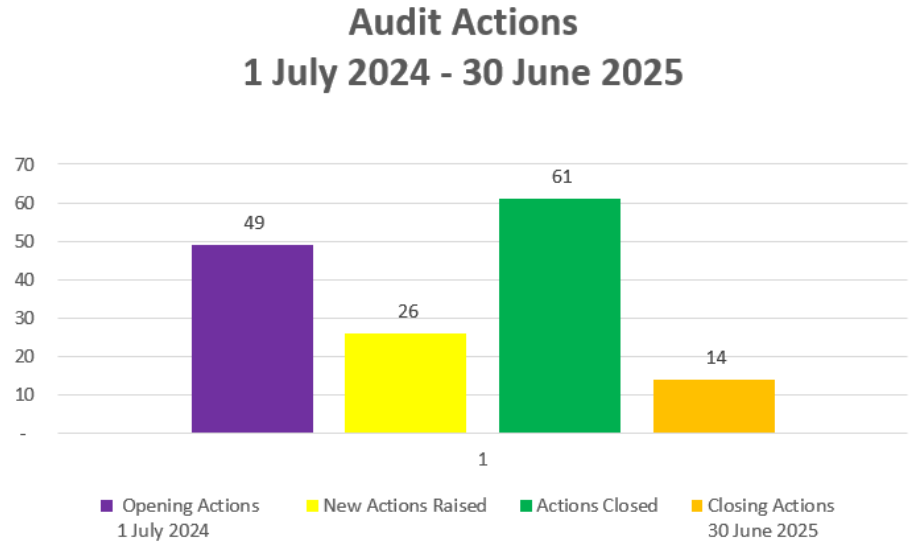
The Committee received quarterly updates from the Internal Auditor on the progress of the Internal Audit Plan and the implementation of the recommendations made. In the past 12 months, the internal audit function reviewed, provided assurances and recommended control and efficiency improvements across the following operations:

	Internal Audit	Completed by:
1.	2024-01 - DRIVES24	Internal Auditor
2.	2024-03 – KCT IT User Access SaaS Platforms (Bpoint, Vault, Scout, Civica)	Internal Auditor
3.	2024-03 – KCT IT User Access SaaS Platforms (Content Manager, Titan, Clear Weigh)	Internal Auditor
4.	2024-03 - IT Access Review (Active Directory)	Internal Auditor
5.	2024-04 – ABN Data Integrity and Master File changes (Trade Creditors)	Internal Auditor
6.	2024-05 – Procurement Contract Variations & GIPA	Internal Auditor
7.	2024-06 – Contract Establishment & Procurement Exemptions	Internal Auditor
8.	2024-07 – Rates Data Integrity (Special Review)	Internal Auditor
9.	2023-07 - Project Management Framework	Internal Auditor
10.	2023-05 - Development Assessment Process	Deferred

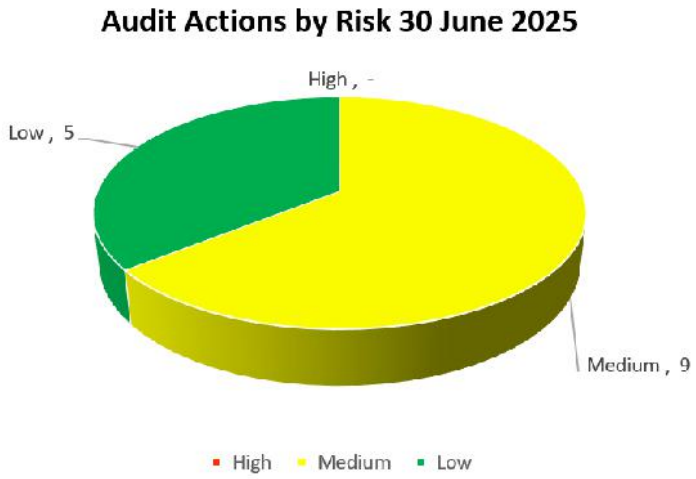
90% completion as at 30 June 2025 with one audit deferred to 2025/2026 in line with expectations communicated to the Committee.

Internal audit action monitoring program

The progress of the implementation of agreed audit actions is actively monitored, and reported to the Committee at each quarterly meeting. The following summary provides an overview of the audit actions raised and closed during 2024/2025.



Internal Audit	Audit Firm	CCC DIR	Opening Actions 1 July 2024	New Actions Raised	Not Accepted	Actions Closed	Closing Actions 30 June 2025
Rates Management	Internal	C&CS	2			2	-
Volunteer Management	Internal	GMU	1			1	-
Work Health & Safety Audit	Centium	GMU	14			14	-
Procurement - Including Panel Arrangements	Internal	C&CS	17			12	5
KCT - Supplier Master File - ABN / GST Registration	Internal	C&CS	2			2	-
On Site Sewage Management	Internal	P&E	1			1	-
KCT - IT User Access	Internal	C&CS	1				1
KCT - IT User Access - Saas Platforms (Bpoint, Civica, Vault, Vendor Panel, Scout, Pulse)	Internal	C&CS	-	9		9	-
KCT - Project Management Framework	Internal	W&I	-	3		2	1
KCT - ABN Data Integrity and Master File Changes (Trade Creditors)	Internal	C&CS	-	2		2	-
Rates Data Integrity	Internal	C&CS	-	4		4	-
KCT - IT User Access - Saas Platforms *(Titan, Clearweigh, Trim)*	Internal	C&CS	-	1		-	1
Audit Office of NSW*	AONSW	All	11	7		12	6
			49	**26**	**-**	**61**	**14**



Council has successfully closed 61 out of 75 total actions during the year, which reflects a strong closure rate of 81%. This significant reduction from 49 opening actions to 14 remaining demonstrates managements proactive commitment to resolving audit findings in a timely manner.

INTERNAL AUDIT PERFORMANCE

The following key performance indicators ensure compliance with the Global Internal Audit Standards and provide Council's Executive Leadership Team and the Committee with assurance on the effective operation of the internal audit function



EXTERNAL AUDIT

The external auditor is invited to all Committee meetings. Representatives from the NSW Audit Office and their appointed contractor Prosperity Advisors attended the meetings.

During the period, the Committee:

- Received the draft Financial Statements for the FY 2023-24 before the external audit, and recommended Council to formally refer for the external audit.
- Received the audited Financial Statements for the FY 2023-24.
- Received the Engagement Closing Report and the Conduct of the Audit Report.
- Received an Interim Management Letter and the Final Management Letter for the FY2023-24 with the issues raised by the external auditor and the management responses to the issues raised.
- Considered the Annual Client Engagement Plan prepared by the external auditor for FY 2024-25 audit.

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YEAR AHEAD – 2025-2026

COMMITTEE STRATEGIC WORKPLAN

The Committee has endorsed a four year strategic workplan to ensure the Committee meets its legislative obligations under section 428A of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act).

The Strategic Workplan sets out the rolling four-year program to ensure coverage of the Committee's responsibilities. This is detailed in the meeting planner (section 7) which outlines:

- Standard agenda items – Items that should be examined at every (or most) Committee meetings.
- Special agenda items – Items that can generally be spread over a year and examined once per year.
- Special meeting – Items for review for the end of year financial statements.
- Annual reporting requirements – Items required under the Committee Charter.
- End of Council term agenda items – Items required under the Committee Charter.

The Annual ARIC 2025-2026 has been reviewed by the Committee and has been included as an appendix to this report (Appendix A).

STRATEGIC INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2025-2029

The Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW requires council's Audit, Risk and Improvement committee (Committee) to develop a Strategic risk-based Internal Audit plan to ensure that all the matters listed in section 428A of the Local government Act are reviewed by the committee and internal audit function over each council term.

Internal Audit at Cessnock City Council operates in accordance with the Global Internal Audit Standards. The standards outline the Principles and Standards under which we work and provides mandatory guidance and a code of ethics to be adhered to.

This Strategic 4-year Internal Audit Plan is aligned with the Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework and Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and has been developed to provide the internal audit direction for Cessnock City Council for the next four years.

The Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2025-2029 has been developed by Internal Audit in consultation with key stakeholders across Council including:

- General Manager
- Directors
- Managers
- Key staff members as required
- Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

A risk based approach has been applied to developing the Plan. It is required to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis or when considered necessary by the Committee to ensure that Internal Audit reviews are still aligned with any critical strategic and operational risks identified within Council.

The Strategic Internal Audit Plan for 2025-2029 was endorsed by the Committee in May 2025 and included as an appendix to this report.

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APPENDIX A – ARIC STRATEGIC WORKPLAN 2024-2028

*Separate attachment - Confidential Report - **Enclosure 2***

APPENDIX B – ARIC ANNUAL WORKPLAN 2024-2025 (Completed)

	ARIC Responsibility	Frequency	Business Unit	Aug-24	Oct-24	Dec-24	Feb-25	May-25
	Audit Committee (standing agenda items)							
	Acknowledgement of Country			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Apologies			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Confirm previous minutes			✓	▪	✓	✓	✓
	Disclosure of Interests			✓	▪	✓	✓	✓
	Business arising from the minutes			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Closed session			▪	×	▪	▪	×
1	**External Audit and Financial Reporting (Sch 1 – 17.1)**							
	Interim Management Letter	Annual	AONSW/ Finance	R				
	Final Management Letter	Annual	AONSW/ Finance			D	R	
	Client Engagement Plan	Annual	AONSW/ Finance				R	
	Final Financial Statements	Annual	AONSW/ Finance		R			
	Engagement Closing Report	Annual	AONSW/ Finance		R			
2	**Risk Management (Sch 1 – 17.2)**							
	Enterprise Risk Management Framework	Annual	Safety and Risk	R		D	R	
	Strategic Risk Register	Annual	Safety and Risk				D	D
	Fraud Risk Register	Annual	Safety and Risk				D	D
	Operational Risk Register	Annual	Safety and Risk					D
	Annual insurance (Inc. claims) report	Annual	Safety and Risk	R				
	Work, Health and Safety	Annual	Safety and Risk			R	R	
	Business Continuity Plan	Annual	Safety and Risk					D
3	**Financial Management (Sch 1 – 17.6)**							
	Operational Budget	Annual	Finance					R
	Quarterly Budget Review Statement	Annual	Finance			R	R	R
	Corporate Credit Cards Usage	Annual	Finance			R		
	Finance Policies and Accounting Positions	As Required	Finance	*	*	R	*	R
	Draft Financial Statements	Annual	Finance	R				
4	**Corporate Governance (Sch 1 – 17.4 / 17.5 / 17.7)**							
	Legislative Compliance Register	Annual	Governance	R				
	GIPA	Annual	Governance	R				
	Privacy Management	Annual	Governance	R				
	Fraud, Control and Corruption Prevention Framework	Annual	Governance			R		
	Complaints Management Framework	Annual	Governance			R		
	Information Technology / Cyber Risk	Annual	IT			R		
	Ethical Behaviour Framework (Gifts & Benefits, Delegations, Written Returns, Code of Conduct, Conflicts of Interests	Annual	Governance				R	
	Controlled Document Framework	Annual	Governance					R
	Legal Services	Annual	Governance					R

	ARIC Responsibility	Frequency	Business Unit	Aug-24	Oct-24	Dec-24	Feb-25	May-25
5	**Implementation of strategic plan, delivery program & strategies (Sch 1 – 17.8)**							
	Annual Report	Annual	IP&R					
	Quarterly Report	Annual	IP&R			R	R	R
	Operational Plan	Annual	IP&R					R
	Community Strategic Plan	Council Term	IP&R					R
	Service Review	Bi-Annually	IP&R					D
	Service Review	Bi-Annually	IP&R					D
6	**Internal Audit - (Sch1 – 17.1 / 17.7)**							
	Quarterly Internal Audit Report	Quarterly	Internal Audit	R		R	R	R
	Quality Assurance Improvement Program	Annual	Internal Audit	R				
	Annual Internal Audit Report	Annual	Internal Audit	R				
	Annual Internal Audit Workplan	Annual	Internal Audit	D		D	R	R
	Strategic Internal Audit Workplan	Annual	Internal Audit	D		D	R	R
	Internal Audit Manual Review	Annual	Internal Audit			R		
	Internal Audit Charter Review	Annual	Internal Audit				D	D
	Internal Audit Reports							
1	DRIVES24	As Completed	Internal Audit	R				
2	Key Control Testing - IT User Access	As Completed	Internal Audit	R				
3	On Site Sewage Management	As Completed	Internal Audit	R				
4	Development Assessments	As Completed	Internal Audit					IP
5	Key Control Testing - IT User Access SaaS Platforms	As Completed	Internal Audit			R		
6	Key Control Testing - Project Management Framework	As Completed	Internal Audit			R		
7	Key Control Testing - ABN Data Integrity and Master File Changes	As Completed	Internal Audit					R
8	Special Review - Rates Data Integrity	As Completed	Internal Audit					R
9	Contract Variations / GIPA *Followup Audit*	As Completed	Internal Audit					IP
10	Contract Establishment *Followup Audit*	As Completed	Internal Audit					IP
7	**ARIC Administration**							
	Review ARIC Charter	Annual	Internal Audit/ARIC				R	
	ARIC Report Calendar	Quarterly	Internal Audit/ARIC	R		R	R	R
	Proposed meeting schedule	Annual	Internal Audit/ARIC					R
	Annual Self Assessment	Annual	Internal Audit/ARIC					R
	ARIC Annual Report	Annual	Internal Audit/ARIC	D	R			
	Strategic Workplan / Annual Workplan Review	Annual	Internal Audit/ARIC					R
8	**ARIC Requests**							
	Update implementation of Internal Audit and Risk Management Requirements	As Requested	Internal Audit	R		R	R	

R = Report Received, D= Deferred, IP= In Progress

APPENDIX C – STRATEGIC INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2025-2029

*Separate attachment - Confidential Report - **Enclosure 3***

Internal Audit Charter

Last Updated: **4 September 2025** Revision: **2**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. We acknowledge these Aboriginal peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices and operations are located, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

COUNCIL VALUES
Integrity, Respect, Teamwork, Accountability, and Excellence.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Cessnock City Council has established the internal audit function as a key component of the Council's corporate governance framework, in compliance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (Regulation) and the Office of Local Government's *Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW*.

This Charter provides the framework and authority for performance of internal audit activities at Cessnock City Council. Consistent with the 'Global Internal Audit Standards' this document details the internal audit function's authority, role and responsibility (mandate) as well as its organisational position, reporting relationships, scope of work, and range of services.

Chief Audit Executive describes the person responsible for effectively managing all aspects of the Internal Audit function and ensuring the quality performance of internal audit services in accordance with the 'Global Internal Audit Standards' issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors. The Chief Audit Executive is accountable to the General Manager and Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee for the Internal Audit function's implementation of and conformance with requirements of this Charter. At Council, the Chief Audit Executive is the Internal Auditor.

This Charter has been approved by the Council taking into account the advice of Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (Committee).

2 PURPOSE OF INTERNAL AUDIT

2.1 Internal audit is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve a council's operations. It helps Council accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

2.2 Internal auditing enhances the organisation's:

2.2.1 Successful achievement of its objectives.

2.2.2 Governance, risk management, and control processes.

2.2.3 Decision-making and oversight.

2.2.4 Reputation and credibility with its stakeholders.

2.2.5 Ability to serve the public interest.

3 NATURE AND SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 The scope of Internal Audit work embraces the wider concept of corporate governance and risk, recognising that controls exist in the Council to manage risks and promote effective and efficient governance and performance.

3.2 Internal Audit services may include:

3.2.1 Assurance Services – objective examination of evidence for the purpose of providing an independent assessment of risk management, control and governance processes.

3.2.2 Advisory Services – advisory and related activities, the nature and scope of which are agreed upon with the Council and/or General Manager and the Committee. Advisory services are intended to add value and improve business operations.

3.3 Internal Audit will offer a service catalogue, including:

3.3.1 Internal audit engagements with a compliance, financial or performance improvement focus.

3.3.2 Management requested services where business areas within the Council may request Internal Audit services, usually in response to an issue or an emerging risk.

3.3.3 Multi-stage audit engagements at key project milestones.

3.3.4 Continuous auditing of controls using technology.

3.4 The scope and coverage of Internal Audit work is not limited in any way and may cover any activity, operation and program of Council.

4 ROLE

4.1 The internal audit function is to support the Committee to review and provide independent advice to the Council in accordance with section 428A of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act). This includes conducting internal audits of Council functions and services and monitoring the implementation of agreed audit actions.

4.2 The internal audit function is to also play an active role in:

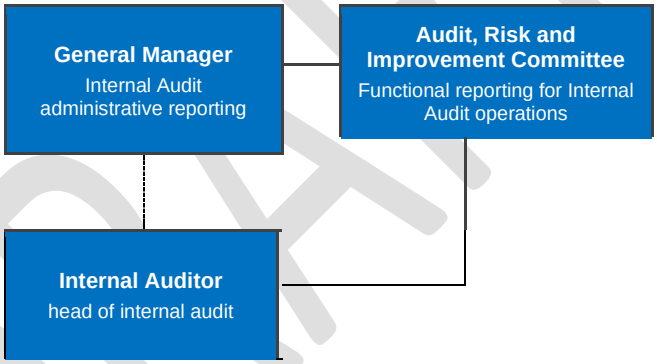
4.2.1 developing and maintaining a culture of accountability and integrity

4.2.2 facilitating the integration or risk management into day-to-day business activities and processes, and

4.2.3 promoting a culture of high ethical standards.

5 INTERNAL AUDIT FUNCTION

5.1 Internal Audit is positioned within Council as follows:



5.2 Individuals that perform internal audit activities for Council must have:

5.2.1 an appropriate level of understanding of the Council's culture, systems and processes

5.2.2 the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to conduct internal audit activities in the Council

5.2.3 effective interpersonal and communication skills to ensure they can partner with council staff effectively and collaboratively, and

5.2.4 honesty, integrity and diligence.

6 INTERNAL AUDITOR

6.1 Council's internal audit function is to be led by the internal auditor as an employee of Council.

6.2 The internal auditor will have sufficient skills, knowledge and experience to ensure it fulfils its roles and responsibilities to the governing body and its Committee. The internal auditor must be independent, impartial, unbiased and objective when performing their work and free from any conflicts of interest.

6.3 Responsibilities of the internal auditor include:

6.3.1 managing the day-to-day activities of the internal audit function

6.3.2 managing the Council's internal audit budget

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6.3.3 supporting the operation of the Council's Committee

6.3.4 approving internal audit project plans, conducting or supervising audits and assessments and providing independent advice to the Committee

6.3.5 monitoring the Council's implementation of agreed audit actions that arise from the findings of audits

6.3.6 assisting with the implementation of the Committee's annual workplan and four-year strategic workplan

6.3.7 ensuring the Council's internal audit activities comply with the Guidelines on risk management and internal audit in local councils in NSW, and

6.3.8 contract management and oversight of supplementary external providers (where appropriate).

7 PERFORMING INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITIES

7.1 The work of the internal audit function is to be thoroughly planned and executed. Council's Committee must develop a strategic workplan every four years to ensure that the matters listed in Schedule 1 are reviewed by the Committee and considered by the internal audit function when developing their risk-based program of internal audits. The strategic workplan must be reviewed at least annually to ensure it remains appropriate.

7.2 The Committee must also develop an annual workplan to guide the work of the internal audit function over the forward year.

7.3 All internal audit activities are to be performed in a manner that is consistent with relevant professional standards including the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors, Risk Management Guidelines ISO:31000:2018 and Council's Internal Audit Manual (DOC2024/170875).

7.4 The Internal Auditor is to provide the findings and agreed audit actions of internal audits to the Committee at the end of each audit.

7.5 The Internal Auditor is to establish an ongoing monitoring system to follow up Council's progress in implementing agreed audit actions.

7.6 The internal auditor in consultation with the General Manager and the Committee, is to develop and maintain policies and procedures to guide the operation of the Council's internal audit function.

7.7 The Internal Auditor is to ensure that the Committee is advised at each of the Committee's meetings of the internal audit activities completed during that quarter, progress in implementing the annual workplan and progress made implementing agreed audit actions.

8 INDEPENDENCE

8.1 Council's internal audit function is to be independent of the elected Council so it can provide an unbiased assessment of Council's operations and risk and control activities.

8.2 The internal audit function has no direct authority or responsibility for the activities it reviews. The internal audit function has no responsibility for developing or implementing procedures or systems and does not prepare records or engage in council functions or activities (except in carrying out its own functions).

8.3 The Internal Auditor reports functionally to Council's Committee on the results of completed audits, and for strategic direction and accountability purposes, and reports administratively to the General Manager to facilitate day-to-day operations. Internal audit activities are not subject to direction by the elected Council and Council's management has no role in the exercise of Council's internal audit activities.

8.4 The Committee is responsible for communicating any internal audit issues or information to the elected Council. Should the elected Council require additional information, a request for the information may be made to the Chairperson of the Committee by resolution. The Chairperson is only required to provide the information requested by the elected Council where the Chairperson is satisfied that it is reasonably necessary for the elected Council to receive the information for the purposes of performing its functions under the Act. Individual Councillors are not entitled to request or receive information from the Committee.

8.5 The General Manager must consult with the Chairperson of Council's Committee before appointing or making decisions affecting the employment of the internal auditor.

8.6 Where the Chairperson of Council's Committee has any concerns about the treatment of the Internal Auditor or any action taken that may compromise their ability to undertake their functions independently, they can report their concerns to the General Manager.

8.7 The Internal Auditor is to confirm at least annually to the Committee the independence of internal audit activities from Council.

9 CONFLICT OF INTERESTS AND IMPAIRMENT OF OBJECTIVITY

9.1 Conflict of interest is a situation in which an internal auditor, who is in a position of trust, has a competing professional or personal interest. Such competing interests can make it difficult to fulfil duties impartially. A conflict of interest exists even if no unethical or improper act results. A conflict of interest can create an appearance of impropriety that can undermine confidence in the internal auditor, the internal audit function, and the profession. A conflict of interest could impair an individual's ability to perform his or her duties and responsibilities objectively.

9.2 Internal auditors are not to provide audit services for work for which they may previously have been responsible. The Institute of Internal Auditors provides guidance on this point and suggests a period of one year, but each instance should be carefully assessed.

9.3 When engaging internal audit service providers, the Internal Auditor shall take steps to identify, evaluate the significance, and manage any perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest that may impinge upon internal audit work. Where an internal audit service provider may be requested to provide a non-internal audit service by another business area, prior written permission of the Internal Auditor is required before the service provider can be engaged.

9.4 Instances of perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest by Internal Audit staff and service providers shall immediately be reported it to the General Manager and the Committee Chairperson.

10 AUTHORITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

10.1 Council authorises the Internal Auditor to have full, free and unrestricted access to all functions, premises, assets, personnel, records and other documentation and information that the Internal Auditor considers necessary for the internal audit function to undertake its responsibilities.

10.2 All records, documentation and information accessed while undertaking internal audit activities are to be used solely for the conduct of those activities. The Internal Auditor and individual internal audit staff are responsible and accountable for maintaining the confidentiality of the information they receive when undertaking their work.

10.3 All internal audit documentation is to remain the property of Council, including where internal audit services are performed by an external third-party provider.

10.4 Information and documents pertaining to the internal audit function are not to be made publicly available. The internal audit function may only release Council's information to external parties that are assisting the internal audit function to undertake its responsibilities with the approval of the General Manager, except where it is being provided to an external investigative or oversight

agency for the purpose of informing that agency of a matter that may warrant its attention, or as required by law.

11 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

11.1 The Internal Auditor is responsible for developing and maintaining a quality assurance and improvement program that includes:

11.1.1 Internal assessments and ongoing monitoring.

11.1.2 Performance measures agreed by the Committee

11.1.3 Annual internal assessments against the 'Global Internal Audit Standards'.

11.1.4 Annual assertion to the Committee on compliance with internal audit standards.

11.1.5 Independent external assessments performed at least once every five years by a qualified, independent assessor or assessment team from outside the organisation.

11.2 Internal Audit is encouraged to develop and maintain mutually beneficial relations with counterparts in other organisations, thought leaders, relevant professional bodies and networks with a view to:

11.2.1 Exchanging information on internal audit good practice.

11.2.2 Exchanging information on emerging corporate governance, risk management and assurance matters.

12 EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE

12.1 Internal Audit performance will be evaluated annually and results reported to the Committee. This will include:

12.1.1 Results of the quality assurance and improvement program.

12.1.2 Results of Internal Audit performance measures previously approved by the Committee.

12.1.3 Feedback from management of areas where internal audit work has been performed.

12.1.4 Feedback from Committee members.

13 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

13.1 Internal Audit will govern itself by adherence to mandatory guidance contained in the 'International Professional Practices Framework' (IPPF), Global Internal Audit Standards' and 'Topical Requirements' issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA).

13.2 The Chief Audit Executive is accountable for the adherence of internal auditors to these professional standards.

13.3 Adherence to Professional Standards will also apply to internal audit work performed by service providers.

14 CONDUCT

14.1 Internal audit personnel must comply with Council's Code of Conduct. Complaints about breaches of Council's Code of Conduct by internal audit personnel are to be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct Procedures.

14.2 The General Manager must consult with the Council's Committee before any disciplinary action is taken against the Internal Auditor in response to a breach of Council's Code of Conduct.

14.3 Internal auditors must also comply with the Code of Ethics for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors.

15 ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

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Audit, risk and improvement committee meetings

15.1 The internal auditor will attend audit, risk and improvement committee meetings as an independent non-voting observer. The Internal Auditor can be excluded from meetings by the committee at any time.

15.2 The internal auditor must meet separately with the audit, risk and improvement committee at least once per year.

15.3 The internal auditor can meet with the chairperson of the audit, risk and improvement committee at any time, as necessary, between committee meetings.

Relationship with other assurance activities

15.4 Council uses the 3 lines integrated assurance model to allocate responsibilities for risk management and control, recognising that:

15.4.1 1st line – Management has ownership, responsibility and accountability for assessing, controlling and mitigating risks.

15.4.2 2nd line – Risk management facilitates and monitors implementation of effective risk management practices by management and assists risk owners in reporting adequate risk-related information up and down the organisation.

15.4.3 3rd line – Internal audit will, through a risk-based approach, provide assurance to the Audit Committee and management on how effectively Council assesses and manages its risks, including the manner in which the first and second lines operate. Internal audit does not absolve management and staff from any of their risk management and control responsibilities.

15.5 Internal Audit will establish and maintain an open relationship with the external auditor and other assurance providers. Internal Audit will plan its activities to ensure adequacy of overall assurance coverage and to minimise duplication of assurance effort across Council.

15.6 External audit has full and free access to all internal audit plans, work papers and reports.

Dispute resolution

15.7 The internal audit function should maintain an effective working relationship with the governing body and the audit, risk and improvement committee and seek to resolve any differences they may have in an amicable and professional way by discussion and negotiation.

15.8 In the event of a disagreement between the internal audit function and the governing body, the dispute is to be resolved by the General Manager and/or the audit, risk and improvement committee. Disputes between the internal audit function and the audit, risk and improvement committee are to be resolved by the governing body.

15.9 Unresolved disputes regarding compliance with statutory or other requirements are to be referred to the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government in writing.

Review arrangements

15.10 Council's audit, risk and improvement committee must review the performance of the internal audit function each year and report its findings to the governing body.

15.10.1 A strategic and quality assurance review of the internal audit function must be conducted each council term that considers the views of an external party with a strong knowledge of internal audit on the performance of the internal audit function and reported to the governing body.

15.10.2 This charter is to be reviewed annually by the audit, risk and improvement committee and once each council term by the governing body. Any substantive changes are to be approved by the governing body.

16 SCHEDULE 1 – INTERNAL AUDIT FUNCTION RESPONSIBILITIES

Audit

16.1 Internal audit

16.1.1 Conduct internal audits as directed by the council's audit, risk and improvement committee.

16.1.2 Develop and implement a flexible annual internal audit plan and a rolling four-year strategic work plan, using appropriate risk-based methodology, considering any risks or control concerns identified by management.

16.1.3 Monitor the implementation of agreed audit actions.

16.1.4 Assist council to develop and maintain a culture of accountability and integrity.

16.1.5 Facilitate the integration of risk management into day-to-day business activities and processes.

16.1.6 Promote a culture of high ethical standards.

16.2 External audit

16.2.1 Provide input and feedback on the financial statement and performance audit coverage proposed by external audit and provide feedback on the audit services provided.

16.2.2 Review all external plans and reports in respect of planned or completed audits and monitor council's implementation of audit recommendations.

16.2.3 Provide advice on action taken on significant issues raised in relevant external audit reports and better practice guides.

Risk

16.3 Risk management

16.3.1 Providing assurance on risk management processes

16.3.2 Evaluating risk management processes

16.3.3 Reporting key risks

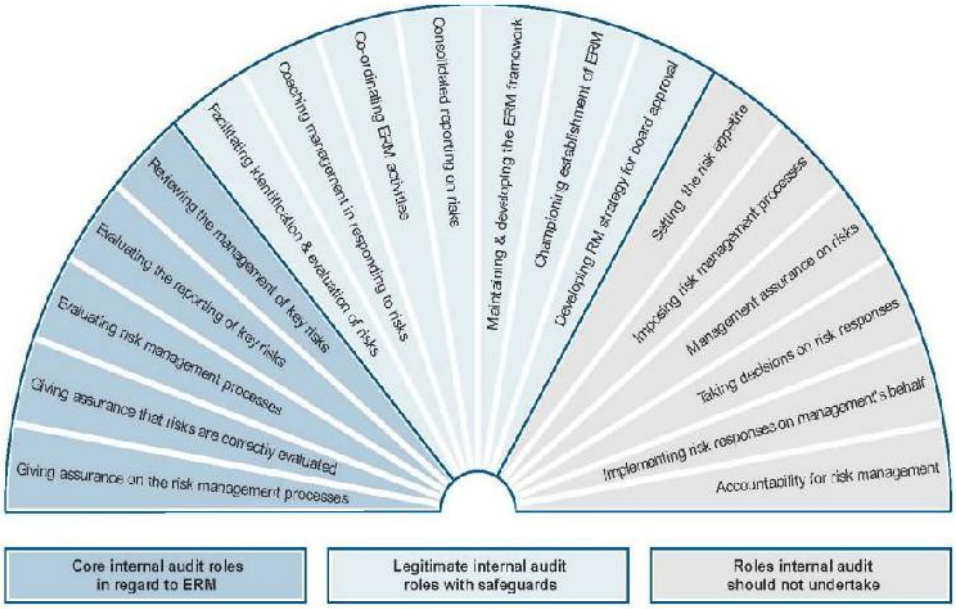
16.3.4 Reviewing the management of key risks

16.3.5 Performing the full audit cycle including risk management and control management over operations effectiveness, financial reliability and compliance with all applicable legislation and regulations

16.3.6 Consideration of risk in determining the internal audit scope and developing the annual internal audit plan and four year strategic workplan.

Figure 1 – Internal audits role in enterprise risk management[1]

[1] IIA Position Paper: The Role of Internal Auditing in Enterprise-wide Risk Management (theiia.org)



16.3.7 The activities on the left of Figure 1 are all assurance activities. They form part of the wider objective of giving assurance on risk management. An internal audit function complying with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing can and should perform at least some of these activities.

Internal controls

16.4 Assist council in maintaining effective controls by evaluating their effectiveness and efficiency and by promoting continuous improvement.

16.5 review and advise if council's monitoring and review of controls is sufficient,

16.6 review and advise if internal and external audit recommendations to correct internal control weaknesses are implemented appropriately

Compliance

16.7 Review and advise of the adequacy and effectiveness of council's compliance framework via internal audit activities, including:

16.7.1 if council has appropriately considered legal and compliance risks as part of the council's risk management framework

16.7.2 how the council manages its compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures, codes, and contractual arrangements, and

16.7.3 whether appropriate processes are in place to assess compliance.

Fraud and corruption

16.8 Review and advise of the adequacy and effectiveness of council's fraud and corruption prevention framework and activities via internal audit activities, including whether council has appropriate processes and systems in place to capture and effectively investigate fraud-related information.

Financial management

16.9 Review and advise via internal audit activities:

16.9.1 if Council's financial management processes are adequate

16.9.2 the adequacy of cash management policies and procedures

16.9.3 if there are adequate controls over financial processes, for example:

- appropriate authorisation and approval of payments and transactions
- adequate segregation of duties
- timely reconciliation of accounts and balances
- review of unusual and high value purchases

16.9.4 if policies and procedures for management review and consideration of the financial position and performance of Council are adequate

16.9.5 if Council's grants and tied funding policies and procedures are sound.

Corporate Governance

16.10 Review and advise of the adequacy of council's governance framework via internal audit activities, including the council's:

16.10.1 decision-making processes

16.10.2 implementation of governance policies and procedures

16.10.3 reporting lines and accountability

16.10.4 assignment of key roles and responsibilities

16.10.5 committee structure

16.10.6 management oversight responsibilities

16.10.7 human resources and performance management activities

16.10.8 reporting and communication activities

16.10.9 information and communications technology (ICT) governance, and

16.10.10 management and governance of the use of data, information and knowledge.

Improvement

16.11 Strategic planning

16.11.1 Review and advise of the adequacy of council's strategic planning framework via internal audit activities, including:

- the adequacy and effectiveness of council's integrated, planning and reporting (IP&R) processes
- if appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure progress against objectives, and
- whether council is successfully implementing and achieving its IP&R objectives and strategies.

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17 SCHEDULE 2 - INTERNAL AUDIT PROTOCOL

Objective

17.1 This protocol prescribes obligations for internal audit and senior management in relation to internal audit work.

17.2 Internal audit will professionally contribute to building a better organisation through their work with the bigger picture in mind.

17.3 Management will constructively contribute to internal audit work to enhance organisation governance and operational control.

Mutual Obligations

Activity	Internal Audit	Management
Strategic Alignment	Our audits will align with the strategies, objectives and risks of the council	We will provide suitable guidance to the internal auditors on our strategies, objectives and risks.
Collaboration	We will work constructively with management to improve our council.	We will work constructively with internal audit to promote council improvement.
Assurance Strategy	We will offer an assurance strategy service to management to better understand whether governance and controls are operating effectively. We will develop a strategy for delivery of internal audit services that aligns with the assurance strategy	We will collaborate with internal audit on initiatives such as assurance strategy to improve the governance and control environment.
Internal Audit Planning	We will prepare an annual internal audit plan that considers management input about council's risks and issues.	We will actively provide input to the internal audit plan.
Internal Audit Service Planning	We will facilitate planning workshops with management before internal audit services for mutual understanding.	We will actively provide input to audit planning and draw out relevant elements of the approved risk appetite.
Audit Timing	We will provide management with an audit schedule and timings and we will stick to it subject to resources.	We will make ourselves available to internal audit in line with audit schedule timings.
Audit Execution	We will be respectful of the people we audit, understand they have their jobs to do, and avoid peak business periods where we reasonably can.	We understand internal audit also has a job to do and we will help them to do that.
Communication	We will maintain effective communication throughout the audit so that management is not surprised and caught off guard by significant observations raised during the wrap-up and reporting stage of the audit	We will provide internal auditors with all relevant information they require to complete the audit and will do so in a timely manner.
Audit Reporting	We will deliver the internal audit report on the date we promised and ensure it is insightful, proactive and future-focused. We will give credit where it is due and not just focus on the negative	We will commit to constructive discussion on internal audit results and the best ways to mitigate identified risks.
Agreed Audit Recommendations	We will work with management to achieve the best improvement actions to remediate risks.	We will work with internal audit to achieve the best improvement actions to remediate risks.
Monitoring and follow-up	We will actively follow-up and support management as they implement agreed audit actions.	We will diligently work to implement agreed audit actions in a timely way
Ad hoc services	We will offer risk-based ad hoc internal audit services to management in response to emerging risks and issues	We will work collaboratively with internal audit to address emerging risks and issues

Internal Audit Plan

17.4 Internal audit will consult with the General Manager, senior management and the audit, risk and improvement committee when developing the internal audit plan for the coming year to gain insights into risks and emerging issues around operations, corporate support activities and projects.

Internal Audit Services

17.5 An executive sponsor will be nominated for each internal audit service.

17.6 Internal audit will consult with the executive sponsor, management of the area to be audited, and the General Manager (or their delegate) at the planning stage of every internal audit service. This includes opportunity for input to the objective and scope for upcoming internal audit services.

17.7 A planning workshop with relevant management and staff may be facilitated by internal audit to discuss risks around the audit topic and optimise the audit objective and scope.

17.8 Internal Audit will ensure the executive sponsor is presented and with the agreed terms of reference including the objective, scope and timeline. Internal audit will keep relevant management up-to-date on progress throughout internal audit services and to advise and discuss issues found by internal audit as they arise.

17.9 At conclusion of audits, internal audit will convene a formal closing meeting (audit action workshop) to discuss results of the internal audit and arrive at agreed fit-for-purpose implementation actions and timings.

Implementing Agreed Audit Actions

17.10 Management will be responsible for timely implementation of agreed audit actions in response to improvement opportunities contained in internal audit reports. These actions will align to the strategies, objectives and risks of council. Internal audit will workshop the agreed audit actions with internal audit ensuring improvement actions contain:

17.10.1 Action to be taken – Agreed audit actions should be practical and address the finding and underlying root cause and reduce the level of risk identified. Where a technology solution is required, confirmation should be included from the Information Technology Manager that this is on the ICT work program and is funded.

17.10.2 Responsible person - An assigned responsible officer who will be responsible for the implementation of the agreed audit action.

17.10.3 Due date - Dates for implementation should be realistic taking into consideration resources and approved budgets of the relevant business unit.

17.10.4 Interim control arrangements to be relied upon where there is a long lead time, such as waiting to close-out an agreed audit action through the implementation of a technology solution.

17.11 If an agreed action cannot be reached, internal audit will refer the matter to the General Manager for resolution. If agreement is still not reached, the final arbiter will be the audit, risk and improvement committee.

17.12 Each quarter, internal audit will request an update from management on implementation progress for agreed audit actions. Progress updates on agreed audit actions will detail the progress of implementation. Timing of progress updates will align to audit, risk and improvement committee meetings.

17.12.1 Where an implementation date needs to be revised the progress updated will detail the reasons and challenges in implementing the action by its original due date. The audit, risk and improvement committee may request the executive sponsor to attend meetings and present details on why the action has not been fully implemented and closed-out

and how the resulting risk is being addressed in the interim.

17.12.2 Where management seeks to accept a risk from an audit, they are required to complete a 'management acceptance of risk' form that considers approved risk appetite, and have it endorsed by the General Manager.

17.12.3 Management requests for agreed audit actions to be closed out will be supported by documentary evidence and reviewed by the internal auditor prior to being presented to the audit, risk and improvement as formally closed.

18 CHARTER ADMINISTRATION

Directorate	General Manager's Unit		
Responsible Officer	Internal Auditor		
Associated Procedure	Internal Audit Manual (DOC2024/170875)		
Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Review Frequency	Annual	**Council Review Frequency**	Each Council term or as required
Document Reference Number	DOC2025/xxxxxx		
This Charter supports Council's compliance with the following legislation: Section 216O Internal audit charter—the Act, Sch 6, cl 8A *Local Government (General) Amendment (Audit, Risk and Improvement* Committee) under the *Local Government Act 1993*			
This Charter contributes to the achievement of the following desired outcome or objectives as per Council's Delivery Program: Outcome 5 – Lead - We have strong leadership and effective governance			
Related Documents (include reference document numbers)	▪ Code of Conduct (DOC2018/086716) ▪ Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Charter (DOC2024/223983) ▪ Internal Audit Manual (DOC2024/170875) ▪ Quality Assurance Improvement Program (DOC2023/158818)		

19 CHARTER HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	8 May 2024 - Audit and Risk Committee	New charter adopted in alignment with the Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW November 2023.
2	19 June 2024 - Council	
3	4 September 2025 - Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee	Annual Review – Alignment with Global Internal Audit Standards Model Internal Audit Charter
4	*Council November 2025*	

Internal Audit Charter

Last Updated: **4 September 2025** Revision: **2**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. We acknowledge these Aboriginal peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices and operations are located, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

COUNCIL VALUES
Integrity, Respect, Teamwork, Accountability, and Excellence.

DISCLAIMER
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1 INTRODUCTION

Cessnock City Council has established the internal audit function as a key component of the Council's corporate governance framework, in compliance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (Regulation) and the Office of Local Government's *Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW*.

This Charter provides the framework and authority for performance of internal audit activities at Cessnock City Council. Consistent with the 'Global Internal Audit Standards' this document details the internal audit function's authority, role and responsibility (mandate) as well as its organisational position, reporting relationships, scope of work, and range of services.

Chief Audit Executive describes the person responsible for effectively managing all aspects of the Internal Audit function and ensuring the quality performance of internal audit services in accordance with the 'Global Internal Audit Standards' issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors. The Chief Audit Executive is accountable to the General Manager and Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee for the Internal Audit function's implementation of and conformance with requirements of this Charter. At Council, the Chief Audit Executive is the Internal Auditor.

This Charter has been approved by the Council taking into account the advice of Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (Committee).

2 PURPOSE OF INTERNAL AUDIT

2.1 Internal audit is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve a council's operations. It helps Council accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes.

2.2 Internal auditing enhances the organisation's:

2.2.1 Successful achievement of its objectives.

2.2.2 Governance, risk management, and control processes.

2.2.3 Decision-making and oversight.

2.2.4 Reputation and credibility with its stakeholders.

2.2.5 Ability to serve the public interest.

3 NATURE AND SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 The scope of Internal Audit work embraces the wider concept of corporate governance and risk, recognising that controls exist in the Council to manage risks and promote effective and efficient governance and performance.

3.2 Internal Audit services may include:

3.2.1 Assurance Services – objective examination of evidence for the purpose of providing an independent assessment of risk management, control and governance processes.

3.2.2 Advisory Services – advisory and related activities, the nature and scope of which are agreed upon with the Council and/or General Manager and the Committee. Advisory services are intended to add value and improve business operations.

3.3 Internal Audit will offer a service catalogue, including:

3.3.1 Internal audit engagements with a compliance, financial or performance improvement focus.

3.3.2 Management requested services where business areas within the Council may request Internal Audit services, usually in response to an issue or an emerging risk.

3.3.3 Multi-stage audit engagements at key project milestones.

3.3.4 Continuous auditing of controls using technology.

3.4 The scope and coverage of Internal Audit work is not limited in any way and may cover any activity, operation and program of Council.

4 ROLE

4.1 The internal audit function is to support the Committee to review and provide independent advice to the Council in accordance with section 428A of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act). This includes conducting internal audits of Council functions and services and monitoring the implementation of agreed audit actions.

4.2 The internal audit function is to also play an active role in:

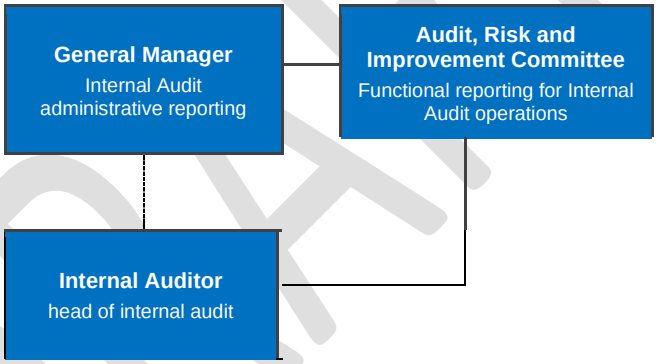
4.2.1 developing and maintaining a culture of accountability and integrity

4.2.2 facilitating the integration or risk management into day-to-day business activities and processes, and

4.2.3 promoting a culture of high ethical standards.

5 INTERNAL AUDIT FUNCTION

5.1 Internal Audit is positioned within Council as follows:



5.2 Individuals that perform internal audit activities for Council must have:

5.2.1 an appropriate level of understanding of the Council's culture, systems and processes

5.2.2 the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to conduct internal audit activities in the Council

5.2.3 effective interpersonal and communication skills to ensure they can partner with council staff effectively and collaboratively, and

5.2.4 honesty, integrity and diligence.

6 INTERNAL AUDITOR

6.1 Council's internal audit function is to be led by the internal auditor as an employee of Council.

6.2 The internal auditor will have sufficient skills, knowledge and experience to ensure it fulfils its roles and responsibilities to the governing body and its Committee. The internal auditor must be independent, impartial, unbiased and objective when performing their work and free from any conflicts of interest.

6.3 Responsibilities of the internal auditor include:

6.3.1 managing the day-to-day activities of the internal audit function

6.3.2 managing the Council's internal audit budget

6.3.3 supporting the operation of the Council's Committee

6.3.4 approving internal audit project plans, conducting or supervising audits and assessments and providing independent advice to the Committee

6.3.5 monitoring the Council's implementation of agreed audit actions that arise from the findings of audits

6.3.6 assisting with the implementation of the Committee's annual workplan and four-year strategic workplan

6.3.7 ensuring the Council's internal audit activities comply with the Guidelines on risk management and internal audit in local councils in NSW, and

6.3.8 contract management and oversight of supplementary external providers (where appropriate).

7 PERFORMING INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITIES

7.1 The work of the internal audit function is to be thoroughly planned and executed. Council's Committee must develop a strategic workplan every four years to ensure that the matters listed in Schedule 1 are reviewed by the Committee and considered by the internal audit function when developing their risk-based program of internal audits. The strategic workplan must be reviewed at least annually to ensure it remains appropriate.

7.2 The Committee must also develop an annual workplan to guide the work of the internal audit function over the forward year.

7.3 All internal audit activities are to be performed in a manner that is consistent with relevant professional standards including the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors, Risk Management Guidelines ISO:31000:2018 and Council's Internal Audit Manual (DOC2024/170875).

7.4 The Internal Auditor is to provide the findings and agreed audit actions of internal audits to the Committee at the end of each audit.

7.5 The Internal Auditor is to establish an ongoing monitoring system to follow up Council's progress in implementing agreed audit actions.

7.6 The internal auditor in consultation with the General Manager and the Committee, is to develop and maintain policies and procedures to guide the operation of the Council's internal audit function.

7.7 The Internal Auditor is to ensure that the Committee is advised at each of the Committee's meetings of the internal audit activities completed during that quarter, progress in implementing the annual workplan and progress made implementing agreed audit actions.

8 INDEPENDENCE

8.1 Council's internal audit function is to be independent of the elected Council so it can provide an unbiased assessment of Council's operations and risk and control activities.

8.2 The internal audit function has no direct authority or responsibility for the activities it reviews. The internal audit function has no responsibility for developing or implementing procedures or systems and does not prepare records or engage in council functions or activities (except in carrying out its own functions).

8.3 The Internal Auditor reports functionally to Council's Committee on the results of completed audits, and for strategic direction and accountability purposes, and reports administratively to the General Manager to facilitate day-to-day operations. Internal audit activities are not subject to direction by the elected Council and Council's management has no role in the exercise of Council's internal audit activities.

8.4 The Committee is responsible for communicating any internal audit issues or information to the elected Council. Should the elected Council require additional information, a request for the information may be made to the Chairperson of the Committee by resolution. The Chairperson is only required to provide the information requested by the elected Council where the Chairperson is satisfied that it is reasonably necessary for the elected Council to receive the information for the purposes of performing its functions under the Act. Individual Councillors are not entitled to request or receive information from the Committee.

8.5 The General Manager must consult with the Chairperson of Council's Committee before appointing or making decisions affecting the employment of the internal auditor.

8.6 Where the Chairperson of Council's Committee has any concerns about the treatment of the Internal Auditor or any action taken that may compromise their ability to undertake their functions independently, they can report their concerns to the General Manager.

8.7 The Internal Auditor is to confirm at least annually to the Committee the independence of internal audit activities from Council.

9 CONFLICT OF INTERESTS AND IMPAIRMENT OF OBJECTIVITY

9.1 Conflict of interest is a situation in which an internal auditor, who is in a position of trust, has a competing professional or personal interest. Such competing interests can make it difficult to fulfil duties impartially. A conflict of interest exists even if no unethical or improper act results. A conflict of interest can create an appearance of impropriety that can undermine confidence in the internal auditor, the internal audit function, and the profession. A conflict of interest could impair an individual's ability to perform his or her duties and responsibilities objectively.

9.2 Internal auditors are not to provide audit services for work for which they may previously have been responsible. The Institute of Internal Auditors provides guidance on this point and suggests a period of one year, but each instance should be carefully assessed.

9.3 When engaging internal audit service providers, the Internal Auditor shall take steps to identify, evaluate the significance, and manage any perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest that may impinge upon internal audit work. Where an internal audit service provider may be requested to provide a non-internal audit service by another business area, prior written permission of the Internal Auditor is required before the service provider can be engaged.

9.4 Instances of perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest by Internal Audit staff and service providers shall immediately be reported it to the General Manager and the Committee Chairperson.

10 AUTHORITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

10.1 Council authorises the Internal Auditor to have full, free and unrestricted access to all functions, premises, assets, personnel, records and other documentation and information that the Internal Auditor considers necessary for the internal audit function to undertake its responsibilities.

10.2 All records, documentation and information accessed while undertaking internal audit activities are to be used solely for the conduct of those activities. The Internal Auditor and individual internal audit staff are responsible and accountable for maintaining the confidentiality of the information they receive when undertaking their work.

10.3 All internal audit documentation is to remain the property of Council, including where internal audit services are performed by an external third-party provider.

10.4 Information and documents pertaining to the internal audit function are not to be made publicly available. The internal audit function may only release Council's information to external parties that are assisting the internal audit function to undertake its responsibilities with the approval of the General Manager, except where it is being provided to an external investigative or oversight

agency for the purpose of informing that agency of a matter that may warrant its attention, or as required by law.

11 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

11.1 The Internal Auditor is responsible for developing and maintaining a quality assurance and improvement program that includes:

11.1.1 Internal assessments and ongoing monitoring.

11.1.2 Performance measures agreed by the Committee

11.1.3 Annual internal assessments against the 'Global Internal Audit Standards'.

11.1.4 Annual assertion to the Committee on compliance with internal audit standards.

11.1.5 Independent external assessments performed at least once every five years by a qualified, independent assessor or assessment team from outside the organisation.

11.2 Internal Audit is encouraged to develop and maintain mutually beneficial relations with counterparts in other organisations, thought leaders, relevant professional bodies and networks with a view to:

11.2.1 Exchanging information on internal audit good practice.

11.2.2 Exchanging information on emerging corporate governance, risk management and assurance matters.

12 EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE

12.1 Internal Audit performance will be evaluated annually and results reported to the Committee. This will include:

12.1.1 Results of the quality assurance and improvement program.

12.1.2 Results of Internal Audit performance measures previously approved by the Committee.

12.1.3 Feedback from management of areas where internal audit work has been performed.

12.1.4 Feedback from Committee members.

13 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

13.1 Internal Audit will govern itself by adherence to mandatory guidance contained in the 'International Professional Practices Framework' (IPPF), Global Internal Audit Standards' and 'Topical Requirements' issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA).

13.2 The Chief Audit Executive is accountable for the adherence of internal auditors to these professional standards.

13.3 Adherence to Professional Standards will also apply to internal audit work performed by service providers.

14 CONDUCT

14.1 Internal audit personnel must comply with Council's Code of Conduct. Complaints about breaches of Council's Code of Conduct by internal audit personnel are to be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct Procedures.

14.2 The General Manager must consult with the Council's Committee before any disciplinary action is taken against the Internal Auditor in response to a breach of Council's Code of Conduct.

14.3 Internal auditors must also comply with the Code of Ethics for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing issued by the Institute of Internal Auditors.

15 ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Audit, risk and improvement committee meetings

15.1 The internal auditor will attend audit, risk and improvement committee meetings as an independent non-voting observer. The Internal Auditor can be excluded from meetings by the committee at any time.

15.2 The internal auditor must meet separately with the audit, risk and improvement committee at least once per year.

15.3 The internal auditor can meet with the chairperson of the audit, risk and improvement committee at any time, as necessary, between committee meetings.

Relationship with other assurance activities

15.4 Council uses the 3 lines integrated assurance model to allocate responsibilities for risk management and control, recognising that:

15.4.1 1st line – Management has ownership, responsibility and accountability for assessing, controlling and mitigating risks.

15.4.2 2nd line – Risk management facilitates and monitors implementation of effective risk management practices by management and assists risk owners in reporting adequate risk-related information up and down the organisation.

15.4.3 3rd line – Internal audit will, through a risk-based approach, provide assurance to the Audit Committee and management on how effectively Council assesses and manages its risks, including the manner in which the first and second lines operate. Internal audit does not absolve management and staff from any of their risk management and control responsibilities.

15.5 Internal Audit will establish and maintain an open relationship with the external auditor and other assurance providers. Internal Audit will plan its activities to ensure adequacy of overall assurance coverage and to minimise duplication of assurance effort across Council.

15.6 External audit has full and free access to all internal audit plans, work papers and reports.

Dispute resolution

15.7 The internal audit function should maintain an effective working relationship with the governing body and the audit, risk and improvement committee and seek to resolve any differences they may have in an amicable and professional way by discussion and negotiation.

15.8 In the event of a disagreement between the internal audit function and the governing body, the dispute is to be resolved by the General Manager and/or the audit, risk and improvement committee. Disputes between the internal audit function and the audit, risk and improvement committee are to be resolved by the governing body.

15.9 Unresolved disputes regarding compliance with statutory or other requirements are to be referred to the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government in writing.

Review arrangements

15.10 Council's audit, risk and improvement committee must review the performance of the internal audit function each year and report its findings to the governing body.

15.10.1 A strategic and quality assurance review of the internal audit function must be conducted each council term that considers the views of an external party with a strong knowledge of internal audit on the performance of the internal audit function and reported to the governing body.

15.10.2 This charter is to be reviewed annually by the audit, risk and improvement committee and once each council term by the governing body. Any substantive changes are to be approved by the governing body.

16 SCHEDULE 1 – INTERNAL AUDIT FUNCTION RESPONSIBILITIES

Audit

16.1 Internal audit

16.1.1 Conduct internal audits as directed by the council's audit, risk and improvement committee.

16.1.2 Develop and implement a flexible annual internal audit plan and a rolling four-year strategic work plan, using appropriate risk-based methodology, considering any risks or control concerns identified by management.

16.1.3 Monitor the implementation of agreed audit actions.

16.1.4 Assist council to develop and maintain a culture of accountability and integrity.

16.1.5 Facilitate the integration of risk management into day-to-day business activities and processes.

16.1.6 Promote a culture of high ethical standards.

16.2 External audit

16.2.1 Provide input and feedback on the financial statement and performance audit coverage proposed by external audit and provide feedback on the audit services provided.

16.2.2 Review all external plans and reports in respect of planned or completed audits and monitor council's implementation of audit recommendations.

16.2.3 Provide advice on action taken on significant issues raised in relevant external audit reports and better practice guides.

Risk

16.3 Risk management

16.3.1 Providing assurance on risk management processes

16.3.2 Evaluating risk management processes

16.3.3 Reporting key risks

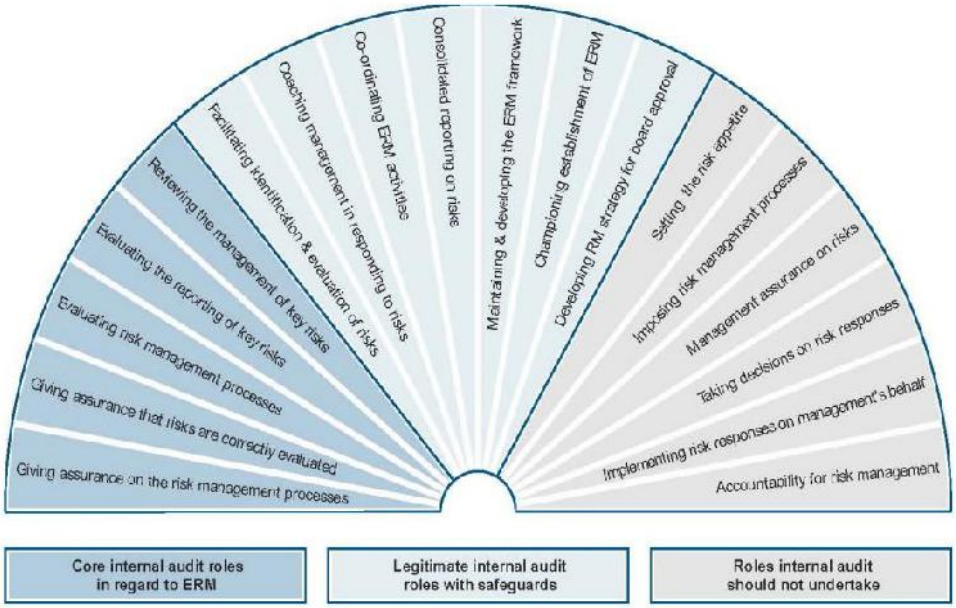
16.3.4 Reviewing the management of key risks

16.3.5 Performing the full audit cycle including risk management and control management over operations effectiveness, financial reliability and compliance with all applicable legislation and regulations

16.3.6 Consideration of risk in determining the internal audit scope and developing the annual internal audit plan and four year strategic workplan.

Figure 1 – Internal audits role in enterprise risk management[1]

[1] IIA Position Paper: The Role of Internal Auditing in Enterprise-wide Risk Management (theiia.org)



16.3.7 The activities on the left of Figure 1 are all assurance activities. They form part of the wider objective of giving assurance on risk management. An internal audit function complying with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing can and should perform at least some of these activities.

Internal controls

16.4 Assist council in maintaining effective controls by evaluating their effectiveness and efficiency and by promoting continuous improvement.

16.5 review and advise if council's monitoring and review of controls is sufficient,

16.6 review and advise if internal and external audit recommendations to correct internal control weaknesses are implemented appropriately

Compliance

16.7 Review and advise of the adequacy and effectiveness of council's compliance framework via internal audit activities, including:

16.7.1 if council has appropriately considered legal and compliance risks as part of the council's risk management framework

16.7.2 how the council manages its compliance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures, codes, and contractual arrangements, and

16.7.3 whether appropriate processes are in place to assess compliance.

Fraud and corruption

16.8 Review and advise of the adequacy and effectiveness of council's fraud and corruption prevention framework and activities via internal audit activities, including whether council has appropriate processes and systems in place to capture and effectively investigate fraud-related information.

Financial management

16.9 Review and advise via internal audit activities:

16.9.1 if Council's financial management processes are adequate

16.9.2 the adequacy of cash management policies and procedures

16.9.3 if there are adequate controls over financial processes, for example:

- appropriate authorisation and approval of payments and transactions
- adequate segregation of duties
- timely reconciliation of accounts and balances
- review of unusual and high value purchases

16.9.4 if policies and procedures for management review and consideration of the financial position and performance of Council are adequate

16.9.5 if Council's grants and tied funding policies and procedures are sound.

Corporate Governance

16.10 Review and advise of the adequacy of council's governance framework via internal audit activities, including the council's:

16.10.1 decision-making processes

16.10.2 implementation of governance policies and procedures

16.10.3 reporting lines and accountability

16.10.4 assignment of key roles and responsibilities

16.10.5 committee structure

16.10.6 management oversight responsibilities

16.10.7 human resources and performance management activities

16.10.8 reporting and communication activities

16.10.9 information and communications technology (ICT) governance, and

16.10.10 management and governance of the use of data, information and knowledge.

Improvement

16.11 Strategic planning

16.11.1 Review and advise of the adequacy of council's strategic planning framework via internal audit activities, including:

- the adequacy and effectiveness of council's integrated, planning and reporting (IP&R) processes
- if appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanisms are in place to measure progress against objectives, and
- whether council is successfully implementing and achieving its IP&R objectives and strategies.

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17 SCHEDULE 2 - INTERNAL AUDIT PROTOCOL

Objective

17.1 This protocol prescribes obligations for internal audit and senior management in relation to internal audit work.

17.2 Internal audit will professionally contribute to building a better organisation through their work with the bigger picture in mind.

17.3 Management will constructively contribute to internal audit work to enhance organisation governance and operational control.

Mutual Obligations

Activity	Internal Audit	Management
Strategic Alignment	Our audits will align with the strategies, objectives and risks of the council	We will provide suitable guidance to the internal auditors on our strategies, objectives and risks.
Collaboration	We will work constructively with management to improve our council.	We will work constructively with internal audit to promote council improvement.
Assurance Strategy	We will offer an assurance strategy service to management to better understand whether governance and controls are operating effectively. We will develop a strategy for delivery of internal audit services that aligns with the assurance strategy	We will collaborate with internal audit on initiatives such as assurance strategy to improve the governance and control environment.
Internal Audit Planning	We will prepare an annual internal audit plan that considers management input about council's risks and issues.	We will actively provide input to the internal audit plan.
Internal Audit Service Planning	We will facilitate planning workshops with management before internal audit services for mutual understanding.	We will actively provide input to audit planning and draw out relevant elements of the approved risk appetite.
Audit Timing	We will provide management with an audit schedule and timings and we will stick to it subject to resources.	We will make ourselves available to internal audit in line with audit schedule timings.
Audit Execution	We will be respectful of the people we audit, understand they have their jobs to do, and avoid peak business periods where we reasonably can.	We understand internal audit also has a job to do and we will help them to do that.
Communication	We will maintain effective communication throughout the audit so that management is not surprised and caught off guard by significant observations raised during the wrap-up and reporting stage of the audit	We will provide internal auditors with all relevant information they require to complete the audit and will do so in a timely manner.
Audit Reporting	We will deliver the internal audit report on the date we promised and ensure it is insightful, proactive and future-focused. We will give credit where it is due and not just focus on the negative	We will commit to constructive discussion on internal audit results and the best ways to mitigate identified risks.
Agreed Audit Recommendations	We will work with management to achieve the best improvement actions to remediate risks.	We will work with internal audit to achieve the best improvement actions to remediate risks.
Monitoring and follow-up	We will actively follow-up and support management as they implement agreed audit actions.	We will diligently work to implement agreed audit actions in a timely way
Ad hoc services	We will offer risk-based ad hoc internal audit services to management in response to emerging risks and issues	We will work collaboratively with internal audit to address emerging risks and issues

Internal Audit Plan

17.4 Internal audit will consult with the General Manager, senior management and the audit, risk and improvement committee when developing the internal audit plan for the coming year to gain insights into risks and emerging issues around operations, corporate support activities and projects.

Internal Audit Services

17.5 An executive sponsor will be nominated for each internal audit service.

17.6 Internal audit will consult with the executive sponsor, management of the area to be audited, and the General Manager (or their delegate) at the planning stage of every internal audit service. This includes opportunity for input to the objective and scope for upcoming internal audit services.

17.7 A planning workshop with relevant management and staff may be facilitated by internal audit to discuss risks around the audit topic and optimise the audit objective and scope.

17.8 Internal Audit will ensure the executive sponsor is presented and with the agreed terms of reference including the objective, scope and timeline. Internal audit will keep relevant management up-to-date on progress throughout internal audit services and to advise and discuss issues found by internal audit as they arise.

17.9 At conclusion of audits, internal audit will convene a formal closing meeting (audit action workshop) to discuss results of the internal audit and arrive at agreed fit-for-purpose implementation actions and timings.

Implementing Agreed Audit Actions

17.10 Management will be responsible for timely implementation of agreed audit actions in response to improvement opportunities contained in internal audit reports. These actions will align to the strategies, objectives and risks of council. Internal audit will workshop the agreed audit actions with internal audit ensuring improvement actions contain:

17.10.1 Action to be taken – Agreed audit actions should be practical and address the finding and underlying root cause and reduce the level of risk identified. Where a technology solution is required, confirmation should be included from the Information Technology Manager that this is on the ICT work program and is funded.

17.10.2 Responsible person - An assigned responsible officer who will be responsible for the implementation of the agreed audit action.

17.10.3 Due date - Dates for implementation should be realistic taking into consideration resources and approved budgets of the relevant business unit.

17.10.4 Interim control arrangements to be relied upon where there is a long lead time, such as waiting to close-out an agreed audit action through the implementation of a technology solution.

17.11 If an agreed action cannot be reached, internal audit will refer the matter to the General Manager for resolution. If agreement is still not reached, the final arbiter will be the audit, risk and improvement committee.

17.12 Each quarter, internal audit will request an update from management on implementation progress for agreed audit actions. Progress updates on agreed audit actions will detail the progress of implementation. Timing of progress updates will align to audit, risk and improvement committee meetings.

17.12.1 Where an implementation date needs to be revised the progress updated will detail the reasons and challenges in implementing the action by its original due date. The audit, risk and improvement committee may request the executive sponsor to attend meetings and present details on why the action has not been fully implemented and closed-out and how the resulting risk is being addressed in the interim.

17.12.2 Where management seeks to accept a risk from an audit, they are required to complete a 'management acceptance of risk' form that considers approved risk appetite, and have it endorsed by the General Manager.

17.12.3 Management requests for agreed audit actions to be closed out will be supported by documentary evidence and reviewed by the internal auditor prior to being presented to the audit, risk and improvement as formally closed.

18 CHARTER ADMINISTRATION

Directorate	General Manager's Unit		
Responsible Officer	Internal Auditor		
Associated Procedure	Internal Audit Manual (DOC2024/170875)		
Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Review Frequency	Annual	**Council Review Frequency**	Each Council term or as required
Document Reference Number	DOC2025/xxxxxx		
This Charter supports Council's compliance with the following legislation: Section 216O Internal audit charter—the Act, Sch 6, cl 8A *Local Government (General) Amendment (Audit, Risk and Improvement* Committee) under the *Local Government Act 1993*			
This Charter contributes to the achievement of the following desired outcome or objectives as per Council's Delivery Program: Outcome 5 – Lead - We have strong leadership and effective governance			
Related Documents (include reference document numbers)	▪ Code of Conduct (DOC2018/086716) ▪ Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Charter (DOC2024/223983) ▪ Internal Audit Manual (DOC2024/170875) ▪ Quality Assurance Improvement Program (DOC2023/158818)		

19 CHARTER HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	8 May 2024 - Audit and Risk Committee	New charter adopted in alignment with the Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW November 2023.
2	19 June 2024 - Council	
3	4 September 2025 - Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee	Annual Review – Alignment with Global Internal Audit Standards Model Internal Audit Charter
4	*Council November 2025*	

ASSESSMENT REPORT

DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Development Application No. **8/2025/536/1** seeks approval for a Telecommunications Facility (Mobile Telephone Base Station).

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.

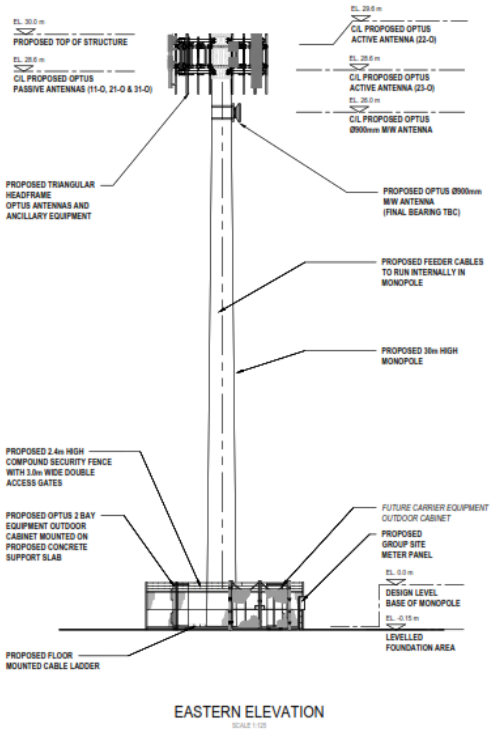


Figure 1: Eastern Elevation of Proposed Development

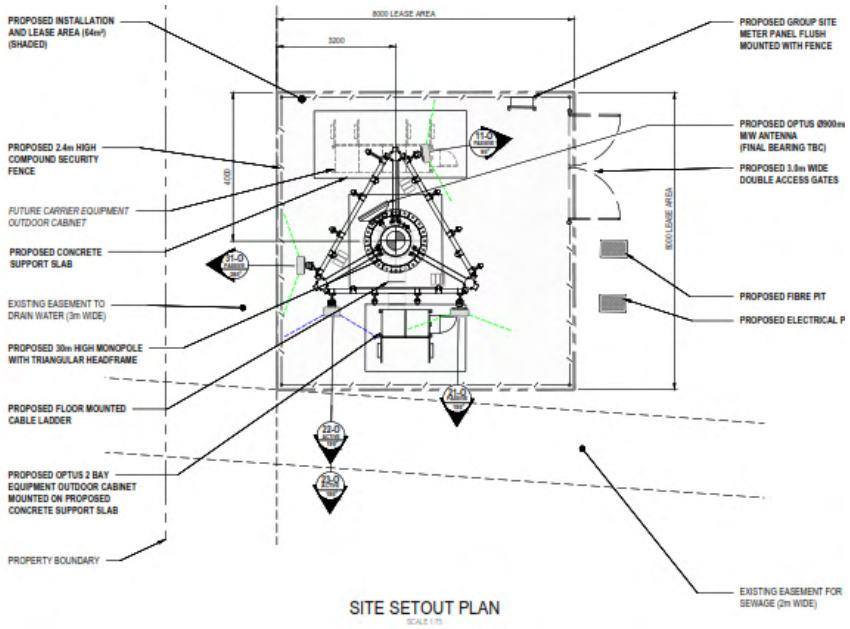
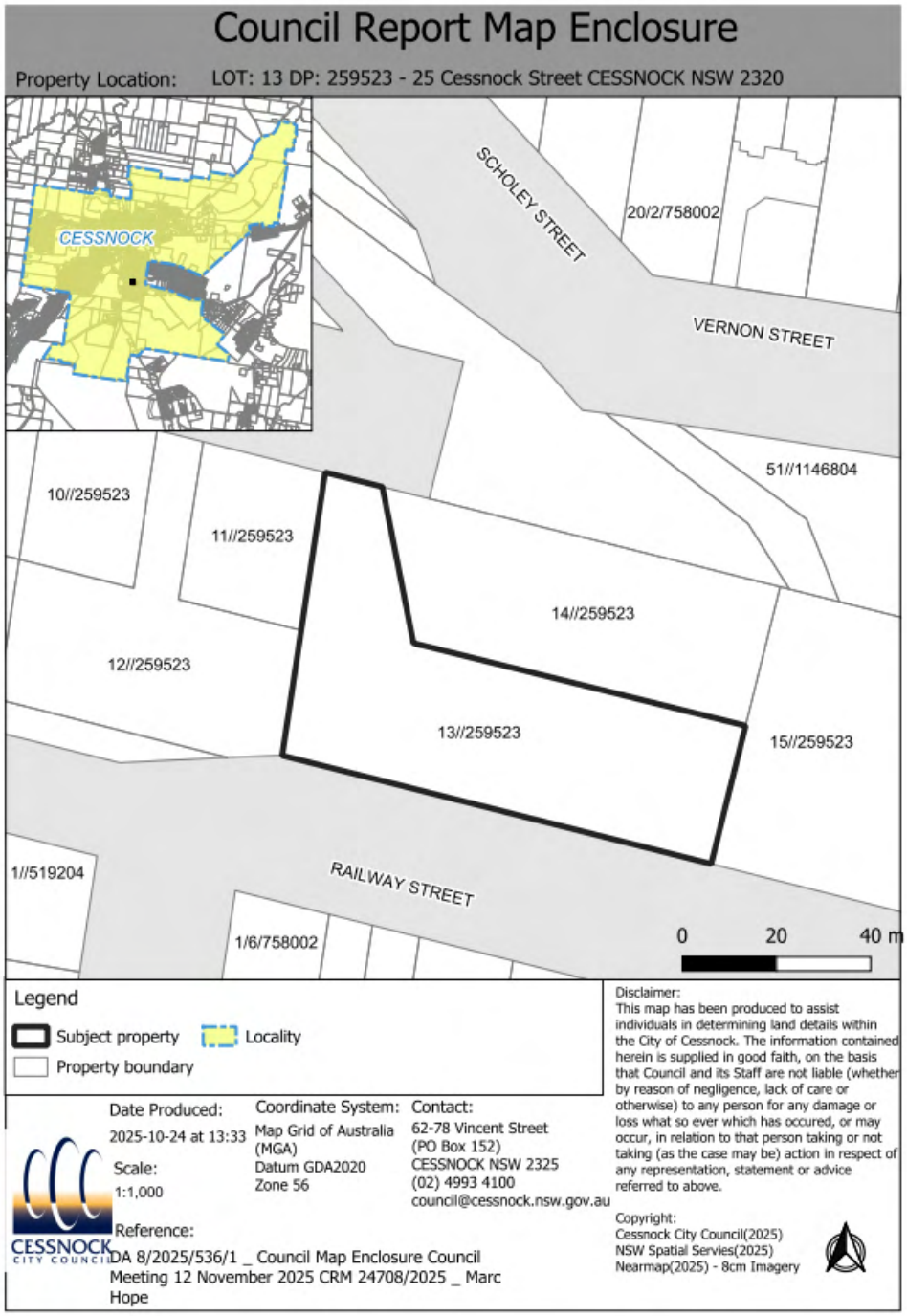


Figure 2: Site Setout Plan of Proposed Development

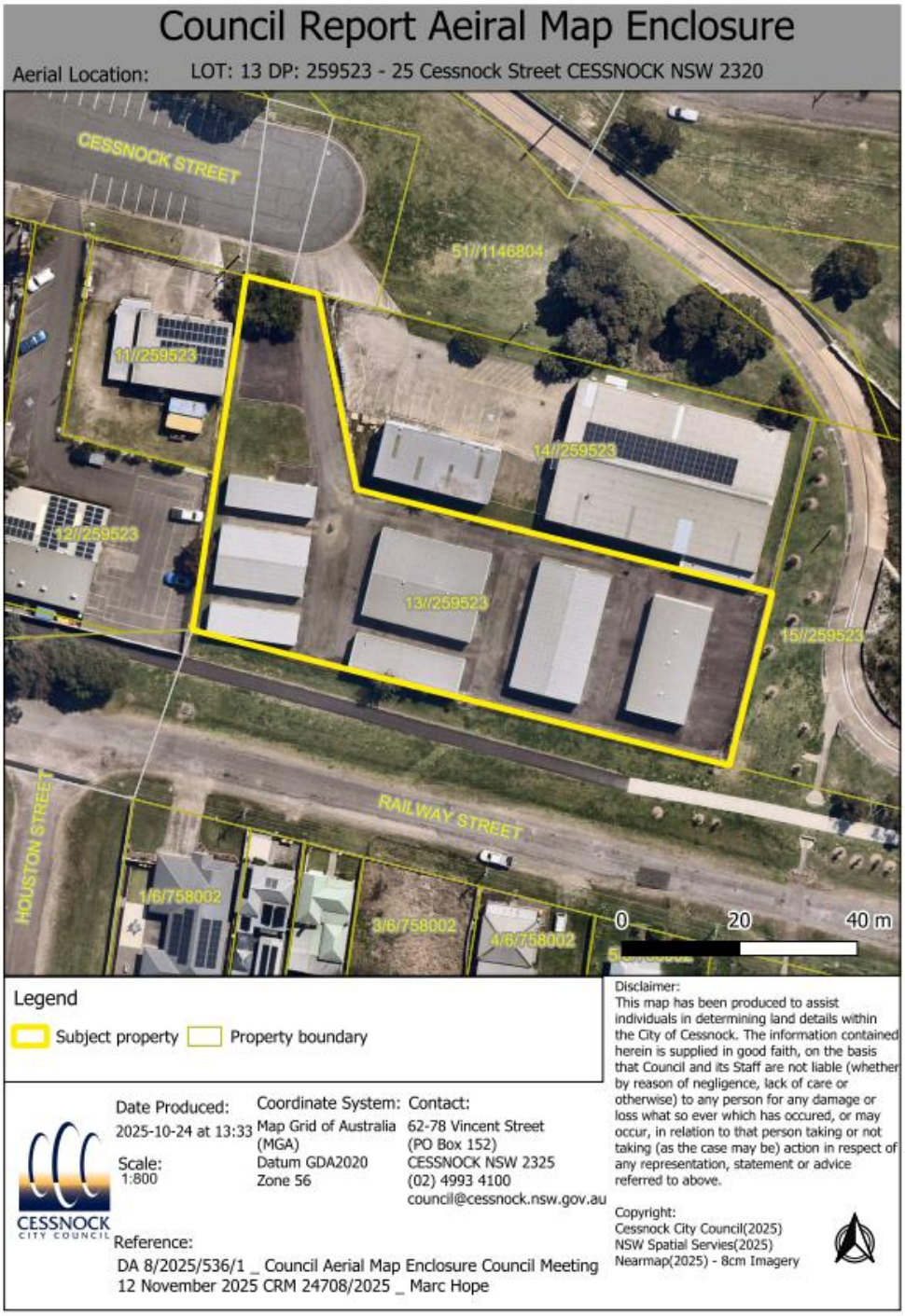
Plans illustrating the proposed development are contained in Enclosure 3.

LOCATION MAP



3

AERIAL


Council Report Aeiral Map Enclosure
Aerial Location: LOT: 13 DP: 259523 - 25 Cessnock Street CESSNOCK NSW 2320
CESSNOCK STREET
51//1146804
11//259523
14//259523
12//259523
13//259523
15//259523
RAILWAY STREET
HOUSTON STREET
1/6/758002
3/6/758002
4/6/758002
0
20
40 m
Legend
Subject property
Property boundary
Disclaimer:
This map has been produced to assist individuals in determining land details within the City of Cessnock. The information contained herein is supplied in good faith, on the basis that Council and its Staff are not liable (whether by reason of negligence, lack of care or otherwise) to any person for any damage or loss what so ever which has occured, or may occur, in relation to that person taking or not taking (as the case may be) action in respect of any representation, statement or advice referred to above.
Copyright:
Cessnock City Council(2025)
NSW Spatial Servies(2025)
Nearmap(2025) - 8cm Imagery
Date Produced:
2025-10-24 at 13:33
Scale:
1:800
Coordinate System:
Map Grid of Australia (MGA)
Datum GDA2020
Zone 56
Contact:
62-78 Vincent Street
(PO Box 152)
CESSNOCK NSW 2325
(02) 4993 4100
council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au
CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL
Reference:
DA 8/2025/536/1 _ Council Aerial Map Enclosure Council Meeting 12 November 2025 CRM 24708/2025 _ Marc Hope

SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCALITY

The subject site is commonly known as 25 Cessnock Street, Cessnock, and is legally described as Lot 13 in Deposited Plan 259523.

The subject site is located on the southern side of Cessnock Street, near the cul-de-sac end. The site has a frontage of 12.5m to Cessnock Street, a depth of 60m, and an overall site area of 3,435 m². Legal and physical vehicular access to the subject site is provided from Cessnock Street, with a secondary road frontage to Railway Street to the south.

The subject site is currently occupied by a Storage Facility. The subject site is irregular in shape and is of a battle-axe lot configuration. The land is zoned MU1 Mixed Use under the Cessnock Local Environmental Plan (CLEP) 2011 and forms part of the local heritage listing for the South Maitland Railway System, which is of local heritage significance.

The proposed telecommunications facility is positioned near the western boundary, approximately 21 metres from the Cessnock Street boundary.

The below photographs depict the site:



Figure 3: Proposed location of telecommunication tower and ancillary cabinet with 25 Cessnock Street Cessnock



Figure 4: Existing access off Cessnock Street proposing to remain unchanged



Figure 5: View West from subject site showing mixed land uses and on street parking



Figure 6: View toward subject site from Council owned reserve forming part of netball complex



Figure 7: View East toward nearest residential dwellings from proposed development

The surrounding properties are characterised by a mix of uses. The site lies within the MU1 Mixed Use zone, which generally includes commercial and light industrial developments extending along Vincent Street and South Road. To the south, the area transitions into an E3 Industrial Zone, which includes larger-scale uses such as Bunnings. Residential development occurs primarily to the east of Vincent Street and north of Aberdare Road, with the closest dwelling located on the southern side of Railway Street, approximately 70 metres from the subject site. Open areas, including recreation spaces, educational facilities, and other community uses, are also present within the wider locality.

No existing telecommunications facilities are located within the immediate area. The closest existing Optus facility is located approximately 1km to the north.

Relevant development consents issued in relation to the property include:

Development Consent Reference No.	Date development consent issued	Description of approved development
8/1999/4/1	12/02/1999	Storage Buildings
8/2004/747/1	22/06/2004	Alterations and Extensions to Self-Storage Shed Facility

HISTORY

The history of the subject Development Application is summarised in the following table:

Date	Action
13 July 2025	Development Application submitted on Planning Portal
24 July 2025	Development Application allocated to Assessment Officer
30 July 2025	Internal Referrals initiated
7 August 2025	Notification commenced
13 August 2025	Site inspection
13 August 2025	All finalised referrals received
21 August 2025	Notification concluded
17 October 2025	Second site inspection
17 October 2025	Assessment completed

ASSESSMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979

Section 4.15 Evaluation

In determining a Development Application, the consent authority is to take into consideration the following matters prescribed within s4.15 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, as are of relevance to the development the subject of the development application:

4.15(1)(a)(i) The provisions of any environmental planning instrument

The environmental planning instruments that relate to the proposed development are:

1. **Relevant *State Environmental Planning Policies***
   1.1 *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021*

1.2 *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021*

2. Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011

An assessment of the proposed development under the environmental planning instruments is provided below:

1.1 *State Environmental Planning* Policy *(SEPP)* (*Transport and Infrastructure) 2021*

The SEPP (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 provides for a consistent planning framework for infrastructure and the provision of services across NSW, along with providing consultation with relevant public authorities during the assessment process. The relevant sections establish a framework for the deployment of telecommunications facilities within NSW aimed at improving efficiency and providing consistent planning regime for telecommunications infrastructure and the provision of services such as mobile phone coverage and broadband.

Clause 2.143 of the SEPP specifies that telecommunications facilities are permissible with consent in any zone.

Clause 2.143(2) specifies that the consent authority must take into consideration any guidelines concerning site selection, design, construction or operating principles for telecommunications facilities that are issued by the Secretary for the purposes of this section and published in the Gazette. The relevant guidelines are considered in the below table.

Assessment Criteria NSW Telecommunications Facilities Guideline	
P1: 'Design'	**Assessment**
a. As far as practical, integrate a telecommunications facility that is mounted on an existing building or structure with the design and appearance of the building or structure.	Existing structures onsite could not physically or technically accommodate integration; however, the proposed development achieves compliance by co-locating on the same parcel as the existing exchange building. The siting arrangement ensures functional association while maintaining efficient land use and visual compatibility.
b. Minimise the visual impact of telecommunications facilities, reduce visual clutter (particularly on tops of buildings) and ensure physical dimensions (including support mounts) are sympathetic to the scale and height of the building to which it is to be attached and to adjacent buildings.	The monopole's design, scale, and neutral finish will minimise visual intrusion and visual clutter. The visual impact is assessed as negligible and compatible with the mixed-use character of the surrounding lands.
c. If a telecommunications facility protrudes from a building or structure and is predominantly seen against the sky, either match the prevailing colour of the host building or structure or use a neutral colour such as pale grey.	The monopole will be finished in a non-reflective pale grey colour, consistent with neutral tones recommended under the Guideline. This will be reinforced through a condition of consent to reduce sky contrast.
d. Where possible and practical, screen or house ancillary facilities using the same colour as the prevailing background and consider using existing vegetation or new landscaping.	Ancillary facilities will be housed or finished in colours consistent with nearby structures. The application proposes finishes sympathetic to the built environment.

e. Locate and design a telecommunications facility in a way that responds to its setting (rural, residential, industrial or commercial).	The expected visual outcome is compatible with the streetscape and broader setting of Cessnock. Council's heritage assessment has concluded that, the proposed development is acceptable on heritage grounds, subject to conditions to ensure the protection of archaeology.
f. Site and design a telecommunications facility located on or adjacent to a listed heritage item or within a heritage conservation area with external colours, finishes and scale sympathetic to the heritage item or conservation area.	
g. Locate telecommunications facilities to minimise or avoid obstructing significant views of a heritage item or place, a landmark, a streetscape, vista or a panorama, whether viewed from public or private land.	The site is not situated upon a prominent landmark, vantagepoint, or within a notable sightline or scenic vista.
h. Consult with relevant council when proposing pruning, lopping or removing any tree or vegetation. Obtain a tree preservation order, permit or development consent if required.	None of these works proposed.
i. Remove redundant telecommunications facilities and restore the site to the condition it was in prior to the facility's construction.	N/A
j. Remove redundant components of existing facilities after upgrades.	N/A
k. Where possible, consolidate telecommunications facilities to reduce visual clutter and work with other users on co-location sites to minimise cumulative visual impact.	Co-location is addressed further below.
l. Accord with all relevant industry design guides when siting and designing telecommunications facilities.	The Statement of Environmental Effects submitted by the applicant addresses all relevant guidelines, standards, and legislation.
m. Assess potential visual impact in alternative site assessments.	The submitted application documents includes a brief visual impact analysis and alternative sites assessment. The assessment of the application has indicated that the telecommunication tower must be situated within the Cessnock Commercial Centre to achieve the necessary service outcomes and network performance objectives. Consequently, some degree of visual impact is unavoidable at any site within this precinct, given the uniform character and built form of the surrounding commercial context. Cessnock Street, the proposed location, exhibits relatively low traffic volumes compared to adjoining streets and functions primarily as a local access route rather than a pedestrian-oriented thoroughfare. Limited pedestrian activation and reduced visual exposure along this street corridor diminish the overall prominence of the proposed structure within the public domain.

	Accordingly, the visual impact associated with the proposed siting along Cessnock Street is considered minor relative to other feasible locations within the precinct. The site selection demonstrates an appropriate balance between achieving technical network requirements and maintaining an acceptable level of visual amenity within the local urban landscape.
Overall, the proposal is wholly consistent with the design principles established by the Guidelines.	
P2: 'Co-location'	**Assessment**
a. As far as practical, locate telecommunications lines underground or within an existing underground conduit or duct.	N/A
b. Where practical, co-locate or attach overhead lines, antennas and ancillary telecommunications facilities to existing buildings, public utility structures, poles, towers or other radiocommunications equipment to minimise clutter.	The proposal is unable to co-locate or attach overhead lines, antennas and ancillary telecommunications facilities to existing buildings, public utility structures, poles, towers or other radiocommunications equipment.
c. Consider extending an existing tower as a practical co-location solution to new towers.	The use of existing monopoles (or the like) is not feasible as the proposal seeks to extend coverage. Therefore, tower co-location is redundant.
d. Demonstrate that co-location is not practicable if choosing not to co-locate a facility.	The submitted application documents addresses the impracticality of alternative sites for co-location.
e. If choosing to co-locate, design, install and operate a telecommunications facility so that resultant cumulative levels of radio frequency emissions are within the maximum human exposure levels set out in RPS S-1.	Not applicable – applicant is not seeking approval for a co-location.
Overall, the proposal is consistent with the co-location principles, or those applicable, established by the Guidelines.	
P3: 'ERE Health Standards'	**Assessment**
a. Design, install and operate a telecommunications facility so that maximum human exposure levels to radiofrequency emissions comply with RPS S-1 (see Appendix C).	Telecommunications facilities generating Electromagnetic Emissions (EME), must comply with EME standards mandated by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), which includes a maximum exposure limit expressed as a percentage value of 100%. The exposure of 100% is considered safe under the Australian Standard (AS1055). The application is required to be supported by an EME Environmental report prepared in accordance with the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) prediction methodology and report format. A suitable EME report has been provided by the Applicant which demonstrates that the maximum predicted EME levels of the proposed development will equate to 1.82% of the
b. Using the format required by ARPANSA, report on predicted levels of EME surrounding any development covered by the Industry Code C564:2020 Mobile Phone Base Station Deployment, and how the development will comply with ACMA safety limits and RPS S-1.	

	maximum exposure limit, which is below the maximum allowable exposure limit under the Australian Standard. As such, the proposal is considered satisfactory in this regard.
Overall, the submitted materials affirm the proposed development accords with the applicable electromagnetic standards.	
P4: 'Disturbance, Risk & Compliance'	**Assessment**
a. Ensure the siting and height of a telecommunications facility complies with the of the Commonwealth Civil Aviation Regulations 1998 and Airports (Protection of Airspace) Regulations 1996. Avoid penetrating any obstacle limitation surface (OLS) shown on a relevant OLS plan for an aerodrome or airport (as reported to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority) within 30 km of the proposed development.	The site is not subject to an obstacle limitation surface limit according to Council mapping.
b. Ensure no adverse radio frequency interference with any airport, port or Commonwealth defence navigational or communications equipment, including the Morundah Communication Facility, Riverina.	The minimisation of interference is the responsibility of Optus. The operator must control radio frequencies in accordance with the requirement of the Communications Authority.
c. Carry out the telecommunications facility and ancillary facilities in accordance with any manufacturer's installation specifications.	Construction in accordance with any manufacturer's installation specifications will be conditioned.
d. Protect the structural integrity of any building or structure on which a telecommunications facility is erected.	The proposed elements which may warrant structural consideration, i.e., the monopole, is standalone and therein of little concern.
e. Erect the telecommunications facility wholly within the boundaries of a property as approved by the relevant landowner.	The proposed elements are sited entirely within the subject land on the submitted plans.
f. Ensure all construction of a telecommunications facility accords with Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and Construction – Volume 1 (Landcom 2004), or its replacement.	Compliance with Landcom's construction guideline(s) will be conditioned.
g. Mitigate obstruction or risks to pedestrians or vehicles caused by the location of the facility, construction activity or materials used in construction.	Placement of stored materials and construction vehicles will be conditioned.
h. Where practical, carry out work at times that minimise disruption to adjoining properties and public access and restrict hours of work to 7.00am and 5.00pm, Mondays to Saturdays, with no work on Sundays and public holidays.	Construction hours will be conditioned as such.
i. Employ traffic control measures during construction in accordance with Australian Standard AS1742.3-2002 Manual of uniform traffic control devices – Part 3: Traffic control devices for works on roads.	The provision of a Traffic Management Plan will be conditioned.
j. Guard open trenching in accordance with Australian Standard Section 93.080 – Road Engineering AS1165 – 1982 – Traffic hazard warning lamps.	The mitigation of potential, adverse impacts arising from trenching will be conditioned.

k. Minimise disturbance to flora and fauna and restore land to a condition similar to its condition before the work was carried out.	Not applicable – urban area with minimal fauna; no flora required to be cleared by proposal.
l. Identify any potential impacts on threatened species and communities in consultation with relevant authorities and avoid disturbance to identified species and communities where possible.	Council mapping indicates no threatened plant or animal species onsite or in proximity.
m. Identify the likelihood of harming an Aboriginal place and/or Aboriginal object and obtain approval from the Department of Premier and Cabinet if the impact is likely, or Aboriginal objects are found.	The cessation of works in the instance any Aboriginal artefacts are found will be conditioned.
n. Reinstate, at your expense, street furniture, paving or other facilities removed or damaged during construction to at least the same condition as that prior to installation.	The protection of affected Council assets, and the like, will be conditioned.
Overall, the proposal is consistent with these principles established by the Guidelines or will be regulated as such as per the imposed conditions of consent.	
P5: 'Alternative Sites'	**Assessment**
a. Include adequate numbers of alternative sites in the alternative site assessment as a demonstration of good faith.	The submitted Statement includes the identification of (14) alternative sites.
b. In addition to the new site selection matters in Section 4 of the Industry Code C564:2020 Mobile Phone Base Station Deployment: *• only include sites that meet coverage objectives, and that have been confirmed as available, with an owner agreeable to having the facility on their land* *• if the preferred site is a site owned by the Carrier, undertake a full assessment of the site* *• indicate the weight placed on selection criteria* *• undertake an assessment of each site before any site is dismissed.*	The submitted alternative site assessment meets the objectives of the Guideline, evidencing a transparent and technically justified selection process.

The proposed facility has been sited and designed with consideration given to the principles of NSW Telecommunications Facilities Guideline, including Broadband (October 2022).

1.2 *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021*

The aim of the policy is to promote the remediation of contaminated land for the purpose of reducing the risk of harm to human health or any other aspect of the environment.

State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021 requires that consent not be granted until Council has considered whether the land is contaminated. If the land is contaminated, the Council needs to be satisfied that the land is suitable in its contaminated state (or will be suitable, after remediation) for the purpose for which the development is proposed to be carried out.

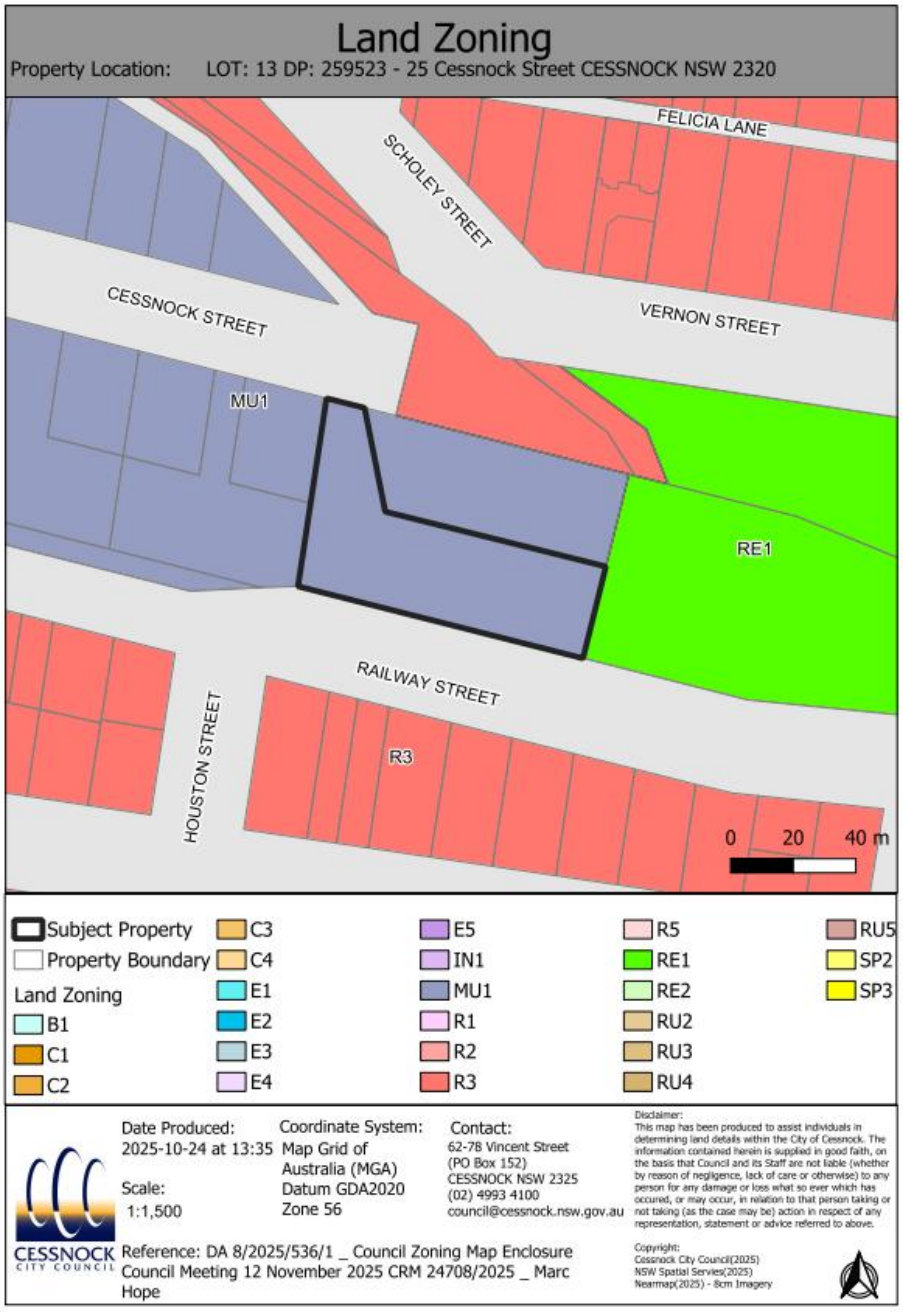
The subject site has historically been used for storage facilities which is a consistent use within the zoning.

No evidence of contamination was observed during inspection of the site. As there is no historical evidence of the site being previously used for a purpose which would result in the land being contaminated, further testing of the site in respect of contamination is not warranted in this instance. It is further noted that the proposed use is not a sensitive land use having regard to contamination considerations.

2. *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011*

2.1 Permissibility

The subject site is zoned MU1 – Mixed Use under the provisions of the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan (CLEP) 2011*, as depicted in the below map:



The proposed development is categorised as telecommunications facility under CLEP 2011, which is defined as follows:

telecommunications facility *means—*

(a) any part of the infrastructure of a telecommunications network, or
(b) any line, cable, optical fibre, fibre access node, interconnect point equipment, apparatus, tower, mast, antenna, dish, tunnel, duct, hole, pit, pole or other structure in connection with a telecommunications network, or
(c) any other thing used in or in connection with a telecommunications network.

telecommunications network *means a system, or series of systems, that carries, or is capable of carrying, communications by means of guided or unguided electromagnetic energy, or both.*

The development satisfies the above definition, as the development comprises infrastructure of a telecommunications network (Optus) specifically, tower and antennas.

Development for the purpose of telecommunications facility is a permitted land use in the MU1, with consent.

2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the MU1 zone, and a response to each, are identified in the following table:

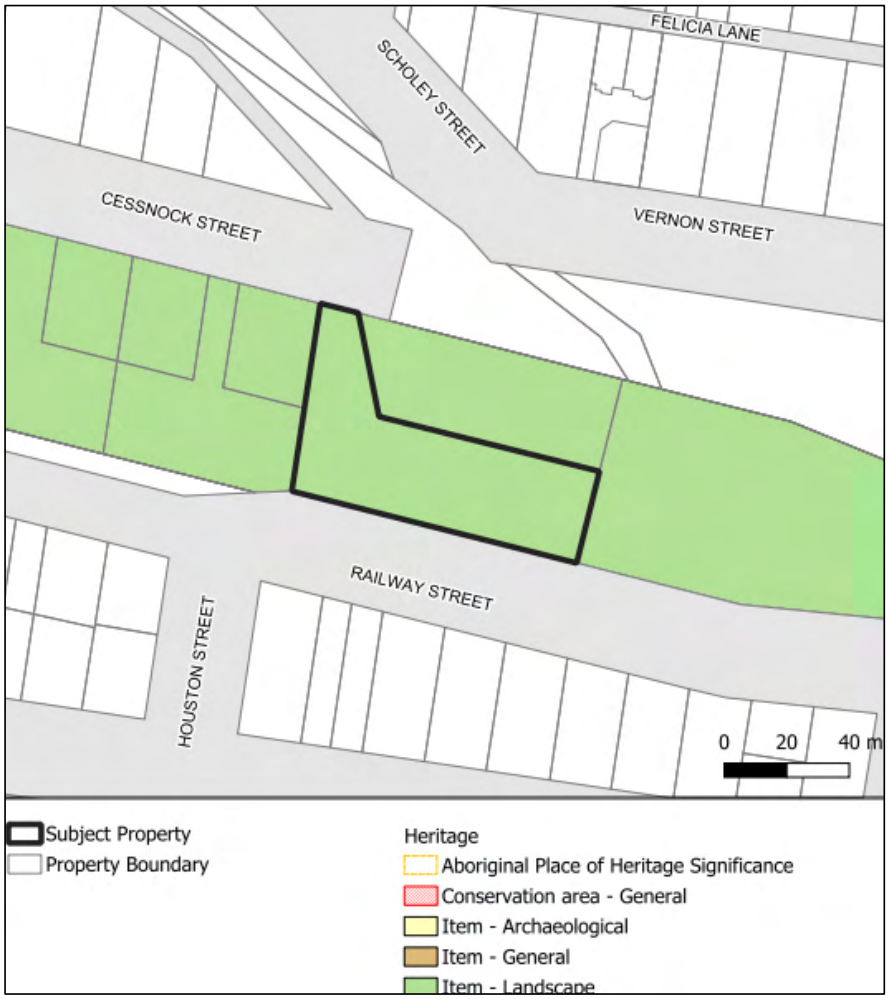
Objective	Comment
To encourage a diversity of business, retail, office and light industrial land uses that generate employment opportunities.	The objective seeks to encourage a diverse range of business, retail, office, and light industrial land uses that collectively support employment generation and economic sustainability. The provision of telecommunications towers contributes directly to achieving the objective of encouraging a diversity of business, retail, office, and light industrial land uses that generate employment opportunities. By providing reliable and advanced digital connectivity, the tower enables local businesses to operate efficiently, supports modern communication needs, and attracts technology-based enterprises to the area. Enhanced telecommunications infrastructure underpins innovation, remote working, and e-commerce activity, fostering economic diversification and competitiveness across sectors. Consequently, the presence of a telecommunications tower strengthens the foundation for sustained business growth and supports the establishment of a well-connected, economically active community.
To ensure that new development provides diverse and active street frontages to attract pedestrian traffic and to contribute to vibrant, diverse and functional streets and public spaces.	The proposed telecommunications tower supports the objective as it has no impact on providing diverse and active street frontages.
To minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and land uses within adjoining zones.	The proposed telecommunications facility complies with the objective to minimise conflict between land uses within this zone and adjoining zones. It is located on an unused portion of the site, well separated from nearby dwellings by at least 70 metres to the south and at least 90 metres to the north-east. Existing buildings and vegetation provide effective screening, while open space and mixed-use developments surround the site. The facility does not limit future business, retail, or community uses, ensuring compatibility with surrounding land uses and maintaining the intended harmony of the MU1 zone.
To encourage business, retail, community and other non-residential land uses on the ground floor of buildings.	The proposed service-based facility is not a multistorey mixed use building capable of meeting this objective.

2.3 Relevant Clauses

The Development Application was assessed against the following relevant clauses of the CLEP 2011:

- Clause 5.10 Heritage Conservation

The subject site is located within the former railway corridor that previously formed part of the South Maitland Railway System shown in the figure below. This section of the corridor formerly contained the Cessnock Railway Station. Following the closure of the railway line, the associated infrastructure, including the station building, was removed. The former railway alignment is now only partially discernible within the existing subdivision pattern.



The subdivision of the former railway station site and adjoining corridor occurred in 1979, after which the resultant allotments were progressively developed. The subject site has since been developed with several freestanding buildings currently used as a storage facility.

The site and adjoining allotments have been subject to extensive ground disturbance, and no visible remnants associated with the former railway use remain. Accordingly, the proposed development does not pose a risk to heritage values, provided conditions of consent are applied to address the management and protection of any archaeological material that may be uncovered during site works.

- Clause 5.21 Flood planning

In part, Section 5.21 states as follows:

(2) Development consent must not be granted to development on land the consent authority considers to be within the flood planning area unless the consent authority is satisfied the development—

(a) is compatible with the flood function and behaviour on the land, and

(b) will not adversely affect flood behaviour in a way that results in detrimental increases in the potential flood affectation of other development or properties, and

(c) will not adversely affect the safe occupation and efficient evacuation of people or exceed the capacity of existing evacuation routes for the surrounding area in the event of a flood, and

(d) incorporates appropriate measures to manage risk to life in the event of a flood, and

(e) will not adversely affect the environment or cause avoidable erosion, siltation, destruction of riparian vegetation or a reduction in the stability of river banks or watercourses.'

The objective of Section 5.21 is to ensure that development is compatible with the flood function and behaviour of the land. The subject lot is identified as being affected by the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) storm event, as determined by the Black Creek Flood Study. The site is classified as hazard category H1 and located within the flood fringe.

Although the proposed development is not specifically identified within the land use types listed in Chapter C9 of the Development Control Plan (DCP), it is considered an ancillary structure and is therefore permissible within an H1 flood hazard area, subject to Class A controls. These controls require that all electrical fixtures be located above the Flood Planning Level (FPL), which is defined as the 1% AEP flood level plus a 500mm freeboard. A referral to Council's flooding team was undertaken to confirm the relevant flood levels and applicable conditions.

The flood certificate obtained indicates a maximum 1% AEP flood level of Reduced Level (RL) 71.03m. Based on the spot levels provided (maximum RL70.96m), the corresponding Flood Planning Level for the site is RL71.46m. Appropriate conditions of consent will ensure the development complies with these flood planning requirements.

- Clause 7.2 Earthworks

Clause 7.2 seeks to ensure that any earthworks do not result in an adverse impact on the environment, neighbouring properties or heritage items. Earthworks proposed are considered to be minor/reasonable and will not result in any detrimental impact upon the surrounding environment.

- 7.14 Essential services

The subject site has access to essential services that can be made available or adequate arrangements be made to make them available, including waste management during construction and ongoing operation of the proposed development.

4.15(1)(a)(ii) The provisions of any proposed instrument that is or has been the subject of public consultation under this Act and that has been notified to the consent authority (unless the Planning Secretary has notified the consent authority that the making of the proposed instrument has been deferred indefinitely or has not been approved).

No proposed environmental planning instruments are relevant to the application.

4.15(1)(a)(iii) The provisions of any development control plan

Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010

The following is an assessment of the proposal's compliance with the relevant numerical standards in the Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010. Discussion of any variations to the standards is provided after the compliance table:

Part C: General Guidelines
Chapter 3: Contaminated Lands

As the DCP has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of SEPP (Resilience and Hazards) 2021, the proposed development is consistent with the requirements of this chapter as per discussed above (refer to consideration of the SEPP).

Part C: General Guidelines
Chapter 5: Waste Management

A waste management plan has not been submitted and the provision of such will be conditioned. Waste generated during construction of the development shall be separated into recyclable and non-recyclable materials and where possible shall be reused on-site. All other materials shall be disposed of at an appropriate facility.

Part E: Specific Areas
Chapter 21: Centres

This chapter applies to all assessable development in E1 Local Centre, E2 Commercial Centre and MU1 Mixed Use zones. Additional area-based provisions apply to Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, Branxton and Weston. The proposed development has been assessed under the provisions of Chapter E21 of the DCP. It is noted that given the type of development and its relationship with the intention of this chapter, the provisions are largely not applicable.

The following table details compliance with the applicable provisions contained within this chapter:

E21 – Centres (General)

Provision	Required	Discussion	Complies

Active street frontages	Active street frontages are provided on primary road frontages.	The land use form does not permit active street frontage elements.	**N/A**
Addressing the Street and Public Domain	Entrances are to be visible to the street and well lit.	Entry to the development is proposed via existing infrastructure that is visible and sufficiently lit.	**Yes**
Built Form, Setbacks and Street Hierarchy	Where a zero-metre setback is not achievable or is not desirable, the setback should be consistent with the established setback in the street.	The elements of the proposed development setback consistent with the established setback of surrounding developments fronting Cessnock Street.	**Yes**
Building Height	Where the proposal is higher than the heights in the established streetscape, the proposal must be accompanied by design justification demonstrating that the greater height will not adversely impact on the established streetscape or adjoining buildings.	Visual Impacts are discussed further in accordance with 4.15(1)(b), however, the resulting visual outcome has been mitigated where possible as the development will not adversely affect the streetscape.	**Yes**
Site Servicing	Garbage, mail box structures, service meters, air conditioners and the like are to be integrated with the overall design of the buildings and/or landscaping. Garbage storage areas are not permitted along the primary or secondary street frontage. Ventilation stacks are to be utilised wherever possible to vent shops and basements.	These site servicing features already exist and function in tandem with the existing storage development and will therefore extend to the proposed development.	**Yes**

E21 – Centres (Cessnock Commercial Precinct)

Provision	Required	Discussion	Complies

Active Street Frontages	To encourage lively, active streets. To contribute to the vitality of streets by maximising entries and display windows to retail uses and minimizing blank walls. To promote pedestrian activity and safety in the public domain. To allow for outlook to and surveillance of the street. Development contributes to the quality, activity, safety and amenity of streets and public domain.	The subject site is not located within the active street frontage area.	**N/A**
Built Form, Setbacks and Street Hierarchy	Development within existing or established centres are consistent with the existing or established setbacks in the street. of streetscapes and all other areas of public domain	The subject site is mapped as 0m setback for developments in accordance with the 'Setbacks in the Cessnock Commercial Precinct' mapping. The elements of the proposed development setback consistent with the established setback of surrounding developments fronting Cessnock Street.	**YES**



Figure 8: Cessnock Commercial Precinct showing location of Subject Site within precinct

4.15(1)(a)(iiia) The provisions of any planning agreement that has been entered into under section 7.4, or any draft planning agreement that a developer has offered to enter into under section 7.4

No such agreement has been proposed in conjunction with this application.

4.15(1)(a)(iv) The provisions of the regulations

There are no matters prescribed by the regulations that apply to this development.

4.15(1)(b) The likely impacts of that development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts on the locality

As demonstrated by the above assessment, the proposed development is unlikely to have a significant impact on both the natural and built environments, and the social and economic conditions of the locality. In particular:

Visual Impact

The proposed 30-metre telecommunications facility is to be located in the northern, currently undeveloped portion of the subject site. Its siting will introduce a new vertical element into the local landscape, and due to its height, the structure will inevitably be visible from various points within the surrounding mixed-use area. The surrounding context includes residential, commercial, and light industrial land uses, which already feature a diversity of built forms and utility infrastructure. These existing vertical and structural elements, along with scattered vegetation, will help moderate the visual prominence of the facility and reduce its overall aesthetic intrusion within key view corridors.

While the proposed height will result in some visual impact, this effect is considered negligible, as the scope of the impact is dependent on the position and perspective of the observer. The slender design and neutral finish of the structure will further assist in minimising its visual contrast with the background environment. Given the functional necessity of height for telecommunication coverage and the transient nature of its visual presence, the overall impact is regarded as acceptable and not expected to cause any substantial detriment to the existing character, amenity, or visual quality of the surrounding mixed-use setting.

Electromagnetic Emissions

Telecommunications facilities generating Electromagnetic Emissions (EME) are to comply with EME standards, as mandated by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), which includes a maximum exposure limit expressed as a percentage value of 100%. The exposure of 100% is considered safe under the Australian Standard (AS1055). A suitable EME Report has been provided by the Applicant which demonstrates that the maximum predicted EME levels of the proposed development will equate to 1.82% of the maximum exposure limit, which is below the maximum allowable exposure limit under the Australian Standard (AS1055). As such, the proposal is considered satisfactory in this regard.

The proposed telecommunications facility has been assessed in accordance with the requirements of ACMA and the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Authority (ARPANSA). Telecommunication facilities that emit electromagnetic energy are required to comply with all relevant EME standards, including the ARPANSA Radiofrequency Standard (RPS S-1) and Australian Standard AS1055, which set maximum public exposure limits at 100% of the permissible level. These standards are mandatory across Australia and are founded on extensive scientific evidence, independent research, and international guidance developed in consultation with the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP).

The EME Report submitted by the Applicant demonstrates that the maximum predicted EME level generated by the proposed facility will equate to approximately 1.82% of the allowable public exposure limit. This assessment extends to publicly accessible areas surrounding the site, including nearby residences, open spaces, and educational institutions such as Cessnock Public School and Cessnock High School, all of which demonstrate compliance with the RPS S-1 standard. Once the facility is constructed, an independent EME compliance certificate will be issued and made publicly available via the national RFNSA database.

The RPS S-1 standard aims to protects all members of the community, including children, the elderly, and individuals with health sensitivities, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Protection under this standard is not dependent on physical separation between the tower and nearby

uses, nor on the duration of exposure. As such, the facility's proximity to residential zones, schools, or other sensitive land uses is not a factor in determining compliance or safety. The level of protection afforded under the standard remains constant regardless of the time spent near the structure. Both Optus and Waveconn, as telecommunications carriers, are bound by these safety provisions and rely upon ARPANSA's expert guidance rather than setting their own exposure criteria.

According to information published by Optus, all telecommunications carriers operate under strict compliance regimes that ensure their facilities meet the ARPANSA RPS S-1 public safety standard at all times. Rigorous testing, review, and certification practices are in place to continually validate these compliance levels throughout the operational life of the facility. ARPANSA's guidance emphasizes that exposure to EME from telecommunications infrastructure remains far below levels known to cause harm, adopting conservative safety margins that are many times lower than scientifically demonstrated risk thresholds.

In accordance with the consideration of the proposal by Council, the EME impacts of the proposed facility are therefore assessed as entirely acceptable. The predicted exposure levels are negligible in the context of public health standards and consistent with typical telecommunication installations across Australia. While community concerns surrounding EME emissions are understandable, the adequacy and stringency of the RPS S-1 standard are outside the scope of planning discretion and are instead matters regulated through national public health and safety frameworks. The evidence demonstrates full compliance with these mandatory standards, which is the relevant threshold for consideration by the assessment authority.

Social and Economic Impacts

The development is identified as improving social and economic impacts within the locality as it provides a service that meets and improves the provision of services to satisfy the day to day needs of residents, workers, and visitors, as well as businesses. Moreover, the provision of mobile service coverage constitutes a considerable improvement to the amenity of Cessnock and its surrounds, which is directly aligned with the intended outcomes of the Cessnock District Strategy.

The proposed development has the potential to provide greater range and quality mobile phone coverage for residents and businesses. This will facilitate improved communication between residents, businesses, government, and support services, in turn resulting in beneficial social, health and safety, emergency, financial, technological, educational, cultural, tourism and leisure impacts.

Moreover, the provision of greater mobile service coverage incurs a multitude of benefits for essential services, activities, and general functions of day-to-day life. Specifically, emergency services can be reliably contacted, directed, liaised with, and reporting upon the instances in which they are required by virtue of the improved coverage. Businesses, whether reliant upon fixed or mobile goods and services operations, similarly rely upon mobile service coverage to function and communicate with the community.

4.15(1)(c) The suitability of the site for the development

As demonstrated by the above assessment, subject to appropriate conditions of consent and mitigation measures being implemented and maintained for the life of the development, the site is considered to be suitable for the proposed development.

The site is located within an established urban area, and is in close proximity to development of a similar nature. There are no constraints or restrictions over the land that would result in the site being considered unsuitable to accommodate the proposed development.

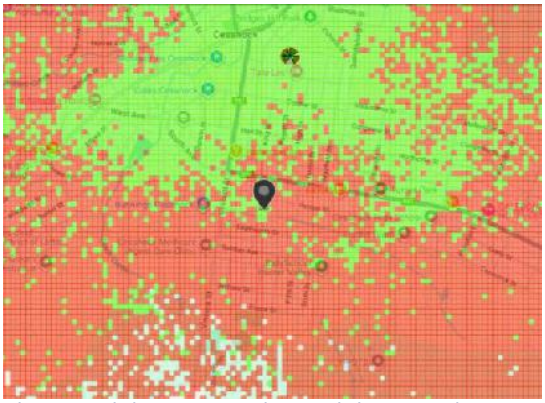
4.15(1)(d) Any submissions made in accordance with this Act or the regulations

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 having regard to the provisions of Development Practice Note. As a result, the Development Application is considered to formally have six (6) letters of objection, however notwithstanding all matters raised in all the received submission have been considered below.

The following table outlines the issues raised in the submissions lodged with Council, along with a response to each matter:

Issues	Comments
Need For the Facility	
• Existing coverage sufficient as there are multiple telecommunication facilities currently in the CBD	The below figure identifies the existing Optus facility at Millfield Street currently services a large portion of southern Cessnock but is frequently operating beyond its intended capacity.  *Figure 9: Existing Optus Service Levels in Cessnock* The applicant has advised that this congestion results in reduced reliability and slower data speeds, particularly during times of high network demand. The proposed facility is intended to relieve this pressure by expanding network coverage and increasing capacity within areas experiencing poor performance, especially to the south and east of the current facility. The location has been selected to provide overlap with, rather than duplication of, coverage from Millfield

	Street, ensuring more consistent service across the region. In addition, the facility is designed to support the introduction and operation of 5G technologies, which have enhanced data capability but shorter effective range than existing 4G networks. Placement of the monopole within close proximity to users is therefore essential to ensure delivery of higher network performance standards to meet current and future demands.
Alternate Locations and Collocation	
• The identified site is not fit for the proposed use and further investigations into surrounding sites should've been undertaken to find a better site.	The applicant undertook a detailed assessment of available infrastructure and alternative locations. Mapping and field investigations confirmed that no existing facilities within the southern Cessnock area are positioned to achieve the desired network outcomes, making collocation unfeasible. The applicant also considered approximately fourteen potential alternative properties along Vincent Road and Cessnock Street. These sites were either unavailable for lease, too constrained in size, topographically unsuitable, or located in positions that did not meet the required coverage objectives. Landowners of several possible sites expressed no interest in accommodating telecommunications infrastructure. As such, no other suitable options were determined to be viable. The final chosen location is within a Mixed-Use zone and is consistent with the objectives of that zone, which encourages a range of non-residential uses and supports essential infrastructure development.
Health and Safety	
• Potential health impacts from electromagnetic emissions, with assurance sought that the facility will operate safely and in full compliance with national exposure standards.	The documentation lodged with the application confirm that the facility will fully comply with the exposure limits established under the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Authority's (ARPANSA) Standard RPS S-1. This national standard has been developed through comprehensive scientific review in conjunction with international assessments from the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). It incorporates highly conservative exposure thresholds to protect all members of the public, including children, the elderly, and people with pre-existing health conditions. The emissions from the proposed facility have been modelled at 1.82% of the maximum permitted public exposure limit at 1.5 metres above ground level, which is significantly below the allowable standard. Once constructed, the operator is required to obtain an independently certified compliance certificate confirming that the facility adheres to RPS S-1 at all times. The EME report accompanying the application also demonstrates compliance for surrounding sensitive land uses, including Cessnock Public School and Cessnock High School. Under the NSW planning framework, once compliance is demonstrated with this

	mandatory standard, health-related impacts are considered to be adequately addressed and are not a matter for further planning determination.
Impacts on Amenity and Character	
• Visual impact of the proposed 30-metre monopole and its visibility within the local landscape, particularly in relation to nearby residential areas.	The proposed 30-metre monopole will inevitably be visible in the surrounding landscape; however, this height is fundamental to achieving the required telecommunications coverage, avoiding service interference and meeting safety thresholds. Telecommunications facilities are generally taller than nearby structures to ensure a reliable signal footprint and, by extension, minimises the need for additional towers elsewhere. The proposed site is located within a Mixed-Use Zone, which already accommodates a variety of non-residential and commercial land uses and supports a greater built-form scale than surrounding residential areas. The presence of existing buildings on the site and vegetation along the southern boundary will partially screen the structure from nearby dwellings. Dwellings to the south-west will benefit from roadside vegetation providing additional filtering of views. As a result, while the facility will be perceptible from some locations, its visual presence is consistent with the scale and functionality expected within the zone. The monopole and equipment will not produce dust, fumes, vibrations, or glare, and will not generate other forms of nuisance typically associated with industrial operations.
Property Values	
• Potential impact of the proposed facility on surrounding property values and whether its presence may reduce nearby residential land values.	Telecommunication infrastructure, such as mobile towers and small-cell installations, are established throughout Australia's urban and regional areas. There is no reliable or peer-reviewed evidence demonstrating a direct or consistent link between the installation of such infrastructure and property value reduction. Telecommunications access is, in many cases, regarded by residents and businesses as an asset that adds convenience and supports economic activity, particularly for those reliant on high-speed data for remote work and connectivity. Planning legislation in New South Wales does not include property market impacts as relevant assessment criteria.
Noise	
• Potential noise impacts from both the construction and operation of the facility, particularly in relation to nearby residential properties.	The proposed development is not likely to generate significant noise, either during installation or operation. Construction noise will be limited to short-term daytime activity typical of similar infrastructure works and can be managed through standard site controls.

	The applicant has advised that during operation, noise sources will be small cooling fans housed inside the equipment cabinets, which are located behind existing buildings on the site and set back from residential property boundaries. These fans operate intermittently and at low decibel levels that dissipate before reaching adjoining properties. The development will comply with relevant environmental noise criteria, ensuring that operational impacts on neighbouring areas are negligible, and conditions of consent have been recommended in relation to noise management.
Flooding	
• Safety concerns of the construction of development within flood prone land.	As examined above, an assessment has been undertaken against the relevant flood planning controls and the proposal has reached compliance. However, Council determines that a relevant safeguard is needed in the form of a condition to ensure that the equipment cabinets are installed at or above a specified minimum floor level consistent with the applicable flood planning level.
Heritage	
• Potential impact of the proposed facility on the heritage significance of the South Maitland Railway site and whether the development could affect any remaining heritage features.	As discussed above, the subject site is heritage listed as the South Maitland Railway. The site comprises a historical railway alignment that has been substantially modified over time, and no remnant railway infrastructure remains on or adjacent to the subject property, with the majority of the former line redeveloped for other uses. Consequently, the construction and operation of the proposed facility will not affect any physical heritage items or diminish the cultural significance of the listing.
Lighting	
• Possible lighting impacts from the facility, including whether illumination from the site could create disturbance or light spill to nearby properties.	The facility design does not include any external or continuous lighting. Minimal security lighting may be installed within the equipment compound, which will operate only when maintenance technicians are present or where required for safety. The absence of continuous external illumination ensures that no adverse lighting impacts will occur to nearby properties or the surrounding environment.
Construction Impacts	
• Potential construction impacts, including traffic disruption, noise, dust, and general disturbance to nearby residential areas during installation and operation of the facility	The applicant indicates that all construction vehicle access will occur via Cessnock Street, avoiding impacts on nearby residential streets. Construction is expected to be of short duration, limited to site preparation, installation of the monopole, and connection of associated equipment. Standard environmental management measures will be implemented to control dust, waste, and noise in accordance with Council and environmental authority requirements. Once operational, the facility will require

	minimal maintenance, with technician visits typically limited to quarterly inspections. The ongoing use of the site will therefore generate negligible traffic or operational disturbance.

4.15(1)(e) The public interest

The public interest is served through the detailed assessment of this Development Application under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021*, Environmental Planning Instruments and Council Policies.

Based on the above assessment, it is considered that the proposed development is consistent with the public interest.

SECTION 7.12 CONTRIBUTIONS

Section 7.12 Contributions are payable for the proposal.

In the event the application is approved, Section 7.12 Contributions totalling $915.75 would be payable, in accordance with the following:

Cessnock Section 7.12 Levy Contributions Plan 2017 : Calculator			
DA Number:	8/2025/536/1		
Address:	25 Cessnock Street, Cessnock		
Planner:	M Hope		
Date	13/10/2025		
Proposed cost of carrying out the development (PC)	Percentage of Levy (L%)	Proposed Cost of Development	S7.12 Contribution
$0 to $100,000	0.0%	*No levies applicable*	$0.00
$100,001 to $200,000	0.5%	*$183,150.00*	$915.75
More than $200,000	1%		$0.00
		Contribution Total	**$915.75**
Works valued over $1,000,000.00 require a Quantity Surveyor's report.			

INTERNAL REFERRALS

The Development Application was referred to the following Council officers for comment:

Officer	Comment
Development Engineering	The application has been assessed as being satisfactory in relation to engineering matters, and suitable conditions of consent have been imposed.
Heritage Advisor	The application has been assessed as being satisfactory in relation to heritage matters, and suitable advisory notes have been imposed on the conditions of consent.

EXTERNAL REFERRALS

The Development Application was not required to be referred to any external agencies for comment.

Reasons for approval

The determination decision was reached for the following reasons:

- The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, is consistent with the objectives of the applicable environmental planning instrument(s), being the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 (CLEP), State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021 and State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021.*

- The proposed development is, subject to the recommended conditions, consistent with the objectives of the Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 (DCP).

- Subject to the recommended conditions, the proposed development will be provided with adequate essential services required under the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 (CLEP).*

- The proposed development is considered to be of an appropriate scale and form for the site, and is consistent with the character of the locality.

- The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, will not result in unacceptable adverse impacts upon the natural or built environments.

- The proposed development is a suitable and planned use of the site and its approval is consistent with the public interest.

- Any issues raised in submissions have been taken into account in the assessment report and where appropriate, conditions of consent have been imposed on the determination. Council has given due consideration to community views when making the decision to determine the application.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

Condition

1. Approved Plans and Documents

Development must be carried out strictly in accordance with DA No. 8/2025/536/1 and the following plans and supplementary documentation, except where amended by the conditions of this consent.

Plan Reference	Drawn By	Dated
SITE PLAN (AN2325-003) (Sheet No. P1)	Waveconn	11.05.2025
SITE SETOUT PLAN (Dwg. No. AN2325-003) (Sheet No. P2)	Waveconn	11.05.2025
EASTERN ELEVATION (Dwg. No. AN2325-003) (Sheet No. P3)	Waveconn	11.05.2025

Document Title	Prepared By	Dated
Environmental EME Report	Optus, ARPANSA	06.05.2025
Statement of Environmental Effects	SAQ Consulting	18.06.2025

In the event of any inconsistency between the approved plans and supplementary documentation, the plans will prevail.

2. CC, PC & Notice Required

In accordance with the provisions of Section 6.6 and 6.7 of the *EP&A Act 1979,* construction works approved by this consent must not commence until:

a) A *CC* has been issued by a Certifier (being Council or a registered certifier); and

b) A *PC* has been appointed by the person having benefit of the development consent; and

c) If Council is not the *PC*, notify Council no later than two (2) days before building work commences as to who is the appointed *PC*; and

d) At least two (2) days before commencement of building work, the person having benefit of the development consent is to notify Council as to the intention to commence building work.

3. BCA Compliance

Pursuant to Section 4.17(11) of the *EP&A Act 1979* all building work must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the *BCA.*

Note: Section 69 of the *EP&A Reg 2021* and Section 19 of the *EP&A (DC&FS) Reg 2021* states 'a reference to the *BCA* is a reference to the *BCA* as in force on the relevant date', which is:

a) the day on which the application for the construction certificate was made, or
b) if the building is a multi storey building and a construction certificate has been issued under the same development consent for building work involving the entrance floor—the day on which the application for that construction certificate was made'.

4. Compliance with NSW Telecommunications Facilities Guideline

The approved development must be designed, constructed, and operated in accordance with the NSW Telecommunications Facilities Guideline 2022.

In particular, the facility must comply with Performance Requirement P1(c) and be finished in a neutral pale grey colour.

BUILDING WORK

BEFORE ISSUE OF A CONSTRUCTION CERTIFICATE

Condition

5. Long Service Levy

In accordance with Section 34 of the *Building and Construction Industry Long Service Payments Act 1986*, the applicant must pay a long service levy at the prescribed rate to either the Long Service Payments Corporation or Council for any work costing $250,000 or more. The Long Service Levy is payable prior to the issue of a *CC.*

6. Security for Cost of Damage and Completion of Public Work

Prior to issue of a *CC* authorising the carrying out of any work in accordance with this development consent, the applicant must provide security to the Council for the payment of the cost of the following:

a) making good any damage caused to any property of the Council as a consequence of the doing of anything to which the consent relates,

b) completing any public work (such as road work, kerbing and guttering, footway construction, stormwater drainage and environmental controls) required in connection with the consent,

c) remedying any defects in any such public work that arise within six (6) months after the work is completed.

The security is to be for an amount that is the greater of $5,000 or 5% of the estimated cost of carrying out the development and may be provided by way of:

a) cash deposit with the Council, or

b) an unconditional bank guarantee in favour of the Council.

The security may be used to meet any costs referred above and on application being made to the Council by the person who provided the security, any balance remaining is to be refunded to, or at the direction of, that person. If no application is made to the Council for a

refund of any balance remaining of the security within six (6) years of the date of issue of the *OC* or *SC* for the development the Council may pay the balance to the Chief Commissioner of State Revenue under the *Unclaimed Money Act 1995*.

7. Cessnock Section 7.12 Levy Development Contributions Plan

A total monetary contribution of $915.75 is to be paid to Council, pursuant to Section 7.12 (cf previous s 94A) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979,* such contribution is to be paid prior to the issue of a Construction Certificate in respect of the proposed development.

i) This condition is imposed in accordance with the provisions of *Cessnock S94A Levy Development Contributions Plan 2017*. A copy of the document is available on Council's website at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au or maybe inspected at Councils' Customer Services Section, Administration Building, Vincent Street Cessnock.

ii) The amount of contribution payable under this condition has been calculated on the basis of the current rate as at the date of consent and is based on the most recent quarterly Consumer Price Index (CPI) release made available by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). The CPI index rate is expected to rise at regular intervals and therefore the actual contribution payable is indexed and recalculated at the CPI rate applicable on the day of payment.

CPI quarterly figures are released by the ABS on a date after the indexation quarter and as a guide, these approximate dates are provided below. Indexation quarters from the ABS are as follows:

Indexation quarters	Approx. release date
September	Late October
December	Late January
March	Late April
June	Late July

Any party intending to act on this consent should contact Council to determine the indexed amount of contribution on the date of payment.

NOTE: PRIOR TO PAYMENT OF ANY CONTRIBUTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLANNING ASSISTANT ON 02 4993 4293 TO OBTAIN AN UP-TO-DATE AMOUNT PAYABLE FIGURE. AT THAT TIME, WE WILL ADVISE HOW YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS CAN BE PAID.

8. Noise Management Plan

A Noise Management Plan prepared by a suitably qualified professional must be submitted to the Certifier prior to the issue of a *CC*. The plan must address the following matters:

a) Identification of sensitive locations near the site.

b) Identification of potential impacts including exceedances of the goals at the identified locations

c) Mitigation measures to control noise, and feasibility and reasonableness of these measures

d) Selection criteria for plant and equipment

e) Community consultation

f) Details of work schedules for all construction phases

g) Selection of traffic routes to minimise residential noise intrusion

h) Schedule of plant and equipment use and maintenance programs

i) Noise monitoring techniques and method of reporting results

j) The methodology to be employed for handling and investigating any complaints should they arise

k) Site induction details for employees and contractors

l) A declaration of available technologies, and the reason for the selection of the preferred technology from a noise generating perspective should be included.

9. Waste Management Plan

A Waste Management Plan is to be provided to the Certifier prior to the issue of a *CC.* The Waste Management Plan is to be prepared in accordance with the following:

a) Estimated quantities of materials that are reused, recycled, removed from the site

b) On site material storage areas during construction

c) Materials and methods used during construction to minimise waste

d) Nomination of end location of all waste generated

All requirements of the approved Waste Management Plan must be implemented during the construction of the development.

BEFORE BUILDING WORK COMMENCES

Condition

10. Construction and Traffic Management Plan

The applicant must prepare a Construction Management and Traffic Management Plan incorporating the following matters. The plan must be submitted to and approved by the *PC* as satisfying these matters prior to the commencement of works.

a) A plan view of the entire site and frontage roadways indicating:

i) Dedicated construction site entrances and exits, controlled by a certified traffic controller, to safely manage pedestrians and construction related vehicles in the frontage roadways.

ii) Turning areas within the site for construction and spoil removal vehicles, allowing a forward egress for all construction vehicles on the site.

iii) The locations of proposed work zones in the frontage roadways.

iv) Location of any proposed crane, concrete pump, truck standing areas on and off the site.

v) A dedicated unloading and loading point within the site for all construction vehicles, plant and deliveries.

vi) Material, plant and spoil bin storage areas within the site, where all materials are to be dropped off and collected.

vii) An onsite parking area for employees, tradespersons and construction vehicles as far as possible.

viii) The proposed areas within the site to be used for the storage of excavated material, construction materials and waste and recycling containers during the construction period.

ix) How it is proposed to ensure that soil/excavated material is not transported onto surrounding footpaths and roadways.

x) The proposed method of support to any excavation adjacent to adjoining properties, or the road reserve. The proposed method of support is to be designed by a Chartered Civil Engineer.

b) During excavation, demolition and construction phases, noise generated from the site must be controlled.

c) All site works must comply with the work health and safety requirements of SafeWork NSW.

d) During excavation, demolition and construction phases, toilet facilities are to be provided on site, at the rate of one (1) toilet for every twenty (20) persons or part of twenty (20) persons employed at the site.

e) All traffic control plans must be in accordance with the *TfNSW* publication *Traffic Control Worksite Manual* and prepared by a suitably qualified person (minimum 'red card' qualification). The main stages of the development requiring specific construction management measures are to be identified and specific traffic control measures identified for each stage.

Approval is to be obtained from Council for any temporary road closures or crane use from public property. Applications to Council shall be made a minimum of six (6) weeks prior to the proposed activity being undertaken.

11. Site To Be Secured

The site must be secured and fenced prior to works commencing. If necessary, an awning is to be erected, sufficient to prevent any substance from, or in connection with, the work falling onto public property. The work site must be kept lit between sunset and sunrise if it is likely to be hazardous to persons on public property.

If the work involves the erection or demolition of a building and is likely to cause pedestrian or vehicular traffic on public property to be obstructed or rendered inconvenient, or building

involves the enclosure of public property, a hoarding or fence must be erected between the work site and the public property.

Separate approval is required to erect a hoarding or temporary fence on public property. Approvals for hoardings, scaffolding on public land must be obtained and clearly displayed on site for the duration of the works.

Any hoarding, fence or awning is to be removed when the work is completed.

12. Erection of Signs

Prior to the commencement of building works, or demolition work, a sign must be erected in a prominent position on the site on which the work is being carried out. The sign must state:

a) the name, address and telephone number of the principal certifier for the work;

b) the name of the principal contractor, if any, for the building work and a telephone number on which the principal contractor may be contacted outside of working hours; and

c) state that unauthorised entry to the work site is prohibited.

The sign must be maintained while the work is being carried out, but must be removed when the work has been completed.

13. Public Liability Insurance

Any person or contractor undertaking works on public property must take out Public Risk insurance with a minimum cover of twenty (20) million dollars in relation to the occupation of, and approved works within, public property. The Policy is to note, and provide protection for Cessnock City Council as an interested party, and a copy of the Policy must be submitted to Council prior to commencement of the works. The Policy must be valid for the entire period that the works are being undertaken on public property. The insurance shall also note the location and the risk.

14. S138 Roads Act Approvals

Under Section 138 of the *Roads Act 1993*, should any work on the verge, footpath, or public road reserve be required, a S138 Roads Act Approval will need to be obtained from Council. In this regard, the applicant is to make a formal application to Council. The S138 application is to be submitted to, and approved by, Council prior to works commencing.

15. Noise and Vibration Management Plan Required

Prior to the commencement of works, a Noise and Vibration Management Plan is to be prepared by a suitably qualified professional addressing, the likely noise and vibration from excavation and construction of the proposed development, and provided to the Council.

The plan is to identify amelioration measures to ensure the noise and vibration levels will be compliant with the relevant *AS.* The report shall be prepared in consultation with any geotechnical report that itemises equipment to be used for excavation works. The plan shall address, but not be limited to, the following matters:

a) Identification of activities carried out, and associated noise sources

b) Identification of potentially affected sensitive receivers, including residences, churches, commercial premises, schools and properties containing noise sensitive equipment

c) Determination of appropriate noise and vibration objectives for each identified sensitive receiver

d) Noise and vibration monitoring, reporting and response procedures

e) Assessment of potential noise and vibration from the proposed demolition, excavation and construction activities, including noise from construction vehicles

f) Description of specific mitigation treatments, management methods, and procedures to be implemented to control noise and vibration during construction

g) Construction timetabling to minimise noise impacts, including time and duration restrictions, respite periods and frequency

h) Procedures for notifying residents of construction activities likely to affect their amenity through noise and vibration

i) Contingency plans to be implemented in the event of non- compliances and/or noise complaints.

16. Approval Required for Equipment in Road Reserve

An application for any of the following on public property (footpaths, roads, reserves) shall be submitted to, and approved by, Council prior to the commencement of works.

a) Construction zone;

b) A pumping permit;

c) Mobile crane; and/or

d) Skip bins.

17. Soil and Water Management Plan Implemented

The requirements of a Soil and Water Management Plan shall be in place prior to the commencement of demolition works and/or construction works and shall be maintained throughout the demolition and/or construction process.

18. Toilet Facilities

Toilet facilities are to be provided prior to works commencing, at or in the vicinity of the work site on which work involved in the erection or demolition of a building is being carried out, at the rate of one toilet for every 20 persons or part of 20 persons employed at the site.

Each toilet provided must be a sewage management facility approved by the NSW Department of Health and/or Council, and operate in an environmentally responsible manner, free of nuisance or offence, and be appropriately serviced.

19. Relocation of Services

The person having the benefit of the Development Consent shall be responsible for all costs incurred in the necessary relocation of any services affected by the required construction works. In the event that existing services are required to be relocated, the proprietor shall make application to obtain any necessary approval from the relevant service authority prior to commencement of any works.

DURING BUILDING WORK

Condition

20. Construction Hours

Excavation, building or subdivision work must be restricted to the hours of 7.00am and 5.00pm on Monday to Saturday inclusive. Work is not to be carried out on Sundays and public holidays.

21. Site is Securely Fenced

The site must be appropriately secured and fenced at all times during works.

22. Approved Plans Kept Onsite

A copy of the approved plans must be kept onsite for the duration of site works and be made available upon request.

23. Construction Noise

Noise arising from the works must be controlled in accordance with the requirements of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* and guidelines contained in the New South Wales Environmental Protection Authority document *Noise Guide for Local Government*.

24. Location of Council Pipes

During all phases of demolition, excavation and construction, it is the full responsibility of the applicant and their contractors to:

a) Ascertain the exact location of the Council stormwater drainage pipeline and associated pits traversing the site in the vicinity of the works

b) Take measures to protect the in-ground Council stormwater drainage pipeline and associated pits

c) Ensure dedicated overland flow paths are satisfactorily maintained through the site

Stormwater drainage pipes can be damaged through applying excessive loading (such as construction machinery, material storage, and the like). All proposed structures and construction activities must be sited fully clear of Council's stormwater drainage pipes, pits, easements, watercourses and overland flow paths on the site.

If the Council pipeline is uncovered during construction, all work must cease, and the *PC* and Council must be contacted immediately for advice. Any damage caused to the Council

stormwater drainage system must be immediately repaired in full as directed, and at no cost to Council.

25. Construction Vehicles

Construction material and vehicles shall not be placed on public footpaths. The use of footpaths or roadways shall be undertaken in accordance with the prevailing kerbside restrictions, the Australian Road Rules and Council's Parking Code.

26. Road – Obstruction of Footpath Restriction

No obstruction is to be caused to Council's footpaths, roads and/or other public areas during construction of the development.

No spoil, building materials, equipment, excavated or demolition material from the site shall be stored or deposited on the public road, footpath, public place or Council owned property, without prior approval of Council.

27. Erosion and Sediment Controls

The control of erosion, and the prevention of silt discharge into drainage systems and waterways, will be necessary in accordance with Council's 'Engineering Guidelines for Design and Construction', and Landcom's Soils and Construction Manual - April 2004. Erosion control measures are to be implemented prior to the commencement of any earthworks, and shall be maintained until satisfactory completion and restoration of site earthworks, including revegetation of all exposed areas.

28. Stormwater Runoff

Alterations to the natural surface contours must not impede or divert natural surface water runoff, so as to cause a nuisance to adjoining property owners.

29. Waste Management

Rubbish generated from the development is to be suitably contained on site at all times. No rubbish shall be stockpiled in a manner which facilitates the rubbish to be blown off site.

BEFORE ISSUE OF AN OCCUPATION CERTIFICATE

Condition

30. Satisfactory Completion of Conditions

Prior to the issue of an *OC* the applicant shall provide Council with appropriate certification to confirm that all of the development works have been constructed strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Development Consent and *CC*.

31. EME Environmental Report

The submission of an EME Environmental Report to Council prior to the use or occupation of the proposed facility, to confirm that the EME levels are consistent with those presented in the report provided to Council, is required.

32. Finish of Excavated and/or Filled Areas Around Site

The excavated and/or filled areas of the site are to be stabilised and drained, to prevent scouring onto adjacent private or public property. The finished ground around the perimeter of the facility is to be graded to prevent ponding of water, and to ensure the free flow of water away from the building and adjoining properties.

33. Confirmation of Height

Prior to the issue of an *OC*, a registered surveyor must provide certification that the height of the telecommunications facility is consistent with the height approved.

34. Waste Disposal

Prior to the issue of an *OC* and/or commencement of the use, whichever is earlier, the building owner must ensure that all construction waste, and other waste, is removed from the site and disposed of correctly.

35. Certification of Electrical Fittings

All electrical fittings and electrical outlets are to be installed and certified by a registered surveyor as being not less than 500mm above the 100 year Average Recurrence Interval flood level. The fittings / outlets are to therefore be installed at a level of RL 71.46m Australian Height Datum or higher. Alternatively, electrical fittings / outlets are to be provided with their own separate circuit (with earth leakage protection) to the rest of the building. The certification shall be submitted to the PC prior to issue of an OC.

OCCUPATION AND ONGOING USE

Condition

36. Removal of Graffiti

The owner/manager of the site is responsible for the removal of all graffiti from the building and fences within seven (7) days of its application.

37. Operation of Facility

The development is to operate in accordance with the conditions of consent, the Environment EME Report, and approved EME levels at all times.

ADVISORY

Notes

A. BEFORE YOU DIG AUSTRALIA

Before any excavation work starts, contractors and others should look up the "Before You Dig Australia" service to access plans/information for underground pipes and cables. www.byda.com.au

B. Dividing Fences

The erection of dividing fences under this consent does not affect the provisions of the *Dividing Fences Act 1991*. Under this Act, all relevant parties must be in agreement prior to the erection of any approved dividing fence/s under this consent.

Council has no regulatory authority in this area and does not adjudicate civil disputes relating to the provision of, or payment for, the erection of dividing fences. If there is a neighbour dispute about the boundary fence and you are seeking mediation, you may contact the Community Justice Centre, or if legal advice or action is required, you may contact the Chamber Magistrate.

C. Other Approval and Permits

The applicant shall apply to Council for all necessary permits including crane permits, road opening permits, hoarding or scaffolding permits, footpath occupation permits, and/or any other approvals under *Section 68 (Approvals)* of the *Local Government Act, 1993* or *Section 138 of the Roads Act, 1993*.

D. Site Contamination Issues During Construction

Should any new information come to light during demolition or construction works which has the potential to alter previous conclusions about site contamination, Council must be immediately notified by the applicant, and works must cease. Works must not recommence on site until approval is granted by Council.

E. Impact of Below Ground (Sub-surface) Works – Non-Aboriginal Relics

If any archaeological relics are uncovered during the course of the work, all works shall cease immediately in that area, and Heritage NSW shall be contacted. Depending on the possible significance of the relics, an archaeological assessment and an excavation permit under the *NSW Heritage Act 1977,* may be required before further works can continue in that area.

F. Aboriginal Heritage

As required by the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* and the *Heritage Act 1977*, in the event that Aboriginal cultural heritage or historical cultural fabric or deposits are encountered/discovered where they are no expected, works must cease immediately and Council and the Heritage NSW must be notified of the discovery.

In the event that archaeological resources are encountered, further archaeological work may be required before works can re-commence, including the statutory requirement under the *Heritage Act 1977* to obtain the necessary approvals/permits from Heritage NSW.

Note: The *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* and the *Heritage Act 1977* impose substantial penalty infringements and/or imprisonment for the unauthorised destruction of archaeological resources, regardless of whether or not such archaeological resources are known to exist on the site.

Land Dedication Policy

Last Updated: **xx/xx/xxxx** Revision: **x**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. We acknowledge these Aboriginal peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices and operations are located, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

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Integrity, Respect, Teamwork, Accountability, and Excellence.

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PART A - INTRODUCTION

1 POLICY OBJECTIVES

1.1 To ensure the community is not burdened with the cost of maintaining Dedicated Land that:

a. Is not identified in Council's strategic plans, infrastructure contributions plans or a voluntary planning agreement.

b. Is otherwise excess to Council's strategic requirements for recreation, open space, community facilities or other infrastructure needs.

1.2 To set out the conditions or terms that need to be met in order for Council to accept Dedicated Land, subject to this Policy.

1.3 To ensure Dedicated Land is in the public interest and Fit for Purpose.

2 POLICY SCOPE

2.1 This Policy applies to land that is proposed to be dedicated to Council, but is not specifically identified in an adopted Council contribution plan or voluntary planning agreement prepared in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, and is determined by Council to be excess to its strategic requirements, as set out in Council's adopted:

- Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan; or
- Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan.

2.2 This Policy does not apply to the strategic acquisition of land by Council.

2.3 This Policy does not apply to land that is proposed to be dedicated pursuant to s.9 of the *Roads Act 1993* for the purpose of a public road and Council has consented to the land dedication.

2.4 This Policy prevails in the event of an inconsistency with another Council Policy.

PART B – POLICY STATEMENT

3 LAND DEDICATION REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Council will only accept Dedicated Land if it is satisfied that:

a. It is in the public's interest to accept the land and there are no acceptable alternatives (**see cl.3.2**).

b. The Dedicated Land is acceptable in its current state (**see cl.3.3**).

c. Council is satisfied with the terms of the transfer of the Dedicated Land (see **cl.3.4**).

3.2 Dedicated Land is in the public's interest if:

a. The land is deemed by Council to be Fit for Purpose.

b. Council will not be burdened with land that, in Council's opinion, will result in unreasonable financial, legal, or operational costs as a result of the land dedication.

c. Council will not be burdened with any remediation or rectification costs in relation to the land.

d. All alternatives to dedicating the land to Council have been considered.

3.3 Dedicated Land is acceptable in its current state if, in Council's opinion:

a. It is not contaminated, or likely to be contaminated, or has been remediated to ensure it is suitable for its intended use.

b. It is not affected by priority weeds or invasive species.

c. It is not subject to existing property rights in favour of a third party or parties (other than public authorities).

d. In the case of stormwater infrastructure land, in Council's opinion, the stormwater infrastructure has been maximised for operational efficiency and services an Associated Development; and

e. It is well connected, is not excessive in area, and maximises opportunities for a range of uses; and

f. It is not excessively constrained or part of an approved Asset Protection Zone.

3.4 The terms of the transfer of Dedicated Land must be approved by Council, and the following matters are addressed.

a. A Land Dedication Proposal is lodged with Council, in accordance with the Land Dedication Guidelines.

b. A Planning Agreement is executed in relation to the transfer of the Dedicated Land, addressing the ongoing maintenance of the land and any improvements on it. As a minimum, the person dedicating the land must agree to:

- Maintain the land at their own expense for an Initial Maintenance Period of at least five (5) years.
- Provide to Council, a maintenance bond or bank guarantee in respect of the Initial Maintenance Period.

  Note: The maintenance bond or bank guarantee is to be at least 5% of the total Dedicated Land value. The maintenance bond will be refunded or returned at the end of the Initial Maintenance Period, upon application.
- Pay a Maintenance Fee to Council upon dedication of the land, in accordance with the Land Dedication Guidelines.

c. The transfer of the Dedicated Land and any Planning Agreement necessitated by this Policy, will be at no cost to Council.

d. Council will not accept any land improvement, maintenance period or payment as a credit against local infrastructure contributions, which are required to be paid in relation to an associated development.

e. Council will determine the classification of all land that is proposed to be dedicated.

f. Where requested by Council, a draft Plan of Management (POM) must be prepared by a suitably qualified person or organisation and lodged with Council for consideration, exhibition, and determination, prior to the dedication of the land to Council. All costs associated with the preparation of the draft POM shall be borne by the Developer. The draft POM is to conform to the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

PART C – ADMINISTRATION

4 POLICY DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Associated Development	Means the approved development associated with the Land Dedication Proposal.
Land Classification	Means the designation of land as either "community" or "operational" land in accordance with s.26 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.
Contaminated Land	Means the presence in, on or under the land of a substance at a concentration above the concentration at which the substance is normally present in, on or under (respectively) land in the same locality, being a presence that presents a risk of harm to human health or any other aspect of the environment.
Council	Means Cessnock City Council.
Dedicated land	Means any land subject to this Policy that is proposed to be dedicated to Council.
Fit for Purpose	Means the Dedicated Land is unencumbered and is suitable to fulfil its intended use in line with criteria outlined in Council's adopted plans, policies and strategies.
Initial Maintenance Period	Means the first five years, starting from the day after the land is dedicated to Council, during which the person who dedicated the land is responsible for maintaining it at their own expense.
Land Dedication Proposal	Means a written request to Council, made in accordance with the Land Dedication Guidelines, proposing to dedicate land to Council.
Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	Means Council's plans that levy contributions on development to fund community infrastructure, such as roads, stormwater management facilities, open space and recreational facilities.
Maintenance Fee	Means a contribution to Council, paid upon dedication of the land, which is used by Council to help maintain the land for a finite period commencing at the end of the initial Five-Year Maintenance Period.
Plan of Management (POM)	Means a Plan prepared under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993* for all public land that is classified 'community land', to guide how the land will be managed, including the directions for planning, resource management and maintenance of the land.
Planning Agreement	Is a voluntary agreement or other arrangement between a planning authority (or two or more planning authorities) and a person (developer) who has sought a change to an environmental planning instrument or who has made, or proposes to make, a development application, entered into pursuant to section 7.4 of the Act.

5 POLICY AUTHORISATIONS

No.	Authorised Function	Authorised Business Unit / Role(s)
	Negotiation of Planning Agreements	Infrastructure Contributions Planner

6 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate	Planning and Environment
Responsible Officer	Strategic Planning Manager
Associated Procedure	Senior Infrastructure Contributions Planner

Land Dedication Policy

Policy Review Date	TBA [Actual date - three years from date of adoption unless legislated otherwise]	**Is this a local policy pursuant to Part 3, Chapter 7 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)?**	**No**
Document Reference Number	DOC2025/105382		
This policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation: ▪ Section 49 of Division 3 of Part 2 of the *Local Government Act 1993*; ▪ Subdivision 2 of Division 7.1 of Part 7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* ▪ Division 1A of Part 4 of the Regulation; ▪ Planning Agreement Practice Note – February 2021; and ▪ Schedule 1 of the GIPA Regulation			
This policy contributes to the achievement of the following desired outcome or objectives as per Council's Delivery Program: **A Sustainable & Healthy Environment** Objective 3.1 Protecting & enhancing the natural environment and the rural character of the area. **Civil Leadership & Effective Governance** Objective 5.3: Making Council more responsive to the community.			
Related Documents (include reference document numbers) [Please include Policies, Protocols, Procedures, SOPs, and templates where relevant].	▪ Records Management Policy (DOC2019/038769) ▪ Complaints Handling policy (DOC2018/048382) ▪ Privacy Management Plan (DOC2014/005148) ▪ Strategic Planning Statement (DOC2018/087261) ▪ Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention Policy (DOC2020/027334)		

7 POLICY HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	<<Enter text…>> *[Must include the ELT or Council minute number]*	<<Enter text…>> *[New policy adopted]*
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Land Dedication Guideline

Last Updated: **xx/xx/xxxx** Revision: **x**

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PART A - INTRODUCTION

1 PREAMBLE

1.1 Council's Land Dedication Policy and Land Dedication Guideline have been prepared to manage Land Dedication Proposals and address the financial implications to Council of Dedicated Land.

1.2 Council has historically accepted Dedicated Land, despite the fact that much of it is not strategically required for community use and is unusable due to environmental or infrastructure constraints, creating a long-term maintenance burden for Council.

1.3 In the future, Council is likely to receive significantly more Dedicated Land from private subdivisions, cumulatively increasing Council's long term land maintenance burden.

1.4 While it is acknowledged that green space improves urban amenity, it comes with ongoing maintenance costs and Council is not obligated to accept land without mechanisms, like Planning Agreements, to manage the maintenance costs associated with that land.

2 GUIDELINE OBJECTIVES

2.1 To provide additional guidance in relation to:

a. Land dedication requests and Council's requirements and process for Dedicated Land.

b. Acceptable and unacceptable Dedicated Land.

c. The categorisation of Dedicated Land.

d. The calculation of Council's Maintenance Fee for Dedicated Land.

3 GUIDELINE SCOPE

3.1 This Guideline applies to land that is proposed to be dedicated to Council, but is not specifically identified in an adopted Council contribution plan or voluntary planning agreement, and is determined by Council to be excess to its strategic requirements.

3.2 This Guideline does not apply to the strategic acquisition of land by Council.

3.3 This Guideline does not apply to land that is proposed to be dedicated pursuant to s.9 of the *Roads Act 1993* for the purpose of a public road, which has development consent.

PART B – GUIDELINES

4 DEDICATED LAND MUST BE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

4.1 The primary concern for Council in accepting Dedicated Land is whether the land dedication is in the public interest.

4.2 Some of the factors influencing Council's decision to accept Dedicated Land include:

a. The cost of labour and materials to maintain Dedicated Land in perpetuity.

b. Whether the land is Fit for Purpose.

c. How many people are likely to benefit from the Dedicated Land.

d. Whether there are any acceptable alternatives to land dedication, e.g. community title.

4.3 For these reasons, land that is proposed to be dedicated to Council must:

a. Have an identified community or operational use and be Fit for Purpose, e.g. as a pedestrian connection, shared pathway, off-leash dog area, lookout or viewing platform, active recreation space, natural play space, public art, interpretative use, technological use, native habitat, or environmental reserve, etc.

b. Be designed and constructed to ensure minimal ongoing maintenance and management by Council.

c. Not result in unreasonable financial, legal, or operational costs for Council.

d. Not require remediation or rectification of any sort following dedication to Council.

4.4 Council reserves the right to refuse the dedication of sportsgrounds, parks or community facilities that are determined to be excess to Council's strategic requirements, that are encumbered, or not Fit for Purpose.

5 DEDICATED LAND MUST BE ACCEPTABLE IN ITS CURRENT STATE

5.1 Council will not accept land that is:

a. Contaminated or potentially contaminated.

b. Is affected by priority weeds or invasive species.

c. Is subject to existing property rights in favour of a third party or parties (other than public authorities).

5.2 Previously contaminated land will only be considered if:

a. Early discussions are undertaken between the developer, land owner and Council to determine specific requirements for remediation of the land proposed for dedication.

b. Council is satisfied, based on information provided by the applicant where required, that the land is suitable for its intended use in accordance with *State Environmental Planning Policy (Resilience and Hazards) 2021*.

c. Land remediation is carried out in accordance with Part 5 of Council's Contaminated Land Policy – Land Use Planning.

d. Where the land requires an on-going Environmental Management Plan, the developer or owner is to provide a Site Audit, including a Site Audit Certificate and Site Audit Statement, to Council for consideration prior to acceptance of any such land.

e. the land is considered by Council to be Fit for Purpose following remediation.

f. Council will not be burdened with financial, legal, or operational costs following land dedication, as a result of the land being previously contaminated.

g. Council will not be burdened with any additional remediation or rectification costs in relation to the land being previously contaminated.

5.3 Council reserves the right to refuse the dedication of stormwater infrastructure land which, in Council's opinion, is not maximised for operational efficiency, or does not service an approved subdivision.

5.4 Land that is proposed to be dedicated to Council must:

a. Have adequate connectivity to other similar uses and a population that will use it.

b. Not be excessive, but of a scale that, in Council's opinion, is appropriate to the location and the population that will use it.

c. Maximise opportunities for a wide range of uses.

d. Not be excessively constrained or part of an Asset Protection Zone.

e. Where applicable, be designed and constructed in accordance with the relevant Vegetation Management Plan approved for the land, and in accordance with all relevant conditions of development consent for works on the land.

f. Where applicable, must be designed and constructed in accordance with Council's adopted strategies and plans, such as Council's adopted Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan or Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan.

6 DEDICATED LAND MUST BE APPROVED BY COUNCIL

6.1 Acceptance of Dedicated Land will be at the sole discretion of Council and merit assessed on a case-by-case basis. In determining a proposal, Council will consider any applicable legislation, ministerial directions, and the practice notes issued by the NSW Government.

6.2 A request to dedicate land to Council must be supported by a Land Dedication Proposal, containing:

a. The legal description of the land that is proposed to be dedicated to Council.

b. A survey plan identifying the extent of the land and any improvements or significant natural features within the land, including habitat for threatened species, or areas of cultural significance.

c. A comprehensive description of the land, including its condition, access, slope, topography, land use zoning, and current use.

d. The intended purpose of the land to be dedicated (e.g. for drainage, or a community purpose, noting that in some circumstances land may fit into more than one category).

e. Any specific requirements relating to the identification, protection and management of potential Aboriginal artefacts or European heritage on the land, this may include the preparation of a cultural heritage assessment and/or cultural heritage management plan or archaeological assessment and/or conservation management plan.

f. Any improvements to the land, which presently exist, or are proposed to be undertaken prior to dedication, including the standards or specifications for the improvements.

g. Whether the land contains infrastructure, e.g. transmission, sewerage, water, or stormwater infrastructure or easements.

Note: Early consideration should be given to the use and ownership options for land burdened by infrastructure or easements, including consultation with Council if the land is proposed to be dedicated to ensure decisions can be made in a timely manner.

h. The quality of the land and its interface with the urban environment.

i. The range of encumbrances restricting community use and enjoyment of the land.

j. Recognition of cultural landscapes and significant view lines.

k. Protection of significant environmental features the land.

6.3 A Planning Agreement must be in place with Council to ensure the ongoing maintenance of the land and any improvements on the land.

6.4 The person dedicating the land to Council must agree to:

a. Maintain the land at their expense for a period of at least 5 years (the Initial Maintenance Period), commencing from the day after the land is dedicated to Council.

b. Provide to Council, a maintenance bond or bank guarantee in respect of the Initial Maintenance Period.

   Note: The maintenance bond or bank guarantee shall be 5% of the total land value. The maintenance bond will be refunded or returned at the end of the Initial Maintenance Period, subject to the land having being maintained to Council's satisfaction and the terms of any Voluntary Planning Agreement.

c. Comply with any reasonable direction of Council in relation to the land during the Initial Maintenance Period.

d. Pay a Maintenance Fee to the Council upon dedication of the land, or provide an alternative arrangement of equivalent value, subject to approval from Council's Development Contributions Steering Group. The Maintenance Fee will be used by Council to maintain Dedicated Land in the Local Government Area for a period of time, following the Initial Maintenance Period.

6.5 The Maintenance Fee will be calculated by Council and in consideration of the Land Categories and Land Dedication Rates referenced in **Appendix A,** and the equation below:

C = (M x T) / R

Where:

- C is the Maintenance Fee, payable on dedication of the land.
- M is the Annual Maintenance Cost (i.e. the Maintenance Rate multiplied by the land area in hectares).
- T is the designated maintenance period for each category of land, in addition to the Initial Maintenance Period.
- R is CPI rate of 2.5%.

6.6 The Land Dedication Rates in **Appendix A** are baseline rates. The final Maintenance Rate that will be used by Council to calculate the Maintenance Fee will depend on the nature of the land to be dedicated, noting that a higher rate may apply to more complex or highly constrained land.

6.7 The Maintenance Fee for land containing multiple Land Categories will be calculated proportionally.

6.8 The Maintenance Fee will be consolidated into a single Council fund and used, at Council's discretion, to assist with the ongoing maintenance of Dedicated Land within the LGA.

7 REQUIREMENTS UPON LAND DEDICATION

7.1 Land that is subject to the Land Dedication Policy must not be dedicated to Council unless a Planning Agreement is executed in relation to the land in accordance with Council's Land Dedication Policy and Planning Agreement Policy.

7.2 Where requested by Council, a draft Plan of Management (POM) must be prepared by a suitably qualified person or organisation and lodged with Council for consideration, exhibition, and determination. All costs associated with the preparation of the draft POM shall be borne by the Developer. The draft POM is to conform to the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

7.3 A Works-as-Executed Plan is to be provided in relation to the land, any embellishments within the land, and any associated warranties relating to the maintenance.

7.4 The Developer is to provide a schedule of works with a cost estimate for all components of the works for the ongoing management and maintenance of the land.

PART C – ADMINISTRATION

8 GUIDELINE DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Annual Maintenance Cost	Means the Maintenance Rate multiplied by the area of the land to be dedicated in hectares.
Contaminated Land	Means the presence in, on or under the land of a substance at a concentration above the concentration at which the substance is normally present in, on or under (respectively) land in the same locality, being a presence that presents a risk of harm to human health or any other aspect of the environment.
Council	Means Cessnock City Council.
Associated Development	Means the approved development that is associated with the Land Dedication Proposal.
Dedicated land	Means any land subject to this Policy that is proposed to be dedicated to Council.
Fit for Purpose	Means the Dedicated Land is unencumbered and is suitable to fulfil its intended use in line with criteria outlined in Council's adopted plans, policies and strategies.
Infrastructure Land	Means land containing (or which is planned to contain): - a utility, easement or service; - stormwater infrastructure; or - a major infrastructure corridor.
Initial Maintenance Period	Means the first five years, starting from the day after the land is dedicated to Council, during which the person who dedicated the land is responsible for maintaining it at their own expense.
Land Category	Means a category of land included in Appendix A.
Land Dedication Proposal	Means a written request to Council, made in accordance with the Land Dedication Guidelines, proposing to dedicate land to Council.
Local Infrastructure Contributions Plan	Means plans that apply levies to development to fund community infrastructure, such as roads, stormwater management facilities, open space and recreational facilities.
Maintenance Fee	Means a contribution to Council, paid upon dedication of the land, which is used by Council to help maintain the land for a finite period commencing at the end of the Initial Maintenance Period.
Maintenance Rate	Means the annual per hectare maintenance rate associated with each category of Dedicated Land. Note: The Maintenance Rate for each category of Dedicated Land is provided in **Appendix A**.
Plan of Management (POM)	Means a Plan prepared under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993* for all public land that is classified 'community land', to guide how the land will be managed, including the directions for planning, resource management and maintenance of the land.

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Planning Agreement	Is a voluntary agreement or other arrangement between a planning authority (or two or more planning authorities) and a person (developer) who has sought a change to an environmental planning instrument or who has made, or proposes to make, a development application, entered into pursuant to section 7.4 of the Act.

9 POLICY AUTHORISATIONS

No.	Authorised Function	Authorised Business Unit / Role(s)
	Negotiation of Planning Agreements	Infrastructure Contributions Planner
	Expenditure of funds collected	General Manager or Relevant Unit Director

10 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate	Planning and Environment		
Responsible Officer	Strategic Planning Manager		
Associated Procedure	Senior Infrastructure Contributions Planner		
Policy Review Date	TBA [Actual date - three years from date of adoption unless legislated otherwise]	**Is this a local policy pursuant to Part 3, Chapter 7 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)?**	**No**
Document Reference Number	DOC2025/105382		
This policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation: ▪ Section 49 of Division 3 of Part 2 of the *Local Government Act 1993*; ▪ Subdivision 2 of Division 7.1 of Part 7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* ▪ Division 1A of Part 4 of the Regulation; ▪ Planning Agreement Practice Note – February 2021; and ▪ Schedule 1 of the GIPA Regulation			
This policy contributes to the achievement of the following desired outcome or objectives as per Council's Delivery Program: **A Sustainable & Healthy Environment** Objective 3.1 Protecting & enhancing the natural environment and the rural character of the area. **Civil Leadership & Effective Governance** Objective 5.3: Making Council more responsive to the community.			
Related Documents (include reference document numbers) [Please include Policies, Protocols, Procedures, SOPs, and templates where relevant].	▪ Records Management Policy (DOC2019/038769) ▪ Complaints Handling policy (DOC2018/048382) ▪ Privacy Management Plan (DOC2014/005148) ▪ Strategic Planning Statement (DOC2018/087261) ▪ Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention Policy (DOC2020/027334)		

11 POLICY HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	<<Enter text…>> *[Must include the ELT or Council minute number]*	<<Enter text…>> *[New policy adopted]*
2	<<Enter text…>>	<<Enter text…>> *[Periodic review]*

12 APPENDICES

Appendix A – Land Categories and Baseline Maintenance Rates

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APPENDIX A: LAND CATEGORIES & BASELINE MAINTENANCE RATES

1. The following Land Categories and Maintenance Rates will be used by Council to Calculate the baseline Maintenance Fee for Dedicated Land.
2. It is possible that Dedicated Land may fit within more than one Land Category. In such cases, Dedicated Land will be assessed under each applicable Land Category and the Maintenance Fee calculated accordingly.
3. The Annual Maintenance Rate outlined in the table below will be indexed and adjusted quarterly in accordance with the Sydney Consumer Price Index (CPI) applicable to each quarter. The CPI is published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Please refer to the ABS website www.abs.gov.au for information regarding the CPI.
4. The Time Periods nominated in the Table below are in addition to the Initial Maintenance Period required by Council for Dedicated Land.

Land Category	Definition	Annual Maintenance Rate[3] per Hectare	Time Period[4]
Natural areas (riparian)	Natural wetlands, watercourses, foreshores and riparian land. This includes land defined under section 36(4)(a), 35(5)(b), 36(5)(d) and 36(5)(e) of the Act and sections 110 and 111 of the Regulation.	$26,080.76	10 Years
Natural areas (non-riparian)	This includes natural areas as defined in section 36(4)(a), 36(5)(a) and 36(5)(c) of the Act and sections 107 and 109 of the Regulation (e.g. bushland, escarpment, etc.)	$21,058.37	10 Years
Active open space	Active open space designed for formal recreational activities like sportsgrounds, playgrounds and ovals. This includes sportsgrounds as defined in section 36(4)(b) of the Act and section 103 of the Regulation.	$72,620.59	15 Years
Passive open space	Open space land with minimal infrastructure intended for low-intensity, informal recreation (e.g. pocket parks and nature reserves). This includes parks as defined in section 36(4)(c) of the Act and section 104 of the Regulation.	$46,247.83	10 Years
Utility easements	Land required for the provision of a utility that is restricting the use of the land. This includes electricity, gas, sewer and water supply pipe easements. This would generally be classified as general community use land under section 36(4)(e) of the Act and section 106 of the Regulation.	$10,152.14	5 Years
Land with engineered stormwater assets	This includes land with engineered stormwater management assets (e.g. gross pollutant traps, basins, channels, water sensitive urban design infrastructure, etc.) dedicated to Council as per section 49(3) of the Act.	For assets < 1,250m^2 $284,841.58 For assets > 1,250m^2 & < 5,000m^2 $180,484.66 For assets > 5,000m^2 $114,336.32	5 Years

Works-In-Kind (WIK) Agreement Policy

Last Updated: **xx/xx/xxxx** Revision: **x**

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Works-In-Kind (WIK) Agreement Policy

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to:

1.1. Establish a clear, open, transparent and accountable framework to govern the negotiation, use and implementation of Works in Kind (WIK) Agreements by Council.

1.2. Ensure that the framework is sound, enables efficient, fair and accountable negotiations and implementation of WIK Agreements.

1.3. Promotes trust and confidence in the processes of negotiation, execution and implementation of WIK Agreements.

1.4. Ensure compliance with regulatory requirements under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW) ('the Act') governing WIK Agreements.

2. SCOPE

2.1. This policy applies to the negotiation, use and implementation of WIK Agreements within the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA).

2.2. This policy shall not limit or fetter Council's statutory discretion or duty in determining development applications under the Act.

2.3. This policy should be read in conjunction with Council's adopted local infrastructure contribution plans and templates.

3. STATEMENT

Council is committed to the equitable and transparent approach to the negotiation, development and management of WIK Agreements to facilitate the delivery of public infrastructure to meet the needs of the community.

4. PUBLIC INTEREST AND PROBITY

Probity

4.1. Public probity is fundamentally important to Council as it will ensure that the negotiation of any WIK Agreement proposal is fair, transparent and is directed at achieving public benefit in an appropriate manner, free of fraud and corruption.

4.2. Council will:

4.2.1. Ensure the developer has access to Council's Statement of Business Ethics

4.2.2. Provide all stakeholders relevant information to understand each party's role in negotiating a WIK Agreement.

4.2.3. Ensure appropriate delegations and separation of responsibilities are maintained when considering Development Applications that involve WIK Agreements.

4.2.4. Ensure any potential for conflict of interest within Council will be appropriately managed in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.

4.2.5. Take every step to ensure that conflicts of interest (actual or perceived) are declared, managed or mitigated, if not eliminated to the greatest extent possible.

Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention

4.3. Council meets high standard of integrity and accountability when negotiating WIK Agreements. Council has a responsibility to:

4.3.1. Protect taxpayer funded resources and assets from fraud and corruption.

4.3.2. Ensure Council decisions and actions are free from fraud and corruption.

4.4. In this respect all parties involved with negotiating a WIK Agreement will adhere to Council's Corruption Prevention Policy.

PART B – POLICY CONTENT

5. WIK AGREEMENT

Council at its sole discretion will decide whether to accept a WIK Agreement in lieu of monetary Contributions towards the provision of public infrastructure. The public infrastructure must be one or more projects listed from the works schedule in Council's adopted s7.11 Contributions Plan. Where Council agrees to accept the provision of WIK Agreement, they must be the subject of a formal WIK Agreement. This agreement is a legally binding contract that is entered into by both Applicant and Council.

Council will not publicly report WIK Agreements for notification. The Works Schedule in the Contribution Plans has already been exhibited and adopted by Council. This agreement is of an administrative nature to bring forward infrastructure in a relevant area rather than having Council complete the works.

Contributions will only be credited in relation to the relevant category i.e open space facilities, community facilities, roadworks facilities or drainage. This ensures the delivery of all infrastructure required to be constructed in the contribution plan is not compromised.

6. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

6.1. Section 7.11(1) of the Act provides that if a consent authority is satisfied that development for which development consent is sought will or is likely to require the provision of or increase the demand for public facilities within a council's local government area, the consent authority may grant the development consent subject to a condition requiring, among other things, that the developer pay to the Council a monetary section 7.11 contribution.

6.2. Section 7.11(3) of the Act provides that:

6.2.1. If a consent authority has provided public amenities or public services within a council's area in preparation for or to facilitate the carrying out of development in the area, and

6.2.2. Development for which development consent is sought will, if carried out, benefit from the provision of those public amenities or public services, the consent authority may grant the development consent subject to a condition requiring, among other things, that the developer pay to the Council a monetary section 7.11 contribution.

6.3 Section 7.11(5)(b) of the Act enables the consent authority to accept the provision of a material public benefit in part or full satisfaction of the payment by a developer of a monetary section 7.11 contribution.

6.4 A WIKA is an agreement between the Council and a developer entered into for the purpose of section 7.11(5)(b) of the Act under which the Council accepts the provision of a material public benefit by the developer in part or full satisfaction of the obligation to pay a monetary section 7.11 contribution.

6.5 Competitive tendering under section 55(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) is not feasible before the Council enters into a WIKA because the only possible primary party to the WIKA other than Council is the person having the benefit of a development consent requiring the payment of a monetary section 7.11 contribution which will be wholly or partially offset under the WIKA. For this reason, the Council has resolved that tenders will not be invited before the Council enters into such an agreement.

PART C - ADMINISTRATION

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

7.1. All compliance, monitoring and review of a WIK Agreement is to be conducted in accordance with the detail contained in the individual WIK Agreement, the Act, the Regulation and any direction from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

Responsibilities

Council's:

7.2. Strategic Planning Manager is responsible for overseeing and supporting Council staff in negotiation of WIK Agreements, implementation and review of this policy.

7.3. Local Infrastructure Contributions Steering Group will oversee entering into a negotiation of a WIK Agreement including, but not limited to, reviewing the proposed offer and providing advice for the WIK Agreement.

7.4. Senior Infrastructure Contributions Planner is responsible for the negotiation of the WIK Agreement with the developer and reporting to the Local Infrastructure Contributions Steering Group and Strategic Planning Manager.

Reporting

7.5. After entering into a WIK Agreement with Council, any future reporting will be in accordance with the terms of the WIK Agreement.

Privacy and personal information handling

7.6. Personal information collected concerning WIK Agreements is being collected for the purpose of implementing this policy and WIK Agreements. This information will be used for the purpose outlined, related administrative functions, compliance and complaint handling, internal auditing, and in accordance with Council's Privacy Management Plan and Privacy Statement which can be found on Council's website.

Records management

7.7. Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in accordance with Council's Records Management Policy.

Complaints

7.8. Complaints or disputes concerning matters subject to a WIK Agreement are to be dealt with in accordance with dispute resolution clauses of that agreement.

7.9. Complaints regarding any other aspect of this policy should be lodged in accordance with Council's Complaints Handling policy.

8. POLICY DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Act	Means the *Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW).*
Applicant	The person entitled to act upon a Development Consent.
Contribution	Means a contribution referred to in section 7.11 of the Act.
Contributions Plan	The applicable Section 7.11 Contribution Plan.
Council	Means Cessnock City Council.
Development Application	Has the same meaning as in the Act.
Development Consent	Has the same meaning as in the Act.
Regulation	Means the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* (NSW).
WIK	Is the undertaking of work, or the provision of a facility, or the dedication of land and includes reference to contribution offsets.
WIK Application	An application for WIK Agreement, contribution offsets or combinations thereof.
WIK Agreement	A formal agreement that must be entered into with Council following Council approval of an application under this policy.
WIK Proposal	A proposal for WIK made by the Applicant to the Council for approval by the Council in line with this policy.

9. POLICY AUTHORISATIONS

No.	Authorised Function	Authorised Business Unit / Role(s)
	Negotiation of Works in Kind Agreements	Senior Infrastructure Contributions Planner

10. POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate	Planning and Environment		
Responsible Officer	Strategic Planning Manager		
Associated Procedure			
Policy Review Date	TBA	**Is this a local policy pursuant to Part 3,**	No

		Chapter 7 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)?	
Document Reference Number	DOC2024/029832		
This policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation: – Section 49 of Division 3 of Part 2 of the *Local Government Act 1993*; – Subdivision 2 of Division 7.1 of Part 7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* – Division 1A of Part 4 of the Regulation; – Planning Agreement Practice Note – February 2021; and – Schedule 1 of the GIPA Regulation			
This policy contributes to the achievement of the following desired outcome or objectives as per Council's Delivery Program: **A Sustainable & Healthy Environment** Objective 3.1 Protecting & enhancing the natural environment and the rural character of the area. **Civil Leadership & Effective Governance** Objective 5.3: Making Council more responsive to the community.			
Related Documents (include reference document numbers)	▪ Records Management Policy (DOC2019/038769) ▪ Complaints Handling policy (DOC2018/048382) ▪ Privacy Management Plan (DOC2014/005148) ▪ Strategic Planning Statement (DOC2018/087261) ▪ Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention Policy (DOC2020/027334)		

11. POLICY HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	<<Enter text…>>	<<Enter text…>>

12. APPENDICES

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Works in Kind Agreement Guide

Last Updated: **xx/xx/xxxx** Revision: **x**

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This guide compliments Council's adopted Works in Kind (WIK) Agreement Policy ('the Policy') and sets out the framework for the negotiation and management of WIK Agreements. All developers proposing to enter into negotiations for a WIK Agreement should read both documents, together with any reference documents, prior to initiating negotiations.

1 OBJECTIVES

1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide clarity for developers regarding the procedures and practices in negotiating, executing and implementing WIK Agreements with Cessnock City Council (Council).

2 SCOPE

2.1 Council, at its complete discretion, may consider entering into a WIK Agreement with a developer after development consent has been issued.

2.2 In particular, Council may consider negotiating a WIK Agreement to:

2.2.1 Enable items in the work schedules of Council's Contribution Plan (CP) to be brought forward.

2.2.2 Not involve any unreasonable financial liabilities for Council.

3 CONTEXT

3.1 The implementation of procedures and practices is designed to support a high level of efficiency. Council is responsible for ensuring transparency regarding the costs of professional, administrative, and legal staff involved. Accordingly, Council will:

3.1.1 Ensure that it will adhere to the strict procedures as outlined in this document and in the Policy.

3.1.2 Seek to obtain reimbursement for the costs incurred in negotiating, executing and implementing a WIK Agreement.

3.1.3 Ensure that the Local Infrastructure Contributions Steering Group (Steering Group) will oversee the negotiation of all WIK agreements.

3.1.4 Ensure all negotiations for WIK agreements aim to be efficient, predictable, transparent and accountable in line with the Policy.

3.1.5 Encourage the developer to hold discussions with Council before starting the formal process of entering into a WIK Agreement.

4 PUBLIC INTEREST AND PROPERTY

4.1 Council staff with appropriate delegated authority will negotiate a WIK Agreement on behalf of Council. These Council staff (subject to resource capacity) will not be involved in the direct assessment of the relevant Development Application (DA).

5 ASSESSMENT OF A WIK AGREEMENT

5.1 Council may, subject to certain criteria being met, accept a provision of a WIK Agreement by a developer in lieu of the payment of contributions. The proposal, in writing and in the form of a letter, must be to Council. Details should include:

5.1.1. The description of the land.

5.1.2. Development consent and Section 7.11 condition.

5.1.3. Relevant Contributions Plan, the Work(s) and Contributions Plan Work(s) value(s).

5.1.4. Description of the proposed works, cost and estimated value of the works.

5.1.5. The proposed contributions plan credit.

5.2 Council's Infrastructure Contributions Planner will be responsible for recording the application and coordinating the consideration, negotiation and execution of the agreement on behalf of Council.

5.3 Once the agreement has been reached in principle, the agreement is to be drafted using Council's WIK Agreement template (DOC2024/029833).

5.4 The developer should understand that an application for a WIK Agreement will be considered in accordance with the following criteria:

5.4.1 Works to be undertaken: WIK Agreements will only be negotiated on those works detailed in the relevant CP.

5.4.2 Timing of works:

a) Demonstration that earlier timing of the works provides planning and/or public benefit(s).

b) No WIK Agreements will be negotiated retrospectively i.e. after works have commenced.

5.4.3 Prejudicial impact: The application must not prejudice the timing or the manner of the provision of the infrastructure for which the contribution was required. Prejudicial impact will have regard of all items in the CP work schedule, not only the item(s) in the request, and will consider any impacts.

5.4.4 Financial Impact: The application must be of reasonable cost when compared to the CP work schedule.

5.4.5 Prior to a formal WIK Agreement being prepared, the developer will accept that the value of works is the amount stated in the CP and ensure the infrastructure meets the necessary standards required by Council. Council will not accept additional costs.

5.4.6 Once formal negotiations commence, requests for additional items or costs will not be considered. Once commenced, non-compliance with the agreement will result in enforcement. Construction of any item in the agreement must not commence until the WIK Agreement has been signed.

6 COUNCIL'S COSTS RELATING TO A WIK AGREEMENT

6.1 The developer shall pay Council's full costs in negotiating, executing and implementing the WIK Agreement, including legal costs and the costs of engagement of any independent expert(s).

6.1 Council may engage legal representatives for legal opinion following drafting of the WIK Agreement. The developer will be responsible for Council's legal costs with respect to considering variations to the WIK Agreement. Any legal opinion received by Council is confidential.

6.2 Council will at all times strive to be fair, reasonable and accountable when seeking the developer to reimburse the costs incurred for negotiating, executing and implementing the WIK Agreement.

7 ACCEPTABILITY OF OFFER

When Council assesses an offer in relation to a WIK Agreement, it will be assessed in accordance with the notations of clause 5 and ensure that:

7.1 A WIK Agreement must provide for the delivery of infrastructure that is contained in the works schedule of Council's adopted s7.11 CP.

7.2 That any request is in accordance with Council's contribution plan, strategic plans and studies.

7.3 The proposal equals the value of the project contained in the works schedule of the contribution plans and the local infrastructure contributions condition by the DA consent. Council will not allow for any further contribution plan credits in any circumstances.

8 INDEPENDENT THIRD PARTY

8.1 Council may, at its sole discretion, appoint an independent person(s) to facilitate or otherwise participate in the negotiations or aspects of the WIK Agreement.

9 PROCESSES AND PRACTICES

9.1 Council may, at its sole discretion, appoint an independent person(s) to facilitate or otherwise participate in the negotiations or aspects of the WIK Agreement. These may include:

9.1.1 Valuation of costs of the construction of the proposed infrastructure.

9.1.2 Factual information requires validation in the course of negotiations.

9.1.3 Sensitive financial or other confidential information must be verified or established in the course of negotiations.

9.1.4 Any dispute resolution as required under the WIK Agreement.

Pre-lodgement

9.2 All developers are encouraged to have pre-lodgement discussions and a pre lodgement meeting with Council. The initial discussions should include:

9.2.1 The proposed offer for a WIK Agreement.

9.2.2 Costings.

9.2.3 Contributions payable under the DA consent.

9.2.4 Explanation of Council's Policy.

9.2.5 The legal framework.

9.2.6 The procedures for negotiation.

9.2.7 Council will provide its requirements for the design, materials and specifications for the infrastructure.

9.3 Following a pre-lodgement meeting, the developer must provide Council with a written letter of offer advising the:

9.3.1 Details required to be included as specified in the Policy and this document.

9.3.2 Detailed description of the infrastructure proposed to be undertaken and/or land to be dedicated to Council in lieu of section 7.11 conditions of consent, including location, legal description of the land together with the relationship between the land dedication, works and the relevant CP.

9.3.3 Estimated costs of infrastructure and land value and sufficient level of detail will be required to enable Council to verify the value of works together with timeframes for design, construction and handover of works.

9.3.4 Any draft designs of the proposed infrastructure. The developer should provide to Council any preliminary concept designs as a starting point for discussion with Council as to the proposed infrastructure.

9.3.5 If infrastructure is not on land owned by the developer, then the landowner must provide written consent that they have no objection to the works on their property, relinquish all their rights to enter an agreement for the subject works at a later date, and understand that Council has discretion to accept the land dedication as a contribution at a later date.

9.3.6 Information regarding that the proposed infrastructure to be completed will be in full or partially complete in accordance with the CP.

9.3.7 Information of the contributions payable on the condition of consent and the proposed WIK Agreement offsetting the condition of consent. Council will only use the value that is provided for in the CP.

9.3.8 The developer is to advise if they are appointing a representative in the negotiations of the WIK Agreement.

Council consideration and determination

9.4 The Infrastructure Contributions Planner is to assess the letter of offer in accordance with the policy, Council's WIK Agreement templates, adopted s7.11 contribution plans, the relevant Development Consent, specific Council engineering guidelines/policies/specifications and Act and the Regulation, together with any Ministerial Direction. Consideration will also be given to any relevant Practice Note and the assessment will then be tabled at the next Steering Group meeting for approval.

9.5 The Steering Group will consider whether a WIK Agreement is suitable.

9.6 Oversee the negotiation of the WIK Agreement and ensure all internal Council processes are followed.

9.7 Following a decision by the Steering Group, Council will inform the developer, in writing, of its decision.

9.8 If Council recommends to enter into the WIK Agreement, drafting of the WIK Agreement should commence.

9.9 If Council recommends not to enter into the WIK Agreement, the developer and Council can renegotiate the proposal.

Negotiation of the WIK Agreement

9.10 The draft agreement can either be prepared by Council or the developer and should include:

9.10.1 Scope of works.

9.10.2 Rights and responsibilities of each party.

9.10.3 Detailed design for approval.

9.10.4 Offsets that form the agreement.

9.10.5 Any other financial obligations.

9.11 Any changes to the draft WIK Agreement, is to be provided in the form of a marked-up version of the draft WIK Agreement together with justification for any amendment.

9.12 Council is to provide written confirmation that the WIK Agreement is approved. All parties can sign the agreement in the form of a hard copy or electronic copy. The developer is to sign the agreement first followed by Council.

9.13 The WIK Agreement must be signed within three (3) months from the date of notification by Council. After that time the developer will need to seek re-approval by Council.

Approval of Infrastructure (Works)

9.14 The developer must obtain all approvals for works and any land dedications. Council and the developer should also ensure all conditions of the WIK Agreement is followed.

9.15 A WIK Agreement does not constitute development consent for any works specified in the agreement.

9.16 Normal development assessment processes will apply and any modifications to DA consent for works and land dedications will incur fees and these will to be borne solely by the developer and will not be credited against any contributions. The developer must ensure that works be in accordance with Council's design, specification standards or as otherwise agreed.

Construction Phase

9.17 As Council ultimately has ownership and responsibility for public facilities, Council must approve commencement of any works.

9.18 Once DA approval for the works has been given, the WIK Agreement executed and all compliance matters completed, construction may commence. No additions or alterations to the works and variations to costs should be made to the works without Council's consent in writing. A modification may be required for any additional, variations or alterations to the works and these costs are borne by the developer.

9.19 All works must be inspected by Council in accordance with the WIK Agreement and relevant DA Consent. Any defects must be rectified in accordance with the provisions of the WIK Agreement.

Handover Phase

9.20 The handover of completed works must be in accordance with the WIK Agreement. The developer must submit all drawings/AutoCAD drawing files or equivalent files as required by Council. The drawings must be provided in electronic format including any notations. PDF documents are not acceptable. The developer will be required to complete and submit any further documentation required by Council.

10 DEVELOPER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The developer must:

10.1 Work with Council to develop a design to achieve a positive outcome for the community and complies with Council's design guides prior to lodgement of a DA for the works.

10.2 Comply with all required statutory requirements and regulations and in accordance with the WIK Agreement.

10.3 Indemnify Council against any claims or otherwise related to the works.

10.4 Provide public risk insurance policy with a minimum liability of $20,000,000 and present Council with a copy of this policy and other insurances set out in the WIK Agreement.

10.5 Not vary the agreed works without written approval from Council.

10.6 Note Council will not be liable for any variations between the value of the works/land in the CP and estimated construction costs.

10.7 Notify Council when all inspections are required as per the WIK Agreement and/or DA Consent.

10.8 Provide Council with a land tax clearance issued by the Office of State Revenue dated less than one month prior to the land transfer to Council.

10.9 Pay all costs incurred by Council and in particular in appointing a qualified quantity surveyor, if required, to provide a "fair value" valuation for the asset/s to be dedicated to Council. The valuation must be carried out by a registered valuer and comply with the NSW Department of Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

10.10 On completion of the works the developer must comply in accordance with the WIK Agreement regarding hand over dates, drawings and any provisions relating to rectification of defects.

10.11 Provide security for rectification of defects for the duration of the defect liability period in accordance with the WIK Agreement and/or Council's engineering specifications.

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11 VALUE OF WORKS OFFSET AGAINST CONTRIBUTIONS

11.1 The purpose of providing a WIK is to satisfy the conditions of a DA consent relating to local infrastructure contributions.

11.2 Council will only offset the value of a WIK against the contribution required for that particular type of work, for example, a local park will only apply to open space and recreation contributions.

11.3 Council will only accept land and/or a WIK to the value of the contributions required in the consent. Councils may accept a WIK where the combined value of the land and works exceeds the value of the contribution required by the consent, should the developer not request additional contribution offsets.

11.4 WIK credits will be applied as an agreed reduction of contributions payable under the relevant development consent in accordance with s 7.11(5) of the EPA Act. The condition requiring the payment of the contributions does not need to be modified. WIK credits cannot be applied once contributions have been paid.

11.5 Where the value of works undertaken is equal to the contribution required as a condition of consent, Council will consider those works to be the equivalent of the payment of the contribution in full.

11.6 Where the value of the works undertaken is less than the contribution required as a condition of consent, the developer will be required to pay the difference.

11.7 Council will not offset against the value of required contributions, the value of any work which is required under Section 4.17 of the Act, being works required as a result of the considerations of Section 4.15 of the Act.

11.8 Council does not accept any financial risk associated with the construction of the works and will only cover those costs agreed to in the WIK Agreement entered into by the developer. Any costs beyond this will be borne by the developer.

12 SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS

12.1 A requirement of the WIK Agreement is that satisfactory security arrangements must be in place. Generally works are either required to be completed prior to a subdivision certificate being issued or after a subdivision certificate is issued.

12.2 All WIKs are to be completed prior to a subdivision certificate being issued for the DA consent which is the subject of the contributions. If this cannot be achieved by any reason, the developer must approach Council to discuss this matter further. In particular, the developer should refer to Council's policy on deferred or periodic payments in the CP.

13 OWNERSHIP OF WORKS PROVIDED BY WIK Agreements

13.1 Works become the property of the Council at the date they are handed over to Council or in accordance with the WIK Agreement.

13.2 No credit will be provided for the works until they have been handed over to the Council or in the case of works to be completed after a subdivision certificate has been issued, or other appropriate arrangements have been put in place.

13.3 When the work undertaken by the developer is for the design of an item of infrastructure, the design work will become the intellectual property of the Council. All plans and related documentation must be provided to the Council.

14 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

14.1 In the event of a dispute, all parties should refer to the WIK Agreement.

15 POLICY DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Act	Means the *Environment Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW).*
Applicant	The person entitled to act upon a Development Consent.
Contribution	Means a contribution referred to in section 7.11 of the Act.
Contribution Plan (CP)	The applicable Section 7.11 Contribution Plan.
Contribution Plan credit	Is the dollar amount, in accordance with the works schedule of the contributions plan, by which the value of an approved works in kind agreement is to be applied in part or full satisfaction of a contributions plan requirement.
Council	Means Cessnock City Council.
Development Application	Has the same meaning as in the Act.
Development Consent	Has the same meaning as in the Act.
Regulation	Means the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* (NSW).
WIK	Is the undertaking of work, or the provision of a facility, or the dedication of land and includes reference to contribution offsets.
WIK Application	An application for WIK, contribution offsets or combinations thereof.
WIK Agreement	A formal agreement that must be entered into with Council following Council approval of an application under this policy.
WIK Proposal	A proposal for WIK made by the Applicant to the Council for approval by the Council in line with this policy.

16 POLICY AUTHORISATIONS

No.	Authorised Function	Authorised Business Unit / Role(s)
	Negotiation of Works in Kind Agreements	Infrastructure Contributions Planner

17 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate	Planning and Environment		
Responsible Officer	Strategic Planning Manager		
Associated Procedure			
Policy Review Date	TBA	**Is this a local policy pursuant to Part 3, Chapter 7 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)?**	No
Document Reference Number	DOC2024/029822		

This policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation:

- Section 49 of Division 3 of Part 2 of the *Local Government Act 1993*;
- Subdivision 2 of Division 7.1 of Part 7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
- Division 1A of Part 4 of the Regulation;
- Planning Agreement Practice Note – February 2021; and
- Schedule 1 of the GIPA Regulation

This policy contributes to the achievement of the following desired outcome or objectives as per Council's Delivery Program: **A Sustainable & Healthy Environment** Objective 3.1 Protecting & enhancing the natural environment and the rural character of the area. **Civil Leadership & Effective Governance** Objective 5.3: Making Council more responsive to the community.	
Related Documents (include reference document numbers)	▪ WIK Agreement Policy (DOC2025/***) ▪ Records Management Policy (DOC2019/038769) ▪ Complaints Handling policy (DOC2018/048382) ▪ Privacy Management Plan (DOC2014/005148) ▪ Strategic Planning Statement (DOC2018/087261) ▪ Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention Policy (DOC2020/027334)

18 POLICY HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	<<Enter text…>>	<<Enter text…>>

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Planning Agreement Policy

Last Updated: **xx/xx/xxxx** Revision: **x**

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Integrity, Respect, Teamwork, Accountability, and Excellence.

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PART A – INTRODUCTION

1 OBJECTIVES

1.1. Establish a clear, open, transparent and accountable framework to govern the negotiation, use and implementation of planning agreements by Council towards the delivery of public infrastructure services and facilities in the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA).

1.2. Ensure that the framework is soundly based upon probity and enables efficient, equitable and accountable negotiations and implementation of planning agreements.

1.3. Promote public trust and confidence in the processes of negotiation, execution and implementation of planning agreements.

1.4. Ensure that all parties involved have clarity about their roles and responsibilities when assessing, negotiating and implementing planning agreements.

1.5. Provide planning flexibility for Council to negotiate equitable and reasonable local infrastructure contributions by proponents of planning proposals and development applications (DAs).

1.6. Ensure consideration is also given towards conservation offsets towards the conservation, protection and ongoing management of land, which is off environmental value and significance in the LGA (including giving effect to Council's Biodiversity Offsets Policy).

2 SCOPE

2.1. This Policy applies to the negotiation, use and implementation of planning agreements concerning the LGA.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

3.1. Council is committed to the equitable and transparent approach to the negotiation, development and management of planning agreements to facilitate the delivery of public infrastructure to meet the needs of the community.

4. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

4.1 Council's use of planning agreements will be governed by the following fundamental principles outlined in the Planning Agreements Practice Note:

4.1.1 Planning authorities should always consider a development proposal on its merits, not on the basis of a planning agreement.

4.1.2 Planning agreements must be underpinned by proper strategic land use and infrastructure planning carried out on a regular basis, and must address expected growth and the associated infrastructure demand.

4.1.3 Strategic Planning should ensure that development is supported by the infrastructure needed to meet the needs of the growing population.

4.1.4 A consent authority cannot refuse to grant development consent on the grounds that a planning agreement has not been entered into in relation to the proposed development or that the proponent has not offered to enter into such an agreement.

4.1.5 Planning agreements should not be used as a means of general revenue raising or to overcome revenue short falls, unless they resolve a specific infrastructure funding gap that would otherwise prevent a development from proceeding, and all parties agree it is in the public interest.

4.1.6 Planning agreements must not include public benefits wholly unrelated to the particular

development.

4.1.7 Value capture should not be the primary purpose of a planning agreement.

5. PUBLIC INTEREST AND PROBITY

5.1 Public probity is fundamentally important to Council as it will ensure that the negotiation of any planning agreement is equitable, transparent and is directed at achieving public benefits in an appropriate manner, free of fraud and corruption.

5.1.1 In this regard, Council will:

a) Provide the proponent with access to Council's Statement of Business Ethics.

b) Ensure that all stakeholders understand the planning agreement system and each party's role in negotiating a planning agreement.

c) Publicly notify planning agreements to ensure they are open and transparent and in accordance with relevant legislation and directives.

d) Actively promote public awareness of the matters contained in a planning agreement and the potential benefits of an agreement.

e) Ensure appropriate delegations and separation of responsibilities are maintained when considering DAs that involve planning agreements.

f) Ensure that the role of Councillors, council management and staff in negotiating planning agreements are clearly defined (this ensures any potential for conflict of interest within Council will be appropriately managed in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct Policy).

g) Take every step to ensure that conflicts of interest (actual and perceived) are declared, managed or mitigated, if not eliminated to the greatest extent possible.

5.1.2 If deemed applicable by the Local Infrastructure Contributions Steering Group, heads of agreement formally endorsed by the parties may be required. This can be the basis for drafting the planning agreement as a whole and be applied for other purposes in the interim, such as reporting to the elected Council in conjunction with the relevant planning proposal.

5.2 Public participation and notification

5.2.1 Public participation in the planning agreement process is important to ensure the community has an opportunity to provide input in decisions being made relating to public benefit and development. Planning agreements redistribute the costs and benefits of a development and it is critical the public can comment on whether they think the balance between development and public benefit is achieved successfully.

5.2.2 Once the planning agreement has been negotiated and documented, it must be publicly notified and made available for public inspection before they can be entered into in accordance with the Act and Regulation and any practice notes or directions released by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

5.2.3 The Regulation requires that the notification of a proposed planning agreement occurs at the same time as the planning proposal or DA, or if this is not practicable, as soon as possible after.

5.2.4 The terms of the planning agreement and its proposed public benefits should be clearly shown as part of consultation material. This will help the community make a fully informed decision on the overall proposal.

5.2.5 Planning agreements must be accompanied by an explanatory note to assist the public in understanding the agreement. Other types of consultation material are encouraged in

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addition to the explanatory note. This might include additional written material, diagrams or plans.

5.2.6 Council will publicly re-notify a proposed planning agreement if, in Council's opinion as advised by the Local Infrastructure Contributions Steering Group, the changes materially affect:

a) How any of the matters specified in section 7.4 of the Act are dealt with by the planning agreements.

b) Other key terms and conditions of the planning agreements.

c) The planning authority's interest or public interest under the planning agreements.

d) Whether a non-involved member of the community would have made a submission objecting to the change if it had been publicly notified.

5.3 Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention

5.3.1 Councillors and staff must meet high standards of integrity and accountability when negotiating planning agreements. Council has a responsibility to:

a) Protect taxpayer funded resources and assets from fraud and corruption.

b) Ensure that its decisions and actions are free from fraud and corruption.

5.3.2 In this respect, all parties involved in negotiating a planning agreement will adhere to Council's Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention Policy.

6. THE ACCEPTABILITY TEST

6.1 Planning agreements should be assessed by Council's Infrastructure Contributions Planner against the acceptability test, which determines the acceptability of the planning agreements. The test requires that planning agreements:

6.1.1 Are directed towards legitimate planning purposes, which can be identified in the statutory planning controls and other adopted planning strategies and policies applying to development.

6.1.2 Provide for the delivery of infrastructure or public benefits not wholly unrelated to the development.

6.1.3 Produce outcomes that meet the general values and expectations of the public and protect the overall public interest.

6.1.4 Provide for a reasonable means of achieving the desired outcomes and securing the benefits.

6.1.5 Protect the community against adverse planning decisions.

7. CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER THE NEGOTIATION OF A PLANNING AGREEMENT

7.1 Council at its complete discretion by the Local Infrastructure Contributions Steering Group may consider the negotiation of a planning agreement with a proponent who has voluntarily offered to enter into such a planning agreement in association with a planning proposal or DA. Council should be contacted as early as possible, if an applicant is seeking to enter into a planning agreement with Council in relation to planning proposal or DA.

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8. APPLICATION OF CESSNOCK LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN (LEP) 2011 TO DEVELOPMENT TO WHICH A PLANNING AGREEMENT RELATES

8.1 Council will agree to having a provision in a planning agreement to justify a variation from applicable development standards only if Council is satisfied that the proposed matter of the planning agreement does in fact address the requirements of the Cessnock LEP in relation to the dispensation sought.

9. NEGOTIATION, NOTIFICATION, EXECUTION AND FINALISATION OF PLANNING AGREEMENTS

9.1 All planning agreements will be negotiated by Council's Infrastructure Contributions Planner in accordance with this Policy, Council's Planning Agreement Guidelines and relevant templates, EP&A Act and EP&A Regulations together with any ministerial direction or practice note.

10. WORKS IN KIND PROVISION IN PLANNING AGREEMENTS

10.1 Competitive tendering under section 55(1) of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) is not feasible before the Council enters into a planning agreement because the only possible primary party to the planning agreement other than Council is the person having the benefit of a development consent requiring the payment of a monetary section 7.11 contribution which will be wholly or partially offset under the planning agreement. For this reason, the Council has resolved that tenders will not be invited before the Council enters into such an agreement.

11. RENEWABLE ENERGY – BENEFIT SHARING

11.1 Council will consider large-scale renewable energy projects within its Local Government Area in line with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's *Benefit Sharing Guideline* (November 2024) and any future updates. Relevant legislation, ministerial directions, circulars, practice notes, and other relevant documents will also guide the assessment. These, along with Council's Planning Agreement Guideline, will form the basis for any Planning Agreement negotiations.

12. STRATEGIC CONSIDERATION

12.1 Prior to the acceptance of any planning agreement, Council's Infrastructure Contributions Planner and Strategic Planning Manager will undertake a strategic review to ensure that the proposal will be delivered in accordance with Council's Strategic Planning Statement.

PART B – Administration

13 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

All compliance, monitoring and review of a Planning Agreement is to be conducted in accordance with the detail contained in the individual Planning Agreement, the Act, the Regulation and any direction from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

Responsibilities

Strategic Planning Manager is responsible for overseeing and supporting Council staff in negotiation of Planning Agreements, implementation and review of this policy.

Local Infrastructure Contributions Steering Group will oversee entering into a negotiation of a Planning Agreement including, but not limited to, reviewing the proposed offer and providing advice for the Planning Agreement.

Senior Infrastructure Contributions Planner is responsible for the negotiation of the Planning Agreement with the developer and reporting to the Local Infrastructure Contributions Steering Group and Strategic Planning Manager.

Reporting

After entering into a Planning Agreement with Council, any future reporting will be in accordance with the terms of the Planning Agreement.

Privacy and personal information handling

Personal information collected concerning Planning Agreements is being collected for the purpose of implementing this policy and Planning Agreements. This information will be used for the purpose outlined, related administrative functions, compliance and complaint handling, internal auditing, and in accordance with Council's Privacy Management Plan and Privacy Statement which can be found on Council's website.

Records management

Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in accordance with Council's Records Management Policy.

Complaints

Complaints or disputes concerning matters subject to a Planning Agreement are to be dealt with in accordance with dispute resolution clauses of that agreement.

Complaints regarding any other aspect of this policy should be lodged in accordance with Council's Complaints Handling policy.

14 POLICY DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Definition
Act	Means the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.
Agreed Value	Means the cost of the works to be delivered as agreed between all parties to the agreement.
Agreed Works	Means works to be delivered as agreed between all parties to the agreement.
Benefit Sharing	Benefit-sharing aims to distribute benefits generated by a project between the applicant and the community through mutually agreed opportunities such as funding or sponsoring local community initiatives, programs or projects.
Contributions Offset	The dedication of land and/or the construction of infrastructure required as part of Council's Section 64 Development Servicing Plans.
Council	Means Cessnock City Council.
Development Application	Has the same meaning as in the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.
Development Consent	Has the same meaning as in the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.
Local Infrastructure Contribution	Means the provision made by a proponent under a planning agreement being a monetary contribution, the dedication of land free of cost or the provision of a Material Public Benefit, or any combinations of the above.
Environmental Planning Instrument	Means an Environmental Planning Instrument (including a SEPP or LEP but not including a DCP) made, or taken to have been made, under Part 3 (of the Act) and in force.

Explanatory Note	Means a written statement that provides details of the objectives, nature, effects and merits of a planning agreement or an amendment to, or revocation of, a planning agreement.
Instrument Change	Means a change to an Environmental Planning Instrument to facilitate development which is the subject of a planning agreement.
Material Public Benefits	Consist of some physical (material) component, other than land dedication or monetary contribution, in settlement of the contributions levied upon the development consent, but does not include works nominated in a Contribution Plan's Work Schedule.
Plan	The applicable Section 7.11 Contribution Plan, depending upon the infrastructure within the Application Works in Kind Policy.
Planning Benefit	Means a Local Infrastructure Contribution that confers a net Public Benefit, i.e. a benefit that exceeds the benefit derived from measures that would address the impacts of particular development on surrounding land or the wider community.
Planning Agreement	Means a voluntary agreement or other arrangement between a planning authority and a proponent who has sought a change to an environmental planning instrument or made or proposes to make a development application or application for a complying development certificate under which the proponent 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.
Planning Authority	Has the same meaning as in Division 7.1 of Part 7 of the EP&A Act, along with: • a Council, or • the Minister for Planning, or • the Planning Ministerial Corporation, or • a development corporation (within the meaning of the Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Act 1974), or • a public authority.
Planning Obligation	Means an obligation imposed by a planning agreement on a proponent requiring the proponent to make a contribution.
Planning Proposal	Means a proposed change to the Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 – a change to an Environmental Planning Instrument - to enable a development subject of an application to be made permissible and to carry out the development subject of the development application and planning agreement.
Practical Completion	Developer Works or a specified part of the Developer Works, occurs when the Council has issued a Practical Completion Certificate for the Developer Works or the specified part.
Practice Note	Means any Practice Notes on Development Contributions published by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.
Proponent	Means a person who has sought a change to an Environmental Planning Instrument through the lodgment of a Planning Proposal or who has submitted or proposes to lodge a development application – or, by formal agreement, is a representative of an applicant for such changes.
Public	Includes a section of the Public.
Public Benefit	Means the benefit enjoyed by the public as a consequence of development contribution.
Public Infrastructure	Means facilities, amenities and services.

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Public Purpose	Includes: • provision of, including recoupment of, the cost of public amenities or public services; • provision of, including recoupment of, the cost of affordable housing; • transport or other infrastructure relating to land; • funding of recurrent expenditure relating to the provision of public amenities of public services, affordable housing or transport or other infrastructure; • monitoring of the planning impacts of development; and • conservation or enhancement of the natural environment.
Regulation	Means the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*
Surplus Value	Means the value of the proponents' provision under a planning agreement more than the sum of the value of public works required to be carried out by the proponent under a condition imposed under Section 4.17 (1) of the Act and the value of Development Contributions that are or could have been required to be made under Section 7.11 or Section 7.12 of the Act in respect of the development subject of the planning agreement.
Works In Kind	Is the undertaking of work, or the provision of a facility, or the dedication of land as nominated in the Planning Agreements work schedule and includes reference to contribution offset.
Works In Kind Application	An application for Works in Kind, Material Public Benefit, contribution offsets or combinations thereof.
Works In Kind Agreement	A formal agreement that must be entered into with Council following Council approval of an application under this policy.

15 POLICY AUTHORISATIONS

No.	Authorised Function	Authorised Business Unit / Role(s)
1	Negotiation of Planning Agreements	Infrastructure Contributions Planner

16 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate	Planning and Environment		
Responsible Officer	Strategic Planning Manager		
Associated Procedure			
Policy Review Date	TBA	**Is this a local policy pursuant to Part 3, Chapter 7 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)?**	No
Document Reference Number	DOC2025/107083		
This policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation: ▪ Subdivision 2 of Division 7.1 of Part 7 of the *Act;* ▪ Division 1A of Part 4 of the Regulation; ▪ Planning Agreement Practice Note – February 2021; and ▪ Schedule 1 of the GIPA Regulation			
This policy contributes to the achievement of the following desired outcome or objectives as per			

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Council's Delivery Program: **A Sustainable & Healthy Environment** Objective 3.1 Protecting & enhancing the natural environment and the rural character of the area. **Civil Leadership & Effective Governance** Objective 5.3: Making Council more responsive to the community.	
Related Documents (include reference document numbers)	▪ Works in Kind Policy (DOC2024/107083) ▪ Land Dedication Policy (DOC2025/105382) ▪ Records Management Policy (DOC2019/038769) ▪ Complaints Handling policy (DOC2018/048382) ▪ Privacy Management Plan (DOC2014/005148) ▪ Land Dedication Policy ▪ Works in Kind Agreement Policy

17 POLICY HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	15 November 2017 PE61/2017	New Policy Adopted
2	25 May 2020	First periodic review of the policy
3	TBA	Second periodic review of the policy

18 APPENDICES

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External Planning Agreement Guide

Last Updated: **xx/xx/xxxx** Revision: **x**

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External Planning Agreement Guide

This guide compliments Council's adopted Planning Agreement Policy (**Policy**) and sets out the framework for the negotiation and management of Planning Agreements (**PAs**). All developers proposing to enter into negotiations for a Planning Agreement should read both documents, together with any reference documents, prior to initiating negotiations.

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSES

This guide compliments Council's adopted Policy and Land Dedication Policy (LD Policy) and sets out the framework for the negotiation and management of planning agreements (PA) within the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA). All developers proposing to enter into negotiations for a PA should read all documents, together with any reference documents, prior to initiating negotiations.

The purpose of this guide is to provide clarity for developers regarding the procedures and practices in negotiating, executing and implementing PAs with Cessnock City Council.

2. WHAT IS A PA?

A PA is a voluntary agreement between a planning authority and developer that allows local infrastructure contributions whether it be dedication of land (free of cost), a monetary contribution, other material benefit, or a combination of all to deliver a public benefit.

A PA provides flexibility to deliver a range of public facilities and services. PAs arise through a change to an environmental planning instrument (planning proposal) or a Development Application (DA), or an application for a Complying Development Certificate (CDC).

3. CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER THE NEGOTIATION OF A PA

3.1 Council, at its complete discretion, may consider the negotiation of a PA with a developer who has voluntarily offered to enter into a PA in association with a Planning Proposal (PP), DA, or CDC. All proposals for a PA should begin prior to lodgement of any PP, DA, or CDC.

3.2 Council may consider negotiating a PA with a developer to consider:

3.2.1 Compensation for the loss of, or damage to, public infrastructure, facilities, services, resources or environmental assets caused by the proposed development through replacement, substitution, repair or regeneration.

3.2.2 Meeting the demands created by the development for new public infrastructure, amenities and services or when, in Council's opinion, an environmental offset represents a public and a planning benefit.

3.2.3 Addressing deficiencies in existing provision of public infrastructure, services and facilities, which have a connection with the PP/DA/CDC and would otherwise prevent the development occurring. There should also be demonstrable public benefit from the re-dress of those deficiencies.

3.2.4 Achieving recurrent funding in respect of public infrastructure, services and/or facilities and for ongoing maintenance of land of environmental significance which is to be conserved and ultimately transferred to Council.

3.2.5 Prescribing inclusions in the development that meet specific planning and environmental objectives of council e.g. Council's Biodiversity Offsets Policy and any relevant ministerial directors and/or practice notes.

3.2.6 Monitoring the planning impacts of the PP/DA/CDC.

3.2.7 Clearly securing planning benefits for the wider community.

3.2.8 Enabling items in the work schedules of Council's contribution plans to be brought forward and/or when deficiencies and/or omissions in Council's existing contribution plans can be addressed.

3.2.9 Not involve any unreasonable financial liabilities for council.

4. CONTEXT

The implementation of procedures and practices is designed to support a high level of efficiency. Council is responsible for ensuring transparency regarding the costs of professional, administrative, and legal staff involved. Accordingly, Council will:

4.1 Ensure it adheres to the strict probity procedures as outlined in this document and in the Policy.

4.2 Seek to obtain reimbursement for the costs incurred in negotiating, executing and implementing PA, in accordance with the policy.

4.3 Ensure that the Steering Group will oversee the negotiation of all PAs.

4.4 Negotiate PAs efficiently, predictably, transparently and accountable in line with the Policy.

4.5 Ensure that the final negotiation of all PAs run in parallel with the PP/DA/CDC so as not to unduly delay any assessments or determinations.

4.6 Make every endeavour to have PAs fully documented with the explanatory note in readiness for the public notification of the PP/DA/CDC.

4.7 Encourage the developer to hold discussions with Council before the lodgement of the relevant PP/DA/CDC regarding a proposed PA.

5. PUBLIC INTEREST AND PROBITY

The following procedures will be implemented to address the above probity matters:

5.1 Council staff with appropriate delegated authority will negotiate a PA on behalf of Council. These Council staff (subject to resource capacity) will not be involved in the direct assessment of the relevant PP/DA/CDC.

5.2 If Council has a commercial interest in the subject development project or the property of the subject PA, Council staff with key responsibility for determining DAs will not play an active role in the assessment of any commercial aspects of the agreement, except where advice is required on matters relating to the conditions of consent for a particular proposal.

5.3 Council, may at its discretion, involve an independent person(s), particularly where Council has a commercial interest in the matter or where the size or complexity of the project requires an independent person(s) with specialist skills to participate in the negotiations or any aspect of the negotiations.

5.4 Council will ensure that all negotiations with developers and their representatives are documented.

6. BENEFIT SHARING – RENEWABLE ENERGY

Council will follow the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure Benefit Sharing Guidelines as a basis of negotiating planning agreements in relation to renewable energy projects.

7. CONTENTS OF A PA

7.1 Cost and value estimations

7.1.1 Council will provide standard, consistent values and costs for capital and recurrent aspects of PA where possible.

7.1.2 It is anticipated that a principle used increasingly in future planning of public facilities will be one of maximising co-location, e.g. community facilities and recreational facilities; multi-use

halls and community facilities, etc. This will also enable multi-use of facilities and therefore sharing of costs such as car parking, lighting, landscaping and security.

7.1.3 Council will require the developer to fund an independent quantity surveyor to provide cost estimates to form the basis of PA costs for capital and recurrent items.

7.1.4 Where the benefit under a PA is for the provision of land for a public purpose, council will require a valuation of the said land at the developer's cost and seek to value the benefit of the said land on the basis of the estimated amount of compensation to which the developer would be entitled under the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* upon the compulsory acquisition of the land.

7.2 Recurrent costs

7.2.1 Council may request developers, through a PA, to make local infrastructure contributions towards the recurrent costs of maintenance in accordance with the LD Policy or for public facilities. Where the public facility primarily serves the development to which the PA relates or to a neighbouring development, the arrangement for recurrent funding may be in perpetuity. Where the land or public facility is intended to serve the wider community, the PA may only require the developer to make monetary contributions towards the recurrent maintenance costs for a set period which will be negotiated according to the impact of the development.

7.2.2 If the funding of recurrent costs is required to be part of the PA, the PA will ensure that the LD Policy and the following matters are taken into account:

a) The specific purpose of the recurrent funding.

b) The nature and extent of the recurrent funding.

c) The time period over which the funding shall be provided.

d) Any mechanisms for the indexing of the recurrent funding.

e) The heads of consideration for any endowment fund or trust that may be required to be established to manage the recurrent funding.

f) The provision of security such as bank guarantee, bond or other form of security to secure the ongoing funding.

g) Circumstances in which funding would be renegotiated or revoked.

h) Any other matter relevant to securing the public interest in the achievement of an ongoing public benefit.

7.3 Land dedication in PA

7.3.1 You should ensure that you read Council's adopted Land Dedication Policy in line with the Planning Agreement Policy and this Guide.

7.3.2 PAs may make provision for the dedication of land, if the land has intrinsic environmental value of as an environmental offset. In the case of land identified within a contribution plan, the estimated value of land that is identified in that contribution plan will be given due consideration. This consideration is essential as the initial estimated value contributed to determining the contribution rates.

7.3.2 In all cases, the agreed value of the particular parcel of land will be negotiated as part of the PA. Council will take into account the unique characteristics of the property and the circumstances of the dedication which may include:

a) Whether the land proposed to be dedicated has been identified by Council in any strategic plan, development control plan, contributions plan or other policy as having intrinsic environmental significance.

b) Whether the land has been identified as having intrinsic environmental significance in studies supporting the PP/DA/CDC, which underpin a recommendation that the land be rezoned to E2 Environmental Conservation Zone, or E3 Environmental Management Zone.

c) Intrinsic environmental significance may also be land which achieves linkages of critical habitat or corridors.

d) Whether the land is located in or adjacent to a riparian corridor or bush fire prone land.

e) Whether the land supports the habitat of threatened fauna or flora species or endangered ecological communities.

f) The extent, if any, to which any development potential attaching to that part of the land to be dedicated can be incorporated elsewhere within the development.

g) The location, configuration, size, accessibility, topography, existing infrastructure and existing use of the land proposed to be dedicated.

h) Whether the land adjoins an existing area of open space and can be consolidated into that area.

i) Whether the land will create or improve accessibility within the locality.

j) Any other factors which may affect the usability of the land, e.g. soil characteristics, flood liability, potential soil contamination, public accessibility and safety, proximity to existing uses, the current use of the land, the cost of embellishment or construction of any proposed facility on the land, etc.

k) In the case of a material public benefits not anticipated by a contribution plan and proposed to be offset against monetary contributions, the impact on the achievement of works identified within any adopted contribution plan of Council.

l) The ongoing maintenance costs to Council after the improvement works are carried out on the land.

m) A land review by Council's Property Section, together with other relevant matters, based on the circumstances of the case.

7.3.3 If the proposed land is to be dedicated or subject to transfer of ownership to Council or any other public authority, then the Developer must:

a) Identify the land in any strategic plan, development control plan, contributions plan, or other policy as having intrinsic environmental significance/value or negotiated in accordance with the Land Dedication Policy.

b) Detail the intrinsic environmental significance in studies supporting the PP/DA/CDC, which underpin a recommendation that the land be rezoned to E2 Environmental Conservation or E3 Environmental Management. Then, that land should be valued based upon the E2 Environmental Conservation or E3 Environmental Management zoning.

7.3.4 The PA must specify the date at which the transfer of ownership will take place or the threshold, which will trigger the requirement to transfer ownership of the land. This trigger will usually be the expiry of a maintenance period for which the developer is responsible.

7.3.5 Council will not consider contribution credits for any maintenance period prior to ownership by Council.

7.3.6 Following the execution of a PA, the agreed value will be as per the PA regardless of any subsequent change in land value including a change in value between the execution of the PA and the transfer of land ownership.

7.3.7 If a PA provides that a specified land dedication satisfies a required contribution or consent condition without specifying a land value, that agreement will stand regardless of whether relative changes in land value or contribution rates alter the value of that agreement to either party, unless the PA is formally amended by mutual agreement. The PA (or amended PA) is to set out:

a) The amount of the monetary contribution.

b) The purpose and extent of the monetary contribution.

c) When such contributions are to be paid.

d) In the case of staged payments, the nature of the staging or the dates at which time payments are to be made.

e) Any mechanisms for the indexing of the monetary contribution against inflation over time.

f) Details of any security that is to be provided in lieu of the monetary contribution until such time as it becomes due and payable.

g) Any obligations on council for the expenditure of the monetary contributions and related financial reporting.

h) Any other matter relevant to securing the public interest in the management and expenditure of the monetary contributions.

7.4 Works in Kind (WIK)

7.4.1 Council may, subject to certain criteria being met, accept a provision of a WIK. In this case the developer should also read the Works in Kind Agreement Policy, user guide and templates together with any relevant documentation issued by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, including relevant legislation.

7.5 Pooling of local infrastructure contributions

7.5.1 Where a proposed PA provides for a monetary contribution by the developer, Council may seek to include a provision permitting money paid under the agreement to be pooled with money paid under another PA and applied progressively for the different purposes under those agreements, subject to the specific requirements of the relevant agreements. Pooling may be appropriate to allow public benefits, particularly essential infrastructure, to be provided in a fair and equitable way.

7.5.2 If pooling of contributions is agreed to in the PA. Council must keep a detailed record of contributions collected and allocation of where the contributions were expended.

7.5.3 Monetary contributions required by a standard condition of consent in accordance with an adopted section 7.11 or section 7.12 Contribution Plan will not be normally referenced in a PA, except where the PA must clarify its the relationship to any contributions which may be required as a consequence of granting a consent on land to which the PA applies.

7.6 Capital Works in Kind and PA

7.6.1 A PA may make provision for a developer to carry out work on land to be dedicated to Council, or that is already in the public domain. In such circumstances, the provision of quality work which is fit for purpose is critical to Council. Council may appoint a Quantity Surveyor, at the developer's expense, to verify cost estimates submitted by the developer. The PA will specify the particulars of the work and the procedure for satisfying any requirements in carrying out of the work, taking into account the unique characteristics of the property and the circumstances of the work which may include:

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a) Requirements and specifications for detailed design plans for future approval or specific references to endorsed plans.

b) Public liability insurance during construction and during the defect's liability period.

c) Requirements for inspections by Council prior to and during the course of construction including the notice to be given in order to arrange such an inspection.

d) Requirements for the commencement of handover proceedings.

e) Details of the defect's liability period.

f) Security such as bonds or bank guarantees to be held during the course of construction and during the defect's liability period.

g) Access for Council officers during the course of construction to ascertain progress or to assess asset value.

h) In some cases, permitting Council to carry out the work itself and recover the costs of so doing from the security and/or the developer.

i) Any other matter relevant to securing the public interest in the achievement of a quality public benefit.

7.7 Methodology for valuing public benefits under a PA

7.7.1 Where the Public Benefit under a planning agreement is the provision of land for a Public Purpose, Council will require a valuation at the developer's cost and seek to value the Public Benefit on the basis of the estimated amount of compensation to which the developer would be entitled under the *Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991* upon the compulsory acquisition of the land.

7.7.2 Adequately skilled Council staff will review and validate cost estimates provided by developers of a PA and reserve the right to obtain quotations from other relevant parties to ensure accuracy of cost estimates to be included into PA.

7.7.3 If the public benefit under a PA is the carrying out of works for a public purpose, Council will generally seek to value the public benefit on the basis of the estimated value of the completed works in accordance with a cost estimate prepared by a registered Quantity Surveyor. In either case, the costs of the valuation of the benefits are to be at no cost to Council.

7.8 Council's costs of negotiating, entering into, monitoring and enforcing a PA

7.8.1 The developer shall pay Council's full costs in negotiating, executing and implementing the PA, including legal costs and the costs of engaging of any independent expert(s).

7.8.2 A PA will specify that other costs related to the core purposes of the PA such as architectural design plans and detailed landscape plans will be borne by the developer.

7.8.3 A PA may also make provision for Council's costs for the monitoring and enforcing of the PA to be borne by the developer. In particular cases, Council may require the PA to make provision for a local infrastructure contribution by the developer towards the on-going administration of the agreement.

7.8.4 Council will at all times strive to be fair, reasonable and accountable when seeking the developer to reimburse the costs incurred for negotiating, executing and implementing the PA.

7.9 Acceptability Test

7.9.1 When Council assesses an offer in relation to PAs, an acceptability test will be undertaken by Council's Infrastructure Contributions Planner. The acceptability test ensures that PAs

are directed towards legitimate planning purposes that can be identified in the statutory planning controls and other adopted planning strategies and policies applying to development.

7.9.2 Provide for the delivery of infrastructure or public benefits not wholly unrelated to the development.

7.9.3 Produce outcomes that meet the general values and expectations of the community and protect the overall public interest.

7.9.4 Provide for reasonable means of achieving the desired outcomes and securing the benefits.

7.10 When applying the acceptability test, Council will consider the following:

7.10.1 Is the proposed PA directed towards proper and legitimate planning and/or environmental purposes having regard to statutory planning controls and other adopted planning policies and the circumstances of the case?

7.10.2 Is provision made for reasonable means of achieving the relevant purpose?

7.10.3 Can the proposed PA be taken into consideration in the assessment of the relevant PP or DA?

7.10.4 Will outcomes be produced that meet the expectations of the community and serve the public interest?

7.10.5 Do the contents of the proposed PA align with Council's strategic objectives contained in this policy?

7.10.6 Does the proposed PA conform to the fundamental principles governing Council's use of PAs?

7.10.7 Is it clear that no relevant circumstances may preclude Council from entering into the proposed PA?

7.10.8 Does the proposed PA have a clear and strong connection with the development subject of the PP/DA? (The PA does not necessarily have to be wholly related).

7.10.9 Is the content of the proposed PA fair, reasonable, financially sound and equitable to the parties who will be signatories to the agreement?

7.11 Involvement of independent third parties in the negotiation process

7.11.1 Council may, at its sole discretion, appoint an independent person(s) to facilitate or otherwise participate in the negotiations or aspects of it, particularly where:

a) An independent assessment of a proposed Instrument change or DA is necessary or desirable.
b) Factual information requires validation in the course of negotiations.
c) Sensitive financial or other confidential information must be verified or established in the course of negotiations.
d) Facilitation of complex negotiations are required in relation to large projects or where numerous parties or stakeholders are involved.
e) Dispute resolution is required under a PA.

8. PROCESSES AND PRACTICES

The processes and practices for the negotiation, execution and implementation of PAs are set out below:

8.1 Commencement

8.1.1 Pre-lodgement

a) All developers are encouraged to have pre-lodgement discussions and a pre-lodgement meeting with Council.
b) The initial discussions should include:
   i. The proposed offer for a PA.
   ii. The type of development proposed.
   iii. Could an amendment to the contribution plan be more acceptable?
c) Any pre-lodgement meeting, will include Council's Infrastructure Contributions Planner and a minute taker provided by Council. The meeting is to include:
   i. Explanation of Council's policy.
   ii. The legal framework.
   iii. The procedures for negotiation.
   iv. Proposals for infrastructure or environmental offsets.

8.1.2 Scoping meeting

a) The Infrastructure Contributions Planner is to discuss the proposed PA offer at Council's internal Local Contributions Steering Group. The Steering Group will consider whether a PA is suitable compared to a consent condition for contributions;
   i. The Steering Group will appoint relevant staff to form a working group to negotiate the terms of the PA; and
   ii. The Steering Group will oversee the negotiation of the PA and ensure all internal Council processes are followed including liaison with the Manager Financial Services/Internal Auditor to ensure that the financial contents of the draft PA are consistent with the financial requirements of Council.

8.2 Negotiation

8.2.1 Proposals, Negotiations and Evaluation

a) Outcomes of the Steering Group are to be provided to the developer.
b) If the proposal is acceptable to Council, the developer makes formal offer to Council.
c) The offer must be:
   i. In writing.
   ii. Addressed to Council.
   iii. The offer must be signed by all parties proposed in the planning agreement.
   iv. Outline sufficient detail in accordance with s7.4(3) of the EP&A Act.
   v. Address any details required to be included as specified in the Policy and this document.
   vi. Allow relevant information to allow proper consideration for approval of the PA.
d) The developer is to advise if they are appointing a representative to negotiate the PA.
e) Meeting(s) are held with Council, on an as-needs basis involving Council and the developer to enable the agreement to be reached, including, but not limited to, infrastructure, works in kind, environmental land dedication and management proposals, and the proposed agreement should form the contents of the heads of agreement which will then form the PA.
f) The meetings are to:
   i. Negotiate and refine proposals.
   ii. Determination of roles and responsibilities.
   iii. Assess and validate cost estimates in accordance with Council's policy, recurrent costs, workforce planning, needs for inclusion(s) in Council's Capital Works Program and Council budget implications.
   iv. Include Quantity Surveyor and/or specialist professional to assess and validate cost estimates, if required.
g) Council will ensure it provides a minute taker for all meetings.

h) A copy of the minutes will to be provided to the developer and their representative within five (5) working days of the meeting.

8.2.2 Draft Heads of Agreement

a) Once terms of the proposal are finalised draft heads of agreement encompassing provisions of infrastructure, works in kind and/or environmental land dedication and ongoing management and including validated estimates of costs and land values are to be prepared by Council.

b) Draft heads of agreement are to be endorsed by the Steering Group.

c) Following endorsement, they are to be forwarded to the developer.

8.2.3 Negotiation of Heads of Agreement

a) The developer and their representatives are review the draft agreement.

b) If required, a meeting to discuss the draft heads of agreement can be arranged otherwise this can be completed by emails, telephone calls or letters.

8.2.4 Finalisation of Heads of Agreement

a) Once agreed, the Heads of Agreement is signed by all parties.

8.3 Application

8.3.1 Explanatory Note and drafting PA

a) The Explanatory Note and draft PA is drafted in accordance with Council approved templates only.

b) Either party can draft these documents provided is it produced on Council's templates.

c) Council will not accept PAs drafted on other councils' templates.

8.3.2 Developer's Review

a) Each party to consider the draft PA and explanatory note and refer to legal representatives as needed.

b) Any changes to the draft PA must be made in a marked-up form and changes must be justified with comments to enable Council to review same.

8.4 Notification

8.4.1 Endorsement for Public Exhibition

a) When the PA is formally agreed, the PA must be reported to Council for consideration and endorsement for public notification.

8.4.2 Public Exhibition

a) Following endorsement by Council, the PA is placed on public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days concurrently with the PP/DA/CDC, or for 28 day period which is as close as possible to the exhibition period of the relevant PP/DA/CDC.

b) If any submissions are received, Council will review, and if deemed necessary, will discuss them with the developer and their representative.

c) If changes to the PA are proposed, the parties may be required to undertake further negotiations and a number of the above steps may need to be repeated as a result of the public notification process.

d) Once any amendments are agreed to, the PA will be reported back to Council with a recommendation to either re-exhibit or execute the agreement. A detailed justification regarding changes will be included with the recommendations.

e) Re-exhibition of the PA if required.

8.5 Assessment

8.5.1 The draft planning agreement is considered in the assessment of the relevant application.

8.6 Execution

8.6.1 Following exhibition and agreement from Council the PA can be executed.

8.6.2 The developer must sign the PA first and then forward same to Council for execution by the General Manager.

8.6.3 Finalisation of the agreement must be in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulations*.

9 IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 When is a planning agreement required to be entered into?

9.1.1 A PA is entered into when it is signed by all of the parties and the PA may include timing and/or staging commitments for the developer to meet in terms of completion of works, etc.

9.1.2 A PA can be entered into at any time after the agreement is publicly notified in accordance with the Act and Regulation.

9.1.3 Council will usually require a planning agreement to be entered into as a condition of granting development consent to the development to which the agreement relates.

9.2 Implementation agreement

9.2.1 In appropriate cases, Council may require a PA to provide that before the development the subject of the agreement is commenced, the parties are to enter into an implementation agreement that provides for matters such as:

a) The times at which and, if relevant, the period during which, the developer is to fulfil commitments under the planning agreement.

b) The design, technical specification and standard of any work required by the PA to be undertaken by the developer.

c) The manner in which a work is to be handed over to Council.

d) The manner in which a Material Public Benefit is to be made available for its public purpose in accordance with the PA.

9.2.2 Council will generally require a planning agreement to provide that the developer's obligations under the planning agreement take effect when the first development consent operates in respect of development that is the subject of the agreement or within an alternative prescribed timeframe.

9.3 Monitoring, review and enforcement of the Planning Agreement

9.3.1 Council will continuously monitor the performance of the developer's obligations under a PA.

9.3.2 Council will require the PA to contain a provision establishing a mechanism under which the PA is periodically reviewed with the involvement of all parties. This will include a review of the developer's performance in implementing the agreement.

9.3.3 Council will require the PA to contain a provision requiring the parties to use their best endeavours to agree on a modification to the agreement having regard to the outcomes of the review.

9.4 Modification or discharge of the developer's obligations under a PA

9.4.1 In most cases, the PA will provide for appropriate review or modification. Council will generally only agree to a provision in a planning agreement permitting the developer's obligations under the agreement to be modified or discharged where the modification or discharge is linked to the following circumstances:

a) The developer's obligations have been fully carried out in accordance with the PA.

b) The developer has assigned their interest under the PA in accordance with its terms and the assignee has become bound to Council to perform the developer's obligations under the agreement.

c) The development consent to which the PA relates has lapsed.

d) The performance of the planning agreement has been frustrated by an event beyond the control of the parties.

e) Other material changes affecting the operation of the PA have occurred.

f) Council and the developer otherwise agree to the modification or discharge of the PA.

g) The Minister has determined in writing to the parties not to support the PP.

9.5 Assignment and dealings by the developer

9.5.1 Council will require every PA to provide that the developer may not assign its rights or obligations under the PA nor have any dealing in relation to the land the subject of the PA unless, in addition to any other requirements of the PA:

a) The developer has, at no cost to Council, first procured the execution by the person with whom it is dealing of all necessary documents in favour of Council by which that person agrees to be bound by the PA as if they were a party to the original PA.

b) The developer is not in breach of the PA.

9.6 Notations on certificates under section 10.7(5) of the Act

9.6.1 Council will generally require a planning agreement to contain an acknowledgement by the developer that Council may, in its absolute discretion, make a notation under section 10.7(5) of the Act about a planning agreement on any certificate issued under section 10.7(5) of the Act relating to the land the subject of the agreement or any other land.

9.7 Registration of PAs

9.7.1 Council will require a PA to contain a provision requiring the developer to agree to registration of the PA pursuant to section 7.6 of the Act if the requirements of that section are satisfied. Council will undertake the registration at the developer's cost.

9.8 Dispute resolution

Council will require a PA to provide for mediation of disputes between the parties to the PA, at their own cost, before the parties may exercise any other legal rights in relation to the dispute.

10 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

10.1 Council's costs

The developer must pay Council's costs in relation to the preparation of the PA. Council will endeavor, where possible, to provide the developer as estimation of costs prior to negotiation.

10.2 Credits and refunds

Council will not generally agree to a PA providing for the surplus value under a PA being refunded to the developer or offset against local infrastructure contributions required to be made by the developer in respect of other development in the Cessnock Local Government Area.

10.3 Provision of security under a PA

Council will require a PA to make provision for a non-refundable security payment to the value of 10% of the value of the developer obligations under the agreement.

The form of security will generally be an unconditional bank guarantee from an Australian Bank (or other institution approved by Council's Finance Manager) in favour of Council and on terms otherwise acceptable to Council.

10.4 Indexation and adjusting contribution rates

Pursuant to clause 25I of the Regulation, the proposed cost of carrying out development is to be indexed before payment to reflect quarterly variations in the Consumer Price Index All Group Index Number for Sydney between the date the proposed cost was determined by Council and the date the contribution is required to be paid.

The contribution rates identified in PAs will be indexed and adjusted quarterly in accordance with the Sydney Consumer Price Index (CPI) applicable to each quarter. The CPI is published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Please refer to the ABS website www.abs.gov.au for information regarding the CPI.

In the event that the CPI All Groups Index Number for Sydney is less than the previous CPI All Groups Index Number for Sydney, the current index shall be taken as not less than the previous index.

11 ADMINISTRATION OF THE PA

11.2 The written agreement document is to be prepared and presented using Council's PA template.

11.3 Three original copies of the PA are required for execution:

10.2.1 Copy for the developer.

10.2.2 Copy for Council.

10.2.3 Copy for the Land Titles Office.

10.3 A third copy will not be required if the PA is not required to be registered on the title of the land.

10.4 Council will provide the developer with the required paper copies for signature.

10.5 Council will sign and date the required paper copies only after the developer has signed. Council will then retain one original copy in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*. Council will provide the remaining copy(s) to the developer.

12 POLICY DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Definition
Act	Means the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.
Agreed Value	Means the cost of the works to be delivered as agreed between all parties to the agreement.
Agreed Works	Means works to be delivered as agreed between all parties to the agreement.
Contributions Offset	The dedication of land and/or the construction of infrastructure required as part of Council's Section 64 Development Servicing Plans.
Council	Means Cessnock City Council.

Development Application	Has the same meaning as in the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.
Development Consent	Has the same meaning as in the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.
Local Infrastructure Contribution	Means the provision made by a proponent under a planning agreement being a monetary contribution, the dedication of land free of cost or the provision of a Material Public Benefit, or any combinations of the above.
Environmental Planning Instrument	Means an Environmental Planning Instrument (including a SEPP or LEP but not including a DCP) made, or taken to have been made, under Part 3 (of the Act) and in force.
Explanatory Note	Means a written statement that provides details of the objectives, nature, effects and merits of a planning agreement or an amendment to, or revocation of, a planning agreement.
Instrument Change	Means a change to an Environmental Planning Instrument to facilitate development which is the subject of a planning agreement.
Material Public Benefits	Consist of some physical (material) component, other than land dedication or monetary contribution, in settlement of the contributions levied upon the development consent, but does not include works nominated in a Contribution Plan's Work Schedule.
Plan	The applicable Section 7.11 Contribution Plan, depending upon the infrastructure within the Application Works in Kind Agreement Policy.
Planning Benefit	Means a Local Infrastructure Contribution that confers a net Public Benefit – that is, a benefit that exceeds the benefit derived from measures that would address the impacts of particular development on surrounding land or the wider community.
Planning Agreement	Means a voluntary agreement or other arrangement between a planning authority and a proponent who has sought a change to an environmental planning instrument or made or proposes to make a development application or application for a complying development certificate under which the proponent 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.
Planning Authority	Has the same meaning as in Division 7.1 of Part 7 of the EP&A Act, along with: • a Council, or • the Minister for Planning, or • the Planning Ministerial Corporation, or • a development corporation (within the meaning of the Growth Centres (Development Corporations) Act 1974), or • a public authority.
Planning Obligation	Means an obligation imposed by a planning agreement on a proponent requiring the proponent to make a contribution.
Planning Proposal	Means a proposed change to the Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 – a change to an Environmental Planning Instrument - to enable a development subject of an application to be made permissible and to carry out the development subject of the development application and planning agreement.
Practical Completion	Developer Works or a specified part of the Developer Works, occurs when the Council has issued a Practical Completion Certificate for the Developer Works or the specified part.

Practice Note	Means any Practice Notes on Development Contributions published by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.
Proponent	Means a person who has sought a change to an Environmental Planning Instrument through the lodgment of a Planning Proposal or who has submitted or proposes to lodge a development application – or, by formal agreement, is a representative of an applicant for such changes.
Public	Includes a section of the Public.
Public Benefit	Means the benefit enjoyed by the public as a consequence of development contribution.
Public Infrastructure	Means facilities, amenities and services.
Public Purpose	Includes: • Provision of, including recoupment of, the cost of public amenities or public services. • Provision of, including recoupment of, the cost of affordable housing. • Transport or other infrastructure relating to land. • Funding of recurrent expenditure relating to the provision of public amenities of public services, affordable housing or transport or other infrastructure. • Monitoring of the planning impacts of development. • Conservation or enhancement of the natural environment.
Regulation	Means the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000.*
Surplus Value	Means the value of the proponents' provision under a planning agreement more than the sum of the value of public works required to be carried out by the proponent under a condition imposed under Section 4.17 (1) of the Act and the value of Development Contributions that are or could have been required to be made under Section 7.11 or Section 7.12 of the Act in respect of the development subject of the planning agreement.
Works In Kind	Is the undertaking of work, or the provision of a facility, or the dedication of land as nominated in the Planning Agreements work schedule and includes reference to contribution offsets.
Works In Kind Application	An application for Works in Kind, Material Public Benefit, contribution offsets or combinations thereof.
Works In Kind Agreement	A formal agreement that must be entered into with Council following Council approval of an application under this policy.

13 POLICY AUTHORISATIONS

No.	Authorised Function	Authorised Business Unit / Role(s)
	Negotiation of Works in Kind Agreements	Infrastructure Contributions Planner

14 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate	Planning and Environment		
Responsible Officer	Strategic Planning Manager		
Associated Procedure			
Policy Review Date	TBA	**Is this a local policy pursuant to Part 3,**	No

		Chapter 7 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)?	
Document Reference Number	DOC2024/030648		
This policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation: – Section 49 of Division 3 of Part 2 of the *Local Government Act 1993*. – Subdivision 2 of Division 7.1 of Part 7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.* – Division 1A of Part 4 of the Regulation. – Planning Agreement Practice Note – February 2021. – Schedule 1 of the GIPA Regulation.			
This policy contributes to the achievement of the following desired outcome or objectives as per Council's Delivery Program: **A Sustainable & Healthy Environment** Objective 3.1 Protecting & enhancing the natural environment and the rural character of the area. **Civil Leadership & Effective Governance** Objective 5.3: Making Council more responsive to the community.			
Related Documents (include reference document numbers)	▪ Planning Agreement Policy (DOC2025/107083) ▪ Works in Kind Policy (DOC2024/029833) ▪ Records Management Policy (DOC2019/038769) ▪ Complaints Handling policy (DOC2018/048382) ▪ Privacy Management Plan (DOC2014/005148) ▪ Strategic Planning Statement (DOC2018/087261) ▪ Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention Policy (DOC2020/027334)		

15 POLICY HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	15 November 2017 PE61/2017	New Policy Adopted
2	25 May 2020	First periodic review of the policy
3	TBA	Second periodic review of the policy

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CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL

CESSNOCK LGA
2025-35

CESSNOCK CITY LIBRARY STRATEGY



CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL



Journey Through Time, created by local school students and artist Steven Campbell.

Acknowledgement of Country

Cessnock City Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. We acknowledge these Aboriginal peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices and operations are located, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

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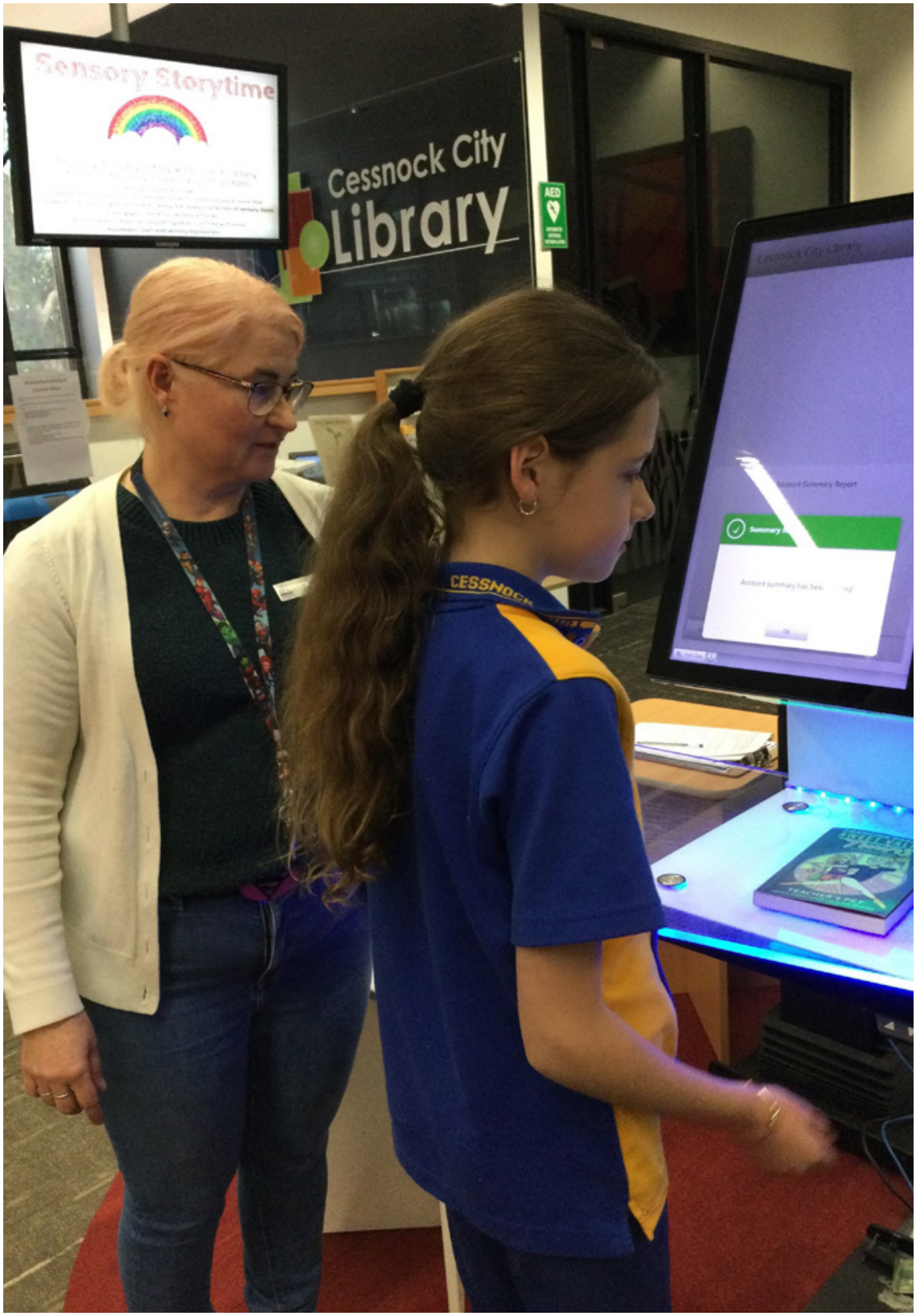
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Sensory Storytime
Cessnock City
Library
AED

Mayor's message

Daniel Watton

Cessnock City Library has long been a cornerstone of life in our community, a place that provides free and equitable access to information, technology, culture, and our shared stories. As our region grows and evolves, so too must our library. The Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan 2025-2035 sets a clear vision for the future, ensuring our library continues to respond to the changing needs and aspirations of our diverse and dynamic population.

This plan is the result of meaningful collaboration between community members, Council staff, and key stakeholders. Through workshops, focus groups, surveys, and benchmarking, we have developed a strategy that is informed, inclusive, and aligned with broader Council priorities, as well as national and state frameworks.

As Cessnock continues to undergo significant social and economic transformation, our library will remain a vital community space - trusted, inclusive, and welcoming to all. This Strategic Plan reaffirms our commitment to literacy, digital access, cultural celebration, and lifelong learning for every member of our community.



Interim General Manager's message

Peter Chrystal

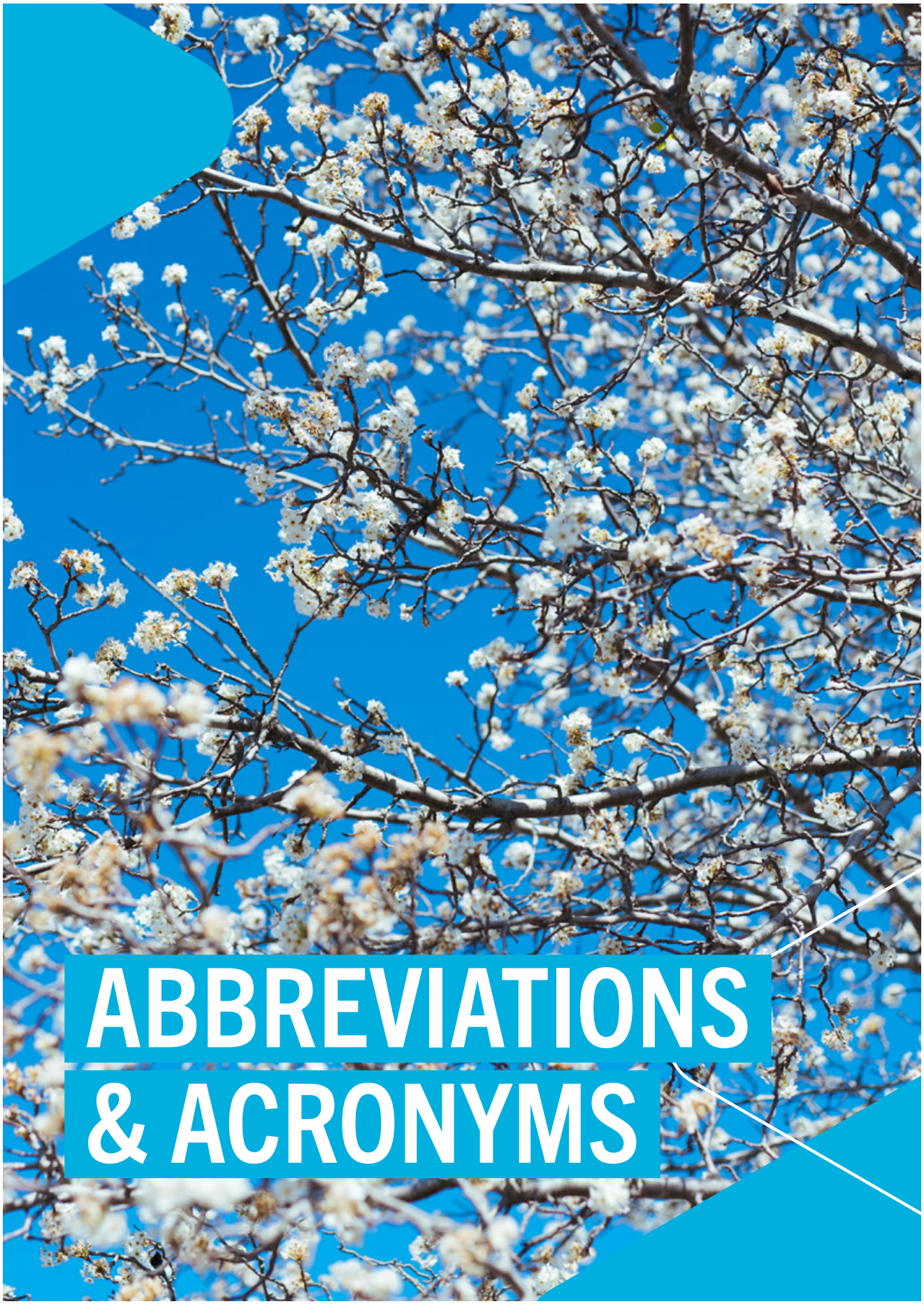
The Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan 2025-2035 sets a clear and forward-looking vision for how our libraries will continue to serve, inspire and empower our community over the next decade, through welcoming spaces that provide access to knowledge, technology, culture and life-long learning.

Centred on five strategic pillars - spaces, people, collections, connections, and programs - the Plan outlines a practical roadmap that honours our library's proud history while embracing innovation, equity, and opportunity. These pillars are grounded in best practice and guided by the Framework for Australian Public Libraries and the IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto.

The Plan builds on a strong foundation of service design and delivery, while expanding our focus on digital access, inclusive programming, and meaningful community partnerships. Under our Integrated Planning and Reporting framework, progress on the plan will be reviewed annually and shared through our annual report.

We're committed to strengthening the role of libraries in our region and look forward to seeing this Strategic Plan utilised as a foundation for ongoing improvements that reflect the needs of our community.





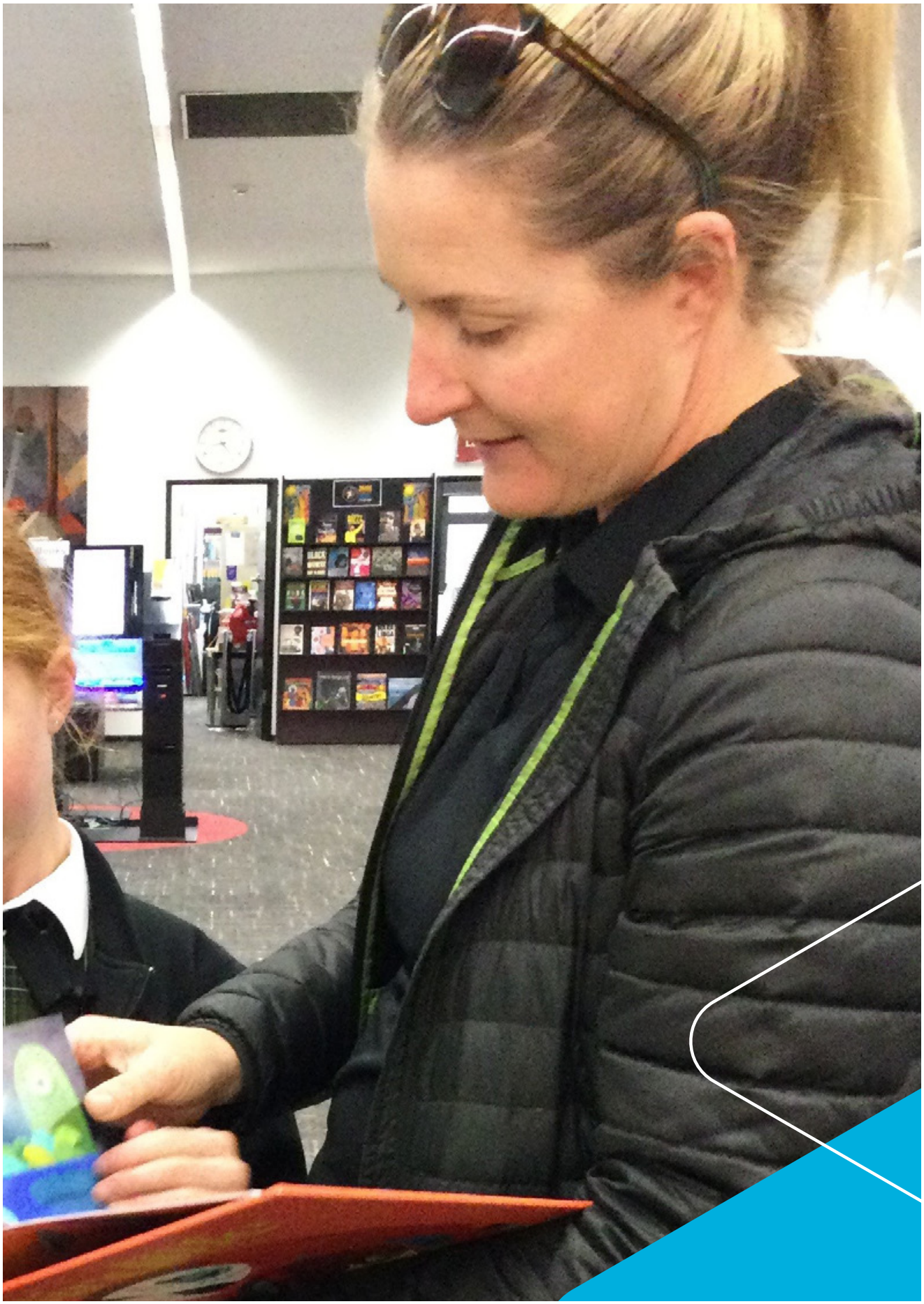
ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

Acronyms & abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ALIA	Australian Library and Information Association
Amplify	Platform for oral histories and local content
APLA	Australian Public Library Alliance
BorrowBox	A popular app for borrowing digital content
CSP	Community Strategic Plan
eBranch	Library website
eLending	Electronic Lending
eResources	Electronic Resources
indyreads	NSW-wide eBook and audiobook platform
JRC	Jan Richards Consulting
IFLA	International Federation Of Library Associations and Institutions
LGA	Local Government Area
LLL	Living Learning Libraries Standards and Guidelines for NSW public libraries
LMS	Library management system
Maker Space	A creative area for hands-on learning, making, and collaboration
NSWPLA	NSW Public Libraries Association
NSWPLN	NSW public library network, the informal network of public library services across the state
People Places	People Places; a guide for planning public library buildings, The NSW and Australian standard
PLS	Public Library Services branch of the State Library of New South Wales
SLNSW	State Library of New South Wales
SPUN	User group of Spydus Library Management System
SPYDUS	The library management system used by Cessnock City Library
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics
Tech Savvy Seniors	NSW program for digital literacy



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



1. Executive summary

1.1 Introduction

In December 2024, Cessnock City Council engaged Jan Richards Consulting (JRC) to develop a Strategic Plan for Cessnock City Library for the period 2025–2035. The purpose of the plan is to provide a long-term framework that supports the delivery of responsive, inclusive, and sustainable library services aligned with Council's broader strategic goals and community priorities.

Located in the Lower Hunter Valley Cessnock City Library operates two physical branches—in Cessnock and Kurri Kurri—supported by an eBranch and a well-regarded Home Library Service. The service is deeply valued by the local community and plays a key role in supporting literacy, lifelong learning, digital inclusion, and social connection. The Library meets or exceeds all the principles of a well-managed library specified in Living Learning Libraries Standards and Guidelines for NSW public libraries.

The strategic planning process included extensive community and stakeholder consultation, staff engagement, service benchmarking, and review of demographic and sector trends. Feedback confirmed high levels of satisfaction with current services, as well as a strong appetite for expanded programming, improved facilities, enhanced digital access, and greater outreach across the region.

In collaboration with the Cessnock City Library team, five Pillars were identified to guide the development of this plan.



Spaces

Library Spaces That are Inviting, Engaging, and Accessible



People

Creating an Inclusive and Vibrant Library Community



Collections

Collections That Reflect Diversity, Interest, and Community Needs



Connections

Technology That Empowers Access, Skills, and Participation



Programs

Programs That Inspire Learning, Creativity, and Connection

These Pillars are drawn from the Framework for *Australian Public Libraries*, which identifies essential elements for the effective and efficient operation of public libraries. Each one is discussed using a consistent structure throughout the report.

- Trends – A brief overview of major trends affecting the public library sector, with sources listed in the Bibliography. These include the most recent International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Trend Report (September 2024).
- Insights from the community – A summary of insights gathered from community focus groups, interviews, and surveys.
- Cessnock City Library – An analysis of the current state and potential future directions for the library service.
- Strategic Directions – Once endorsed, these will be incorporated into a separate, actionable Strategic Plan.
- Other key documents were used in the development of this report and are referenced in the bibliography and, where appropriate, noted in the text.
- This plan positions Cessnock City Library to meet the needs of a growing and diverse population and outlines the strategies and actions required to ensure the service continues to deliver high-quality, accessible, and future-focused outcomes for the community over the next decade.



Jan Richards AM

Jan Richards Consulting





1.2 Cessnock City Council

Cessnock City Council governs a Local Government Area (LGA) of 1,966 square kilometres in the Hunter Valley region of New South Wales. Located around 120 kilometres north of Sydney and 40 kilometres west of Newcastle, the area includes a mix of growing urban centres, rural villages, and natural landscapes.

Cessnock Local Government Area is situated on the traditional lands of the Wonnarua, Awabakal, and Darkinjung peoples, with a deep Aboriginal heritage that continues to shape the identity of the region. Many localities, such as Kurri Kurri and Wollombi, carry Aboriginal names and cultural significance. The region also contains many important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sites and holds environmental value, with over 65 threatened species and several critically endangered ecosystems. One-third of the LGA is UNESCO World Heritage-listed, reflecting its biodiversity and conservation importance.

Historically, the region transitioned from early European pastoral settlement in the 1820s to a coal mining hub by the late 19th century. While coal mining defined the local economy for much of the 20th century, industry changes and mine closures have seen a shift toward other sectors, particularly viticulture, tourism, and service industries. The Hunter Valley wine region, centred around Pokolbin, Mount View, and Allandale, is now a major contributor to the local economy.

Today, the leading employment sectors include accommodation and food services, retail, health care and social assistance, education, and manufacturing. The Cessnock LGA is experiencing significant population growth, with an estimated population of 69,352 as of June 2024—an increase of 2.62% from the previous year. Projections suggest the population could reach 96,000 people by 2036, with strong growth in urban corridors between Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, and Maitland, and from Branxton through to Rutherford.

Infrastructure such as hospitals, TAFE campuses, childcare centres, aged care, and community services are already in place, though ongoing investment will be needed to meet the demands of a growing population. The area is also well-connected, with proximity to the University of Newcastle, Port of Newcastle, and Newcastle Airport, supporting both regional accessibility and economic opportunity.

The towns and villages are characterised by open green spaces, sporting facilities, and strong community identity. As the LGA continues to evolve, its unique combination of heritage, environment, and community spirit positions it well for sustainable growth.

1.3 Cessnock City Library

Cessnock City Library serves the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA) with branches in Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, a 24/7 eLibrary, and a range of outreach programs. It is part of the Central East Zone of the NSW Public Libraries Association. With the LGA experiencing significant population growth, future library infrastructure is planned for North Rothbury, Branxton, and Greta.

The foundation for free public libraries in NSW was laid with the passing of the Library Act in 1939, following years of advocacy by the Free Library Movement. Cessnock Municipal Council adopted the Act in November 1951, and by December 1952, the city had opened its first public library in a meeting room at the Council Chambers near Cessnock swimming pool.

The service rapidly expanded. In 1958, the library moved to North Avenue, becoming the Edgeworth David Memorial Library. Kurri Kurri followed with its own branch in 1961, and Weston opened a library in 1967 (now closed) using a mix of donated and existing collections.

Cessnock Library opened in its current building at 65-67 Vincent Street in April 1983. Later that year, the Kurri Kurri Library relocated to a newly renovated section of the former Co-operative Society building, known locally as "The Store." It continues to operate from this site.

Today, Cessnock City Library continues to evolve to meet the needs of a growing and diverse community, maintaining its role as a cornerstone of free and equitable access to information, literacy, and community connection.

Vision

Vibrant, inclusive spaces where people connect, create, and grow.

Purpose

To empower our community through welcoming spaces that provide access to knowledge, technology, culture, and shared stories—supporting lifelong learning, creativity, and connection.



1.4 Cessnock Library - A snapshot

ESTABLISHED	Library service commenced 1 December 1952 *Library Act* adopted 5 December 1951
BRANCHES	Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, eBranch
AREA	1,966 sq km
POPULATION	69,352 (ABS Resident Population 2024)
MEMBERSHIP	13,254
TARGET GROUPS	• Children • Young people • Families • Adults • Older people • Home library • Students (including home schoolers) • CALD communities • New residents • Business community • People with disability and service providers • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples • Job seekers • Local and family history • Community groups • Travellers and casual users • Local partners and professionals • State wide partners
MAJOR LEGISLATION	*NSW Library Act 1939* & Library Regulation 2018 *NSW Local Government Act 1993*
GUIDING PRINCIPLES	ALIA Statement on *Public Library Services* *IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 2022*
LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS)	Spydus
PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS	NSW Public Libraries Association SPUN (Spydus Users Group)
WEBSITE	https://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/libraries/Home
COMMUNICATION	Facebook Youtube Instagram Cessnock City Library eNews

1.5 The process

This report was developed in collaboration with staff from Cessnock City Library, Cessnock City Council, and members of the local community. It captures the unique qualities of the region and identifies development opportunities, while also drawing on best practice examples that can be adapted to the local context.

In preparing the report, the following steps were undertaken:

- Analysis of current membership and usage data from the Library Management System;
- Demographic review using data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Australian Early Development Census, and the Australian Digital Inclusion Index;
- Alignment of the library service with relevant Council and industry plans;
- Benchmarked Cessnock City Library against similar and neighbouring services;
- Considered relevant national and international trends.

Site visits to the City of Cessnock were conducted in December 2024 and again in March 2025, during which the consultant:

- Worked closely with library staff through a workshop and individual discussions, followed by online consultations on specific topics. Their contributions were insightful, creative, and honest;
- Held 14 focus and small group discussions, along with one-on-one conversations at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries, engaging key stakeholders including library users and partner organisations;
- Visited the library's branches at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, attending programs and speaking with the community.

To inform the development of the Cessnock City Library Strategic Report and Plan, a community survey was conducted to understand what residents value about the current service and what they envision for the future. The survey was made available at a community Pop-Up on Library Lovers' Day (14 February), as well as online and in hardcopy form throughout February and March 2025. It invited responses from both library users and non-users. 387 responses were received from users and non-users. The findings are included in Appendix 1, and selected comments have been incorporated into the "Insights from the community" section of this report to enrich the analysis.

Additionally, Cessnock City Library regularly collects community feedback, and relevant insights from this ongoing engagement have also been included in the report.



ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

2. Environmental scan

2.1 SWOT analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Highly experienced, knowledgeable and collaborative staff with a strong customer focus • Innovative attitude towards new programs and initiatives • Positive profile in the community, a safe place to go • Diverse range of programs • Main street locations • Strong relationships with community groups • Only public technology option within the community • Engaged volunteer base • Excellent Local History program • Strong social media presence, and good media profile • Regularly benchmark against other libraries	• Low membership numbers • Current opening hours • Inadequate space • Only 2 branch libraries to service a large LGA • Ageing staff and need for succession planning • Lack of asset management plans • The age of the buildings and need for risk management mapping • Integration with Council Business Units • Inability to compellingly tell our story
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
• Build membership numbers and advocacy base • Expansion of Cessnock library into adjoining property • Establishment of a third branch • Outreach (e.g. Van/Kiosk) • Increase the profile and reach of the Local History collection • Explore untapped partnerships in community • Potential co-location with other agencies • Engagement of young people • Greater collaboration with other libraries	• 'Competition' from other libraries and commercial providers • Customers we don't meet (online members) • Local government funding • Commuter community

2.2 Our People, Our Place, Our Future

Cessnock City Council Community Strategic Plan 2040

The sources which have informed the development of the Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan includes Cessnock City Council's *Community Strategic Plan 2040* (CSP) and related *Delivery Program 2025-2029*. In the CSP the library is recognised as principally supporting Outcome 1, 'Live'. Mapping the Library against the CSP identifies further examples of where the library contributes to the community and opportunities for growth and, where appropriate, these have been incorporated into the Library's Strategic Plan.

Outcome 1 - Live

We are connected, safe and creative

OBJECTIVE 1.1 ENCOURAGE SOCIAL CONNECTIONS AND WELLBEING	
Cessnock Community Plan Strategies	**Cessnock City Library Contribution**
1.1.1 Our neighbourhoods have a variety of spaces, activities and programs that connect us.	• Programs and activities developed in consultation with the community which meet industry best practice.
1.1.2 Strengthen outcomes for young people to make our city a vibrant place of opportunity.	• Library branches in Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, Home Library Service, 24/7 eBranch; • Planned expansion of Cessnock Library Branch to increase the size of the library and service a population growing in number (construction works are subject to development contributions and grant funding); • Long term, a library is planned for the North Rothbury, Branxton, Greta area in accordance with the Huntlee Planning Agreement; • Exploration of alternative service models (library van, lockers, kiosks to meet community needs).
1.1.3 Support better outcomes for young people and contribute to making our area a vibrant place of opportunity.	• Targeted collections and programs for young people; • Strong networks with community providers.
1.1.4 Improve opportunities for people with disability to access services, activities, facilities and information.	• Both Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Library are accessible spaces; • Programs and resources for people with a disability included in the Library's offer.

OBJECTIVE 1.2 STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY CULTURE	
Cessnock Community Plan Strategies	**Cessnock City Library Contribution**
1.2.1 Build unity and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.	• Cessnock City Library is guided by the Indigenous Spaces in Library Places strategy and toolkit to develop services that are inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

OBJECTIVE 1.3 DEVELOP AN ACTIVE AND CREATIVE COMMUNITY	
Cessnock Community Plan Strategies	**Cessnock City Library Contribution**
1.3.2 Implement accessible, creative and innovative projects and programs in our area.	• Showcases the work of local creatives including talks and visits and facilitates workshops and exhibitions; • Suitably skilled and trained volunteers are used to support family history, home library, storytime programs and information technology support; • Offers a diverse program of events targeted at all audience sectors; • Partnerships with arts and cultural bodies including provision of meeting spaces.

OBJECTIVE 1.4 FOSTER SAFE COMMUNITIES	
Cessnock Community Plan Strategies	**Cessnock City Library Contribution**
1.4.1 Participate in collaborative partnerships to assist with crime prevention.	• Public libraries are recognised as safe, inclusive places which combat social isolation.



Outcome 2 - Thrive

We have a diverse and resilient economy

OBJECTIVE 2.1 DIVERSIFY AND GROW OUR ECONOMY	
Cessnock Community Plan Strategies	**Cessnock City Library Contribution**
2.1.2 Create a skilled and employment ready workforce within our Council.	• Cessnock City Library actively participates in the NSW public library network.
2.1.3 Support investment in facilities, infrastructure and services to support business growth and increased output in our area.	• Public libraries attract job seekers — drawn by free internet access and peripherals; • Cessnock City Library provides facilities for teleworkers needing work space outside the home and reliable, high speed internet access.

OBJECTIVE 2.2 DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	
Cessnock Community Plan Strategies	**Cessnock City Library Contribution**
2.2.1 Implement accessible education projects and programs in our area.	• The Library is a place for lifelong learning, skills development and distance education; • There is the potential to partner with other providers to offer targeted training opportunities e.g. courses in CV writing and literacy classes.



OBJECTIVE 2.3 INCREASE TOURISM AND VISITATION OPPORTUNITIES	
Cessnock Community Plan Strategies	**Cessnock City Library Contribution**
2.3.2 Encourage a variety of niche tourism opportunities.	• Contributes to cultural tourism through the rich local and family history collections, and program delivery.



Jane Tara and Julie Goodwin at the Newcastle Readers Festival event in Cessnock April 2025. Photo: Cessnock City Council

2.3 Cessnock City Library & The U.N. Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015 the United Nations Member States adopted the Sustainable Development Goals. These are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity, now and into the future. Cessnock City Council has adopted the SDGs, and these are integrated into their planning processes. Australian Libraries are strong supporters of the Goals with a focus on the ten detailed below.



SDG 1: End poverty

Universal literacy is critical if we are to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty and disadvantage. Cessnock City Library provides a rich storytime program for babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, and literacy and lifelong learning programs aimed at the wider community.



SDG 3: Good health and wellbeing

Cessnock Library provides the community with access to health and wellness information through contemporary collections, online databases and the state-wide Drug Info program. It supports community connectedness through a range of inclusive programs and activities.



SDG 4: Quality education

Cessnock City Library provides informal, self-directed lifelong learning opportunities through its collections and programming for the community including digital literacy for older residents. The library complements the education system through resources and initiatives which expand the learning experience.



SDG 5: Gender equality

Libraries provide safe and welcoming meeting spaces and dedicated programs designed to meet the needs of women and girls.



SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth

Libraries provide access to information and skills training that people need to find, apply for, and succeed in work. The Library's spaces and internet connectivity at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri are used by remote workers who contribute to the local economy.



SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and infrastructure

Libraries provide access to technology and high-speed internet that may not be available anywhere else. Cessnock City Library supports digital literacy for all ages through workshops, one on one tuition and targeted programs.



SDG 10: Reduced inequalities

Cessnock City Library provides safe, welcoming and accessible spaces and supportive outreach services that are accessible to all.



SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities

Libraries are trusted institutions devoted to promoting cultural inclusion and understanding. They collect and preserve the nations' cultural heritage for future generations. Cessnock City Library's rich Local History collection, outreach services and strong community partnerships safeguards the memory of the region.



SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions

Within this goal is the target for public access to information. Libraries provide training and skills needed to understand and access civic services. Through its print and electronic collections, free internet access, professional guidance and support, Cessnock City Library meets this target.



SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals

Libraries are part of a global network of community-based institutions, focussed on supporting their local communities. Cessnock City Library is an engaged member of the NSW Public Libraries Association.



2.4 Benchmarking

Australia is among the few countries that have developed evidence-based public library standards and guidelines at both the State and National levels. These include the *Living Learning Libraries (NSW)* and the *APLA/ALIA Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries* (National). Both frameworks share a similar philosophy and have been developed collaboratively over time. For this project, both have been used due to their distinct strengths:

- *Living Learning Libraries* (LLL) has informed the benchmarking, as it aligns with the State Library of NSW's performance benchmarks and funding criteria.
- The *ALIA Standards and Guidelines* provide a more detailed and descriptive framework.

LLL, and the annual *NSW Public Library Statistics* use population-based peer cohorts for benchmarking, allowing for more accurate comparisons between library services serving similar population sizes. Cessnock City Council falls within the "Urban Medium" category (population 50,001–150,000), a broad cohort that includes 29 library services across both metropolitan and regional councils in NSW.

However, following discussions with Cessnock City Library staff, an alternative benchmarking cohort was identified to better reflect the Library's established practice of comparing itself with neighbouring services. This group includes Maitland, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Central Coast, Hawkesbury, and Singleton. While Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, and Central Coast fall under the "Urban Large" category and Singleton under "Urban Small," their geographic proximity, shared community movement for education, employment and retail, and history of collaboration make them a relevant and practical comparison group. Both Hawkesbury and Maitland are also classified as Urban Medium.

Where relevant, comparative tables using this customised cohort have been included throughout this document.

2.4.1 About statistics

In compiling this Report the following statistical sources have been used:

- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Estimated Resident Population 2024* in conjunction with Cessnock City Library's Spydus Library Management System for current population and membership figures;
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) *Estimated Resident Population 2023* in conjunction with *NSW Public library statistics 2023-24* for benchmarking purposes;
- ABS Census of Population and Housing 2021 where detailed age breakdown is required;
- .id (informed decisions) (2024) *National Forecasting Program* for future population figures.


PILLAR 1
SPACES


Let's go Shopping
AGAIN!
DON'T WAKE the Dingo!
ABC
Brave

Spaces

3.1 Trends

Libraries as community anchors

Libraries are safe, welcoming spaces where individuals can simply spend time. They play a vital role in fostering healthier, more connected communities and help reduce social isolation. Increasingly, libraries are becoming hubs of community life—hosting local organisations, clubs, and events, and providing inclusive spaces that bring people together and encourage social interaction.

Flexible, multipurpose spaces

Modern library design prioritises flexibility. Spaces are created to adapt to a variety of uses, including workshops, community meetings, study areas, and collaborative projects. Multipurpose rooms can be reconfigured throughout the day to meet changing needs, ensuring the library remains responsive to evolving community expectations.

Inclusive and accessible environments

Libraries are committed to inclusivity, designing spaces that welcome people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. This includes features such as ramps, elevators, assistive technologies, and sensory-friendly environments to better support individuals with disabilities.



Sustainable design principles

Many new or renovated library buildings incorporate environmentally sustainable practices. These include energy-efficient lighting, passive heating and cooling systems, green roofs, renewable energy sources, and the use of sustainable building materials to reduce environmental impact.

Cultural and civic hubs

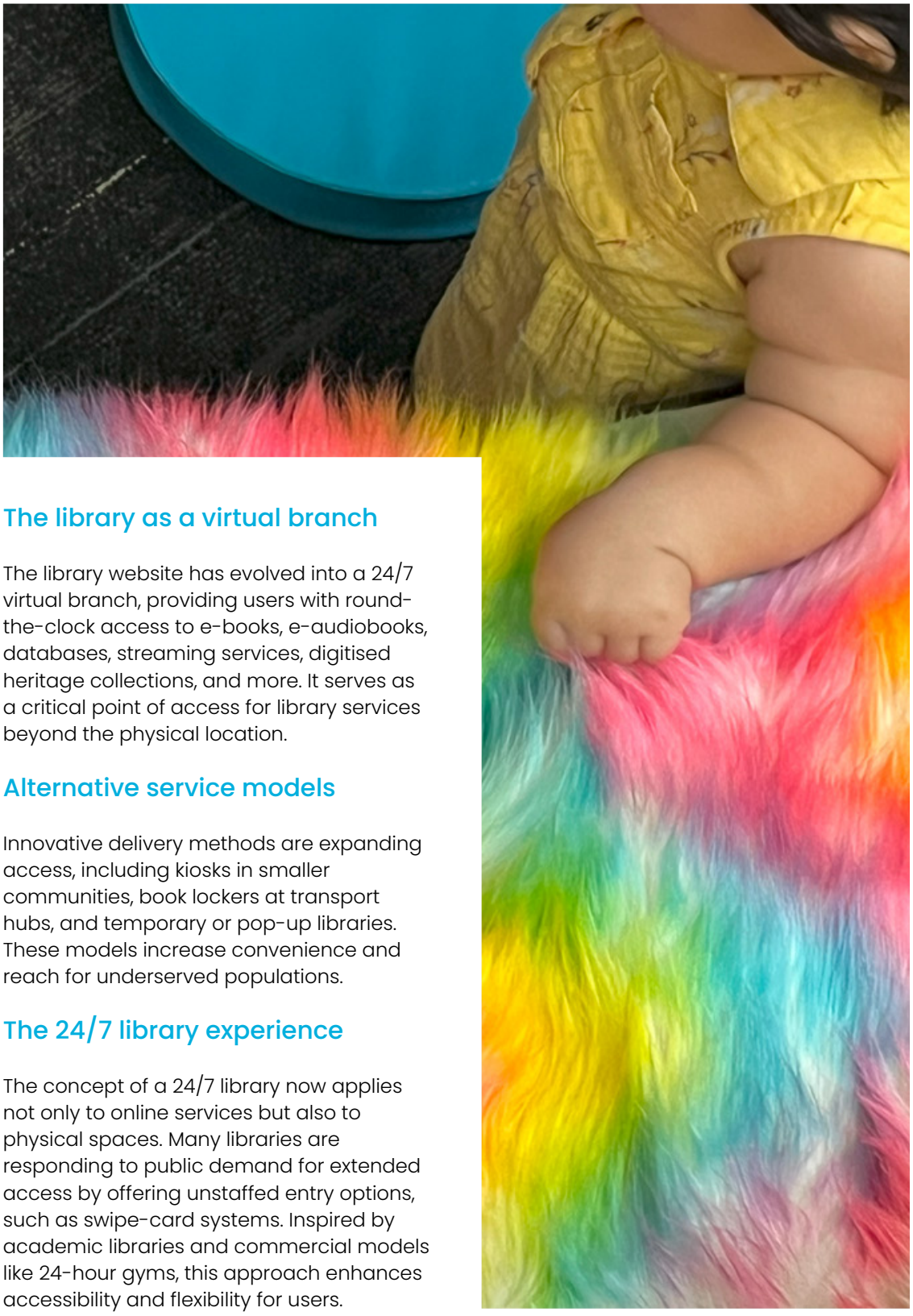
Libraries have expanded beyond traditional book lending to become cultural and civic centres. They offer diverse programs that support lifelong learning, creativity, and civic participation—such as art exhibitions, author talks, and initiatives that support democracy such as introductory courses on voting.

Adaptive reuse and renovation

Rather than building entirely new facilities, many libraries are revitalising existing structures through adaptive reuse and renovations. This approach preserves historic architecture while updating spaces to meet contemporary needs and sustainability goals.

Technology-enhanced services

Advanced technologies are being integrated to enrich the library experience. These include high-speed internet, digital media labs, makerspaces, interactive learning stations, and access to digital resources such as e-books, online databases, and virtual reality tools.



The library as a virtual branch

The library website has evolved into a 24/7 virtual branch, providing users with round-the-clock access to e-books, e-audiobooks, databases, streaming services, digitised heritage collections, and more. It serves as a critical point of access for library services beyond the physical location.

Alternative service models

Innovative delivery methods are expanding access, including kiosks in smaller communities, book lockers at transport hubs, and temporary or pop-up libraries. These models increase convenience and reach for underserved populations.

The 24/7 library experience

The concept of a 24/7 library now applies not only to online services but also to physical spaces. Many libraries are responding to public demand for extended access by offering unstaffed entry options, such as swipe-card systems. Inspired by academic libraries and commercial models like 24-hour gyms, this approach enhances accessibility and flexibility for users.



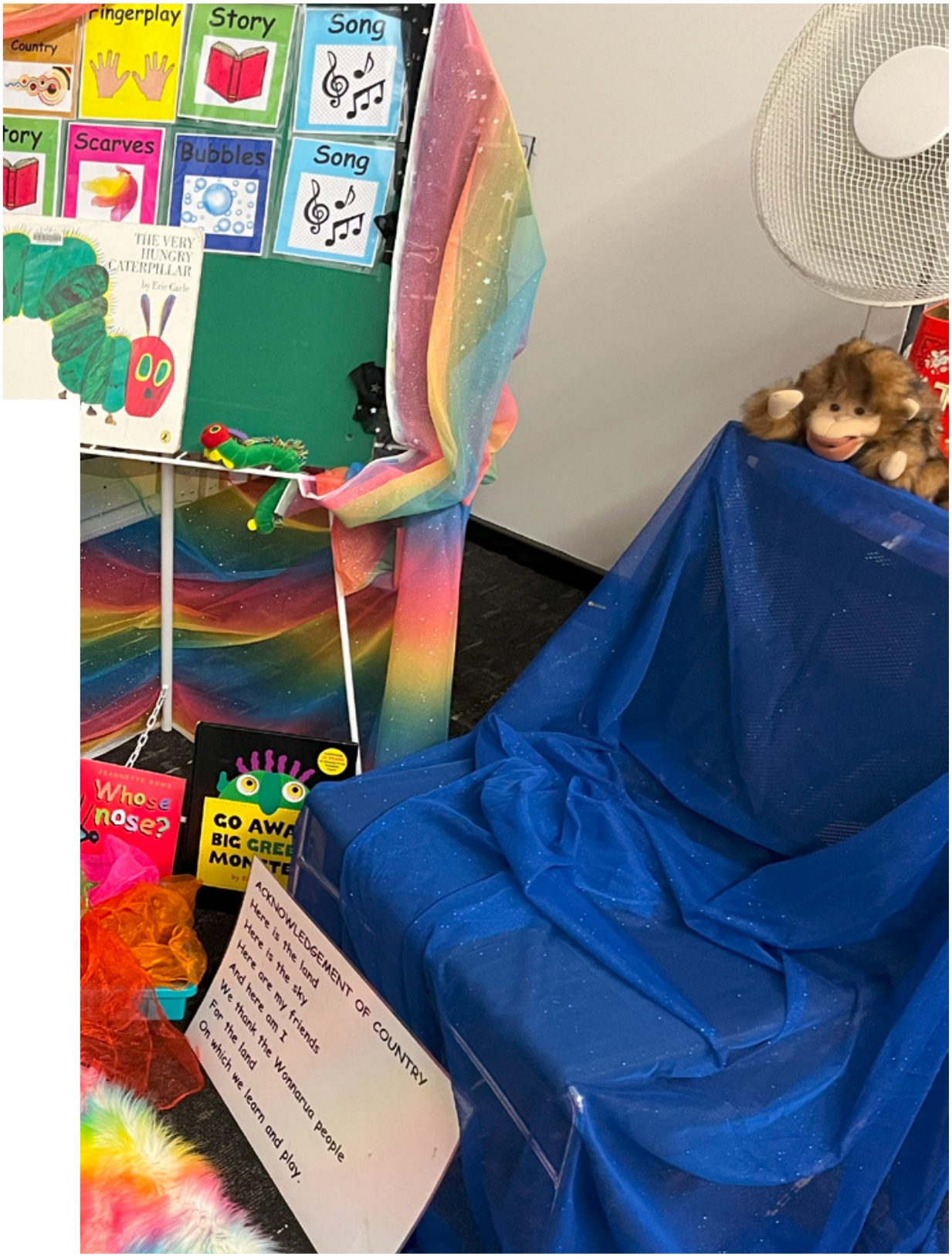
3.2 Insights from the Community

They valued

- Main street locations of Cessnock and Kurri Kurri libraries;
- Open at convenient hours;
- User-friendly for people of all ages, comfortable and inclusive for seniors, families, and students;
- Libraries have a positive profile as safe and trusted community spaces;
- Quiet, peaceful, and calm atmosphere;
- Clean, well-organised, and welcoming layout;
- Recognised as important community hubs and meeting places;
- Free and welcoming spaces that cater to a wide range of needs;
- The lift at Cessnock Library Branch

The library would be enchanced by

- Desire for larger, modern spaces at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri with revamped layouts quiet rooms, or designated zones for study, children, or programs;
- Mobile services (van) and outreach to Huntlee, Millfield, North Rothbury, Bellbird, Braxton – 'transport is a huge barrier';
- Emphasis on physical accessibility: ramps, heavy doors, children-sized toilets, change tables;
- Better wayfinding, and curb appeal;
- Improved parking and identified pathways from the rear area (Cessnock);
- Extended opening hours, particularly at weekends, exploration of 24/7 capability;
- Outdoor areas for sitting or events;
- Welcoming spaces with visible books, display areas, and soft play reading zones;
- Co-location with community infrastructure (recreation areas, parks, theatres).


Country
ringerplay
Story
Song
tory
Scarves
Bubbles
Song
THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR
by Eric Carle
Whose nose?
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY
Here is the land
Here is the sky
Here are my friends
And here am I
We thank the Wonnarua people
For the land
On which we learn and play.

3.3 Cessnock City Library

3.3.1 The buildings

Facility needs analysis (2017)

In 2015, Cessnock City Council sought assistance from the State Library of NSW in assessing the future infrastructure needs for its libraries at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, and direction for a new facility in the Branxton/ Huntlee area. This analysis was focused on the period 2017-2037 and was based on strategic planning, projected population growth, and community needs including early literacy, employment, and wellbeing. Libraries were identified as key partners in community engagement.

The resulting report, *Cessnock City Library Facilities Needs Analysis* highlighted significant space shortfalls at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri libraries, and recommended the development of a new facility at Branxton/ Huntlee to support the growing community in that area.

The *Analysis* emphasised the role of public libraries as vital community hubs that promote early literacy, digital access, and social inclusion, especially for disadvantaged and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It noted increasing demand for library spaces, programs, and internet access, and calls for future planning to focus on sustainable, flexible, and accessible designs, extended hours, and enhanced services. Key priorities included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement, youth programs, technology access, and dedicated spaces for learning and cultural activities, with central and accessible site locations essential to their success.

After discussions with Cessnock Library and Council staff and analysis of the suggested sizes in *People Places: a guide for public library buildings in New South Wales*, the State library made the following recommendations that addressed the key project objectives of sizes for three library buildings, schedule of required functional areas and spatial requirements for a centralised headquarters:

Cessnock Library

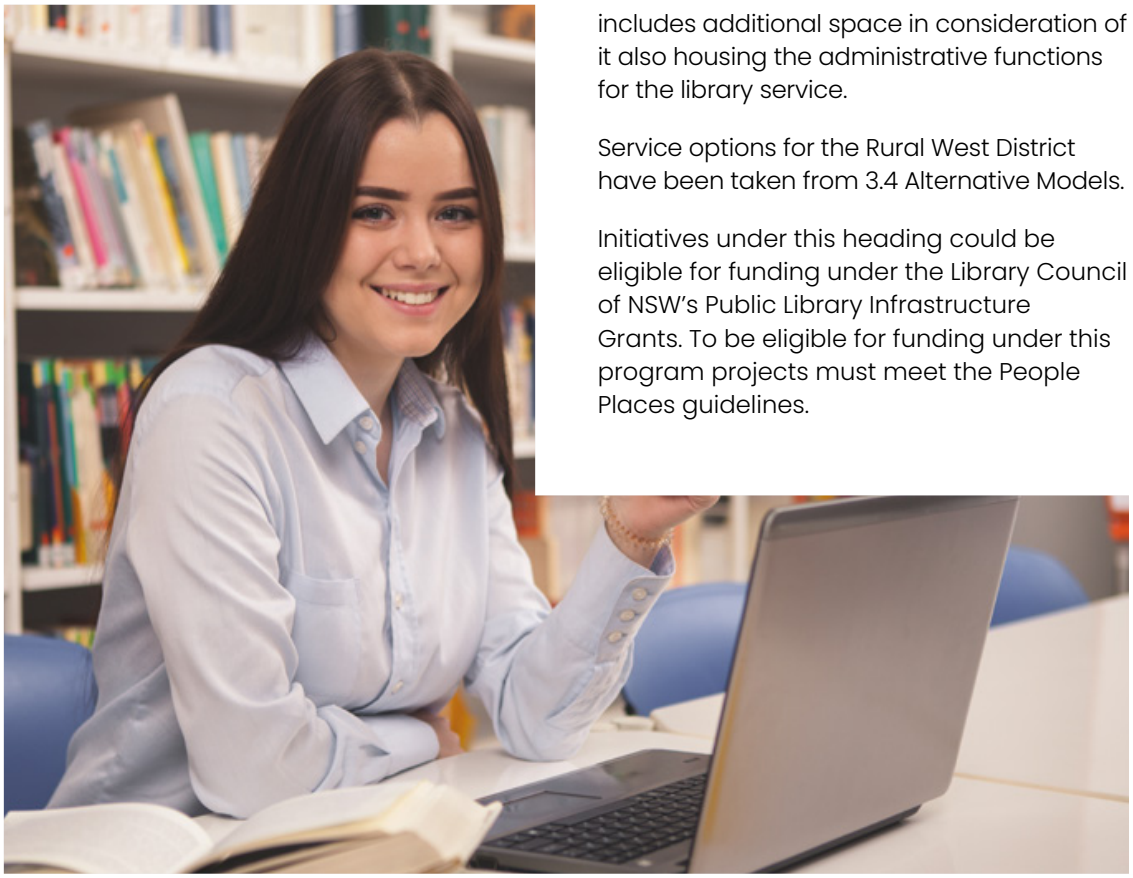
- The current location at Cessnock is undersized to meet the needs of the catchment;
- Where possible available space should be repurposed to public use;
- The space required in order to meet the needs of the projected population: 1,882m^2;
- An accessible entrance from the car park area is needed (has since been achieved).

Kurri Kurri Library

- This library is well located however it is too small to meet current requirements and lacks suitable meeting room and group study spaces to adequately meet the needs of the local community;
- A larger space, an increase of 79% in size to 1,006m^2, is required for the projected population in the catchment;
- Pursue opportunities in co-locating and sharing services (e.g. accessible toilet and meeting rooms) with the adjacent community centre. Funding has since been received for an accessible toilet and a small meeting room.

Branxton/Huntlee

- The catchment is projected to grow rapidly in this area and the ideal location for the proposed library would be in the town centre as per the People Places guidelines;
- A branch library offering a full range of services will require 1,127m^2 to meet the population projections;
- There may be opportunities to consider co-location with other council or community facilities (e.g. community centre). Council should make careful enquiry into any proposed joint-use; library arrangements to ensure best value and appropriate management structures can be achieved as per the Joint-Use Library Guidelines.



2025 Consultancy

The SLNSW Needs Analysis provides a sound basis to move forward in planning for enhanced spaces at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, and in establishing a physical presence in the Branxton/Huntlee area.

In the period since the Analysis was undertaken, the population of Cessnock LGA has increased significantly, and the forecast population for 2031 used in the Analysis has also increased. In making recommendations for the future, and being mindful of the library's 10-year strategic direction, updated population forecasts for 2031 and 2036 have been used. This growth impacts on the minimum size required for a library building as prescribed by the People Places guidelines. This change is reflected in the table below, and in the discussion around the size of the existing and proposed branch libraries. The calculation for Cessnock includes additional space in consideration of it also housing the administrative functions for the library service.

Service options for the Rural West District have been taken from 3.4 Alternative Models.

Initiatives under this heading could be eligible for funding under the Library Council of NSW's Public Library Infrastructure Grants. To be eligible for funding under this program projects must meet the People Places guidelines.

Minimum library building size – people places

CATCHMENT	METRIC	2024	2031	2036
Cessnock	Population	27,586	36,248	41,065
	Current Library Size	1,071 m^2	-	-
	Recommended Library Size	2,041m^2	2,336m^2	2,496m^2
Kurri Kurri	Population	25,032	27,164	29,462
	Current Library	560m^2	-	-
	Recommended Library Size	1,411m^2	1,485m2	1,565m^2
Branxton/Huntlee	Population	10,872	15,776	20,264
	Recommended Library Size	750m^2	1,083m^2	1,243m^2
Rural West	Population	5,832	5,991	5,890

Cessnock Library



- Current Floor Space: 1,071m^2
- Recommended Floor Space (as at 2025): 2,041m^2
- Recommended Floor Space (2036): 2,496m^2

Cessnock Library is ideally located in a prime location with dual frontage onto the City's main thoroughfare, Vincent Street, and a rear entrance at a lower level leading to a major retail area off Charlton Street with associated parking. The SLNSW Needs Analysis recommended the installation of an accessible entrance from the car park area. This was addressed in 2020 with the installation of a lift providing access from the rear entrance to the main library floor. The project was funded through the NSW Public Library Infrastructure Grants program. One focus group participant with mobility issues commented, 'The lift is awesome.'

Despite the excellent location, visibility and access are problematic due to minimal external signage and energy-saving blinds

that reduce curb appeal. A long entrance hallway currently functions as a community art space with rotating exhibitions. While this supports local artists, this prominent area could be more effectively used for library-led exhibitions that clearly signal the space is part of a library and highlight its role in learning, literacy, and culture.

The Library has a welcoming atmosphere, and the staff have been creative in the use of resources to maximise appeal. Despite this, as noted in the State Library's Analysis, internal facilities are limited: meeting rooms are either cramped or overbooked, shelving is inflexible, and there is a shortage of study areas. Limited space also restricts the delivery of programs, reducing the Library's capacity to meet community demand.

Due to space limitations, the Library's outstanding Local History collection is relegated to the building's lower basement level, restricting access and limiting opportunities for public engagement and research. Flooding of basement areas poses ongoing risks to stored collections, despite temporary protective measures.

Cessnock Library also houses the administrative offices for the Library service.

It is also worth noting that the *2031 Community Infrastructure Plan* (p.84) recommends considering the inclusion of an allocated space for a temporary museum in the design of any new library. Given the strength of the Library's Local History collection, this presents an ideal opportunity for convergence and enhanced community engagement.

Expanding the library on its current site would maintain a high-profile location and continuity of service, while enhancing convenience for users. It would also increase the library's appeal to members and visitors, strengthening its role as a hub for recreation, learning, local history, and community connection.

Short term

Prepare a detailed design for an expanded Cessnock Library Branch and seek funding for construction works.

Medium term

Installation of a Library pick-up-locker located outside of a building to provide convenience for those people unable to collect items during opening hours.

Kurri Kurri Library



- Current Floor Space: 560m^2
- Recommended Floor Space (as at 2025): 1,411m^2
- Recommended Floor Space (2036): 1,565m^2

Housed in the iconic "Store" building Kurri Kurri Library is located near key community facilities, including a public school, community centre and pre-school. Major renovations were undertaken in 2018, and it is an inviting space which is valued by the community. The large children's area is multipurpose by design, and allows for a range of programming.

Despite its strategic location, the 560m^2 library is undersized for both current use and the projected 2036 catchment population of 29,462 requires a 179.5% increase in space to meet demand. The library supports a community with significant disadvantage and, with expanded facilities, could offer a broader range of programs addressing job readiness, health, literacy, and digital inclusion. The small meeting room lacks accessibility, and there is unmet demand for larger, compliant spaces. Opportunities include shared spaces with adjacent facilities. Council has noted the potential for expansion to this site in the *2031 Community Infrastructure Plan* (p.84).

The prominent intersection location of Kurri Kurri Library presents an ideal opportunity to attract passers-by; however, this potential is currently underutilised due to the dark security window treatment, which limits visibility into the space.

In the *Needs Analysis* (p.27) SLNSW noted the opportunity to incorporate a demonstration kitchen in a new meeting room space to stage healthy eating, active ageing, and job skills programs as well as providing a facility that could be used in partnership with local wineries and chefs. Given the food and wine focus of the region such an initiative could not only be beneficial for those areas noted but in attracting cultural tourism. Kitchens in libraries play a significant role in literacy and numeracy programs. Best practice examples are Culinary Literacy Centre, Philadelphia and Bibliotheca del Fondo, Barcelona.

Short term

An accessible toilet and a small meeting room are planned for Kurri Kurri Library. Both projects are funded.

Medium term

Installation of a Library pick-up-locker located outside of a building to provide convenience for those people unable to collect items during opening hours.

Long term

Expansion as noted in *2031 Community Infrastructure Plan* (p.84).

Proposed Branxton/Huntlee Library

As identified in the *2031 Community Infrastructure Plan* (p.84) Voluntary Planning Agreement for the Huntlee Residential Development makes the provision for a library. The proposed building will be multi-purpose (youth centre and neighbourhood centre) and will be 2000m^2. The library will occupy a portion of this space. *People Places* identifies the minimum library space should be 1,243m^2.

The population of this area is estimated to increase from 8,615 since the last Census in 2021 to 20,264 in 2036.

Population forecast Branxton-Greta district

2021	2024	2031	2036
8,615	10,872	15,776	20,264

There are opportunities to offer a range of services to this growing community.

Short term

Installation of a Library pick-up-locker located at Huntlee Shopping Centre;

Use of a Library Outreach Van to visit relevant locations.

Medium term

Introduction of a library kiosk at Huntlee Shopping Centre.

Long term

Construction of a new library to meet the needs of the community and in accordance with People Places Guidelines.



Katherine's Landing, Huntlee

Rural West district

Minimal population growth is expected in this area in the next ten years. Of the survey respondents who identified as being resident in the Rural West district 75% indicated that they used Cessnock Library with 25% using the eBranch.

Population forecast Rural West district

2021	2024	2031	2036
5,438	5,832	5,991	5,941

Several options described in Alternative Models 3.4 would provide access to these remote communities including visits from an Outreach Van and installation of a Library pick-up-locker or Kiosk.

Short/medium term

Use of a Library Outreach Van to visit relevant locations;

Installation of a Library pick-up-locker or Kiosk at Wollombi.

3.3.2 24/7 eBranch

The eBranch, Cessnock City Library's digital branch, provides convenient, 24/7 access to a wide range of information, services and online resources, including eBooks, eAudiobooks, newspapers, databases, streaming services, research resources and training courses. Members can borrow items and access information services from any location with internet access. This service is particularly beneficial for those who may face barriers to visiting a physical library.

The site contains extensive information about library services (including member registration). All upcoming events and programs are listed along with the events booking system. The eBranch is supported by the user-friendly Library app, which enhances accessibility and convenience.

Cessnock City Library's website is modern, visually appealing, easy to navigate, and kept up to date. It meets or exceeds all standards outlined in the Living Learning Libraries guidelines. It serves as a vital gateway to the library's rich online collections, including the Local History and family history resources.



3.3.3 Opening hours

Using Living Learning Libraries, the recommended minimum opening hours per week are 53 hours for Cessnock Library, which is classified as Tier One (Central) library, and 31 hours for Kurri Kurri, a total of 84 hours. Cessnock Library is currently open for 50.5 hours per week and Kurri Kurri 45.5 hours, a total of 96 hours for the LGA. Living Learning Libraries cautions against being prescriptive in applying the opening hours formula in a multi branch system due to variables including library structure, population density and geographic factors. Cessnock City Library currently exceeds the standard.

DAY	CESSNOCK	KURRI KURRI	TOTAL	STANDARD
Monday	9.00am – 5.30pm	9.00am – 5.00pm		
Tuesday	9.00am – 7.00pm	9.00am – 7.00pm		
Wednesday	9.00am – 7.00pm	9.00am – 5.00pm		
Thursday	9.00am – 7.00pm	9.00am – 5.00pm		
Friday	9.00am – 5.30pm	9.00am – 5.00pm		
Saturday	9.00am – 12.30pm	9.00am – 12.30pm		
Sunday	Closed	Closed		
Total	**50.5 hours**	**45.5 hours**	**96**	**84**

While current opening hours were generally rated positively by the community, feedback from both the survey and focus groups indicated a strong interest in extended hours—particularly in the evenings—to better support students and other users. There was also a clear appetite for expanded weekend hours to allow for a broader range of programs, such as youth activities, family programming and author events. The Library has introduced storytime at both Cessnock and Kurri Kurri branches every Saturday morning at 10 am to allow for families to attend, and has also begun to schedule some programs for Saturday mornings. Both initiatives have proved very successful. Extending hours into Saturday afternoon and Sunday would extend the Library's reach and address community needs.

These changes would not only attract new users but also enhance the library's value as a vibrant and inclusive community space. This aligns with Hunter Regional Plan, which encourages local strategic planning to diversify evening activity options, including the extension of library and gallery hours, in support of healthy, innovative, and prosperous communities (Strategy 8.3, p.84).

'There's not much to do with children at the weekend in Cessnock, especially if they're not sporty. Our main option for a family outing is a trip to Bunnings. It would be so much better to be able to visit the library.'
– Focus group participant, Kurri Kurri.

Ideally, extended opening hours would be implemented; however, staffing and budget constraints mean alternative approaches may need to be considered.

3.4 Alternative models

Consideration should also be given to alternative models of library service delivery to extend access to Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries and to provide services in other locations such as Huntlee and other emerging communities and the Rural West District. This would align with Objective 3 of the Hunter Regional Plan 2041 which maximises the provision of community and cultural facilities at a more localised level.

Survey and focus group feedback highlighted public transport as a major barrier to accessing the library. Exploring alternative service delivery models offers a practical solution to help overcome this challenge.

These initiatives could be eligible for funding under the Library Council of NSW's Public Library Infrastructure Grants or achieved using Local Priority Grant Funding.

3.4.1 Outreach van

What?

An outreach van is a modern take on the traditional mobile library or bookmobile, designed to deliver library services directly to the community. These vans carry a selection of books, media, and other resources to areas where access to a physical library may be limited. They commonly visit rural communities, aged care facilities, schools, and neighbourhoods with limited transport options. By extending library services beyond traditional buildings, outreach vans help make library resources more accessible and inclusive. Routes and schedules are usually planned to cover a wide range of communities, but they can also be adapted to meet specific needs or support local events. Typically, smaller than traditional mobile libraries, these vans can be driven with a standard (Class 1) driver's licence, allowing for greater flexibility in staffing.

Why?

- A visually striking outreach van could become a highly visible and valuable asset for Cessnock City Council, raising the profile of the library and enhancing service flexibility.
- It would allow for trialling new service models in developing communities and areas currently underserved by existing branches.
- The van could operate on a scheduled and publicised route, visiting identified locations across the LGA.
- Provides an effective way to connect with hard-to-reach groups, including attendance at community gatherings to promote borrowing, e-collections, and other library services.
- Offers older residents in retirement villages the independence to select their own materials, unlike traditional home library services where items are chosen on their behalf.
- Enables the delivery of outreach programs such as pop-up storytimes in parks and public spaces.
- Can be used to participate in local events such as community festivals and family fun days.
- Creates opportunities for collaboration with other council departments in service delivery.

- Blacktown City Library provides a strong example, with its mobile library designed for external access, improving usability and engagement at events.
- Wollondilly Shire Council's mobile library combines scheduled visits with appearances at community events, maximising visibility. The "Dilly Wanderer" initiative, a partnership between Wollondilly Library and Council's children's services, demonstrates successful integrated community outreach.

Best practice examples

Blacktown City Libraries, Wollondilly Library Mobile and Dilly Wanderer



Blacktown City Libraries Van. Photo: Blacktown City Libraries

3.4.2 Pop-up libraries

What?

A pop-up library is a temporary or mobile service that appears in different locations for a limited time. These libraries can vary widely—from a simple book display in a public space to a fully equipped mini-library in a shopfront, complete with shelving, seating, technology, and staff or volunteers. They might be set up in parks, community centres, shopping centres, transport hubs, or even on public transport. Pop-up libraries typically offer a curated selection of materials for borrowing or digital download, free Wi-Fi, children's reading activities, information about library services, and sometimes special events such as author talks or book clubs. Library vans are also a form of pop-up library.



City of Melbourne Pop-Up shopfront library. Photo: Creative Commons

Why?

- Used to promote library services at special events or as part of outreach programs.
- Help assess community demand for library services in new or underserved areas.
- Provide temporary access to basic library services during refurbishments or while new library buildings are under construction, often operating from shopfronts or similar spaces.
- Extend library reach to communities with limited access to traditional branches.
- Offer additional library services in high-traffic locations such as shopping centres and transport hubs.
- Aim to promote literacy, increase access to books and digital resources, and encourage community engagement with reading and learning.

Best practice examples

City of Melbourne Pop-Up Libraries, Brisbane City Council, Cairns Regional Council



Mobile pop-up library in Taarnby Main Library, Denmark. Photo: Jan Richards Consulting

3.4.3 Library pick up lockers

What?

One option for extending borrowing services is the implementation of 24/7 library pick-up lockers. These self-service units can be installed outside library buildings or at alternative community locations such as transport hubs or community centres, offering added convenience for individuals unable to visit during standard opening hours. The free-standing lockers are accessed via RFID technology linked to the user's library card. Items are requested through the library app, and members are notified when their items are ready for collection. Return chutes are typically located alongside the pick-up lockers to allow for easy returns.



Brisbane City Council Libraries.
Photo: Brisbane City Library



Cowra, NSW. Photo: Central West Libraries

Why?

- Library pick-up lockers offer a convenient and flexible way for members to access their requested items.
- Enable collection of materials at any time, including outside normal library hours.
- Particularly beneficial for people with busy schedules who can't visit during standard opening times.
- Enhance operational efficiency by reducing the need for staff involvement in item collection.

'I'd love out of hours reservation collection' – Survey Respondent Kurri Kurri

Best practice examples

Connected Libraries (City of Casey, Victoria)
Brisbane City Council

3.4.4 Kiosk/vending machine libraries

What?

Kiosk libraries are compact, self-service stations that operate 24/7 offering a curated selection of books and other materials for borrowing. Typically situated in high-traffic public areas they provide convenient access to reading materials for people on the move. Many kiosks also feature touchscreen interfaces that enable digital borrowing. These units may function as standalone vending-style machines or be integrated into nearby infrastructure as part of a larger pod-style setup.



Kiralee Library Pod, Ipswich and Palm Beach Gold Coast. Photo: Creative Commons

Why?

- Improved Access: Kiosk libraries extend access to books in areas where full-scale library branches may not be practical, such as remote locations, shopping centres, and community venues.
- Round-the-Clock Convenience: Users can borrow materials at any time of day, offering a flexible solution for those with demanding schedules or limited availability during standard library hours.
- Tailored Collections: Each kiosk can feature a curated selection designed to reflect the interests and preferences of the local community, including popular titles, timeless classics, and niche categories.
- Technology-Enhanced Access: Many kiosks incorporate digital features such as e-book lending or audiobook access, allowing users to instantly borrow and enjoy content in electronic formats.
- Helps Grow Library Membership: by offering a convenient alternative for people who can't visit during standard opening hours due to other commitments.

Best practice examples

Hong Kong Public Libraries Self Service Library Station; Ipswich Libraries Karalee Library, City of Gold Coast Libraries

3.4.5 24/7

What?

The **24/7** or extended hours library model—or a variation of it—is an effective way to improve accessibility and usage, particularly when planning new library facilities. In this model, libraries are typically staffed only during core hours, while access beyond these times may be supported by security personnel. Borrowing remains available via self-checkout machines.

This approach is well-established in the commercial sector, such as with 24-hour gyms, and is commonly used in European public libraries where a library membership card functions as an access pass. Extended access can apply to all or just parts of a library and doesn't necessarily mean full 24/7 availability. For instance, libraries co-located with other facilities might align their extended hours with those of the host venue.

While this model offers clear benefits in terms of convenience and increased access, it also introduces important considerations around staffing, security, and facility maintenance. These operational challenges must be carefully addressed when implementing or expanding extended access.



Why?

- Flexible Access: 24/7 libraries accommodate the varied schedules of users including students, shift workers, and busy professionals—by providing round-the-clock access.
- Improved Accessibility: They offer greater access to resources and services for individuals unable to visit during standard hours due to work, family, or other commitments.
- Extended Study Opportunities: These libraries provide essential study spaces beyond regular hours, particularly useful during exams or when other venues are unavailable.
- Responsive to Community Needs: They fulfil the growing demand for safe, quiet, and accessible public spaces where individuals can read, study, or access digital resources at any time.

Best practice examples

Forestville Library Northern Beaches Library, Harrington Library MidCoast Council, Wentworth Point Community Centre and Library (City of Parramatta)

'The Central Coast's 'Library at Your Time' where the libraries can be used out of hours once a person had been inducted would be fabulous!.' - Survey respondent, Cessnock



Forestville Library 24/7.
Photo Creative: Commons



Matatiki-Hornby Centre New Zealand 24/7 Library.
Photo: Christchurch City Library

3.5 Strategic direction

Spaces

Library spaces that are inviting, engaging, and accessible

WE SHAPE AND MAINTAIN WELCOMING ENVIRONMENTS THAT ARE SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND FLEXIBLE FOR ALL USERS	
Strategies	**Actions**
Create vibrant, welcoming library spaces that are responsive to the diverse and evolving needs of our community, ensuring they remain engaging, inclusive, and adaptable to emerging trends and expectations.	• Work in collaboration with Cessnock City Council to align library space development with broader community planning and growth strategies; • Seek funding opportunities through state and federal grants, philanthropic sources, and strategic partnerships to support upgrades and new infrastructure projects.
Create culturally welcoming and trusted spaces in libraries that honour and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and their stories.	• Establish a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples presence in our libraries through signage that acknowledges the Wonnarua, Awabakal, and Darkinjung peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land.
Develop an innovative, user-friendly virtual branch that ensures round-the-clock access to library services and resources.	• Ensure the library's website remains dynamic, informative, and compliant with the Living Learning Libraries guidelines.
Investigate, evaluate and implement innovative service delivery models to enhance access and responsiveness.	• Review library opening hours to align with community needs and lifestyle: Identify, trial, and evaluate opportunities to implement alternative service delivery models in emerging communities, community centres, and easily accessible locations focusing on funding opportunities and collaborative partnerships to support implementation.

Performance measures

- Library visits per capita;
- Number of visible library spaces acknowledging and connecting with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, their culture and history;
- Web visits per capita;
- Report on alternative service models.



PILLAR 2
PEOPLE

People

4.1 Trends

People at the Heart of Library Services

A vibrant and responsive library service is built around people—its members, staff, volunteers and partners.

Shifting Membership Trends

Over the past decade, public library membership has declined both statewide and nationally, despite continued and in some cases growing usage. In response, libraries around the world are focusing on strategies to retain existing users, re-engage inactive members, and attract new audiences particularly in the wake of disruptions caused by the COVID pandemic.

Challenges in Attracting LIS Professionals

Regional libraries face increasing difficulty in recruiting qualified Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals. This issue has been exacerbated by the reduction in LIS education programs offered by universities and TAFE, limiting entry pathways into the profession.

Evolving Library Workforce

As the scope of library services expands, so too has the diversity of the workforce. Not all roles require formal LIS qualifications and there is renewed emphasis on "growing your own" talent through on-the-job development. The Australian Library and Information Association's ALIA Skills, Knowledge and Ethics Framework initiative reflects a sector-wide commitment to building staff capability and nurturing new leaders, including those entering the field from non-traditional backgrounds.

Volunteer Engagement Among Older Adults

An aging, well-educated population is actively seeking meaningful volunteer opportunities and libraries are well-placed to provide fulfilling roles that benefit both individuals and the broader community.

Fostering Social Connection

In an era marked by social isolation and a desire for local engagement, libraries play a crucial role in fostering community connection. By offering shared spaces, resources and opportunities for interaction—both in-person and online—libraries contribute to building a more equitable and cohesive society. The shift towards flexible work arrangements also opens new possibilities for community engagement and participation.

4.2 Insights from the community

They valued:

- The welcoming, knowledgeable and friendly staff - acknowledged as the biggest drawcard of the service;
- The library's strong focus on community engagement;
- The opportunity to contribute through volunteering;
- Partnerships such as the Justice of the Peace service which expanded the services available.

The library would be enhanced by:

- Creating enhanced volunteer opportunities especially around local and family history;
- Building on existing community networks to promote services;
- Expanding partnerships and outreach with health services, baby nurses, schools, heritage groups and tourism;
- Offering respite, refuge and adult conversation, particularly valuable for parents and carers;
- Creating welcoming entry points for new members: welcome packs, prompts on screens and signage.

4.3 Cessnock City Library

4.3.1 Members and visitation

4.3.1.1 Membership

A registered library member refers to an individual or organisation that has signed up with the library service to access its collections and services, either onsite or remotely. This includes digital or cardless members who exclusively use the library's electronic resources. Membership at Cessnock Library is available to anyone who lives, works or studies within the Cessnock LGA.

In line with industry best practices, accounts of expired or inactive borrowers are archived every three years to maintain accurate records and reduce the risk of personal information being compromised in the event of a data breach. Active members receive a reminder email in the month their membership is due to expire, along with a link to renew.

In common with all NSW public libraries, Cessnock's membership numbers were affected by the COVID pandemic, which changed how the community engaged with the service dropping from 28% of the community in 2018/19 to the current level of 18-20%. When compared to the other libraries in the benchmarked cohort Cessnock's performance is at the lower end of the scale. The Living Learning Libraries minimum standard for a LGA with less than 200,000 residents is 50% of residents as registered members.



Library members, as a % of resident population – benchmarked cohort

LIBRARY SERVICE	POPULATION	MEMBERSHIP (RESIDENT)	MEMBERSHIP (NON-RESIDENT)	MEMBERSHIP (TOTAL)	PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENT POPULATION
Central Coast	351,934	56,755	1,180	57,935	16
Cessnock	67,591	11,973	1,720	13,693	18
Lake Macquarie	219,249	45,549	5,572	51,121	20
Singleton	25,332	5,222	1,239	6,461	20
Maitland	95,957	24,400	3,488	27,888	25
Hawkesbury	68,156	23,105	5,778	28,883	34
Newcastle	261,809	102.306	21,664	123,970	39

Note: *The table above provides details of resident (living in the LGA) and non-resident (working and studying in the LGA but reside elsewhere) members. The impact of non-resident members can be significant on some library services due to work, shopping and education patterns. Under the NSW Reciprocal Membership Agreement to which Cessnock City Library is a signatory, residents can be members of more than one library service.*

Cessnock Library membership by service age group

AGE GROUP	SERVICE DESCRIPTOR	POPULATION*	MEMBERS	% OF POP
0-4	Babies and pre-schoolers	4,283	213	5
5-11	Primary schoolers	6,001	1,641	27
12-17	Secondary schoolers	4,827	1,771	37
18-24	Tertiary education and independence	4,574	1,823	40
25-34	Young workforce	9,104	1,237	13.5
35-49	Parents and homebuilders	11,667	2,556	22
50-59	Older workers and pre-retirees	7,673	1,239	16
60-69	Empty nesters and retirees	7,430	1,923	26
70-84	Seniors	6,165	2,342	38
85+	Elderly	1,167	92	8

**Population breakdown into Service Age Groups based on 2021 Census of Population and Housing.*

There is considerable potential to grow membership among children aged 0–4. Although this age group frequently participates in family literacy programs, borrowing is typically done using a parent's or caregiver's library card. As a result, the contribution of this cohort is underrepresented in membership data, which can make it challenging to demonstrate the value of the library's services for young children and to justify investment in relevant collections and programs.

There is also the opportunity to grow the young workforce, parents and homebuilders, and older workers cohorts by reintroducing them to the library and the services that are available including online. The alternative methods of service delivery discussed in Pillar 1 would feed into this strategy.

Growing membership

A range of strategies can be implemented to rebuild and grow Cessnock City Library's membership base, ultimately fostering a network of library advocates. These include:

- Converting users into members: Encourage individuals who attend programs or use library spaces to formally register as members.
- Engaging the commuter population: Target residents who work outside the LGA and may use libraries in other areas due to limited access (including opening hours) to Cessnock or Kurri Kurri branches. Promote eResources and broaden efforts to attract members within the 20–69 year age group.
- Connecting all programming back to the library: Ensure that every program—whether held offsite or in partnership—reinforces the library's role and identity.
- Sharing member stories: Highlight the achievements and experiences of library members to build awareness and community connection.
- Joining broader campaigns: Actively participate in state and national initiatives run by the NSW Public Libraries Association and the Australian Public Library Alliance.
- Strengthening new resident engagement: Leverage tools like the New Residents Guide and relevant social media to raise awareness of the library's offerings.
- Expanding outreach: Investigate outreach opportunities to increase the library's visibility and accessibility across the community.

4.3.1.2 Visitation

A significant number of people use public libraries without being registered members. These users access a wide range of services, such as consulting reference materials, reading newspapers and magazines, using library computers and internet, attending events and programs, and studying. People need to be library members to borrow items.

Library visitation was significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with current figures (113,391) still 34% lower than pre-pandemic levels recorded in 2018–2019 (172,009). Despite this, onsite use and visitation have shown steady and encouraging growth since 2020–21 and 2021–22. This positive trend is expected to continue as the Library advances the rollout of its Strategic Plan. The Living Learning Libraries minimum standard for library visits is 4 per capita. Currently Cessnock City Library records 1.67 visits per capita.

Library visitation, as an annual visit per capita – benchmarked cohort

LIBRARY SERVICE	POPULATION	SERVICE POINTS*	TOTAL VISITS	VISITS PER CAPITA
Hawkesbury	68,156	2	108.877	1.5
Cessnock	67,591	2	113,391	1.67
Central Coast	351,934	*11	651,206	1.8
Lake Macquarie	219,249	*10	454,640	2.07
Maitland	95,957	4	213,150	2.22
Singleton	25,332	1	60,132	2.37
Newcastle	261,809	*14	691,715	2.64

**Includes Mobile Libraries.*

Differences in library visitation are influenced by community demographics and the services offered, such as program variety, space quality and internet access. Higher visitation is typical in CBDs, regional centres and tourist areas due to increased foot traffic. However, visitation statistics alone don't fully reflect library use, as they exclude virtual visits, home library services, outreach and offsite program participation.

4.3.2 Library staff

Staff numbers

Library staff are central to the success of any library service. They represent both the largest operational cost and the library's most valuable asset. Of the almost 384 responses to Cessnock City Library's survey 40% highlighted the role that the Library staff played in assisting them and making them feel welcome.

An analysis using Living Learning Libraries (LLL) benchmarks shows that Cessnock City Library does not currently meet the minimum recommended staffing level of 1 full-time equivalent (EFT) staff member per 3,000 residents. Based on this standard, the library should have 23.11 EFT staff but currently operates with only 15.6 EFT.

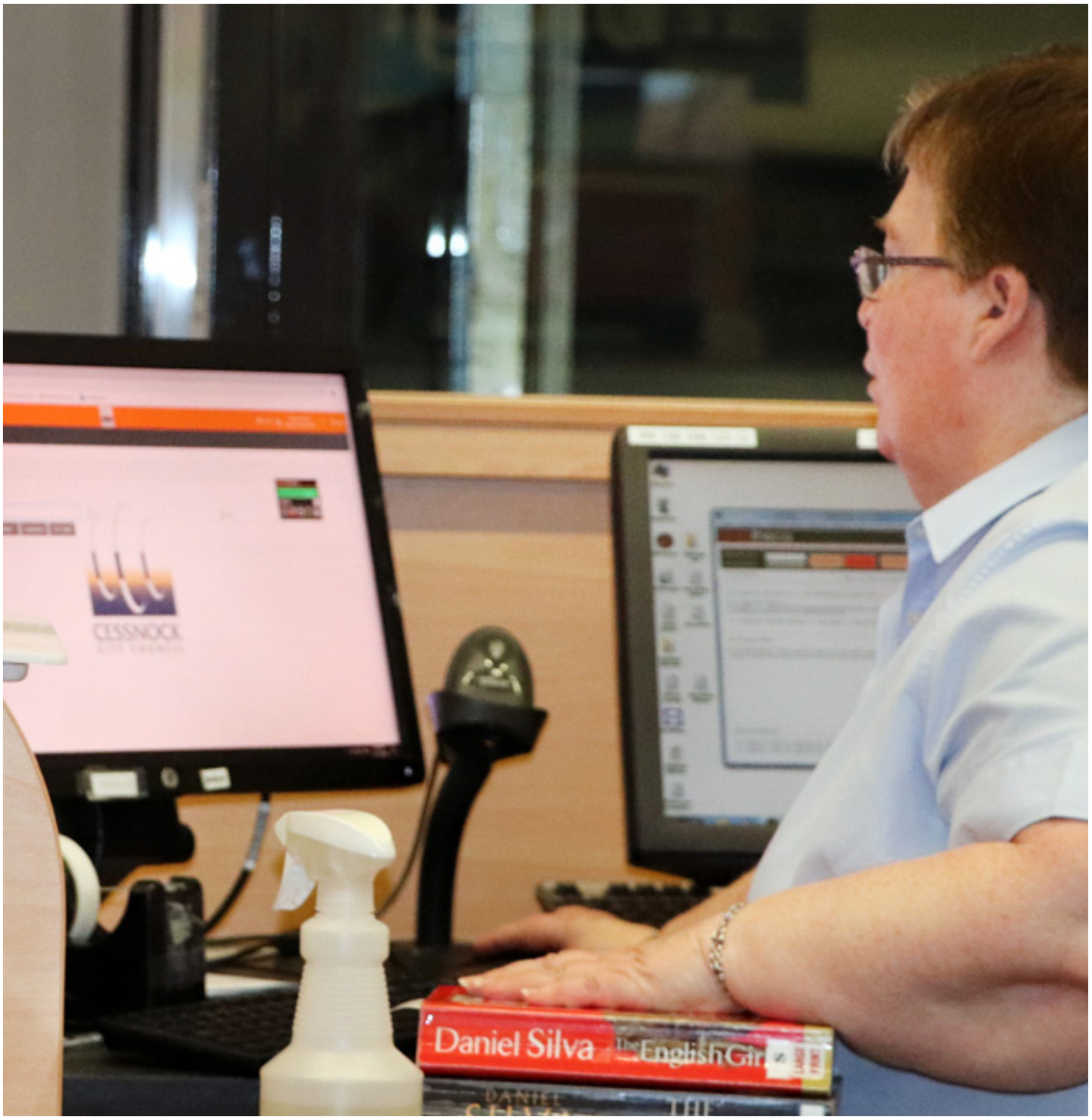


Library staff numbers (EFT) – benchmarked cohort

LIBRARY SERVICE	POPULATION	LLL (MINIMUM)	STAFF ACTUAL
Central Coast	351,934	117	63.90
Cessnock	67,591	23.11	15.60
Hawkesbury	68,156	22.7	16.82
Lake Macquarie	219,249	73	47.72
Maitland	95,957	32	25.40
Newcastle	261,809	87.26	105.79
Singleton	25,332	8.4	9.88

Libraries like Cessnock that have implemented self-check/RFID systems or outsourced collection management are often able to streamline staffing needs—allowing staff to focus more on delivering professional services and programs or reducing routine materials handling tasks. While Living Learning Libraries does not currently provide a formula to adjust minimum staffing levels based on these efficiencies, it should be considered a flexible guide rather than a fixed requirement.

As new initiatives from the Strategic Plan are implemented, staffing needs may increase. Any expansion in service delivery should be carefully planned to ensure adequate staffing support is in place.



Qualified staff

Attracting qualified staff to regional areas is becoming increasingly challenging, with many positions requiring multiple rounds of advertising. To address this, councils need to continue with flexible recruitment strategies and be willing to mentor and support new appointees. This approach is supported by Living Learning Libraries, which encourages councils to seek the most effective mix of professional and paraprofessional staff. Paraprofessional staff are those eligible for ALIA's library technician membership.

Number of qualified staff (EFT) – benchmarked cohort

LIBRARY SERVICE	POPULATION	LLL (MINIMUM)	STAFF ACTUAL
Central Coast	351,934	35.19	25.13
Cessnock	67,591	6.7	5.60
Hawkesbury	68,156	6.8	4.00
Lake Macquarie	219,249	21.9	12.00
Maitland	95,957	9.5	5.00
Newcastle	261,809	26.18	21.90
Singleton	25,332	3.3	3.00

The LLL minimum standard for qualified staffing for populations over 50,000 is 1 qualified staff member for every 10,000 residents. 'Qualified' is recognised as being eligible for professional membership of ALIA and includes the following categories:

- **Associate:** Library and information science undergraduate or postgraduate qualification
- **Library Technician:** Library technician qualification
- **Allied Field:** Minimum of a diploma qualification and working at a professional level within the profession

The minimum number of qualified staff EFT recommended for Cessnock (calculated per 10,000 residents) is 6.7 Cessnock City Library currently has 5.6 qualified staff members, 1.1 below the minimum standard.

The table above highlights how Cessnock performs in comparison to its cohort in terms of employing qualified staff members.

ALIA recognises that the skill set required in today's public libraries extends beyond traditional librarian and technician roles. Their ALIA Skills, Knowledge and Ethics Framework initiative is a sector-wide response aimed at developing the skills of current staff and supporting new leaders from outside the profession. For staff with backgrounds in education, social work, IT, and other fields, this means acknowledging their existing expertise and offering targeted training to help them better navigate the public library environment.

There is also significant opportunity to invest in local talent by "growing your own" through school-based traineeships and mentoring programs, including those supported by ALIA and the NSW Public Libraries Association.

The Cessnock City Library Staff Training Plan is attached as *Appendix 2*.



4.3.3 Volunteers

There is strong potential to involve volunteers in the Library's programs and activities, in accordance with Council's Volunteer Policy, ALIA's Statement on voluntary work in library and information services, and the Living Learning Libraries guidelines. Volunteers should not replace paid staff, but rather complement and enhance existing or planned services. In public libraries, volunteers commonly support areas such as local and family history research and Home Library services.

Cessnock Library already benefits from dedicated volunteers, including those from the Cessnock Historical Society's Family History Group. These individuals assist with genealogical enquiries on Mondays and Tuesdays. Family history is a highly specialised area where many volunteers bring extensive expertise and research skills. Their enthusiasm and knowledge greatly enhance service quality and improve access to collections. Individuals also contribute to Children's Services, the Local History collection and Tech Help program.

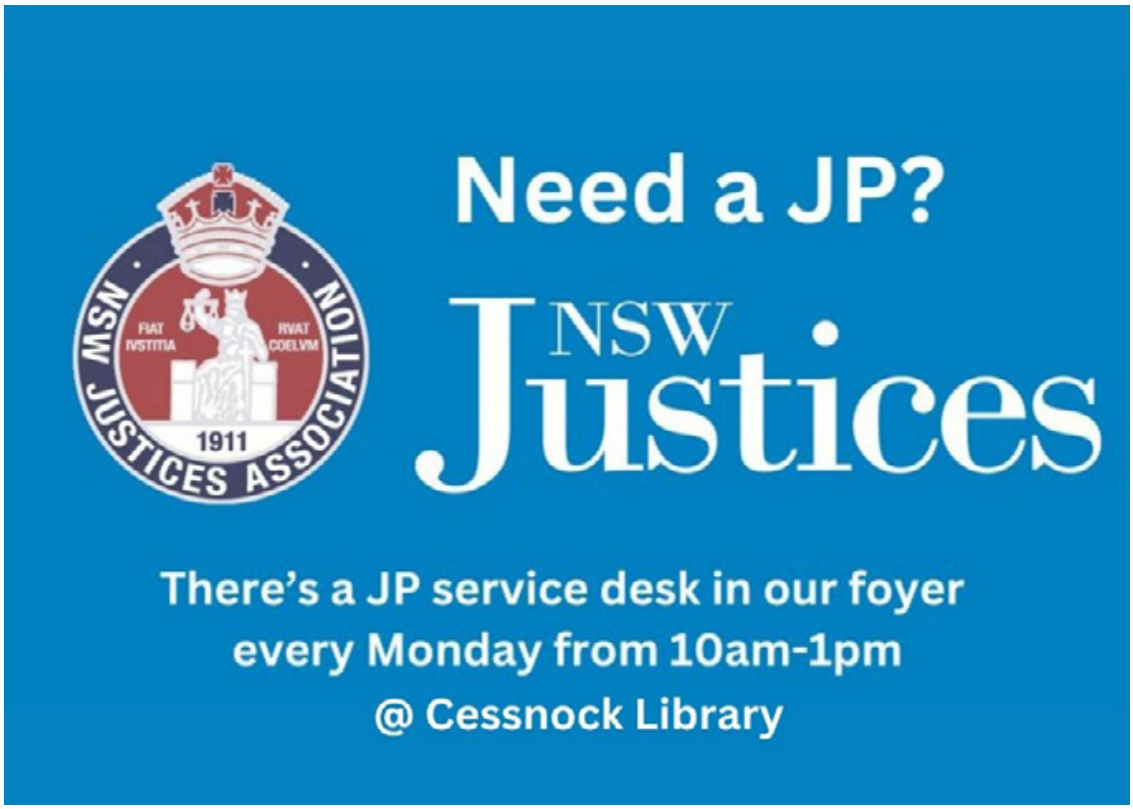
Engaging family history volunteers to support library staff is becoming standard practice across the sector, with emerging best practice guidelines available through professional networks. While volunteers bring significant value, effective volunteer programs require active staff involvement for coordination and oversight. Volunteers must also be properly supported, trained, and resourced, with clear policies in place to ensure a positive and productive experience for all involved.

4.3.4 Partners

Cessnock City Library has cultivated a diverse network of partnerships that enhance its capacity to serve the community. These collaborations span various stakeholders, including other Council departments, government agencies, community groups, educational institutions, historical and heritage societies, commercial organisations, publishers, the State Library of NSW and the broader NSW public library network. Such partnerships facilitate resource sharing, expand program offerings, and introduce innovative service delivery methods, thereby increasing the library's visibility and attracting individuals who might not typically engage with library services.

To effectively manage and evaluate these partnerships, the State Library of NSW has developed the **FAMOUS Principles** framework. This framework assists in assessing both new and existing collaborations, ensuring they are Feasible, Appropriate, Mutually beneficial, Optional, Useful, and Sustainable. By applying these principles, Cessnock City Library can identify successful initiatives and pinpoint areas for improvement, aligning with the Council's recognition of the importance of partnerships in its *Community Strategic Plan*.

The library's strong community presence and robust membership base make it an attractive partner for various organisations. However, successful partnerships require dedicated time, effort, and ongoing management. Regular reviews and audits of current partnerships are essential to maintain their effectiveness and value to the library, ensuring that collaborative efforts continue to meet community needs and contribute to the library's mission.



4.4 Strategic direction

People

Creating an inclusive and vibrant library community

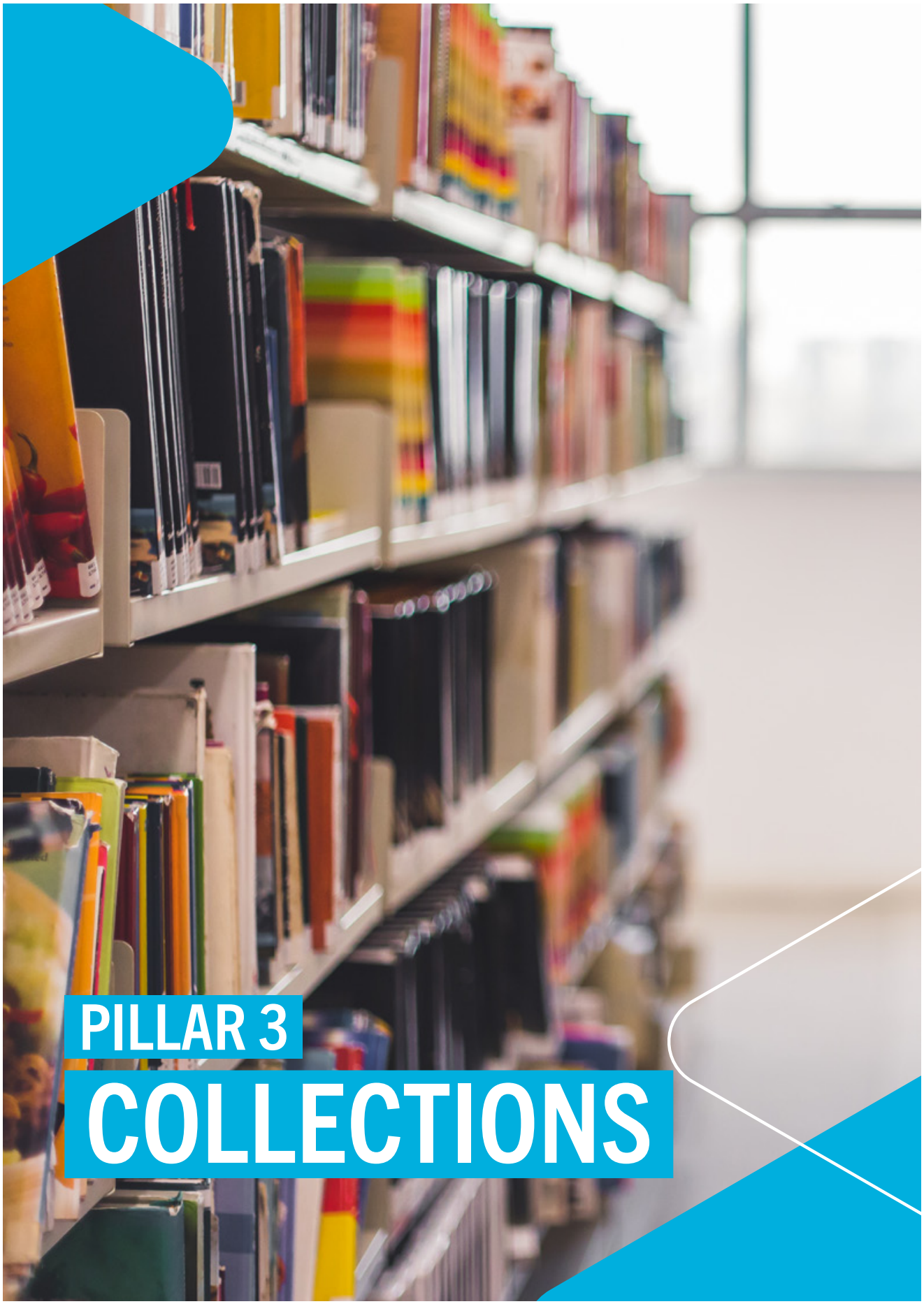
WE FOSTER BELONGING, ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION, AND CELEBRATE THE DIVERSE VOICES WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY	
Strategies	**Actions**
Strengthen membership and participation	• Convert casual library users into registered members through targeted promotion and streamlined sign-up processes; • Attract the commuter community by promoting eResources and exploring alternative service delivery models such as mobile services and 24/7 lockers; • Participate in NSWPLA and APLA campaigns and initiatives aimed at growing public library membership.
Align staffing with service needs	• Increase staffing levels in line with population growth and service demand, as funding allows; • Strengthen staff capabilities and adaptability through targeted professional development, ensuring readiness to deliver both current and emerging library services.
Explore the use of volunteers to deliver targeted programs and activities	• Recruit and train volunteers to support the delivery of targeted programs, including the enrichment of local and family history collections.
Strengthen and expand strategic partnerships using the FAMOUS Principles	• Conduct an audit of existing partnerships to assess their effectiveness and alignment with library goals; • Develop and implement a formal partnership policy to guide future collaboration and ensure strategic value.

Performance measures

- Staffing levels meet Living Learning Libraries Guidelines;
- Membership per capita;
- User satisfaction identified through regular surveys;
- Library visits per capita;
- Recruitment of a volunteer cohort who add value to and advocate for the Library;
- Partnerships meet FAMOUS Principles.



It's all about people – our members and our team. Kurri Kurri Library.
Photo: Cessnock City Library


PILLAR 3
COLLECTIONS

Collections

5.1 Trends

Collections at the Heart of the Library

Collections remain central to a library's mission, supporting reading for pleasure, lifelong learning, and the preservation of cultural heritage.

Balancing Physical and Digital Formats

While there is a clear shift toward digital content and online services, many library users continue to prefer physical books. Libraries must carefully balance formats to meet diverse preferences. Some areas, like reference materials, have transitioned almost entirely online to improve accessibility and ensure up-to-date information.

Demand-Driven Collection Development

Collection development has evolved from a "just in case" approach to a more strategic "just in time" model, where each item must demonstrate value. Community input plays a key role, and best practices include acquiring or leasing multiple copies of high-demand titles. There is also growing focus on sustainable practices for the responsible disposal of outdated materials.

Retail-Inspired Display and Organisation

Libraries increasingly adopt a bookstore-style layout, with face-out displays to attract attention and boost circulation. Organising collections by genre further enhances discoverability and encourages browsing, leading to increased borrowing through serendipitous discovery.

Consortia and Outsourcing for Efficiency

To make the most of their budgets, many libraries are joining consortia to benefit from collective purchasing power. Additionally, outsourcing tasks such as selection, cataloguing, and processing helps free up staff to focus more on direct service and community engagement.

5.2 Insights from the community

They valued:

- Appreciation of the range and quality of the collection including all formats;
- The ability to discover new releases, genre diversity and well curated displays;
- Availability of eResources;
- The ease of borrowing, returning and reserving materials as the availability of self-service options and online catalogue;
- The rich Local History collection;
- The seed library;
- The Library App.

The library would be enhanced by:

- More copies and quicker availability of popular titles/new releases;
- Greater range of eBooks;
- Series gaps, especially in eCollections.

5.3 Cessnock City Library

5.3.1 Collections

Collections are at the heart of every library, supporting reading for pleasure, lifelong learning, and the preservation of cultural memory. Library services ensure universal and equitable access to diverse, inclusive, and comprehensive collections for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. Increasingly the Library's collections are moving into the online environment.





Photos: Jan Richards Consulting

In the Community Survey 80% of respondents said that they came to the library to borrow books or magazines. Online resources were used by 30% of respondents, either alone or in combination with traditional materials.

When benchmarked against the Living Learning Libraries standards, Cessnock City Library showed the following results:

- Above the minimum standard for the percentage of materials purchased in the last five years, reflecting the currency of the collection and the effectiveness of staff selection and management processes;
- Close to the minimum for turnover of stock (i.e. how often items are borrowed);
- Below the Standard for items expenditure on library materials purchased, items held per capita and acquisitions per capita.

LIVING LEARNING LIBRARIES STANDARD	CESSNOCK	NSW MINIMUM
S5 expenditure on library materials per capita	$4.02	$5.27
S6 items per capita	1.08	2
S7 acquisitions per capita	0.12	0.20
S8a percentage of collection purchased in the last 5 years	61%	50%
S9 circulation per capita	2.79	5.5
S10 turnover of stock	2.83	3.0

A table detailing the whole Benchmark Cohort is included as Appendix 3.

Cessnock City Library has the opportunity to further explore consortia arrangements—particularly for eContent—as well as fee-for-service partnerships with other library services. These collaborations could help maximise resources and provide the community with access to a broader and more diverse range of content.



5.3.2 Local history/family history

Public libraries are actively involved in securing cultural heritage and creating a sense of place through the creation and curation of locally relevant collections, ranging from extensive digitisation programs where historic and sensitive collections are made available online, to projects that capture local stories and assist citizens in the creation of local content. In an increasingly globalised and connected world, the public library's role in safeguarding, and sharing local content is crucial. It is also each library's point of difference, actively connecting the library to the community in which it is embedded. Emphasising local connections and connotations is a powerful link in strengthening the library's profile and attracting key stakeholders, including politicians, media and volunteers. The appeal of local should never be underestimated.

Cessnock Library has an extensive Local History Collection which illustrates and records the history and development of the local region. This includes printed and pictorial material, newspapers, maps, oral histories, and ephemera. The collection is increasingly available online via the library's website and on the Spydus LMS.

While Spydus is seen as an excellent tool in recording a collection, consideration could be given to creating an integrated online digital presence as a way of capturing the history, heritage and stories of Cessnock making this easily accessible to the community.

Recollect is a software package used by a growing number of public, academic and state libraries to highlight their heritage collections and make them easily discoverable Blacktown Memories, City of Sydney Archives and History Resources,



Recollect Central West, Picture Ipswich. The platform allows for libraries to become a content aggregator providing space for the collections of local historical societies developing relationships, building community engagement and ensuring the long term access to the materials.

There are opportunities for the library to further engage the community and enhance access to local history resources. Through the *Amplify* platform, the library can invite community members to participate in transcribing oral history collections. Additionally, selected digitised local studies publications could be made available via *indyreads*, expanding reach and accessibility. Both platforms are supported by the State Library of NSW. Given the interconnected history of the Hunter region, increased collaboration with neighbouring library services in the area of local studies could also provide mutual benefits and broader community value.

The library works closely with the Family History Group from the Cessnock Historical Society in research, curating content and developing programs. The group holds its meetings in Cessnock Library.

Cultural tourism presents significant opportunities, with many visitors eager to learn about their ancestors and the places they lived.

As highlighted in *People (4.3.3)*, local and family history is a promising area for deeper community engagement. In particular, there is potential to involve volunteers in a range of tasks, drawing on their enthusiasm, expertise, and local knowledge. Formalising volunteer roles and ensuring they are properly resourced and supported can deliver substantial benefits for both the service and the community.

5.4 Strategic direction

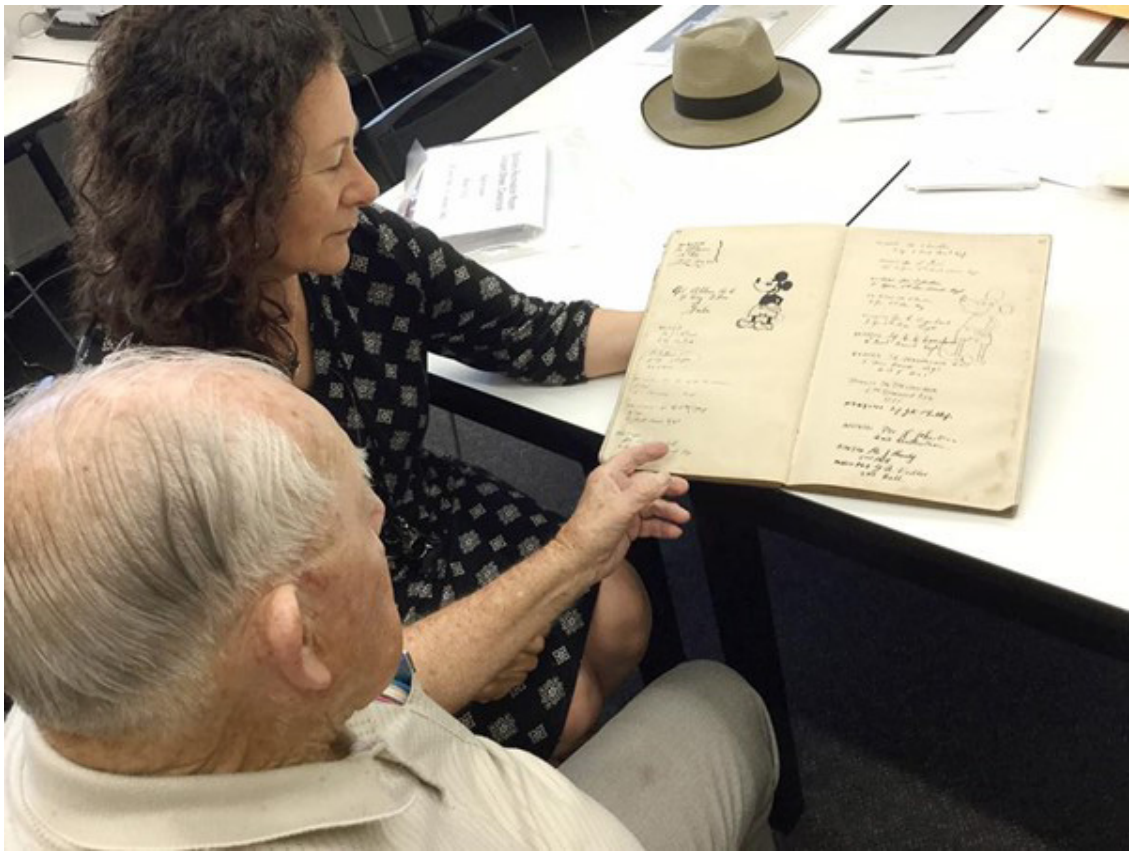
Collections

Collections that reflect diversity, interest, and community needs

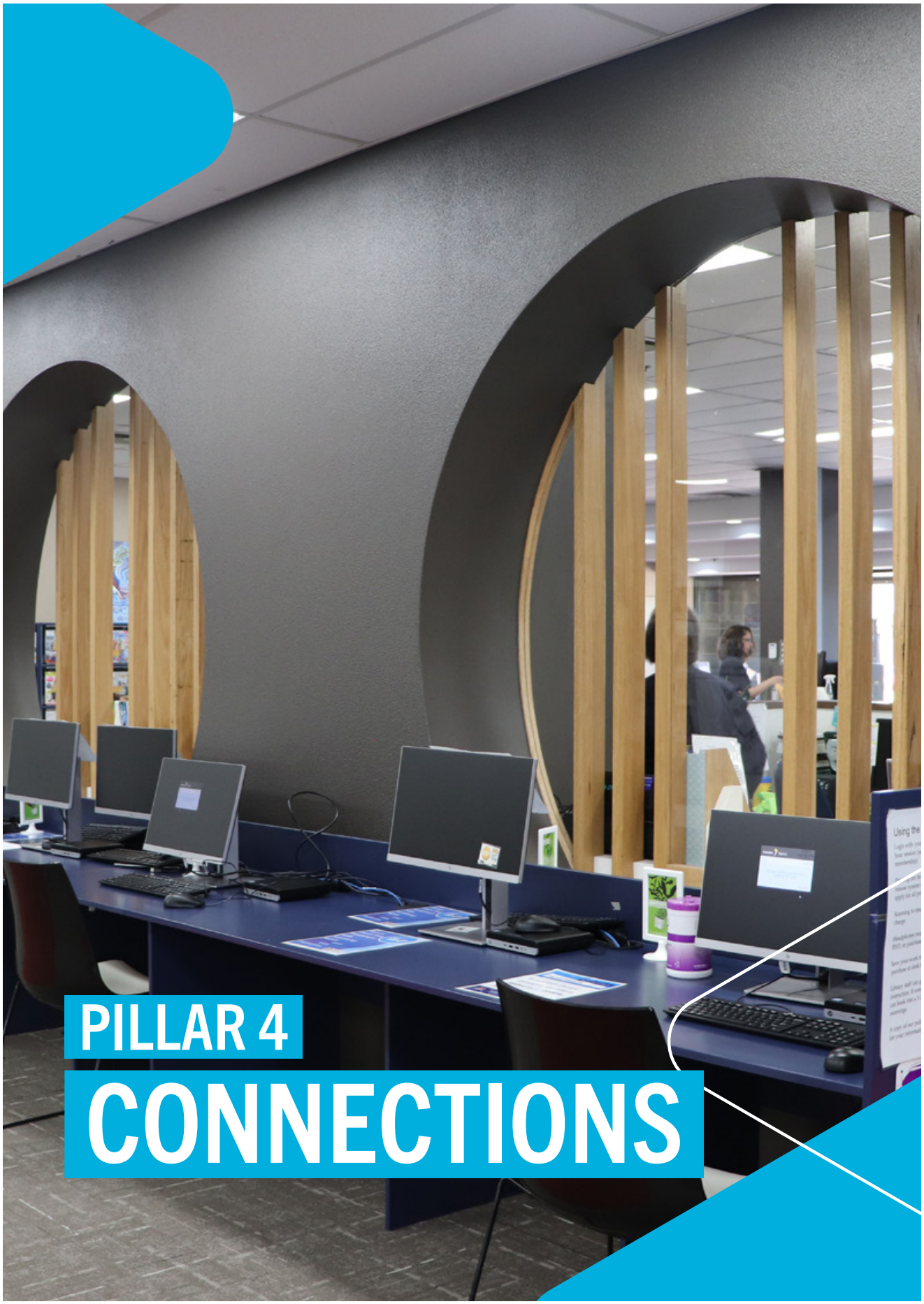
WE CURATE COLLECTIONS THAT ARE CURRENT, REPRESENTATIVE, AND RESPONSIVE TO LOCAL NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS	
Strategies	**Actions**
Deliver collections that are relevant, inclusive, and responsive to community needs.	• Regularly review and update the collection based on usage data, community feedback, statewide health checks and emerging interests; • Investigate regional consortia and fee-for-service partnerships with other library services to enhance access to a broader range of collections, with a focus on expanding digital content.
Increase understanding and appreciation of the cultures, histories, and achievements of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	• Build a dedicated collection featuring the stories, language, and history of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; • Partner with local Elders and organisations to guide culturally appropriate collection development; • Preserve and share the heritage of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through oral histories and community-led projects; • Ensure collection policies support respectful and inclusive representation of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
Capture and share the region's stories and heritage through curated collections and original content.	• Explore opportunities to make the Library's Local History collections easily discoverable in the online environment; • Build on unique local collections to contribute to cultural tourism.

Performance measures

- Loans per capita;
- Age of collections meets Living Learning Libraries Guidelines;
- Local and Family History visitation and enquiry rates;
- Increase in locally created and digitised content.



Local History Collection, an invaluable resource. Photo: Cessnock City Council


PILLAR 4
CONNECTIONS

Connections

6.1 Trends

Evolving Knowledge Systems

The way we define and engage with knowledge is shifting, bringing both opportunities and challenges. There is a growing focus on expanding what is recognised as knowledge, amplifying diverse perspectives, and addressing the rising impact of misinformation.

The Impact of Emerging Technologies

Technologies such as generative AI are reshaping how information is created, accessed, and understood. These advancements raise critical questions about authenticity and trust, particularly with the rise of deepfakes. However, they also offer new possibilities for preserving and interacting with information in innovative ways.

Expanding Skill Requirements

As information landscapes become more complex, individuals will increasingly need a combination of practical, critical thinking, and digital skills to navigate them effectively. A more information-literate society offers significant benefits, but those lacking these skills face the risk of being left behind.

Digital Inclusion as a Path to Equity

Access to digital technologies remains uneven, creating a widening digital divide. As services continue to shift online, ensuring digital inclusion is essential for equitable participation. At the same time, there is potential to build a more inclusive and culturally responsive information ecosystem.

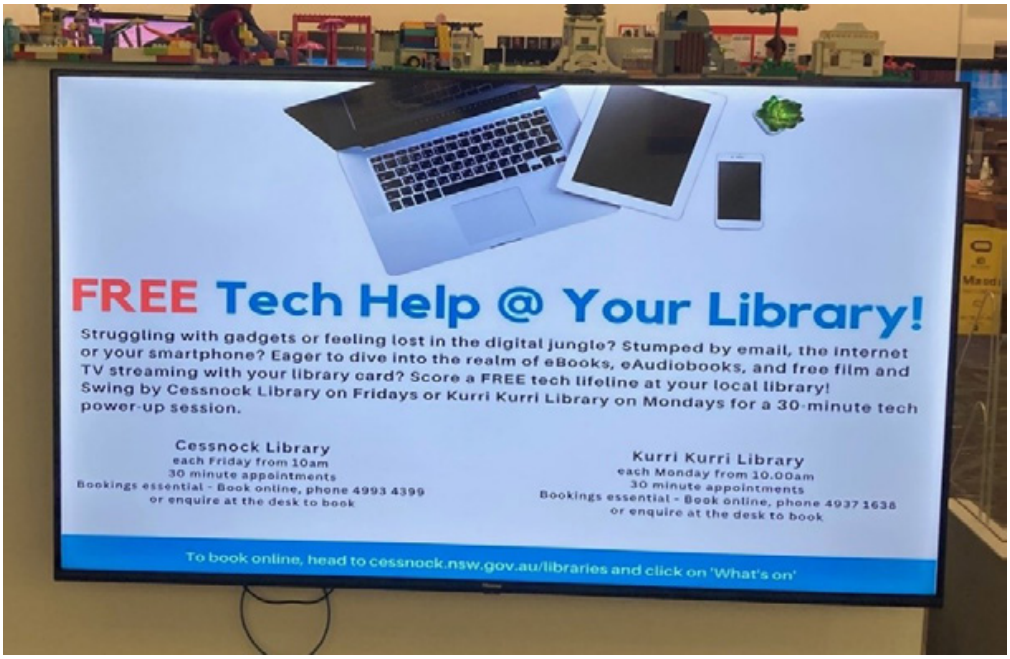
6.2 Insights from the community

They valued:

- Access to computers and internet, especially for those without digital access;
- Ongoing support for tech-savvy programs, and digital skill-building.

The library would be enhanced by:

- Greater printing capabilities;
- Increased digital literacy programs;
- Intergenerational technology programs.



Tech Help @ Your Library. Photo: Cessnock City Council/Jan Richards Consulting

6.3 Cessnock City Library

Digital literacy and access to current technology are essential for full participation in modern life—enabling access to government services, education, information, and community engagement. However, many individuals still lack the confidence or skills to use computers effectively or navigate digital information. Public libraries play a key role in bridging this digital divide.

For some members of the community, Cessnock City Library is the only publicly accessible source of technology, including computers, internet access, and digital devices. As such, the library is a vital point of digital inclusion, offering equitable access to tools and resources that many would otherwise go without.

Cessnock's score of 70.6 on the 2023 Australian Digital Inclusion Index—below the national average of 73.2—highlights local challenges in digital access, affordability, ability, and awareness. This further reinforces the library's role in addressing digital disadvantage. By providing free access to technology, internet services, and digital skills training, the library supports those who may be excluded from opportunities in education, employment, and civic participation.

Cessnock City Library continues to lead in this space by delivering programs that help community members navigate the online environment safely and with confidence. These include participation in state and national initiatives such as Tech Savvy Seniors, as well as tailored one-on-one support sessions like 1-2-1 Tech Help, ensuring responsive and inclusive service delivery for all.

6.4 Strategic direction

Connections

Technology that empowers access, skills, and participation

WE PROVIDE UP-TO-DATE TOOLS AND TRAINING TO HELP THE COMMUNITY NAVIGATE AND THRIVE IN A DIGITAL WORLD	
Strategies	**Actions**
Provide access and support to the community in current and emerging technology which addresses the digital divide.	• Evaluate and build on current digital literacy and inclusion programs; • Explore intergenerational 'tech -savvy initiatives; • Build skills in e-safety, critical thinking skills and responsible use of technology for library staff and the community.
Performance measures	
• Usage numbers; • Enrolment numbers; • Participation surveys.	



Tech Help at Cessnock Library. Photo: Cessnock City Council


PILLAR 5
PROGRAMS

Programs

7.1 Trends

Expanding Program Offerings

While traditional programs like storytime remain central to library services, there is growing community interest in more diverse and interactive activities that appeal to a broader range of age groups and interests. These include a wide variety of STEAM-based initiatives—covering science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics—such as coding clubs, writing workshops and hands-on creative sessions.

Collaborative and Funded Program Delivery

Increasingly, libraries are delivering programs in partnership with external organisations or through targeted funding opportunities. Initiatives like Tech Savvy Seniors are examples of how specific programs can be developed to meet particular community needs through collaboration and financial support.

Preserving and Sharing Local History

The library's role as a custodian of local heritage remains essential. This function can be further enriched through community partnerships, collaborative projects, and shared initiatives that help preserve and celebrate local stories and collective memory.

7.2 Insights from the community

They valued:

- The wide-ranging calendar of programs and activities;
- The range of children's programs and school holiday activities;
- The 'Speaking of Books' talks and special events like the Live streaming of the Sydney Writers Festival;
- 'What's on' information easily found;
- Programs and events built a sense of community and connection;
- "It's more than just an event I come to, we've all become friends".

The library would be enhanced by:

- Continuation of pre-school programs during school holidays;
- Provision of afternoon and weekend activities, especially for children and families;
- More intergenerational activities (e.g. aged care visits, joint programs with children);
- Additional local history, genealogy and author talks with an historical focus. There was also an interest in oral histories;
- Local Aunty as part of storytime.



7.3 Cessnock City Library

According to Living Learning Libraries Standard 17, public libraries serving populations over 50,000—such as Cessnock City Library—should provide a range of programs tailored to the community's demographics, staff expertise, and other relevant factors, with some programs offered more than once a week. Cessnock City Library successfully meets this standard by delivering a broad and diverse suite of programs that are well-supported by the community, as demonstrated by strong attendance and positive feedback.

These programs are designed to serve key audience segments, reflecting the program categories defined by the National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA):

- Stronger and more creative communities
- Personal development and wellbeing
- Informed and connected citizens
- Literacy and lifelong learning
- Digital inclusion

There is also a clear interest in extending programming beyond standard business hours, Monday to Friday to meet community and lifestyle needs. The success of 'Saturday Storytime' at both Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries highlights the benefits of more flexible scheduling. Additionally, there were calls for increased outreach opportunities in this area. Introducing a mobile van and involving the community in planning activities would support the expansion of programs and enhance engagement.

Survey and focus group feedback indicated strong community interest in a broader and more diverse range of programs for adult members. While staffing capacity may limit the library's ability to expand programs independently, there are valuable opportunities to build on the network of strong partnerships further extending the library's capacity, enabling greater reach and more responsive programming for a wide range of audiences.

Currently, the library offers a mix of ongoing and one-off programs at both its branch libraries and other appropriate venues. Staff also engage in outreach, bringing services directly to the community.

Family literacy is a core component of public library services and both Cessnock and Kurri Kurri libraries maintain a strong focus on programs for children aged 0–5. Staff are consistently praised for their skills, enthusiasm and engagement in delivering these sessions.

The library maintains a strong focus on reading-based activities, which are well supported by the community. These include author talks through the 'Speaking of Books' series, the provision of book club kits, and participation in major literary events such as the Newcastle Writers' Festival and the livestream of the Sydney Writers' Festival.

There is strong community interest in programs focused on local and family history, supported by the library's rich heritage collections and well-established partnerships with local societies. These programs play an important role in fostering personal and community identity while also contributing to cultural tourism. The library's Talking History events are a standout example—consistently popular and often fully booked shortly after being announced.

The library offers a wide range of free weekly drop-in activities catering to diverse interests and age groups. These include Dungeons and Dragons sessions for teens and tweens at both Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, First Thursday/Friday Flicks, Teen Library Lounge for ages 8–11, knitting groups, and LEGO clubs. Many of these activities lend themselves to self-directed formats—such as knitting groups—while also fostering social engagement. In these cases, the library serves as an inclusive and supportive venue for community-led creativity.

"I run an Airbnb, and I recently had a lovely couple stay. They mentioned they had called Cessnock Library because they wanted to attend the recent author talk and were blown away with helpfulness and loveliness she received in that phone call. They had a lovely time at the Author talk and were so very grateful, the whole experience with Cessnock Library was so positive and happy, they can't wait to come back."

This area of library programming is strengthened by the skills and expertise of library staff, who develop engaging activities that connect participants with the library's collections and services—successfully attracting both existing and new audiences.



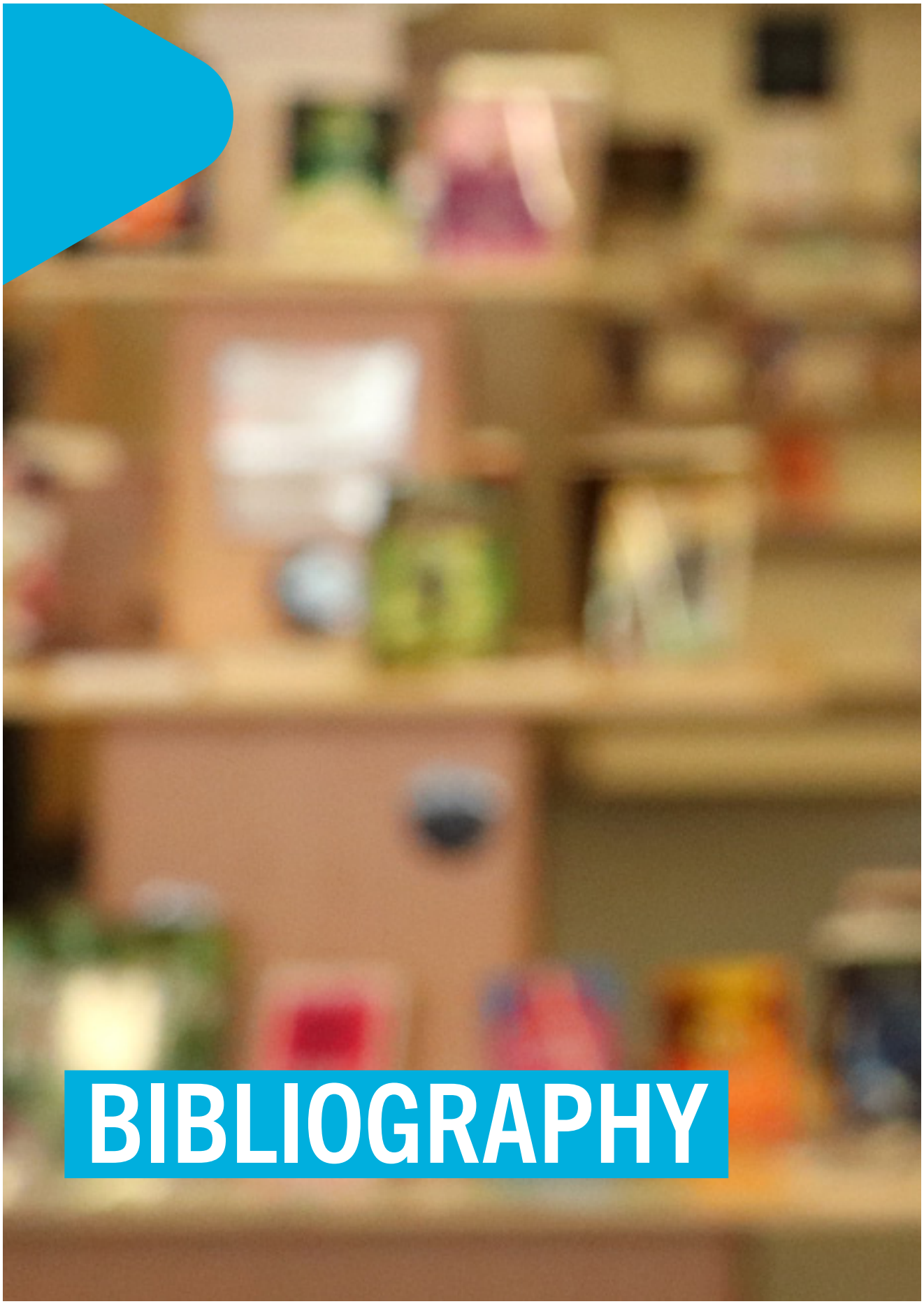
The popular 'Archives Basement Tour': Photo: Cessnock City Council

7.4 Strategic direction

Programs

Programs that inspire learning, creativity, and connection

WE DELIVER MEANINGFUL PROGRAMS THAT REFLECT COMMUNITY INTERESTS, PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING, AND SPARK CREATIVITY	
Strategies	**Actions**
Foster a love of reading, a culture of learning and an enthusiasm for creativity and heritage.	• Position reading and literacy as core program areas, with tailored initiatives for all age groups; • Curate inclusive programs and activities adaptable for off-site delivery, extending the library's reach into the community; • Develop 'maker' environments within both libraries to encourage hands-on creativity, exploration, and skill-building.
Equip the community with the skills to maximise our resources.	• Enhance the value of library collections by offering seminars, workshops, and training that build confidence and skills in using specific resources—such as online databases, eResources and local and family history collections.
Explore and develop collaborative opportunities for service and program delivery.	• Develop programs in partnership with cultural and heritage organisations to support and promote cultural tourism; • Collaborate with community groups, schools and service providers to engage hard-to-reach populations, such as youth and marginalised communities; • Work with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to co-design culturally respectful programs and events.
Performance measures	
• Number of participants; • Satisfaction with library programs and activities; • Engagement with the Library's social media presence.	


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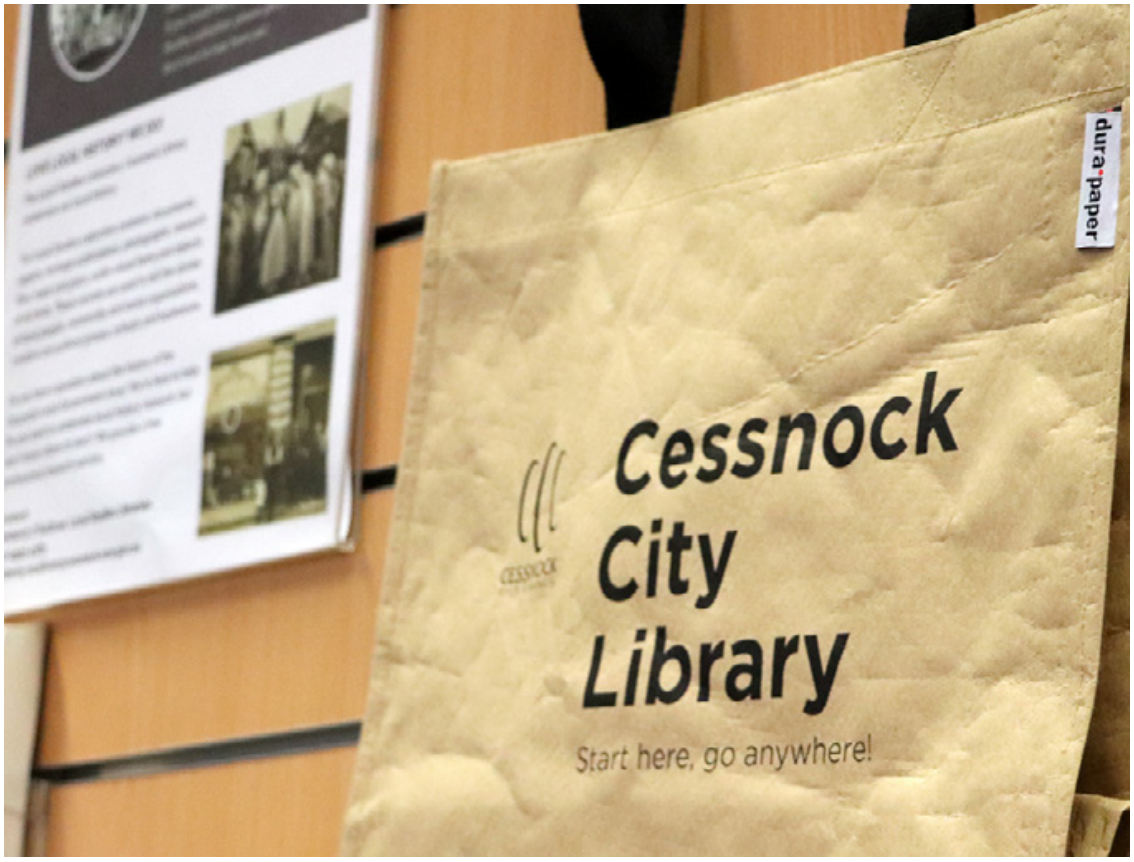
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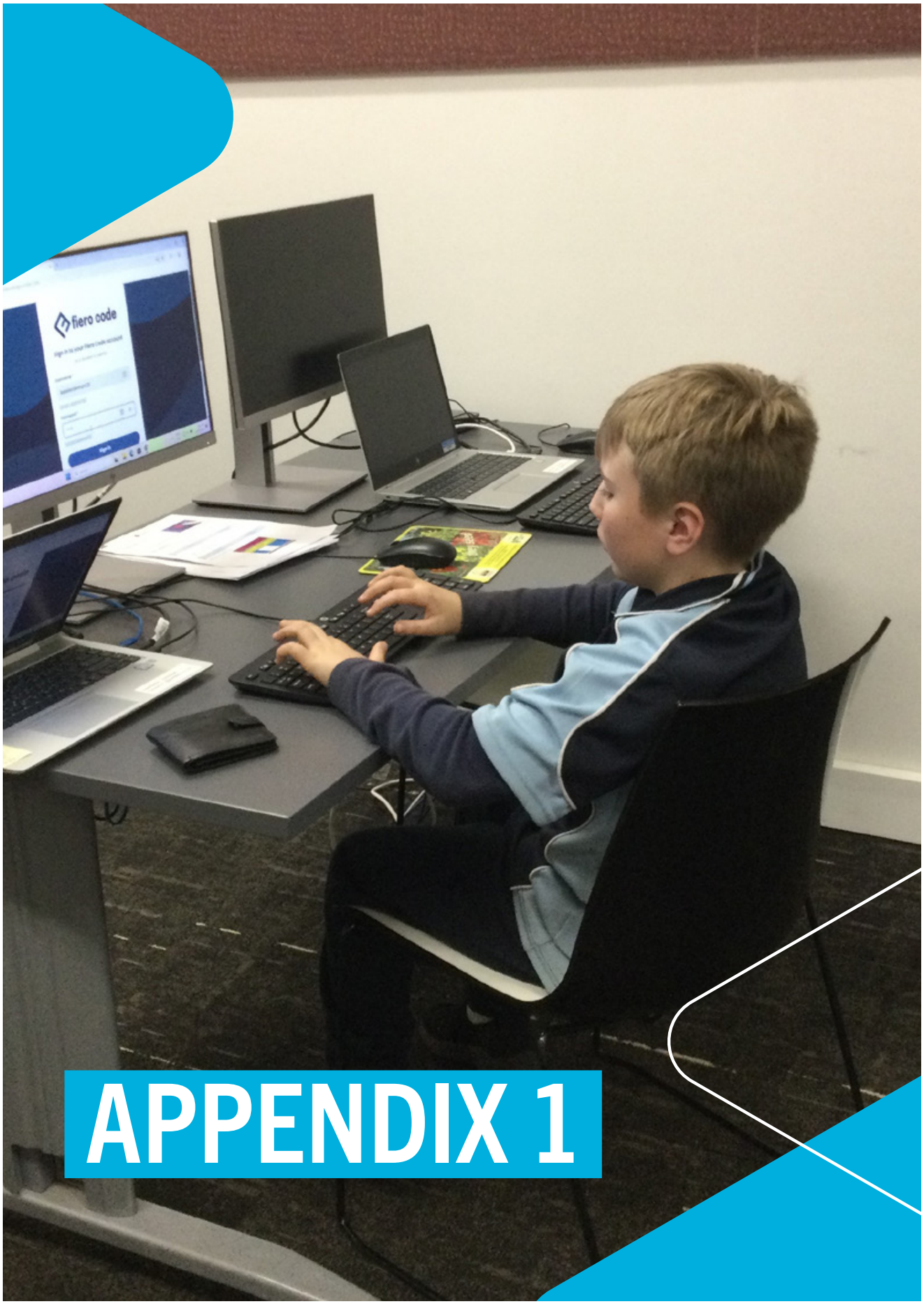
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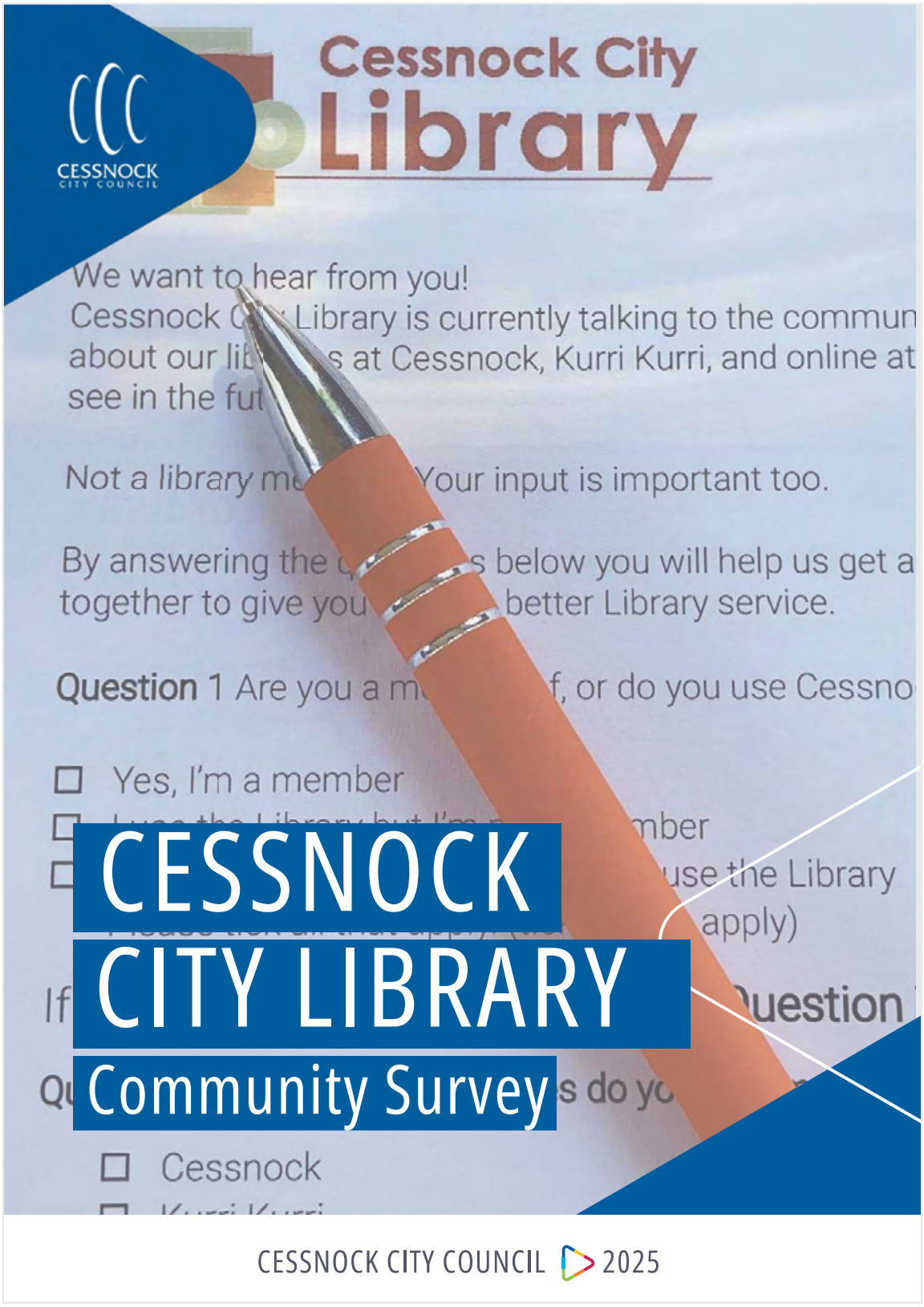
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APPENDIX 1


Cessnock City
Library
CESSNOCK
CITY COUNCIL
We want to hear from you!
Cessnock C Library is currently talking to the commun
about our lib s at Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, and online at
see in the fut
Not a library me Your input is important too.
By answering the q s below you will help us get a
together to give you better Library service.
Question 1 Are you a m f, or do you use Cessno
Yes, I'm a member
mber
use the Library
apply)
If uestion
Qu s do yo
Cessnock
CESSNOCK
CITY LIBRARY
Community Survey
CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL 2025

Cessnock City Library Community Survey

Introduction

To inform the development of the Cessnock City Library Strategic Report and Plan, a community survey was conducted to understand what residents value about the current service and what they envision for the future. The survey was made available at a community Pop-Up on Library Lovers' Day (14 February), as well as online and in hardcopy form throughout February and March 2025.

The Survey was promoted in Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries, in the Library's Newsletter and on the Library and Council websites. It was also promoted via social media.

It invited responses from both library users and non-users. 387 responses were received from users and non-users.

Summary

Library Usage:

1. Membership: 92.19% of respondents are library members, 2.34% use the library without membership, and 5.47% neither use nor are members.
2. Most Visited Library: Cessnock Library is the most visited (64.22%), followed by Kurri Kurri (29.36%) and eLibrary (6.42%).

Services Used:

- Popular Services: Borrowing/reading materials (79.82%), adult programs (32.11%), and online services like BorrowBox (29.97%).
- Other Activities: Quiet study (13.15%), children's programs (16.21%), and using the Library App (28.44%).

Positive Feedback:

- Staff: Praised for being helpful and friendly.
- Facilities: Appreciated for being clean, quiet, and welcoming.
- Resources: Valued for diverse collections and accessible technology.
- Community Engagement: Programs for all ages and social opportunities are highly appreciated.
- Convenience: Easy borrowing, returning, and reserving materials.

Areas for Improvement:

- Facilities: Requests for better seating, study booths, and a café. Complaints about uncomfortable temperatures.

- Noise: Desire for quieter spaces during events or busy times.
- Resources: Need for a larger collection, especially eBooks and new releases.
- Accessibility: Parking issues and mobility challenges.
- Opening Hours: Requests for extended hours, especially weekends/evenings.
- Technology: Aging tech and difficulties with online resources.

Suggestions for Enhancements:

- Larger library spaces with quiet zones, meeting rooms, and better layouts.
- Improved air conditioning, lighting, and seating.
- Expanded programs for teens, adults, and seniors.
- Broader book collections and improved online services.
- Better promotion of events via email, social media, and outreach.

Non-User Feedback:

- Reasons for non-use include geographic distance, time constraints, health issues, and preference for owning books.
- Suggestions to attract non-users include adding branches in new areas, hosting more community events, and improving children's sections.

Demographics:

- Gender: 77.5% female, 21.43% male, 0.71% non-binary.
- Age: Majority are aged 65-74 (32.26%) and 75+ (19.35%).
- Suburbs: Most respondents live in Cessnock (72), Kurri Kurri (36), and Weston (14).

Communication Preferences:

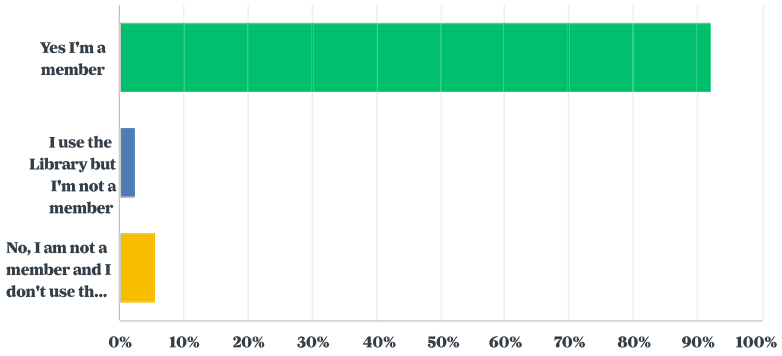
- Top Methods: Email (80.16%), Facebook (29.55%), and newsletters (29.96%).

This survey highlights the library's strengths in community engagement and resource availability while identifying areas for improvement in facilities, accessibility, and program offerings.

Cessnock City Library

Q1 Are you a member/do you use Cessnock City Library?

Answered: 384 Skipped: 2

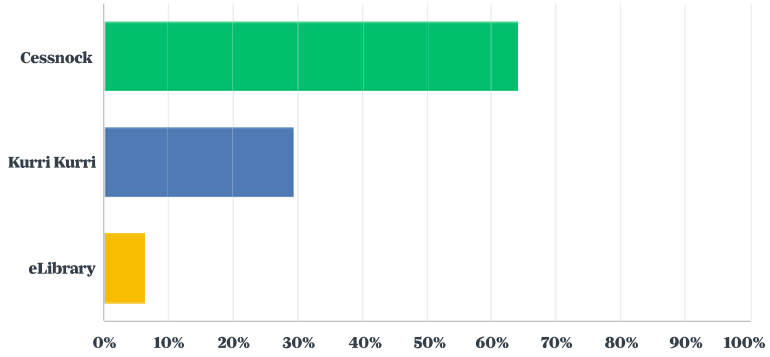


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes I'm a member	92.19%	354
I use the Library but I'm not a member	2.34%	9
No, I am not a member and I don't use the Library	5.47%	21
TOTAL		384

Cessnock City Library

Q2 Which of our libraries do you visit most often

Answered: 327 Skipped: 59

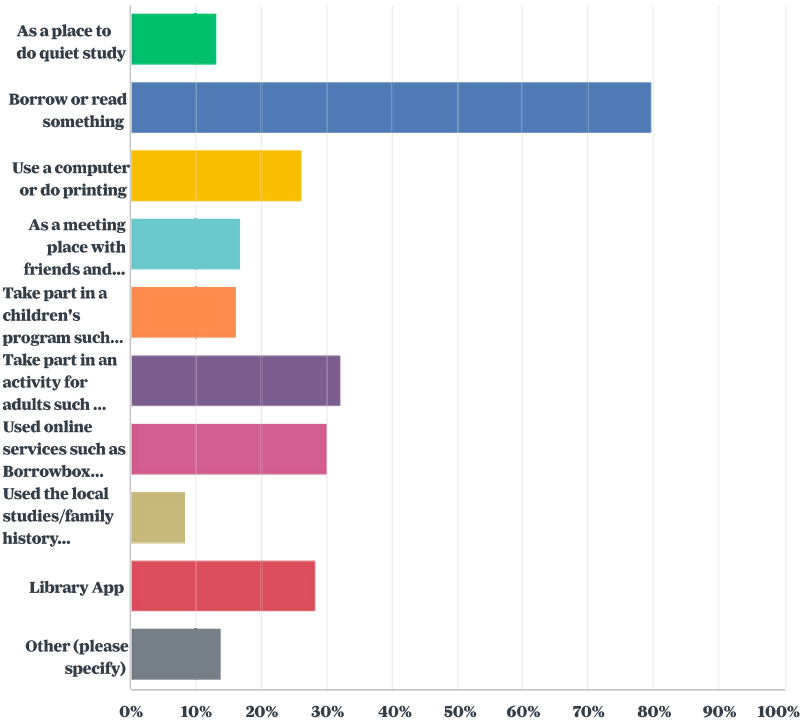


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Cessnock	64.22%	210
Kurri Kurri	29.36%	96
eLibrary	6.42%	21
TOTAL		327

Cessnock City Library

Q3 What Library services or activities have you used in the past 2 years? Please tick all that apply.

Answered: 327 Skipped: 59



Cessnock City Library

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
As a place to do quiet study	13.15%	49
Borrow or read something	79.82%	266
Use a computer or do printing	26.30%	87
As a meeting place with friends and others	16.82%	55
Take part in a children's program such as storytime	16.21%	55
Take part in an activity for adults such as a seminar or author visit	32.11%	112
Used online services such as Borrowbox or reserach databases	29.97%	103
Used the local studies/family history collection	8.26%	27
Library App	28.44%	93
Other (please specify)	13.76%	16
Total Respondents: 327		

Other:

- Seniors Tech Help (4)
- Justice of the Peace service (2)
- Seed Library (2)
- Research assistance (2)
- View displays (2)
- Use the amenities (2)
- Volunteering (1)
- Book sales (1)

Cessnock City Library

Q4 What do you like most about the Library? What is working for you?

Answered: 316 Skipped: 70

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	100.00%	316
2	68.04%	215
3	47.15%	149

There was consistency in the responses provided by respondents. They can be summarised as:

Helpful and Friendly Staff:
- Consistent praise for the staff's friendliness, responsiveness, and willingness to assist patrons with their needs.

Facilities and Environment:
- Users appreciate the library as a quiet, clean, and welcoming space conducive to reading, studying, and community activities;
- Many noted the importance of a peaceful atmosphere and well-organised layout.

Resource Availability:
- The library's extensive collection of books, audiobooks, eBooks, DVDs, magazines, and online resources is highly valued;
- Members appreciate the ability to borrow a wide variety of materials and access to technology.

Community Engagement:
- The library serves as a community hub, offering programs for all ages, including children's activities, author talks, and workshops;
- Users value the social aspect of the library and the opportunity to meet others.

Convenient Services:
- The ease of borrowing, returning, and reserving materials—both in-person and online—is highlighted, as well as the availability of self-service options and online catalogue.

Programs and Events:
- There is a strong appreciation for children's programs, educational workshops, and events that cater to diverse interests, enhancing community engagement.

Accessible Technology:
- Users find the library's online services, including e-resources and borrowing apps like BorrowBox and Libby, to be user-friendly and beneficial in accessing materials.

Cessnock City Library

Q5 What do you like least about our Library? What could be improved?

Answered: 240 Skipped: 146

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	100.00%	240
2	22.92%	55
3	12.08%	29

Responses can be summarised as:

Facilities:
- Many comments about uncomfortable seating and wish for better chairs or study booths;
- Requests for a café or coffee cart to enhance the library experience;
- Mention of the temperature being too hot or stuffy during summer.

Noise and Space:
- Complaints about noise levels, particularly during events or busy times, leading to difficulties in studying or reading quietly;
- Concern over lack of quiet spaces for study and reading.

Resources and Collection:
- Desire for a larger collection, especially regarding eBooks, new releases, and titles for specific age groups (13-16 years old, tweens);
- Some mentioned that essential books, including classics and popular authors, are often not available;
- Limitations on book reservations and accessibility to newly released titles.

Accessibility and Parking:
- Issues with parking availability and accessibility for those with mobility challenges;
- Suggestions for improved pedestrian access from car parks and clearer signage for library facilities.

Opening Hours:
- Requests for extended opening hours, especially on weekends or in the evenings.

Technology and Resources:
- Comments on aging technology and difficulties using online resources and apps for eBook borrowing.

Cessnock City Library

Q6 What suggestions do you have to enhance the Library - changes for the better!

Answered: 218 Skipped: 168

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1	100.00%	218
2	26.61%	58
3	12.84%	28

Responses can be summarised as:

Facilities:
- Requests for a larger library building with more space, including quiet areas, meeting rooms, study zones, and a better layout for computers and children's programs;
- Improved air conditioning, lighting, and accessibility features;
- Suggestions for beanbags, comfy seating, stools in aisles, and a reading room;
- Requests for a café or coffee machine to enhance the user experience;
- Emphasis on maintaining and celebrating the community role of the library.

Noise and Space:
- Noise concerns in shared areas—desire for partitions or designated quiet zones.

Resources and Collection:
- Broader range of books, especially: New releases, popular authors, and complete series;
- Desire for expanded online and digital services, including demonstrations of eResources with a request for these to also be held at weekends.

Programming
- More adult programs, especially in the evenings or weekends;
- Expanded craft, gardening, and lifestyle workshops, including sessions for older adults;
- Greater focus on teen and youth programs, such as Dungeons & Dragons, graphic novel groups, and more clubs;
- Requests for more author talks, book clubs, and writing classes;
- Calls for better promotion of events and services—via email, social media, and outreach (e.g. schools, community groups);
- Support for heritage and cultural displays, including rotating exhibitions, local artifacts, and First Nations history.

Opening Hours:
- Interest in out of hours access models.

Technology and Resources:
- Integration of event bookings and tech bookings with Spydus.

Cessnock City Library

Q7 If you answered No to Question 1 what is the main reason you don't use our libraries?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 369

When asked why they do not use the library, non-users gave a range of reasons, including:

- Geographic distance or location-related barriers (e.g. living in Branxton, or outside the LGA; visitor to the area);
- New to the area and not yet engaged with the library;
- Time constraints or conflicting priorities;
- Health and mobility issues limiting travel;
- Membership or use of libraries closer to home (2 responses);
- Preference for owning books or forgetting the library is an option;
- Limited perceived relevance, with one respondent suggesting greater use for business or community networking could increase appeal;
- Occasional use only for specific events, such as guest speakers;
- Lack of motivation or “lethargy”.

Cessnock City Library

Q8 If you answered NO to Question 1 What would have to change to make you more likely to use Cessnock City Library?

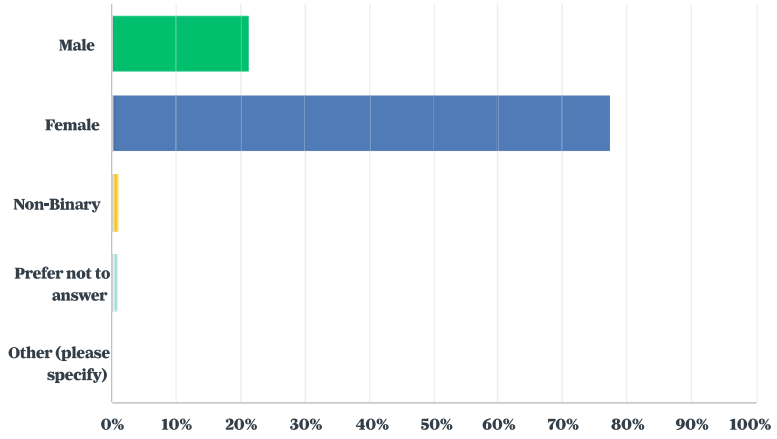
Answered: 12 Skipped: 370

- My main reason in visiting the library is to listen to the guest speakers;
- If I had more spare time;
- I am sorry to see that there is no library bus any more to Branxton;
- Moving to Cessnock or surrounding area;
- I would need to move to Cessnock LGA, but I would also like to see an engaging children's section - that starts out the front of the building and continues a path into the kids' corner. As present it is boring and needs revamping;
- Online;
- Honestly, I love our libraries! The only thing that would need to change for me would be to move to the Cessnock LGA;
- If there was a smaller branch in the Huntlee or Branxton areas. I think a Lot of people would then take advantage of this especially with the development in the area;
- More motivation on my part;
- If the Library had capacity to host meetings, community sessions/workshops or events. If they do I'm not aware they have this option;
- Put a lock on the interior door in the ladies' toilet;
- Move back to Cessnock as I have moved to Raymond Terrace.

Cessnock City Library

Q9 To help us make sure that we've captured the opinions of a broad cross section of our community we'd like to ask you a few questions. What is your gender?

Answered: 280 Skipped: 106



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Male	21.43%	60
Female	77.50%	217
Non-Binary	0.71%	2
Prefer not to answer	0.36%	1
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		280

Q10 So that we can make sure we've heard from people across our footprint can you please tell what suburb you live in?

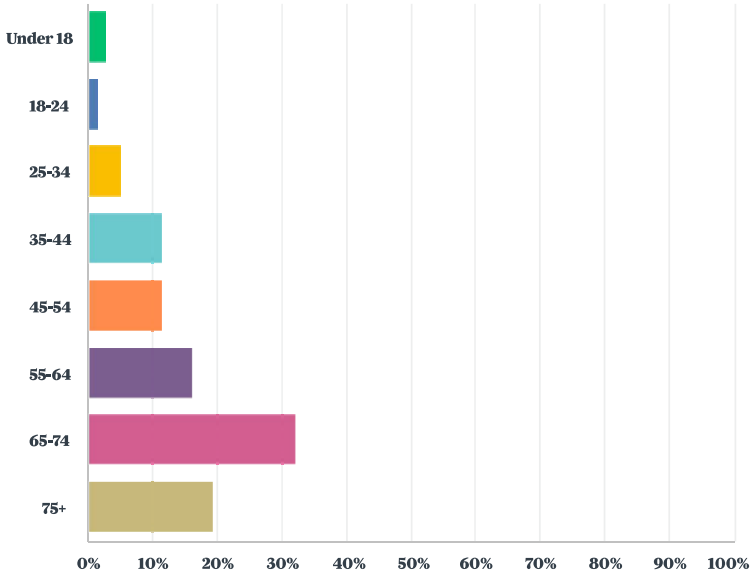
Answered: 275 Skipped: 111

Aberdare	8	East Branxton	2	Murrays Run	1
Abermain	9	Ellalong	3	Neath	1
Abernethy	2	Fishing Point	1	Noraville	2
Bellbird	5	Gillieston Heights	3	North Rothbury	11
Bellbird Heights	3	Heddon Greta	8	Nulkaba	2
Bishops Bridge	1	Kearsley	5	Paxton	6
Black Hill	1	Keinbah	1	Pelaw Main	3
Branxton	2	Kitchener	1	Pokolbin	10
Broke	1	Kurri Kurri	36	Quorrobolong	3
Buchanan	1	Laguna	3	Rutherford	1
Bucketty	1	Lovedale	4	Sawyers Gully	2
Cessnock	72	Maitland	2	Stanford Merthyr	3
Cessnock East	2	Millfield	2	Weston	14
Cessnock West	4	Mount View	2	Wollombi	7
Cliftleigh	4	Mount Vincent	2		
Congewai	1	Mulbring	2		

Cessnock City Library

Q11 What is your age?

Answered: 279 Skipped: 107



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	2.87%	8
18-24	1.43%	4
25-34	5.02%	14
35-44	11.47%	32
45-54	11.47%	32
55-64	16.13%	45
65-74	32.26%	90
75+	19.35%	54
TOTAL		279

Cessnock City Library

Q12 If you're happy for us to contact you to discuss any of your answers in detail please complete the form below.

Answered: 122 Skipped: 264

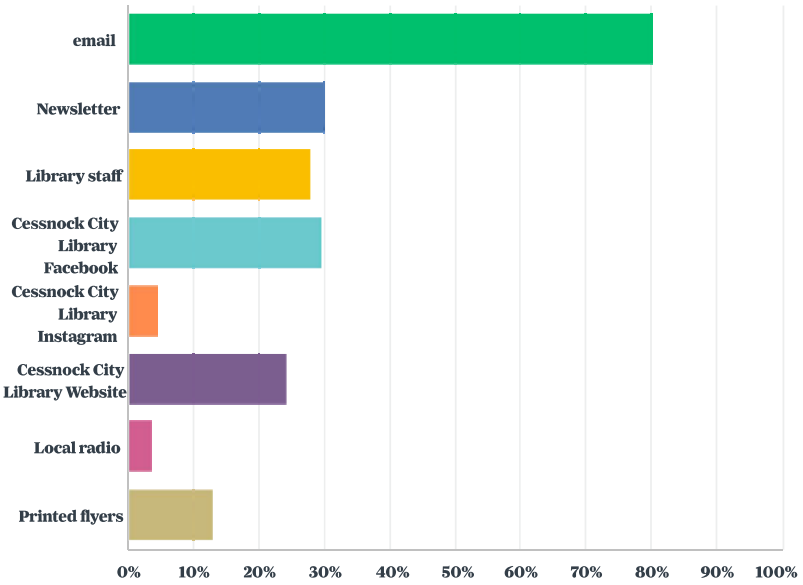
Company		0
Address	0.00%	0
Address 2	0.00%	0
City/Town	0.00%	0
State/Province	0.00%	0
ZIP/Postal Coe	0.00%	0
Name	0.00%	0
		111
		92

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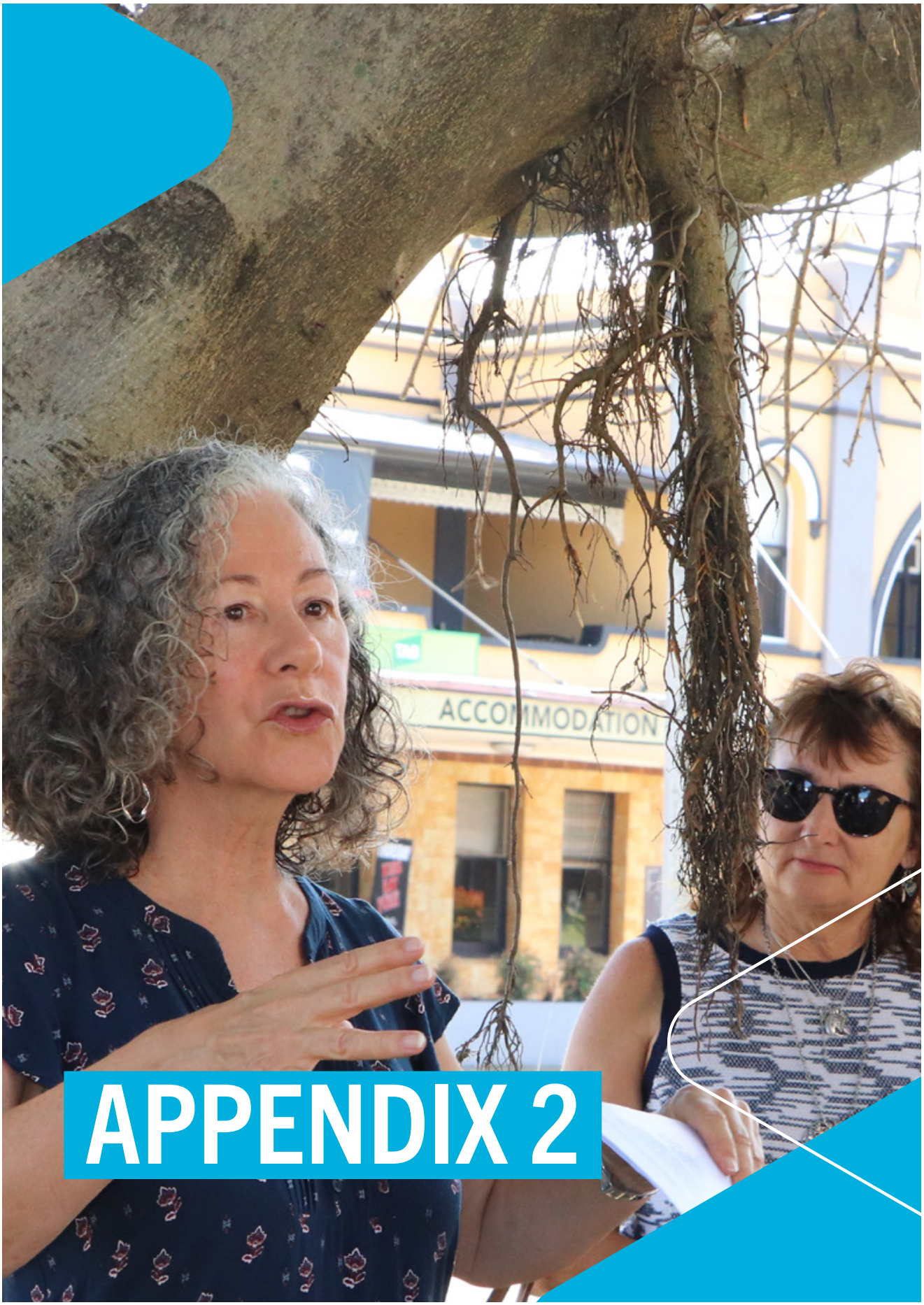
Cessnock City Library

Q13 Finally, what is the best way we can communicate with you about library services? Select all that apply.

Answered: 247 Skipped: 139



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
email	80.16%	198
Newsletter	29.96%	74
Library staff	27.94%	69
Cessnock City Library Facebook	29.55%	73
Cessnock City Library Instagram	4.45%	11
Cessnock City Library Website	24.29%	60
Local radio	3.64%	9
Printed flyers	12.96%	32
Total Respondents: 247		



APPENDIX 2

Appendix 2

Cessnock City Library staff training plan

This Plan has been divided into the eight core **Public Library competencies** identified by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA):

1. Understand the environment in which public libraries operate and the policies, issues and trends that impact the local government sector.

2. Understand the importance of digital literacy across the community and assist in its development.

3. Understand the principles and practices related to providing information services to meet community needs.

4. Know and understand the importance of reading amongst all members of the community and actively promote and support programs for members of the community with identified literacy reads.

5. Understand the management of public library resources in a broad range of formats.

6. Know and understand the application of leadership, finance, communication, marketing and management theory and techniques (administration).

7. Understand and use technology and systems to manage all forms of information.

8. Maintain currency of professional knowledge and practice.

ALIA also recognises competencies for seven specialist areas:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Accessibility
- Child/Youth
- Community Engagement
- Cultural Diversity
- Digital Literacy
- Local Studies/Genealogy

These have been integrated under the main headings where there are additional suggested requirements.

In February 2025 the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) released the Skills Agenda for the Trend Report which has identified the skills that should be taken into consideration in equipping the Library and Information workforce for the future.
Where appropriate, the skills identified in the IFLA document have been incorporated into the following table which is based on the ALIA categories.

Environmental

Understand the environment in which public libraries operate and the policies, issues, and trends that impact upon the local government sector.

General

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Cessnock City Council policy & direction • Local Government environment • Local demographics • Library and Information Service (LIS) trends • Digital Literacy • Ethical and legal issues including local, state, and federal government policies	• Council induction • ALIA PD • SLNSW Professional Development • SLNSW Working Groups and email lists • NSWPLA conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings

Specialisations

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Awareness of cultural practices	• Centre for Cultural Competence Australia • SLNSW Indigenous Engagement

Accessibility

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Accessibility Principles	• Cessnock City Council • SLNSW Professional Development • SLNSW Working Groups

Cultural diversity

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Awareness of Cultural practices	• Cultural Competence Program • SLNSW Professional Development • SLNSW Working Groups

Local studies/genealogy

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Working with affiliated organisations	• Museums of History NSW (State Archives) • Society of Australian Genealogists • SLNSW Professional Development • SLNSW Working Groups • Royal Australian Historical Society • ALIA PD

Digital

Understand the importance of digital literacy as a means of fostering accessibility, and assist in its development.

General

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Best practice in online safety • Technological profile of your community and its implications • Importance of digital literacy across the community • Legal issues around digital collections	• Cessnock City Council Guidelines • Australian Digital Inclusion Index • ALIA PD • SLNSW Professional Development • NSWPLA conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings • Tech Savvy Seniors/Be Connected

Specialisations

Local studies/genealogy

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Digitisation of local collections	• ALIA PD • SLNSW Professional Development • SLNSW Working Groups • NSWPLA conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings

Information services

Understand the principles and practices related to providing information services to meet community needs (e.g. reference services; reader's advisory; information access; document delivery).

General

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Understand the principles and practices related to providing information services to meet community needs • Address barriers to community use of the library and its services • Customer Service	• Sparkle Customer Service Program • Council preferred provider • Include as a standard agenda item for staff meetings

Specialisations

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Appropriate content and perspectives in traditional cultural property • Establish mechanisms to allow participation of indigenous community representatives in the library's programs	• SLNSW Indigenous Engagement • SLNSW Professional Development • ALIA PD

Cultural diversity

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Bilingual resources • Diverse community representatives in the library's programs	• SLNSW Professional Development SLNSW Working Groups

Reading

Know and understand the importance of reading among all members of the community and actively promote and support programs for members of the community with identified literacy needs.

General

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Analysis of information about literacy levels in the community • Understanding the principles of preliteracy and importance of storytelling • Engagement with other organisations such as schools, community language collections, book clubs • Reading challenges	• ALIA PD • SLNSW Professional Development • SLNSW Working Groups • NSWPLA conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings • Indigenous Literacy Foundation • Children's Book Council • NSW Writers Centre • Australian Children's Laureate • Online opportunities from publishers/ vendors

Collection/resource manager

Understand the management of public library resources in a broad range of access focused formats.

General

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Collection development and management including policies • Electronic licensing • Copyright • Digital repositories • Digitisation of collections • Cataloguing; classification; metadata	• University/TAFE • National Library of Australia ALIA PD • SLNSW Professional Development • SLNSW Working Groups • NSWPLA workshops, meetings

Specialisations

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Cataloguing and signage in first languages inclusion of materials by and about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples in the collection • Awareness of cultural sensitivity	• SLNSW Indigenous Engagement • SL NSW Professional Development • SLNSW Working Groups

Cultural diversity

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Signage in languages other than English • Cooperative agreements as a means of extending member choices in other languages	• SLNSW Professional Development • SLNSW Working Groups

Local studies

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Co-operative relationships with museums, galleries, etc. • Cataloguing; classification	• SLNSW Professional Development • SLNSW Working Groups

Administration

Know and understand the application of leadership, finance, communication, marketing and management theory and techniques.

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Strategic planning • Organisational policy planning and decision making • Financial management • Marketing and public relations • Review and evaluation of library services • Human resources planning and management	• Council • ALIA mentor scheme • SLNSW Professional Development • SLNSW Working Groups • LGMA

Technology

Understand and use current technology and systems to manage all forms of information, with a focus on accessibility.

TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Library Management System • Web Management Mobile Technologies Database creation and Management • Content Management • Web applications and social media	• CIVICA • SPUN user group • Libraries Australia • SLNSW Professional Development • SLNSW Working Groups • ALIA Professional Development

Profession

Maintain currency of Professional Practice and Knowledge.

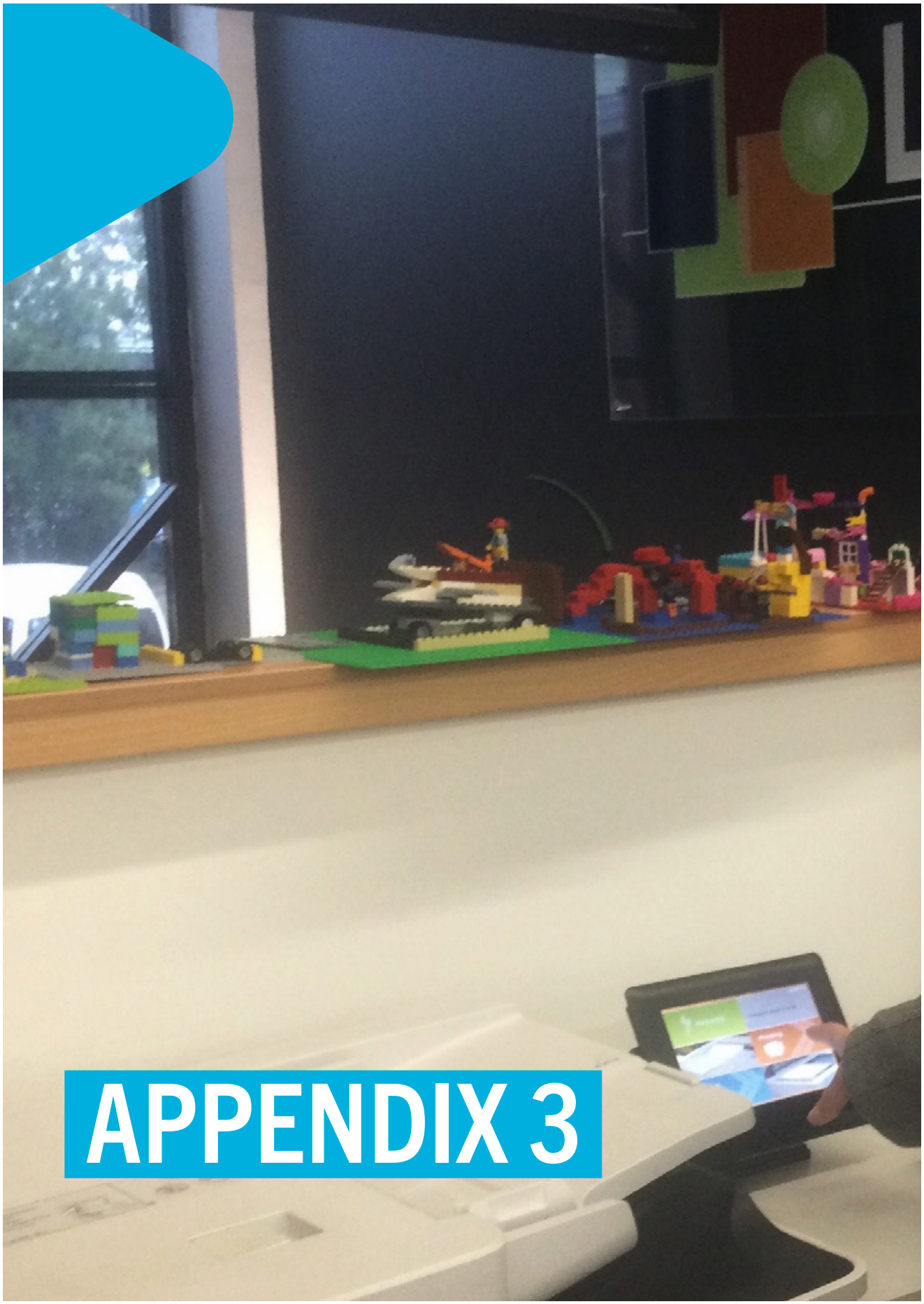
TRAINING NEED	OPTIONS
• Participation in professional organisations • Attending formal conferences and workshops • Participating in working groups • Signing up to eLists and contributing to the conversation • Professional reading; sharing items of interest with colleagues at staff meetings • Looking beyond the LIS sector	• NSWPLA Zone & State including project working groups • SLNSW Working • ALIA • IFLA

Training methods

Staff in all branches of Cessnock City Library require regular training to keep up to date and remain engaged with current practices and develop skills. This includes full-time, part-time and casual staff. A range of methods can be employed.

METHOD	COMMENT
Formal Training	A number of opportunities exist including University and TAFE. ALIA is increasingly adding to its offering of short courses, many of which are tied into the Public Library Competencies. Some of these are delivered by one of the accredited providers (e.g. TAFE or University).
Informal training	Many of the options in this plan would fall into the category of informal training and encompass areas such as Conferences, seminars and workshops. SLNSW has long been a source of this type of training, but increasingly other opportunities are becoming available and should be sought out. They may not be library specific, but they relate to the services that libraries provide. Sometimes they will be offered by partner organisations (e.g. Children's Book Council) but others may be left field. Giving staff the license to look for these opportunities helps to promote interest in the subject.

METHOD	COMMENT
Peer to Peer	An important area is peer-to-peer training where colleagues support each other. This is particularly usual in areas such as the LMS or in-house systems. Developing manuals/guidelines around this ensures consistency and is itself a training exercise, particularly if this is done as a shared task.
Meetings/Champions	Staff meetings are an excellent opportunity to incorporate training opportunities. These can be led by staff who are champions in a particular area or guest speakers can be invited. For example, ask representatives from the Council to come and speak to specific issues or policies. Staff often feel uncertainty about Readers Advisory work. Consider including a 'what I'm reading' section into staff meetings and let them develop skills in discussing reading within a trusted environment.
Vendor focused	Vendors are a rich source of training. This ranges from the more formalised training provided by CIVICA to You Tube videos of how to use some of the electronic resources the library holds. If the library holds a range of formats all staff should know how to use them and be able to share this information with library members. Such discussions can also be incorporated into staff meetings.
Online	There is a raft of seminars, workshops and podcasts online. Staff need to be given permission to watch these and an opportunity to discuss them.
Networks	The networks of SLNSW, NSWPLA and ALIA are strong and a great source of information. Joining and contributing to relevant eLists provides many opportunities for professional development and growth.


APPENDIX 3


ibrary
Seed Libr

Library Collections Benchmarking by Cohort

LIVING LEARNING LIBRARIES STANDARD		MINIMUM	CENTRAL COAST	CESSNOCK
S5	Expenditure on library materials per capita	$5.27	3.67	4.02
S6	Items per capita	2	0.80	1.08
S7	Acquisitions per capita	0.20	0.14	0.12
S8	Percentage of collection purchased in the last 5 years	50%	65.04%	61.00%
S9	Loans per capita	5.5	4.15	2.79
S10	Turnover of stock – loans per item	3.0	5.45	2.83



HAWKESBURY	LAKE MACQUARIE	MAITLAND	NEWCASTLE	SINGLETON
4.22	3.25	3.93	5.93	5.12
3.14	0.89	1.33	4.06	2.32
0.14	0.22	0.16	0.11	0.15
54.50%	63.23%	39.50%	49.00%	37.27%
4.12	4.45	3.89	8.06	5.61
2.94	5.20	3.18	3.36	2.61



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CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL

CESSNOCK LGA
2025

CESSNOCK CITY LIBRARY STRATEGY

SUMMARY



CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL



Journey Through Time, created by local school students and artist Steven Campbell.

Acknowledgement of Country

Cessnock City Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. We acknowledge these Aboriginal peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices and operations are located, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

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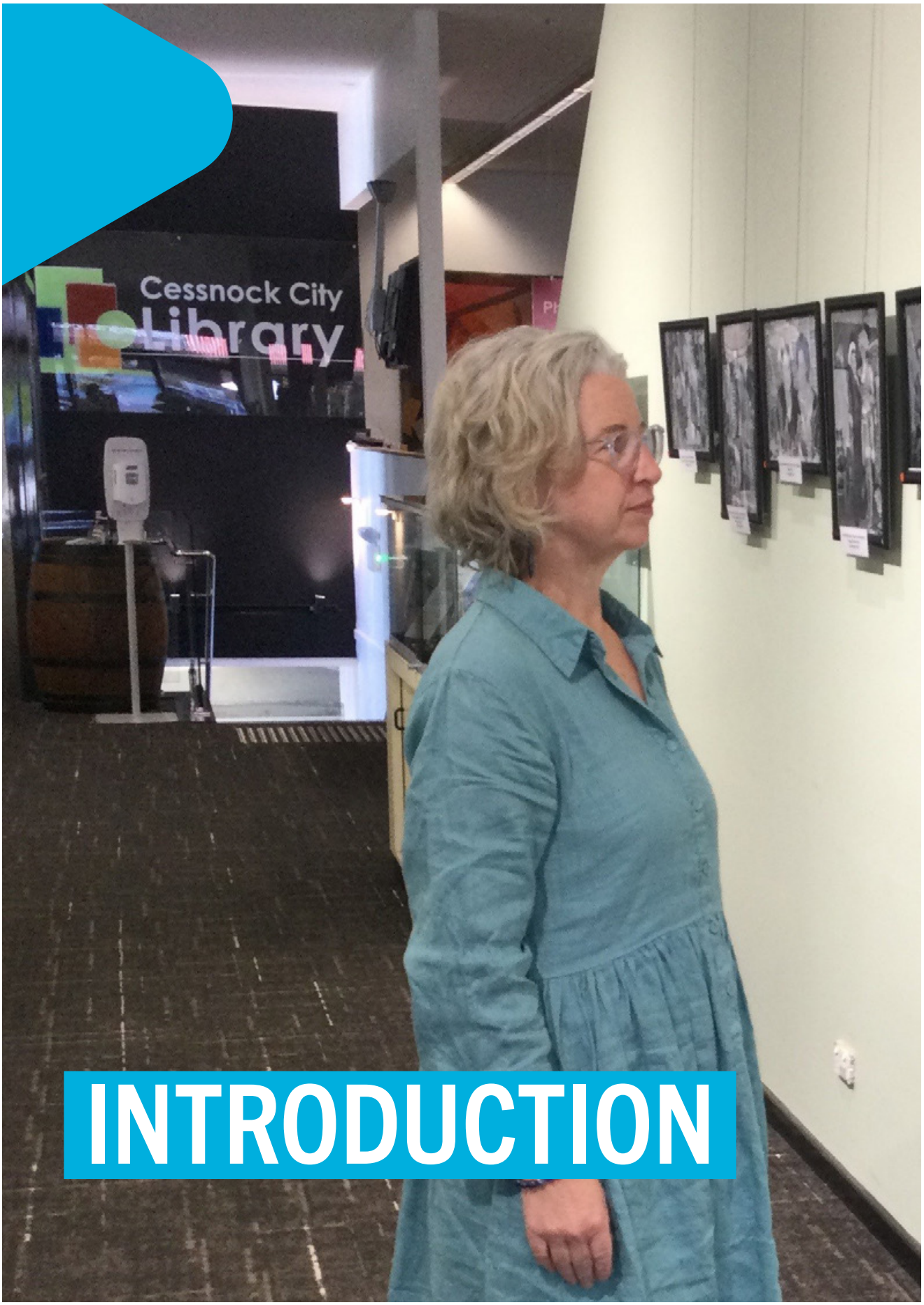
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INTRODUCTION



Mayor's message

Daniel Watton

Cessnock City Library has long been a cornerstone of life in our community, a place that provides free and equitable access to information, technology, culture, and our shared stories. As our region grows and evolves, so too must our library. The Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan 2025-2035 sets a clear vision for the future, ensuring our library continues to respond to the changing needs and aspirations of our diverse and dynamic population.

This plan is the result of meaningful collaboration between community members, Council staff, and key stakeholders. Through workshops, focus groups, surveys, and benchmarking, we have developed a strategy that is informed, inclusive, and aligned with broader Council priorities, as well as national and state frameworks.

As Cessnock continues to undergo significant social and economic transformation, our library will remain a vital community space - trusted, inclusive, and welcoming to all. This Strategic Plan reaffirms our commitment to literacy, digital access, cultural celebration, and lifelong learning for every member of our community.



Interim General Manager's message

Peter Chrystal

The Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan 2025-2035 sets a clear and forward-looking vision for how our libraries will continue to serve, inspire and empower our community over the next decade, through welcoming spaces that provide access to knowledge, technology, culture and life-long learning.

Centred on five strategic pillars - spaces, people, collections, connections, and programs - the Plan outlines a practical roadmap that honours our library's proud history while embracing innovation, equity, and opportunity. These pillars are grounded in best practice and guided by the Framework for Australian Public Libraries and the IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto.

The Plan builds on a strong foundation of service design and delivery, while expanding our focus on digital access, inclusive programming, and meaningful community partnerships. Under our Integrated Planning and Reporting framework, progress on the plan will be reviewed annually and shared through our annual report.

We're committed to strengthening the role of libraries in our region and look forward to seeing this Strategic Plan utilised as a foundation for ongoing improvements that reflect the needs of our community.




There's a Unicorn STUCK in my BOOK!
There's a Unicorn STUCK in my BOOK!

ABOUT US

Cessnock City Library: A snapshot

ESTABLISHED	Library service commenced 1 December 1952 *Library Act* adopted 5 December 1951
BRANCHES	Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, eBranch
AREA	1,966 sq km
POPULATION	69,352 (ABS Resident Population 2024)
MEMBERSHIP	13,254
TARGET GROUPS	• Children • Young people • Families • Adults • Older people • Home library • Students (including home schoolers) • CALD communities • New residents • Business community • People with disability and service providers • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples • Job seekers • Local and family history • Community groups • Travellers and casual users • Local partners and professionals • State wide partners
MAJOR LEGISLATION	*NSW Library Act 1939* & Library Regulation 2018 *NSW Local Government Act 1993*
GUIDING PRINCIPLES	ALIA Statement on *Public Library Services* *IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 2022*
LIBRARY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS)	Spydus
PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS	NSW Public Libraries Association SPUN (Spydus Users Group)
WEBSITE	https://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/libraries/Home
COMMUNICATION	Facebook Youtube Instagram Cessnock City Library eNews

Cessnock City Library

Cessnock City Library serves the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA) with branches in Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, a 24/7 eLibrary, and a range of outreach programs. With the LGA experiencing significant population growth, future library infrastructure is planned for the Branxton/Huntlee area.

The foundation for free public libraries in NSW was laid with the passing of the Library Act in 1939, following years of advocacy by the Free Library Movement. Cessnock Municipal Council adopted the Act in November 1951, and by December 1952, the city had opened its first public library in a meeting room at the Council Chambers near Cessnock swimming pool.

The service rapidly expanded. In 1958, the library moved to North Avenue, becoming the Edgeworth David Memorial Library. Kurri Kurri followed with its own branch in 1961, and Weston opened a library in 1967 (now closed) using a mix of donated and existing collections.

Cessnock Library opened in its current building at 65-67 Vincent Street in April 1983. Later that year, the Kurri Kurri Library relocated to a newly renovated section of the former

Co-operative Society building, known locally as "The Store." It continues to operate from this site.

Today, Cessnock City Library continues to evolve to meet the needs of a growing and diverse community, maintaining its role as a cornerstone of free and equitable access to information, literacy, and community connection. It is part of the Central East Zone of the NSW Public Libraries Association and is an engaged member of the Association and the NSW public library network.



Cessnock's first library in the Council Chambers

Cessnock Library

- Current Floor Space: 1,071m^2
- Recommended Floor Space (as at 2025): 2,041m^2
- Recommended Floor Space (2036): 2,496m^2



Cessnock Library is ideally located in a prime location with dual frontage onto the City's main thoroughfare, Vincent Street, and a rear entrance at a lower level leading to a major retail area off Charlton Street with associated parking. Cessnock Library also houses administrative offices for the Library service.

The Library has a welcoming atmosphere, and staff have been creative in the use of resources to maximise appeal. Despite this, internal facilities are limited: meeting rooms are either cramped or overbooked, shelving is inflexible, and there is a shortage of study areas. Limited space also restricts the delivery of programs, reducing the Library's capacity to meet community demand.

Due to space limitations, the Library's outstanding Local History collection is relegated to the building's lower basement level, restricting access and limiting opportunities for public engagement and research. Flooding of basement areas poses ongoing risks to stored collections, despite temporary protective measures.

Expanding the library on its current site would maintain a high-profile location and continuity of service, while enhancing convenience for users. It would also increase the library's appeal to members and visitors, strengthening its role as a hub for recreation, learning, local history, and community connection.

Kurri Kurri Library

- Current Floor Space: 560m^2
- Recommended Floor Space (as at 2025): 1,411m^2
- Recommended Floor Space (2036): 1,565m^2



Located at a major intersection in the iconic 'Store' building Kurri Kurri Library is situated near key community facilities, including a public school, community centre and pre-school. Major renovations were undertaken in 2018, and it is an inviting space which is valued by the community. The large children's area is multipurpose by design, and allows for a range of programming.

Notwithstanding its strategic location, the 560m² library is undersized for both current use and the projected 2036 catchment population of 29,462, requires a 79% increase in space to meet demand.

eLibrary

The eBranch, Cessnock Library's digital branch, provides convenient 24/7 access to a wide range of information, services, and online resources, including eBooks, eAudiobooks, newspapers, databases, streaming services, research resources and training courses. This service is particularly beneficial for those who may face barriers in visiting a physical library.

The online site contains extensive information about library services (including member registration). All upcoming events and programs are listed along with the events booking system. The eBranch is supported by the user-friendly Library app, which enhances accessibility and convenience.

Our Community

Cessnock City Council governs a Local Government Area (LGA) of 1,966 square kilometres in the Hunter Valley region of New South Wales. Located around 120 kilometres north of Sydney and 40 kilometres west of Newcastle, the area includes a mix of growing urban centres, rural villages, and natural landscapes.

The Cessnock Local Government Area is situated on the traditional lands of the Wonnarua, Awabakal, and Darkinjung peoples, with a deep Aboriginal heritage that continues to shape the identity of the region. The region also contains many important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sites and holds environmental value, with over 65 threatened species and several critically endangered ecosystems. One-third of the LGA is UNESCO World Heritage-listed, reflecting its biodiversity and conservation importance.

Historically, the region transitioned from early European pastoral settlement in the 1820s to a coal mining hub by the late 19th century. While coal mining defined the local economy for much of the 20th century, industry changes and mine closures have seen a shift toward other sectors, particularly viticulture, tourism, and service industries. The Hunter Valley wine region, centred around Pokolbin, Mount View, and Allandale, is now a major contributor to the local economy.

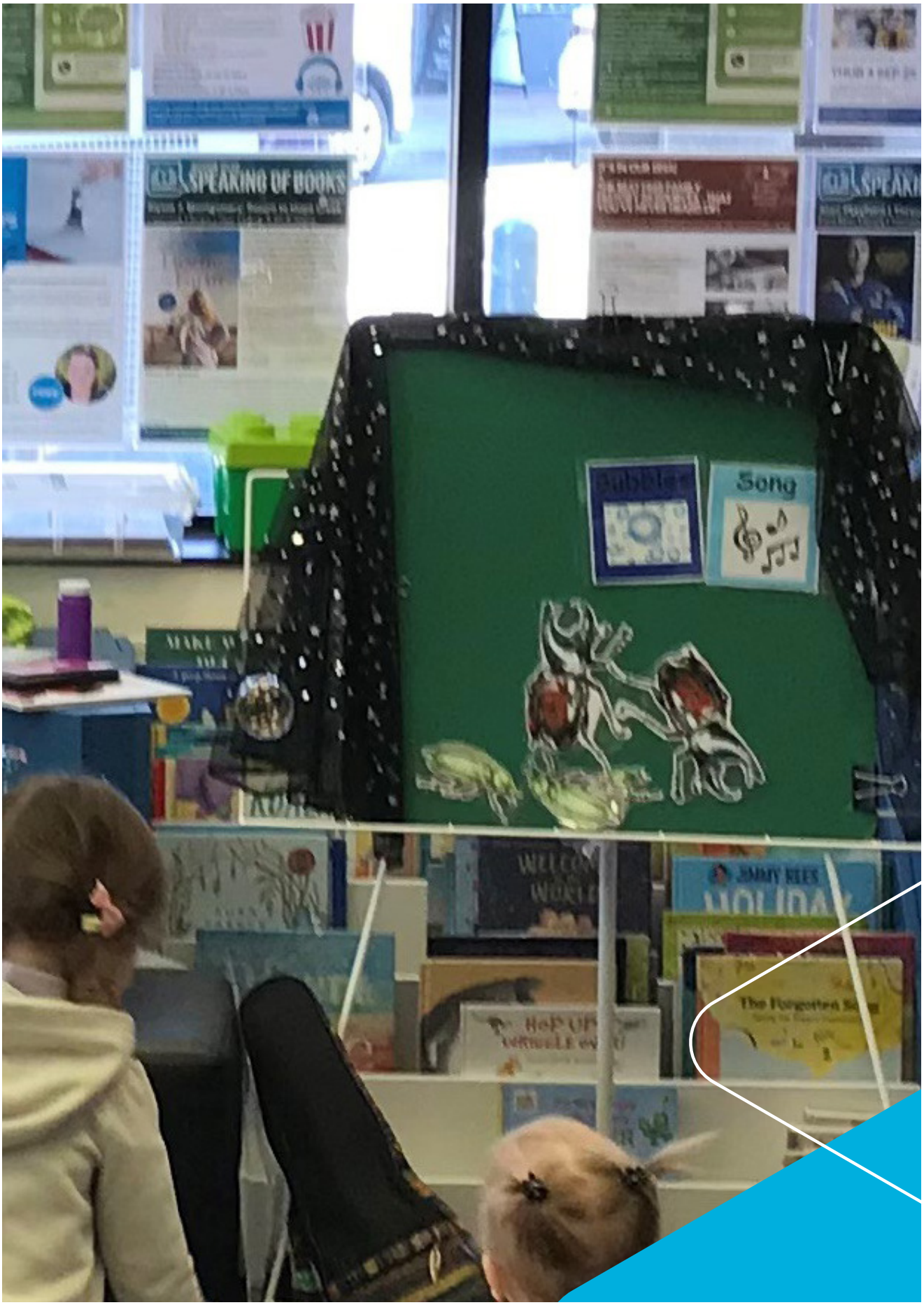
Today, the leading employment sectors include accommodation and food services, retail, health care and social assistance, education, and manufacturing. The Cessnock LGA is experiencing significant population growth, with an estimated population of 69,352 as of June 2024, an increase of 2.62% from the previous year. Projections suggest the population could reach 96,784 people by 2036, with rapid growth in urban corridors between Cessnock, Kurri Kurri, and Maitland, and from Branxton through to Rutherford.

Infrastructure such as hospitals, TAFE campuses, childcare centres, aged care, and community services are already in place, though ongoing investment will be needed to meet the demands of a growing population. The area is also well-connected, with proximity to the University of Newcastle, Port of Newcastle, and Newcastle Airport, supporting both regional accessibility and economic opportunity.

The towns and villages are characterised by open green spaces, sporting facilities, and strong community identity. As the LGA continues to evolve, its unique combination of heritage, environment, and community spirit positions it well for sustainable growth.



OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION


SPEAKING OF BOOKS
Song

Our Strategic Direction

The process

This report was developed in collaboration with Cessnock City Library staff, Cessnock City Council, and the local community. It reflects the region's unique characteristics, identifies growth opportunities, and draws on adaptable best practice models.

Key research activities included analysis of library usage data, demographic reviews using national datasets, alignment with strategic plans, benchmarking with similar services, and consideration of national and global library trends.

Site visits in December 2024 and March 2025 involved staff workshops, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and community engagement at both Cessnock and Kurri Kurri branches.

A community survey conducted in early 2025 gathered 387 responses from library users and non-users, with results informing the strategic direction. Additional insights were drawn from the library's ongoing community feedback mechanisms.





Our vision

Our vision

Vibrant, inclusive spaces where people connect, create, and grow.

Our purpose

To empower our community through welcoming spaces that provide access to knowledge, technology, culture, and shared stories—supporting lifelong learning, creativity, and connection.

Our

- **Integrity:** We are open, honest, and transparent. We build trust.
- **Respect:** We treat people fairly and consistently. We respect others' views, ideas, and opinions.
- **Teamwork:** We work as one to get the job done. We work together with our community.
- **Accountability:** We are committed to safety in all we do. We take ownership of our decisions and actions. We are accountable to our community.
- **Excellence:** We strive to do it once and do it right. We take pride in our work and strive for efficiency and innovation.


THE FIVE
PILLARS



The five pillars

In collaboration with the Cessnock City Library team, Five Pillars were identified to guide the development of this plan:

Spaces

Library Spaces That are Inviting, Engaging, and Accessible

People

Creating an Inclusive and Vibrant Library Community

Collections

Collections That Reflect Diversity, Interest, and Community Needs

Connections

Technology That Empowers Access, Skills, and Participation

Programs

Programs That Inspire Learning, Creativity, and Connection

These Pillars are drawn from the *Framework for Australian Public Libraries*, which identifies essential elements for the effective and efficient operation of public libraries.



Pillar 1 - Spaces

Library spaces that are inviting, engaging, and accessible

WE SHAPE AND MAINTAIN WELCOMING ENVIRONMENTS THAT ARE SAFE, INCLUSIVE, AND FLEXIBLE FOR ALL USERS	
Strategies	**Actions**
Create vibrant, welcoming library spaces that are responsive to the diverse and evolving needs of our community, ensuring they remain engaging, inclusive, and adaptable to emerging trends and expectations.	• Work in collaboration with Cessnock City Council to align library space development with broader community planning and growth strategies; • Seek funding opportunities through state and federal grants, philanthropic sources, and strategic partnerships to support upgrades and new infrastructure projects.
Create culturally welcoming and trusted spaces in libraries that honour and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and their stories.	• Establish a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples presence in our libraries through signage that acknowledges the Wonnarua, Awabakal, and Darkinjung peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land.
Develop an innovative, user-friendly virtual branch that ensures round-the-clock access to library services and resources.	• Ensure the library's website remains dynamic, informative, and compliant with the Living Learning Libraries guidelines.
Investigate, evaluate and implement innovative service delivery models to enhance access and responsiveness.	• Review library opening hours to align with community needs and lifestyle: Identify, trial, and evaluate opportunities to implement alternative service delivery models in emerging communities, community centres, and easily accessible locations focusing on funding opportunities and collaborative partnerships to support implementation.

Performance measures

- Library visits per capita;
- Number of visible library spaces acknowledging and connecting with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, their culture and history;
- Web visits per capita;
- Report on alternative service models.

Pillar 2 - People

Creating an inclusive and vibrant library community

WE FOSTER BELONGING, ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION, AND CELEBRATE THE DIVERSE VOICES WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY	
Strategies	**Actions**
Strengthen membership and participation	• Convert casual library users into registered members through targeted promotion and streamlined sign-up processes; • Attract the commuter community by promoting eResources and exploring alternative service delivery models such as mobile services and 24/7 lockers; • Participate in NSWPLA and APLA campaigns and initiatives aimed at growing public library membership.
Align staffing with service needs	• Increase staffing levels in line with population growth and service demand, as funding allows; • Strengthen staff capabilities and adaptability through targeted professional development, ensuring readiness to deliver both current and emerging library services.
Explore the use of volunteers to deliver targeted programs and activities	• Recruit and train volunteers to support the delivery of targeted programs, including the enrichment of local and family history collections.
Strengthen and expand strategic partnerships using the FAMOUS Principles	• Conduct an audit of existing partnerships to assess their effectiveness and alignment with library goals; • Develop and implement a formal partnership policy to guide future collaboration and ensure strategic value.

Performance measures

- Staffing levels meet Living Learning Libraries Guidelines;
- Membership per capita;
- User satisfaction identified through regular surveys;
- Library visits per capita;
- Recruitment of a volunteer cohort who add value to and advocate for the Library;
- Partnerships meet FAMOUS Principles.

Pillar 3 - Collections

Collections that reflect diversity, interest, and community needs

WE CURATE COLLECTIONS THAT ARE CURRENT, REPRESENTATIVE, AND RESPONSIVE TO LOCAL NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS	
Strategies	**Actions**
Deliver collections that are relevant, inclusive, and responsive to community needs.	• Regularly review and update the collection based on usage data, community feedback, statewide health checks and emerging interests; • Investigate regional consortia and fee-for-service partnerships with other library services to enhance access to a broader range of collections, with a focus on expanding digital content.
Increase understanding and appreciation of the cultures, histories, and achievements of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	• Build a dedicated collection featuring the stories, language, and history of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; • Partner with local Elders and organisations to guide culturally appropriate collection development; • Preserve and share the heritage of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through oral histories and community-led projects; • Ensure collection policies support respectful and inclusive representation of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
Capture and share the region's stories and heritage through curated collections and original content.	• Explore opportunities to make the Library's Local History collections easily discoverable in the online environment; • Build on unique local collections to contribute to cultural tourism.
Performance measures	

- Loans per capita;
- Age of collections meets Living Learning Libraries Guidelines;
- Local and Family History visitation and enquiry rates;
- Increase in locally created and digitised content.

Pillar 4 - Connections

Technology that empowers access, skills, and participation

WE PROVIDE UP-TO-DATE TOOLS AND TRAINING TO HELP THE COMMUNITY NAVIGATE AND THRIVE IN A DIGITAL WORLD	
Strategies	**Actions**
Provide access and support to the community in current and emerging technology which addresses the digital divide.	• Evaluate and build on current digital literacy and inclusion programs; • Explore intergenerational 'tech -savvy initiatives; • Build skills in e-safety, critical thinking skills and responsible use of technology for library staff and the community.
Performance measures	
• Usage numbers; • Enrolment numbers; • Participation surveys.	



Tech Help at Cessnock Library. Photo: Cessnock City Council

Pillar 5 - Programs

Programs that inspire learning, creativity, and connection

WE DELIVER MEANINGFUL PROGRAMS THAT REFLECT COMMUNITY INTERESTS, PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING, AND SPARK CREATIVITY	
Strategies	**Actions**
Foster a love of reading, a culture of learning and an enthusiasm for creativity and heritage.	• Position reading and literacy as core program areas, with tailored initiatives for all age groups; • Curate inclusive programs and activities adaptable for off-site delivery, extending the library's reach into the community; • Develop 'maker' environments within both libraries to encourage hands-on creativity, exploration, and skill-building.
Equip the community with the skills to maximise our resources.	• Enhance the value of library collections by offering seminars, workshops, and training that build confidence and skills in using specific resources—such as online databases, eResources, and local and family history collections.
Explore and develop collaborative opportunities for service and program delivery.	• Develop programs in partnership with cultural and heritage organisations to support and promote cultural tourism; • Collaborate with community groups, schools, and service providers to engage hard-to-reach populations, such as youth and marginalised communities; • Work with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to co-design culturally respectful programs and events.

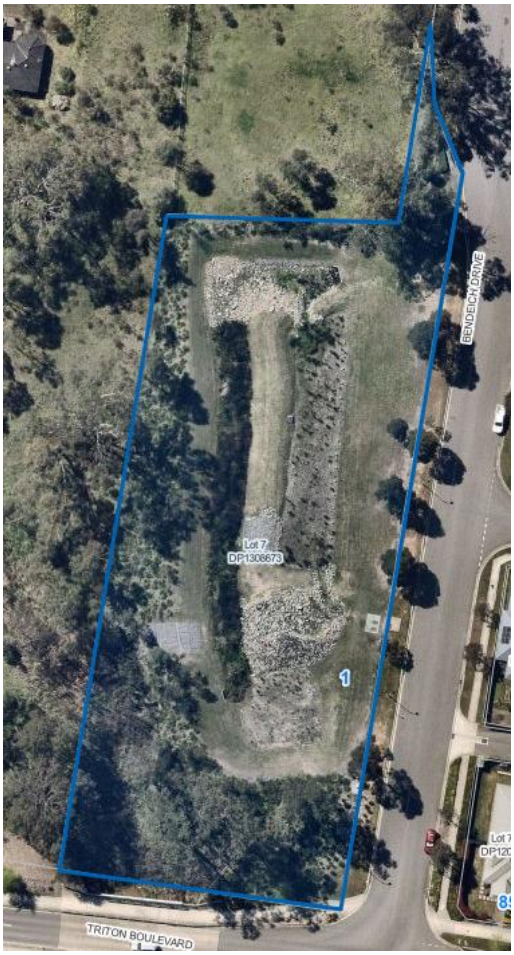
Performance measures

- Number of participants;
- Satisfaction with library programs and activities;
- Engagement with the Library's social media presence.

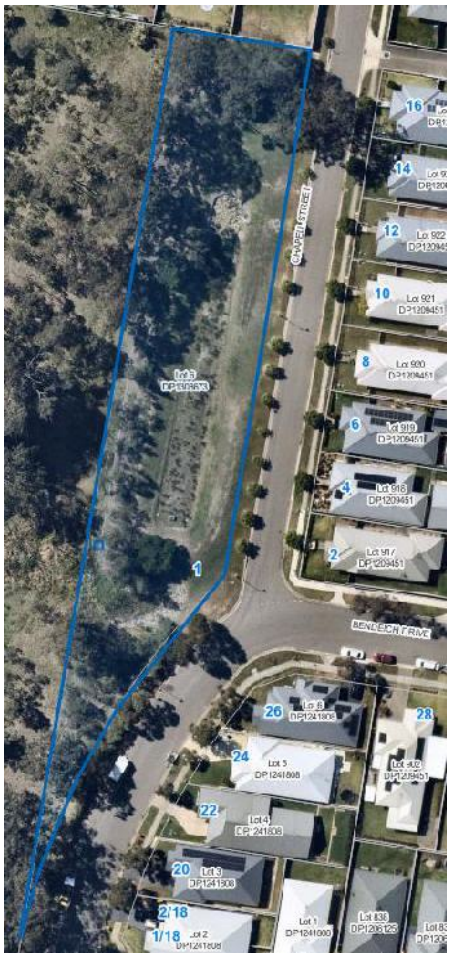
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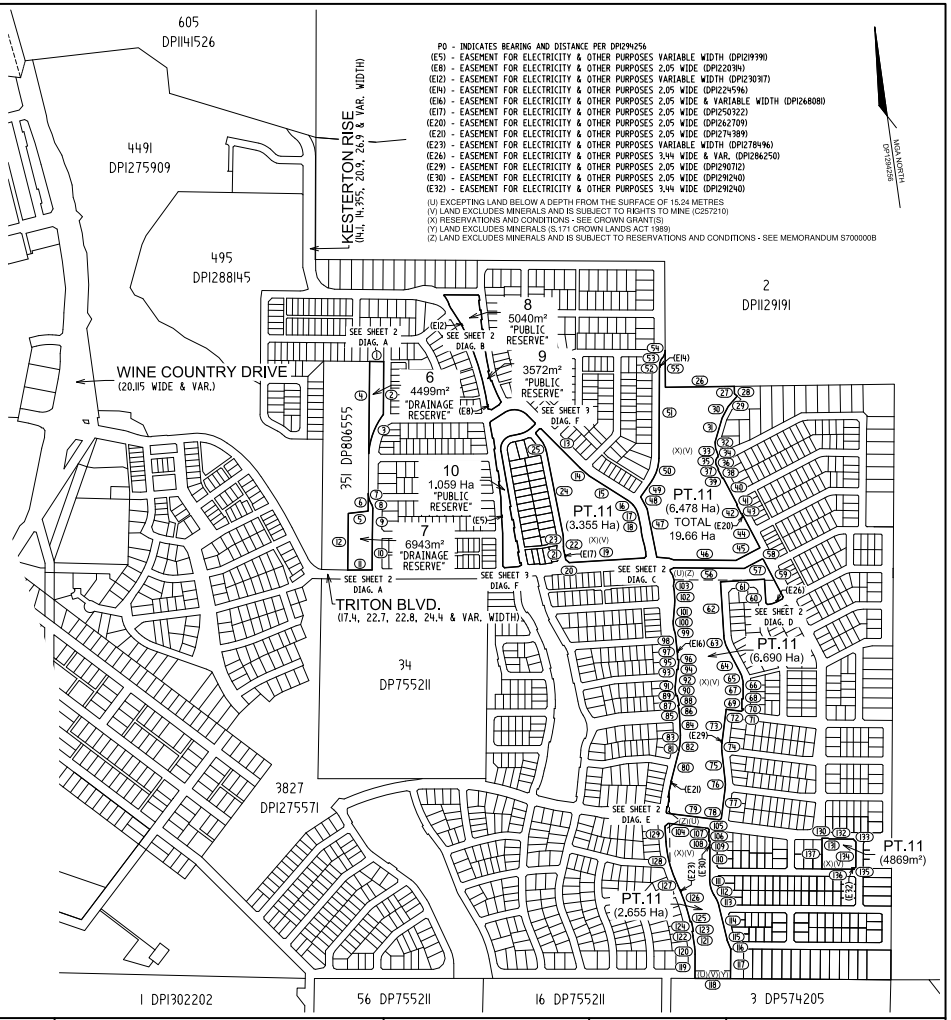


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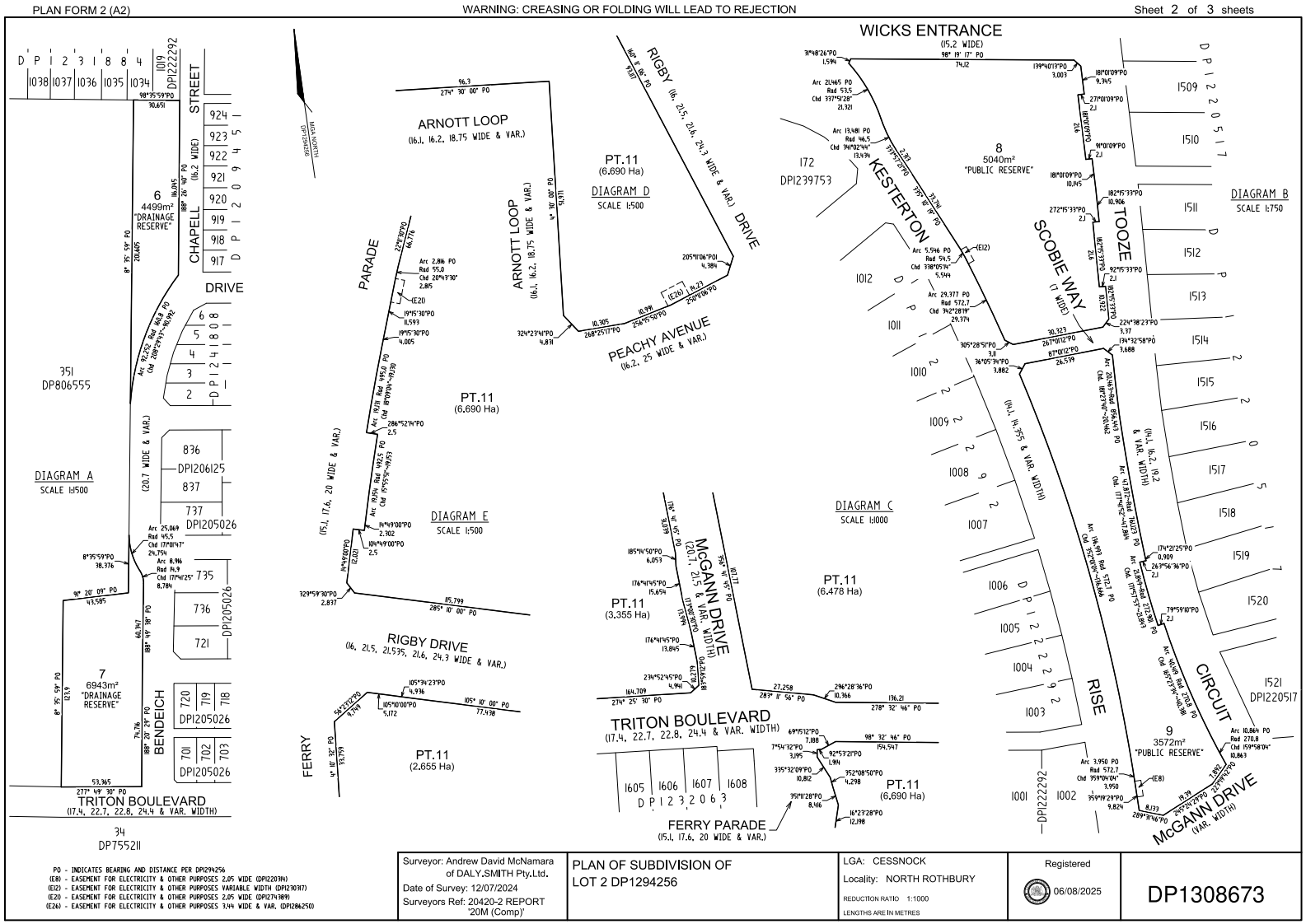
PLAN FORM 2 (A2) WARNING: CREASING OR FOLDING WILL LEAD TO REJECTION Sheet 1 of 3 sheets

PO Short Lines & Arcs					PO Short Lines & Arcs					PO Short Lines & Arcs				
No.	Bearing	Distance	Arc	Radius	No.	Bearing	Distance	Arc	Radius	No.	Bearing	Distance	Arc	Radius
1	98° 35' 59"	30.651			51	8° 19' 17"	199.265			101	12° 44' 22"	33.524		
2	188° 26' 40"	116.095			52	12° 43' 02"	5.960			102	4° 46' 43"	43.073	43.212	155.50
3	208° 29' 43"	90.992	92.252	160.757	53	30° 40' 38"	15.418	15.673	25.00	103	16° 23' 28"	12.198		
4	8° 35' 59"	201.605			54	28° 08' 51"	17.502	17.881	25.00	104	105° 10' 00"	77.438		
5	91° 20' 09"	43.585			55	187° 39' 27"	80.498			105	144° 27' 44"	3.539		
6	8° 35' 59"	38.376			56	98° 32' 46"	154.547			106	191° 04' 00"	5.102		
7	171° 01' 47"	24.754	25.069	45.50	57	70° 11' 06"	44.581			107	190° 10' 47"	4.226	4.227	68.35
8	171° 41' 25"	8.784	8.916	14.90	58	115° 11' 06"	2.097			108	188° 24' 30"	15.914		
9	188° 49' 38"	60.347			59	160° 11' 06"	93.117			109	98° 24' 30"	2.500		
10	188° 20' 29"	74.716			60	4° 30' 00"	51.971			110	188° 24' 30"	83.937		
11	277° 49' 30"	53.365			61	274° 30' 00"	96.300			111	172° 43' 00"	35.430	35.877	65.50
12	8° 35' 59"	123.900			62	184° 30' 00"	118.445			112	157° 01' 30"	8.314		
13	142° 59' 46"	122.032			63	172° 20' 33"	27.588	27.797	65.50	113	165° 45' 22"	16.546	16.610	54.50
14	138° 53' 41"	26.295			64	160° 11' 06"	61.182			114	174° 29' 15"	78.697		
15	130° 22' 49"	100.235			65	174° 15' 48"	26.514	26.783	54.50	115	170° 04' 07"	3.313	3.316	21.50
16	138° 36' 16"	14.514	14.641	51.00	66	188° 20' 30"	31.557			116	165° 38' 59"	17.278		
17	166° 45' 44"	26.285	26.585	51.00	67	278° 20' 30"	2.650			117	188° 24' 30"	65.000		
18	176° 41' 45"	31.039			68	188° 20' 30"	21.684			118	278° 24' 34"	77.694		
19	274° 25' 30"	144.709			69	98° 20' 30"	2.650			119	8° 24' 34"	52.951		
20	318° 57' 45"	10.269			70	188° 20' 30"	2.270			120	3° 55' 30"	16.416	16.433	105.00
21	356° 41' 45"	19.641			71	236° 45' 15"	4.646			121	359° 26' 29"	24.545		
22	1° 41' 45"	9.221	9.233	52.90	72	285° 10' 00"	33.616			122	358° 46' 23"	9.451	9.451	405.00
23	6° 41' 45"	23.590			73	195° 10' 00"	75.671			123	87° 53' 32"	2.500		
24	356° 41' 45"	188.420			74	188° 26' 15"	15.350	15.385	65.50	124	356° 34' 49"	21.666	21.669	407.50
25	342° 52' 44"	26.509	26.768	55.50	75	181° 42' 30"	68.306			125	265° 16' 03"	2.500		
26	97° 12' 07"	150.809			76	188° 26' 15"	12.772	12.802	54.50	126	349° 41' 55"	75.615	75.725	405.00
27	187° 12' 07"	15.904			77	195° 10' 00"	68.370			127	344° 20' 32"	23.424		
28	138° 42' 22"	8.109			78	240° 10' 00"	4.950			128	354° 15' 32"	84.385	84.808	245.00
29	228° 42' 22"	30.252			79	285° 10' 00"	115.799			129	4° 10' 32"	33.759		
30	215° 46' 25"	28.421			80	22° 11' 30"	66.776			130	98° 24' 30"	13.133		
31	204° 26' 42"	55.124			81	18° 05' 15"	9.304	9.312	65.00	131	128° 24' 30"	3.000		
32	182° 22' 21"	13.787			82	134° 59' 00"	13.539			132	98° 24' 30"	52.549		
33	167° 02' 07"	14.972			83	9° 38' 00"	9.860	9.870	65.00	133	143° 06' 46"	8.213		
34	191° 06' 28"	4.580			84	5° 17' 00"	48.832			134	188° 20' 30"	56.149		
35	198° 18' 51"	18.400	19.838	14.90	85	0° 51' 00"	10.049	10.059	65.00	135	233° 22' 30"	5.306		
36	160° 11' 06"	10.420			86	356° 25' 00"	7.887			136	278° 24' 30"	70.932		
37	250° 11' 06"	1.600			87	86° 25' 00"	2.500			137	8° 24' 30"	67.200		
38	160° 11' 06"	21.600			88	356° 25' 00"	21.600							
39	70° 11' 06"	1.600			89	266° 25' 00"	2.500							
40	160° 11' 06"	65.900			90	356° 25' 00"	4.689							
41	250° 11' 06"	1.600			91	4° 55' 10"	16.264	16.324	55.00					
42	160° 11' 06"	21.600			92	13° 25' 20"	36.737							
43	70° 11' 06"	1.600			93	103° 25' 20"	2.500							
44	160° 11' 06"	84.730			94	13° 25' 20"	9.112							
45	250° 11' 06"	59.578			95	11° 02' 51"	13.093	13.097	158.00					
46	278° 32' 46"	136.210			96	278° 40' 23"	2.500							
47	356° 41' 45"	107.770			97	5° 22' 12"	17.918	17.928	155.50					
48	339° 53' 55"	30.152			98	2° 04' 02"	92.354							
49	43° 08' 11"	41.950			99	356° 01' 20"	12.953	12.977	61.50					
50	25° 43' 44"	52.354	53.168	87.50	100	1° 21' 30"	21.510	21.652	54.50					



Surveyor: Andrew David McNamara of DALY.SMITH Pty.Ltd. Date of Survey: 12/07/2024 Surveyors Ref: 20420-2 REPORT '20M (Comp)'	PLAN OF SUBDIVISION OF LOT 2 DP1294256	LGA: CESSNOCK Locality: NORTH ROTHBURY REDUCTION RATIO 1:6000 LENGTHS ARE IN METRES	Registered 06/08/2025	DP1308673

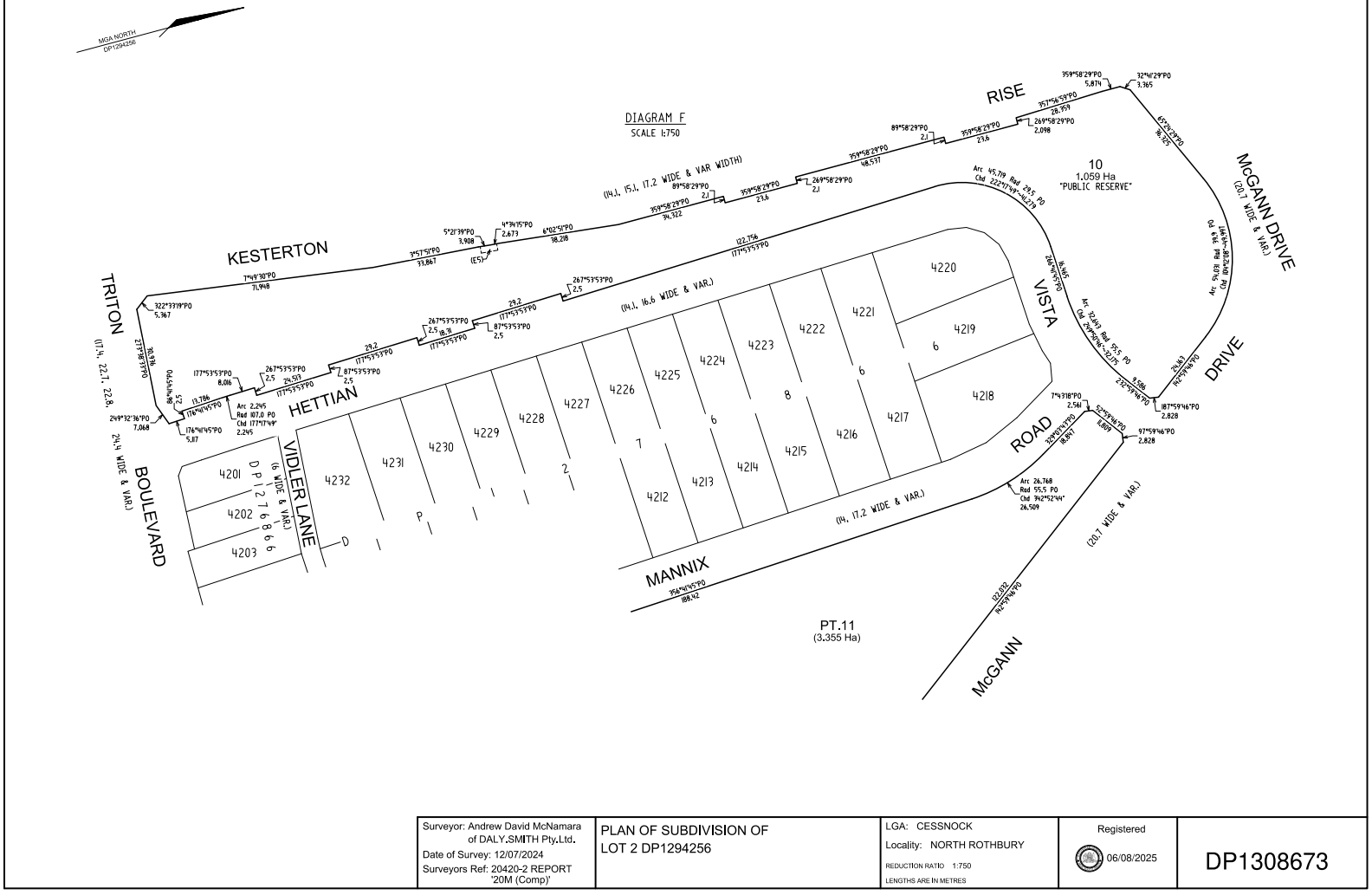
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PLAN FORM 2 (A2) WARNING: CREASING OR FOLDING WILL LEAD TO REJECTION Sheet 3 of 3 sheets

PO - INDICATES BEARING AND DISTANCE PER DP1294256
(ES) - EASEMENT FOR ELECTRICITY & OTHER PURPOSES VARIABLE WIDTH (DP1219390



Surveyor: Andrew David McNamara of DALY.SMITH Pty.Ltd. Date of Survey: 12/07/2024 Surveyors Ref: 20420-2 REPORT '20M (Comp)'	PLAN OF SUBDIVISION OF LOT 2 DP1294256	LGA: CESSNOCK Locality: NORTH ROTHBURY REDUCTION RATIO 1:750 LENGTHS ARE IN METRES	Registered 06/08/2025	DP1308673

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DEPOSITED PLAN ADMINISTRATION SHEET Sheet 1 of 4 sheet(s)

Office Use Only

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Title System: TORRENS

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DP1308673

PLAN OF SUBDIVISION OF LOT 2 DP1294256

LGA: **CESSNOCK**

Locality: **NORTH ROTHBURY**

Parish: **BRANXTON**

County: **NORTHUMBERLAND**

Survey Certificate

I, **ANDREW DAVID McNAMARA**

of **Daly.Smith** PTY LTD PO BOX 204 MORISSET 2264

a surveyor registered under the *Surveying and Spatial Information Act 2002*, certify that:

*(a) ~~The land shown in the plan was surveyed in accordance with the *Surveying and Spatial Information Regulation 2017*, is accurate and the survey was completed on .....~~, or

*~~(b) The part of the land shown in the plan (*being/*excluding **.....~~

~~.....)~~

~~was surveyed in accordance with the *Surveying and Spatial Information Regulation 2017*, the part surveyed is accurate and the survey was completed on, ... the part not surveyed was compiled in accordance with that Regulation, or~~

*(c) The land shown in this plan was compiled in accordance with the *Surveying and Spatial Information Regulation 2017*.

Datum Line: X-Y

Type: *Urban/*~~Rural~~

The terrain is *Level-Undulating / *~~Steep-Mountainous~~.

Signature: ..... Dated: 2/8/2024

Surveyor Identification No: **4101**
Surveyor registered under
the *Surveying and Spatial Information Act 2002*

*Strike out inappropriate words.

**Specify the land actually surveyed or specify any land shown in the plan that is not the subject of the survey.

Crown Lands NSW/Western Lands Office Approval

I, ... (Authorised Officer) in approving this plan certify that all necessary approvals in regard to the allocation of the land shown herein have been given.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

File Number: .....

Office:

Subdivision Certificate

I, Joseph Myson

~~*Authorised Person/*General Manager~~/*Registered Certifier, certify that the provisions of s.6.15 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* have been satisfied in relation to the proposed subdivision, new road or reserve set out herein.

Signature: .....

Registration number: BDC04536

Consent Authority: Minister for Planning & INF

Date of endorsement: 28/07/2025

Subdivision Certificate number: 20130161SU78

File number: MP 10_0137

*Strike through if inapplicable.

Plans used in the preparation of ~~survey~~/compilation.

DP1219391	DP1262709	DP1294256
DP1220314	DP1274389	
DP1224596	DP1278496	
DP1230317	DP1286250	
DP1250322	DP1290712	
DP1268081	DP1291240	

Statements of intention to dedicate public roads create public reserves and drainage reserves, acquire/resume land.

IT IS INTENDED TO DEDICATE LOTS 6-7 AS DRAINAGE RESERVE & LOTS 8-10 AS PUBLIC RESERVE

Surveyor's Reference: **20420-2 REPORT** '20M (Comp)'

Signatures, Seals and Section 88B Statements should appear on PLAN FORM 6A

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Office Use Only

Registered: 06/08/2025

Office Use Only

DP1308673

PLAN OF SUBDIVISION OF LOT 2 DP1294256

Subdivision Certificate number: 2013.0161.5.078

Date of Endorsement: 28/07/2025

This sheet is for the provision of the following information as required:

- A schedule of lots and addresses - See 60(c) *SSI Regulation 2017*
- Statements of intention to create and release affecting interests in accordance with section 88B *Conveyancing Act 1919*
- Signatures and seals- see 195D *Conveyancing Act 1919*
- Any information which cannot fit in the appropriate panel of sheet 1 of the administration sheets.

Lot	Street Number	Street name	Street type	Locality
6	1	Chapell	Street	North Rothbury
7	1	Bendeich	Drive	North Rothbury
8	2	Wicks	Entrance	North Rothbury
9	56	McGann	Drive	North Rothbury
10	121	Triton	Boulevard	North Rothbury
11	N/A	Triton	Boulevard	North Rothbury

EXECUTED for and on behalf of **HUNTLEE PTY LTD** (ACN 143 744 745) by Stephen Thompson its duly appointed Attorney under Power of Attorney No 921 Book 4814:

.....

Signature of Stephen Thompson

Witnessed

Signed in my presence by Stephen Thompson who is personally known to me.

..... (Signature of witness)

ANDREW DAVID MCNAMARA (Name of witness)

6 DOYALSON STREET (Address of witness)

MORISSET NSW 2264

If space is insufficient use additional annexure sheet

Surveyor's Reference: **20420-2 REPORT**
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PLAN FORM 6A (2019) **DEPOSITED PLAN ADMINISTRATION SHEET** Sheet 3 of 4 sheet(s)

Office Use Only

Registered: 06/08/2025

Office Use Only

DP1308673

PLAN OF SUBDIVISION OF LOT 2 DP1294256

This sheet is for the provision of the following information as required:

- A schedule of lots and addresses - See 60(c) *SSI Regulation 2017*
- Statements of intention to create and release affecting interests in accordance with section 88B *Conveyancing Act 1919*
- Signatures and seals- see 195D *Conveyancing Act 1919*
- Any information which cannot fit in the appropriate panel of sheet 1 of the administration sheets.

Subdivision Certificate number: 20130161578

Date of Endorsement: 28/07/2025

EXECUTED for and on behalf of **COMMONWEALTH BANK OF AUSTRALIA** (ACN 123 123 124) by its attorney under power of attorney dated **1 October 2012**, registered number **Book 4639 No 422** in the presence of;

Signature of witness

Signature of attorney

Matthew Angus Hammond

Full name of witness [please print]

Matthew Cameron Wilson

Full name of attorney [please print]

Level 14, Australia Square, 264-278 George Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Address of witness [please print]

Partner, HWL Ebsworth Lawyers

Position of attorney

The witness confirms that this document was signed in the witness presence or signed in counterpart and witnessed over audio visual link in accordance with section 14G of the Electronic Transactions Act 2000 (NSW).

If space is insufficient use additional annexure sheet

Surveyor's Reference: **20420-2 REPORT**
'20M (Comp)'

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PLAN FORM 6A (2019) **DEPOSITED PLAN ADMINISTRATION SHEET** Sheet 4 of 4 sheet(s)

Registered: 06/08/2025 Office Use Only

Office Use Only

DP1308673

PLAN OF SUBDIVISION OF LOT 2 DP1294256

This sheet is for the provision of the following information as required:

- A schedule of lots and addresses - See 60(c) *SSI Regulation 2017*
- Statements of intention to create and release affecting interests in accordance with section 88B *Conveyancing Act 1919*
- Signatures and seals- see 195D *Conveyancing Act 1919*
- Any information which cannot fit in the appropriate panel of sheet 1 of the administration sheets.

Subdivision Certificate number: 20130161578

Date of Endorsement: 28/07/2025

EXECUTED for and on behalf of **CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL** by its authorised delegate pursuant to *s.377 Local Government Act 1993* as acceptance of new roads, laneways and/or public or drainage reserves in the plan in the presence of;

(Signature) _____

Full Name: Hamish Mackinnon (print)

Authorised Delegate

Electronic signature of me, Hamish Mackinnon [Name]

affixed by me, or at my direction, on 29 August 2024 [Date]

Witnessed

I certify that I am an eligible witness and that the delegate signed in my presence.

_____ (Signature of witness)

Janelle Foster (Name of witness)

62-78 Vincent Street (Address of witness)

CESSNOCK NSW 2325

Electronic signature of me, Janelle Foster [Name]

affixed by me, or at my direction, on 29 August 2024 [Date]

If space is insufficient use additional annexure sheet

Surveyor's Reference: **20420-2 REPORT** '20M (Comp)'

Code of Meeting Practice

Last Updated: **xx/xx/xxxx** Revision: **15**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. We acknowledge these Aboriginal peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices and operations are located, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

COUNCIL VALUES
Integrity, Respect, Teamwork, Accountability, and Excellence.

DISCLAIMER
The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of the adoption date and may not be accurate, current or complete at the time of viewing. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this publication, Cessnock City Council expressly disclaims any liability to any person in respect of anything done or not done as a result of the contents of this publication or the data provided therein. Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice when making decisions related to material contained in this publication.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Code of Meeting Practice (Code) is prescribed under section 360 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) (Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (NSW) (Regulation) and incorporates the mandatory provisions of the prescribed Model Code of Meeting Practice issued by the Office of Local Government, and supplementary provisions that are not inconsistent with the Model Meeting Code.

1.2 This Code includes relevant references to sections of the Act and Regulations as well as supplementary provisions adopted by Council.

1.3 This Code applies to all meetings of Council and committees of Council of which all the members are Councillors (committees of Council).

1.4 All Councillors, staff and community members participating in meetings of Council and committees of Council must act in accordance with this Code.

1.5 Council committees whose members include persons other than Councillors may adopt their own rules for meetings unless Council determines otherwise.

2 MEETING PRINCIPLES

2.1 Council and committee meetings should be:

Transparent	Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.
Informed	Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.
Inclusive	Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.
Principled	Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.
Trusted	The community has confidence that Councillors and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.
~~Respectful~~	~~Councillors, staff and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.~~
Effective	Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.
Orderly	Councillors, staff and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

Note: The Office of Local Government has issued a guideline on free speech in local government in NSW. The Guideline provides practical guidance to councils on what free speech means in the context of NSW local government, including in relation to Council meetings. The Guidelines have been issued under section 23A of the Act, meaning Council must consider them when exercising their functions at meetings.

3 BEFORE THE MEETING

Timing of ordinary Council meetings

3.1 Ordinary meetings of the Council will be held in the Council Chambers on the third Wednesday of each month commencing at 6.30pm, with the exception that the December meeting is held on the second Wednesday and there is no meeting held in January.

Note: Under section 365 of the Act, Councils are required to meet at least ten (10) times each year, each time in a different month unless the Minister for Local Government has approved a reduction in the number of times that a Council is required to meet each year under section 365A.

Rescheduling of meetings

3.A Adjustments to the Council meeting schedule may be made without a resolution of Council in the following circumstances:

a) Where a scheduled meeting of Council falls on a public holiday, the meeting will be held on the day immediately after the public holiday. However, Council may alter the location, time and date of a meeting of Council by resolution at a prior ordinary meeting.

b) Where four (4) or more Councillors indicate their intention to attend any seminar or the like which clashes with a Council or Committee meeting, the date of that meeting will be altered by the Mayor to ensure the availability of the maximum number of Councillors possible.

Extraordinary meetings

3.2 If the Mayor receives a request in writing, signed by at least two (2) Councillors, the Mayor must call an extraordinary meeting of the Council to be held as soon as practicable, but in any event, no more than fourteen (14) days after receipt of the request. The Mayor can be one of the two Councillors requesting the meeting.

Clause 3.2 reflects section 366 of the Act.

3.3 The Mayor may call an extraordinary meeting without the need to obtain the signature of two (2) Councillors.

Notice to the public of Council meetings

3.4 The Council must give notice to the public of the time, date and place of each of its meetings, including extraordinary meetings, and of each meeting of committees of the Council.

Clause 3.4 reflects section 9(1) of the Act.

3.5 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of a meeting of the Council and of a committee of Council is to be published before the meeting takes place. The notice must be published on the Council's website, and in such other manner that the Council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

3.6 For the purposes of clause 3.4, notice of more than one (1) meeting may be given in the same notice.

Notice to Councillors of ordinary Council meetings

3.7 The General Manager must send to each Councillor, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the Council, a notice specifying the time, date and place at which the meeting is to be held, and the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

Clause 3.7 reflects section 367(1) of the Act.

3.8 The notice and the agenda for, and the business papers relating to, the meeting may be given to Councillors in electronic form, but only if all Councillors have facilities to access the notice, agenda and business papers in that form.

Clause 3.9 reflects section 367(3) of the Act.

3.B Notwithstanding the electronic format, paper copies of reports shall still be provided to Councillors on request.

Notice to Councillors of extraordinary meetings

3.9 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given to Councillors of an extraordinary meeting of the Council in cases of emergency.

Clause 3.9 reflects section 367(2) of the Act.

Giving notice of business to be considered at Council meetings

3.10 A Councillor may give notice of any business they wish to be considered by the Council at its next ordinary meeting by way of a notice of motion. To be included on the agenda of the meeting, the notice of motion must be in writing and must be submitted by 10:00am on the Monday of the week before the meeting is to be held.

3.11 A Councillor may, in writing to the General Manager, request the withdrawal of a notice of motion submitted by them prior to its inclusion in the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered.

3.C If the General Manager considers that a notice of motion submitted by a Councillor for consideration at an ordinary meeting of the Council has legal, strategic, financial or policy implications which should be taken into consideration by the meeting, the General Manager may prepare a report in relation to the notice of motion for inclusion with the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the Council.

3.D A notice of motion for the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the Council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the notice of motion. If the notice of motion does not identify a funding source, the General Manager must either:

a) prepare a report on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted for inclusion in the business papers for the meeting at which the notice of motion is to be considered by the Council, or

b) by written notice sent to all Councillors with the business papers for the meeting for which the notice of motion has been submitted, defer consideration of the matter by the Council to such a date specified in the notice, pending the preparation of such a report.

Questions with notice

3.12 A Councillor may, by way of a notice submitted under clause 3.10, ask a question for response by the General Manager about the performance or operations of the Council.

3.13 A Councillor is not permitted to ask a question with notice under clause 3.12 that would constitute an act of disorder. ~~comprises a complaint against the General Manager or a member of staff of the Council, or a question that implies wrongdoing by the General Manager or a member of staff of the Council.~~

3.14 The General Manager or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted under clause 3.12 by way of a report included in the business papers for the relevant meeting of the Council ~~or orally at the meeting~~.

Agenda and business papers for ordinary meetings

3.15 The General Manager must cause the agenda for a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council to be prepared as soon as practicable before the meeting.

3.16 The General Manager must ensure that the agenda for an ordinary meeting of the Council states:

a) all matters to be dealt with arising out of the proceedings of previous meetings of the Council, and

b) if the Mayor is the Chairperson – any matter or topic that the Chairperson proposes, at the time when the agenda is prepared, to put to the meeting, and

c) all matters, including matters that are the subject of staff reports and reports of committees, to be considered at the meeting, and

d) any business of which due notice has been given under clause 3.10.

3.17 Nothing in clause 3.16 limits the powers of the Mayor to put a Mayoral minute to a meeting under

clause 9.7.

3.18 The General Manager must not include in the agenda for a meeting of the Council any business of which due notice has been given if, in the opinion of the General Manager, the business is, or the implementation of the business would be, unlawful. The General Manager must report, without giving details of the item of business, any such exclusion to the next meeting of the Council.

3.19 Where the agenda includes the receipt of information or discussion of other matters that, in the opinion of the General Manager, is likely to take place when the meeting is closed to the public, the General Manager must ensure that the agenda of the meeting:

a) identifies the relevant item of business and indicates that it is of such a nature (without disclosing details of the information to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public), and

b) states the grounds under section 10A(2) of the Act relevant to the item of business.

Clause 3.19 reflects section 9(2A) of the Act.

3.20 The General Manager must ensure that the details of any item of business which, in the opinion of the General Manager, is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, are included in a business paper provided to Councillors for the meeting concerned. Such details must not be included in the business papers made available to the public and must not be disclosed by a Councillor or by any other person to another person who is not authorised to have that information.

~~**Statement of Ethical Obligation**~~

~~**3.21** Business papers for all ordinary and extraordinary meetings of the Council and committees of the Council must contain a statement reminding Councillors of their oath or affirmation of office made under section 233A of the Act and their obligations under the Council's Code of Conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.~~

Availability of the agenda and business papers to the public

~~**3.22**~~**3.21** Copies of the agenda and the associated business papers, such as correspondence and reports for meetings of the Council and committees of Council, are to be published on the Council's website, and must be made available to the public for inspection, or for taking away by any person free of charge at the offices of the Council, at the relevant meeting and at such other venues determined by the Council.

Clause 3.21 reflects section 9(2) and (4) of the Act.

~~**3.23**~~**3.22** Clause 3.21 does not apply to the business papers for items of business that the General Manager has identified under clause 3.20 as being likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public.

Clause 3.22 reflects section 9(2A)(b) of the Act.

~~**3.24**~~**3.23** For the purposes of clause 3.21, copies of agendas and business papers must be published on the Council's website and made available to the public at a time that is as close as possible to the time they are available to Councillors.

Clause 3.23 reflects section 9(3) of the Act.

~~**3.25**~~**3.24** A copy of an agenda, or of an associated business paper made available under clause 3.21, may in addition be given or made available in electronic form unless the Council determines otherwise.

Clause 3.24 reflects section 9(5) of the Act.

Agenda and business papers for extraordinary meetings

3.25 The Council~~General Manager~~ must ensure that the agenda for an extraordinary meeting of the

Council deals only with the matters stated in the notice of the meeting.

3.26 Nothing in clause 3.25 limits the powers of the Mayor to put a Mayoral Minute to an Extraordinary Meeting without notice under clause 9.7.

3.27 Despite clause 3.25, business may be considered at an extraordinary meeting of the Council at which all Councillors are present, even though due notice of the business has not been given, if the Council resolves to deal with the business on the grounds that it is urgent and requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council. A resolution adopted under this clause must state the reasons for the urgency. ~~:~~

~~a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and~~

~~b) the business to be considered is ruled by the Chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council.~~

3.28 A motion moved under clause 3.27 can be moved without notice but only after the business notified in the agenda for the extraordinary meeting has been dealt with. Despite any other provision of this Code, only the mover of a motion moved under clause 3.27, and the Chairperson, if they are not the mover of the motion, can speak to the motion before it is put.

3.29 If all Councillors are not present at the Extraordinary Meeting, the Council may only deal with business at the Meeting that Councillors have not been given due notice of, where a resolution is adopted in accordance with clause 3.27 and the Chairperson also rules that the business is urgent and requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled Ordinary Meeting.

~~3.29~~**3.30** A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling of the Chairperson under clause 3.27 on whether a matter is of great urgency.

Prohibition of pre-meeting briefing sessions~~Agenda Review Meetings~~

~~**3.30** Briefing sessions must not be held to brief Councillors on business listed on the agenda for meetings of the Council or committees of Council. Prior to each ordinary meeting of the Council, the General Manager may arrange an Agenda Review Meeting to brief Councillors on business to be considered at the meeting. Agenda Review Meetings may also be held for extraordinary meetings of the Council and meetings of committees of the Council.~~

~~**3.31** Agenda Review Meetings are to be held in the absence of the public.~~

~~**3.32** Agenda Review Meetings may be held by audio-visual link.~~

~~**3.33** The Mayor or General Manager or a member of staff nominated by the Mayor or General Manager is to preside at Agenda Review Meetings.~~

~~**3.34** Councillors must not use Agenda Review Meetings to debate or make preliminary decisions on items of business they are being briefed on, and any debate and decision-making must be left to the formal Council or committee meeting at which the item of business is to be considered.~~

~~**3.35** Councillors (including the Mayor) must declare and manage as they become aware of it any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of an item at an Agenda Review Meeting in the same way that they are required to do so at a Council or committee meeting. The Council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made at Agenda Review Meetings and how the conflict of interest was managed by the Councillor who made the declaration.~~

3.31 ~~Councillors should reasonably inform themselves of any business to be considered at the meeting and if clarification is required this should be sought prior to the meeting.~~

Note: The prohibition on the holding of briefing sessions under clause 3.31 reflects the intent of Chapter 4, Part 1 of the Act which requires business of the Council to be conducted openly and transparently at a formal meeting of which due notice has been given and to which the public has

access. Pre-meeting briefing sessions are inconsistent with the principles of transparency, accountability, and public participation and have the potential to undermine confidence in the proper and lawful decision-making processes of the Council.

~~3.36~~3.32 Nothing in clause 3.31 prevents a Councillor from requesting information from the General Manager about a matter to be considered at a meeting, provided the information is also available to the public. Information requested under this clause must be provided in a way that does not involve any discussion of the information.

4 PUBLIC FORUMS~~ACCESS~~

4.1 The Council may hold a ~~will allow~~ public forum prior ~~access as part of~~to ~~each ordinary~~ meetings of the Council and committees of Council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public forums~~access~~ may also be held prior to ~~as part of extraordinary Council meetings and~~ meetings of other committees of the Council.

4.2 The Council may determine the rules under which public forums are to be conducted and when they are to be held.

4.24.3 T~~Public access may be held by audio visual link~~he provisions of this Code requiring the livestreaming of meetings also apply to public forums.

4.A To speak in a public forum~~access~~, a person must first make an application to the Council on the approved form. Applications to speak in a public ~~access~~ forum must be received by 12:00 noon on Tuesday immediately before the meeting at which the matter is to be considered, and must identify the item of business on the agenda of the Council meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.

4.B A person may apply to speak on no more than one item of business on the agenda of the Council meeting.

4.C Legal representatives acting on behalf of others are not to be permitted to speak in a public ~~access~~ forum unless they identify their status as a legal representative when applying to speak at the public ~~access~~forum.

4.D The General Manager or their delegate may refuse an application to speak in a public ~~access~~forum. The General Manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.

4.E No more than one speaker is permitted to speak 'for' or 'against' each item of business on the agenda for the Council meeting.

4.F If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the General Manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to address the Council on the item of business. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to address the Council, the General Manager or their delegate is to determine who will address Council at the public ~~access~~forum.

4.G If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak 'for' or 'against' any item of business, the General Manager or their delegate may, in consultation with the Mayor or the Mayor's nominated Chairperson, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the Council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business.

4.H Approved speakers in public forums~~access~~ are to register with the Council any written, visual or audio material to be presented in support of their address to the Council at the public ~~access~~forum, and to identify any equipment needs by 12:00 noon on Tuesday the week of the public ~~access~~forum. The General Manager or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented.

4.I The General Manager or their delegate is to determine the order of speakers at the public ~~access~~forum.

4.J Each speaker will be allowed 3 minutes to address the Council and may be granted up to two (2) one (1) minute extensions. This time is to be strictly enforced by the Chairperson.

4.K Speakers at public ~~access~~ forums must not digress from the item on the agenda of the Council meeting they have applied to address the Council on. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the Chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the Chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

4.L A Councillor (including the Chairperson) may, through the Chairperson, ask questions of a speaker following their address at a public ~~access~~forum. Questions put to a speaker must be direct, succinct and without argument.

4.M Speakers are under no obligation to answer a question put under clause 4.L. Answers by the speaker, to each question are to be brief and succinct.

4.N Speakers at public ~~access~~ forums cannot ask questions of the Council, Councillors or Council staff.

4.O The General Manager or their nominee may, with the concurrence of the Chairperson, address Council for up to two (2) minutes in response to an address of Council at a public ~~access~~ forum after the address and any subsequent questions and answers have been finalised.

4.P Where an address made at a public ~~access~~ forum raises matters that require further consideration by Council staff, the General Manager may recommend that Council defer consideration of the matter pending the preparation of a further report on the matters.

4.Q When addressing Council, speakers at public ~~access~~ forums must comply with this Code and all other relevant Council codes, policies and procedures. Speakers must refrain from engaging in disorderly conduct, publicly alleging breaches of Council's Code of Conduct or making other potentially defamatory statements.

4.R If the Chairperson considers that a speaker at a public ~~access~~ forum has engaged in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.Q, the Chairperson may request the person to refrain from the inappropriate behaviour and to withdraw and unreservedly apologise for any inappropriate comments. Where the speaker fails to comply with the Chairperson's request, the Chairperson may immediately require the person to stop speaking.

4.S Clause 4.R does not limit the ability of the Chairperson to deal with disorderly conduct by speakers at public forums access in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of this Code.

4.T Where a speaker engages in conduct of the type referred to in clause 4.Q, the General Manager or their delegate may refuse further applications from that person to speak at public ~~access~~ forums for such a period as the General Manager or their delegate considers appropriate.

4.U Councillors (including the Mayor) must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to any item of business that is the subject of an address in public ~~access~~forum, in the same way that they are required to do so at a Council or committee meeting. Council is to maintain a written record of all conflict of interest declarations made in public forum~~access~~ and how the conflict of interest was managed by the Councillor who made the declaration.

Note: Where a public ~~access~~ forum is held as part of a Council or committee meeting, it must be conducted in accordance with the other requirements of this Code relating to the conduct of Council and committee meetings.

5 COMING TOGETHER

Attendance by Councillors at meetings

5.1 All Councillors must make reasonable efforts to attend meetings of the Council and of committees

of the Council of which they are members.

Note: A Councillor may not attend a meeting as a Councillor (other than the first meeting of the Council after the Councillor is elected or a meeting at which the Councillor takes an oath or makes an affirmation of office) until they have taken an oath or made an affirmation of office in the form prescribed under section 233A of the Act.

5.2 The Council may determine standards of dress for Councillors when attending meetings.

~~5.2~~5.3 A Councillor cannot participate in a meeting of the Council or of a committee of the Council unless personally present at the meeting, unless permitted to attend the meeting by audio-visual link under this Code.

~~5.3~~5.4 Where a Councillor is unable to attend one or more ordinary meetings of the Council, the Councillor should submit an apology for the meetings they are unable to attend, state the reasons for their absence from the meetings and request that the Council grant them a leave of absence from those meetings. ~~This clause does not prevent a Councillor from making an apology if they are unable to attend a meeting. However, the acceptance of such an apology does not constitute the granting of a leave of absence for the purposes of this Code and the Act.~~

~~**5.4** A Councillor's request for leave of absence from Council meetings should, if practicable, identify (by date) the meetings from which the Councillor intends to be absent and the grounds upon which the leave of absence is being sought.~~

5.5 The Council must not act unreasonably when considering whether to grant a Councillor's request for a leave of absence.

~~5.5~~5.6 Where a Councillor makes an apology under clause 5.5, the Council must determine by resolution whether to grant the Councillor a leave of absence for the meeting for the purposes of section 234(1)(d) of the Act. If the Council resolves not to grant a leave of absence for the meeting, it must state the reasons for its decision in its resolution.

~~5.6~~5.7 A Councillor's civic office will become vacant if the Councillor is absent from three (3) consecutive ordinary meetings of the Council without prior leave of the Council, or leave granted by the Council at any of the meetings concerned, unless the holder is absent because they have been suspended from office under the Act, or because the Council has been suspended under the Act, or as a consequence of a compliance order under section 438HA.

Clause 5.7 reflects section 234(1) (d) of the Act.

~~A Councillor who intends to attend a meeting of the Council despite having been granted a leave of absence should, if practicable, give the General Manager at least two (2) days' notice of their intention to attend.~~

The quorum for a meeting

~~5.7~~5.8 The quorum for a meeting of the Council is a majority of the Councillors of the Council who hold office at that time and are not suspended from office.

Clause 5.8 reflects section 368(1) of the Act.

~~5.8~~5.9 Clause 5.8 does not apply if the quorum is required to be determined in accordance with directions of the Minister in a performance improvement order issued in respect of the Council.

Clause 5.9 reflects section 368(2) of the Act.

~~5.9~~5.10 A meeting of the Council must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:

a) at the commencement of the meeting where the number of apologies received for the meeting indicates that there will not be a quorum for the meeting, or

b) within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting, or

c) at any time during the meeting.

~~5.10~~5.11 In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date, and place fixed:

a) by the Chairperson, or

b) in the Chairperson's absence, by the majority of the Councillors present, or

c) failing that, by the General Manager.

~~5.11~~5.12 The General Manager must record in the Council's minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the Council, together with the names of the Councillors present.

~~5.12~~5.13 Where, prior to the commencement of a meeting, it becomes apparent that a quorum may not be present at the meeting, or that the health. safety or welfare of Councillors, Council staff and members of the public may be put at risk by attending the meeting because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency, the Mayor may, in consultation with the General Manager and, as far as is practicable, with each Councillor, cancel the meeting. Where a meeting is cancelled, notice of the cancellation must be published on the Council's website and in such other manner that the Council is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the cancellation to the attention of as many people as possible.

~~5.13~~5.14 Where a meeting is cancelled under clause 5.13, the business to be considered at the meeting may instead be considered, where practicable, at the next ordinary meeting of the Council or at an extraordinary meeting called under clause 3.2.

Meetings held by audio-visual link

~~5.14~~5.15 A meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council may be held by audio-visual link where the Mayor determines that the meeting should be held by audio-visual link because of a natural disaster or a public health emergency. The Mayor may only make a determination under this clause where they are satisfied that attendance at the meeting may put the health and safety of Councillors and staff at risk. The Mayor must make a determination under this clause in consultation with the General Manager and, as far as is practicable, with each Councillor.

~~5.15~~5.16 Where the Mayor determines under clause 5.15 that a meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, the General Manager must:

a) give written notice to all Councillors that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link, and

b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that all Councillors can participate in the meeting by audio-visual link, and

c) cause a notice to be published on the Council's website and in such other manner the General Manager is satisfied will bring it to the attention of as many people as possible, advising that the meeting is to be held by audio-visual link and providing information about where members of the public may view the meeting.

~~5.16~~5.17 This Code applies to a meeting held by audio-visual link under clause 5.15 in the same way it would if the meeting was held in person.

Note: Where a council holds a meeting by audio-visual link under clause 5.15, it is still required under section 10 of the Act to provide a physical venue for members of the public to attend in person and observe the meeting.

Attendance by Councillors at meetings by audio-visual link

5.18 Councillors may attend and participate in meetings of the Council and committees of the Council by audio-visual link with the approval of the Council or the relevant committee where they are prevented from attending in person because of ill-health or other medical reasons or because of unforeseen caring responsibilities.

5.A Councillors may attend and participate in meetings of the council and committees of the council by audio-visual link with the approval of the council or the relevant committee they are prevented from attending the meeting in person due to unforeseen work-related travel. However, Councillors

may only request to attend and participate in a meeting under this clause up to three (3) times per calendar year.

~~5.17~~5.19 Clauses ~~5~~ 5.18 ~~and 5.A~~ does not apply to meetings at which a mayoral election is to be held.

~~5.18~~5.20 A request by a Councillor for approval to attend a meeting by audio-visual link must be made in writing to the General Manager prior to the meeting in question and must provide reasons why the Councillor will be prevented from attending the meeting in person.

~~5.19~~5.21 Councillors may request approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link. Where a Councillor requests approval to attend more than one meeting by audio-visual link, the request must specify the meetings the request relates to in addition to the information required under clause 5.20.

~~5.20~~5.22 The Council must comply with the Health Privacy Principles prescribed under the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* (NSW) when collecting, holding, using and disclosing health information in connection with a request by a Councillor to attend a meeting by audio-visual link.

~~5.21~~5.23 A Councillor who has requested approval to attend a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council by audio-visual link may participate in the meeting by audio-visual link until the Council or committee determines whether to approve their request and is to be taken as present at the meeting. The Councillor may participate in a decision in relation to their request to attend the meeting by audio-visual link.

~~5.22~~5.24 A decision whether to approve a request by a Councillor to attend a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council by audio-visual link must be made by a resolution of the Council or the committee concerned. The resolution must state the meetings the resolution applies to.~~, and~~

~~e) the reason why the Councillor is being permitted to attend the meetings by audio-visual link where it is on grounds other than illness, disability, or caring responsibilities.~~

~~5.24~~5.25 If the Council or a committee refuses a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link, their link to the meeting is to be terminated.

~~5.25~~5.26 A decision whether to approve a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link is at the Council's or the relevant committee's discretion. The Council and committees of the Council must act reasonably when considering requests by Councillors to attend meetings by audio-visual link. ~~However, the Council and committees of the Council are under no obligation to approve a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the technical capacity does not exist to allow the Councillor to attend the meeting by these means.~~

~~5.26~~5.27 The Council and committees of the Council may refuse a Councillor's request to attend a meeting by audio-visual link where the Council or the committee is satisfied that the Councillor has failed to appropriately declare and manage conflicts of interest, observe confidentiality or to comply with this Code on one or more previous occasions they have attended a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council by audio-visual link.

~~5.27~~5.28 This Code applies to a Councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link in the same way it would if the Councillor was attending the meeting in person. Where a Councillor is permitted to attend a meeting by audio-visual link under this Code, they are to be taken as attending the meeting in person for the purposes of the Code and will have the same voting rights as if they were attending the meeting in person.

~~5.28~~5.29 A Councillor must give their full attention to the business and proceedings of the meeting when attending a meeting by audio-visual link. The Councillor's camera must be on at all times during the meeting except as may be otherwise provided for under this Code.

~~5.29~~5.30 A Councillor must be appropriately dressed when attending a meeting by audio-visual link

and must ensure that no items are within sight of the meeting that are inconsistent with the maintenance of order at the meeting or that are likely to bring the Council or the committee into disrepute.

Entitlement of the public to attend Council meetings

~~5.30~~5.31 Everyone is entitled to attend a meeting of the Council and committees of the Council. The Council must ensure that all meetings of the Council and committees of the Council are open to the public.

Clause 5.31 reflects section 10(1) of the Act.

~~5.31~~5.32 Clause 5.31 does not apply to parts of meetings that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

~~5.32~~5.33 A person (whether a Councillor or another person) is not entitled to be present at a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council if expelled from the meeting:

a) by a resolution of the meeting, or

b) by the person presiding at the meeting if the Council has, by resolution, authorised the person presiding to exercise the power of expulsion.

Clause 5.33 reflects section 10(2) of the Act.

5.34 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.

Note: Clause 15.15 confers a standing authorisation on all Chairpersons of meetings of the Council and committees of the Council to expel persons from meetings. Clause 15.15 authorises chairpersons to expel persons other than Councillors from a Council or committee meeting.

~~Webcasting~~ Livestreaming of meetings

~~5.33~~5.35 Each meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council is to be recorded by means of an audio or audio-visual device.

~~5.34~~5.36 At the start of each meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council, the Chairperson must inform the persons attending the meeting that:

a) the meeting is being recorded and made publicly available on the Council's website, and

b) persons attending the meeting should refrain from making any defamatory statements.

~~5.35~~ The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the Council's website ~~:~~

~~5.36~~5.37 at the same time as the meeting is taking place~~, or~~

~~e) as soon as practicable after the meeting.~~

5.38 The recording of a meeting is to be made publicly available on the Council's website for at least 12 months after the meeting or for the balance of the Council's term, whichever is the longer period.

5.39 Clauses 1.1 – 5.38 does not apply to parts of a meeting that have been closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

Clauses 5.35 – 5.39 reflects section 236 of the Regulation.

5.40 Recordings of meetings may be disposed of in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998* (NSW).

Attendance of the General Manager and other staff at meetings

5.41 The General Manager is entitled to attend, but not to vote at, a meeting of Council or a meeting of a committee of Council of which all of the members are Councillors.

Clause 5.41 reflects section 376(1) of the Act.

5.42 The General Manager is entitled to attend a meeting of any other committee of the Council and may, if a member of the committee, exercise a vote.

Clause 5.42 reflects section 376(2) of the Act.

5.43 The General Manager may be excluded from a meeting of the Council or a committee while the Council or a committee deals with a matter relating to the standard of performance of the General Manager or the terms of employment of the General Manager.

Clause 5.43 reflects section 376(3) of the Act.

5.44 The attendance of other Council staff at a meeting, (other than as members of the public) shall be determined by~~with the approval of~~ the General Manager in consultation with the Mayor.

~~The General Manager and other Council staff may attend meetings of the Council and committees of the Council by audio-visual-link. Attendance by Council staff at meetings by audio-visual link (other than as members of the public) shall be with the approval of the General Manager.~~

~~7~~6 THE CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson at meetings

~~7.1~~6.1 The Mayor, or at the request of or in the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor (if any) presides at meetings of the Council.

Clause 6.1 reflects section 369(1) of the Act.

~~7.2~~6.2 If the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor (if any) are absent, a Councillor elected to chair the meeting by the Councillors present presides at a meeting of the Council.

Clause 6.2 reflects section 369(2) of the Act.

Election of the Chairperson in the absence of the Mayor and the deputy Mayor

~~7.3~~6.3 If no Chairperson is present at a meeting of the Council at the time designated for the holding of the meeting, the first business of the meeting must be the election of a Chairperson to preside at the meeting.

~~7.4~~6.4 The election of a Chairperson must be conducted:

a) by the General Manager or, in their absence, an employee of the Council designated by the General Manager to conduct the election, or

b) by the person who called the meeting or a person acting on their behalf if neither the General Manager nor a designated employee is present at the meeting, or if there is no General Manager or designated employee.

~~7.5~~6.5 If, at an election of a Chairperson, two (2) or more candidates receive the same number of votes and no other candidate receives a greater number of votes, the Chairperson is to be the candidate whose name is chosen by lot.

~~7.6~~6.6 For the purposes of clause 6.5, the person conducting the election must:

a) arrange for the names of the candidates who have equal numbers of votes to be written on similar slips, and

b) then fold the slips so as to prevent the names from being seen, mix the slips and draw one of the slips at random.

~~7.7~~6.7 The candidate whose name is on the drawn slip is the candidate who is to be the Chairperson.

~~7.8~~6.8 Any election conducted under clause 6.3, and the outcome of the vote, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Chairperson to have precedence

~~7.9~~6.9 When the Chairperson rises or speaks during a meeting of the Council:

a) any Councillor then speaking or seeking to speak must cease speaking and, if standing, immediately resume their seat, and

b) every Councillor present must be silent to enable the Chairperson to be heard without interruption.

~~8~~7 MODES OF ADDRESS

7.1 Where physically able to, Councillors and staff should stand when the Mayor enters the chamber and when addressing the meeting.

7.A Councillors that are attending the meeting via audio-visual link are not required to stand when the Mayor enters the chamber of when addressing the meeting.

7.2 If the Chairperson is the Mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr Mayor' ~~or Mayor [Surname], or~~ 'Madam Mayor', or 'Mayor'.

~~8.1~~7.3 If the Chairperson is the deputy Mayor, they are to be addressed as 'Mr deputy Mayor', 'Madam deputy Mayor', or 'deputy Mayor'.

~~8.2~~7.4 Where the Chairperson is not the Mayor or deputy Mayor, they are to be addressed as either 'Mr Chairperson', ~~or~~ 'Madam Chairperson', or 'Chair'.

~~8.3~~7.5 A Councillor is to be addressed as 'Councillor [surname]'.

~~8.4~~7.6 A Council officer is to be addressed by their official designation or as Mr/Ms/Mx [surname].

~~9~~8 ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

~~9.1~~8.1 At a meeting of the Council, the general order of business is as fixed by resolution of the Council.

~~9.2~~8.2 The order of business as fixed under clause 8.1 may be altered for a particular meeting of the Council if a motion to that effect is passed at that meeting. Such a motion can be moved without notice.

Note: Part 13 of this Code allows Council to deal with items of business by exception/Englobo.

~~9.3~~8.3 Despite any other provision of this Code~~clauses 10.20 – 10.30~~, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 8.2 and the Chairperson can~~may~~ speak to the motion before it is put.

8.A Where an agenda item is the subject of public ~~access~~ forum the matter will be dealt with following that address.

~~10~~9 CONSIDERATION OF BUSINESS AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Business that can be dealt with at a Council meeting

~~10.1~~9.1 The Council must not consider business at a meeting of the Council:

a) unless a Councillor has given notice of the business, as required by clause 3.11, and

b) unless notice of the business has been sent to the Councillors in accordance with clause 3.8 in the case of an ordinary meeting or clause 3.10 in the case of an extraordinary meeting called in an emergency.

~~10.2~~9.2 Clause 9.1 does not apply to the consideration of business at a meeting, if the business:

a) is already before, or directly relates to, a matter that is already before the Council, or

b) is the election of a Chairperson to preside at the meeting, or

c) ~~subject to clause 9.9,~~ is a matter or topic put to the meeting by way of a Mayoral minute, or

d) is a motion for the adoption of recommendations of a committee, including, but not limited to,

a committee of the Council.

~~10.3~~9.3 Despite clause 9.1, business may be considered at a meeting of the Council where all Councillors are present even though due notice of the business has not been given to the Councillors if the Council resolves to deal with the business on the grounds that it is urgent and requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting. A resolution~~:~~ adopted under this clause must state the reasons for the urgency.

~~a) a motion is passed to have the business considered at the meeting, and~~

~~b) the business to be considered is ruled by the Chairperson to be of great urgency on the grounds that it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council.~~

9.4 A motion moved under clause 9.3 can be moved without notice. Despite any other provision of this Code, ~~clauses 10.20 – 10.30,~~ only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 9.3 and the Chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put.

~~10.4~~9.5 If all Councillors are not present at a meeting, the Council may only deal with business at the meeting that Councillors have not been given due notice of where a resolution is adopted in accordance with clause 9.3 and the Chairperson also rules that the business is urgent and requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting.

~~10.5~~9.6 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the Chairperson under clause 9.5.

Mayoral Minutes

~~10.6~~9.7 ~~Subject to clause 9.9, if the Mayor is the Chairperson at a meeting of the Council, t~~The Mayor may, by minute signed by the Mayor, put to the meeting without notice any matter or topic that the Mayor determines should be considered at the meeting ~~is within the jurisdiction of the Council, or of which the Council has official knowledge~~.

~~10.7~~9.8 A Mayoral minute, when put to a meeting, takes precedence over all business on the Council's agenda for the meeting. The ~~Chairperson (but only if the Chairperson is the~~ Mayor~~)~~ may move the adoption of a Mayoral minute without the motion being seconded.

~~10.8~~9.9 A recommendation made in a Mayoral minute put by the Mayor is, so far as it is adopted by the Council, a resolution of the Council.

~~9.9(a) A Mayoral minute must not be used to put **without** notice matters that are routine and not urgent or matters for which proper notice should be given because of their complexity. For the purpose of this clause, a matter will be urgent where it requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council.~~

9.A Where a Mayoral minute makes a recommendation which, if adopted, would require the expenditure of funds on works and/or services other than those already provided for in the Council's current adopted operational plan, it must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the recommendation. If the Mayoral minute does not identify a funding source, the Council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the General Manager on the availability of funds for implementing the recommendation if adopted.

Staff Reports

~~10.9~~9.10 A recommendation made in a staff report is, so far as it is adopted by the Council, a resolution of the Council.

Reports of committees of Council

~~10.10~~9.11 The recommendations of a committee of the Council are, so far as they are adopted by the Council, resolutions of the Council.

~~10.11~~9.12 If in a report of a committee of the Council distinct recommendations are made, the Council

may make separate decisions on each recommendation.

Questions

~~10.12~~9.13 A question must not be asked at a meeting of the Council unless it concerns a matter on the agenda of the meeting or notice has been given of the question in accordance with clauses 3.11 and 3.15, unless the Council determines otherwise in accordance with this Code.

~~10.13~~9.14 A Councillor may, through the Chairperson, ~~put a question to~~ask another Councillor about a matter on the agenda.

9.15 A Councillor may, through the Mayor~~General Manager~~, ask the General Manager ~~put a question to a Council employee~~ about a matter on the agenda. The General Manager may request another Council employee to answer the question.

~~Council employees are only obliged to answer a question put to them through the General Manager at the direction of the General Manager.~~

~~10.15~~9.16 A Councillor or Council employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to information. Where a Councillor or Council employee to whom a question is put is unable to respond to the question at the meeting at which it is put, they may take it on notice and report the response to the next meeting of the Council.

~~10.16~~9.17 Councillors must put questions directly, succinctly, respectfully and without argument.

~~10.17~~9.18 The Chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply to, or refusal to reply to, a question put to a Councillor or Council employee.

~~11~~10 RULES OF DEBATE

Motions to be seconded

~~11.1~~10.1 Unless otherwise specified in this Code, a motion or an amendment cannot be debated unless or until it has been seconded.

Notices of motion

~~11.2~~10.2 A Councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.11 is to move the motion the subject of the notice of motion at the meeting at which it is to be considered.

~~11.3~~10.3 If a Councillor who has submitted a notice of motion under clause 3.11 wishes to withdraw it, they ~~after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to Councillors, the Councillor~~ may request its~~the~~ withdrawal ~~of the motion when it is before the Council~~at any time. If the notice of motion is withdrawn after the agenda and business paper for the meeting at which it is to be considered have been sent to Councillors, the Chairperson is to note the withdrawal of the notice of motion at the meeting unless the Council determines to consider the notice of motion at the meeting.

~~11.4~~10.4 In the absence of a Councillor who has placed a notice of motion on the agenda for a meeting of the Council:

a) any other Councillor may, with the leave of the Chairperson, move the motion at the meeting, or

b) the Chairperson may defer consideration of the motion until the next meeting of the Council.

Chairperson's duties with respect to motions

~~11.5~~10.5 It is the duty of the Chairperson at a meeting of the Council to receive and put to the meeting any lawful motion that is brought before the meeting.

~~11.6~~10.6 The Chairperson must rule out of order any motion or amendment to a motion that is unlawful or the implementation of which would be unlawful.

~~11.7~~10.7 Before ruling out of order a motion or an amendment to a motion under clause 10.6, the Chairperson is to give the mover an opportunity to clarify or amend the motion or amendment.

~~Any motion, amendment, or other matter that the Chairperson has ruled out of order is taken to have been lost.~~

Motions requiring the expenditure of funds

10.A A motion or an amendment to a motion which if passed would require the expenditure of funds on works and/ or services other than those already provided for in the Council's current adopted operational plan must identify the source of funding for the expenditure that is the subject of the motion. If the motion does not identify a funding source, the Council must defer consideration of the matter, pending a report from the General Manager on the availability of funds for implementing the motion if adopted.

Amendments To Motions

~~11.8~~10.8 An amendment to a motion must be moved and seconded before it can be debated.

~~11.9~~10.9 An amendment to a motion must relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion before the Council and must not be a direct negative of the original motion. An amendment to a motion which does not relate to the matter being dealt with in the original motion, or which is a direct negative of the original motion, must be ruled out of order by the Chairperson.

~~11.10~~10.10 The mover of an amendment is to be given the opportunity to explain any uncertainties in the proposed amendment before a seconder is called for.

~~11.11~~10.11 If an amendment has been lost, a further amendment can be moved to the motion to which the lost amendment was moved, and so on, but no more than one (1) motion and one (1) proposed amendment can be before Council at any one time.

~~11.12~~10.12 While an amendment is being considered, debate must only occur in relation to the amendment and not the original motion. Debate on the original motion is to be suspended while the amendment to the original motion is being debated.

~~11.13~~10.13 If the amendment is carried, it becomes the motion and is to be debated. If the amendment is lost, debate is to resume on the original motion.

~~11.14~~10.14 An amendment may become the motion without debate or a vote where it is accepted by the Councillor who moved the original motion.

~~**Foreshadowed Motions**~~

~~A Councillor may propose a foreshadowed motion in relation to the matter the subject of the original motion before the Council, without a seconder during debate on the original motion. The foreshadowed motion is only to be considered if the original motion is lost or withdrawn and the foreshadowed motion is then moved and seconded. If the original motion is carried, the foreshadowed motion lapses.~~

~~Where an amendment has been moved and seconded, a Councillor may, without a seconder, foreshadow a further amendment that they propose to move after the first amendment has been dealt with. There is no limit to the number of foreshadowed amendments that may be put before the Council at any time. However, no discussion can take place on foreshadowed amendments until the previous amendment has been dealt with and the foreshadowed amendment has been moved and seconded.~~

~~Foreshadowed motions and foreshadowed amendments are to be considered in the order in which they are proposed. However, foreshadowed motions cannot be considered until all foreshadowed amendments have been dealt with.~~

Limitations on the number and duration of speeches

~~11.15~~10.15 A Councillor who, during a debate at a meeting of the Council, moves an original motion, has the right to speak on each amendment to the motion and a right of general reply to all observations that are made during the debate in relation to the motion, and any amendment to it at the conclusion of the debate before the motion (whether amended or not) is finally put.

~~11.16~~10.16 A Councillor, other than the mover of an original motion, has the right to speak once on the motion and once on each amendment to it.

~~11.17~~10.17 A Councillor must not, without the consent of the Council, speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, or for longer than five (5) minutes at any one time.

~~11.18~~10.18 Despite clause 10.17, the Chairperson may permit a Councillor who claims to have been misrepresented or misunderstood to speak more than once on a motion or an amendment, and for longer than five (5) minutes on that motion or amendment to enable the Councillor to make a statement limited to explaining the misrepresentation or misunderstanding.

~~11.19 Despite clause 10.22, the Council may resolve to shorten the duration of speeches to expedite the consideration of business at a meeting.~~

~~11.20~~10.19 Despite clauses 10.15 and 10.16, a Councillor may move that a motion or an amendment be now put:

a) if the mover of the motion or amendment has spoken in favour of it and no Councillor expresses an intention to speak against it, or

b) if at least two (2) Councillors have spoken in favour of the motion or amendment and at least two (2) Councillors have spoken against it.

~~11.21~~10.20 The Chairperson must immediately put to the vote, without debate, a motion moved under clause 10.19. A seconder is not required for such a motion.

~~11.22~~10.21 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is passed, the Chairperson must, without further debate, put the original motion or amendment to the vote immediately after the mover of the original motion has exercised their right of reply under clause 10.15.

~~11.23~~10.22 If a motion that the original motion or an amendment be now put is lost, the Chairperson must allow the debate on the original motion or the amendment to be resumed.

~~11.24~~10.23 All Councillors must be heard without interruption and all other Councillors must, unless otherwise permitted under this Code, remain silent while another Councillor is speaking.

10.24 Once the debate on a matter has concluded and a matter has been dealt with, the Chairperson must not allow further debate on the matter.

~~11.25~~10.25 Clause 10.24 does not prevent a further motion from being moved on the same item of business where the original motion is lost provided the motion is not substantially the same as the one that is lost.

10.B Debate on any item of business on the agenda or transaction without notice may not continue for more than 45 minutes. At the expiration of this time from the commencement of the debate, the Mayor or Chairperson will put the motion, irrespective as to whether a Councillor is speaking at the time, after permitting the mover of the motion three minutes right of reply.

10.C The motion will be put by the Mayor or Chairperson in the following form: “The time for debate has expired. Under the Code of Meeting Practice of this Council, I may now put the motion. The mover of the motion has three minutes right of reply.”

~~12~~11 VOTING

Voting Entitlements of Councillors

~~12.1~~11.1 Each Councillor is entitled to one (1) vote.

Clause 11.1 reflects section 370(1) of the Act.

~~12.2~~11.2 The person presiding at a meeting of the Council has, in the event of an equality of votes, a second or casting vote.

Clause 11.2 reflects section 370(2) of the Act.

~~12.3~~11.3 Where the Chairperson declines to exercise, or fails to exercise, their second or casting vote, in the event of an equality of votes, the motion being voted upon is lost.

Voting at Council Meetings

~~12.4~~11.4 A Councillor who is present at a meeting of the Council but who fails to vote on a motion put to the meeting is taken to have voted against the motion.

~~12.5~~11.5 Voting at a meeting, including voting in an election at a meeting, is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system). However, the Council may resolve that the voting in any election by Councillors for Mayor or Deputy Mayor is to be by secret ballot.

~~12.6~~11.6 All voting at Council meetings, (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of Councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

Voting On Planning Decisions

11.7 The Council or a Council committee must not make a final planning decision without receiving a staff report containing an assessment and recommendation in relation to the matter put before the Council for a decision.

11.8 Where the Council or a Council committee makes a planning decision that is inconsistent with the recommendation made in a staff report, it must provide reasons for its decision and why it did not adopt the staff recommendation.

~~12.7~~11.9 The General Manager must keep a register containing, for each planning decision made at a meeting of the Council or a Council committee (including, but not limited to a committee of the Council), the names of the Councillors who supported the decision and the names of any Councillors who opposed (or are taken to have opposed) the decision.

~~12.8 For the purpose of maintaining the register, a division is taken to have been called whenever a motion for a planning decision is put at a meeting of Council or a Council committee.~~

~~12.9~~11.10 Each decision recorded in the register is to be described in the register or identified in a manner that enables the description to be obtained from another publicly available document.

~~12.10~~11.11 Clauses 11.7 – 11.10 apply also to meetings that are closed to the public.

Clauses 11.7 – 11.11 reflect section 375A of the Act.

Note: The requirements of clause 11.7 may be satisfied by maintaining a register of the minutes of each planning decision.

~~13~~12 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

~~13.1~~12.1 The Council may resolve itself into a committee to consider any matter before the Council.

Clause 12.1 reflects section 373 of the Act.

~~13.2~~12.2 All the provisions of this Code relating to meetings of the Council, so far as they are applicable, extend to and govern the proceedings of the Council when in committee of the whole,

except the provisions limiting the number and duration of speeches and encouraging Councillors and staff to stand when addressing the meeting.

Note: Clauses 10.15 – 10.24 limit the number and duration of speeches.

Note: Clause 7.1 encourages Councillors and staff to stand when addressing the meeting where they can.

~~13.3~~12.3 The General Manager or, in the absence of the General Manager, an employee of the Council designated by the General Manager, is responsible for reporting to the Council the proceedings of the committee of the whole. It is not necessary to report the proceedings in full, but any recommendations of the committee must be reported.

~~13.4~~12.4 The Council must ensure that a report of the proceedings (including any recommendations of the committee) is recorded in the Council's minutes. However, the Council is not taken to have adopted the report until a motion for adoption has been made and passed.

~~14~~13 DEALING WITH ITEMS BY EXCEPTION / ENGLOBO

~~14.1~~13.1 The Council or a committee of Council may, at any time, resolve to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together by way of a single resolution.

~~14.2~~13.2 Before the Council or a committee resolves to adopt multiple items of business on the agenda together under clause 13.1, the Chairperson must list the items of business to be adopted and ask Councillors to identify any individual items of business listed by the Chairperson that they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or that they wish to speak on.

~~14.3~~13.3 The Council or a committee must not resolve to adopt any item of business under clause 13.1 that a Councillor has identified as being one they intend to vote against the recommendation made in the business paper or to speak on.

~~14.4~~13.4 Where the consideration of multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 involves a variation to the order of business for the meeting, the Council or a committee must resolve to alter the order of business in accordance with clause 8.2.

~~14.5~~13.5 A motion to adopt multiple items of business together under clause 13.1 must identify each of the items of business to be adopted and state that they are to be adopted as recommended in the business paper.

13.A The motion in the minutes will be written as:

That having read and considered the reports in the agenda related to items:
[list all reports to be considered Englobo]
Council adopt the recommendations as printed for those items.

~~14.6~~13.6 Items of business adopted under clause 13.1 are to be taken to have been adopted unanimously.

~~14.7~~13.7 Councillors must ensure that they declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in relation to items of business considered together under clause 13.1 in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Code of Conduct.

~~15~~14 CLOSURE OF COUNCIL MEETINGS TO THE PUBLIC

Grounds on which meetings can be closed to the public

~~15.1~~14.1 The Council or a committee of the Council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion or the receipt of any of the following types of matters:

a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than Councillors),

b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer,

c) information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business,

d) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:

i. prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or

ii. confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the Council, or

iii. reveal a trade secret,

e) information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law,

f) matters affecting the security of the Council, Councillors, Council staff or Council property,

g) advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the ground of legal professional privilege,

h) information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land,

i) alleged contraventions of the Council's Code of Conduct.

Clause 14.1 reflects section 10A(1) and (2) of the Act.

~~15.2~~14.2 The Council or a committee of the Council may also close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public.

Clause 14.2 reflects section 10A(3) of the Act.

Matters to be considered when closing meetings to the public

~~15.3~~14.3 A meeting is not to remain closed during the discussion of anything referred to in clause 14.1:

a) except for so much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security, and

b) if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret – unless the Council or the committee concerned is satisfied that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest.

Clause 14.3 reflects section 10B(1) of the Act.

~~15.4~~14.4 A meeting is not to be closed during the receipt and consideration of information or advice referred to in clause 14.1(g) unless the advice concerns legal matters that:

a) are substantial issues relating to a matter in which the Council or a committee is involved, and

b) are clearly identified in the advice, ~~and~~

c) are fully discussed in that advice, and~~.~~

~~c)~~d) are subject to legal professional privilege.

Clause 14.4 reflects section 10B(2) of the Act.

~~15.5~~14.5 If a meeting is closed during the discussion of a motion to close another part of the meeting to the public (as referred to in clause 14.2), the consideration of the motion must not include any consideration of the matter or information to be discussed in that other part of the meeting other than consideration of whether the matter concerned is a matter referred to in clause 14.1.

Clause 14.5 reflects section 10B(3) of the Act.

~~15.6~~14.6 For the purpose of determining whether the discussion of a matter in an open meeting would be contrary to the public interest, it is irrelevant that:

a) a person may misinterpret or misunderstand the discussion, or

b) the discussion of the matter may:

i. cause embarrassment to the Council or the committee concerned, or to Councillors or to employees of the Council, or

ii. cause a loss of confidence in the Council or a committee.

Clause 14.6 reflects section 10B(4) of the Act.

~~15.7~~14.7 In deciding whether part of a meeting is to be closed to the public, the Council or the committee concerned must consider any relevant guidelines issued by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.

Clause 14.7 reflects section 10B(5) of the Act.

Notice of likelihood of closure not required in urgent cases

~~15.8~~14.8 Part of a meeting of the Council, or of a committee of the Council, may be closed to the public while the Council or a committee considers a matter that has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed, but only if:

a) it becomes apparent during the discussion of a particular matter that the matter is a matter referred to in clause 14.1, and

b) the Council or a committee, after considering any representations made under clause 14.9, resolves that further discussion of the matter:

i. should not be deferred (because of the urgency of the matter), and

ii. should take place in a part of the meeting that is closed to the public.

Clause 14.8 reflects section 10C of the Act.

Representations by members of the public

~~15.9~~14.9 The Council, or a committee of the Council, may allow members of the public to make representations to or at a meeting, before any part of the meeting is closed to the public, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.

Clause 14.9 reflects section 10A(4) of the Act.

14.10 A representation under clause 14.9 is to be made after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded.

~~15.10~~14.11 Despite clauses 14.9 and 14.10, the Council may resolve to close the meeting to the public in accordance with this Part to hear a representation from a member of the public as to whether the meeting should be closed to consider an item of business where the representation involves the disclosure of information relating to a matter referred to in clause 14.1.

14.12 Where the matter has been identified in the agenda of the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, in order to make representations under clause 14.9, members of the public must first make an application to the Council in the approved form.

14.A Applications must be received by 12:00 noon on Tuesday the week before the meeting at which the matter is to be considered.

14.B The General Manager (or their delegate) may refuse an application made under clause 14.12. The General Manager or their delegate must give reasons in writing for a decision to refuse an application.

14.C No more than one speaker is to be permitted to make representations under clause 14.9.

14.D If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to make representations under clause 14.9, the General Manager or their delegate may request the speakers to nominate from among themselves the persons who are to make representations to the Council. If the speakers are not able to agree on whom to nominate to make representations under clause 14.9, the General

Manager or their delegate is to determine who will make representations to the Council.

14.E The General Manager (or their delegate) is to determine the order of speakers.

14.F Where the Council or a committee of the Council proposes to close a meeting or part of a meeting to the public in circumstances where the matter has not been identified in the agenda for the meeting under clause 3.21 as a matter that is likely to be considered when the meeting is closed to the public, the Chairperson is to invite representations from the public under clause 14.9 after the motion to close the part of the meeting is moved and seconded. The Chairperson is to permit no more than one speaker to make representations in such order as determined by the Chairperson.

14.G Each speaker will be allowed three minutes to make representations, and this time limit is to be strictly enforced by the Chairperson. Speakers must confine their representations to whether the meeting should be closed to the public. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the Chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the Chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

Expulsion of non-Councillors from meetings closed to the public

~~15.11~~14.13 If a meeting or part of a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council is closed to the public in accordance with section 10A of the Act and this Code, any person who is not a Councillor and who fails to leave the meeting when requested, may be expelled from the meeting as provided by section 10(2)(a) or (b) of the Act.

14.14 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the Council or person presiding, may, by using ~~only~~ such force as is reasonably necessary, remove the first- mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re- entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Note: Failure to comply with a direction to leave a meeting is an offence under section 660 of the Act carrying a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units.

Obligations of Councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link

~~15.12~~14.15 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must ensure that no other person is within sight or hearing of the meeting at any time that the meeting is closed to the public under section 10A of the Act.

Information to be disclosed in resolutions closing meetings to the public

~~15.13~~14.16 The grounds on which part of a meeting is closed must be stated in the decision to close that part of the meeting and must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The grounds must specify the following:

a) the relevant provision of section 10A(2) of the Act,

b) the matter that is to be discussed during the closed part of the meeting,

c) the reasons why the part of the meeting is being closed, including (if the matter concerned is a matter other than a personnel matter concerning particular individuals, the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer or a trade secret) an explanation of the way in which discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

Clause 14.16 reflects section 10D of the Act.

Resolutions passed at closed meetings to be made public

~~15.14~~14.17 If the Council passes a resolution during a meeting, or a part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, the Chairperson must make the resolution public as soon as practicable after the meeting, or the relevant part of the meeting, has ended, and the resolution must be recorded in

the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

14.18 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the Chairperson under clause 14.17 during a part of the meeting that is livestreamed~~webcast~~ where practicable.

14.19 The General Manager must cause business papers for items of business considered during a meeting, or part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, to be published on the Council's website as soon as practicable after the information contained in the business papers ceases to be confidential.

~~15.15~~14.20 The General Manager must consult with the Council and any other affected persons before publishing information on the Council's website under clause 14.19 and provide reasons for why the information ceased to be confidential.

~~16~~15 KEEPING ORDER AT MEETINGS

Points of order

~~16.1~~15.1 A Councillor may draw the attention of the Chairperson to an alleged breach of this Code by raising a point of order. A point of order does not require a seconder.

~~A point of order cannot be made with respect to adherence to the principles outlined in Clause 2 of this Code.~~

~~16.3~~15.2 A point of order must be taken immediately it is raised. The Chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting and permit the Councillor raising the point of order to state the provision of this Code they believe has been breached. The Chairperson must then rule on the point of order – either by upholding it or by overruling it.

Questions of order

~~16.4~~15.3 The Chairperson, without the intervention of any other Councillor, may call any Councillor to order whenever, in the opinion of the Chairperson, it is necessary to do so.

~~16.5~~15.4 A Councillor who claims that another Councillor has committed an act of disorder, or is out of order, may call the attention of the Chairperson to the matter.

~~16.6~~15.5 The Chairperson must rule on a question of order immediately after it is raised but, before doing so, may invite the opinion of the Council.

~~16.7~~15.6 The Chairperson's ruling must be obeyed unless a motion dissenting from the ruling is passed.

Motions of dissent

~~16.8~~15.7 A Councillor can, without notice, move to dissent from a ruling of the Chairperson on a point of order or a question of order. If that happens, the Chairperson must suspend the business before the meeting until a decision is made on the motion of dissent.

~~16.9~~15.8 If a motion of dissent is passed, the Chairperson must proceed with the suspended business as though the ruling dissented from had not been given. If, as a result of the ruling, any motion or business has been rejected as out of order, the Chairperson must restore the motion or business to the agenda and proceed with it in due course.

~~16.10~~15.9 Despite any other provision of this Code, only the mover of a motion of dissent and the Chairperson can speak to the motion before it is put. The mover of the motion does not have a right of general reply.

Acts of disorder

~~16.11~~15.10 A Councillor commits an act of disorder if the Councillor, at a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council:

a) contravenes the Act, the Regulation or this Code, or

b) assaults or threatens to assault another Councillor or person present at the meeting, or

c) moves or attempts to move a motion or an amendment that has an unlawful purpose or that deals with a matter that is outside the jurisdiction of the Council or the committee, or addresses or attempts to address the Council or the committee on such a motion, amendment or matter, or

d) uses offensive or disorderly words, or

~~c)~~e) makes gestures or otherwise behaves in a what that is sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise discriminatory, or if the behaviour occurred in the Legislative Assembly, would be considered disorderly, or

~~d)~~f) ~~insults, makes unfavourable personal remarks or~~ imputes improper motives to or unfavourably personally reflects upon any other Council official, or a person present at the meeting, except by a motion~~alleges a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct~~, or

~~e)~~g) says or does anything that would promote~~is inconsistent with maintaining~~ disorder at the meeting or is ~~likely to bring the Council or the committee into disrepute~~otherwise inconsistent with maintaining order at the meeting.

Clause 15.10 reflects section 182 of the Regulation.

Note: The Legislative Assembly's Speakers Guidelines state that "Members are not to use language, make gestures, or behave in any way in the Chamber that is sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise exclusionary or discriminatory. Such conduct may be considered offensive and disorderly, in accordance with Standing Order 74."

~~16.12~~15.11 The Chairperson may require a Councillor:

a) to apologise without reservation for an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.10(a), (b), (d), (e) or (g), or

b) to withdraw a motion or an amendment referred to in clause 15.10(c) and, where appropriate, to apologise without reservation, or

c) to retract and apologise without reservation for any statement that constitutes an act of disorder referred to in clauses 15.10(d), (e), (f) or (g).

Clause 15.11 reflects section 233 of the Regulation.

15.12 A failure to comply with a requirement under clause 15.11 constitutes a fresh act of disorder for the purposes of clause 15.10.

15.13 Where a Councillor fails to take action in response to a requirement by the Chairperson to remedy an act of disorder under clause 15.11 at the meeting at which the act of disorder occurred, the Chairperson may require the Councillor to take that action at each subsequent meeting until such time as the Councillor complies with the requirement. If the Councillor fails to remedy the act of disorder at a subsequent meeting, they may be expelled from the meeting under clause 15.17.

How disorder at a meeting may be dealt with

~~16.13~~15.14 If disorder occurs at a meeting of the Council, the Chairperson may adjourn the meeting for a period of not more than fifteen (15) minutes and leave the chair. The Council, on reassembling, must, on a question put from the Chairperson, decide without debate whether the business is to be proceeded with or not. This clause applies to disorder arising from the conduct of members of the public as well as disorder arising from the conduct of Councillors.

Expulsion from meetings

~~16.14~~15.15 All Chairpersons of meetings of the Council and committees of the Council are authorised under this Code to expel any person other than a Councillor, from a Council or committee meeting, for the purposes of section 10(2)(b) of the Act. Councillors may only be expelled by resolution of the Council or the committee of the Council.

~~16.15~~15.16 Clause 15.15 does not limit the ability of the Council or a committee of the Council to resolve to expel a person, including a Councillor, from a Council or committee meeting, under section 10(2) (a) of the Act.

~~16.16~~15.17 A Councillor may, as provided by section 10(2) (a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the Council for having failed to comply with a requirement under clause 15.11. The expulsion of a Councillor from the meeting for that reason does not prevent any other action from being taken against the Councillor for the act of disorder concerned.

Clause 15.17 reflects section 233(2) of the Regulation.

15.18 A member of the public may, as provided by section 10(2) (a) or (b) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting of the Council for engaging in or having engaged in disorderly conduct at the meeting.

15.19 Members of the public attending a meeting of the Council:

a) must remain silent during the meeting unless invited by the Chairperson to speak,

b) must not bring flags, signs or protest symbols to the meeting, and

c) must not disrupt the meeting.

~~16.17~~15.20 Without limiting clause 15.18, a contravention of clause 15.19 or an attempt to contravene that clause, constitutes disorderly conduct for the purposes of clause 15.18. Members of the public may, as provided by section 10(2) of the Act, be expelled from a meeting for a breach of clause 15.19.

~~16.18~~15.21 Where a Councillor or a member of the public is expelled from a meeting, the expulsion and the name of the person expelled, if known, are to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

15.22 If a Councillor or a member of the public fails to leave the place where a meeting of the Council is being held immediately after they have been expelled, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the Council or person presiding, may, by using ~~only~~ such force as is reasonably necessary, remove the Councillor or member of the public from that place and, if necessary, restrain the Councillor or member of the public from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Note: Failure to comply with a direction to leave a meeting is an offence under section 660 of the Act carrying a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units.

How disorder by Councillors attending meetings by audio-visual link may be dealt with

~~16.19~~15.23 Where a Councillor is attending a meeting by audio-visual link, the Chairperson or a person authorised by the Chairperson may mute the Councillor's audio link to the meeting for the purposes of enforcing compliance with this Code.

~~16.20~~15.24 If a Councillor attending a meeting by audio-visual link is expelled from a meeting for an act of disorder, the Chairperson of the meeting or a person authorised by the Chairperson, may terminate the Councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting.

Use of mobile phones and the unauthorised recording of meetings

~~16.21~~15.25 Councillors, Council staff and members of the public must ensure that mobile phones are turned to silent during meetings of the Council and committees of the Council.

~~16.22~~15.26 A person must not live stream or use an audio recorder, video camera, mobile phone or any other device to make a recording of the proceedings of a meeting of the Council or a committee of the Council without the prior authorisation of the Council or the committee.

~~16.23~~15.27 Without limiting clause 15.18, a contravention of clause 15.26 or an attempt to contravene that clause, constitutes disorderly conduct for the purposes of clause 15.18. Any person who contravenes or attempts to contravene clause 15.26, may be expelled from the meeting as provided for under section 10(2) of the Act.

15.28 If any such person, after being notified of a resolution or direction expelling them from the meeting, fails to leave the place where the meeting is being held, a police officer, or any person authorised for the purpose by the Council or person presiding, may, by using ~~only~~ such force as is reasonably necessary, remove the first-mentioned person from that place and, if necessary, restrain that person from re-entering that place for the remainder of the meeting.

Note: Failure to comply with a direction to leave a meeting is an offence under section 660 of the Act carrying a maximum penalty of 20 penalty units.

~~17~~16 CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

~~17.1~~16.1 All Councillors and, where applicable, all other persons, must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at meetings of the Council and committees of the Council in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and Council's Conflict of Interest Guideline where relevant. All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed by the person who made the declaration must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.

~~17.2~~16.2 Councillors attending a meeting by audio-visual link must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct. Where a Councillor has declared a pecuniary or significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter being discussed at the meeting, the Councillor's audio-visual link to the meeting must be suspended or terminated and the Councillor must not be in sight or hearing of the meeting at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the Council or committee, or at any time during which the Council or committee is voting on the matter.

~~18~~17 DECISIONS OF COUNCIL

Council decisions

~~18.1~~17.1 A decision supported by a majority of the votes at a meeting of the Council at which a quorum is present is a decision of the Council.

Clause 17.1 reflects section 371 of the Act.

~~18.2~~17.2 Decisions made by the Council must be accurately recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the decision is made.

Rescinding or altering Council decisions

~~18.3~~17.3 A resolution passed by the Council may not be altered or rescinded except by a motion to that effect of which notice has been given ~~under clause 3.11~~in accordance with this Code.

Clause 17.3 reflects section 372(1) of the Act.

~~18.4~~17.4 If a notice of motion to rescind a resolution is given at the meeting at which the resolution is carried, the resolution must not be carried into effect until the motion of rescission has been dealt with.

Clause 17.4 reflects section 372(2) of the Act.

~~18.5~~17.5 If a motion has been lost, a motion having the same effect must not be considered unless notice of it has been duly given in accordance with ~~clause 3.11~~this Code.

Clause 17.5 reflects section 372(3) of the Act.

~~18.6~~17.6 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution, and a notice of motion which has the same effect as a motion which has been lost, must be signed by three (3) Councillors if less than three (3) months has elapsed since the resolution was passed, or the motion was lost.

Clause 17.6 reflects section 372(4) of the Act.

~~18.7~~17.7 If a motion to alter or rescind a resolution has been lost, or if a motion which has the same

effect as a previously lost motion is lost, no similar motion may be brought forward within three (3) months of the meeting at which it was lost. This clause may not be evaded by substituting a motion differently worded, but in principle the same.

Clause 17.7 reflects section 372(5) of the Act.

~~18.8~~17.8 The provisions of clauses 17.5 – 17.7 concerning lost motions do not apply to motions of adjournment.

Clause 17.8 reflects section 372(7) of the Act.

~~18.9~~17.9 A notice of motion submitted in accordance with clause 17.6 may only be withdrawn under clause 3.11 with the consent of all signatories to the notice of motion.

~~18.10~~17.10 A notice of motion to alter or rescind a resolution relating to a development application must be submitted to the General Manager no later than noon on Friday following the meeting at which the resolution was adopted.

~~18.11~~17.11 A motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the Council may be moved on the report of a committee of the Council and any such report must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the Council.

Clause 17.11 reflects section 372(6) of the Act.

~~18.12~~17.12 Subject to clause 17.7, in cases of urgency, a motion to alter or rescind a resolution of the Council may be moved at the same meeting at which the resolution was adopted, where:

a) a notice of motion signed by three Councillors is submitted to the Chairperson, and

~~b) a motion to have the motion considered at the meeting is passed, and~~

~~c)~~b) the Council resolves~~Chairperson rules the business~~ to deal with the motion at the meeting ~~that is the subject of the motion is o~~on the grounds that it is~~f great~~ urgent~~cy on the grounds that it~~and requires a decision by the Council before the next scheduled ordinary meeting of the Council.

17.13 A motion moved under clause 17.12(b) can be moved without notice. Despite ~~clauses 10.20 – 10.30,~~any other provision of this Code, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.12(b) and the Chairperson, if they are not the mover of the motion, can speak to the motion before it is put.

~~18.13~~17.14 A resolution adopted under clause 17.12(b) must state the reasons for the urgency.

~~A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the Chairperson under clause 17.12(c).~~

Recommitting resolutions to correct an error

~~18.14~~17.15 Despite the provisions of this Part, a Councillor may, with the leave of the Chairperson, move to recommit a resolution adopted at the same meeting:

a) to correct any error, ambiguity or imprecision in the Council's resolution, or

b) to confirm the voting on the resolution.

~~18.15~~17.16 In seeking the leave of the Chairperson to move to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), the Councillor is to propose alternative wording for the resolution.

~~18.16~~17.17 The Chairperson must not grant leave to recommit a resolution for the purposes of clause 17.15(a), unless they are satisfied that the proposed alternative wording of the resolution would not alter the substance of the resolution previously adopted at the meeting.

~~18.17~~17.18 A motion moved under clause 17.15 can be moved without notice. Despite any other provision of this Code~~ clauses 10.20 – 10.30~~, only the mover of a motion referred to in clause 17.15 and the Chairperson, if they are not the mover of the motion, can speak to the motion before it is put.

~~18.18~~17.19 A motion of dissent cannot be moved against a ruling by the Chairperson under clause 17.15.

~~18.19~~17.20 A motion moved under clause 17.15 with the leave of the Chairperson cannot be voted on unless or until it has been seconded.

~~19~~18 TIME LIMITS ON COUNCIL MEETINGS

~~19.1~~18.1 Meetings of the Council and committees of the Council are to conclude no later than 10:00pm.

~~19.2 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at 9:00pm, the Council or the committee may, by resolution, extend the time of the meeting.~~

~~19.3~~18.2 If the business of the meeting is unfinished at 10:00pm, and the Council does not resolve to extend the meeting, the Chairperson must either:

a) defer consideration of the remaining items of business on the agenda to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, or

b) adjourn the meeting to a time, date and place fixed by the Chairperson.

~~19.4~~18.3 Clause 18.2 does not limit the ability of the Council or a committee of the Council to resolve to adjourn a meeting at any time. The resolution adjourning the meeting must fix the time, date and place that the meeting is to be adjourned to.

~~19.5~~18.4 Where a meeting is adjourned under clause 18.2 or 18.3, the General Manager must:

a) individually notify each Councillor of the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene, and

b) publish the time, date and place at which the meeting will reconvene on the Council's website and in such other manner that the General Manager is satisfied is likely to bring notice of the time, date and place of the reconvened meeting to the attention of as many people as possible.

~~20~~19 AFTER THE MEETING

Minutes of Meetings

~~20.1~~19.1 Council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the Council.

Clause 19.1 reflects section 375(1) of the Act.

~~20.2~~19.2 At a minimum, the General Manager must ensure that the following matters are recorded in Council's minutes:

a) The names of Councillors attending a Council meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link.

b) details of each motion moved at a Council meeting and of any amendments moved to it,

c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,

d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and

e) such other matters specifically required under this Code.

~~20.3~~19.3 The minutes of a Council meeting must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the Council.

Clause 19.3 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

~~20.4~~19.4 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

~~20.5~~19.5 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at the subsequent meeting.

Clause 19.5 reflects section 375(2) of the Act.

~~20.6~~19.6 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

~~20.7~~19.7 The confirmed minutes of a Council meeting must be published on the Council's website. This clause does not prevent the Council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of its meetings on its website prior to their confirmation.

Access to correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, a meeting

~~20.8~~19.8 The Council and committees of the Council must, during or at the close of a meeting, or during the business day following the meeting, give reasonable access to any person to inspect correspondence and reports laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting.

Clause 19.8 reflects section 11(1) of the Act.

~~20.9~~19.9 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the correspondence or reports relate to a matter that was received or discussed or laid on the table at, or submitted to, the meeting when the meeting was closed to the public.

Clause 19.9 reflects section 11(2) of the Act.

~~20.10~~19.10 Clause 19.8 does not apply if the Council or the committee resolves at the meeting, when open to the public, that the correspondence or reports are to be treated as confidential because they relate to a matter specified in section 10A(2) of the Act.

Clause 19.10 reflects section 11(3) of the Act.

~~20.11~~19.11 Correspondence or reports to which clauses 19.9 and 19.10 apply are to be marked with the relevant provision of section 10A (2) of the Act that applies to the correspondence or report.

Implementation of decisions of the Council

~~20.12~~19.12 The General Manager is to implement, without undue delay, lawful decisions of the Council.

Clause 19.12 reflects section 335(b) of the Act.

~~21~~20 COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Application of this Part

~~21.1~~20.1 This Part only applies to committees of the Council whose members are all Councillors.

Council committees whose members are all Councillors

~~21.2~~20.2 The Council may, by resolution, establish such committees as it considers necessary.

~~21.3~~20.3 A committee of the Council is to consist of the Mayor and such other Councillors as are elected by the Councillors or appointed by the Council.

~~21.4~~20.4 The quorum for a meeting of a committee of the Council is to be:

a) such number of members as the Council decides, or

b) if the Council has not decided a number – a majority of the members of the committee.

Functions of committees

~~21.5~~20.5 The Council must specify the functions of each of its committees when the committee is established but may from time to time amend those functions.

Notice of committee meetings

~~21.6~~20.6 The General Manager must send to each Councillor, regardless of whether they are a committee member, at least three (3) days before each meeting of the committee, a notice

specifying:

a) the time, date and place of the meeting, and

b) the business proposed to be considered at the meeting.

~~21.7~~20.7 Notice of less than three (3) days may be given of a committee meeting called in an emergency.

~~**Attendance at Committee Meetings**~~

~~21.8 A committee member (other than the Mayor) ceases to be a member of a committee if the committee member:~~

~~a) has been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the committee without having given reasons acceptable to the committee for the member's absences, or~~

~~b) has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the committee acceptable reasons for the member's absences.~~

~~21.9 Clause 20.8 does not apply if all of the members of the Council are members of the committee.~~

Non-members entitled to attend committee meetings

~~21.10~~20.8 A Councillor who is not a member of a committee of the Council is entitled to attend, and to speak at a meeting of the committee. However, the Councillor is not entitled:

a) to give notice of business for inclusion in the agenda for the meeting, or

b) to move or second a motion at the meeting, or

c) to vote at the meeting.

Chairperson and deputy Chairperson of Council committees

~~21.11~~20.9 The Chairperson of each committee of the Council must be:

a) the Mayor, or

b) if the Mayor does not wish to be the Chairperson of a committee, a member of the committee elected by the Council, or

c) if the Council does not elect such a member, a member of the committee elected by the committee.

~~21.12~~20.10 The Council may elect a member of a committee of the Council as deputy Chairperson of the committee. If the Council does not elect a deputy Chairperson of such a committee, the committee may elect a deputy Chairperson.

~~21.13~~20.11 If neither the Chairperson nor the deputy Chairperson of a committee of the Council is able or willing to preside at a meeting of the committee, the committee must elect a member of the committee to be acting Chairperson of the committee.

~~21.14~~20.12 The Chairperson is to preside at a meeting of a committee of the Council. If the Chairperson is unable or unwilling to preside, the deputy Chairperson (if any) is to preside at the meeting, but if neither the Chairperson nor the deputy Chairperson is able or willing to preside, the acting Chairperson is to preside at the meeting.

Procedure in committee meetings

~~21.15~~20.13 Subject to any specific requirements of this Code, each committee of the Council may regulate its own procedure. The provisions of this Code are to be taken to apply to all committees of the Council ~~unless the Council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with this clause~~.

~~21.16~~20.14 Whenever the voting on a motion put to a meeting of the committee is equal, the Chairperson of the committee is to have a casting vote as well as an original vote unless the

Council or the committee determines otherwise in accordance with clause 20.13.

20.15 Voting at a Council committee meeting is to be by open means (such as on the voices, by show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system).

Mayoral minutes

~~21.17~~20.16 The provisions of this Code relating to Mayoral minutes also apply to meetings of committees of the Council in the same way they apply to meetings of the Council.

Closure Of Committee Meetings to The Public

~~21.18~~20.17 The provisions of the Act and Part 14 of this Code apply to the closure of meetings of committees of the Council to the public in the same way they apply to the closure of meetings of the Council to the public.

~~21.19~~20.18 If a committee of the Council passes a resolution, or makes a recommendation, during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the Chairperson must make the resolution or recommendation public as soon as practicable after the meeting or part of the meeting has ended, and report the resolution or recommendation to the next meeting of the Council. The resolution or recommendation must also be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

20.19 Resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the Chairperson under clause 20.18 during a part of the meeting that is livestreamed where practicable~~webcast~~.

20.20 The General Manager must cause business papers for items of business considered during a meeting, or part of a meeting, that is closed to the public, to be published on Council's website as soon as practicable after the information contained in the business papers ceases to be confidential.

~~21.20~~20.21 The General Manager must consult with the committee and any other affected persons before publishing information on the Council's website under clause 20.20 and provide reasons for why the information has ceased to be confidential.

Disorder in committee meetings

~~21.21~~20.22 The provisions of the Act, the Regulation and this Code relating to the maintenance of order in Council meetings apply to meetings of committees of the Council in the same way as they apply to meetings of the Council.

Minutes of Council committee meetings

~~21.22~~20.23 Each committee of the Council is to keep full and accurate minutes of the proceedings of its meetings. At a minimum, a committee must ensure that the following matters are recorded in the committee's minutes:

a) The names of Councillors attending a meeting and whether they attended the meeting in person or by audio-visual link,

b) details of each motion moved at a meeting and of any amendments moved to it,

c) the names of the mover and seconder of the motion or amendment,

d) whether the motion or amendment was passed or lost, and

e) such other matters specifically required under this Code.

~~21.23~~20.24 All voting at meetings of committees of the Council (including meetings that are closed to the public), must be recorded in the minutes of meetings with the names of Councillors who voted for and against each motion or amendment, (including the use of the casting vote), being recorded.

~~21.24~~20.25 The minutes of meetings of each committee of the Council must be confirmed at a

subsequent meeting of the committee.

~~21.25~~20.26 Any debate on the confirmation of the minutes is to be confined to whether the minutes are a full and accurate record of the meeting they relate to.

~~21.26~~20.27 When the minutes have been confirmed, they are to be signed by the person presiding at that subsequent meeting.

~~21.27~~20.28 The confirmed minutes of a meeting may be amended to correct typographical or administrative errors after they have been confirmed. Any amendment made under this clause must not alter the substance of any decision made at the meeting.

~~21.28~~20.29 The confirmed minutes of a meeting of a committee of the Council must be published on the Council's website. This clause does not prevent the Council from also publishing unconfirmed minutes of meetings of committees of the Council on its website prior to their confirmation.

~~22~~21 IRREGULARITIES

~~22.1~~21.1 Proceedings at a meeting of a Council or a Council committee are not invalidated because of:

a) a vacancy in a civic office, or

b) a failure to give notice of the meeting to any Councillor or committee member, or

c) any defect in the election or appointment of a Councillor or committee member, or

d) a failure of a Councillor or a committee member to declare a conflict of interest, or to refrain from the consideration or discussion of, or vote on, the relevant matter, at a Council or committee meeting in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, or

e) a failure to comply with this Code.

Clause 21.1 reflects section 374 of the Act.

~~23~~22 ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

22.A Administrative changes to this Code can be made without needing Council adoption or a resolution. An administrative change is amending the:

a) name and titles of Council Officials or dignitaries, references to other organisations or bodies; and

b) layout, numbering, grammar and syntax, spelling and the policy administration part of this Code.

~~24~~23 POLICY DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Act	means the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW).
act of disorder	means an act of disorder as defined in clause 15.10 of this Code
amendment	in relation to an original motion, means a motion moving an amendment to that motion. An amendment is a change to the motion before the council, and takes place while that motion is being debated. An amendment to a motion must be put forward in a motion itself.
audio recorder	any device capable of recording speech
audio-visual link	means a facility that enables audio and visual communication between persons at different places.
business day	means any day except Saturday or Sunday or any other day the whole or part of which is observed as a public holiday throughout New South Wales

Chairperson	in relation to a meeting of the Council – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by section 369 of the Act and clauses 6.1 and 6.2 of this Code, and in relation to a meeting of a committee – means the person presiding at the meeting as provided by clause 20.9 of this Code
this Code	means the Council's adopted Code of Meeting Practice
committee of the Council	means a committee established by the Council in accordance with clause 20.2 of this Code (being a committee consisting only of Councillors) or the Council when it has resolved itself into committee of the whole under clause 12.1
Council official	has the same meaning it has in the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW includes Councillors, members of staff of Council (employed on a permanent, temporary, casual or part-time basis), consultants, contractors, volunteers, administrators, Council committee members, delegates of Council and for the purposes of clause 4.16 of Council's Code of Conduct, Council advisers.
Council	means Cessnock City Council
day	means calendar day
division	means a request by two Councillors under clause 11.7 of this Code requiring the recording of the names of the Councillors who voted both for and against a motion
Englobo	means all together
~~**foreshadowed amendment**~~	~~means a proposed amendment foreshadowed by a Councillor under clause 10.18 of this Code during debate on the first amendment~~
~~**foreshadowed motion**~~	~~means a motion foreshadowed by a Councillor under clause 10.17 of this Code during debate on an original motion~~
livestream	means a video broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet concurrently with the meeting
motion	A motion is a proposal to be considered by Council at a meeting. It is a request to do something or to express an opinion about something. A motion formally puts the subject of the motion as an item of business for Council.
open voting	means voting on the voices or by a show of hands or by a visible electronic voting system or similar means
planning decision	means a decision made in the exercise of a function of a Council under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (NSW) including any decision relating to a development application, an environmental planning instrument, a development control plan or a development contribution plan under that Act, but not including the making of an order under Division 9.3 of Part 9 of that Act
performance improvement order	means an order issued under section 438A of the Act
quorum	means the minimum number of Councillors or committee members necessary to conduct a meeting

resolution	A resolution is a motion that has been passed by a majority of Councillors at the meeting. While in practice it means the 'Council decision', the word 'resolution' also indicates the process by which the decision was made.
the Regulation	means the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (NSW)
~~**webcast**~~	~~a video or audio broadcast of a meeting transmitted across the internet either concurrently with the meeting or at a later time~~
year	means the period beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June

~~25 POLICY AUTHORISATIONS~~

~~No.~~	~~Authorised Function~~	~~Authorised Business Unit / Role(s)~~

3524 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate	Corporate and Community Services		
Responsible Officer	Corporate Governance ~~and Council Support Coordinator~~Manager		
Associated Procedure	N/A		
Policy Review Date	23-10-2027	**Is this a local policy pursuant to Part 3, Chapter 7 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)?**	No
Document Reference Number	To be updated by Governance upon finalisation of Policy		

This policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation:

- s360 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)
- *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (NSW)
- Model Code of Meeting Practice for Local Councils in NSW 2025~~0~~

This policy contributes to the achievement of the following desired outcome or objectives as per Council's Delivery Program:

- 5.3.7 "Continue to manage Council's governance functions and statutory requirements":
- Action 5.3.7.c: Manage Council's corporate governance in accordance with regulations

Related Documents (include reference document numbers)	▪ Code of Conduct (DOC2018/086716) and Code of Conduct Procedures (DOC2018/086682) ▪ Conflict of Interest Guideline (DOC2020/016395) ▪ Conflict of Interest Policy – Dealing with Conflicts of Interest throughout the Development Process (DOC2022/189148) ▪ Conflict of Interest Guideline – Dealing with Conflicts of Interest throughout the Development Process (DOC2022/189150) ▪ Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy (DOC2019/121988) ▪ Privacy Management Plan (DOC2014/005148)

3625 POLICY HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes

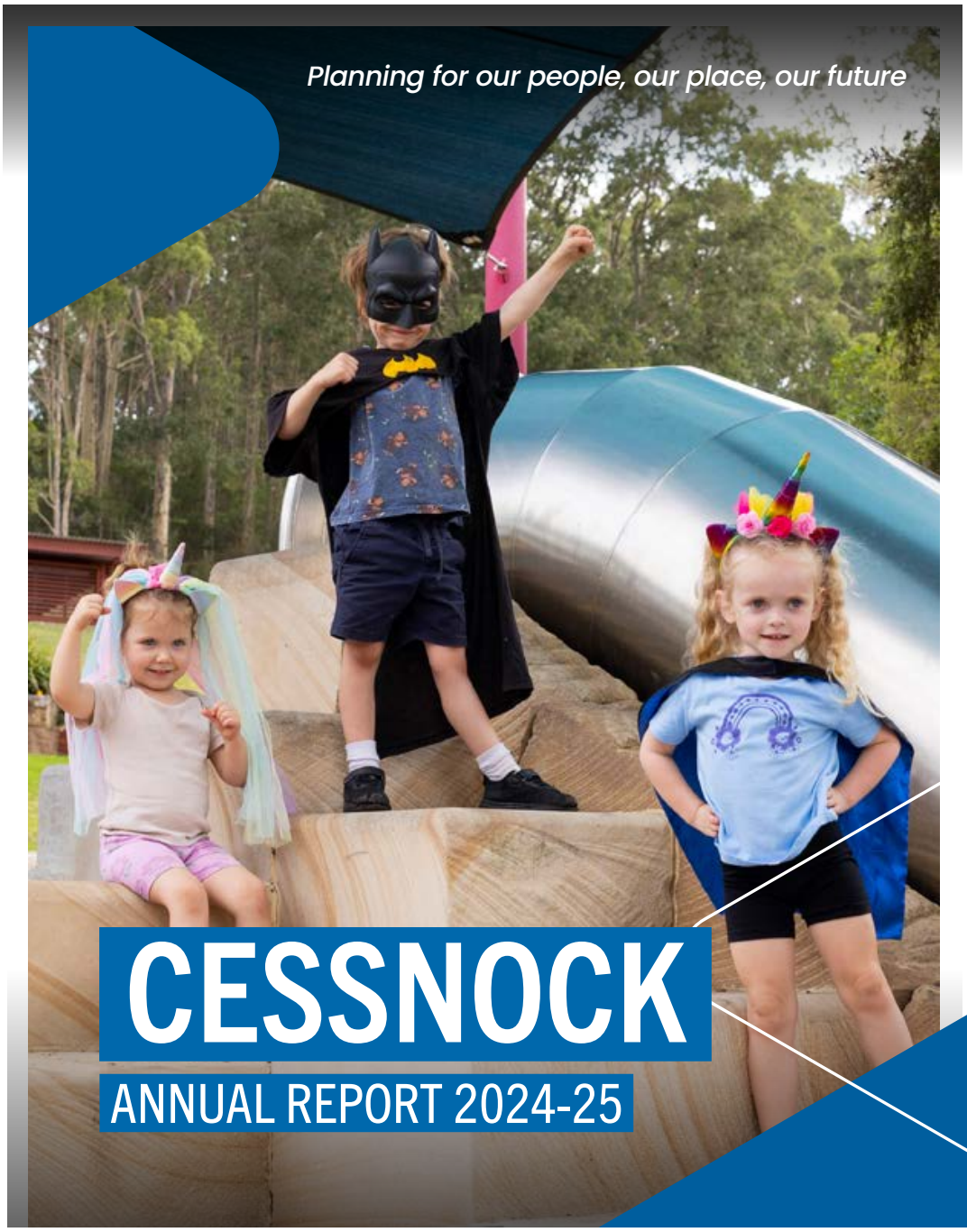
1	21 June 2000	Initial Adoption by Council
2	2 February 2009	Addition of point 8 to clause 10.13 – Page 39
3	18 February 2009	Major Review – all pages
4	20 January 2010	Changes to clause 10.1.5 Order of Business and clause 10.13.8 the words unanimous vote be replaced by two-thirds majority – Page 34 & 39
5	23 June 2010	Remove Questions Without Notice from the Order of Business – Page 34
6	21 July 2010	Procedure for election of Deputy Mayor – pages 10 & 87
7	17 November 2010	Include the Agenda item "Questions for the Next Meeting" – pages 2, 8, 34 & 46
8	19 March 2014	Major Review – all pages
9	20 February 2019 / CC10/2019	Mandatory Review following release of new Model Code of Meeting Practice on 14 December 2018 – all pages
10	15 May 2019 / CC35/2019	Minor Changes to wording. Clauses 4.2,4.9,4.11 & 10.31
11	9 December 2020 / CC112/2020	Minor changes to reflect monthly meetings and notice period for submitting notices of motion and correct minor number referencing errors.
12	15 June 2022 / CC46/2022	Mandatory Review following LG Election
13	1 November 2023 (Administrative update)	Minor change to clause 15.2 Points of Order to correct referencing error - clause referenced updated to 1.6 from 2.1.
14	23 October 2024 / CC55/2024	Mandatory Review following LG Election Change 'Pre-Meeting Briefing Sessions' to 'Agenda Review Meetings' to reflect Council terminology Change 'Public forum' to 'Public access' to reflect Council terminology Minor administrative changes and subsequent changes to clause numbers.
15	September 2025	Update following release of revised Model Code of Conduct, including: • Removal of 'Statement of Ethical Obligations' • Prohibition on pre-meeting briefing sessions • New clauses providing powers to the Mayor

~~37~~26 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – REQUIRED NOTICE FOR PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

MOTIONS	MOVED WITHOUT NOTICE
Change the Order of Business	Yes, see clause 8.2

Business Without Notice (matter of urgency)	Yes, see clause 9.3
Dissent from Chairperson's Ruling on Point of Order	Yes, see clause 9.6
Adjournment of Meeting	Yes, see clause 18
Limitation to Numbers of Speakers (questions be now put)	Yes – after at least 2 speakers have spoken in favour of motion or amendment and at least 2 against motion or amendment. See clauses 10.19 and 10.20
Deferment of a Matter	Yes, see clause 10.4
Extension of Time to Debate an Item	Yes, see clause 0



CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL CESSNOCK LGA



Acknowledgement of Country

Cessnock City Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. We acknowledge these Aboriginal peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices and operations are located, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

Journey Through Time, created by local school students and artist Steven Campbell.

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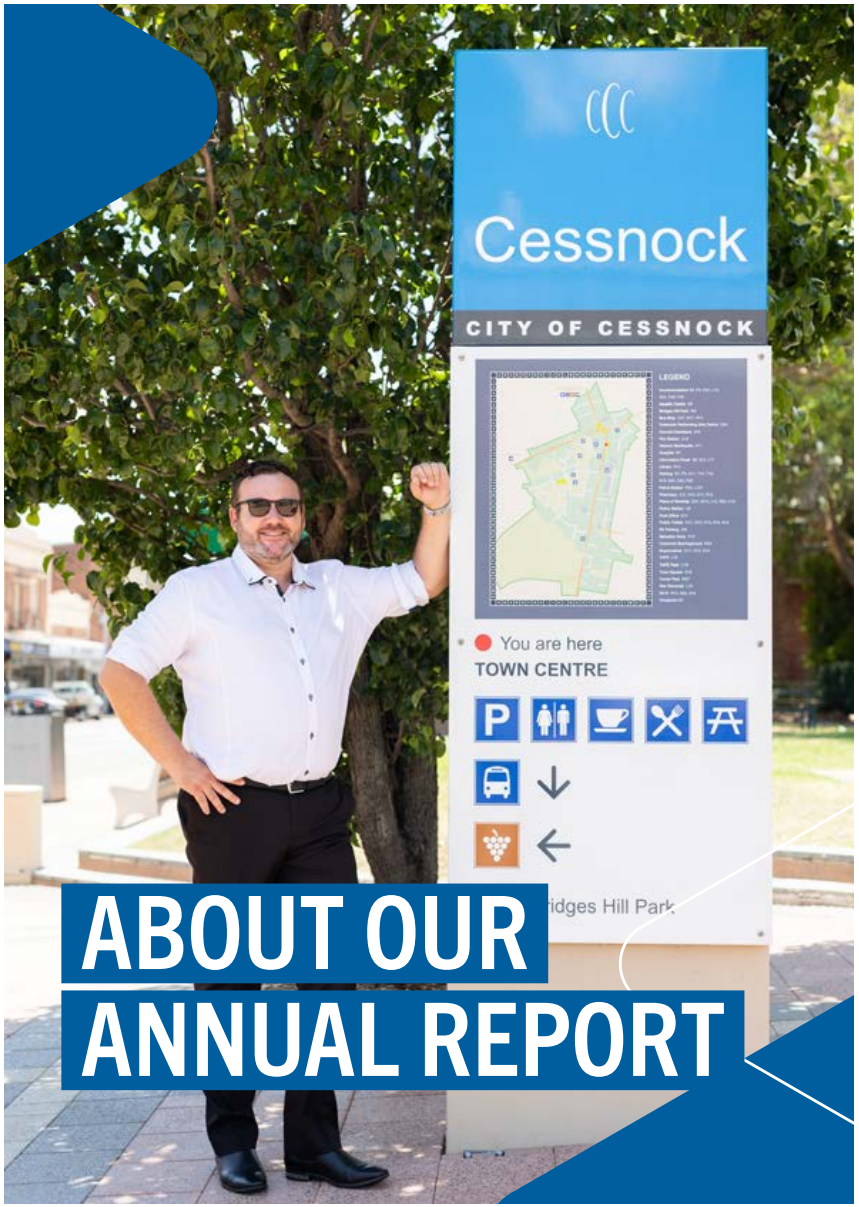
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About our annual report

This is our Council's report to our community and shows how we are delivering on our vision during the 2024-25 financial year. It is prepared in accordance with Section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 and the guidelines outlined in the Office of Local Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines.

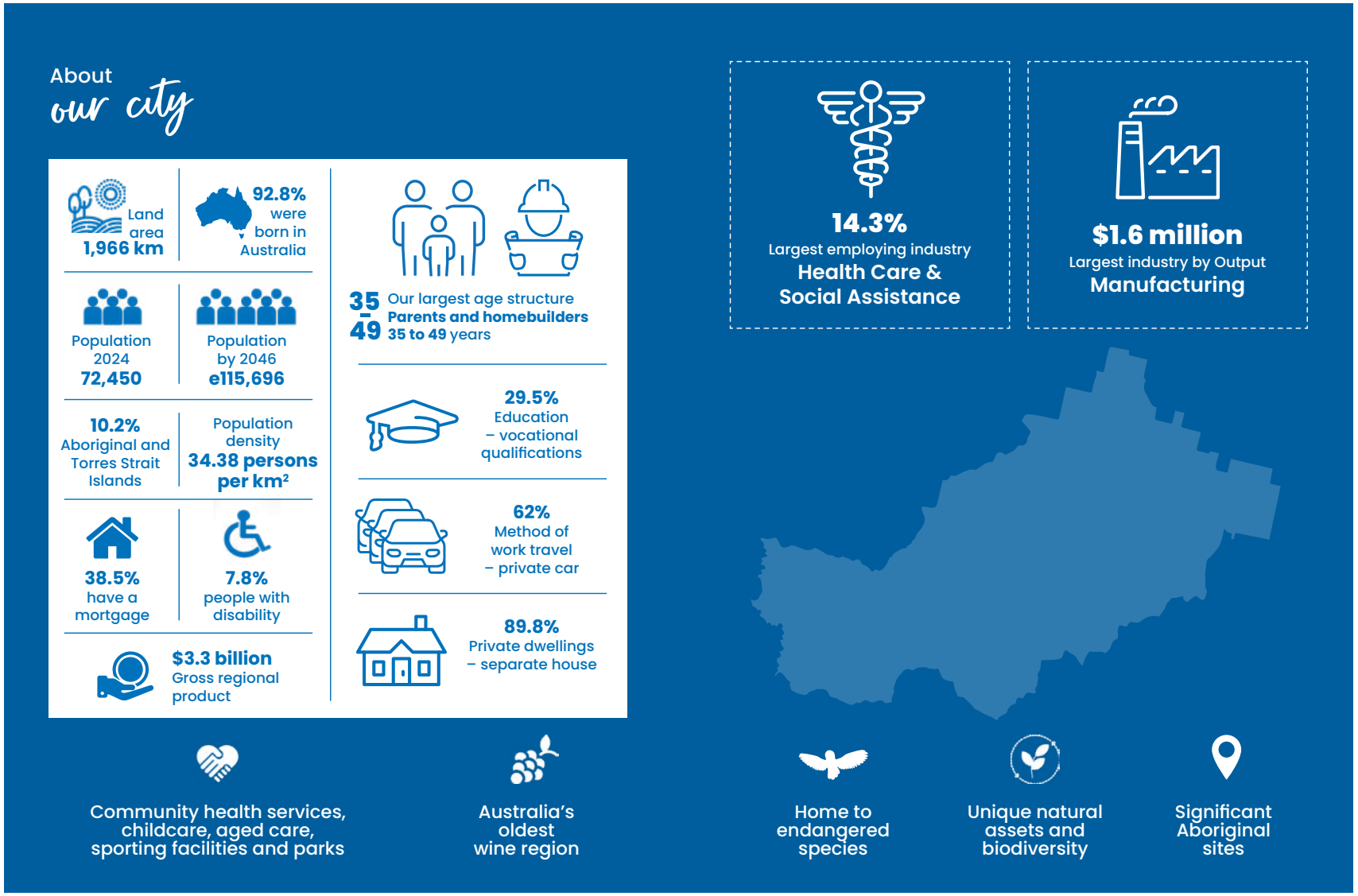
This report provides an overview of our financial and operational performance against the **Community Strategic Plan, Cessnock 2036**, the **Delivery Program 2022-2026** and **Operational Plan 2024-25**.

In this report, we represent our commitment to community priorities and inform our community and stakeholders about our achievements and challenges. It is also a mechanism to inform and engage our employees on how we have performed over the year, and how our work contributes to achieving our community vision and expectations for the future.

This report is divided into the following sections:

- Our Year in Review – a summary of us over the 2024-25 financial year
- Our Corporate Governance – how we manage delivery to our community
- Our Performance – our results against our five strategic themes
- Our Accountability – our internal regulators
- Our Legislative Compliance – meeting government requirements
- Our financials – details on how we managed our finances




About
our city
Land area
1,966 km
92.8% were born in Australia
Population 2024
72,450
Population by 2046
e115,696
10.2% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands
Population density
34.38 persons per km²
38.5% have a mortgage
7.8% people with disability
$3.3 billion
Gross regional product
35 - 49
Our largest age structure
Parents and homebuilders
35 to 49 years
29.5%
Education – vocational qualifications
62%
Method of work travel – private car
89.8%
Private dwellings – separate house
14.3%
Largest employing industry
Health Care & Social Assistance
$1.6 million
Largest industry by Output
Manufacturing
Community health services, childcare, aged care, sporting facilities and parks
Australia's oldest wine region
Home to endangered species
Unique natural assets and biodiversity
Significant Aboriginal sites



Cessnock

Attractive, thriving and welcoming

Cessnock City is located in the Hunter Valley, New South Wales, about 120 kilometres north of Sydney, 58 kilometres southwest of Newcastle Airport and approximately 40 kilometres west of The University of Newcastle and the Port of Newcastle. Our area is located on the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people and has a rich Indigenous heritage with many towns, villages, and localities bearing Aboriginal names including Kurri Kurri (meaning "the beginning" or "the first") and Wollombi ("meeting place" or "meeting of the waters"). Our area's local biodiversity is significant, both in the Hunter Valley and NSW, with more than 65 threatened species of plants and animals, including nine endangered ecological communities. Critically endangered species, including the Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot use our local bushland for food and shelter. The Regent Honeyeater is also known to breed here. Listed as critically endangered, the North Rothbury. Persoonia (persoonia pauciflora), is only found in a small area in North Rothbury. European settlement dates from the 1820s when pastoralists arrived using land mainly for farming, market gardening and timber getting. The Great North Road was constructed in the 1830s, linking the Hawkesbury and Hunter Valleys. The township of Cessnock developed from 1850 as a service centre at the junction of the Great North Road. Significant development in Cessnock occurred when coal was struck in 1892 and several coal mines were established. Changes to the mining industry led to the closure of the vast majority of mines, resulting in a decline in population in many villages and townships, especially since the 1980s. Many areas have undergone a change in character, with rural residential housing developments becoming popular. There has been a rise in the wine and tourism industry, with many vineyards at Allandale, Mount View, Pokolbin and Rothbury, as well as small cottages and farms used mainly as weekend retreats.



Our Community *Vision*

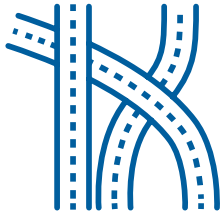
Cessnock is a cohesive and welcoming community living in an attractive and sustainable rural environment. There is a diversity of business and employment opportunities supported by accessible infrastructure and land services which effectively meet community needs.

Our services *at a glance*

- **1** Performance theatre
- **1** Art exhibition
- **1** Youth Centre
- **2** Libraries
- **12** Cemeteries
- **13** Community halls
- **1** Waste recycling centre
- **2** Indoor sports facilities
- **4** Skate parks
- **42** Playgrounds
- **56** Parks
- **4** Hit up walls
- **3** Swimming pools
- **25** Public toilets
- **37** BBQ facilities
- **6** Off leash dog areas
- **295 ha** Open Space
- **1** Airport
- **1** Outdoor cinema

Our assets

Cessnock has continued to experience solid population growth rates. Our area's current growth rate is one of the highest of all New South Wales. We have adopted the asset management policy and strategies to manage our public assets. These documents inform the Long-Term Financial Plan that sets the funding levels for renewal and maintenance works over a 10-year period. Our approach is to fund natural asset consumption or deterioration to gradually improve the overall network and portfolio condition over time while balancing risk and level of service.



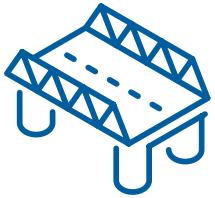
Road & road infrastructure network

Bus shelters - **90**
Carpark - **123**
Pedestrian refuge - **191**
Roundabouts - **37**
Pathways – **177 km**
Kerb & gutters – **535 km**
Roads sealed – **731 km**
Roads unsealed - **326 km**
Runway and taxiway – **4km**



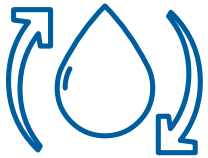
Buildings

Administration buildings - **5**
Airport buildings - **4**
Amenities/toilet blocks - **63**
Childcare buildings - **22**
Club houses - **21**
Commercial buildings - **2**
Community facilities - **25**
Emergency service buildings - **19**
Grandstands - **5**
Libraries - **2**
Plant/workshops - **24**
Residential buildings - **3**
Sheds/shelters/carports - **59**
Sports centres - **7**



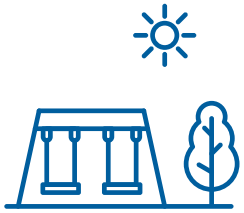
Bridges

Timber - **42**
Concrete - **28**
Steel/concrete composite – **9**
Pedestrian - **40**
Culverts - **81**



Stormwater network

Pits - **8256**
Pipes - **191 km**
Culverts - **5.7 km**



Open spaces & other structures

Local parks - **29.45h**
District parks - **56.15h**
Regional parks - **67.95h**
Passive parks - **50.36h**
Fencing – **72.5 km**
Automated irrigation Systems - **32**
Shelters - **156**
BBQs - **26**
Picnic tables - **244**
Seats/benches - **673**
Bins enclosures - **67**
Signs - **558**
Cricket wickets – **18**
Hockey surface - **1**
Goal posts/hoops - **152**
Pools - **7**
Lighting (Inc. poles, bollard) - **444**
Skate parks - **4**
Tennis courts - **39**
Netball courts - **25**
Basketball/multi-sports courts - **11**
Playgrounds inc. bike circuits and splash pads - **44**



Mayor's message

Daniel Watton

DRAFT

The 2024-25 Financial Year marked another important step in ensuring our Council remains sustainable, accountable and responsive to the needs of our growing community.

As Mayor, I remain focused on strengthening the foundations of our organisation so we can continue to deliver the infrastructure and services our residents expect and deserve – today and well into the future. This means ensuring Council operates with transparency and financial discipline, while embracing opportunities for innovation, collaboration and long-term planning.

Despite navigating economic and environmental pressures, I'm proud that Council has stayed firmly focused on delivering value for our community. We've enhanced community services and seen progress on several key infrastructure projects, including the new landfill development at Cessnock Waste Management Centre, upgrades to the Cessnock Netball Courts, Sawyers Gully Road improvements and the completion of Orange Street Abermain, and the continued delivery of the Branxton to Greta Pathway.

This Annual Report reflects an organisation evolving to meet the challenges ahead, while continuing to support the daily needs of our residents. We've taken meaningful steps to ensure our planning keeps pace with growth across the Cessnock LGA, and aligns with the needs of our town centres, villages and rural areas.

Between maintaining what we have, and preparing for what's to come, it's essential we get the balance right. I believe we are on the right path.

Thank you to our staff, Councillors and community for continuing to shape a stronger, more resilient Cessnock.



Interim General Manager's message

Peter Chrystal

Cessnock City Council has experienced continuity and change through the reporting period for Financial Year 2024/25. We welcomed and onboarded a new cohort of Councillors who were elected at local government elections in September, and farewelled outgoing General Manager Ken Liddell towards the end of the financial year. Ken achieved a great deal during his three years in the role, building our capacity to deliver for the community and leaving us far better positioned to respond to the challenges we face.

Throughout these transitions, we continued to provide the services and infrastructure valued by our community. As highlighted in this annual report, we've delivered a significant program of work and achieved a number of key milestones across a range of areas over the reporting period.

We've sharpened our focus on strategic planning and long-term decision-making to ensure we're building a resilient and future-ready Council. This has included refining internal processes, advancing major infrastructure projects, and engaging meaningfully with our community to better understand local priorities. These efforts not only support our day-to-day operations, but also ensure we are laying a solid foundation for the region's growth and prosperity.

Importantly, we continued our critical journey towards financial sustainability – ensuring we remain a responsible and capable organisation well into the future.

It is vital that Cessnock City Council operates responsibly and responsively, in the best interests of our community. This annual report shows that we continue to do that.

Our principles

Social justice

Promoting access, equity, participation and rights

Partnerships and collaboration

Working together to achieve our vision

Opportunity

Creating and taking opportunities for the advancement of the City

Resilience

Supporting each other to survive, adapt and thrive in the face of extreme challenges

Sustainability

Enabling a sustainable community, economy and environment through effective leadership



Our Elected Officials


Daniel Watton
Mayor


Sarah Pascoe
Councillor


Mitchell Lea
Councillor


Mitchell Hill
Deputy Mayor


Jessica Jurd
Councillor


Sophie Palmowski
Councillor


Susanne Dixon
Councillor


Rosa Grine
Councillor


Jay Suvaal
Councillor


Mark Mason
Councillor


Tracey Harrington
Councillor


Chris Madden
Councillor


Quintin King
Councillor

Our Executive

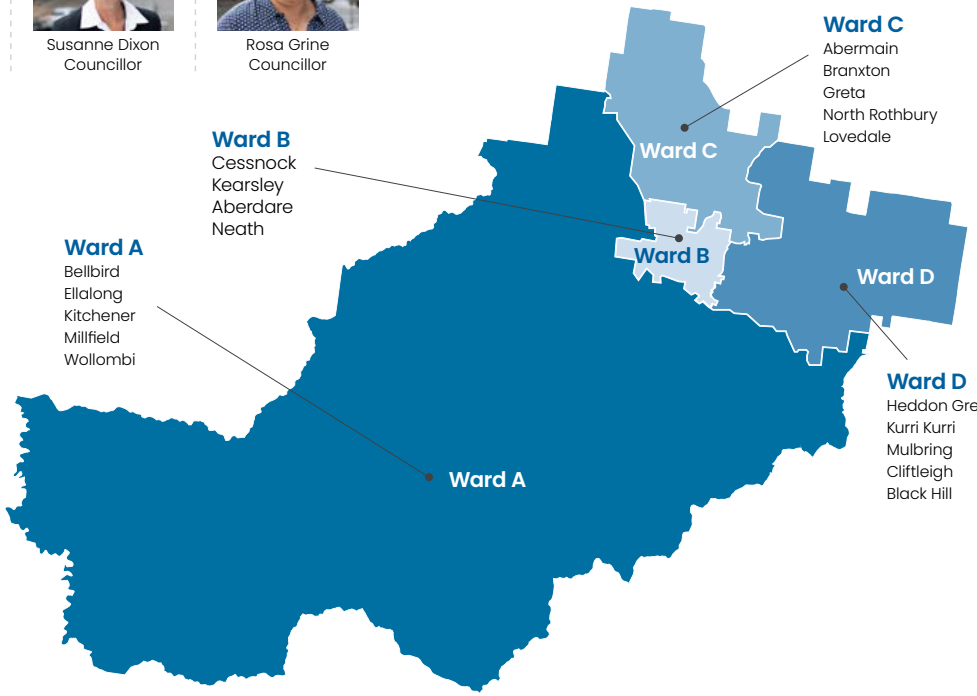

Ken Liddell
General Manager


Robert Maginnity
Director - Corporate & Community Services


Peter Chrystal
Director - Planning & Environment


Paul McLachlan
Director - Works & Infrastructure


Michelle Honeyman
People & Culture Manager



Our Wards

Our organisation

Workforce diversity

Our core values and people are the foundation of our success. We reflect our values as individuals and as an organisation. Our goal is to retain and support our employees and recruit new employees who share our values. To achieve our desired workplace culture, we aim to establish a supportive atmosphere where employees feel valued and are empowered to develop and grow in a productive environment.

We are committed to supporting the expansion of opportunities to employ apprentices, trainees and graduates. We are focused on supporting and creating secure local employment opportunities in our area.

We strive to have diversity in our workforce and an inclusive and flexible work environment where our differences are celebrated and valued.

We continue to work towards zero harm within our workplace by providing a healthy and safe work environment for our employees.

Gender

53.8% Male

46.2% Female

12% <25

19% 25-34

22% 35-44

21% 45-54

21% 55-64

5% 65+



EEO measures

31 Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander

6 Disability

29 Non-English-Speaking Background

12 Ethnic Minority





Our year in review

Highest priority issues

1. Roads

""Prioritising infrastructure particularly roads and traffic control."

"Traffic management in the Cessnock area; the new estates are outgrowing the traffic control, congestion is a major problem including damaging the road."

"Roads near schools are not safe because of speeding and disrepair."

2. Costs

"Rising cost of living in the area, specifically housing prices."

"Rising prices in food shopping and house prices, daily living expenses."

3. Recreation & Leisure

"Lack of infrastructure for community."

"More recreational activities, e.g. introduce a cinema, gated playgrounds."

"More pedestrian paths and cycleways."



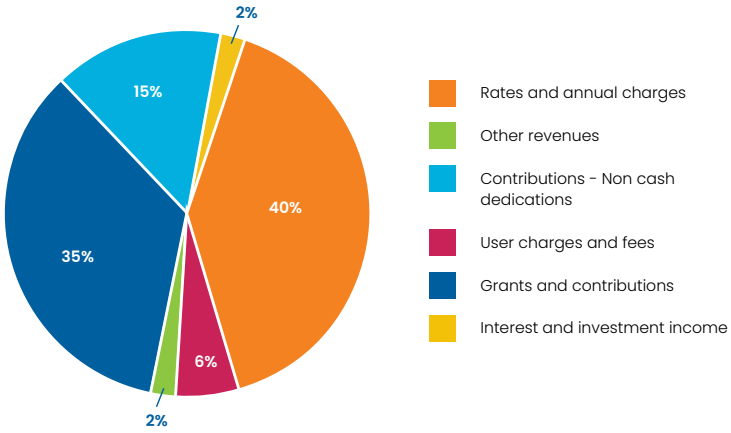
Community Involvement

Our engagement activities are guided by the best practice International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) model. This is used to help us understand any changes in our community's aspirations for our future. Consultation with members of our community and stakeholders through surveys, online discussions, community events, workshops and local conversations ensured that our community had the opportunity to participate in the development of our plan. The results of this engagement were considered when formulating our CSP for the next 10 years.

June 2023	Australian Liveability Census	Online benchmarking survey, independently run More than 15,000 responses
June to October 2024	Community pop-ups	12 face-to-face sessions. 400+ conversations
June to October 2024	Formal submissions portal	Community comments and submissions
June to October 2024	'Have your Say' digital forums campaign	192 contributions
February 2025	Community Satisfaction Survey	Phone survey, independently managed 402 participants

Financial summary

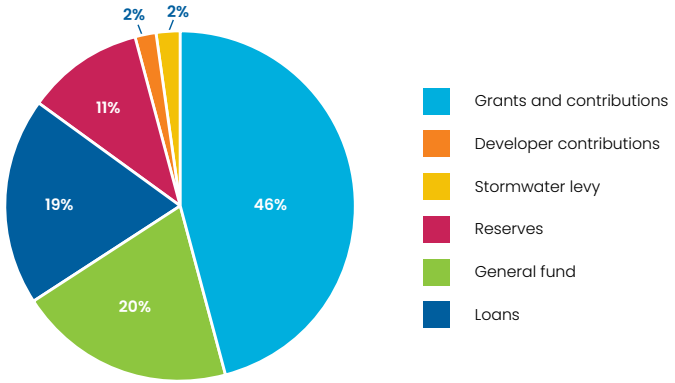
What were our sources of income?



$61.3m received in grants and contributions
$26.4m non-cash dedications
$4m other revenues
$71.2m raised in rates and charges

Works projects snapshot

Source of funds



General Definition

Capital Projects consist of projects that build new community infrastructure. They can include road improvements such as resurfacing or intersection upgrades, shared pathways, drainage improvements, asset renewal works, playground upgrades or replacement, new facilities such as sports amenities and libraries, and environmental projects such as erosion control and bank stabilisation.

Asset Management Prioritisation

The Asset Management Prioritisation programs have been developed to bridge the gap between current/historic funding levels and the community's desired level of service. It targets assets or asset components that are falling under this service level and brings them back in-line with our community's expectation.

Highlights

Key projects



Cessnock City Council Waste Facility - new landfill development



Wollombi Road



Cessnock Netball court resurfacing



Sawyers Gully Road



Kurri Kurri Netball Facilities



Weston Bears amenities and grandstand



Orange Street, Abermain



Branxton to Greta pathway



South Cessnock flood mitigation

Challenges

Economic

In any year, the economy has a significant impact on expected revenues and expenses, which in turn affects the demand for certain services we provide. The costs of materials and services and return on investment are affected by changes in inflation rates and interest rates. Recent global and national events have highlighted our current economic climates and cost of living pressures on many Australian households.

Environmental

Many of our maintenance and construction activities priorities and programs are also impacted by climate change and subsequent weather events such as floods, bushfires and storm events. This can cause the re-evaluation of our activities and priorities, which significantly impacts our future plans.

Asset management

Recent local government reviews have highlighted the shortfall in infrastructure operation, maintenance and renewals expenditure, as well as the level of service expected by our community. This is a common issue. If appropriate asset management processes are not adopted, then assets can deteriorate to the point where agreed service levels are no longer achievable.

We continue to identify substantial future commitments that will require funding in the short to medium term, including maintenance funding for these projects. The amounts associated with these future commitments exceeds our capacity to fund the construction or maintenance of the assets within existing budgets. We will need to consider mechanisms in the current term of Council to substantially increase the revenue base or alternatively divest assets and reduce service levels to existing services.

Our path to reconciliation

- 2024-25 saw the development of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Action Plan 2025-2029, in consultation with the Cessnock City Council Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee and our community. The plan was adopted in June.
- In July we celebrated NAIDOC Week "2024" which included a program of 16 events hosted by a number of community service providers across our area.
- On 28 May over 150 people came together at Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) to recognise Reconciliation Week 2025.
- Our Youth Services team also facilitated a wellbeing program for high school Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls at risk or no longer engaging in school.





We are committed to building unity and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples and respect their connections to lands, waters, places and cultures. We acknowledge that within our city boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people, and the Darkinjung people. We aim to create a welcoming community where the histories, cultures, knowledges, achievements and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are acknowledged, respected, considered and celebrated.

We support the national objectives of closing the social, economic and health gaps between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader Australian community and achieving reconciliation in Australia. We will ensure reconciliation is alive in our city by walking together along our two paths to increase our understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and current issues.



Supporting an accessible and inclusive community

Highlights

- Accessibility improvements to our recreational spaces were commenced in line with the NSW Everyone Can Play guidelines:
    - Weston, Ernie Dunlop Park Multipurpose court – upgrade access improvements.
- Kurri Kurri, Birralee Park Playground – accessible pathways, seating and shade.
- Heddon Greta, Avery's Rise - A new local park which includes accessible entry and circulation paths, shade, seating and play opportunities.

Communities that are accessible and inclusive provide greater choice and control for individuals and are vital to enabling people with disability the opportunity to participate equally in community life.

We recognise that the barriers people with disability encounter in participating in community life are not just about the individuals or their personal condition, but from the interaction between people with disability and the physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers they face in their environment.

We play a key role in working to remove barriers so people with disability can participate equally and independently in our community. We are committed to upgrading accessibility within our community infrastructure and events by introducing systems that support inclusion. We are also committed to promoting diversity and fostering positive community attitudes, recognising the key contributions people with disability make in our community.





Key projects included:

- Our Australia Day Awards Ceremony included an Auslan Interpreter, extending the accessibility of Civic Events for our community.
- We incorporated, into our procurement processes, suppliers who provide employment and training opportunities for people with disability including Mai-Wel Enterprises 'Thrive Café' and Aruma Disability Services business 'Aussie Biscuits'.
- Our Senior Festival Portraiture project 'Reach Beyond' included recognition of local woman Ellena Morris OAM, Special Olympics Hunter Valley Sports Coordinator and community volunteer.
- We held 2 'Older Road User' programs which included topics such as 'use of mobility devices on public road network/ footpaths' and 'accessing shared pathways throughout our area'.
- Accessible parking spaces, pathway connections and pedestrian facilities were included in our Kurri Kurri Central Business District upgrade.
- Our community engagement processes focused on incorporating audio visual messaging into our community pages.
- Our customer service support implemented a live chat option for customers experiencing speech difficulties.
- Our 2025 Community Day at Hunter Valley Wildlife included 100 free additional tickets for guests with disability.

Our commitment to the environment

- The South Cessnock Bund Wall project has now been completed with only final mulching and planting to be undertaken, with work commencing on bringing the road section back to an acceptable standard.
- In August and September our focus was on our Koala population which included workshops at Laguna and Mulbring as well as studies including surveys and mapping.
- September also included our Bushland Festival with approximately 1,000 community members and visitors attending the event.
- The final draft of our Floodplain Risk Management Plan has been undertaken with public exhibition due in 2025-26.





Since the 1970's the Hunter Region has experienced a changing climate with the average annual maximum temperature increasing. We are committed to net zero emissions by 2050, and we have committed to both mitigation and adaptation measures for our operations and our community. We are dedicated to facilitating community greenhouse emissions reduction and sustainable actions through factual education and advice to our stakeholders.

Our city is biologically diverse and supports a range of ecosystems, ecological communities and vegetation types including dry rainforest in the Mount View and Bow Wow area, which supports many threatened bird species. Botanists have also counted 29 species of Eucalypt near Kurri Kurri.

We are dedicated to balancing development management with the adequate protection of biodiversity to ensure the outcomes are sustainable for the future viability of both.

Housing diversity

- A review of our Local Environmental Plan 2011 included a Residential theme review. The draft Discussion Paper was endorsed for public exhibition which commenced the week beginning 14 July.
- Our Nulkaba Urban Investigation Area draft traffic study was presented in September, with feedback provided to our consultant. We have approached the Minister for Planning & Public Spaces and held a number of meetings with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water regarding the ongoing Biodiversity restraints.
- Our NAIDOC Week programming included support for young people to connect to secure housing, as well as mental health and other services as required.

Shelter is a basic human need, and issues around housing access impact our wellbeing. Housing affordability and availability has become a major issue across Australia and an indication of the seriousness of this problem is the number of people experiencing housing stress. Forecasts show that our population is set to grow to 115,696 by 2046, stimulating demand for new dwellings.

Our vision is that our community's housing needs are met, and lifestyle aspirations are achieved. We will work to provide a mix of affordable, diverse and sustainable options and a supported community housing sector.



Circular economy

- In July we commenced a new contract with Red Energy for streetlighting and our larger sites, with 50% of power now sourced from renewable sources.
- An electric mower was trialled by our Open Space teams, as well as the installation of 2 dual destination EV chargers stations at Bridges Hill carpark for community use.
- In September we held a movie screening of Rachels Farm at Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) on regenerative agriculture, with star Rachel Ward attending the event.
- Conservation and Natural Environment education programs included our Repair Café in February, a Composting Workshop and Clean-Up Australia Day in March.

Governments worldwide are embracing the circular economy and creating policies to encourage circular practices.

In Australia, the Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence is developing policies and solutions that assist with management of the environmental and social impacts of products throughout their life cycle.

A circular economy is about changing the way we produce, assemble, sell and use products to minimise waste, and to reduce our environmental impact.

The benefits of a circular economy for our community are about:

- getting as much use out of products and materials as possible,
- reducing the amount of waste we generate.







Our corporate governance

Cessnock City Council exists as a body politic under the NSW Local Government Act 1993 (NSW). We deliver our statutory roles, functions and objectives through a democratic and corporate governance structure.

Council's corporate governance focuses on continuous improvement and maturing our frameworks to ensure we are an industry leader, meet community expectations, and fulfil our requirements under legislation.

We meet our objectives by:

- encouraging robust and effective decision making through processes, practices and policies,
- ensuring clear lines of accountability,
- actively maintaining systems that assure the community we are meeting our obligations and managing legislative compliance,
- ensuring our integrity frameworks are robust and fit for purpose including our Code of Conduct, Corruption Prevention Framework, management of conflicts of interest and Public Interest Disclosures reporting.





Service delivery

In 2022 the Office of Local Government introduced continuous improvement as a requirement of the IPR framework, which focuses on ways to better meet our community's expectations regarding priorities and service levels.

We have commenced our path towards continuous improvement with the preparation of a draft Service Delivery Framework that ensures our services are:

- appropriate,
- effective,
- efficient,
- are to a standard guided by our community.

This year we conducted Service Delivery Reviews in relation to our Debt Management and Procurement procedures. Recommendations are currently being prepared and will be reported on in the next financial year.

We will continue to ensure we check in with our community on service level expectations through our regular communications and our Community Engagement Strategy. We will also keep our community informed about any impacts of changes to service levels, impacts to other services, the cost of any changes and how these will be funded, with specific details being reported each year via our Annual Reporting process.

Live

- Youth Services
- Building Assessment and Regulation
- Building Maintenance
- Cemetery Maintenance
- Cultural Development
- Compliance
- Economic Development
- Environmental Health
- Environmental Services
- Executive Support
- Library Services
- Media and Communications
- Performing Arts Centre
- Recreation Facility Maintenance
- Recreation Facility Management
- Traffic Management
- Strategic Land Use Planning

Thrive

- Economic Development
- Hunter Valley Visitors Information Centre services
- Strategic Economic Research & Analysis
- Strategic Land Use Planning

Protect

- Compliance
- Environmental Health
- Environmental Services
- Open Space Management
- Strategic Environmental Planning
- Roads & Drainage Construction
- Strategic Land Use Planning
- Strategic Asset Planning
- Waste Services

Move

- Building maintenance
- Cessnock Airport
- Community Development
- Delivery of Capital Works Program
- Plant and Fleet Management
- Procurement and Stores
- Recreation Facility Management
- Roads Administration and Approvals
- Roads and Drainage Construction
- Roads and Drainage Maintenance
- Strategic Land Use Planning
- Strategic Asset Planning

Lead

- Accounts payable
- Accounts receivable
- Administration
- Corporate Planning projects
- Customer Service
- Development Assessment
- Enterprise Risk Management
- Executive Support
- Financial Accounting
- Geographic Information Systems
- Governance
- Information Technology
- Insurance management
- Integrated Planning and Reporting
- Internal Audit
- Internal Business Support
- Legal Services
- Management Accounting
- Media and Communications
- Payroll
- People & Culture
- Property Administration
- Rates Management
- Records Management
- Strategic Property Management



Cyber Security

Effective cyber security, robust risk controls and strong information management are central to maintaining the confidence and trust of our community and stakeholders. A strong framework for managing information security and cyber risks is a pre-requisite in a modern digital environment. We are working with the NSW and Australian Government to further develop our cyber security capabilities through the national cyber security centre and continue work with stakeholders to promote and grow cyber security capabilities by implementing the digital standards for cyber security.

Secure

Our systems are secure and resilient to evolving cyber threats. Non-negotiable minimum security standards are applied across our council

Integrated

Coordinate and collaborate with our partners within a federated framework

Responsive

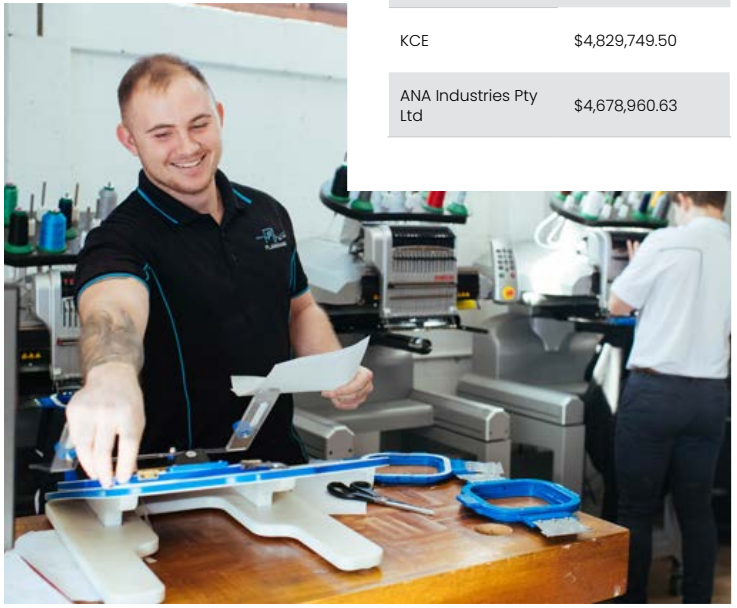
Maintain a strong and timely response to cyber threats and incidents. Our staff capabilities are lifted through training and support

Supporting Local

Our local businesses are at the heart of our community. We continue to support and nurture economic activity in our area in several ways including; our 'Support Local' campaigns to boost local spending and increase engagement with local businesses, providing support to local Job Active Service Providers to improve employment and training outcomes, and engaging local suppliers where appropriate when procuring goods and services.

The top 10 suppliers

SUPPLIER	VALUE
Daracon Contractors Pty Ltd	$10,319,279.81
Stabilised Pavements of Australia Pty Ltd	$6,219,518.01
Anewx Pty Ltd	$5,570,325.88
KCE	$4,829,749.50
ANA Industries Pty Ltd	$4,678,960.63



Our grant partners

- Austar Coal Mine Community Support Program - Kitchener Poppethead Park geophysical investigation and fencing
- Active Transport -
  - Anderson Avenue, Paxton connection route to School
  - East Esplanade, Weston connection shared path route to School
- Black Spot Program - Sandy Creek Road, Mount Vincent
- Department of Communities and Justice, Aboriginal Community Youth Work Service
- Growing Regions Program Round 2 - upgrade Weston Bears amenities and grandstand
- Housing Support Program -
  - Community Enabling Infrastructure - Wollombi Road Stage 2
  - Stream 1 - background studies for Anambah to Branxton regionally significant growth area
- Investing in our Communities -
  - Cessnock Regional Skate Park
  - Kurri Kurri Sportsground Upgrades
- Level Playing Field Program - Kurri Kurri Netball Facility
- Local Government Waste Infrastructure Grant - resource recovery and diversion from landfill for dry waste
- NSW Disaster Recovery Funding - sealed and unsealed roads: various locations
- NSW Government Club grants Category 3 Infrastructure Grant - Neville Tomlinson Regional BMX Facility amenities
- NSW Government Community Building Partnership Program - Chinaman's Hollow water station and lighting
- NSW Government Community War Memorials Fund - TAFE Park deck gun repaint
- NSW Government Crown Reserves Improvement Fund - Kurri Kurri Lawn Cemetery expansion
- Regional Precincts & Partnerships Program - Apex Park redevelopment
- State Library of NSW Local Priority Grants Program –
  - Engagement of consultant for Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan 10-year plan
  - 2 self-check machines
- Weed Action Plan grant -
  - 1,815 aerial and 357 on ground inspections for invasive and priority weeds
  - Landcare community education sessions
  - Environmental Planning Assessment - Illegal Dumping Prevention grant: target illegal dumping





STRATEGIC REPORTING



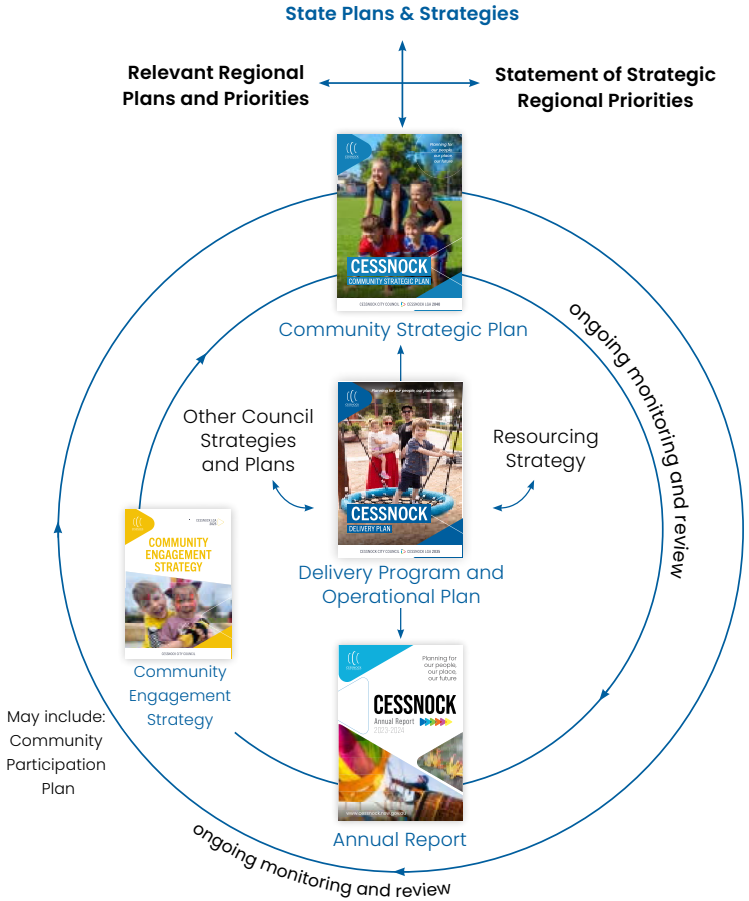
Integrated planning & reporting

The IP&R Framework is prescribed by the Local Government Act 1993. It promotes integration with community-based objectives, informed by state-level plans and cascading down through to implementation across Council.

Our elected representatives and our staff should ensure that the Framework is connected to our operations in a way that effectively plans for the future, and make decisions about services and resources

Our stakeholders

STAKEHOLDER GROUP	WHY OUR STAKEHOLDERS ARE IMPORTANT TO CCC
Our community	Our community is the centre of everything we do. It is our responsibility to support our community's right to access information, be consulted, and actively take part in Council's planning and decisions
Employees	Contributes to the success of our organisation with valuable knowledge, skills, and labour
Customers	Provides us with feedback and utilise our services and products
Visitors	Provides employment opportunities and financial sustainability through visits, shopping, and studies
Community Groups & Volunteers	Relationship building and trust with local communities
Government	By way of funding opportunities, guidance through regulations and legislation, and services, planning direction, and network development
Partners	Sharing of knowledge, networks, cultural experiences, and economies of scale
Ratepayers	Providing the necessary funding through their rates, which supports essential community services and infrastructure projects
Businesses	Build capacity, create vibrancy, and drive economic growth
Media	Promote events, services, and facilities while building and protecting our reputation
Suppliers	Deliver high-quality and value-added products and services



Integrated Planning and Reporting framework



Navigating this section

Outcomes

These are the community's long-term priorities and aspirations for the city, as set out in the Community Strategic Plan. They contribute to achieving the city's vision. Council has a custodial role in working towards realising these objectives; however, it is not wholly responsible for achieving them. Other partners, such as state agencies and community groups, have an important role to play in achieving these outcomes.

Objectives

Our objectives guide us to achieve our outcomes over the four-year period of our delivery program.

Strategies

Align strategic directions to core functions and sustainability and achieving long-term objectives.

Actions

Our actions are the activities and projects we commit to undertake each year, through delivery of our operational plan, to achieve our strategies and deliver our objective.

Progress

IN PROGRESS
Indicates an action is likely to be achieved in the following reporting period

COMPLETE
Indicates an action was achieved during the reporting period

CARRY FORWARD
Indicates an action has been carried over to the next reporting period

NOT PROGRESSING
Generally indicates potential inhibitors to an action being undertaken in this reporting period

Outcomes

The community has identified five desired outcomes in the Community Strategic Plan, **Cessnock 2036:**

1 A connected, safe and creative community

2 A sustainable and prosperous economy

3 A sustainable and healthy environment

4 Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities

5 Civic leadership and effective governance





Our performance

The 2022-26 Delivery Program is a 4-year program that sets out how we aim to achieve the desired outcomes developed by our community in Cessnock 2036. It contains 16 objectives to be delivered by 30 June 2024. A summary of progress towards the Delivery Program Objectives across the 5 desired outcomes from Cessnock 2036 is as follows:



1 A connected, safe & creative community

This desired outcome relates to community wellbeing, connectedness and safety.

Community engagement participants continue to express the desire for a healthy, active, engaged, and cohesive community that maintains its unique local identity and friendliness into the future.

Objective 1.1
Promoting social connections and wellbeing

Strategic Directions

- We are connected to others in our neighbourhood and across the Local Government Area
- Our community has opportunities to celebrate together
- Our community has high levels of wellbeing
- Our community has access to diverse and affordable housing
- We work together to achieve inclusivity and reconciliation

Objective 1.2
Strengthening community culture

Strategic Directions

- Our community is aware of and has access to community services and facilities
- Our residents show pride in the Local Government Area
- Our community organisations have opportunities to work together to develop and deliver services
- We have multi-purpose sporting and recreation facilities that meet the needs of a growing population

Objective 1.3
Promoting safe communities

Strategic Directions

- Our residents and visitors feel safe in the Cessnock Local Government Area
- Our CBD areas are safe at night
- Our roads are safe for motorists and pedestrians

Objective 1.4
Fostering an articulate and creative community

Strategic Directions

- We have thriving cultural precincts throughout the Local Government Area that celebrate our heritage and culture
- We have a diverse program of cultural and heritage activities
- We have access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities

Measures

How we will measure our progress

The following targets are adopted as they are measurable (sourced from the ABS Census, government agencies, Council operational data and community research) as well as being generally aligned with the desired outcomes of the Community Strategic Plan, Cessnock 2036.

While Council is not wholly responsible for the delivery of the Community Strategic Plan objectives, we have a custodial role to examine the progress that has been made towards the achievement.

MEASURE	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	TARGET
Community wellbeing	This measure is from a random survey of residents where they are asked to rate their agreement with the statement "The area offers a good quality of life" on a scale of 1-5, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. In 2016 the rating was 3.66 (compared with 3.76 in 2012).	3.66	Improve
Socio-Economic Index	The Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) measures the relative level of socio-economic disadvantage based on a range of Census characteristics including income, educational attainment, unemployment, and occupations. The 2011 index was 936.4, a slight decline from 938.7 in 2006. In 2016 the index was 925. A score higher than 1,000 means a lower level of disadvantage and a score lower than 1,000 means a higher level of disadvantage.	925	Improve
Malicious damage to property	This measure is the number of malicious damage to properties in the Cessnock local government area from the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research. In 2015 there were 601 incidents and Cessnock local government area had the 43rd highest number of incidents (out of 140 local government areas). In 2021 the number had decreased to 582.	582	Decrease



Highlights

767
Development Applications Residential building approvals

Development processing timeframes

10 days
Complying Development Certificates

22 days
Construction Certificates

Performance Arts Culture Cessnock

18,474
tickets sold

4
sell out performances

Gallery exhibition and workshop program

Seniors festival

45
events

41
organisations participated in running our Festival

Public pools

Attendances:

50,579 Cessnock

28,062 Branxton

140,787
Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre

Community Awareness and Collaboration

Partnership with NSW Police

Cessnock City Liquor Accord

Community Safety Precinct Committee

Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS)

11,965
young people engaged in our programs

Partnerships

- Youth off the Streets
- PCYC
- NSW Police, Department of Communities and Justice, Headspace

Youth Week

21
programmed activities

1,064
young people attended activities

Our Libraries

122,758
in person visits

212,072
Loans

64,783
e-resources loaned 24/7 eBranch

19,114
people attending our Library events

28.9%
increase in e-loans

8.6%
increase in online access

Community safety

Regular updates made to Live Traffic in relation to our capital projects

28
school road safety programs delivered road safety messaging

2
Graduate Licensing workshops for supervisors/ learners/drivers

7
projects delivered under the Local Government Road Safety Project

Key projects

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Abermain, Howe Park – deliver upgrade of floodlights	✓
Abermain, Orange Street - deliver multi-purpose court relocation	✓
Abermain, Orange Street Oval - deliver floodlights upgrade	✓
Bellbird, Neville Tomlinson BMX Facility – deliver amendments	✓
Branxton, Branxton Cemetery - implementation of masterplan	✓
Branxton, Branxton Community Hall - deliver window and board repairs and replacement	✓
Cessnock, Baddeley Park - deliver cricket nets upgrade	✓
Cessnock, Bridges Hill Park - deliver pathway lighting	✓
Cessnock, Bridges Hill Park – deliver shade sail water play	✓
Cessnock, Bridges Hill Park – deliver skate park upgrade	✓
Cessnock, Carmichael Park – deliver BMX Track facility	✓
Cessnock, Cessnock Cemetery - implementation of masterplan	✓
Cessnock, Cessnock Civic Indoor Sports Centre – deliver roof ventilation remediation and automated rollers	✓
Cessnock, Cessnock Hockey – deliver fence replacement	▶
Cessnock, Cessnock Hockey – deliver hockey surface replacement	✓
Cessnock, Cessnock Netball Courts - deliver playing surface replacement	✓
Cessnock, Performance Arts Culture Cessnock – deliver building refurbishment	✓
Cessnock, Cessnock Regional Skate Park - deliver a regional skate park	✓
Cessnock, Macquarie Avenue – deliver playground upgrade	✓
Cessnock, North End Park – deliver shade sail replacement	✓
Cessnock, Turner Park - deliver tennis clubhouse changerooms upgrade	▶
Citywide Libraries - deliver capital book purchases	✓
Cliftleigh, Cliftleigh Playground - deliver shade sail	✓
Greta, Greta Cemetery - implementation of masterplan	✓
Greta, Greta Central Park - deliver environmental works	✓
Heddon Greta, Averys Lane – deliver local playspace	✓
Kitchener, Poppethead Park – deliver concept plan	✓
Kitchener, Poppethead Park – deliver retaining walls	✓
Kurri Kurri – Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA) improvements and demolition	✓
Kurri Kurri, Booth Park – deliver toilet block renewal	✓
Kurri Kurri, Kurri Kurri Library - deliver toilet refurbishment	▶
Kurri Kurri, Kurri Kurri Netball Facility - deliver facilities construction	▶
Kurri Kurri, Kurri Kurri Sportsground - deliver sportsground upgrades	▶
Kurri Kurri, Margaret John Park - renew practice cricket wicket	✓
Pokolbin, Pokolbin Community Hall – deliver toilet upgrade	✓
Various Citywide - deliver aquatic facilities renewal program	✓
Various Citywide - deliver parks and reserves fence replacement program	✓
Various Citywide - deliver parks and reserves irrigation replacement program	✓
Various Citywide - deliver parks and reserves renewal program	✓
Various Citywide - deliver playground edging and surface program	✓
Various Citywide - deliver playground replacement program	✓
Various Citywide - deliver renewed tennis courts supporting infrastructure	✓

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Various Citywide - deliver sporting facilities lights and/or LED replacement program	✓
Various Citywide - pre-construction design of recreation facilities	✓
Various Citywide, Cemeteries - deliver cemeteries fencing renewal	✓
Various Citywide, Cemeteries- deliver cemeteries signage renewal	✓
Various Citywide, Community & Cultural Buildings - investigate and develop community building renewal program	✓
Various Citywide, Community Halls - deliver painting of community buildings	✓
Weston, Ernie Dunlop Park - deliver multi-purpose courts	✓
Weston, Weston Bears Park - deliver amenities and grandstand upgrade	▶
Weston, Weston Civic Centre - deliver flooring	✓
Wollombi, Nature Trail Stairs – deliver natural disaster declaration AGRN 1012 1025 and upgrade trail stairs	✓
Wollombi, Pony Club Building - deliver amenities upgrade	✓
Wollombi, Wollombi Community Hall - develop and deliver retaining wall reconstruction (staged)	✓
Wollombi, Wollombi Walking Shared Path – deliver improvement to shared pathway	▶

Challenges

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Branxton, Miller Park Pump Track - design concept plan	⏸
Cessnock, Cessnock Indoor Sports Centre - deliver scoreboard replacement	⏸
Various Citywide - develop skate park remediation audit	⏸

Detailed performance

Objective 1.1 Promoting social connections and wellbeing

Strategic direction

- We are connected to others in our neighbourhood and across the Local Government Area
- Our community has opportunities to celebrate together
- Our community has high levels of wellbeing
- Our community has access to diverse and affordable housing
- We work together to achieve inclusivity and reconciliation

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
1.1.1.a	Engage with the community in reconciliation initiatives and in implementing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Action Plan.	National Reconciliation Week and National NAIDOC Week Event proposals are consulted with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee. **Target:** Organise an event to recognise National Reconciliation Week. **Target:** Coordinate and promote a community program of events for National NAIDOC Week. **Target:** Implement the 2024-2025 actions listed in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Action Plan.	✓

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
1.1.2.a	Deliver inclusive programming for Council's Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) that engages and encourages young people to participate in a diverse range of social, recreational and educational activities and aligns with the Cessnock City Council Youth Engagement Strategy.	Explore the implementation of externally facilitated programs and activities including creative arts, pop culture and music. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Plan, participate or contribute to at least 2 community events that engage young people living in rural areas across the Cessnock Local Government Area. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Use the engagement findings of the Youth Engagement Strategy to inform recreational CYCOS activities including the expansion and implementation of programming that encourages physical activity, participation in sport and the use of indoor and outdoor sporting venues. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
1.1.2.b	Deliver inclusive programming strategy through Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) that engages Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people, their families and community groups to participate in a diverse range of social, recreational and educational activities.	Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people to provide feedback and have their voice heard during programming, on Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) social media pages, through surveys and when developing CYCOS programs. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Promote and deliver an information, referral and recreation service for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
1.1.2.c	Continue working in partnership with external organisations to implement youth-based wellbeing programs that promote and encourage wellbeing, school attendance and address alcohol consumption and illicit drug use.	Participate in the delivery of at least three (3) year-6 school-based programs with a focus on improving outcomes and building capacity for young people to seek support when transitioning to high school. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Deliver 3 school-based programs that encourage health and wellbeing. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
1.1.2.d	Develop a 2025 Youth Week program that is inclusive, engaging and celebrates young people.	Activities are aligned to the 5 ways to wellbeing. Youth Week program is promoted to schools and community through the use of paper flyers, social media promotions and Council's website. **Target:** Promotion to occur at least 1 month prior to the first event.	✓
1.1.2.e	Promote and deliver diverse and inclusive activities including during school holidays engaging with children, young people and families across the Cessnock Local Government Area.	Collaborate and cross-promote with other Council services to deliver an engaging school holiday program and includes activities at PACC, Cessnock City Library and Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Include a minimum of 3 works for young people and families within the Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) theatre season and exhibition program. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Seek increased funding opportunities to assist in the delivery of school holiday programs **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
1.1.2.f	Further promote the positive image and value of young people and strengthen the presence of Cessnock Youth Centre & Outreach Service (CYCOS) within the community.	Provide awareness of youth engagement opportunities and share the achievements, interests and skills of young people living, working or studying in the local community. **Target:** At least weekly post. Support the running of the Youth Ambassador reference group who work together to reflect the voices of young people across the wider community and help guide CYCOS planning and decision making. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
1.1.3.a	Actively pursue continuous improvement opportunities building an organisation which has a focus on inclusion and accessibility.	Investigate access improvements at the Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre site, including preparation of a concept design for access improvements to the outdoor toilet amenities. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Undertake a review of the 2021-2025 Disability Inclusion Action Plan and develop the next Disability Inclusion Action Plan (2025-2029). **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
1.1.4.a	Coordinate and promote a community Program of Events for the 2025 Cessnock Local Government Area Seniors Festival.	Continue to build relationships with stakeholder groups to encourage engagement in Seniors Festival. Increase community awareness of and participation in Seniors Festival. Events offered align with the '5 Ways to Wellbeing Framework'. **Target:** The evaluation for Seniors Festival to occur by 30 June 2025.	✓
1.1.4.b	Organise and deliver throughout December a diverse program of free Christmas events engaging children, young people and families including Carols in the Park.	Events promoted using a variety of media platforms to reach a diverse audience. **Target:** Prior to event commencement. **Target:** Audience feedback gathered formally and informally following December 2024 events.	✓
1.1.4.c	Organise ceremonies (and associated activities) for civic events such as Australia Day, Mayoral Scholarships and Citizenship presentations.	Facilitate 1 annual Mayoral Scholarship program, 1 Australia Day event, and minimum 2 Citizenship presentations subject to the requirements of Home Affairs. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓



Objective 1.2 Strengthening community culture

Strategic direction

- Our community is aware of and has access to community services and facilities
- Our residents show pride in the Local Government Area
- Our community organisations have opportunities to work together to develop and deliver services

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
1.2.1.a	Promote Council's community and cultural services and activities hosted by Cessnock Library Branch, Kurri Kurri Library Branch, Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service, Performance Arts Culture Cessnock, and Community Services.	Post at least weekly on the Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service Facebook, Performance Arts Culture Cessnock Facebook and Cessnock City Library Facebook. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Continue to develop and deliver diverse and inclusive lifelong learning programs, arts and local history exhibitions at Cessnock Library and Kurri Kurri Library Branches. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Increase the distribution of the e-Library Newsletter and e-PACC Newsletter. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Update where required the Cessnock Local Government Area Community Directory. Provide ongoing community awareness and promotion for the Community Events Calendar. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
1.2.2.a	Be an active member of collaborative network groups that strive for inclusive, safer and healthier communities and in partnership with stakeholders deliver diverse and innovative community development initiatives.	Engagement with local service providers scoping and participating in community development opportunities. **Target:** Regular attendance at local interagency meetings.	✓
1.2.2.b	Promote and administer Council's Community, Sporting and Environment Grant Scheme.	Advertise at least one round of funding. **Target:** by 31 December 2024. Distribute all funds. **Target:** by 30 June 2025.	✓
1.2.3.a	Liaise with community groups who operate from Council owned community and cultural facilities, to provide a welcoming, engaging, inclusive, safe and accessible environment.	Funding grants submitted in accordance with asset management plans for improvements to community and cultural facilities. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Maintain good communication with regular Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) community hirers to ensure the delivery of diverse programming whilst maximising venue availability for commercial hirers. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
1.2.4.a	Deliver and promote an engaging exhibition program at Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) and continue to activate the makers space with workshops that represent a diverse range of genres.	A minimum of 5 exhibitions at Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC). **Target:** by 30 June 2025 A minimum of 6 workshops presented in the makers space. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
1.2.4.c	Promote and deliver Council's Dollar for Dollar programs to community groups	Grants are provided to local sporting and community groups to improve or refurbish Council owned sporting facilities. **Target:** Advertise at least 1 round of funding by 30 December 2024. Distribute all funds by 30 June 2025.	✓
1.2.4.d	Prepare and submit applications for funding to improve and/or construct community, sporting and aquatic facilities	Grant applications are submitted via the Crown Reserves Improvement Fund, Infrastructure Grant Program, Open Space Grant Program and Club grants in line with projects in the Delivery Program. **Target:** 30 June 2025	▶
1.2.5.a	A concept plan is developed for Kitchener Poppethead Regional Playspace	The concept plan is finalised. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
1.2.6.a	Implement the Cessnock City Council Cemeteries Masterplan through a new columbarium wall at Kurri Kurri Cemetery.	Investigate alternate interment options at Kurri Kurri Cemetery. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓

Objective 1.3 Promoting safe communities

Strategic direction

- Our residents and visitors feel safe in the Cessnock Local Government Area
- Our CBD areas are safe at night
- Our roads are safe for motorists and pedestrians

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
1.3.1.a	Collaborate through participation on the Cessnock City Liquor Accord and Community Safety Precinct Committee.	Report on number of meetings attended per quarter. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
1.3.2.a	Conduct two Graduated Licensing Scheme Workshops for supervisors and learners\drivers.	Deliver two (2) GLS workshops. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
1.3.2.b	Engage with Schools within the Cessnock LGA regarding road safety around schools.	Engage with 7 schools per quarter. **Target:** during 24/25 FY	✓
1.3.3.a	Upon receipt of all required information, assess and determine Complying Development Certificate applications within 10 days and Construction Certificate applications within 25 days from the date of lodgement.	Assess and determine as per mentioned timeframes **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
1.3.4.a	Implement next steps of local government road safety project from the Road Safety Strategic Plan	Deliver the 7 projects nominated under the road safety program subject to confirmation of funding **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
1.3.5.c	Oversee the accelerated replacement of existing eligible street lights with energy efficient LEDs.	Ongoing	✓

Objective 1.4 Fostering an articulate and creative community

Strategic direction

- We have thriving cultural precincts throughout the Local Government Area that celebrate our heritage and culture
- We have a diverse program of cultural and heritage activities
- We have access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
1.4.1.a	Deliver an engaging Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) season with programming strategy that considers Councils community plans, diversity and inclusion.	Principals of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 are included within the programming strategies of both the PACC Theatre and Gallery. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Seek feedback from audiences via post-show surveys and discussion with patrons. **Target:** Following any events within July 2024 to June 2025. The season, as a whole, is inclusive of performances for adults, young people and families. PACC is committed to presenting works by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples if touring opportunities are offered. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) to present the annual theatre season in two parts, Act Two 2024 July to December and Act One 2025 January to June. **Target:** Act One of the 2025 Theatre Season Program available and on sale by November 2024.	✓
1.4.2.a	Develop and promote Cessnock City Library digital services including 24/7 eBranch.	Promote and further develop the Library App and online access points. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Continue to develop and implement easy access to digital services. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
1.4.2.c	Progress the development of the next Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan.	Draft Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan prepared **Target:** by 30 June 2025. Undertake community consultation identifying further opportunities for library services and programs. **Target:** during formation of Draft Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan	✓





2 A sustainable and prosperous economy

This desired outcome identifies the need to attract a diverse range of businesses, industries, and services together with improved access to education, training, and employment opportunities to ensure we have a sustainable and prosperous economy into the future

Objective 2.1

Diversifying and growing our economy

Strategic Directions

- Our Local Government Area is attractive to and supportive of businesses
- We have a diversity of businesses and industries across the Local Government Area
- We have adequate industrial and employment lands and thriving commercial precincts

Objective 2.2

Achieving more sustainable employment opportunities

Strategic Directions

- We have education and training opportunities for people of all ages and abilities
- We have a diverse range of local employment opportunities

Objective 2.3

Increasing tourism opportunities and visitation in the area

Strategic Directions

- We have a range of diverse visitor experiences across the entire Local Government Area
- Our Local Government Area is attractive to visitors

Measures

How we will measure our progress

MEASURE	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	TARGET
Education	This measure is the percentage of the population with post school qualifications (degree, diploma or vocational). This measure is obtained from the ABS Census. In 2011 36.7% of us had post school qualifications. By 2016 this had risen to 40.9%.	40.9%	Improve
Unemployment rate	This is the measure of residents actively seeking employment but unable to find work. It is published quarterly by the Dept of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations. In September 2021 the unemployment rate for Cessnock local government area was 5.8% (compared with 5.5% for NSW and 5.6% for Australia).	5.8%	Improve (relative to NSW)
Tourist visitation and expenditure	This measure is the total number of visitors (overnight and day trips) and their total expenditure in the local government area from Destination NSW and Tourism Research Australia's National Visitor Survey and International Visitor Survey. In 2015 there were 1,050,000 visitors with a total spend of $294m (compared with 9,399,000 visitors to Hunter with total spend of $2,319m).	1,050,000 visitors, $294m spend	Maintain



Highlights

Our Support Local program

Car and Motorbike service industry
9 entries, 4 winners

Food service industry
69 entries, 15 winners

Mayoral scholarship
was awarded to
15 worthy recipients

Hunter Valley wine Tourism Alliance
held 4 meetings

Joint Tourism Service
has 247 paid members

An investment attraction analysis and workshop were undertaken in collaboration with the Office of Regional Economic Development.

Hunter Valley Visitors Information Centre

54,646
annual visitors

5,278
Facebook likes

$287,782
made from merchandise

14,700
Facebook followers

$40,040.43
from experience and accommodations booking

906 products from
67 predominantly local
Hunter Valley suppliers

Key projects

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Branxton, Church Street to Anvil Creek Bridge (north side) - develop town centre upgrade	
Cessnock CBD, Library Shared Zone - deliver Stage 2	
Kurri Kurri, Kurri Kurri Commercial Centre - design and construct upgrade associated roadworks	

Detailed performance

Objective 2.1 Diversifying and growing our economy

Strategic direction

- Our Local Government Area is attractive to and supportive of businesses
- We have a diversity of businesses and industries across the Local Government Area
- We have adequate industrial and employment lands and thriving commercial precincts

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
2.1.1.a	Seek grant funding for the Shiraz to Shore Trail - Hunter Valley Gardens to Abermain section.	Consider any available grant funding streams and submit applications where applicable. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	
2.1.1.b	Submit a minimum of three grant applications that align with the Cessnock City Council Economic Growth Agenda and social priorities for the community.	Make a minimum of 3 grant applications **Target:** by 30 June 2025	
2.1.1.c	Undertake a review/ study of the Cessnock Employment Lands and prepare an Employment Lands Strategy	Prepare a report to Council seeking exhibition of a draft Employment Lands Strategy **Target:** By 31 December 2024	
2.1.2.a	Complete investment attraction opportunities analysis in collaboration with the Office of Regional Economic Development.	Complete opportunities analysis workshop, update the investment attraction suite and promote on the Advance Greater Cessnock Website **Target:** by 30 June 2025	
2.1.2.b	Create a Cessnock Local Government Area investment attraction factsheet and pitch deck in collaboration with the Office of Regional Economic Development.	Complete opportunities analysis workshop, create the investment attraction factsheet and pitch deck for the Office of Regional Economic Development. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	
2.1.3.a	Support business chambers and tourist associations through providing economic development grants and sponsorship for projects which improve the business environment, build capacity and capabilities amongst businesses, stimulate investment, enterprise and job creation as well as enhance the city's image.	2024-2025 grant and sponsorship funding awarded to Advance Greater Cessnock partners **Target:** by 31 August 2024	

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
2.1.3.b	Support and nurture existing economic activity in the Cessnock local government area by running 10 Support Local campaigns to boost local spending and increase engagement with local businesses.	Create, promote and facilitate minimum 10 independent Support Local Campaigns utilising rewards and prizes, and Social Media coverage to increase community engagement with local businesses. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
2.1.3.d	Review of the Cessnock CBD Masterplan and Public Domain Plan (including the preparation of a Parking and Access Strategy)	Prepare a report to Council seeking exhibition of a draft revised Cessnock CBD Masterplan and Public Domain Plan **Target:** By 31 December 2024	▶

Objective 2.2 Diversifying and growing our economy

Strategic direction

- We have education and training opportunities for people of all ages and abilities
- We have a diverse range of local employment opportunities

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
2.2.2.a	Continue to implement the Greater Cessnock Jobs Strategy 2036	Complete four priority actions from the Greater Cessnock Jobs Strategy 2036. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
2.2.2.b	Advocate for additional bus services between Cessnock and Branxton via Wine Country as a means of supporting employment and facilitating better social outcomes for the community.	Create the advocacy document for additional services between Branxton and Wine Country, and advocate to the NSW Member for Cessnock and the NSW Transport Minister. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
2.2.2.c	Award a minimum of eight Mayoral Scholarships that assists local residents financially to achieve their educational goals at TAFE or university.	Engage with external stakeholders and the local business community to obtain sponsorship funding for Scholarship award. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
2.2.3.a	Continue to implement the graduate, trainee and apprenticeship framework.	Review graduate, trainee and apprenticeship framework **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Increase FTE for by two (2) **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓



Objective 2.3 Increasing tourism opportunities and visitation in the area

Strategic direction

- We have a range of diverse visitor experiences across the entire Local Government Area
- Our Local Government Area is attractive to visitors

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
2.3.1.a	Hold four Hunter Valley Wine Tourism Alliance meetings with Singleton Council and Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Association to develop strategies to grow the visitor economy.	Attend quarterly Hunter Valley Wine Tourism Alliance meetings and deliver the Cessnock City Council related actions generated from the Hunter Valley Wine Tourism Alliance **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
2.3.1.b	Provide a joint tourism service with Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Association that provides destination marketing and in destination tourism services for the benefit of regional tourism.	Maintain minimum of 300 paid members of the Joint Tourism Service, and provide in destination visitor servicing. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
2.3.1.c	Deliver four priority actions from the Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan using budgeted resources.	**Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
2.3.1.d	Grow Council's tourism and business image library by completing two photo or video shoots.	Add 50 new images and 5 videos to the image library **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
2.3.2.a	Provide quality visitor services to Level 1 Accreditation standards for 364 days a year.	Level 1 accreditation maintained **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓





2 A sustainable and prosperous economy

This desired outcome focuses on the conservation and preservation of the natural environment whilst balancing the impact of development to ensure a sustainable and healthy community

Objective 3.1

Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the rural character of the area

Strategic Directions

- We act on climate change and build disaster resilience
- Our area's rural character and heritage is protected
- Our environmental amenity is protected and enhanced
- Our waterways and catchments are maintained and enhanced
- We act to protect our unique biodiversity and natural resources

Objective 3.2

Better utilisation of existing open space

Strategic Directions

- Our open spaces are distributed where people live
- We have green corridors connecting our open space areas
- Our open spaces have suitable facilities, infrastructure, and plenty of shade

Objective 3.3

Better resource recovery and waste management

Strategic Directions

- We divert more of our waste for recycling or re-processing
- We promote waste avoidance
- We create value from waste

Measures

How we will measure our progress

MEASURE	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	TARGET
Open space and green corridors	This measure is the number of lots zoned residential (R2, R3 and RU5) within 500m of open space and green corridors (zoned RE1, RE2 and E1). This measure identifies the number and proportion of residents with access to open space for passive and active recreation purposes. This measure is sourced from Council's geographic information system.	16,675 lots 80.0% (2016)	Maintain
Conservation of land	This measure is the area of land protected for conservation purposes (i.e., land zoned E1, E2 and E3 plus land identified for biodiversity offsets). This measure is sourced from Council's geographic information system.	60,759ha (2017)	Increase
Waste and recycling	This is a measure of the number of tonnes recycled and re-processed via the kerbside recycling and organics collection service. The kerbside recycling service was provided to 21,022 properties in 2015-16. This measure is sourced from Hunter Resource Recovery.	5,500 tonnes per annum	Increase



Highlights

100%
of scheduled on-site sewerage system inspections of commercial and residential premises

100%
of annual scheduled NSW Food Authority Partnership food, pool and skin penetration inspections completed

105 tonnes
problem waste resolved

3,679 tonnes
of recycled kerbside waste

7,600 tonnes
collected and reprocessed kerbside garden organics

13%
below baseline megawatt hours usage across council facilities

1,500 people
attended waste related events

2,915,536
general waste, recycling and organic bin services provided

Waste Avoidance & Reuse Engagement

- 3 Mattress Drop Off events were held with 2,327 mattresses collected for recycling
- 2 Repair Cafes were held
- Composting workshop at Cessnock Community Garden
- 1 Chemical Cleanout event held

Floodplain management

- Production of an Operation and Maintenance Manual for the South Cessnock Detention Basin
- Booth Street, Kurri Kurri
- Hospital Road, Weston
- Main Road, Heddon Greta

Open space facilities

- An electric mower was trialed by our Open Space teams.
- 2 dual destination EV chargers were installed in Bridges Hill carpark
- 2 Trails Reference Group meetings held

Biodiversity education & Environmental initiatives

- A Koala workshop was held at Mulbring
- 50% power now sourced from renewables under a new streetlighting contract with Red Energy.
- Home Grown Healthy Living with Anna Alexia
- 13 schools and 8 community sites registered for Clean Up Australia Day
- 1,620 native plants were given to residence at our Native Tree Giveaway
- Our Green Schools network supported 5 preschools, 3 primary schools and 3 high schools.

Key projects

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Bellbird, Cruickshank Street – deliver drainage upgrade	
Branxton, Cessnock Road – deliver upgrade drainage	
Cessnock, Bridges Hill Park – deliver EV charging stations	
Cessnock, Cessnock Waste Management Centre - deliver domestic waste management (capital)	
Cessnock, Cessnock Waste Management Centre – deliver replacement roller shutters	
Cessnock, Cessnock Waste Management Centre Biodiversity Offset – deliver signage and Stage 2 fencing	
Cessnock, Cessnock Waste Management Centre- deliver new landfill facility	
Cessnock, Mount View – deliver detention basin improvement	
Greta - develop floodplain risk management plan	
Greta, Mansfield and Bell Streets – design upgrade drainage	
Heddon Greta - investigate floodplain mitigation	
Heddon Greta, Main Road - deliver drainage upgrade	
Heddon Greta, Trenchard Street - deliver drainage upgrade	
Kurri Kurri, Booth Street – design upgrade drainage	
Various Citywide – deliver minor drainage investigation and works	
Various Citywide - remediation of former landfill sites	
Various Citywide, Environmental Planning – deliver revolving energy improvement program (RID)	
Various locations - deliver drainage renewal	
Various locations - deliver roadside drainage program	
Weston, Hospital Road - upgrade drainage	

Challenges

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Cessnock, Cessnock Waste Management Centre – deliver capping cover design	
Cessnock, Government Road - deliver drainage reconstruction	
Cessnock, Government Road – deliver drainage reconstruction	
Cessnock, South Cessnock - deliver flood mitigation	
Greta, Whitburn Street - design and construction drainage upgrade	
Kurri Kurri, Former Sanitary Depot – deliver Stage 1 remediation	
Millfield, Portland Street – deliver trunk drainage system	



Detailed performance

Objective 3.1 Protecting and enhancing the natural environmental and the rural character of the area

Strategic direction

- We act on climate change and build disaster resilience
- Our area's rural character and heritage is protected
- Our environmental amenity is protected and enhanced
- Our waterways and catchments are maintained and enhanced
- We act to protect our unique biodiversity and natural resources

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
3.1.1.a	Finalise the planning for the Nulkaba Urban Investigation Area	Prepare a report for Council to seek adoption of the Nulkaba Structure Plan **Target:** Report to Council by 31 December 2024	
3.1.1.b	Continue review of Cessnock LEP 2011.	Finalise the options paper and Planning Proposal for the Residential theme of the CLEP Review **Target:** Report to Council by 30 June 2025	
3.1.1.c	Continue review of the Cessnock DCP 2010 chapters.	Finalise Chapters linked to the review of the residential theme of the CLEP Residential Theme review. **Target:** Report to Council by 30 June 2025	
3.1.3.a	Progress the Vineyards Planning Proposal (including DCP) and Place Strategy.	Finalise the Vineyards Place Strategy. **Target:** By 31 December 2024 Finalise the Vineyards Planning Proposal and DCP **Target:** By 30 June 2025	
3.1.3.b	Undertake a review/ study of the Cessnock Rural Lands and prepare a Rural Lands Strategy	Prepare a report to Council seeking exhibition of a draft Rural Lands Strategy **Target:** By 30 June 2025	
3.1.4.a	Promote and deliver community focused biodiversity education programs	Deliver the Bushland Festival in partnership with relevant stakeholders. **Target:** by October 2024 Investigate funding and viability of 2025 Bushland Festival. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Facilitate the on-ground works for Landcare groups working on Council land. **Target:** Four (4) groups have been assisted by 30 June 2025 Seek funding for the expansion of Landcare programs into other areas **Target:** by 30 June 2025	
3.1.4.b	The Cessnock City Council Tree Strategy is implemented through promoting and delivering a Tree Giveaway event for local residents.	A Tree Giveaway event is held for local residents. **Target:** by 31 December 2024	
3.1.4.c	Review and update standard conditions of development consent in relation to roadside drainage elements.		
3.1.4.d	In collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, facilitate a review of Council's Biodiversity Strategy.	The review of Council's Biodiversity Strategy has commenced in cooperation with Strategic Planning. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
3.1.5.a	Continue to work on energy efficiency of Council facilities under the Revolving Energy Fund	Continue to achieve decrease in megawatt hours power used across Council facilities and street lighting, when compared to the 2016-2017 usage of 1369MW hrs. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
3.1.5.b	Continue the implementation of the Climate Change Resilience Plan.	Commence investigation of Climate Change Resilience Plan actions **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
3.1.6.c	Seek funding for delivery of Floodplain Management Program.	Complete minimum one (1) grant funding application as opportunity becomes available. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
3.1.6.d	Manage declared dams in accordance with NSW Dams Safety legislation.	Develop Operation and Maintenance manual for the South Cessnock detention basin **Target:** by June 2024	✓
3.1.6.e	Contribute to assessing the flood impacts of development.	Obtain and review flood models. **Target:** as required	✓
3.1.6.f	Raise community awareness about the implications of developing flood impacted land through the provision of Flood Certificates.	Issue Flood Certificates on an as needed basis. **Target:** as required	✓
3.1.7.a	Inspect commercial and residential on-site sewerage management systems in accordance with risk based priority routine inspection program.	Base target greater than 80% of routine monitoring inspections completed in accordance with the annual program **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
3.1.7.b	Conduct routine inspection of all food and regulated premises, including public pools and skin penetration premises in accordance with the NSW Food Authority Partnership and relevant legislative requirements.	**Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
3.1.7.c	Continue the implementation of Council's Biosecurity (invasive weed species) Management program in line with Regional and State priority species.	Priority weed species are identified, recorded and appropriate action strategies implemented in line with adopted plans. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Inspections are undertaken of public and private lands in accordance with adopted programs. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	▶
3.1.7.d	Continue to facilitate community engagement and education initiatives relating to conservation of the natural environment.	Hold six (6) community environmental focused activities. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Continue to promote and engage local schools to participate in Council's 'Green Schools' program **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Facilitate the process of retaining and/or forming of environmental focused community programs. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Deliver 'dollar for dollar' grants to eligible community groups for on-ground sustainability programs. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓

Challenges

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
3.1.6.b	Implement high priority projects from the Greta/ Anvil Creek Flood Study including investigation of flood mitigation works.	70% of projects to be incorporated into the updated Delivery Plan **Target:** by 30 June 2025	⏸

Objective 3.2 Better utilisation of existing open spaces

Strategic direction

- Our open spaces are distributed where people live
- We have green corridors connecting our open space areas
- Our open spaces have suitable facilities, infrastructure, and plenty of shade

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
3.2.1.a	The Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan 2019 is reviewed and updated.	The Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan is reviewed and a new Strategy developed. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
3.2.1.e	Develop Generic Plan of Management for Sportsgrounds	A plan of management is developed. **Target:** A final draft is complete and submitted with Crown Lands for Review by 30 June 2025.	▶
3.2.3.a	Design and construction drawings are developed for a new amenity building at Weston Bears Park	Designs are complete **Target:** by 31 December 2024	✓
3.2.4.a	Asset Management Plans are updated	Asset management plan to be endorsed. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓

Challenges

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
3.2.1.b	Concept plans are prepared for a new pump track at Miller Park, Branxton.	A concept plan is developed for a new pump track at Miller Park **Target:** by 30 June 2025	⏸



Objective 3.3 Better resource recovery and waste management

Strategic direction

- We divert more of our waste for recycling or re-processing
- We promote waste avoidance
- We create value from waste

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
3.3.2.a	Administration of the Cessnock Waste Management Centre Biodiversity Offset Area in accordance with adopted plan.	Review actions within the Biodiversity Offset Management Plan to maintain relevance with aims and objectives of the plan. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Continue implementation of endorsed actions outlined within the Biodiversity Offset Management Plan. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
3.3.2.b	As part of the new landfill extension project, implement materials sourcing and reuse strategies to benefit operational business needs.	Segregate excavated materials from new landfill extension works to allow reuse for operational needs and remediation of the current landfill cell. **Target:** Decrease in volumes of imported materials being brought onto the site to meet operational needs in comparison to 2023/2024	✓

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
3.3.3.a	Continue to operate the Community Recycling Centre in collaboration with the NSW EPA in accordance with operational deed of agreement.	Review current community mattress drop-off days in line with recycling voucher scheme **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Work with the EPA to deliver on annual household chemical cleanout event **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Continue to implement initiatives designed to remove sharps from the waste stream. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Monitor potential emerging waste streams and investigate options for management. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
3.3.3.b	Develop policies and procedures to increase the efficiency of waste services.	Continue to review and implement operational improvements across all waste services. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Develop a procedure for the classification of excavated materials to guide options for disposal, charges and reuse **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
3.3.3.c	Commence development of 2026-31 Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy.		✓
3.3.4.a	Continue to implement community focused waste avoidance and reuse initiatives.	Hold six (6) community education and awareness events. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
3.3.4.b	Continue to work collaboratively with regional partners in relation to contract services for organics (green waste) kerbside collection.	In collaboration with member councils, continue to prepare for and commence Food Organic / Garden Organics (FOGO) kerbside collection. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Undertake a kerbside bin audit in 2025 to ascertain pre-FOGO kerbside collection waste composition. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
3.3.4.c	Continue to work collaboratively with regional partners in relation to contract services for recycling kerbside collection.	Continue to implement the current contracted recycling kerbside collection service **Target:** until 30 June 2025 In collaboration with Hunter Resource Recovery and member councils, review and engage a new contracted recycling kerbside collection service to commence in 2025 **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
3.3.4.d	Continue to operate the Cessnock Waste Management Centre in accordance with the NSW EPA Environment Protection Licence and relevant legislation.	Actively monitor and record environmental and pollution control parameters in accordance with EPL requirements **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Maintain pollution preventative works and strategies **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Monitor and implement waste management and disposal practices to ensure compliance with the Environment Protection Licence (EPL) **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
3.3.5.a	Facilitate community focused litter reduction and awareness programs and events.	In partnership with internal stakeholders, review accessibility and suitability of public waste bins. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Facilitate litter reduction and clean-up community initiatives and events such as Adopt a Road program and Clean Up Australia Day **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓





4 Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities

This desired outcome identifies the local, state, and federal infrastructure, services and facilities needed to serve our current and future community of Cessnock whilst ensuring there is adequate access to these facilities and services

Objective 4.1

Better transport links

Strategic Directions

- We have access to a range of public and community transport
- Our communities are linked by walking and bike tracks
- Our airport acts as a key transport, emergency response and business hub
- Our transport network is integrated and supported by appropriate infrastructure

Objective 4.2

Improving the road network

Strategic Directions

- We have an acceptable, safe and affordable road network
- We have managed the traffic impact of the Hunter Expressway on local communities
- We have well managed traffic conditions across our suburbs

Objective 4.3

Improve access to health services locally

Strategic Directions

- We have better availability of and access to hospitals and health services in the Local Government Area
- We have better availability of and access to general practitioners and dental services in the Local Government Area
- We have regional standard health services, facilities, and health professionals

Measures

How we will measure our progress

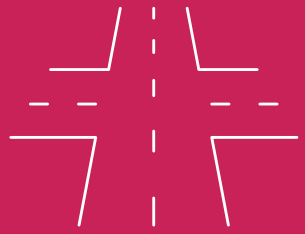
MEASURE	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	TARGET
Public transport usage	This measure is the annual distance and percentage of trips made by public transport (trains and bus) by residents of the local government area. This data is sourced from the Household Travel Survey.	75,000km 3%	Improve
Pavement network condition	The Overall Condition Index (OCI) is a measure of urban road quality - it reflects the quality of the pavement structure (not the surface condition/ driveability). It excludes unsealed roads. On 30 June 2016 the average OCI was 2.72. OCI is based on a scale of 1-5, in line with best practice asset management principles (where 1 is excellent, 2 is good, 3 is average, 4 is poor and 5 is very poor).	2.72 Average to Good	Improve
Ratio of GPs per 100,000 population	This measure is the number of general practitioners (GPs) per 100,000 population in the Cessnock Local Government Area. This data is sourced from the Social Atlas produced by the Public Health Information Development Unit of Torrens University Australia. The industry benchmark is 1 GP per 1,400 population and in 2011 the Cessnock LGA had 1 GP per 1,418 people.	1:1418	Improve
Hospital emergency treatments	This measure is the time the 95th percentile of emergency and urgent patients waited to start treatment at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Hospitals. The benchmarks are within 10 minutes and 30 minutes respectively. In the period July - September 2016 the time that the 95th percentile of emergency patients and urgent patients waited to commence treatment in NSW was 41 minutes and 103 minutes respectively. This data is sourced from the Bureau of Health Information.	25mins and 79mins N/A and 54mins Kurri Kurri	Improve



Highlights



$2.3m
invested in bridge upgrades



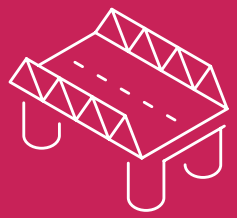
24,482 metres
of roads renewed



80%
of our high priority works have been completed



90%
of pathways identified under the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan have been updated



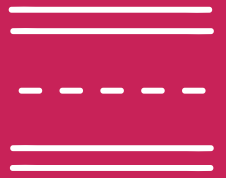
The Westcott Street bridge at Cessnock has been replaced



A carpark has been installed at the Weston Community Preschool



A shared pathway from Bridges Hill Park to Wine Country Drive



Rehabilitation of Mount View Road



Rehabilitation of Quorrobolong Road, Kitchener from Stanford Street



A pedestrian refuge has been installed on the corner of Mount View and McGrane Streets Cessnock

Key projects

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Abermain to Cessnock – deliver shared pathway	
Abermain, Bathurst Street - investigate and develop bridge construction	
Abermain, Bathurst Street Road rehabilitation: investigation and design	
Abermain, Orange Street - deliver road renewal Stage 1 600m from Cessnock Road	
Bellbird, Bellbird Public School - deliver shared pathway to Sparke Street	
Bellbird, Mathieson Street – deliver road Stabilisation and sealing	
Bucketty, George Downes Drive - investigate and develop road safety plan	
Cessnock - deliver shared pathway to Abermain	
Cessnock, Bridges Hill Park - deliver shared pathway to Wine Country Drive	
Cessnock, Cessnock City Council Works Depot - deliver depot pavement construction	
Cessnock, Cessnock City Council Works Depot - deliver sewer connection to depot	
Cessnock, Cessnock City Council Works Depot - deliver storage construction	
Cessnock, Cessnock City Council Works Depot - deliver vehicle plant upgrade purchases	
Cessnock, McGrane Street and Mount View Road – deliver pedestrian refuge	
Cessnock, Mount View Road – deliver road rehabilitation	
Cessnock, Old Maitland Road – deliver flood essential public asset restoration program (EPAR)	
Cessnock, Old Maitland Road – deliver non-flood regional emergency road repair fund program (RERRF)	
Cessnock, Waste Services - deliver major plant upgrade purchases	
Cessnock, Westcott Street - deliver bridge replacement	
Cessnock, Wollombi Road – deliver extension to Wollombi Road (grant funding dependent)	
Cessnock, Wollombi Road – deliver Stage 1	

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Cessnock/Bellbird, Wollombi Road - deliver road renewal Stage 2 from Allandale Road to Abbotsford Street	
Congewai, Congewai Road – deliver culverts and structures as part of essential public asset restoration program (EPAR)	
Congewai, Congewai Road – deliver flood essential public asset restoration program (EPAR)	
Congewai, Congewai Road – deliver non flood regional emergency road repair fund program (RERRF)	
East Branxton, Dalwood Road - investigate and develop road renewal plan	
Ellalong, Campbell Street - investigate and develop road renewal plan	
Great North Rd, South Bank - deliver natural disaster remediation	
Great North Road, Laguna 800m North Fern N/B - deliver natural disaster remediation	
Great North Road, Laguna 800m North Fern N/B - deliver natural disaster remediation	
Great North Rodd, South Bank (500m) - deliver natural disaster remediation	
Greta - deliver shared pathway to Branxton	
Heddon Greta, Averys Lane - investigate and develop road renewal plan	
Kitchener, Kitchener Public School - deliver shared pathway to Poppet Head Park	
Kitchener, Quorrobolong Road from Stanford Street north to CH2830 – deliver road rehabilitation	
Kitchener, Richmond Street - deliver shared pathways to Abernethy Street	
Kurri Kurri, Deakin Street - investigate and develop road renewal plan	
Laguna, Great North Road – deliver flood essential public asset restoration program (EPAR)	
Laguna, Great North Road - deliver non flood regional emergency road repair fund program (RERRF)	
Laguna, Rhino Corner to Glenloona Road - deliver natural disaster rehabilitation	
Laguna, Watagan Creek – deliver bridge replacement	

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Lovedale, Lovedale Road, Wilderness Road to Majors Lane – deliver regional emergency road repair fund program (RERRF)	✓
Millfield, Wollombi Road - deliver road renewal 500m from residence 1610 to residence 1368	✓
Mount Vincent, Sandy Creek Road - investigate and develop road safety plan	✓
North Rothbury, Thomas Street - deliver road renewal	▶
Paxton, Middle Road - deliver road renewal	▶
Pelaw Main, Log of Knowledge Park - deliver shared pathway to Neath	▶
Pokolbin, Old North Road – deliver flood essential public asset restoration program (EPAR)	✓
Pokolbin, Pokolbin Visitors Information Centre - deliver pathway and retaining wall	✓
Quorrobolong, Sandy Creek Road, 440m west of Leggetts Drive - deliver road widening and safety treatment	▶
Rothbury, Sweetwater Creek Road - deliver flood essential public asset restoration program (EPAR)	✓
Sawyers Gully, Sawyers Gully Road – deliver flood essential public asset restoration program (EPAR)	✓
Sawyers Gully, Sawyers Gully Road - investigate and develop road renewal plan	✓
Testers Hollow, Cessnock Road - deliver shared pathway	▶
Various Citywide - deliver DDA compliant bus stops	✓
Various Citywide - deliver essential public asset restoration program (EPAR) to sealed roads	✓
Various Citywide – deliver flood gates and warning systems	✓
Various Citywide - deliver gravel rehabilitation and resheeting program	✓
Various Citywide – deliver local road reconstruction	✓
Various Citywide - deliver local road reseal program	✓
Various Citywide – deliver natural disaster declaration AGRN 1012 1025 and essential public asset restoration program (EPAR)	✓
Various Citywide – deliver pre-construction design and contracts	✓

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Various Citywide - deliver roads reseal program	✓
Various Citywide - deliver Safer Roads/Blackspot program	✓
Various Citywide - renew car parks	✓
Various Citywide - upgrade bus stops for Disability Discrimination Act Compliance	✓
Various Citywide, investigate and develop pre-construction design and contracts	✓
Watagan, Watagan Road – deliver non-Flood regional emergency road repair fund program (RERRF)	✓
Watagan, Watagan Road Flood - deliver flood essential public asset restoration program (EPAR)	✓
Weston, East Esplanade – deliver active transport	▶
Weston, Scott Street - deliver community car park presch	✓
Wollombi, Cuneens Bridge - investigate bridge demolition	✓
Wollombi, Paynes Crossing Road – deliver flood essential public asset restoration program (EPAR)	✓
Wollombi, Paynes Crossing Road – deliver non-flood regional emergency road repair fund program (RERRF)	✓

Challenges

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Abermain, Goulburn – deliver road rehabilitation: investigation and design Abermain	⏸
Abernethy, Abernethy Street - deliver road rehabilitation: investigation and design	⏸
Bellbird, Hetton Street – deliver road rehabilitation: investigation and design	⏸
Bishops Bridge, Old Maitland Road - investigate and develop road safety plan	⏸
Cessnock, Cessnock Airport – deliver replacement of museum hangar	⏭

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Cessnock, Cessnock City Council Works Depot - deliver building modifications	
Cessnock, Cessnock City Council Works Depot - deliver building modifications	
Cessnock, Cooper Street and Charlton Street Intersection - investigate and develop road renewal plan	
Cessnock, Doyle Street - deliver bridge replacement	
Cessnock, Government Road - deliver shared pathway and 2 bus shelters from Anzac Avenue to URA	
Cessnock, Old Maitland Road - develop road renewal plan	
East Branxton, Dalwood Road - deliver shared pathway	
Ellalong, Campbell Street - deliver road renewal	
Heddon Greta, Heddon Street – deliver Phase 1 investigate & design	
Kitchener, Abernethy Street - investigate and develop road safety plan	
Kitchener, Quorrobolong Road - deliver road rehabilitation: investigation and design	
Kurri Kurri, Booth Park – deliver street parking and surrounds improvements	

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Millfield to Paxton to Ellalong – deliver shared pathway	
Nulkaba, Wine Country Drive Deliver shared pathway from Lomas Lane to Broke Road (extension of BHP to St Philips)	
Paynes Crossing, Paynes Crossing Road - deliver road renewal	
Paxton, Anderson Avenue – deliver active transport	
Pokolbin, Deasys Road - investigate bridge replacement	
Pokolbin, Marrowbone Road – deliver road rehabilitation: investigation and design	
Pokolbin, Visitors Information Centre - deliver shared pathway to Hall Road	
Quorrobolong, Sandy Creek Road - deliver defect rectification	
Rothbury, Wilderness Road – deliver road rehabilitation: investigation and design	
Weston, Fourth Street to Swanson Street to Chinamans Hollow - deliver shared pathway	
Weston, Swanson Street - Investigate and develop road renewal plan - stage 1	
Wollombi, Wollombi Road - develop traffic facilities project	



Detailed performance

Objective 4.1 Better transport links

Strategic direction

- We have access to a range of public and community transport
- Our communities are linked by walking and bike tracks
- Our airport acts as a key transport, emergency response and business hub
- Our transport network is integrated and supported by appropriate infrastructure

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
4.1.1.a	Prepare applications for grant funding to improve commuter transport links identified in the 2023 Traffic and Transport Strategy.	Complete minimum one (1) grant funding application as opportunity becomes available **Target:** By June 2025	✓
4.1.4.a	Implement the Trails Strategy via Meetings of the Trails Reference Group.	Trails Reference Group Meetings are held **Target:** A minimum of 2 reference group meetings are held by 30 June 2025	✓
4.1.5.a	Collaborate with HJO and TfNSW for the implementation of the Richmond Vale Trail where resources permit.	Establish a working group with HJO to identify future targets and milestones. **Target:** By 30 June 2025	✓

Objective 4.2 Improving road network

Strategic direction

- We have an acceptable, safe and affordable road network
- We have managed the traffic impact of the Hunter Expressway on local communities
- We have well managed traffic conditions across our suburbs

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
4.2.1.a	Develop and deliver prioritised Capital Works Programs in line with adopted Asset Management Plans.	70% of high priority works incorporated in the Delivery Program **Target:** By 30 June 2025	✓
4.2.1.b	Develop guidelines for the opening of roads	Develop guidelines for the opening of roads **Target:** By 30 June 2025	▶
4.2.2.a	Continue implementation of the Plant and Fleet Management review to ensure efficient and effective use of resources.	Develop a Plant and Fleet Asset Management Plan and undertake a review unit rate costs for all items of plant. **Target:** By 30 June 2025	▶

Objective 4.3 Improve access to health services local

Strategic direction

- We have better availability of and access to hospitals in the Local Government Area
- We have better avaiability of and access to general practitioners and dental services in the Local Government Area
- We have regional standard health services, facilities, and health professionals



5 Civic leadership and effective governance

This desired outcome focuses on the conservation and preservation of the natural environment whilst balancing the impact of development to ensure a sustainable and healthy community

Objective 5.1

Fostering & supporting community leadership

Strategic Directions

- We have well-trained and qualified leaders in our community and in our workforce
- Our young people aspire to become leaders
- Our Council is committed to implementing our community's vision

Objective 5.2

Achieving more sustainable employment opportunities

Strategic Directions

- We have education and training opportunities for people of all ages and abilities
- We have a diverse range of local employment opportunities

Objective 5.3

Ensuring Council is accountable and responsive to the community

Strategic Directions

- Our Council is customer focused
- Our Council's processes are efficient and transparent
- Our Council is financially sustainable

Measures

How we will measure our progress

MEASURE	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	TARGET
Public transport usage	This measure is the annual distance and percentage of trips made by public transport (trains and bus) by residents of the local government area. This data is sourced from the Household Travel Survey.	75,000km 3%	Improve
Pavement network condition	The Overall Condition Index (OCI) is a measure of urban road quality - it reflects the quality of the pavement structure (not the surface condition/ driveability). It excludes unsealed roads. On 30 June 2016 the average OCI was 2.72. OCI is based on a scale of 1-5, in line with best practice asset management principles (where 1 is excellent, 2 is good, 3 is average, 4 is poor and 5 is very poor).	2.72 Average to Good	Improve
Ratio of GPs per 100,000 population	This measure is the number of general practitioners (GPs) per 100,000 population in the Cessnock Local Government Area. This data is sourced from the Social Atlas produced by the Public Health Information Development Unit of Torrens University Australia. The industry benchmark is 1 GP per 1,400 population and in 2011 the Cessnock LGA had 1 GP per 1,418 people.	1:1418	Improve
Hospital emergency treatments	This measure is the time the 95th percentile of emergency and urgent patients waited to start treatment at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Hospitals. The benchmarks are within 10 minutes and 30 minutes respectively. In the period July - September 2016 the time that the 95th percentile of emergency patients and urgent patients waited to commence treatment in NSW was 41 minutes and 103 minutes respectively. This data is sourced from the Bureau of Health Information.	25mins and 79mins N/A and 54mins Kurri Kurri	Improve



Highlights

91%
increase of submissions to our Together Cessnock page

18,259
Facebook followers

1,633
Insta followers

Completed Stage 1 of our Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention Framework

Processed our Development Applications in timeframes under NSW state average

Our Customer Relations staff undertook training:

- Mental Resilience
- Achieving Customer Excellence training completed

Lodgements under NSW Government Statement of Expectations Order 2024 Faster Assessment program reduced to
8 calendar days - development assessments to
62 calendar days

Implementation of our Succession Planning Framework

Optimised "Report an Issue" feature on our website

87%
satisfaction rate for our Contact Centre Customer

8,901
customers attended our administration building

58,236
calls received by our Contact Centre

27,362
customer requests resolved

Key projects

OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	STATUS
Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, Libraries – deliver hublet purchase and installation as part of Local Priority Program 2024-2025	✓
Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, Libraries – deliver upgrades as part of local priority program 2022	✓
Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, Libraries – deliver upgrades as part of local priority program 2017/18 - Capital	✓
Cessnock City Council, Elected Members – deliver equipment	✓
Cessnock, Cessnock City Council Works Depot - investigate and develop depot residence office space masterplan	▶
Cessnock, Cessnock City Council, Corporate administration - deliver equipment upgrades	▶
Cessnock, Cessnock City Council, Corporate Administration – deliver IT capital steering committee including civica and online applications	✓
Cessnock, Cessnock City Council, Infrastructure administration - deliver specialised asset planning upgrades	✓
Cessnock, Cessnock City Council, Infrastructure administration – deliver equipment upgrades	✓
Cessnock, Cessnock City Council, Recreation Services administration - deliver equipment upgrades	✓
Cessnock, Cessnock Library – deliver minor refurbishments as part of Local Priority Program 2024/2025	✓

Detailed performance

Objective 5.1 Fostering & supporting community leadership

Strategic direction

- We have well-trained and qualified leaders in our community and in our workforce
- Our young people aspire to become leaders
- Our Council is committed to implementing our community's vision

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
5.1.1.a	Develop an updated Councillor Induction Program and training program outlining compulsory minimum training requirements. Induction of new Councillors to be completed by January 2025	Induction program delivered following 2024 election **Target:** Completed by January 2025 Candidate briefing sessions are delivered **Target:** Completed prior to September 2024 Election	✓

Objective 5.2 Achieving more sustainable employment opportunities

Strategic direction

- We have education and training opportunities for people of all ages and abilities
- Our have a diverse range of local employment opportunities

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
5.2.1.a	Increase opportunities for community engagement by providing accessible information on a variety of platforms for audiences with diverse needs and preferences	Increase visibility of Council through face to face engagement sessions across the LGA **Target:** Hold minimum 20 Face to Face engagement sessions across the LGA by 30 June 2025 Increase registrations to 'Have your say' website. **Target:** 20% increase by 30 June 2025 Increase site visits to 'Have your say' website **Target:** 10% increase year on year by 30 June 2025	✓
5.2.1.b	Prepare and adopt an updated Community Engagement Strategy for 2025-29	Complete draft Community Engagement Strategy **Target:** by 31 December 2024 Engage with internal and external stakeholders in the development of draft Community Engagement Strategy and seek feedback. **Target:** Engagement both prior to and following development of Draft. Prepare report for draft Community Engagement Strategy to Council for adoption **Target:** by 31 March 2025	✓
5.2.1.c	Research and trial opportunities to increase youth participation in community engagement on Council projects, plans and strategies	Complete research of methods used by other Councils and similar organisations **Target:** by 30 November 2024 Plan opportunities to trial identified methods to increase youth participation. **Target:** by 28 February 2025	✓
5.2.2.a	Actively participate in and collaborate with Hunter Joint Organisation to promote the interests of the LGA	General Manager or delegate will attend majority of Hunter Joint Organisation meetings **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
5.2.3.a	Monitor and respond to the State Government's local government reform program	Debt Service - This measure is the three year average of the cost of debt service (principal and interest) divided by total operating revenue **Target:** Ongoing	✓

Objective 5.3 Ensuring Council is accountable and responsive to the community

Strategic direction

- We Our Council is customer focused
- Our Council's processes are efficient and transparent
- Our Council is financially sustainable

Achievements

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
5.3.1.a	Build an organisation which has a focus on the customer by having well trained staff who are committed to providing a quality service	Tailor and facilitate Customer Service training. **Target:** minimum four (4) times by 30 June 2025 Achieving Customer Excellence (ACE) Training to all staff within Council. **Target:** One (1) training session per month in line with Council's onboarding program.	✓
5.3.1.b	Build a customer centric culture that encourages empathy and understanding with values and behaviours that focus employees on delivering great customer experiences	Refine and promote our Customer Service Charter **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
5.3.1.c	Ensure our processes, procedures and roles have the right capability in place to manage expectations and deliver what we promise	Implement target outcomes for CRMs and Driveways journey mapping. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
5.3.1.d	Use technology to share knowledge and to design interactions that are seamless and easy for customers and staff	Improvement of online forms that ensures easy-to-understand language is being used and consistent branding and support is offered **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
5.3.1.e	Increase customer understanding and use it to design services that improves our customer experience	Undertake customer journey mapping in relation to one of our services to gain a clear understanding of our customer's expectations **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
5.3.2.a	Conduct regular development consultation forums	Seek feedback on service delivery from industry applicants following Development Forums and through other engagement methods **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Participate and promote the annual Development Consultation Forum **Target:** One (1) forum by 30 June 2025 Hold five (5) onsite and five (5) on location Development Forums with industry applicants. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
5.3.3.a	Efficiently and effectively process development applications and respond to planning-related enquiries	Process development applications within agreed timeframes **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Respond to planning-related inquiries within agreed timeframes. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
5.3.3.b	Continue the expansion of the application programming interface (API) between the NSW Planning Portal (ePlanning) and Council's systems	Review and implement any further development of the API for the NSW Planning Portal as they become available **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
5.3.3.c	Continue to review and enhance our internal processes and workflows in line with the Departments Development Assessment Best Practice Guide	Refine internal processes to improve Development Assessment processing times **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
5.3.5.a	Continue to develop and implement workplace health and safety and employee wellbeing initiatives	Develop a strategy to manage employee fitness for work and address issues associated with an ageing workforce. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Conduct an external audit against the criteria of ISO45001 to provide assurance on how Council is performing with respect to WHS. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 WHS considerations are integrated into all areas of Council through the review of WHS performance data and KPI's **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Review of WHS System Procedure **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Undertake a survey and audit of the Health and Safety Committee. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Increase the use of Council's electronic safety and risk systems. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Conduct an external audit of Council's Return to Work Program to ensure legislative compliance and best practice. **Target:** by 28 February 2025	✓
5.3.5.b	Maintain an internal audit function delivering the approved annual internal audit plan in accordance with the IPPF and recognised best practice / Manage Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee in accordance with statutory obligations and recognised best practice	Maintain an internal audit function delivering the approved annual internal audit plan in accordance with the IPPF and recognised best practice / Manage Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee in accordance with statutory obligations and recognised best practice **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
5.3.5.c	Review and implement an Enterprise Risk Management Framework to mature and enhance decision-making in supporting the delivery of Councils vision, purpose and objectives		✓
5.3.6.b	Undertake service delivery review of the Debt Collection function to be completed by December 2024		✓
5.3.6.c	Undertake Service Delivery Review of Procurement and Stores Function	Completed and reported to the Audit Committee. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
5.3.7.a	Review and update Council's Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention Framework to align with best practice	Prepare and finalise a revised Fraud Control and Corruption Prevention Framework **Target:** Framework adopted by 30 June 2025	✓
5.3.7.b	Complete all requirements of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework	Adoption of: • Community Strategic Plan • Delivery Program • Operational Plan **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Completion and lodgement: • Annual Report • State of the City Report **Target:** Completed by 30 November 2024	✓
5.3.7.c	Manage Council's corporate governance in accordance with regulations	All policies and procedures are reviewed and adopted as per regulation and Council policy **Target:** Achieved/Not Achieved	✓

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
5.3.7.d	Review and update Council's Ethical Behaviour Framework to ensure delegations and authorisations meet legislative and compliance requirements	Revised delegations management system **Target:** Implemented by 30 June 2025	✓
5.3.8.f	Facilitate inter-departmental working group to review and develop new procedures for Council property leases and licences and associated subsidy assessments		✓
5.3.8.h	Develop a comprehensive Expression of Interest (EOI) for Richmond Main Colliery site, outlining a strategic plan for its future ownership, management, and use		✓
5.3.8.i	Create and maintain a detailed easement register, ensuring accurate documentation and regular updates of all easement agreements and related activities		▶
5.3.9.a	Share information regarding the status of current Capital Works particularly with respect to traffic disruptions and construction works		✓

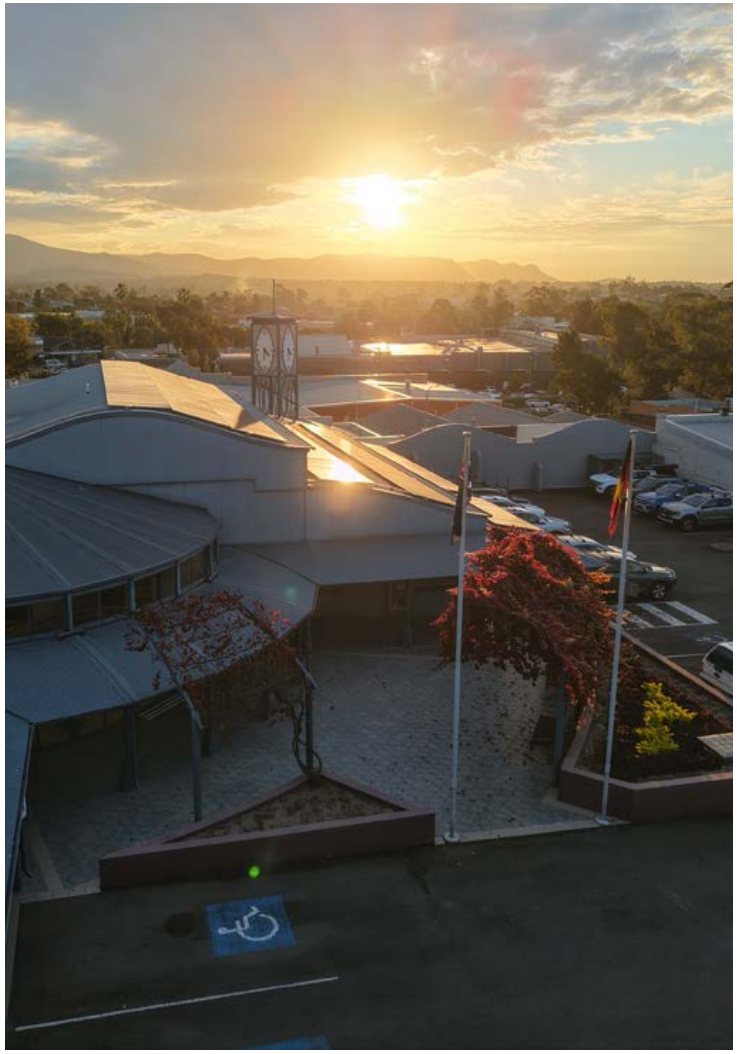
CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
5.3.10.a	Implement Council's Leadership and Capability Framework actions	Review framework documentation, amend actions as required, and communicate to stakeholders. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Employee understanding and satisfaction surveys for framework completed. **Target:** by 30 June 2025 Develop and implement a program plan for each level of leadership that includes formal and on the job training. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
5.3.10.b	Develop and implement a succession planning and talent management framework that is fit for purpose for Council.	Succession planning and talent management framework developed and implemented. **Target:** by 30 June 2025	✓
5.3.11.a	Complete financial modelling to determine future income and expenditure requirements to assess need for a Special Rate Variation	Financial modelling provided to ELT and Council. **Target:** Completed by 31 December 2024	✓

Challenges

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
5.3.11.b	Enhance Council Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) to ensure that the LTFP becomes part of the IP&R documents to facilitate scenario analysis for Special Rate Variation	LTFP aligns with all IP&R documents and is updated as part of the Quarterly Budget Review Statements **Target:** Achieved for each QBRS period	⏸

CODE	OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024-25 ACTION	SERVICE INDICATOR AND MEASURE	STATUS
5.3.8.a	Develop a Financial Strategy integrated with the Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Plans, Workforce Plan to determine future funding requirements for council	Strategy endorsed by Executive Leadership Team **Target:** Completed by 30 April 2025	
5.3.8.b	Progress Cessnock Administration Building relocation and Cessnock Library expansion investigations		
5.3.8.c	Review surplus and under-utilised Council properties to facilitate social and affordable housing provision		







Our accountability

Highlights

We engaged Local Supplier to the amount of $29,726,613 and returned $13,376,975 to the community. This equates to supporting 297 Jobs at a salary of $45,000 per annum in our area.

Top 10 Suppliers via Spend

SUPPLIER	VALUE
Daracon Contractors Pty Ltd	$10,319,279.81
Stabilised Pavements of Australia Pty Ltd	$6,219,518.01
Anewx Pty Ltd	$5,570,325.88
KCE	$4,829,749.50
ANA Industries Pty Ltd	$4,678,960.63
Glascott Landscape & Civil Pty Ltd	$3,270,378.53
StateCover Mutual Limited	$3,132,760.46
Symal Infrastructure Pty Ltd	$2,923,053.59
Hunter Resource Recovery	$2,542,604.56
Gilbert & Roach Pty Ltd	$2,074,134.65

Governance

Review of Proactive Release Program - Clause 8 (a)

Under **section 7** of the Government Information Public Access Act 2009 (GIPA), agencies must review their programs for the release of government information to identify the kinds of information that can be made publicly available. This review must be undertaken at least once every 12 months. Our program for the proactive release of information involves constantly reviewing frequently requested information to determine whether it would be in the public interest to make the information publicly available on our website or via any other means.

We have noted that the majority of requests received by use were to view archived development application files and associated consents and plans, which require an access application as they are dated before July 2010. Our officers are investigating ways to make this information accessible online, while meeting Copyright requirements.



Corporate Risk

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

The Audit, Risk and Improvement committee comprises 3 voting independent members one of whom is the Chair and one non-voting Councillor Member.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP FOR 2024-2025	
Chairperson	Shane Hubble
Chairperson (term ended 31/12/2024)	Jennifer Hayes
Independent Member (appointed Chair 01/01/2025)	Shane Hubble
Independent Member	Martin Matthews
Independent Member	William Middleton
Councillor Member	Mark Mason

Non-voting attendees at each meeting include:

- Mayor
- General Manager
- Internal Auditor
- Representative of the Audit Office of NSW
- Director Corporate and Community Services
- Director Works and Infrastructure
- Director Planning and Environment
- People and Culture Manager
- Chief Financial Officer

Invitees (non-voting) can be called by the Chairperson to attend Committee meetings for specific Agenda items. Where requested to attend a meeting, persons must attend the meeting where possible and provide any information requested.

Meetings

21 August 2024

24 October 2024

5 December 2024

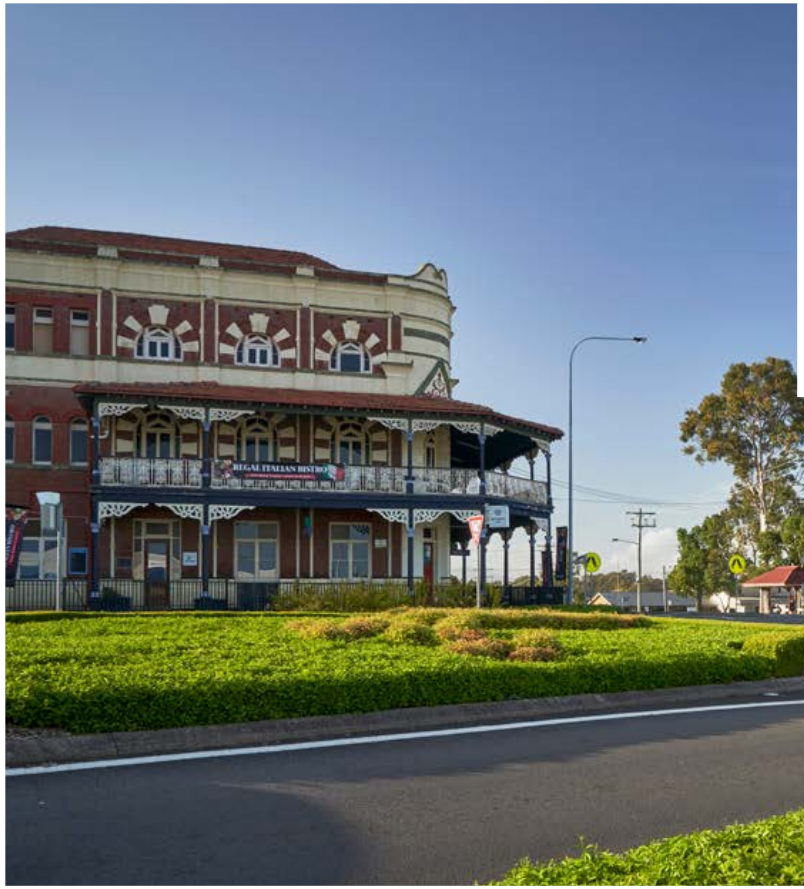
5 February 2025

7 May 2025

The Chair of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee provides a memo to the elected Council with an update on the activities of the Audit, Risk and Improvement, key discussion points and recommendations made within two weeks of the meeting. The business papers for the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee are provided to all Councillors.

Internal auditor

Is responsible for monitoring and reviewing Council's systems and control procedures and recommending process improvements to assist Council to operate in an open, accountable and effective way, in accordance with good governance and exceptional ethical behaviour and accountability standard



Cessnock City Council Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee Performance Review

Under ***Section 10.1*** of the *Cessnock City Council Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Charter* **4** Committee Meetings were held during the reporting period

Attendance Details

In establishing the new current term of Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee, a call for Community Representatives commenced via an expression of interest process November 2024 and concluded 7 February 2025. A total of 14 nominations were received from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander persons seeking Community Representative membership to the Committee.

All 14 people were offered the opportunity to become a member of the Committee and 12 people accepted the offer. The first meeting of the Committee was held on 2 May 2025 and was attended by 8 Community Representatives and 3 Councillors appointed to the Committee.





Our legislative compliance

Grants and contributions

In accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, Clause 217(1)(a5) and the Local Government Act 1993, Section 356, the report must outline the total amount contributed or otherwise granted to financially assist others.



Community, Sporting and Environment Grant Scheme

Community & Cultural Development ***$25,856***

10 community groups:

- ArtsNational Hunter
- Barkuma Neighbourhood Centre
- Branxton Community Hall
- Carries Place Domestic Violence and Homelessness Services
- Cessnock Family Support Service
- Kiray Putjung Aboriginal Corporation
- Lions Club of Branxton Inc
- Prelude Australia
- Sunnyfield Disability Services
- Wollombi Valley Arts Council Inc.

Schools Environment Grant

$5,421

- Hunter Mobile Preschool - Kitchener Venue
- Lower Hunter Children's Activity Van Association
- Weston Community Preschool
- Little Treasures Childcare
- Holy Spirit Primary School
- Nulkaba Public School
- Cessnock East Public School
- Cessnock High School
- St Philip's Christian College, Cessnock
  - Senior School
- Kurri Kurri High School
- Kurri Kurri & District Preschool Kindergarten Inc.

Sustainable Communities

$11,000.11

- Tidy Town Environment Grants
- Cessnock Community Garden
- North Rothbury Bushcare
- Barkuma Neighbourhood Centre
- Greta Tidy Towns
- Wollombi Valley Landcare Group Ltd



Sporting Facilities Grant Scheme

$16,294



- Branxton District Netball Club
- Cessnock District Hockey Association
- Cessnock District Netball Association
- Cessnock Dog Club
- Kurri Kurri Minor Rugby League Football Club
- Kurri Kurri Rugby League Football Club
- Wollombi Valley Tennis Club

Sporting Facilities Grant Scheme

$10,106

- Cessnock Minor Rugby League
- Cessnock Pickleball Association
- Branxton Croquet Club
- Mulbring Cricket Club
- Wollombi Valley Pony Club

Community Facilities Grant Scheme

$33,330



- Branxton Pre-School
- Cessnock Multipurpose Children's Centre
- Hunter Prelude Ltd
- Wollombi Community Hall section 355 committee
- Wollombi Valley Community Association

Advance Greater Cessnock – Economic Development & Sponsorship program

$127,000



- 10 Advance Greater Cessnock Partners projects including event sponsorship
- Town Coordinator
- Kurri Kurri Visitor Information Centre
- Weed eradication
- Business support training
- Business awards sponsorship



Support Local program

$9,500

- Car & Motorbike industry – 4 winners
- Food Service Industry – 15 winners

Mayoral Scholarship Program

$37,500

- 15 scholarships





Other financial assistance provided

Country Womens Association NSW	$1,787.06
Cessnock Homing Pigeon Club	$1,852.10
Trustees Masonic Hall	$2,029.48
Weston Pre-School	$2,638.48
Masonic Holdings Limited	$2,224.59
Cessnock Clay Target Gun Club	$6,712.30
Greta Pre-School Kindergarten	$2,301.46
Kurri Kurri Motor Cycle Club Inc	$1,083.45
Cessnock Rifle Club Inc	$7,421.82
Aberdare Pre School	$3,838.75
Richmond Vale Preservation Co-op Society	$5,021.28
Cessnock Pistol Club Inc	$5,872.70
Branxton Preschool	$1,586.03

Companion Animals

In accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, Clause 217(1)(f), and the Companion Animals Guidelines, the report must include a detailed statement of Council's activities during the year in relation to enforcing, and ensuring compliance with, the provisions of the Companion Animals Act 1988 (CA Act) and the Companion Animal Regulation 2018.

In the 2024-25 reporting period 528 dogs were seized. Of those, 125 were returned to owners in the field by Rangers and 403 conveyed to Maitland Animal Management Facility. 0 cats were seized.

Impounded animals **403**

Dog attacks **77**

Responsible Pet Ownership Education

Council actively enforces the *Companion Animals Act 1998* through the following activities and community education programs

- Free microchipping of Companion Animals for residents
- Regular proactive patrols of the area were made to further promote responsible pet ownership and compliance
- Community education on responsible pet ownership including
- Distribution of pooch pouches
- Dog leads
- Brochures and promotional materials
- Continued "With loves comes responsibility" educational campaigns utilising bus stop posters, social media and competitions



Alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals

As part of Council's agreement with the Maitland Animal Management Facility (MAMF), animals were held for the prescribed time and unclaimed ownership transferred to the MAMF. A behavioural assessment was conducted on unclaimed animals to establish re-homing suitability



Controlling interests and service charges

In accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, clause 217(1)(a7), the report must include a statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which Council held a controlling interest

Council holds no controlling interest in companies.





Storm water management charges

In accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, clause 217(1)(e), the report must include a statement detailing the stormwater management services provided (if levied)

During 2024-25 Council received a total of **$601,084** in Stormwater Management Service Charge funds. We carried out Capital works on underground pipe networks, open channels, drains, floodplain mitigation and detention basins to the value of **$6,199,820** with **$1,125,745** utilised from the Stormwater Levy. Projects included:

- South Cessnock Flood Mitigation
- Black Creek Flood risk management (stage 2)
- Greta Floodplain Risk Management Study

Drainage

- Beillbird, Keelendi Street
- Branxton, Cessnock St (Investigation)
- Heddon Greta, Clift Street
- Heddon Greta, Main Road
- Kurri Kurri, Booth Street
- Kurri Kurri, Edward Street
- Millfield, Portland Street
- North Rothbury, Thomas Street
- Roadside Drainage program

Funds raised from the levy were spent exclusively on stormwater and related infrastructure, with the remaining balance to be carried over to fund 2025-26 and future projects.

Inspections of private swimming pools

In accordance with the *Swimming Pools Act 1992*, section 22F(2), and the Swimming Pools Regulation 2018, clause 23, the report must include details of inspections of private swimming pools

Tourist and Visitor Accommodation	N/A
More than two dwellings	N/A
Properties issued with a Cerificate of Compliance	133
Properties issued with a Certificate of Non-Compliance	92



Public interest disclosures

In accordance with the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022*, Section 31, and the *Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011*, Clause 4, Council must provide information on its public interest disclosure activity as part of the Annual Report.

Council recorded 0 Public Interest Disclosure for the period 1 July to 30 September 2024



Public access to information

In accordance with the *Government Information Public Access Act 2009 (GIPA)*, s125(1) and the Government Information Regulations 2018, cl 8, Schedule 2.

In accordance with Clause 8b the total number of access applications received by the Council in 2022-23 reporting year is 223. The full report on Council's compliance with the Act is annexed to this report.

Number of access applications received Clause 8 (b)

During the reporting period, Council received 174 formal access applications (including withdrawn applications, but not invalid applications).

Number of refused applications for schedule 1 information Clause 8 (c)

During the reporting period, Council refused zero formal access applications because the information requested was information referred to in Schedule 1 of the GIPA Act.



Statistical Information about access applications Clause 8 (d) and Schedule 2

Table A: Number of applications by type of applicant and outcome*

	ACCESS GRANTED IN FULL	ACCESS GRANTED IN PART	ACCESS REFUSED IN FULL	INFORMATION NOT HELD	INFORMATION ALREADY AVAILABLE	REFUSE TO DEAL WITH APPLICATION	REFUSE TO CONFIRM/ DENY WHETHER INFORMATION IS HELD	APPLICATION WITHDRAWN	TOTAL	% OF TOTAL
Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Private sector business	16	27	2	6	0	1	0	3	55	26.44%
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.48%
Members of the public (by legal representative)	2	13	0	3	0	0	0	0	18	8.65%
Members of the public (other)	17	85	4	19	1	5	0	3	134	64.42%
Total	35	126	6	28	1	6	0	6	208	
% of Total	16.83%	60.58%	2.88%	13.46%	0.48%	2.88%	0%	2.88%		

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



Table B: Number of applications by type of application and outcome*

	ACCESS GRANTED IN FULL	ACCESS GRANTED IN PART	ACCESS REFUSED IN FULL	INFORMATION NOT HELD	INFORMATION ALREADY AVAILABLE	REFUSE TO DEAL WITH APPLICATION	REFUSE TO CONFIRM/ DENY WHETHER INFORMATION IS HELD	APPLICATION WITHDRAWN	TOTAL	% OF TOTAL
Personal information applications**	9	7	4	5	0	0	0	0	25	12.02%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	25	118	2	23	1	6	0	6	181	87.02%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.96%
Total	35	126	6	28	1	6	0	6	208	
% of Total	16.83%	60.58%	2.88%	13.46%	0.48%	2.88%	0%	2.88%		

**A personal information application is an access application for personal information (as defined in clause 4 of Schedule 4 to the Act) about the applicant (the applicant being an individual).

Table C: Invalid applications

REASON FOR INVALIDITY	NO OF APPLICATIONS	% OF TOTAL
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	42	100.00%
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0	0.00%
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0	0%
Total number of invalid applications received	42	100%
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	29	69.05%

Table D: Conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure: matters listed in Schedule 1 of Act

	NO OF APPLICATIONS	% OF TOTAL
Overriding secrecy laws	0	0.00%
Cabinet information	0	0.00%
Executive Council information	0	0.00%
Contempt	0	0.00%
Legal professional privilege	0	0.00%
Excluded information	0	0.00%
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0	0.00%
Transport safety	0	0.00%
Adoption	0	0.00%
Care and protection of children	0	0.00%
Ministerial code of conduct	0	0.00%
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0	0.00%
Privilege generally - Sch 1(5A)	0	0.00%
Information provided to High Risk Offenders Assessment Committee	0	0.00%
Total	0	0%

***More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application). This also applies in relation to Table E.

Table E: Other public interest considerations against disclosure: matters listed in table to section 14 of Act

	NUMBER OF TIMES CONSIDERATION USED***	% OF TOTAL
Responsible and effective government	14	7.14%
Law enforcement and security	2	1.02%
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	119	60.71%
Business interests of agencies and other persons	60	30.61%
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	1	0.51%
Secrecy provisions	0	0%
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0	0%
Total	196	

Table F: Timeliness

	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS*	% OF TOTAL
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	195	98.48%
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	2	1.01%
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	1	0.51%
Total	198	

Table G: Number of applications reviewed under Part 5 of the Act (by type of review and outcome)

	DECISION VARIED	DECISION UPHELD	TOTAL	% OF TOTAL
Internal review	1	1	2	66.67%
Review by Information Commissioner****	1	0	1	33.33%
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	0	0	0	0%
Review by NCAT	0	0	0	0%
Total	2	1	3	
% of Total	66.67%	33.33%		

****The Information Commissioner does not have the authority to vary decisions, but can make recommendations to the original decision-maker. The data in this case indicates that a recommendation to vary or uphold the original decision has been made by the Information Commissioner.

Table H: Applications for review under Part 5 of the Act (by type of applicant)

	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW	% OF TOTAL
Applications by access applicants	2	66.67%
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)	1	33.33%
Total	3	

Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies

	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS TRANSFERRED	% OF TOTAL
Agency-Initiated Transfers	1	100%
Applicant - Initiated Transfers	0	0%
Total	1	

Voluntary planning agreements

PROJECT ID	VOLUNTARY PLANNING AGREEMENTS	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SERVICE	AMOUNT EXPENDED	% FUNDED	STATUS
2482	Bellbird Heights Planning Agreement	Performing Arts Centre Cessnock Refurbishment	Community Facilities	$48,023	100.0%	Completed
3301/3306	65 Abernethy Street, Kitchener Planning Agreement	Poppethead Park Kitchener Masterplan/Boardwalk	Open Space	$26,000	100.0%	Ongoing
3360	Bellbird Heights Planning Agreement	Carmichael Park BMX amenities (Neville Thomlinson)	Open Space	$104,298	100.0%	Ongoing
3208	Cliftleigh Planning Agreement	Kurri Library - Toilet Refurbishment	Community Facilities	$23,038	100.0%	Ongoing
2640/3306	Kitchener Planning Agreement	Poppethead Park Kitchener Masterplan/Boardwalk	Open Space	$75,244	100.0%	Ongoing
2164	Kitchener Planning Agreement	Kitchener School Bus Shelter and Signage	Roads & Traffic	$24,253	100.0%	Completed
2077	Kitchener Planning Agreement	RRL-2020-005 Aberdare Street Kitchener	Roads & Traffic	$31,457	100.0%	Completed
5636	Rose Hill Planning Agreement	2 indented bus bays with all weather shelters	Roads & Traffic	$60,000	100.0%	Completed
2926	Snowy Hydro Planning Agreement	Booth Park Netball Courts	Open Space	$426,754	100.0%	Ongoing
3368	West & Wyndham Street, Greta Planning Agreement	Greta Skatepark	Open Space	$32,770	100.0%	Ongoing
				$851,837		

Agreements in force

In accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, Section 7.5(5), the report must include particulars of compliance with, and the effect of, planning agreements in force during the year.

	NAME	DESCRIPTION	DATE	PARTIES TO AGREEMENT	LAND TO WHICH AGREEMENT APPLIES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION E.G. DEEDS OF VARIATION, DEEDS OF AGREEMENT
1	Planning Agreement - Cliftleigh Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Cliftleigh, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979	20 August 2008	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325; and Winten (No 23) Pty Limited of Level 10, 61 Lavender Street, Milsons Point, New South Wales, 2061	Lot 61 DP 1076974 Lot 62 DP 1076974 Lot 23 DP 607899 Lot 61 DP 785115 Lot 62 DP 785115 Lot 3 DP 1039042 Lot 1 DP 1072276 Lot 2 DP 1072111 Lot 22 DP 607899 Lot 1 DP 1039042	Deed of variation – 22 December 2016 Second deed of variation – July 2020
2	Planning Deed - Anvil Creek Project Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Anvil Creek, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979	20 August 2008	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325; and Greta Estates Pty Limited (Greta) of 12 Woodside Avenue, Burwood, New South Wales, 2134.	Lot 1 DP 1036942 Lot 2 DP 1036942 Lot 3 DP 1036942 Lot 4 DP 1036942 Lot 5 DP 1036942 Lot 6 DP 1036942 Lot 263 DP 755211 Lot 264 DP 755211	
3	Planning Agreement - Heddon Greta Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Heddon Greta, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979	3 November 2010	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325; and Kurri Autos Pty Limited of P.O. Box 61 Kurri Kurri, New South Wales, 2327	Part Lot 404 of DP 1127085 Part Lot 102 of DP 1112059 off Main Road, Young and Bowden Streets, Errol Crescent, Madeline and Ashley Close and Forbes Crescent at Heddon Greta.	

	NAME	DESCRIPTION	DATE	PARTIES TO AGREEMENT	LAND TO WHICH AGREEMENT APPLIES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION E.G. DEEDS OF VARIATION, DEEDS OF AGREEMENT
4	Planning Agreement - Cessnock Civic Biodiversity	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide for the management of mine subsidence and environmental offset land within the area commonly known as Cessnock Civic.	13 July 2012	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325; Cessnock Land Management P/L of C/-Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, New South Wales, 2000; Vincent Street Holdings P/L of C/- 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, New South Wales, 2322; and Hardie Oceanic P/L of C/-Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, New South Wales, 2000	Lot 251 DP 606348; Lot 1 DP 1036300; Lot 23 DP 845986; and Lot 22 DP 845986	
5	Planning Agreement - Averys Village Biodiversity	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide environmental offset land to the area commonly known as Averys Village.	15 September 2013	Minister for the Environment of Level 32 Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney, New South Wales, 2000; Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325; Hunter Land Holdings of 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, New South Wales, 2322; Averys Rise Investor Pty Limited of Level 2, 77 Hunter Street, Newcastle, New South Wales, 2300; Lindsay James George Elliott of 57 Averys Lanes, Buchannan, New South Wales, 2323; Graham John Field of P.O. Box 30, Murgon, Queensland, 4605; Pamela Joy Field of P.O. Box 30, Murgon, Queensland, 4605; and HL Eco Trades Pty Ltd of 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, New South Wales, 2322.	Lot 20 DP 11823 Lot 12 DP 755231 Lot 13 DP 755231 Lot 5 DP 1082569 Lot 8 DP 10443 Lot 119 DP 752445	
6	Planning Agreement - West and Wyndham Street Greta Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Greta, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979	6 August 2014	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325; Hardie Greta Pty Limited of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, New South Wales, 2000.	Lot 2 DP 808354 Lot 2 DP 1151267	Deed of Variation dated 22 May 2018

	NAME	DESCRIPTION	DATE	PARTIES TO AGREEMENT	LAND TO WHICH AGREEMENT APPLIES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION E.G. DEEDS OF VARIATION, DEEDS OF AGREEMENT
7	Planning Agreement - Rose Hill Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Millfield, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.	20 October 2014	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325; Fame Cove Three Pty Limited of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, New South Wales, 2000	Lot 12 DP 1181682	
8	Planning Agreement - Bellbird Heights Biodiversity	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide environmental offset land to the area commonly known as Bellbird.	19 November 2014	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325; Winton Partners Pty Limited of Level 2, 95 Pitt Street Sydney, New South Wales, 2000	Lot 1 DP 1164334	
9	Planning Agreement - Bellbird Heights Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Bellbird, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979	19 November 2014	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325; Winton Partners Pty Limited of Level 2, 95 Pitt Street Sydney, New South Wales, 2000	Lot 1 DP 1164334	
10	Planning Agreement - West and Wyndham Street Greta Biodiversity	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide environmental offset land associated with development of the 'West and Wyndham Street, Greta' Urban Release Area, including the on-site protection of 7.7ha, and the off-site dedication of Lots 9, 102, and 207 DP753817 (297ha) for integration into the Wollemi National Park in the Singleton Local Government Area	20 August 2015	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325 Minister administering the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974 of Level 32 Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, New South Wales, Sydney, 2000 Hardie Greta Pty Ltd of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, New South Wales, 2000 Biodiversity Lands Pty Ltd of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, New South Wales, 2000	Lot 2 DP 808354 Lot 2 DP 1151267 Lot 9 DP 753817 Lot 102 DP 753817 Lot 207 DP 753817	

	NAME	DESCRIPTION	DATE	PARTIES TO AGREEMENT	LAND TO WHICH AGREEMENT APPLIES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION E.G. DEEDS OF VARIATION, DEEDS OF AGREEMENT
11	Kitchener Residential Subdivision Deed of Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide $12,057.46 per lot (subject to indexation) for the provision of local infrastructure supporting the development of fifty nine (59) allotments in the Kitchener Urban Release Area.	04 November 2015	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325 JPG 58 Pty Ltd of Level 12, 48 Hunter Street, Sydney	Lot 2 DP 862493	
12	Planning Agreement - Huntlee Local Infrastructure	This Agreement applies to Stage 1 of the Huntlee precinct approved by the State Government in April 2013. In total, the Huntlee Planning Agreement includes more than $38.9 million of local infrastructure in the form of Monetary Contributions valued at $9,546,588.00, Works-in-Kind valued at $29,429,643.00, and 81.45ha of Land Dedication.	18 November 2015	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325 Huntlee Pty Ltd of 34 Main Street Ellenvrook, Western Australia.	Part of Lot 200 DP 828486 Lot 201 DP 828486 Part of Lot 230 DP 79198 Lot 231 DP 879198 Lot 33 DP 755211 Lot 36 DP 755211 Lot 37 DP 755211 Lot 38 DP 755211 Lot 39 DP 755211 Lot 43 DP 755211 Part of Lot 241 DP 11005591 Lot 2 DP 729973 Lot 3 DP 729973 Lot 4 DP 729973 Lot 6 DP 729973 Lot 7 DP 729973 Lot 9 DP 729973 Lot 10 DP 729973 Lot 11 DP 729973 Part of Lot 12 DP 729973 Part of Lot 21 DP 1050597 Part of Lot 221 DP 1064738 Lot 10 DP 1105639 Lot 287 DP 1209109	First Deed of Agreement – 28 September 2014 Second Deed of Agreement – 23 March 2018 Third Deed of Agreement - 18 January 2023

	NAME	DESCRIPTION	DATE	PARTIES TO AGREEMENT	LAND TO WHICH AGREEMENT APPLIES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION E.G. DEEDS OF VARIATION, DEEDS OF AGREEMENT
13	Planning Agreement – Orica Biodiversity	The Planning Agreement commits the landowner to enter into a BioBanking Agreement in relation to part of the site with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage.	19 October 2016	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325 Orica Australia Pty Limited C/ Level 1, 1 Nicholson Street Melbourne, Victoria, 3001	Lot 2 DP 809377	
14	Planning Agreement – Black Hill Biodiversity	The objective of the Planning Agreement is to require the conservation of the natural environment, which is a public purpose associated with the carrying out of development.	21 November 2016	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325 The Trustees of the Roman Catholic Church for the dioceses of Maitland-Newcastle 841 Hunter Street Newcastle New South Wales, 2302	Lot 1131 DP 1057179	
15	Planning Agreement – 1443 Wine Country Drive Local Infrastructure	The objective of the Planning Agreement is to provide suitable funding for various public facilities to meet the demand generated by Development on the Land. .	28 June 2017	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325 Peter Vizzard 1443 Wine Country Drive Rothbury New South Wales, 2335	Lot 11 DP 1105639	
16	Battery Recycling Facility Kurri Kurri Local Infrastructure	The objective of the Planning Agreement is to contribute funds for public domain infrastructure works in the commercial areas of Kurri Kurri and Weston in accordance with existing masterplans.	15 September 2017	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325 Pymore Recyclers International Pty Ltd Governor Macquarie Tower, Level 40 1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000	Lot 796 DP 39877 Lot 797 DP 39877	

	NAME	DESCRIPTION	DATE	PARTIES TO AGREEMENT	LAND TO WHICH AGREEMENT APPLIES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION E.G. DEEDS OF VARIATION, DEEDS OF AGREEMENT
17	65 Abernethy Street, Kitchener Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	The objective of the Planning Agreement is to provide appropriate monetary contributions in conjunction with the carrying out of the development for various public facilities to meet the demand from the additional population generated by the Development.	3 July 2018	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325 Kitchener Harvest Pty Limited 298 Railway Parade Carlton New South Wales 2218	Lot 521 DP 755215	
18	Bailey's Lane Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	The Planning Agreement will require the provision of road and intersection works in relation to the proposed development of the land known as 65 Bailey's Lane, Abermain.	10 July 2019	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325 Bailey's Lane Pty Limited of 20/19-21 Central Road, Miranda NSW 2228	Lot 790 DP 257363	
19	Hunter Power Project (Kurri Kurri Power Station) Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	The Planning Agreement requires a monetary contribution of $880,000 towards the netball facility at Booth Park Kurri Kurri	22 November 2023	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325 Snowy Hydro of Monaro Highway, Cooma	Lot 1 DP 1276814 and Lot 2 DP 1286098	
20	174 – 178 Lang Street, Kurri Kurri VPA	The objective of the Planning Agreement is to provide a mechanism by which contributions towards public purposes can be made in connection with the future development of the subject land to the benefit of the community. The public benefits include the improvement of public amenities, improvements to part of an existing public road, construction of a new public road and greater connectivity for the community	24 June 2024	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325 Votraint No 124 Pty Ltd C/-Chris Burke & Company, 104 Cronulla Street Cronulla George Vrachliotis and Maria Vrachliotis of 647 Port Hacking Road, Lilli Pilli	Lot 136 DP869710	

	NAME	DESCRIPTION	DATE	PARTIES TO AGREEMENT	LAND TO WHICH AGREEMENT APPLIES	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION E.G. DEEDS OF VARIATION, DEEDS OF AGREEMENT
21	Henry Kendall Entrance Planning Agreement	The objective of the Planning Agreement is to allow the Developer to provide a monetary contribution to Council in lieu of constructing an entrance into the development in accordance with conditions 8 and 11 of the development consent for DA 8/2014/628/2 dated 25 May 2021 and modified on 22 November 2022 ("the Development Consent"). Instead, Council will construct the entrance to the Development as part of Stage 1 of Council's upgrade to Wollombi Road, including the associated stormwater and drainage works ("the Intersection Works"). The Developer will register an easement over the relevant part of the Land to allow the Council to complete the stormwater and drainage works included in the Intersection Works.	3 September 2024	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, New South Wales, 2325 Henry Kendall Limestone Cree Pty Limited of 5 Amy Close, North Wyong	Lot 1 DP 327580	

Contracts awarded

In accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, Clause 217(1)(a2)(i),(ii), the report must include details of each contract awarded (whether as a result of tender or otherwise) (other than employment contracts and contracts less than $150,000)



CONTRACT NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	CONTRACTOR	VALUE	CONTRACT START DATE	ESTIMATED CONTRACT END DATE
Q2025-105	Q2025-105 SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF ONE (1) NEW 6 x 4 SIDE LOADING COMPACTOR	Gilbert & Roach Pty Ltd	$586,185.60	01-Apr-2025	31-Oct-2025
T2025-10	Background Studies and Structure Plan for Anambah to Branxton RSGA	Urbis Ltd	$3,416,872.00	21-Apr-2025	20-Apr-2026
T2025-10	Background Studies and Structure Plan for Anambah to Branxton RSGA	Urbis Ltd	$3,416,872.00	21-Apr-2025	20-Apr-2026
Q2025-107	Wollombi Road Upgrade Project - Stage 2 - Detailed Design	Barker Ryan Stewart Pty Limited	$710,820.00	15-May-2025	01-Jan-2027
Q2024-142	Q2024-142 Kurri Kurri Sportsground Mod Field Upgrade	KCE Pty Limited	$188,996.86	22-May-2025	22-Aug-2025
12/159-02	Telstra Data Services - WAN Renewal Agreement	Telstra	$357,696.00	23-May-2025	22-May-2028
Q2025-136*	Computer and Notebook Refresh	Nexon Asia Pacific Pty. Ltd.	$1,159,435.00	26-May-2025	11-July-2026
T2025-11	T2025-11 Weston Bears Park Grandstand, Amenities & Carpark Upgrade	Connex Mangement & Construction Pty Ltd	$6,429,197.50	01-June-2025	01-June-2026
Q2025-133	Supply and Delivery of 20-25T Excavator	KOMATSU AUSTRALIA PTY LTD	$381,973.00	13-June-2025	12-Sept-2025

Development contributions and levies

Under the *Environment Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021* (EPA Reg), Clause 218A(1), (2) and (3) the report must disclose particulars of development contributions and development levies which have been used or expended under each contributions plan.

Total value of all contributions and levies received during the year
$12,621,871

Total value of all contributions and levies expended during the year
$2,127,029

No projects expended money temporarily borrowed from money to be expended for another purpose under the same or another contributions plan (table below)



PROJECT ID	S7.11 AND S.7.12 CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SERVICE	AMOUNT EXPENDED	% FUNDED	STATUS
2927	REPEALED Avery's Village, Heddon Greta Section 94 Contributions Plan	Averys Village - Local Park embellishment	Open Space	$50,000	100.0%	Complete
3424	REPEALED Residential Section 94 Contributions Plan	Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre	Community Facilities	$16,700	100.0%	Ongoing
2482	REPEALED Residential Section 94 Contributions Plan	Performing Arts Centre Cessnock Refurbishment - Funding correction with Planning Agreement	Community Facilities	-$48,023	0.0%	Complete
2338	REPEALED Residential Section 94 Contributions Plan	Portland St Millfield Trunk Drainage	Drainage	$779	67.0%	Ongoing
2517	REPEALED Tourist Development	Shared pathway along Wine Country Drive, Nulkaba	Tourist Facilities	$188,992	63.0%	Ongoing
2526	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	New off-road path on Dalwood Road (Branxton) - New England Highway to Spring Street	Cycleways	$21,014	1.3%	Ongoing
1067	REPEALED Avery's Village, Heddon Greta Section 94 Contributions Plan	Plan preparation and administration	Administration	$200	100.0%	Ongoing
1067	REPEALED Bellbird North Section 94 Contributions Plan	Plan preparation and administration	Administration	$2,000	100.0%	Ongoing
2517	REPEALED Nulkaba Flood Mitigation	Shared pathway along Wine Country Drive, Nulkaba	Drainage	$42,681	13.0%	Ongoing

PROJECT ID	S7.11 AND S.7.12 CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SERVICE	AMOUNT EXPENDED	% FUNDED	STATUS
2526	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	New off-road path on Dalwood Road (Branxton) - New England Highway to Spring Street	Cycleways	$21,014	1.3%	Ongoing
2640	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Kitchener Poppethead Park - Concept & Engineer plans	Cycleways	$33,650	8.9%	Ongoing
3141	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Greta Cemetery	Cycleways	$33,606	8.9%	Complete
3204	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Branxton Cemetery	Cycleways	$11,273	100.0%	Complete
3219	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	New offroad path Richmond, Abernethy St to Poppet Head Park Kitchener	Cycleways	$33,124	4.5%	Ongoing
3269	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	New off road path Swanson/Station Street – Government Road to First Street	Cycleways	$41,185	22.8%	Ongoing
3349	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Baddley Park, Fencing	Cycleways	$1,615	100.0%	Ongoing
3421	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Shared pathway on West St, Greta	Cycleways	$17,054	89.6%	Ongoing
2365	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Clift St - drainage	Drainage	$1,881	0.1%	Ongoing
2631	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Cessnock Regional Skate Park	Open Space	$337,111	100.0%	Complete
3138	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Aberdare Cemetery	Open Space	$8,126	3.8%	Complete
3139	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Cessnock Cemetery	Open Space	$29,933	11.3%	Complete
3140	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Kurri Kurri Cemetery	Open Space	$54,969	1.9%	Complete
3276	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Cessnock Tennis Courts	Open Space	$7,993	7.7%	Ongoing
3360	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Carmichael Park BMX amenities (Neville Thomlinson)	Open Space	$24,084	57.8%	Ongoing
1067	S7.11 City Wide Contributions Plan	Plan preparation and administration	Administration	$340,409	100.0%	Ongoing
2517	Section 7.12 Contributions Plan	Shared pathway along Wine Country Drive, Nulkaba	Commercial Precincts	$70,603	24.0%	Ongoing
				$1,320,959		

Rates and charges subsidies

In accordance with the Local *Government (General) Regulation 2021,* Clause 132, the report must outline the number of rates and charges written off during the year.

NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS TRANSFERRED	% OF TOTAL
Rates written off	$32,477
Pension rebates - rates and annual charges	$1,348,151
Sub total	**$1,348,628**
Pensioner subsidies	-$630,809
Net rates and charges written off	**$717,819**





Legal proceedings

In accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, Clause 217(1)(a3), the report must include a summary of the amounts incurred by our council in relation to legal proceedings.

Summarised below are details of legal proceedings taken by or against Council during 2024-25.

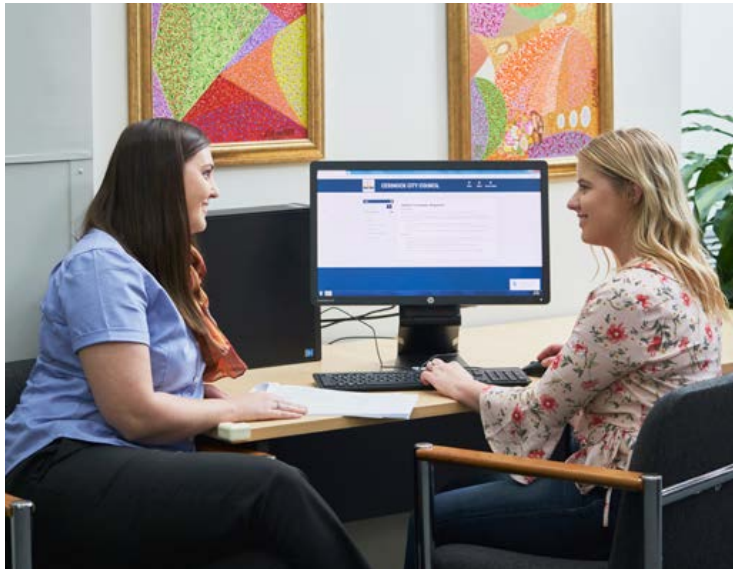
Of this, the monies expended undertaking litigation and the amounts paid in settlement of costs were:

Amount expended undertaking litigation: **$721,710**.

Amount received by Council in settlement of costs **$10,000**.

MATTER	OUTCOME
Land and Environment Court of NSW – Class 1 Appeal Class 1 appeals in the Land and Environment Court are related to environmental planning and protection appeals. This includes appeals on the merits only against refusals, or deemed refusals, of development consents or conditions of development consents.	In 3 matters the appeal was upheld. In 2 matters the appeal was resolved by means of Section 34 Agreement. In 2 matters the proceedings are yet to be finalised.
Land and Environment Court of NSW – Class 4 Class 4 appeals in the Land and Environment Court relate to environmental planning proception and development contract civil enforcement. This includes breaches of planning law or breaches of conditions of development consent, and proceedings which question the legal validity of consents or refusals of consent issued by Council.	In 2 matters the proceedings are yet to be finalised.

MATTER	OUTCOME
Local Court Legal proceedings in the Local Court include prosecutions by Council, which range from unauthorised works to failure to comply with animal control orders or clean-up notices. Defendants may appeal any decisions made by the Local Court in relation to prosecutions. It can also include proceedings commenced against Council in other jurisdictions of the Local Court.	In 2 matters the proceedings are yet to be finalised.
NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal NCAT reviews administrative decisions made by government agencies. The decisions of Council may be subject to review by NCAT. Reviewable decisions include those relating to privacy, personal information and access to government information.	In 1 matter the applicant was successful with no further action required.





Councillors statutory reporting information

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a1) (i),(ii),(iii),(iv),(v),(vi),(vii),(viii), the report must include the total cost during the year of the payment of expenses of, and the provision of facilities to, Councillors in relation to their civic functions (as paid by the Council, reimbursed to the Councillor or reconciled with the Councillor).

Councillors' and mayor's expenses

Mayoral allowance	$63,754
Councillor fees	$333,574
Mayor and Councillors Superannuation	$25,065
Mayoral Vehicle	$21,732
Provision of office equipment	$40,171
Telephone calls and communications	$4,962
Councillors' attendance at conferences/seminars	$15,135
Induction training and professional development for Mayor and other Councillors	$11,835
	$516,227

Councillor meetings attended

The current elected councillors were voted into office in September 2024.

Councillors whose term of office concluded at the election include:

- Anthony Burke (Ward B) – 2016 to 2024
- Paul Dunn (Ward A) – 2016 to 2024
- James Hawkins (Ward A) – 2008 to 2024
- Karen Jackson (Ward C) – 2022 to 2024
- John Moores (Ward B) – 2022 to 2024
- Ian Olsen (Ward B) – 1995 to 2024
- Paul Paynter (Ward D) – 2022 to 2024
- Anne Sander (Ward C) – 2016 to 2024

Meetings attended - July to September 2024

Councillor	17 Jul 2024	21 Aug 2024
Mayor, J Suvaal	✓	✓
A Burke	✓	✓
P Dunn	LA	✓
R Grine	✓	✓
J Hawkins	✓	✓
M Hill	✓	✓
K Jackson	LA	✓
J Jurd	✓	✓
J Moores	✓	✓
I Olsen	LA	LA
P Paynter	✓	✓
A Sander	✓	✓
D Watton	✓	✓

LA Leave of Absence
AP Apology
AV Audio Visual

Meetings attended - October 2024 to June 2025

Councillor	Extra 16 Oct 2024	23 Oct 2024	20 Nov 2024	11 Dec 2024	19 Feb 2025	19 Mar 2025
Mayor, D Watton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
S Dixon	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
T Harrington	✓	✓	✓	AP	✓	✓
R Grine	✓	✓	✓	✓	AP	✓
M Hill	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
J Jurd	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Q King	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
M Lea	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C Madden	✓	AV	✓	✓	AV	✓
M Mason	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
S Palmowski	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
S Pascoe	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
J Suvaal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Councillor	16 Apr 2025	21 May 2025	19 Jun 2025
Mayor, D Watton	✓	✓	✓
S Dixon	✓	✓	✓
T Harrington	AP	✓	✓
R Grine	✓	✓	✓
M Hill	✓	✓	✓
J Jurd	LA	✓	✓
Q King	✓	✓	✓
M Lea	✓	✓	✓
C Madden	✓	✓	✓
M Mason	✓	✓	✓
S Palmowski	✓	✓	✓
S Pascoe	✓	✓	✓
J Suvaal	AP	AP	resigned*

LA Leave of Absence
AP Apology
AV Audio Visual

** resigned effective 6 June 2025*

Overseas visits

In accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, Clause 217(1)(a), the report must include details, including purpose, of overseas visits by Councillors, Council staff or other persons representing Council (including visits sponsored by other organisations).

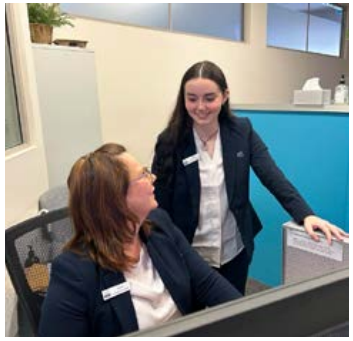
There were no overseas visits by our Councillors or Council staff in 2024-25.

Fair and Equal Employment

In accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, clause 217(1) (a9)(v), this report must include a statement of activities to implement Council's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Diversity Management Plan.

EMPLOYMENT TYPE (AS AT 4 DECEMBER 2024)	HEADCOUNT
Permanent Full Time	371
Permanent Part Time	51
Temporary Full Time	9
Temporary Part Time	10
Casual	53
Apprentice / Trainee	22
Senior Staff	4
Labourco/Contractors	15
	520*

*excludes Contractors



Our Executive

In accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, Clause 217(1)(b)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v), the report must include a statement of the total remuneration package of the General Manager (GM).

Contract employment conditions for senior staff are in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*, Section 338.

The total money payable with respect to their duties during 2024-2025, including money payable for salary, the provision of fringe benefits, and all other costs associated with their employment, was **$1,643,464**.

TOTAL EXECUTIVE REMUNERATION	
General Manager	481,338
Other Senior Staff	1,124,455
Fringe Benefit Tax for any non-cash benefits	37,672

Modern Slavery

In accordance with the *Modern Slavery Act 2018*, Sections (4)(c) and (d) the report must contain a statement detailing the action taken by our council in relation to any issue raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner concerning the operations of our council and identified as being a significant issue, and a statement of steps taken to ensure that goods and services procured by and for our council were not the product of modern slavery within the meaning of the Act.

We have a social and legislative requirement to ensure that its suppliers are aware of and are not engaging in practices covered under the *Modern Slavery Act (Cth) 2018*.

Modern slavery is a serious violation of an individual's dignity and human rights. Exploitative practices including human trafficking, slavery, servitude, forced labour, debt bondage and forced marriage are all considered modern slavery and are serious crimes under Australian law.

We ensure that Modern slavery within the meaning of the Act is recognised and contained within its Procurement Policy, systems and processes. Compliance is promoted internally via regular training and development processes and to our community, suppliers and external stakeholders via the Cessnock City Council Modern Slavery and Compliance Statement.

Cooperatives and joint ventures

In accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, clause 217(1)(a8), the report must include a statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which Council participated during the year.

Our Mayor and General Manager actively participated in Strategic Planning workshops and Board meetings:

- Our Mayor was a member of the Hunter JO board and has been a strong advocate for regional transport planning and financial sustainability.
- Our General Manager regularly attended ARROW Strategic Services Australia



External bodies exercising council functions

In accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, Clause 217(1)(a6), the report must include a statement of all external bodies that exercised functions delegated by Council.

Community committees appointed under **Section 355** of the Local Government Act 1993 manage our community halls and Council facilities.

Corporate Entities of the Hunter Councils

For nearly 70 years, local government in the Hunter has found significant benefit in working together through positive cooperation and resource sharing.

Alongside Cessnock City Council, the nine other Hunter councils include:

Dungog Shire Council

Lake Macquarie City Council

Maitland City Council

City of Newcastle

MidCoast Council

Muswellbrook Shire Council

Port Stephens Council

Singleton Council

Upper Hunter Shire Council



The ten councils that make up the Hunter Joint organisation.

Arising from this collaboration, the ten Hunter councils collectively own and manage the following corporate entities:

Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) – a statutory body under the Local Government Act 1993, established in 2018 to identify, advocate for and collaborate on regional strategic priorities for the Hunter. The Hunter Joint Organisation's statutory mandate includes identifying key regional strategic priorities, advocating for these priorities, and building collaborations around these priorities with other levels of government, industry and the community.

Arrow Collaborative Services Limited (and its wholly owned subsidiary **Hunter Councils Legal Services Limited**) – companies limited by guarantee under the Corporations Act 2001 and established to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided by Hunter councils and local government more broadly across NSW. The services provided focus on specialised planning and environmental law, and regional purchasing and procurement. Arrow also provides direct administration and corporate support to the operations of the Hunter Joint Organisation.

Hunter Councils Incorporated – an incorporated association under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 that holds property assets for the Hunter Joint Organisation and Arrow Collaborative Services.

Cessnock City Council has representation on each entity's board, and shares ownership and governance of the entities with the other nine councils of the Hunter Region.

Sustainability and environmental levy



Council did not levy a Sustainability and Environmental charge.

Carers recognition

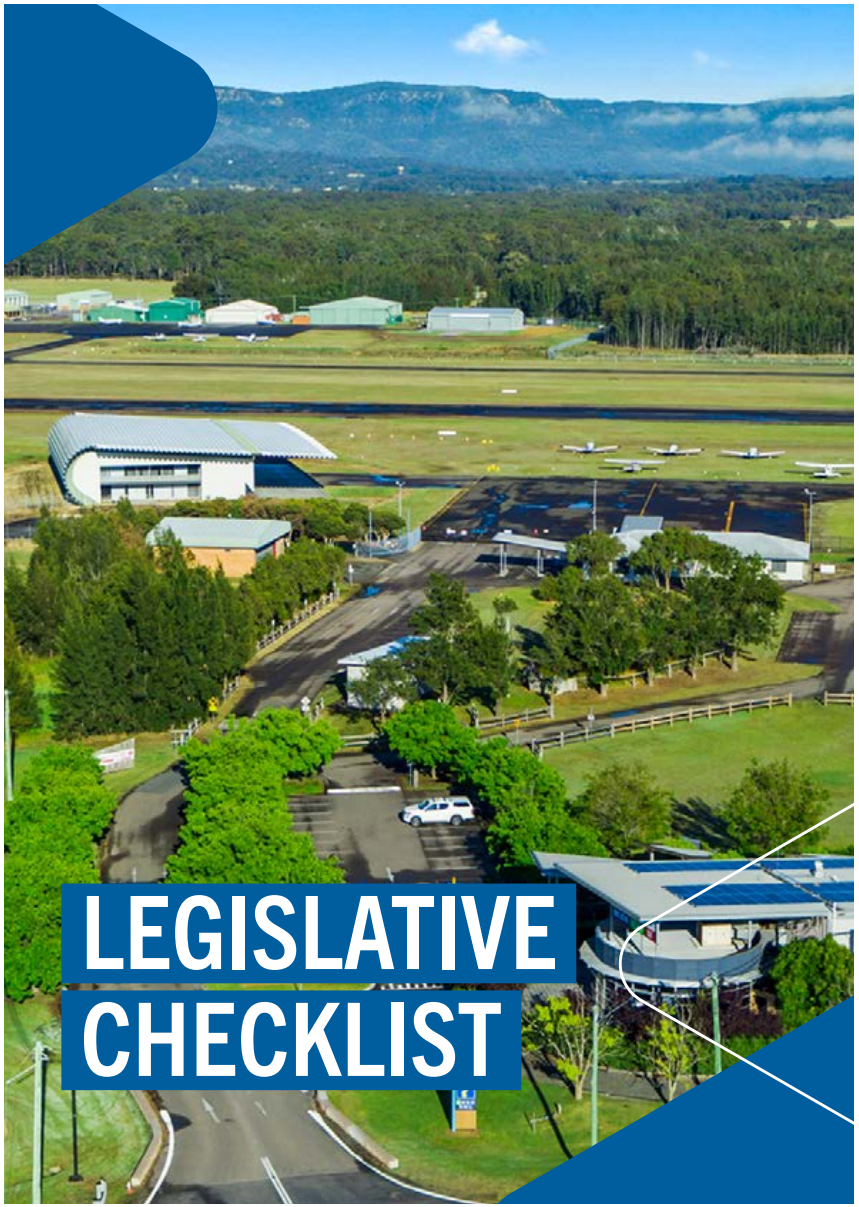
Under the *Carers Recognition Act 2010*, Section 8(2), Councils considered to be 'human service agencies' must report on compliance with the Act for the reporting period.

Council is not considered to be a 'human services agency' under the Act.

Recovery and threat abatement plans

Under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*, Section 220ZT(2), Councils identified in a recovery and threat abatement plan as responsible for implementation of measures included in the plan, must report on actions taken to implement measures as to the state of the environment in its area.

Council is not identified as responsible for implementation of measures in any recovery and threat abatement plans.

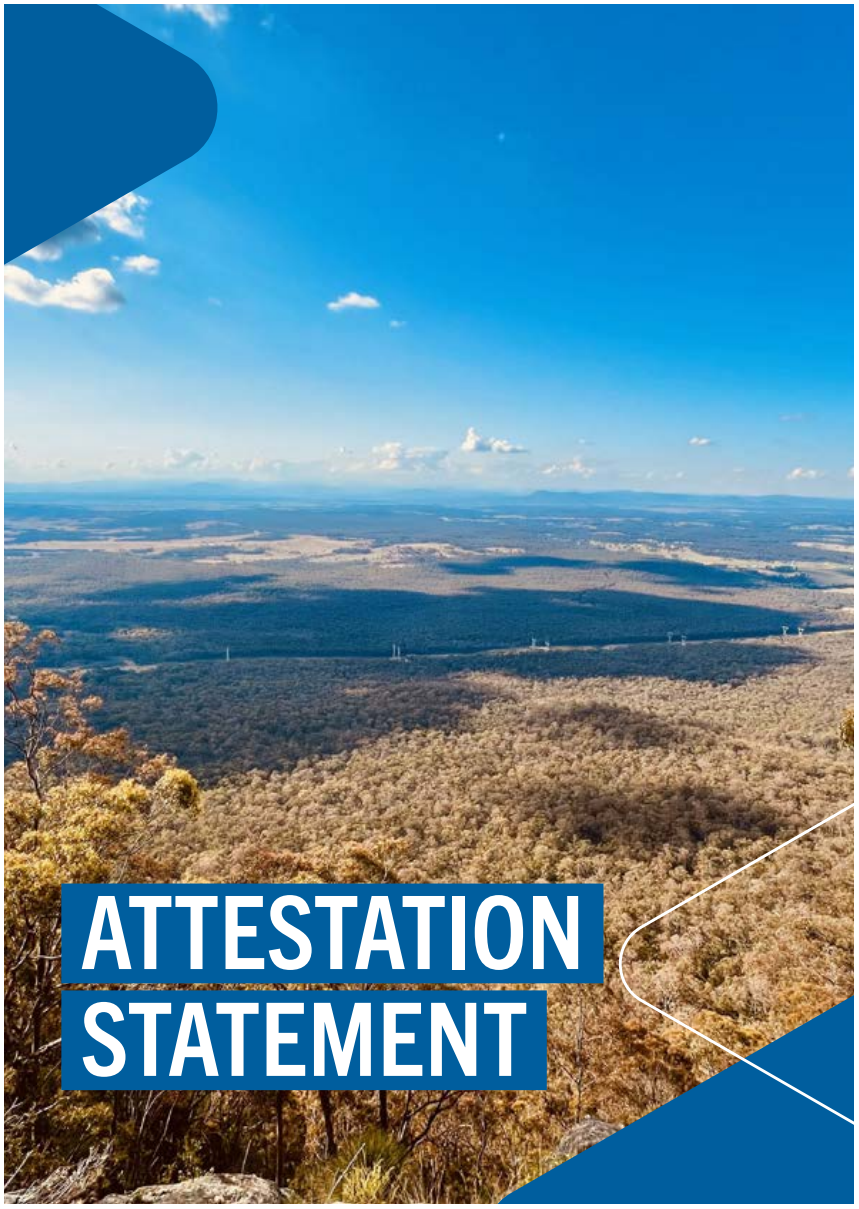


Legislative checklist

REQUIREMENT	SECTION/PAGE
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a5)	
Local Government Act 1993, section 356	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(f)	
Companion Animals Guidelines	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a7)	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(e)	
Swimming Pools Act 1992, section 22F(2)	
Swimming Pools Regulation 2018, clause 23	
Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994, section 31	
Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011, clause 4	
Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009, section 125(1)	
Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018, clause 8, schedule 2	
Disability Inclusion Act 2014, section 13(1)	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a9)(v)	
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, section 7.5(5)	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a2)(i),(ii)	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a4)	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 Part 9, Division 6A, Section 216T	
Local Government Act 1993, section 67 and 67(2)(b)	

REQUIREMENT	SECTION/PAGE
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 132	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a6)	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a3)	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a8)	
Local Government Act 1993, section 54P(1)	
Special Rate Variation Guidelines 7.1	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a1) (i),(ii),(iii),(iv),(v),(vi),(vii),(viii)	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 186	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(a)	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(b) (i),(ii),(iii),(iv),(v)	
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, clause 217(1)(c) (i),(ii),(iii),(iv),(v)	
Environment Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021, clause 218A(1)	
Environment Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021, clause 218A (2)(a),(b),(c),(d),(e),(f),(g)	
Environment Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021, clause 218A(3)(a), (b)	
Modern Slavery Act 2018, sections 428(4)(c), (d) and (5)	





Internal Audit and Risk Management Attestation Statement
2024-2025 Financial Year
Cessnock City Council

I am of the opinion that Cessnock City Council has an Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, Risk Management Framework and Internal Audit function that operate in compliance with the following requirements except as may be otherwise provided below:

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

	Requirement	Compliance
1.	Cessnock City Council has appointed an Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee that comprises of an independent chairperson and at least two independent members (section 428A of the *Local Government Act 1993*, section 216C of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Compliant
2.	The chairperson and all members of Cessnock City Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meet the relevant independence and eligibility criteria prescribed under the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* and have not exceeded the membership term limits prescribed under the Regulation (sections 216D, 216E, 216F, 216G of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Compliant
3.	Cessnock City Council has adopted terms of reference for its Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee that are informed by the model terms of reference approved by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government and the committee operates in accordance with the terms of reference (section 216K of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Compliant
4.	Cessnock City Council provides the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee with direct and unrestricted access to the General Manager and other senior management and the information and resources necessary to exercise its functions (section 216L of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Compliant
5.	Cessnock City Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee exercises its functions in accordance with a four-year strategic work plan that has been endorsed by the governing body and an annual work plan that has been developed in consultation with the governing body and senior management (Core requirement 1 of the Office of Local Government's *Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW*).	Compliant
6.	Cessnock City Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee provides the governing body with an annual assessment each year, and a strategic assessment each council term of the matters listed in section 428A of the *Local Government Act 1993* reviewed during that term (Core requirement 1 of the Office of Local Government's *Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW*).	Annual - Compliant Strategic Not Yet Due Due 2028
7.	The governing body of Cessnock City Council reviews the effectiveness of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee at least once each council term (Core requirement 1 of the Office of Local Government's *Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW*).	Not Yet Due *Due 2028*

Membership

The chairperson and membership of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee are:

Position	Name	Start Date	End Date
Chairperson	Shane Hubble	1 January 2025	31 December 2028
Chair Person *(term ended)*	Jennifer Hayes	1 January 2017	31 December 2024
Independent Member *(appointed to Chair 01/01/25)*	Shane Hubble	19 April 2024	31 December 2024
Independent member	Martin Matthews	19 April 2024	19 April 2028
Independent member	William Middleton	01 January 2021	31 December 2025
Councillor member[1]	Mark Mason	23 October 2024	Mid September 2028

Risk Management

	Requirement	Compliance
8.	Cessnock City Council has adopted a risk management framework that is consistent with current Australian risk management standard and that is appropriate for the Council's risks (section 216S of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Compliant *To be implemented 2025-2026*
9.	Cessnock City Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee reviews the implementation of its risk management framework and provides a strategic assessment of its effectiveness to the governing body each council term (section 216S of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Not Yet Due *Due 2028*

Internal Audit

	Requirement	Compliance
10.	Cessnock City Council has an internal audit function that reviews the council's operations and risk management and control activities (section 216O of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Compliant
11.	Cessnock City Council's internal audit function reports to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee on internal audit matters (sections 216M, 216P and 216R of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Compliant
12.	Cessnock City Council's internal audit function is independent and internal audit activities are not subject to direction by the Council (section 216P of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Compliant
13.	Cessnock City Council has adopted an Internal Audit Charter that is informed by the model internal audit charter approved by the Departmental Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government and the internal audit function operates in accordance with the charter (section 216O of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Compliant
14.	Cessnock City Council has appointed a member of staff to direct and coordinate internal audit activities (section 216P of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Compliant
15.	Internal audit activities are conducted in accordance with the International Professional Practices Framework (Core requirement 3 of the Office of Local Government's *Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW*).	Compliant
16.	Cessnock City Council provides the internal audit function with direct and unrestricted access to staff, the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, and the information and resources necessary to undertake internal audit activities (section 216P of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Compliant
17.	Cessnock City Council's internal audit function undertakes internal audit activities in accordance with a four-year strategic work plan that has been endorsed by the governing body and an annual work plan that has been developed in consultation with the governing body and senior management (Core requirement 3 of the Office of Local Government's *Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW*).	Compliant
18.	Cessnock City Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee reviews the effectiveness of the internal audit function and reports the outcome of the review to the governing body each council term (section 216R of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*).	Not Yet Due *Due 2028*

Peter Chrystal
Interim General Manager
8 September 2025

CESSNOCK
CITY COUNCIL

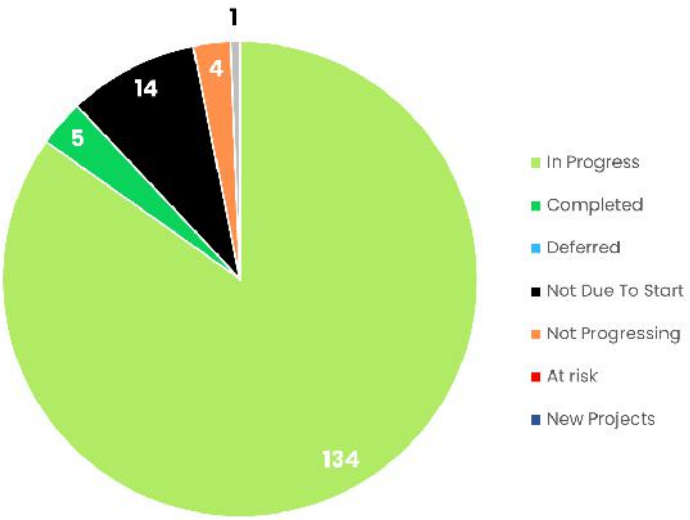
62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock NSW 2325 | PO Box 152 Cessnock NSW 2325
02 4993 4100 | council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au | www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au

DELIVERY PROGRAM & OPERATIONAL PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

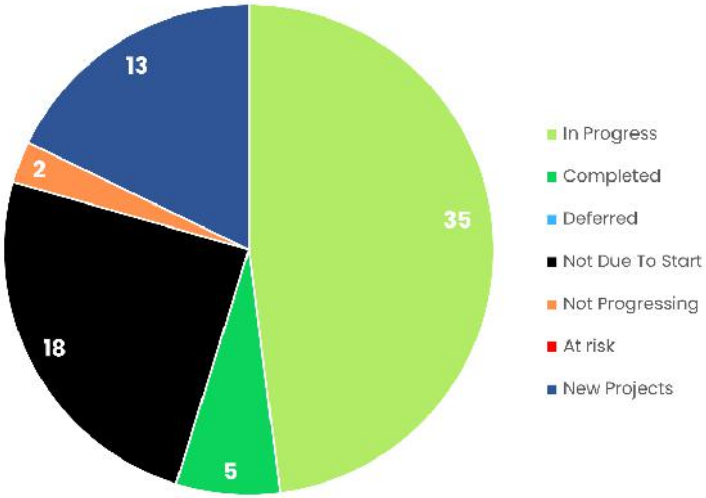
QUARTER 1 2025-26

ACTION UPDATE SNAPSHOT

OBJECTIVES



CAPITAL WORKS



Page | 2

KEY Not Due to Start · In progress · Complete · Not Progressing · Deferred · At Risk

LIVE We are connected, safe and creative

1.1 Encourage social connections and wellbeing

1.1.1 Our neighbourhoods have a variety of spaces, activities and programs that connect us

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Ensure our public amenities are safe, clean, comfortable, and both inclusive and accessible for all residents and visitors in our area.		Public amenities have been maintained in line with schedules.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Hold ceremonies (and associated activities) for civic events such as Australia Day and citizenship presentations.		A Citizenship ceremony is scheduled for National Citizenship Day, 17 September with 53 conferees becoming citizens from the following 24 countries; Philippines, Frances, United Kingdom, Spain, Vietnam, Canada, Pakistan, New Zealand, Hksar of the PRC, Thailand, Zimbabwe, Iran, Taiwan, India, Poland, Brazil, Sri Lanka, Nepal, South Africa, Lao Peoples Democratic Republic, Finland, Germany, Kenya and United States of America.	General Managers Unit
Maintain our City of Cessnock Hall of Fame and inductees		Inductees to the Cessnock City Hall of Fame are listed on the Cessnock City Council webpage. The plaque for the 2025 inductee Ellena Morris OAM	Community and Cultural Development

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
		has been installed at the Kurri Kurri Aquatic and Fitness Centre.	

1.1.2 Strengthen outcomes for young people to make our city a vibrant place of opportunity

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Coordinate and promote a community program of events for Youth Week.	⏭	Youth Week will be held 16 to 26 April 2026 and planning for the event will occur in the next reporting quarter.	Community and Cultural Development
Deliver diverse and inclusive activities during school holidays programs.	▶	The Spring School Holiday program list over 30 events to be held during 27 September to 10 October 2025 and includes gaming, learning, the arts and film.	Community and Cultural Development
Ensure access at our public transport stops meet compliance ratings for members of our community and visitors to our area with disabilities.	▶	We are working consistently with our public transport providers to ensure public transport spots meet appropriate compliance ratings. We are exploring opportunity for 100% externally funded grant opportunities.	Infrastructure

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏭ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Implement a suite of facilitated programs and activities with young people for creative arts, pop culture, music, recreation, wellbeing and mindfulness.		External partnerships and youth led programs occurred weekly at Cessnock Youth Centre, within community and schools. Partnerships with music therapists Polyphonic were included in the school holiday program and the continuation of social worker support during drop in sessions has increased mental health support for young people. Co-designed youth led programs developed and facilitated at the youth centre included a range of art, craft and education based programs. School based programs supporting young people to transition to high school were also facilitated.	Community and Cultural Development
Promote and deliver our 'Green Schools' program with our local schools.		Ongoing Green Teacher program being driven by Sustainability Team. Quarter one activities such as tree and compost giveaway, Bellbird School event including Weeds Officer presentation, and education networking and newsletters continue.	Environment and Waste Services
Provide opportunity for work experience placements in our Council.		Four work experience placements have been completed. Three students undertook work experience in our Works and Infrastructure directorate, and one in the People and Culture team.	People and Culture



1.1.3 Support a diversity of social and affordable housing typologies and configurations that respond to the characteristics of our existing and future community

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Ensure our Council's surplus and under-utilised properties are identified for future housing needs. We have a Housing Strategy which contains a balance of our community's needs and statutory requirements.		We continue to review surplus land for future housing needs and continue to work with Homes NSW to collaborate on opportunities in this space.	Corporate and Community Development
Ensure we have a flexible, simplified, effective and efficient local regulatory framework that encourages housing diversity.		Continual review of all planning documents with current focus on review of Cessnock Local Environmental Plan (CLEP) and Cessnock Development Control Plan (cDCP) chapters.	Strategic Planning
Leading the delivery of a Structure Plan in conjunction with Maitland City Council and Singleton Council for the Anambah to Branxton Corridor.		Consultant engaged to deliver structure plan. Comprehensive scenario workshop held late August with key stakeholders, government agencies. Supporting studies underway. Workshop to finalise preferred scenario for the A2B corridor structure plan to be held November.	Strategic Planning
Support a diversity of housing typologies and configurations that respond to the		This action will be addressed in the review of the Cessnock Housing Strategy (to be undertaken in	Strategic Planning



Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
characteristics of our existing and future community.		conjunction with the review of the Cessnock Urban Growth Management Plan) and review of relevant chapters of the Cessnock Development Control Plan (CDCP).	
We have a contemporary Urban Growth Management Plan.		Housing theme off exhibition and submissions being reviewed with intended workshop with Councillors. Miscellaneous Theme under preparation.	Strategic Planning
We have a Housing Strategy which contains a balance of our community's needs and statutory requirements.		Review to be undertaken in conjunction with the review of the Cessnock Urban Growth Plan.	Strategic Planning

1.1.4 Improve opportunities for people with disability to access services, activities, facilities and information

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Ensure access at our public transport stops meet compliance ratings for members of our community and visitors to our area with disabilities.		We continue to work with our public transport providers and apply for grant opportunities to fund transport stop upgrades to ensure we meet compliance ratings and community members and visitors with disabilities.	Infrastructure

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Facilitate disability inclusive emergency planning to support and improve emergency preparedness of people with disabilities.		Disability Inclusive Emergency Planning workshop is being held with MaiWel in Nov 2025. Person Centred Emergency Preparedness (PCEP) work books have been procured to support people develop personalised emergency plans. 4 PCEP sessions are planned for March 2026 during Seniors Week. PCEP training (to become facilitators of PCEP discussion) is planned in collaboration with MaiWel and Youth Express.	Emergency Management and Resilience
Facilitate person-centred emergency preparedness to support and improve emergency preparedness of people with disabilities to increase their personal emergency preparedness.		Person Centred Emergency Preparedness Forum scheduled to be held Nov 2025. 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. 4 PCEP sessions is proposed for Seniors Week Festival in March 2026.	Emergency Management and Resilience
Foster a diverse and inclusive workforce within our Council.		Actions from our Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2025-2029 are being undertaken and considered in our workplace planning.	People and Culture

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

1.2 Strengthen community culture

1.2.1 Build unity and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Coordinate and promote a community program of events for Reconciliation Week and National NAIDOC Week.		The 2025 NAIDOC Week program listed 12 free community events from 5 July to 14 July and included events organised and hosted by local community organisations and also Council hosted events.	Community and Cultural Development
Foster a diverse and inclusive workforce.		Actions included in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Action Plan are being undertaken and incorporated into our workforce planning. Actions from our Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2025-2029 are being undertaken and considered in our workplace planning.	People and Culture
Our programming and services through our Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people and their families includes a diverse and inclusive range of social, recreational and educational activities that reflect feedback received		Programs co-designed with young people and community partners were delivered in community, within the Cessnock Youth Centre and schools. Programs included outreach activities within a Department of Housing estate, ongoing programs supporting young parents and school based activities including traditional wood burning, art,	Community and Cultural Development

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
during programming, on our media platforms and through surveys.		cultural connection activities and wellbeing programs focusing on young people disengaged from school. Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people supported the development of programs, including wellbeing focus topics for school based education. Additional programs were facilitated as part of NAIDOC Week.	
Recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples and respect their connections to lands, waters, places and cultures		This objective is incorporated in all Strategies and Plans. The A@B project has incorporated Connecting to Country.	Strategic Planning

1.2.3 Provide a variety of interment options for our community

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Review and update the Cessnock Cemetery Strategy 2006.		The review of the strategy has commenced with internal engagement and commencement of a literature review.	Open Space and Community Facilities

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

1.3 Develop an active and creative community

1.3.1 Develop and deliver the Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) programs and events

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Develop a seasonal program incorporating community plans, diversity and inclusion which considers members of our community.	In progress	The 2026 Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) Season Program is being finalised and will be promoted to the community during the next reporting quarter.	Community and Cultural Development
Engage with artists to deliver a variety of exhibitions and workshops at PACC and actively promote across a variety of media platforms to reach a diverse audience.	In progress	Offered at Performance Arts Culture Cessnock (PACC) during August and September was a Botanical Illustration Workshop with Penny Walton. The Immersive Sound + Art: An Evening of Stillness workshop was well received. Held during July to August was exhibition 'In and Out the Windows: much of the last decade in coloured pencil', by artist Susan Ryman. From 20 September to 15 November is 'Grug Retrospective' and celebrates the enduring legacy of Ted Prior's beloved children's character, Grug.	Community and Cultural Development

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

1.3.2 Implement accessible, creative and innovative projects and programs in our area

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Continue to develop and deliver diverse and inclusive lifelong learning programs, arts and local history exhibitions at Cessnock Library and Kurri Kurri Library branches.	▶	The lifelong learning programs on offer at Cessnock Library and Kurri Kurri Library, including children's programming and local studies continue to be a success with a strong interest noted for participation.	Community and Cultural Development

1.3.3 Provide recreation and open space facilities that are connected and well utilised

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Deliver wheeled sports spaces and precincts that encourage and enable skill progression and cater for a broad range of users.	⏭	External funding opportunities continue to be investigated for the renewal of Greta Skatepark.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Develop and maintain our playgrounds.	▶	Playgrounds have been maintained in line with schedules.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Develop Weston Bears Park to provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities in	▶	Construction works associated with a new amenities building are well underway with works planned to be complete in March 2026.	Open Space and Community Facilities

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏩ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
our area.			
Ensure our sportsgrounds are properly maintained and respond to changing community needs, while enhancing the quality of life in our community.		Sportsgrounds have been maintained in line with schedules.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Manage our aquatic facilities to respond to the changing needs of our community and enhance our quality of life.		Our aquatic facilities are managed in line with best practice guidelines and asset management plans.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Our Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan 2019 aligns with current community desired outcomes.		The review of the plan has commenced with supply and demand of open space currently being assessed.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Promote and deliver Council's dollar for-dollar programs to community groups.		The first round of Sporting and Community facility grants have closed with applications to be considered by Council in November.	Open Space and Community Facilities

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Support and assist community groups to manage our community facilities.		Regular engagement has occurred with licence holders and management committees that deliver services from Council owned or managed (crown) properties and includes opportunities for access improvements, grant funding opportunities and inclusion in Council events.	Community and Cultural Development

1.4 Foster safe communities

1.4.1 Participate in collaborative partnerships to assist with crime prevention

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Collaborate with our partners on the Cessnock City Liquor Accord and Community Safety Precinct Committee.		During this quarter we have regularly communicated with our partners and stakeholder.	Infrastructure
Collaborate with partners to develop and maintain a public street lighting network to improve the safety of the road network.		LED upgrade is continuing when opportunity to replace is identified. the pedestrian cross at Branxton now includes appropriate lighting.	Infrastructure

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Conduct Graduated Licensing Scheme (GLS) workshops for supervisors and learner drivers.		Transport for NSW (TfNSW)has directed education programs and plan for more to be delivered in the near future.	Infrastructure
Develop a Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Plan.		Engagement with stakeholders and the community will commence in the next reporting quarter.	Community and Cultural Development
Ensure our road network encompasses the safe systems planning, construction and maintenance legislated principles.		Under the State's Black Spot Grant we completed safety upgrade projects at Wollombi, Sandy Creek Road and Bucketty.	Infrastructure
Maintain awareness of health services in the community to identify any areas for advocacy.		Awareness has been maintained for progress towards the NSW Health project, Cessnock Hospital Redevelopment.	Community and Cultural Development
Monitor crash trends on our road network.		During this quarter we have regularly monitored State reporting systems to establish a comprehensive grants application process	Infrastructure

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
We will work with our partners to fulfill national rail safety legislative obligations in relation to our road/rail interface.		We are in regular communication with our national rail partners to ensure our legislative obligations are being met and our road/rail interface remains at acceptable levels.	Infrastructure

1.4.2 Ensure we have a series of initiatives which assist with connection and facilitate greater resilience for our community before, during and after natural disasters

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Develop and implement a Community Disaster Resilience Strategy.		A Community Disaster Resilience Action Plan has been developed for the Greater Wollombi Valley and a Draft Community Disaster Resilience Action Plan has been developed for the rest of our area. Implementation of these Action Plans are underway.	Emergency Management and Resilience
Develop and strengthen Community Resilience Networks (CRNs).		Community Resilience Networks (CRNs) have been developed in the Greater Wollombi Valley (as this geographic location requires specific focus), as well as a Greater Cessnock area CRN, which will support the rest of the Cessnock area.	Emergency Management and Resilience

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Implement our Fire Safety Strategy in accordance with statutory requirements.		The Fire Safety Strategy was adopted at the Council's September Elective Leadership Team (ELT) meeting and as at the end of quarter 1, 163 were received resulting in 87% compliance.	Regulatory Services

Capital Works Projects

Traffic Facilities and Road Safety

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Citywide _ Various locations - deliver bus stop upgrades in line with Council's Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan		All discreet projects and remaining funding have been spent with works completed. No further works scheduled for this financial year.	Infrastructure

Cemeteries

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Citywide _ Cessnock City Council Cemeteries – Deliver asset renewal program		Not due to commence until quarter 3.	Open Space and Community Facilities

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Buildings

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Cessnock _ Marthaville Arts & Cultural Centre - design toilet block refurbishment		A concept design has been prepared and consulted with the Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre Management Committee.	Community and Cultural Development
Citywide _ Community and Cultural buildings renewal - deliver renewal program		Works have commenced on Branxton Hall external board repairs and replacement.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Citywide _ Various locations - deliver painting of community buildings		Not due to commence until quarter 3.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Kurri Kurri _ Kurri Kurri Library - Deliver refurbishment of toilet block		Safe work methods for necessary remediation works are being prepared and once confirmed will enable construction to commence.	Community and Cultural Development
NEW PROJECT Cessnock _ Cessnock City Library – Deliver lighting upgrade			Community and Cultural Development



Other Open Space & Recreation

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Citywide _ Various - Playground edging and service program	▶	Surface replacements have been completed at Peace Park, Weston and Hall Park, Cessnock.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Citywide _ Various Open Space locations - deliver pre-construction design	▶	Procurement has commenced for updated construction drawings for Greta Central Oval.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Greta _ Greta Central Park - Upgrade Greta Central Skate Park (grant funding dependent)	⏭	Grant funding opportunities continue to be investigated by the Open Space and Community Facilities team.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Greta _ Norman Brown Park - Playspace upgrade (grant funding dependent)	⏭	Grant funding opportunities continue to be investigated by the Open Space and Community Facilities team.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Kurri Kurri _ Kurri Kurri Netball Facility - deliver netball facility	▶	The amenities building is complete to lock up and the 12 new netball courts have been spray sealed.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Mount View _ Mount View Park - Change room upgrade	⏭	The development of an updated Masterplan for Mount View Park is underway. Following the completion of the Masterplan designs for the changeroom extension will commence.	Open Space and Community Facilities

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏭ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Weston _ Chinaman's Hollow - Water station and lighting		Procurement has commenced for new solar lighting along the shared path at Chinaman's Hollow, Weston.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Weston _ Weston Bears Park - Deliver amenities and grandstand upgrades		The construction of the upgraded amenities and grandstand is well underway with block work, internal sheeting, roof, external cladding, plumbing, mechanical and hydraulics complete.	Open Space and Community Facilities
Citywide _ Various - Deliver Parks and Reserves renewal program		Replacement shelters have been ordered for Miller Park, Branxton and Mulbring Park.	Open Space and Community Facilities
NEW PROJECT Bellbird _ Neville Tomlinson BMX Facility – Complete construction			Open Space and Community Facilities
NEW PROJECT Cessnock _ Apex Park – Deliver park redevelopment			Open Space and Community Facilities
NEW PROJECT			Open Space and Community Facilities



Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Kurri Kurri _ Johns Park – Deliver floodlight installation			
NEW PROJECT Pelaw Main _ Centenary Park – Deliver restoration works			Open Space and Community Facilities

Libraries

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Citywide _ Cessnock City Council Libraries - Deliver library book purchases		Book purchases are selected in accordance with the Library Management System and borrower interests.	Community and Cultural Development

Aquatic Facilities

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Citywide _ Cessnock City Council Aquatic Facilities - deliver renewal program		Cessnock Pool grandstand has been painted and new electronic noticeboards have been installed at Cessnock and Branxton Pool.	Open Space and Community Facilities

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Cessnock _ Cessnock Aquatic Centre - Pool shade sail	✔	New shade sails have been installed at Cessnock Pool.	Open Space and Community Facilities

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

THRIVE We have a diverse and resilient community

2.1 Diversify and grow our area and its economy

2.1.1 Support activation of commercial centres, business engagement, promotion and growth of business in our area

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Advocate for additional bus services between Cessnock and Branxton via Wine Country.		A three-day scenario development workshop for the Anambah to Branxton Regionally Significant Growth Area was held in August. While still in the early stages of strategic planning, improved connectivity and transport corridors were identified as a key priority. Building on the Cessnock LGA Traffic and Transport Strategy 2023, further engagement is required, and a meeting with transport stakeholders is scheduled next quarter.	Economic Development and Tourism
Provide economic development grants to support business chambers and tourist associations.		We have completed a review of the economic development grants and sponsorship program and are finalising the updated framework. Grants of up to $5,000 will be assessed on merit, prioritising economic impact and alignment with our objectives. A 20–50% co-contribution is	Economic Development and Tourism

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
		required; operational costs and salaries are ineligible. The program opens next quarter.	
Undertake the Support Local campaigns to boost local spending and increase engagement with local businesses.	▶	We have relaunched the Shop Hunter Valley brand, generating enthusiasm among businesses and visitors. The refreshed brand promotes local producers and retailers, showcasing the Hunter Valley's unique shopping experience. This initiative encourages visitation, stimulates local spending, and strengthens the region's image as both a cultural and retail destination with strong tourism appeal.	Economic Development and Tourism

2.1.2 Create a skilled and employment-ready workforce within our Council

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Ensure we have a range of apprentice, trainee and graduate opportunities within our Council.	✔	All actions have been completed for Apprentice, Trainee and Graduate Framework. We continue to conduct our Apprentice, Trainee and Cadet program in accordance with our actions.	People and Culture
Investigate alternative strategies for advertising vacant positions to increase the	✔	Alternative strategies have been implemented for advertising of positions including high schools,	People and Culture

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✔ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏩ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
candidate pool in our Council.		university hubs, LinkedIn and a weekly subscription service to job vacancies is available. We have seen an increase in candidates applying for our vacant jobs.	
Represent Council at careers expos, University and TAFE open days and school visits to promote career opportunities and pathways available at our Council.	⏭	Scheduled for quarters three and four of 2025/2026.	People and Culture
We have a dedicated engineering graduate program to address skill shortages and future skills requirements in our Council.	▶	A structured undergraduate program has been developed within the Works and Infrastructure Directorate, featuring rotations across key operational areas. A formal guide to support the rotation process in currently in development.	People and Culture

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏭ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

2.1.3 Support investment in facilities, infrastructure and services to support business growth and increased output in our area

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Collaborate with the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to attract business investment.	▶	Regular meetings with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development have been established to drive investment attraction opportunities. This collaboration ensures Cessnock's priorities align with state strategies, strengthens advocacy, and identifies projects with long-term benefits. It provides a structured pathway for pursuing economic growth and advancing regional development objectives.	Economic Development and Tourism
Create a proposition that promotes the key benefits of working with our Council.	⏭	This is not scheduled for completion until 2026/2027.	People and Culture
Ensure our industrial land fosters economic growth, business diversity, and employment opportunities.	▶	Review of the Employment Land Study being progressed and development of the Employment Land Strategy has commenced.	Strategic Planning
Participate and promote the annual Development Consultation Forum.	⏭	Resources are not currently available to undertake this action.	Economic Development and Tourism

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏭ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

2.2 Develop sustainable employment opportunities

2.2.1 Implement accessible education projects and programs in our area

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Advocate to create jobs via Kurri Kurri Hydro Planning.		We have engaged a Planning Consultant to assist with the finalisation of an Employment Lands Study and prepare an Employment Lands Strategy.	Economic Development and Tourism
Advocate to create jobs via the Black Hill Industrial Precinct.		We have engaged a Planning Consultant to assist with the preparation of an Employment Land Study.	Economic Development and Tourism
Provide our community with education programs around poor decision making and non-compliant road user behaviour.		Educational programs directed by Transport for NSW (TfNSW) have been delivered.	Infrastructure
Support our community's education goals by conducting a Mayoral Scholarships program that financially assists members of our community.		Quarter three prospectus will be issued.	General Managers Unit

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

2.3 Increase tourism and visitation opportunities

2.3.1 Promote and grow the Hunter Valley Visitor Information Centre

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Provide quality services to our area's visitors.		Include Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) Accreditation and visitor stats from the Visitor Information Centre (VIC).	Economic Development and Tourism

2.3.2 Encourage a variety of niche tourism opportunities

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Grow Council's tourism and business image library.		A professional photographer was engaged to update the tourism and business image library, enhancing resources for marketing and promotion of the visitor information service and Shop Hunter Valley. We also captured photos at the Cessnock Stomp Festival, including drone shots, providing high-quality visuals to support event promotion and future marketing initiatives.	Economic Development and Tourism
Identify priority opportunities to promote and encourage investment and visitation to our		We have delivered several initiatives that aim to strengthen tourism and events in the Cessnock LGA. The Visitor Information Centre entered the NSW Tourism Awards, which is a great opportunity	Economic Development and Tourism



Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
area.		to raise the Hunter Valley's profile. Shop Hunter Valley was relaunched, boosting local producers, visitation, and regional identity. We have delivered the Cessnock Stomp Festival on 30 August 2025, which showcased 15 local wineries to around 4,000 attendees. More than 20 industry leaders came together at an innovator's lunch to discuss opportunities in Agri-Tech, tech-enabled tourism, and digital solutions. A $5,000 Club Grant has been awarded to us to deliver a local business resilience program and participated in jobs, skills, and business workshops to advocate local priorities and attract investment. Advocacy and investment attraction were strengthened through ongoing collaboration with the Department of Primary Industries.	
Provide a joint tourism service with Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Association for destination marketing and tourism services.		We continue to work with the Hunter Valley Wine and Tourism Association on destination marketing and tourism services. Regular meetings are held to discuss priorities and collaboration, and a review of the agreement is proposed for this financial year.	Economic Development and Tourism



Capital Works Projects

Town Centres

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Branxton _ Branxton Town Centre - Deliver road rehabilitation	⏭	Detailed design will be complete in the coming weeks, Works and Operations being scheduled for commencement in October 2025. Project has a risk of end date (5 February 2026) for deed being managed with funding body.	Infrastructure
Citywide _ Various - Deliver town centre funded projects under Council's Contribution Plans	▶	Funding has been allocated to Branxton town centre, with construction already commenced.	Infrastructure
NEW PROJECT Wollombi _ Wollombi Road, Great North Road, Paynes Crossing Road – Deliver town centre upgrades	●		Infrastructure



PROTECT We have a healthy and sustainable environment

3.1 Protect our biologically diverse natural environment

3.1.1 Strengthen and protect a high quality, sustainable lifestyle for Cessnock's residents and visitors

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Continue to facilitate education initiatives relating to conservation of the natural environment.		Undertaken Koala Survey on private property.	Strategic Planning
Deliver 'dollar-for-dollar' grants to eligible community groups for on-ground sustainability programs.		Round 1 of the Sustainable Community Dollar-for-Dollar grants has been run, with successful projects reported to Council in the November meeting. Round 2 and Schools Grants will open in January 2026.	Environment and Waste Services
Implement community programs designed to remove inappropriate waste from our waste stream.		Our sustainability team continue to promote and educate through various events, community pop-ups, Green Teachers network and NSW Environment Protection Authority waste education programs and collateral.	Environment and Waste Services

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Manage the impact of stormwater flows and stormwater pollution on receiving waterways.		Continual development of Flood studies in various locations including the LGA wide overland flood study.	Asset Planning
Promote and deliver community focused biodiversity education programs.		Undertook koala surveys on private properties to determine population.	Strategic Planning
Promote sustainable transport technology as quality alternatives to conventional private vehicle use.		Bridges Hill Carpark electric vehicle charging station installed and operating. Continuing to look for other funding opportunities and additional alternate private vehicle use technologies for consideration. Climate Change Resilience Committee continues to focus on this program.	Environment and Waste Services
Review our Biodiversity Strategy incorporating our Strategic Planning strategies and methodologies.		Project to commence once environmental land mapping project is completed.	Strategic Planning
Undertake a review of our Cessnock Local Environmental Plan.		Housing theme off exhibition and submissions being reviewed with intended workshop with Councillors. Miscellaneous Theme under preparation.	Strategic Planning

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

3.1.2 Protect and enhance our lands of environmental value

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Continue the implementation of our invasive weed management program in accordance with Biosecurity Act 2015.		Biosecurity Management is progressing as per program in line with Weeds Action Program and Hunter priority weeds.	Environment and Waste Services
Facilitate the on-ground works for Landcare groups working on Council land.		Biosecurity Management Coordinator attended Landcare Muster in September. Garden Escapees book was released at this event. Working with Landcare groups to provide ongoing support in both Biosecurity and Sustainability.	Environment and Waste Services
Monitor our drainage assets to identify opportunity for alignment with engineering and capacity requirements.		Our LGA overland flow study will drive future decisions.	Asset Planning
We have appropriate mechanisms and initiatives to improve biodiversity protection and resilience in our area.		Climate Change Resilience Committee continues to be active looking at alternatively powered equipment for Council operations. Koala project is ongoing. Sustainability month in September saw multiple events focused on biodiversity and sustainability with spotlighting, tree planting, trivia and other events held over the month.	Environment and Waste Services

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

3.1.3 Manage disaster risk and preparedness for extreme weather events

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Ensure expansion of new infrastructure plans for future development considers floodplain impacts.		Our system of internal consultation has been developed and is managed by our Developmental services and Stormwater and Flood Mitigation team.	Asset Planning
Facilitate and manage our area's preparedness for local risks, hazards, emergency management and recovery.		Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) meeting facilitated October 2025.	Emergency Management & Resilience
Identify and manage high priority stormwater, waterway and floodplain works.		We are continually monitoring customer request management (CRM) and recommendations from flood studies.	Asset Planning
Work with our partners to manage natural hazards in our area		We are continually improving relationship with Hunter Water. Flood committee established and in operation. Next scheduled meeting is in March 2026.	Asset Planning

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

3.2 Balance our natural environment and the rural character of our area

Ensure our area's growth enhances and protects our unique location

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Ensure our permissible land use controls remain compatible with the rural character and amenity of our area.		Study on review of rural Land drafted and development of the Rural Lands Strategy has commenced.	Strategic Planning
Ensure we work to minimise the impact of our flying-fox population on our community.		This is an ongoing action and subject to grants and seasonal variations in the size and impacts of the of the bat colony.	Strategic Planning
We have undertaken mitigation and adaptation actions in our area to strengthening resilience to climate change to ensure a sustainable future.		Climate Change Resilience Committee continues to meet and provide alternatively powered plant and equipment options for Council to consider. Landfill operations, gas capture and increase in resource recovery rate will continue to reduce emissions.	Environment and Waste Services
Work to achieve a healthy and diverse urban tree population that is adaptable to climate changes and provides green and cool areas.		A tree giveaway event is planned for November 2025.	Open Space and Community Facilities

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

3.3 Effectively utilise our open spaces for both passive and active recreation options

3.3.1 Provide options for people of all abilities to support active and healthy lifestyle habits

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Ensure we have a network of on-and-off-road bicycle routes as alternative connections between our built and natural destinations.		We have worked with our partners and stakeholders and have undertaken a continual process of exploring opportunities for alternative connections within our area.	Infrastructure
Provide safe and well-maintained spaces for our community's dogs and their owners.		Maintenance of our off leash areas is undertaken in line with asset management methodologies	Open Space and Community Facilities

3.4 Undertake viable resource recovery and waste management

3.4.1 Provide a sustainable and cost-effective recycling service which prioritises waste minimisation

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Engage in a practice of continuous investigation and monitoring of our waste streams.		Monthly Waste and Resource Recovery Portal report review and comparison with Waste Key Performance Indicator's tracking waste reduction and resource recovery percentage. This also	Environment and Waste Services



Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
		identifies opportunity streams for further segregation and downstream processing.	
Ensure our Community Recycling Centre is operated in collaboration with NSW EPA Environmental Protection Agency.		Community Recycling Centre continues to operate, targeting Problem Waste which is correctly segregated and stored prior to going offsite for further processing. Internal inspection conducted 19 September with some storage improvement opportunities and corrective actions noted.	Environment and Waste Services
Ensure we maintain the efficiency of waste recycling services.		Currently reviewing Weighbridge operations and procedures which impact the Waste Levy liability, with staff training planned for November.	Environment and Waste Services
Work with our regional partners to continue implementation of our organics (green waste) kerbside collection.		Working with Maitland and Singleton Councils on Organics contract, with Food Organics Garden Organics collections commencing 30 June 2025. Contract meetings held with both Processing and Collections contractors.	Environment and Waste Services
Work with our regional partners to continue review and implementation of our recycling kerbside collection.		Continuing to work with Hunter Resource Recovery and member Councils on the Recycling Processing Tender/Contract which is at evaluation stage. Continuing to work with Hunter Resource Recovery	Environment and Waste Services

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
		and member Councils on the Recycling Collections Contract which is at initial pre-tender phase at present.	
Work with our regional partners to deliver efficient waste services.	▶	Met with NSW Environment Protection Authority and Hunter Councils at Maitland to discuss regional Waste Infrastructure on 19 August. Met with Hunter Joint Organisation Regional Waste Managers at Cessnock's Performing Arts Culture Centre (PACC) 4 September. Aligned updated E-waste collection contract with other Hunter Councils. Proposed visit to Central Coast Council and/or Lake Macquarie City Council to review landfill compaction equipment Global Positioning Satellite systems in action.	Environment and Waste Services

3.4.2 Provide a sustainable and cost-effective waste service which prioritises waste minimisation

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Consider grant funding opportunities for minimising collection costs and promoting	⏭	Awaiting next suitable grant opportunity.	Environment and Waste Services

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏭ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
litter reduction in key public spaces.			
Consider our mattress drop-off options for our community.		Draft Waste Management Policy is currently on Public Exhibition. This update to the policy allows one mattress per recycling voucher, enabling residents to drop a mattress at the Cessnock Waste Management Centre rather than having to wait for a schedule Mattress Drop-off Event. Once comments from the public are considered this will go back to Council to adopt in November/December. Next Mattress Drop-Off Event is scheduled for 18 October 2025.	Environment and Waste Services
Continue landfill extension to meet the needs of our growing community.		Landfill extension continues with wet weather delays in August. Lining of old cell is complete and lining of new cell well progressed. Leachate drainage system, wheel wash, haul road all complete.	Environment and Waste Services
Continue to operate our Waste Management Centre in accordance with the NSW Environment Protection Agency Licence legislation.		Continue to operate compliantly within our Environment Protection License. Due to wet weather July/August saw multiple leachate discharge events, all of which have been recorded and actioned in line with Environment Protection License requirements. Waste and Resource Recovery Portal reports and	Environment and Waste Services

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
		construction Operational Purpose Deductions all submitted as required.	
Engage in active monitoring and recording of environmental and pollution control parameters in accordance with the NSW Environment Protection Agency Licence legislation.		All monitoring conducted in compliance with Environment Protection License requirements, Significant wet weather in July/August resulted in leachate discharge reporting and monitoring for existing and legacy sites.	Environment and Waste Services
Facilitate litter reduction and cleanup community initiatives.		Illegal Dumping Stakeholder Committee meeting held 6 August with Council, Crown, NSW Environment Protection Authority, Police, Fire, Mindaribba and National Parks & Wildlife all included. Alkira Avenue Illegal Dumping Avoidance event held 20 August with partners Home in Place and Remondis, successfully collecting 21 tonnes of waste and 45 mattresses.	Environment and Waste Services
Implement a number of initiatives to remove sharps and batteries from our waste stream.		Sharps collection at local Hospital ongoing. Battery collection and segregation at Community Recycling Centre is ongoing as we are requesting to be added to the NSW Environment Protection Authority Embedded Battery Program.	Environment and Waste Services



Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Monitor and manage our waste streams to ensure potential issues are mitigated.		Waste service Key Performance Indicators and contamination reporting on Recycling and Food Organics Garden Organics contracts completed monthly with overall resource recovery percentage reported. aste sorting of community drop-off waste expected to commence in October/November as the Material Handler project comes up to speed.	Environment and Waste Services
Review viability and accessibility of new public waste bins.		Ongoing review of existing bins, and more input and consideration on new bins going into new developments or park upgrades.	Environment and Waste Services
Undertake our Illegal Dumping Program which includes facilitating community focused litter reduction and illegal dumping awareness programs and events.		Illegal Dumping Stakeholder Committee meeting held 6 August with Council, Crown, NSW Environment Protection Authority, Police, Fire, Mindaribba and National Parks & Wildlife all included. Alkira Avenue Illegal Dumping Avoidance event held 20 August with partners Home in Place and Remondis, successfully collecting 21 tonnes of waste and 45 mattresses.	Environment and Waste Services
Work with the EPA to deliver household chemical cleanout events.		Most recent Cessnock event was held 8 June 2025. Awaiting dates for next event from NSW Environment Protection Authority once they update the event schedule.	Environment and Waste Services

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Capital Works Projects

Plant & Equipment

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council - Deliver technology upgrades for Weeds Officer	▶	New iPad issued to Weeds Officer. We are nearing completion of the transition from our supplier Chartis to AEOM.	Environment and Waste Services
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council Waste Facility - Deliver 30m hook-lift bins sorting project	⏭	Procurement of bins has not yet commenced with existing and contractor bins being used initially.	Environment and Waste Services
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council Waste Facility - Deliver Hooklift Truck 8x4	⏭	Not yet underway.	Environment and Waste Services
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council Waste Facility - Deliver landfill compactor GPS	⏭	Procurement of this will commence as we near completion of the Landfill Extension.	Environment and Waste Services

Floodplain Management

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Abermain _ Harle Street - Design and deliver culvert	⏭	Concept design is complete. Final design in progress.	Asset Planning

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏭ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Mount View _ Mount View Road - Design and deliver culvert	⏭	Project brief completed with Design team to complete final design. Additional work is required which may impact on budget.	Asset Planning
Wollombi _ Wollombi Brook - Deliver Flood Risk Management Study & Plan	⏭	Awaiting on grant application outcome.	Asset Planning

Drainage

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Branxton _ Fleet Street - Deliver kerb and gutter	▶	Planned to be completed in the same timeframe as the Branxton town centre upgrade project due to the proximity in an effort to realise operational efficiencies. Estimated completion early 2026.	Infrastructure
East Branxton _ Dalwood Road - Design drainage easement	▶	Phase 2 design underway.	Asset Planning
Heddon Greta _ Averys Lane to Clift Street - Deliver trunk drainage	▶	Handed to works team for delivery.	Asset Planning
Millfield _ Portland Street - deliver trunk drainage system	▶	Phase 2 detail design in progress, community has been informed (via letter in mail).	Asset Planning

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏭ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Waste Management

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council Waste Facility - Deliver new landfill development	▶	Wet weather delays in August. Lining of new cell is well underway, with all leachate drainage, haul road and wheel wash complete.	Environment and Waste Services
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council Waste Facility _ Deliver material handler sorting project	⏭	Material Handler has arrived onsite, 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.	Environment and Waste Services
Cessnock _ Cessnock Waste Management Centre - deliver management of domestic waste collection	✔	New Isuzu/SuperiorPak side-loader has arrived and is undergoing final fit-out and branding.	Environment and Waste Services
Cessnock _ Various - implement revolving energy improvement program	▶	Presently working with Traffic assessing joint funding application for Commonwealth's Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program, making pedestrian crossing lighting compliant with AS/NZS 1158.4. It is believed the Revolving Energy Fund can be used as Council's contribution towards this type of project.	Environment and Waste Services



Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Citywide _ Various - Deliver Floodplain Management Program in areas identified in Council's Floodplain Management Strategy		Revision of Council's floodplain investigation studies continues and the outcome of this guides the direction of specifically included capital works projects, for project specific updates refer to each project. Specific community consultation periods are included at various stages of each flood plain study.	Infrastructure

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

MOVE we have accessible and reliable infrastructure, services and facilities

4.1 Progress our transport links

4.1.1 Support local industry and tourism and the related workforce within our area by increasing transport options to and from our vineyards district

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Advocate to establish a Newcastle fast rail.		We continue to advocate for a Newcastle Fast Rail connection through active participation with the Hunter Joint Organisation, Committee for the Hunter, and Business Hunter.	Economic Development and Tourism
Improve access to tourism connection points.		The concept design for the Shiraz to Shore, Singleton to Maitland via Broke Road, Neath sand Kurri to Testers Hollow was completed this quarter.	Infrastructure

4.1.2 Provide and maintain a range of shared pathways that connect our community

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Create investment opportunities to grow our transport links in the Abermain to Branxton area.		The concept design for the shared pathway from Cessnock to Abermain has been completed. Works have also been completed in this quarter for the shared pathway at East Esplanade Weston. An Essential Public Asset Restoration (EPAR) claim	Infrastructure

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
		for funding following declared disaster earlier this year has been submitted. Further opportunity for grant applications throughout this area is regularly being assessed and monitored throughout the quarter.	
Create investment opportunities to grow our transport links in the Blackhill to Sawyers Gully area.		Concept design for all 3 stages of the Kurri Kurri to Testers Hollow shared pathway have been completed. We have also submitted an Essential Public Asset Restoration (EPAR) claim for funding following declared disaster earlier this year.	Infrastructure
Create investment opportunities to grow our transport links in the Kearsley to Cessnock area.		Detailed design for Dalwood Road rehabilitation works is being developed. Further opportunity for grant applications throughout this area is regularly being assessed and monitored throughout the quarter. We have also submitted an Essential Public Asset Restoration (EPAR) claim for funding following declared disaster earlier this year.	Infrastructure
Create investment opportunities to grow our transport links in the Kitchener to Wollombi area.		We have submitted an Essential Public Asset Restoration claim for funding following declared disaster earlier this year.	Infrastructure



Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Our road network is effectively maintained.		Planned inspections of the road network undertaken. Road maintenance works planned and programmed based on planned inspections and customer requests.	Works and Operations

4.1.3 Provide adequate road networks in new urban release areas Infrastructure

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Collaborate with network partners in our area to ensure our new road networks meet our growing population needs.		Throughout this quarter we are in regular communication with our development partners and internal service areas to ensure our road networks aligns with development opportunities in our area.	Infrastructure

4.2 Improve our road network

4.2.1 Ensure our existing road network remains contemporary and meets our community's needs

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Advocate for the construction of Northern Ramps at the Hart Road Interchange.		This project is still in the advocacy stages and we continue to work with our partners on this project.	Infrastructure

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Consider implications of upgrading Old Maitland Road at Sawyers Gully.		Investigation and concept design for Old Maitland Road continued throughout the quarter. Funding opportunities will need to be explored for this project to progress.	Infrastructure
Create investment opportunities for our transport network throughout the Abermain to Branxton corridor.		Upgrades to Sawyers Gully Road continued through this quarter. We also submitted an Essential Public Assets Restoration claim for funding following declared disaster earlier this year. Opportunity for further grant applications throughout this area were regularly being assessed and monitored throughout the quarter.	Infrastructure
Create investment opportunities for our transport network throughout the Blackhill to Sawyers Gully corridor.		We prepared an Essential Public Asset Restoration (EPAR) claim for funding following declared disaster earlier this year. Further opportunity for grant applications throughout this area were regularly assessed and monitored throughout the quarter.	Infrastructure
Create investment opportunities for our transport network throughout the Kearsley to Cessnock corridor.		We submitted an Essential Public Assets Restoration claim for funding following declared disaster earlier this year and continued to assess	Infrastructure

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
		and monitor grant opportunities throughout the quarter.	
Create investment opportunities for our transport network throughout the Kitchener to Wollombi corridor.		Development of the Wollombi Intersection traffic facilities project was commenced this quarter with an Essential Public Asset Restoration (EPAR) claim for funding also being submitted. Opportunity for further grant applications in this area being regularly assessed and monitored throughout the quarter.	Infrastructure
Investigate options for a Cessnock CBD Bypass.		A targeted report on this option was finalised during this quarter with funding opportunities to be explored for this project to continue.	Infrastructure
Undertake routine condition inspections of our bridges and major culverts.		Schedule established in Asset Database as well as adhoc (when necessary) level 2 inspection post weather events.	Asset Planning
Undertake routine reoccurring defects inspection of our road network utilising our adopted Asset Management Strategy criteria.		Ongoing planned inspections of the network undertaken.	Works and Operations

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

4.3 Ensure our transport and freight networks limit impacts on our environment

4.3.1 Ensure our transport planning is integrated with land use planning

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Assess new projects considering a balance between competing compliance and regulation and meeting growing service delivery demand.	?	No action update provided this quarter.	Strategic Planning
Ensure our airport continues to act as a key transport, emergency response and business hub.	▶	Cessnock Airport Master Plan underway. Airport Working Group Quarterly meetings held.	Works and Operations
Maintain an assessment regime of applications for Restricted Access Vehicle movements within our area.	▶	Weekly program to monitor and reply to National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) portal requests, coordinated by the engineers in the Stormwater and Flood Mitigation team.	Asset Planning

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏭ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Capital Works Projects

Other Infrastructure

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council Works Depot - Deliver depot pavement works	⏭	Works planned to commence in in February 2026.	Works and Operations
Citywide _ Various locations - Deliver infrastructure pre-construction design and contracts	▶	Survey procurement to proceed next month.	Infrastructure
Paxton _ Anderson Avenue - Deliver active transport connection	✔	Project completed.	Infrastructure
NEW PROJECT Laguna _ Yango Street causeway – Deliver causeway fencing	●		Infrastructure

Pathways

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Citywide _ Various - Design pathways in accordance with Council's Contributions Plans	▶	Concept designs have progressed in a priority order that positions Council in the most positive	Infrastructure

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✔ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏩ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
		position to be successful in obtaining grant funding.	
Kurri Kurri _ Kurri Kurri, Testers Hollow to Cliftleigh - Deliver shared pathway	⏭	Concept design has been completed for all 3 stages, stage 1 being developed to detail design. Scheduling Works and Ops to undertake construction of stage 1. Working with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) on approval to work on State Road Network. Stage 1 construction will be reduced in line with budget constraints.	Infrastructure
Cessnock _ Cessnock to Abermain - Deliver shared pathway	▶	Concept design has been issued, progressing to developed design. Transport for NSW (TfNSW) have approved an extension to the scope of works (SOW) to connect Abermain to Kurri Kurri, currently being procured.	Infrastructure
NEW PROJECT East Branxton _ Dalwood Road - Deliver shared pathway	●		Infrastructure
NEW PROJECT Weston _ East Esplanade – Deliver pathway	●		Infrastructure

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏩ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
NEW PROJECT Bellbird _ Bellbird Public School to Spark Street – Deliver pathway			Infrastructure
NEW PROJECT Kitchener _ Richmond Street to Abernethy Street – Deliver pathway			Infrastructure

Roads

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Aberdare _ Colliery Street, Duffie Drive to Maitland Road - Design road upgrade		Internal consultation has occurred, and a brief is being prepared.	Infrastructure
Cessnock _ Wollombi Road - Deliver road upgrade Stage 1		Construction contractor is engaged and works are progressing on Wollombi Road upgrade Stage 1.	Works and Infrastructure
Cessnock _ Wollombi Road - Deliver road upgrade Stage 2		Wollombi Road upgrade Stage 2 has progressed to the construction tender phase.	Works and Infrastructure
Citywide _ Various - Deliver local road stabilisation program		Roads list is now prepared and we are preparing to procure a contractor.	Infrastructure



Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Citywide _ Various locations - Deliver local road resealing		Local road reseal program has been planned by the Asset Planning team and Roads maintenance team are planning to implement.	Infrastructure
Citywide _ Various locations - Deliver resealing of regional roads		Regional road reseal program has been prepared by Asset planning and is in preparation for implementation by the Road Maintenance crews.	Infrastructure
Citywide _ Various locations -Deliver gravel rehabilitation and resheeting program		Roads Maintenance team has been progressing the roll out of this program as they address each of the 12 maintenance zones detailed in the current maintenance schedule.	Infrastructure
East Branxton _ Dalwood Road - investigate and design road rehabilitation		Detailed design being developed for extended scope of future works package, no construction funding confirmed at this point.	Infrastructure
Oakey Creek _ Ingles Street to O'Connors Road - Design road upgrade		Internal consultation and brief preparation has commenced but no formal investigations or studies have commenced.	Infrastructure
Sawyers Gully _ Sawyers Gully Road - Deliver road rehabilitation		Works and Ops undertaking construction, Old Maitland Road end is now completed. Works commencing between culvert and Frame Drive intersection.	Infrastructure

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KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
NEW PROJECT Kurri Kurri _ Lang Street - Deliver road rehabilitation			Infrastructure

Bridges

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Citywide _ Various - Deliver bridge replacement program in accordance with the criteria identified in the adopted Asset Management Strategy	⏭	Doyle Street and Bathurst Street are due to start in January 2026. We are currently awaiting grant results. Our projects are funded and will go ahead regardless.	Asset Planning
NEW PROJECT Greta _ Wyndam Street bridge – Deliver bridge upgrade			Asset Planning

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏩ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Airport

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Pokolbin _ Cessnock Airport - Deliver airport improvements	⏭	Work planned to commence in March 2026.	Works and Operations



LEAD We have strong leadership and effective governance

5.1 Support and develop community leadership

5.1.1 Ensure we develop our workforce performance and culture to effectively meet our community's needs and desired outcomes

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Conduct leadership development programs for our workforce.	✔	Two development day have occurred this calendar year and several planned for quarters three and four of 2025/2026.	People and Culture
Develop tailored leadership development programs that identifies high potential staff within our workforce.	▶	Leadership capability and succession planning tool has been implemented with assessments completed for Managers and Coordinators. Team Leader assessments are underway and due for completion by quarter two in 2025/2026. Tailored leadership training in alignment with assessment findings is scheduled to begin in quarter three of 2025/2026, currently being planned in collaboration with an external provider.	People and Culture
Ensure our Council develops core capabilities across all levels of our	▶	A review of our existing competency framework is currently in progress. A competency framework	People and Culture

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✔ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏭ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
workforce.		that includes core competencies will be finalised and communicated in quarter three of 2025/2026.	
Provide an engagement platform to assess employee experience across our workforce.	⏭	Employee Engagement Survey to be conducted in third quarter of 2025/2026.	People and Culture
Undertake succession planning, coaching and mentoring for critical roles.	▶	Critical roles have been identified. Succession plans started.	People and Culture

5.1.2 Provide a safe workplace that supports the health and wellbeing of our people

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Embed a positive and healthy culture within our workforce.	▶	Health monitoring programs continue to be delivered as part of our Health and Wellbeing calendar. All outstanding return to work audit actions complete. Our next return to work and workers compensation audit for early December 2025. Provider engaged to deliver bullying and harassment training in fourth quarter of 2025/2026.	People and Culture
Ensure we maintain a focus on psychosocial health and safety within our workforce.	▶	Wellbeing action plan created based on feedback from our People at Work Survey results and StateCover Healthy Workplace Audit. Wellbeing	People and Culture

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏩ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
		Policy and Procedure in draft. Ongoing support tools provided to staff and available on our Intranet including the Wellbeing Wrapped newsletter with additional resources. Our Wellbeing Committee meeting regularly. R U OK? Day event was held in September.	
Maintain strong performance in Enterprise Risk Management.		Enterprise Risk Management registers continue to be reviewed and updated. Education on the newly implemented Enterprise Risk Management tool continues.	People and Culture

5.2 Encourage community collaboration in decision making

5.2.1 Ensure that community participation is central in planning for our area

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Engage with the community and local service providers to participate in the delivery of our community and cultural development programs.		Planning for Seniors Festival 2026 is well underway in collaboration with the Seniors Reference Group. The interest from local organisations and the business community to contribute to sponsoring the festival has been strong.	Community and Cultural Development

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Obtain feedback from our community events to ensure delivery of a diverse program engaging children, young people and families.		Feedback will be sought from young people on the Spring School Holiday program including identifying opportunities for future activities.	Community and Cultural Development
Participate with the Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) to promote the interests of our area.		Board meeting 14/8/25. Workshops and Strategy Planning sessions attended as organised during quarter.	General Managers Unit

5.2.2 Ensure our staff have the skills, tools, capacity and confidence to engage effectively

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Develop core capabilities and competencies across all levels of our Council.		This action has been duplicated in our operational plan - this action is to be deleted.	People and Culture
Ensure our customers are supported and have positive experiences with our Council.		We continue to focus on improving the customer experience (CX) across all service areas. During the quarter, CX has scoped, developed and tested a new Quality Assurance Program within the Contact Centre to enhance the consistency and	Business Support and Customer Relations



Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
		quality of customer interactions. The program, which will be implemented within the next quarter, will provide valuable insights to help staff deliver timely, accurate and empathetic service to our community.	
Ensure our workforce is appropriately trained and resourced in meeting their governance and statutory compliance obligations.		We have an ongoing program of education, training and awareness to support governance of the organisation.	Corporate Governance
Review our workplace induction and onboarding program.		A review of induction and onboarding has commenced.	People and Culture

5.2.3 Ensure our community has the necessary information to make an informed contribution

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Ensure our community reporting complies with the Integrated Planning & Reporting legislation.		Annual report has been drafted and is on time. The update the Delivery Program will be reported to Council and the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) in November. Work has commenced on the 2026-27 Operational Plan.	Corporate and Community

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Ensure our financial reporting complies with the Australian Accounting Standards.		External audit by the Audit Office of NSW is currently underway for the 30 June 2025 financial statements that will provide assurance in complying with accounting standards. Final audited statements are to be presented to Council in November 2025.	Corporate and Community

5.3 Ensure we are accountable and responsive to our community

5.3.1 Continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our service delivery

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Ensure our Council's administration building provides our workforce with the capacity to effectively meet the needs of our current and growing population.	⏭	To commence once future financial planning is completed.	Corporate and Community
Ensure our Council's services are effectively aligned with our processes and procedures	⏭	To be commenced in the 3rd quarter of 2025/26	Corporate and Community

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏩ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Maintain a continuous review of internal processes to remain compliant with the Department of Planning and Environment's Development Assessment Best Practice Guide.	⏭	Process reviews have commenced in relation to pre-lodgement and pre-DA meetings. Process mapping has also begun in relation to each of these areas. From the reviews undertaken to date, an internal process change has been implemented to address best practice timeframes in order to reduce the number of days to submit an application. Reporting to date suggests that this change in our process has improved submission timeframes, with reporting showing a decrease in submitted days.	Development Services

5.3.2 Harness the potential of digital technologies to improve interaction with customers to deliver better outcomes for our area

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Enhance the utilisation of our electronic safety and risk management system.	▶	The utilisation of BeSafe continues. All data is now being reviewed allowing more accuracy in reporting trends. BeSafe statistic dashboards in draft.	People and Culture

KEY ⏭ Not Due to Start ▶ In progress ✓ Complete ■ Not Progressing ⏩ Deferred ⓘ At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Ensure our Council has the necessary tools and capacity to enable our community to be informed and have opportunities to contribute to our decision making.		Review of website and engagement microsite commenced, and project timelines set.	Communications and Engagement
Investigate the expansion of the application programming interface for software packages utilised throughout our Council.		Initial planning has commenced, documentation from current service providers has been sourced to provide a complete understanding of the current state, IT team to commence high level planning and cost estimates in October 2025.	Information Technology
Our Council's websites are inclusive, accessible, contain accurate information and are easy to navigate.		A review of our website and engagement microsite has commenced, with project timelines set.	Communications and Engagement
Strengthen digital literacy for our workforce.		This action is not scheduled for completion until 2026/2027.	People and Culture

5.3.3 Ensure we maintain adequate funding to support our plans of management, cash position and adopted plans and strategies

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Collaborate with the community to develop new and expand existing community events delivered within our area.		Collaboration has occurred with not-for-profit organisations and businesses seeking to be involved in the event sponsorship for 2026 Seniors Festival. Planning has commenced for Carols in the Park and will be held 5 December 2025.	Community and Cultural Development
Ensure appropriate collection of data to meet annual reporting IPR requirements.		Integrated Planning & Reporting officers source statutory information for the annual report to collate and publish. The 2025 annual report has been drafted and is expected to be reported to Council and the community in November 2025.	Corporate and Community
Ensure that we maintain a comprehensive grants processes and register.		Grants register for existing grants is maintained monthly with reporting and cashflow tracking to encourage invoicing upon milestone completion. Next iteration of the register will be to align to Delivery Program unfunded projects and track grant application performance.	Corporate and Community
Submit grant funding applications in accordance with asset management plans for improvements to recreation community facilities.		An application was submitted via the Greening our City Grant for street tree planting in Aberdare, East Branxton, Kurri Kurri, Pelaw Main and Cessnock and biodiversity understorey plantings at Bridges Hill, Cessnock.	Open Space and Community Facilities

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Seek funding for delivery of Floodplain Management Programs.		Always looking for grant opportunities.	Asset Planning

5.3.4 Provide efficient and effective regulatory systems

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Ensure our Council's development assessment systems remain aligned with NSW Planning Portal legislative requirements.		We have maintained close alignment with updates to the NSW Planning Portal and associated legislative requirements. Our Business Support team and Business Improvement Specialist has continued to monitor state-wide changes and collaborate across teams to ensure any system updates or process adjustments are implemented seamlessly, minimising disruption for applicants and staff.	Business Support and Customer Relations
Maintain a best practice internal audit function and Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee in compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements and the Global Internal Audit Standards.		Reported to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) in September 2025.	General Managers Unit



Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Undertake a regular review process to ensure all policies are updated when necessary.		We have an ongoing program of policy review.	Corporate Governance
Undertake a Service Delivery Program of service areas identified under internal audit function.		Program reported to Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) September 2025 meeting. Recruitment for EFT to be completed 30/9/25.	Information Technology

Capital Works Projects

Administration equipment & systems

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council Administration Centres - Asset Planning specialised tooling and equipment		No specialised tooling and equipment required in the first quarter.	Asset Planning
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council Administration Centres - IT equipment leases		Council purchased 375 laptops under a lease with Vestone Capital, hardware supplied by Nexon.	Information Technology

KEY Not Due to Start | In progress | Complete | Not Progressing | Deferred | At Risk

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council Administration Centres - Replacement of Wi-Fi for Council's administration building, Works Depot and PACC		All equipment has been delivered, required cabling installed and final technical configuration documentation complete. Awaiting vendor to configure and begin testing.	Information Technology
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council Administration Centres _ Minor hardware items		Year to date (YTD) expenditure under this item includes a replacement multi-function printer and commitments for replacement of meeting room equipment in the Awbakal meeting room.	Information Technology

Fleet Management

Operational Plan 2025-26 Action	Progress	Comments	Responsible Officer Unit
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council Works Depot - replacement of heavy vehicle		Ongoing heavy plant replacement program underway in line with agreed service life.	Works and Operations
Cessnock _ Cessnock City Council Works Depot - replacement of leaseback vehicle		Ongoing leaseback vehicle replacement undertaken in line with agreed service life.	Works and Operations



QUARTER 1, 2025-26 DPOP Changes – Edits:

WHERE	TYPE OF CHANGE	PARTICULARS	WHO	ACCEPTED Y/N
Document wide	Reference to "*Community Disaster Resilience Strategy"*	Change title: TO: Community Disaster Resilience Action Plan	Emergency Management & Resilience Coordinator	
2025-26 Operational Plan Actions				
2.1.3	Action 4: *"Create a proposition that promotes the key benefits of working with our Council."*	Change year of delivery (Target): FROM: 30 June 2026 TO: 30 June 2027	People & Culture Manager	
5.1.1	Action 4: *"Ensure our Council develops core capabilities across all levels of our workforce."*	REMOVE ACTION There is another Action under 5.2.2 which is similar	People & Culture Manager	
5.3.2	Action 4: *"Strengthen digital literacy for our workforce"*	Change year of delivery (Target): FROM: 30 June 2026 TO: 30 June 2027	People & Culture Manager	

2025-26 Capital Projects							
WHERE	**TYPE OF CHANGE**				**PARTICULARS**		
	Suburb	**Location**	**Description**	**Budget Forecast**			
Page 86	Greta	Greta Central Park	Upgrade Greta Central Skate Park.	$289,390	Changed description to include 'Grant Funding Dependent'	Open Space & Community Facilities	
Page 110	Citywide	Various	Pre-Construction Design – Infrastructure	$100,00	REMOVE project	Finance	
Page 250	Citywide	Various	Pre-Construction Design – Open Space	$150,000	REMOVE project	Finance	
Page 260	Cessnock	Council Administration Centres	IT Equipment Leases	$762,124	REMOVE project	Finance	
NEW	Branxton	Dalwood Road	Deliver shared pathway	$23,000	COMMENT: Carry over. Grant funded	Finance	

NEW	Weston	East Esplanade	Deliver pathway	$60,000	COMMENT: Developer contributions	Finance	
NEW	Wollombi	Wollombi Road, Great North Road, Paynes Crossing Road	Deliver town centre upgrades	$954,000	COMMENT: Carry over. Develop contributions and Grant funds	Finance	
NEW	Bellbird	Bellbird Public School to Spark Street	Deliver pathway	$811,000	COMMENT: Developer contributions and Grant funds	Finance	
NEW	Kitchener	Richmond Street to Abernethy Street	Deliver pathway	$472,501	COMMENT: Developer contributions and Grant funds	Finance	
NEW	Bellbird	Neville Tomlinson BMX Facility	Complete construction	$73,000	COMMENT: Developer contributions and Grant funds	Finance	
NEW	Kurri Kurri	Lang Street	Deliver road rehabilitation	$27,000	COMMENT: General funds	Finance	
NEW	Laguna	Yango Creek causeway	Deliver causeway fencing	$8,000	COMMENT: Stormwater levy	Finance	
NEW	Cessnock	Apex Park	Deliver park redevelopment	$505,000	COMMENT: Grant funds	Finance	
NEW	Cessnock	Cessnock City Council Library	Deliver lighting upgrade	$62,000	COMMENT: Grant funds	Finance	
NEW	Greta	Wyndam Street bridge	Deliver bridge upgrade	$100,000	COMMENT: Grant funds and general funds	Finance	
NEW	Kurri Kurri	Johns Park	Deliver floodlight installation	$300,000	COMMENT: Grant funds	Finance	
NEW	Pelaw Main	Centenary Park	Deliver restoration works	$141,000	COMMENT: Insurance	Finance	
Other							
1.3.3	Action 6: *"Develop and maintain our playgrounds."*				Change Strategy: FROM: Generic Plan of Management for Playgrounds TO: Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan	Open Space & Community Facilities	

1.3.3	Action 7: *"Ensure our sportsgrounds are properly maintained and respond to changing community needs, while enhancing the quality of life in our community."*	Change Strategy: FROM: Generic Plan of Management – Sportsgrounds TO: Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan	Open Space & Community Facilities	
1.3.3	Action 8: *"Manage our aquatic facilities to respond to the changing needs of our community and enhance our quality of life."*	Change Strategy: FROM: Generic Plan of Management – Aquatic facilities TO: Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan	Open Space & Community Facilities	
3.1.1	Action 7: "Promote sustainable transport technology as quality alternatives to conventional private vehicle use"	Change Strategy: FROM: Traffic & Transport Strategy TO: Climate Change Resilience Plan	Environment & Waste Manager	
3.1.3	Action 4: "Facilitate and manage our area's preparedness for local risks, hazards, emergency management and recovery"	Change Responsible Officer FROM: Asset Management TO: Emergency Management & Resilience	Emergency Management & Resilience Coordinator	
3.2.1	Action 3: *"Ensure we work to minimise the impact of our flying-fox population on our community."*	Change Responsible Officer FROM: Open Space & Community Facilities TO: Strategic Planning	Open Space & Community Facilities	

CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL

2025
2026

Planning for our people, our place, our future





CESSNOCK

QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW STATEMENT

Quarter 1 September 2025

www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au





Welcome
Acknowledgement of Country

Cessnock City Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the Traditional Lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people, and the Darkinjung people.

We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government area

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Report by Responsible Accounting Officer

The following statement is made in accordance with Clause 203(2) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021:

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.

Signed:

Matthew Plumridge – Responsible Accounting Officer

Date: 27/10/2025

Summary

QBRS FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Budget review for the quarter ended

DESCRIPTION		Previous Year Actual 2024/25 $000's	Current Year Original Budget 2025/26 $000's	Approved Changes Carry Forwards $000's	Revised Budget $000's	Recommended changes for council resolution $000's	Projected Year End (PYE) Result 2025/26 $000's	VARIANCE ORIGINAL budget v PYE 2025/26 $000's	ACTUAL YTD 2025/26 $000's
Net Operating Result before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	General Fund	-33,778	-18,945	-1,091	-20,036	244	-19,791	-847	49,114
	Water Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Sewer Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Consolidated	-33,778	-18,945	-1,091	-20,036	244	-19,791	-847	49,114
Operating Result from continuing operations (with capital grants and contributions) excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	**Consolidated**	**64,348**	**70,461**	**1,171**	**71,632**	**13,565**	**85,197**	**14,735**	**72,553**
Borrowings	Total borrowings	13,600	5,525		5,525		5,525	0	0
Liquidity	External restrictions	92,682	46,591	0	46,591	8,716	55,307	8,716	83,283
	Internal Allocations	14,081	15,697	0	15,697	0	15,697	0	7,020
	Unallocated	-10,063	-31,340	0	-31,340	0	-31,340	0	3,110
	Total Cash, Cash Equivalents and Invest	**96,700**	**30,948**	**0**	**30,948**	**8,716**	**39,664**	**8,716**	**93,413**
Capital	Capital Funding	72,710	69,996	8,453	78,450	3,623	82,072	12,076	15,380
	Capital Expenditure	72,710	69,996	8,453	78,450	3,623	82,072	12,076	15,380
	Net Capital	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**-0**	**-0**	**0**

		Opening Balance As at 1 July 2025 $000's	Total Cash Contributions Received As at this Q $000's	Total Interest Earned As at this Q $000's	Total Expended As at this Q $000's	Total Internal Borrowings (to)/from As at this Q $000's	Held as Restricted Asset As at this Q $000's	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from As at this Q $000's
Developer Contribution	Total Developer Contributions	54,524	1,609	508	2,255	0	54,385	0

Income & Expenses

Income and Expenses Budget Review Statement

Budget review for the quarter ended 30/09/2025

Description	Previous Year Actual 2024/25 $000's	Current Year Original Budget 2025/26 $000's	Approved Changes Review Carried Forwards $000's	Revised Budget $000's	Recommended changes for council resolution Q1 $000's	Note	Projected Year End (PYE) Result 2025/26 $000's	VARIANCE ORIGINAL budget v PYE 2025/26 $000's	ACTUAL YTD 2025/26 $000's
INCOME									
Rates and Annual Charges	71,192	75,419		75,419	1,147	1	76,566	1,147	75,985
User Charges and Fees	9,927	9,893		9,893	56	2	9,950	56	3,419
Other Revenue	3,339	2,852		2,852	181	3	3,033	181	714
Grants and Contributions - Operating	15,707	16,041	551	16,591	5,488	4	22,080	6,039	3,608
Grants and Contributions - Capital	71,924	63,204	2,261	65,465	13,321	5	78,786	15,582	16,022
Interest and Investment Income	3,891	3,102		3,102			3,102	0	569
Other Income	642	491		491			491	0	275
Net gain from disposal of assets				0			0	0	
Total Income from continuing operations	**176,621**	**171,002**	**2,812**	**173,814**	**20,194**		**194,008**	**23,006**	**100,593**
EXPENSES									
Employee benefits and on-costs	49,318	48,107		48,107	88	6	48,195	88	14,823
Materials & Services	37,269	36,944	1,640	38,584	6,232	7	44,816	7,872	10,807
Borrowing Costs	922	845		845	309	8	1,154	309	60
Other Expenses	7,359	7,644	2	7,646			7,646	2	2,408
Net Loss from Disposal of Assets	17,405	7,000		7,000			7,000	0	(58)
Total Expenses from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	**112,273**	**100,540**	**1,642**	**102,182**	**6,629**		**108,811**	**8,271**	**28,040**
Operating Result from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	**64,348**	**70,461**	**1,171**	**71,632**	**13,565**		**85,197**	**14,735**	**72,553**
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets	26,202	26,202		26,202			26,202	0	7,416
Operating result from continuing Operations	**38,146**	**44,259**	**1,171**	**45,429**	**13,565**		**58,994**	**14,735**	**65,137**
Net Operating Result before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	**(33,778)**	**(18,945)**	**(1,091)**	**(20,036)**	**244**		**(19,791)**	**(847)**	**49,114**



Operating Performance

The year-to-date operating result before capital income is a surplus of $49.1m

Council levies rates and annual charges for the whole year in July, however ratepayers are provided the option to make payments in quarterly instalments throughout the year due in August, November, February and May. Income is recognised up front in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards and Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting (Guidelines), therefore the Actual YTD figures represent the full year of levied income despite timing differences in payment receipts.

Favourable YTD operating income in rates and annual charges of $1.1m are due to housing growth and increased user fees due to phasing difference to as well as increased activity in development. Changes to the percentage of the financial assistance grant paid in advance have resulted in phasing differences to budget in operating grants. New capital grants received for Wollombi Road, Western Bears and Kurri Kurri netball courts have resulted in a positive YTD variance for capital grants and contributions.

Differences in phasing of some operating expenses are resulting in a favourable YTD budget variance in materials offset by an increase in the waste levy in other expenses. We expect this variance to come back closer to budget during the year.

The revised estimated net operating result before capital income for the year to 30 June 2026 is a deficit of $19.8m (original budget was a deficit of $18.9m). The variance is mostly due to the carry forward of unspent operating grant commitments.



Income and Expense Budget Changes

Variations to income and expenses for this September review (Notes 1 to 8)

Council has conducted a review of its operating income and expenses for this September quarterly budget review for major items and proposes a net decrease to the projected year end deficit of $0.2m to $19.8m. Forecasts for estimated full year budgets have been based on trends and currently available information. The following notes provide commentary on proposed material changes to operational results.

Note	**Income & Expenses Budget review statement Recommended changes to revised budget include the following material items**
1	Increased revenue for rates and domestic waste annual charges due to the addition of new developments
2	Increased User Charges & Fees income from Transport NSW maintenance works offset by increase in expenses (nil impact operating result)
3	Increased Other Income for revenue moved from user fees and charges (nil impact operating income)
4	New Operating Grants and contributions mostly related to Hunter Water works on Wollombi Road.
5	Increase to Capital Grants due to rephasing of projects including Branxton Town centre, Kurri Kurri netball, Thomas St Betterment, Western Bears upgrades and new grants received including Apex Park redevelopment and various shared path grants.
6	Increase in employee costs due to grant received to undertake community training, planning and engagement with regard to natural disasters.
7	Increase in materials and services - Removal of contaminated stockpile site - Increase due to Operating Grants and Contributions, mostly Hunter Water works on Wollombi Road - Transfer of budget from capital for IT equipment, pre-construction works offset by Cessnock floodplain works transferred to capital (mostly grant funded)
8	Increase for new computers funded via lease, originally budgeted in capital as purchases (funding transferred from capital)

Capital Expenditure Budget Review Statement

Capital Budget Review Statement

Budget review for the quarter ended 30/09/2025

Description	Previous Year Actual 2024/25 $000's	Current Year Original Budget 2025/26 $000's	Carry Forwards Budget 2025/26 $000's	Revised Budget $000's	Recommended changes for council resolution $000's	Projected Year End (PYE) Result 2025/26 $000's	VARIANCE ORIGINAL budget v PYE 2025/26 $000's	ACTUAL YTD 2025/26 $000's
CAPITAL FUNDING								
Rates & other untied funding	15,095	10,094	597	10,691	781	11,471	1,377	1,810
Capital Grants & Contributions	34,183	28,179	2,429	30,608	11,702	42,309	14,130	8,738
Reserves - External Restrictions	5,575	26,079	4,607	30,685	(9,020)	21,665	(4,413)	4,624
Reserves - Internally Allocated	4,257	120	821	941	161	1,102	982	207
New Loans	13,600	5,525	0	5,525	0	5,525	0	0
Proceeds from sale of assets					0	0	0	
Other - specify					0	0	0	
Total Capital Funding	**72,710**	**69,996**	**8,453**	**78,450**	**3,623**	**82,072**	**12,076**	**15,380**
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE								
WIP						0	0	
New Assets	41,903	52,291	5,358	57,648	(1,572)	56,077	3,786	9,808
Asset Renewal	30,807	17,706	3,096	20,801	5,195	25,996	8,290	5,572
Other - specify						0	0	
Total Capital Expenditure	**72,710**	**69,996**	**8,453**	**78,450**	**3,623**	**82,072**	**12,076**	**15,380**
Net Capital Funding - Surplus /(Deficit)	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Capital Expenditure by Program

Capital Expenditure	Original Budget 2025-26	Carry Forwards	Revised Budget 2025-26	Variations for this Sep Qtr	Projected Year End Result	Actual YTD Figures
	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000	$'000
Airport Construction Program (PCA)	200	-	200	-	200	-
Branxton Town Centre Program (CTB)	460	143	603	587	1,190	48
Bridge Construction Program (CBS)	3,525	39	3,564	108	3,672	31
Cemetery Facilities Construction Program (CFC)	60	-	60	-	60	(0)
Cessnock Civic Precinct Revitalisation Prog. (RCC)	-	8	8	(8)	-	-
Community Buildings Renewal Program (RBC)	790	18	808	-	808	6
Design & Contracts Pre-Construction Design (DCP)	100	-	100	(100)	-	-
Drainage Construction Program (CDR)	2,715	277	2,992	1,981	4,973	881
Floodplain Management Program (PMF) Capital	735	308	1,043	193	1,236	120
Gravel Rehab & Resheeting Program (RRG)	300	-	300	-	300	9
Kurri Town Centre Program (CTK)	-	-	-	27	27	27
Library Books	208	-	208	-	208	65
Local Road Construction Program (CRL)	924	-	924	-	924	0
Local Road Renewal Program (RRL)	5,895	215	6,110	405	6,515	3,091
Natural Disaster Remediation	-	-	-	-	-	24
Other Fixed Assets (OFA)	886	52	938	105	1,043	931
Pathways Construction Program (CPW)	3,002	888	3,890	313	4,203	511
Plant and Fleet Acquisitions (PFA)	2,500	719	3,219	-	3,219	220
Pool Facilities Renewal Program (RFP)	341	-	341	-	341	104
Recreation Buildings Renewal Program (RBR)	2,176	79	2,255	3,515	5,770	1,912
Recreation Facilities Construction Program (CFR)	8,948	261	9,209	(2,682)	6,527	1,627
Recreation Facilities Renewal Program (RFR)	539	46	585	729	1,314	157
Recreation Pre-Construction Design	150	-	150	-	150	16
Regional Road Renewal Program (RRR)	23,083	-	23,083	(1,935)	21,148	2,294
Safer Roads Program (RMS Blackspot) (CRR)	-	588	588	-	588	299
Traffic Facilities Program (CFT)	170	654	824	300	1,124	132
Waste Facility Construction Program (CFW)	10,587	3,833	14,420	-	14,420	2,343
Waste Major Plant	1,650	267	1,917	85	2,002	533
Works Depot Construction Program	50	60	110	-	110	-
Total Capital Expenditure	**69,996**	**8,453**	**78,450**	**3,623**	**82,072**	**15,380**

Capital Expenditure Budget Changes

Actual Capital Expenditure for the year to 30 September 2025 was $15.4m which equates to 20% spent of current budget of $78.4m.

Variations to capital expenditure for this September review

All projects within the capital works program were reviewed as part of the Q1 Quarterly Budget Review Statement process and a net increase to the overall capital works program of $3.6m is proposed. Material movements are listed below.

Unit	Program	Amount $	Comment
Infrastructure	Regional Road Renewal Program (RRR)	(1,935)	Defer grant funded works - Wollombi Rd Stg 1 & 2 to 2026/27
Infrastructure	Traffic Facilities Program (CFT)	300	Additional developer funded contribution to Wollombi Roads Intersection, Wollombi
Infrastructure	Drainage Construction Program (CDR)	3,241	Additional grant funding for Thomas St drainage works
Infrastructure	Floodplain Management Program (PMF) Capital	268	New grant funded Cessnock Commercial Precinct flood risk Management project
Open Space and Community Facilities	Information Technology Other Fixed Assets (OFA)	(762)	Purchase of IT Equipment now leased (Operating)
Open Space and Community Facilities	Recreation Buildings Renewal Program (RBR)	3,515	Bring forward grant and council contribution to Weston Bears Grandstand and amenities.
Open Space and Community Facilities	Recreation Facilities Construction Program (CFR)	(2,682)	Reduce grant funds required in 25/26 Kurri Kurri netball facility (Booth Park).

Cash and Investments

Cash and Investments Budget Review Statement

Budget review for the quarter ended

Description	Previous Year Actual 2024/25 $000's	Current Year Original (1) Budget 2025/26 $000's	Recommended changes for council resolution Q1 $000's	Projected Year End (PYE) Result 2025/26 $000's	VARIANCE ORIGINAL budget v PYE 2025/26 $000's	ACTUAL YTD 2025/26 $000's
Total Cash, Cash Equivalents & Investments	96,700	30,948	8,716	39,664	8,716	93,413
EXTERNALLY RESTRICTED						
Water Fund				0	0	
Sewer Fund				0	0	
Developer contributions - *General* (2)	54,315	40,754	8,716	49,470	8,716	53,927
Developer contributions - *Water*				0	0	
Developer contributions - *Sewer*				0	0	
Transport for NSW Contributions	0	0		0	0	595
Domestic waste management	7,234	329		329	0	7,098
Stormwater management	413	0		0	0	526
Other - Unexpended Grants, Sale of Land (unpaid rates)	30,720	5,508		5,508	0	21,137
Total Externally Restricted	**92,682**	**46,591**	**8,716**	**55,307**	**8,716**	**83,283**
Cash, cash equivalents & investments not subject to external restrictions	**4,018**	**-15,643**	**0**	**-15,643**	**0**	**10,130**
INTERNAL ALLOCATIONS						
Employee leave entitlements	1,551	1,762		1,762	0	1,163
Security Deposits / Bonds / Cemetery Reservation	4,405	3,467		3,467	0	3,054
Financial Assistance Grant	4,816	8,177		8,177	0	0
Other internal reserves	3,309	2,291		2,291	0	2,803
Total Internally Allocated	**14,081**	**15,697**	**0**	**15,697**	**0**	**7,020**
Unallocated	**-10,063**	**-31,340**	**0**	**-31,340**	**0**	**3,110**

Note 1: Budget Cash, Cash Equivalents and Investments does not reflect the actual opening balance of the statements

Note 2: Developer Contributions in the Reserve include cash balances only therefore don't agree to Developer Contributions Summary (difference is unpaid invoices)

Developer Contributions

Developer contributions are recognised when council gains control over the asset (cash or non-cash).

Councils have obligations to provide facilities from contribution revenue levied on developers under the provisions of s7.4, s7.11 and s7.12 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

Developer contributions may only be expended for the purpose for which the contributions were required, however council may apply contributions according to the priorities established in work schedules for the contribution plan.

Developer Contributions Summary

Budget review for the quarter ended 30/09/2025

Purpose	Opening Balance	Developer Contributions Received			Interest Earned	Amounts Expended	Internal Borrowings (to)/from	Held as Restricted Asset	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
		Cash	Non-Cash Land	Non-Cash Other					
	As at 1 July 2025	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	Q1	As at this Q	As at this Q
	$000's	$000's	$000's	$000's	$000's	$000's	$000's	$000's	$000's
Drainage								0	
Roads	13,116	197			123	773		12,663	
Traffic facilities	4,295	530			43	71		4,797	
Parking								0	
Open space	10,648	562			105	45		11,270	
Community facilities	5,668	91			55	6		5,808	
Other	365	22			3	26		364	
Total S7.11 Under plans	**34,093**	**1,401**	**0**	**0**	**330**	**921**	**0**	**34,902**	**0**
S7.11 Not under plans								0	
S7.12 Levies	1,913	208			19	105		2,035	
S7.4 Planning agreements	18,518	0			159	1,229		17,448	
S64 Contributions								0	
Other								0	
Total Developer Contributions	**54,524**	**1,609**	**0**	**0**	**508**	**2,255**	**0**	**54,385**	**0**



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CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL

CORPORATE PLANNING
2025

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL



Journey Through Time, created by local school students and artist Steven Campbell.

Acknowledgement of Country

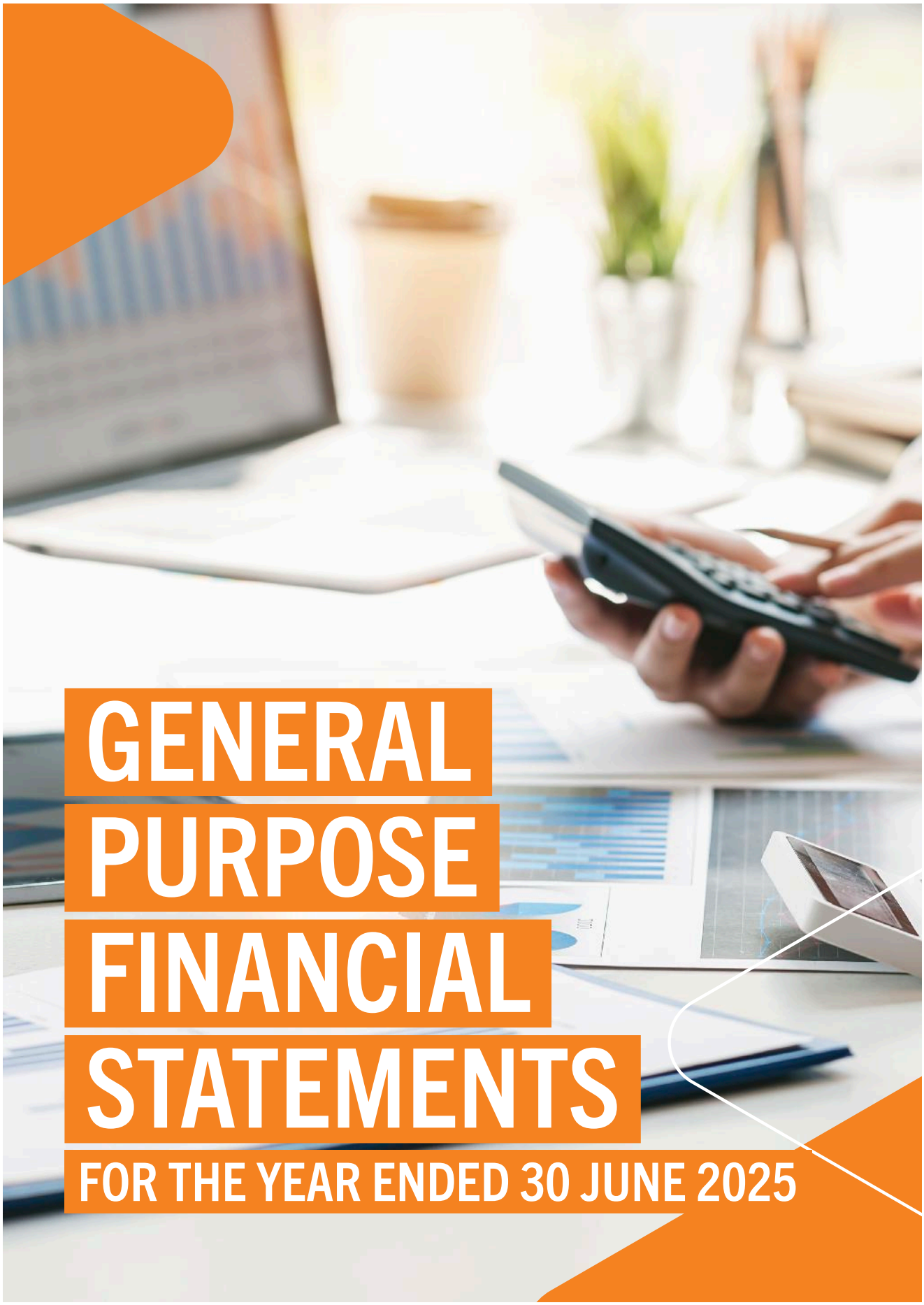
Cessnock City Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. We acknowledge these Aboriginal peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices and operations are located, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

August 2025

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GENERAL
PURPOSE
FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

Cessnock City Council

General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2025

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Overview

Cessnock City Council is constituted under the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) and has its principal place of business at:

62 - 78 Vincent Street
Cessnock NSW 2325

Through the use of the internet, we have ensured that our reporting is timely, complete and available at minimum cost. All press releases, financial statements and other information are publicly available on our website:
www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au.

Cessnock City Council

General Purpose Financial Statements
for the year ended 30 June 2025

Statement by Councillors and Management

Statement by Councillors and Management made pursuant to Section 413 (2c) of the *Local Government Act 1993*

The attached general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- the *Local Government Act 1993* and the regulations made thereunder
- the Australian Accounting Standards issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board
- the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

To the best of our knowledge and belief, these statements:

- present fairly the Council's operating result and financial position for the year
- accord with Council's accounting and other records.

We are not aware of any matter that would render these statements false or misleading in any way.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of Council made on 17 September 2025.

Daniel Watton
Mayor
15 October 2025

Tracey Harrington
Deputy Mayor
15 October 2025

Peter Chrystal
Interim General Manager
15 October 2025

Matthew Plumridge
Responsible Accounting Officer
15 October 2025

Cessnock City Council

Income Statement

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Original unaudited budget 2025	$ '000	Notes	Actual 2025	Actual 2024
	Income from continuing operations			
70,359	Rates and annual charges	B2-1	**71,193**	65,986
9,962	User charges and fees *	B2-2	**9,926**	9,531
2,522	Other revenues	B2-3	**3,339**	2,836
13,193	Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	B2-4	**15,706**	19,301
64,736	Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	B2-4	**71,924**	104,578
2,784	Interest and investment income		**3,891**	3,853
–	Other income		**642**	842
163,556	**Total income from continuing operations**		**176,621**	206,927
	Expenses from continuing operations			
46,800	Employee benefits and on-costs	B3-1	**49,318**	42,362
32,526	Materials and services *	B3-2	**37,269**	36,596
376	Borrowing costs	B3-3	**922**	263
6,899	Other expenses	B3-5	**7,359**	5,555
5,000	Net loss from the disposal of assets	B4-1	**17,405**	10,220
91,601	**Total expenses from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets**		**112,273**	94,996
71,955	**Operating result from continuing operations excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets**		**64,348**	111,931
20,815	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	B3-4	**26,202**	22,987
51,140	**Operating result from continuing operations**		**38,146**	88,944
51,140	Net operating result for the year attributable to Council *		**38,146**	88,944
(13,969)	**Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes**		**(33,778)**	(15,634)

The above Income Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

(*) The 2023-24 comparative figures have been updated to reflect changes in categorisation of expenditure.

Cessnock City Council

Statement of Comprehensive Income

for the year ended 30 June 2025

$ '000	Notes	2025	2024
Net operating result for the year – from Income Statement		**38,146**	88,944
Other comprehensive income:			
Amounts which will not be reclassified subsequent to operating result			
Gain / (loss) on revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-6	**222,099**	(85,434)
Total items which will not be reclassified subsequent to operating result		**222,099**	(85,434)
Total other comprehensive income for the year		**222,099**	(85,434)
Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to Council		**260,245**	3,510

The above Statement of Comprehensive Income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Cessnock City Council

Statement of Financial Position

as at 30 June 2025

$ '000	Notes	2025	2024
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	C1-1	**34,226**	18,994
Investments	C1-2	**62,474**	64,139
Receivables	C1-4	**14,617**	15,429
Inventories		**481**	518
Non-current assets classified as 'held for sale'		**3,093**	1,313
Other		**867**	1,049
Total current assets		**115,758**	101,442
Non-current assets			
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (IPPE)	C1-6	**1,567,624**	1,295,120
Total non-current assets		**1,567,624**	1,295,120
Total assets		**1,683,382**	1,396,562
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Payables	C2-1	**19,236**	14,214
Contract liabilities	C2-2	**32,744**	20,424
Borrowings	C2-3	**6,720**	969
Employee benefit provisions	C2-4	**10,109**	9,607
Provisions	C2-5	**42**	42
Total current liabilities		**68,851**	45,256
Non-current liabilities			
Payables	C2-1	**3,208**	3,924
Borrowings	C2-3	**13,026**	6,146
Employee benefit provisions	C2-4	**803**	770
Provisions	C2-5	**25,301**	28,518
Total non-current liabilities		**42,338**	39,358
Total liabilities		**111,189**	84,614
Net assets		**1,572,193**	1,311,948
EQUITY			
Accumulated surplus		**759,881**	724,860
IPPE revaluation surplus	C3-1	**812,312**	587,088
Total equity		**1,572,193**	1,311,948

The above Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Cessnock City Council

Statement of Changes in Equity

for the year ended 30 June 2025

$ '000	Notes	2025 Accumulated surplus	2025 IPPE revaluation surplus	2025 Total equity	2024 Accumulated surplus	2024 IPPE revaluation surplus	2024 Total equity
Opening balance at 1 July		**724,860**	**587,088**	**1,311,948**	635,916	672,522	1,308,438
Net operating result for the year		**38,146**	**–**	**38,146**	88,944	–	88,944
Other comprehensive income							
Gain on revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-6	**–**	**222,099**	**222,099**	–	(85,434)	(85,434)
Total comprehensive income		**38,146**	**222,099**	**260,245**	88,944	(85,434)	3,510
Transfers between equity items		**(3,125)**	**3,125**	**–**	–	–	–
Closing balance at 30 June		**759,881**	**812,312**	**1,572,193**	724,860	587,088	1,311,948

The above Statement of Changes in Equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Cessnock City Council

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Original unaudited budget 2025	$ '000	Notes	Actual 2025	Actual 2024
	Cash flows from operating activities			
	Receipts:			
70,359	Rates and annual charges		**70,951**	65,158
9,963	User charges and fees		**10,924**	11,105
2,784	Interest received		**4,872**	3,052
77,929	Grants and contributions		**74,139**	71,254
–	Bonds, deposits and retentions received		**561**	838
–	GST Credit		**8,806**	9,351
2,522	Other		**3,930**	13,149
	Payments:			
(46,800)	Payments to employees		**(48,849)**	(42,274)
(32,526)	Payments for materials and services		**(41,729)**	(43,912)
(373)	Borrowing costs		**(922)**	(263)
–	Bonds, deposits and retentions refunded		**(696)**	–
–	Waste Levy		**(5,549)**	(4,536)
(6,899)	Other		**(6,059)**	(2,613)
76,959	**Net cash flows from operating activities**	F1-1	**70,379**	80,309
	Cash flows from investing activities			
	Receipts:			
95,000	Sale of investments		**182,000**	40,000
–	Proceeds from sale of IPPE		**1,008**	2,161
	Payments:			
–	Purchase of investments		**(91,346)**	(40,036)
(85,000)	Acquisition of term deposits		**(89,000)**	(12,000)
(79,217)	Payments for IPPE		**(70,440)**	(71,488)
(69,217)	**Net cash flows from investing activities**		**(67,778)**	(81,363)
	Cash flows from financing activities			
	Receipts:			
13,600	Proceeds from borrowings		**13,600**	–
	Payments:			
(1,053)	Repayment of borrowings		**(969)**	(1,186)
–	Principal component of lease payments		**–**	(2)
12,547	**Net cash flows from financing activities**		**12,631**	(1,188)
20,289	**Net change in cash and cash equivalents**		**15,232**	(2,242)
39,283	Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	C1-1	**34,226**	18,994

The above Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Cessnock City Council

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Cessnock City Council

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A About Council and these financial statements

A1-1 Basis of preparation

These financial statements were authorised for issue by Council on 17 September 2025.

Council has the power to amend and reissue these financial statements in cases where critical information is received from public submissions or where the Office of Local Government (OLG) directs Council to amend the financial statements.

The material accounting policy information related to these financial statements are set out below. Accounting policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Australian Accounting Interpretations, the *Local Government Act 1993* (Act) and *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (Regulation), and the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

Council is a not for-profit entity.

The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars.

Historical cost convention

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain infrastructure, property, plant and equipment and investments.

Significant accounting estimates and judgements

The preparation of financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the Council's accounting policies. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that may have a financial impact on the Council and that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

Council makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results.

The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year include:

(i) fair values of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment – refer Note C1-6
(ii) tip remediation provisions
(iii) employee benefit provisions

Significant judgements in applying the Council's accounting policies

i. Impairment of receivables – refer Note C1-4.
ii. Determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific and whether the contract is within the scope of AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* and / or AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* – refer to Notes B2-2 – B2-4.

Monies and other assets received by Council

The Consolidated Fund

In accordance with the provisions of Section 409(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, all money and property received by Council is held in the Council's Consolidated Fund unless it is required to be held in the Council's Trust Fund.

The Consolidated Fund has been included in the financial statements of the Council.

Cash and other assets of the following entities have been included as part of the Consolidated Fund:

- General purpose operations
- Section 355 Committees

continued on next page ...

A1-1 Basis of preparation (continued)

The Trust Fund

In accordance with the provisions of Section 411 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a separate and distinct Trust Fund is maintained to account for all money and property received by the council in trust which must be applied only for the purposes of, or in accordance with, the trusts relating to those monies.

Trust monies and property subject to Council's control have been included in these reports.

A separate statement of monies held in the Trust Fund is available for inspection at the council office by any person free of charge.

Volunteer services

Volunteer services are used throughout a variety of Council functions. These include Section 355 Committees for community halls and tidy towns projects, library services and performing arts centre services. The value to Council of these services has not been recognised in the income statement as they cannot be readily measured.

New accounting standards and interpretations issued but not yet effective

Certain new accounting standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2025 reporting period. Council has not applied any pronouncements before its operative date in the annual reporting period beginning 1 July 2024.

AASB 18 Presentation and Disclosure in Financial Statements (AASB 18) has not been applied and is not yet effective. AASB 18 aims to improve how entities communicate in their financial statements, with a particular focus on information about financial performance in the statement of profit or loss. AASB 18 will replace AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements.

AASB 18 introduces additional subtotals into the Statement of Profit or Loss as well as restructuring the statement into operating, investing and financing elements. Management performance measures are also required to be disclosed.

For not-for-profit public sector entities, AASB 18 applies to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2028 (ie. council's financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2029). While the impact of AASB 18 is not expected to have an effect on council's reported position or performance, the full impact (ie. the presentation and disclosure of council's financial statements) is yet to be determined by council.

There are other standards and amendments issued but not yet effective, the impacts of which are not anticipated to be material.

New accounting standards adopted during the year

During the year Council adopted all accounting standards and interpretations (as issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board) which were mandatorily effective from the first time at 30 June 2025.

None of these standards had a significant impact on the council's reported position or performance at 30 June 2025.

B Financial Performance

B1 Functions or activities

B1-1 Functions or activities – income, expenses and assets [1]

Income, expenses and assets have been directly attributed to the following functions or activities. Details of those functions or activities are provided in Note B1-2.

	Income		Expenses		Operating result		Grants and contributions		Carrying amount of assets	
$ '000	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024
Functions or activities										
A connected, safe, and creative community	**11,568**	10,901	**29,555**	21,993	**(17,987)**	(11,092)	**7,413**	6,714	**286,515**	277,882
A sustainable and prosperous economy	**405**	1,296	**1,683**	1,385	**(1,278)**	(89)	**31**	815	**57**	2
A sustainable and healthy environment	**30,680**	27,190	**22,265**	17,450	**8,415**	9,740	**7,402**	6,247	**234,969**	160,326
Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities	**30,972**	30,917	**37,805**	22,470	**(6,833)**	8,447	**28,545**	27,662	**1,044,421**	850,991
Civic leadership and effective governance	**102,996**	136,623	**47,167**	54,685	**55,829**	81,938	**72,116**	82,441	**117,420**	107,361
Total functions and activities	**176,621**	206,927	**138,475**	117,983	**38,146**	88,944	**87,630**	123,880	**1,683,382**	1,396,562

(1) The 2023-24 comparative figures have been updated to reflect changes in categorisation of expenditure.

B1-2 Components of functions or activities

Details relating to the Council's functions or activities as reported in B1-1 are as follows:

A connected, safe and creative community

Developing safe and connected neighbourhoods that support healthy and fulfilling lifestyles for people of all ages.

A sustainable and prosperous economy

Achieving long term economic security through a mix of diverse business and employment options.

A sustainable and healthy environment

Acting on climate change, building resilience and promoting a sustainable balance between development and preserving our natural environment.

Accessible Infrastructure, services and facilities

Increasing the range and accessibility of the services we need along with the investment in improved infrastructure.

Civic leadership and effective governance

Ensuring that we have strong leadership and good governance and that we foster community participation in decision making.

B2 Sources of income

B2-1 Rates and annual charges

$ '000	2025	2024
Ordinary rates		
Residential	**39,648**	37,032
Farmland	**2,874**	2,748
Mining	**1,607**	1,528
Business	**7,012**	6,315
Less: pensioner rebates (mandatory)	**(762)**	(763)
Less: pensioner rebates (Council policy)	**(102)**	(97)
Rates levied to ratepayers	**50,277**	46,763
Pensioner rate subsidies received	**413**	420
Total ordinary rates	**50,690**	47,183
Annual charges (pursuant to s496, 496A, 496B, 501 & 611)		
Domestic waste management services	**19,037**	17,410
Stormwater management services	**638**	610
Waste management services (non-domestic)	**1,066**	1,011
Section 611 charges	**(3)**	(5)
Other	**–**	1
Less: pensioner rebates (mandatory)	**(401)**	(393)
Less: pensioner rebates (Council policy)	**(51)**	(47)
Annual charges levied	**20,286**	18,587
Pensioner annual charges subsidies received:		
– Domestic waste management	**217**	216
Total annual charges	**20,503**	18,803
Total rates and annual charges	**71,193**	65,986

Council has used 2022 year valuations provided by the NSW Valuer General in calculating its rates.

Material accounting policy information

Rates and annual charges are recognised as revenue at the beginning of the rating period to which they relate. Prepaid rates are recognised as a financial liability until the beginning of the rating period.

Pensioner rebates relate to reductions in rates and certain annual charges for eligible pensioners' place of residence in the local government council area that are not subsidised by the NSW Government.

Pensioner rate subsidies are received from the NSW Government to provide a contribution towards the pensioner rebates and are recognised within the underlying revenue item based on their substance.

B2-2 User charges and fees *

$ '000	2025	2024
Other user charges and fees		
(i) Fees and charges – statutory and regulatory functions (per s608)		
Inspection services	**394**	311
Regulatory/ statutory fees	**191**	201
Section 10.7 certificates (EP&A Act)	**316**	310
Section 603 certificates	**202**	167
Town planning	**2,636**	2,185
Building permits and fees	**337**	551
Total fees and charges – statutory/regulatory	**4,076**	3,725
(ii) Fees and charges – other (incl. general user charges (per s608))		
Aerodrome	**318**	121
Cemeteries	**286**	225
Transport for NSW works (state roads not controlled by Council)	**2,058**	2,312
Waste disposal tipping fees [1]	**1,610**	1,559
Cessnock performing arts centre	**324**	428
Onsite sewerage management fees	**556**	508
Swimming pool fees	**290**	234
Other	**408**	419
Total fees and charges – other	**5,850**	5,806
Total other user charges and fees	**9,926**	9,531
Total user charges and fees	**9,926**	9,531
Timing of revenue recognition for user charges and fees		
User charges and fees recognised at a point in time	**7,290**	7,346
User charges and fees recognised over time	**2,636**	2,185
Total user charges and fees	**9,926**	9,531

Material accounting policy information

Revenue arising from user charges and fees is recognised when or as the performance obligation is completed and the customer receives the benefit of the goods / services being provided.

The performance obligation relates to the specific services which are provided to the customers and generally the payment terms are within 30 days of the provision of the service or in some cases the customer is required to pay on arrival or a deposit in advance. There is no material obligation for Council in relation to refunds or returns.

Where an upfront fee is charged the fee is recognised on a straight-line basis over the expected life of the membership.

Licences granted by Council are all either short-term or low value and all revenue from licences is recognised at the time that the licence is granted rather than over the term of the licence.

(1) The 2023-24 comparative figures have been updated to reflect changes in categorisation of expenditure.

B2-3 Other revenues

$ '000	2025	2024
Fines	**1,035**	949
Legal fees recovery – rates and charges (extra charges)	**647**	463
Commissions and agency fees	**18**	157
Diesel rebate	**70**	62
Sales – general	**762**	581
Section 355 committees	**231**	181
Other	**204**	30
Metal Sales	**372**	413
Total other revenue	**3,339**	2,836

B2-4 Grants and contributions

$ '000	Operating 2025	Operating 2024	Capital 2025	Capital 2024
General purpose grants and non-developer contributions (untied)				
Current year allocation				
Financial assistance – general component	**1,034**	264	**–**	–
Financial assistance – local roads component	**378**	182	**–**	–
Payment in advance - future year allocation				
Financial assistance – general component	**3,549**	5,716	**–**	–
Financial assistance – local roads component	**1,268**	2,075	**–**	–
Amount recognised as income during current year	**6,229**	8,237	**–**	–
Special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (tied)				
Cash contributions				
Community and Culture	**3,410**	627	**–**	854
Drainage/flood mitigation	**71**	178	**2,734**	1,456
Environmental programs	**443**	248	**23**	–
Natural disasters	**757**	2,995	**8,955**	5,800
Other	**928**	1,056	**–**	711
Other Roads, Bridges and Transport	**196**	3,129	**14,208**	14,016
Recreation	**6**	8	**7,022**	5,036
Rural Fire Services	**–**	–	**–**	1,120
Transport (roads to recovery)	**1,875**	1,065	**–**	–
Transport for NSW contributions (regional roads, block grant)	**1,791**	1,757	**–**	–
Total special purpose grants and non-developer contributions – cash	**9,477**	11,064	**32,942**	28,993
Non-cash contributions				
Dedications – subdivisions (other than by s7.4 and s7.11 – EP&A Act, s64 of the LGA)	**–**	–	**26,360**	63,520
Total other contributions – non-cash	**–**	–	**26,360**	63,520
Total special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (tied)	**9,477**	11,064	**59,302**	92,513
Total grants and non-developer contributions	**15,706**	19,301	**59,302**	92,513
Comprising:				
– Commonwealth funding	**8,216**	9,469	**7,892**	4,228
– State funding	**6,178**	5,771	**23,786**	23,623
– Other funding	**1,312**	4,061	**27,624**	64,662
	15,706	19,301	**59,302**	92,513

continued on next page ...

B2-4 Grants and contributions (continued)

Developer contributions

$ '000	Notes	Operating 2025	Operating 2024	Capital 2025	Capital 2024
Developer contributions: (s7.4 & s7.11 - EP&A Act, s64 of the LGA):	F3				
Cash contributions					
S 7.4 – contributions using planning agreements		**–**	–	**3,233**	2,598
S 7.11 – contributions towards amenities/services		**–**	–	**8,855**	8,028
S 7.12 – fixed development consent levies		**–**	–	**534**	439
Total developer contributions – cash		**–**	–	**12,622**	11,065
Non-cash contributions					
S 7.11 – contributions towards amenities/services		**–**	–	**–**	1,000
Total developer contributions non-cash		**–**	–	**–**	1,000
Total developer contributions		**–**	–	**12,622**	12,065
Total contributions		**–**	–	**12,622**	12,065
Timing of revenue recognition					
Grants and contributions recognised over time		**–**	–	**32,942**	28,993
Grants and contributions recognised at a point in time		**15,706**	19,301	**38,982**	75,585
Total grants and contributions		**15,706**	19,301	**71,924**	104,578

Unspent grants and contributions [1]

Certain grants and contributions are obtained by Council on the condition they be spent in a specified manner or in a future period but which are not yet spent in accordance with those conditions are as follows:

$ '000	Operating 2025	Operating 2024	Capital 2025	Capital 2024
Unspent grants and contributions				
Unspent funds at 1 July	**3,739**	3,895	**19,764**	8,274
Add: Funds recognised as revenue in the reporting year but not yet spent in accordance with the conditions	**2,800**	3,304	**–**	–
Add: Funds received and not recognised as revenue in the current year	**–**	–	**19,940**	18,928
Less: Funds recognised as revenue in previous years that have been spent during the reporting year	**(3,300)**	(3,460)	**–**	–
Less: Funds received in prior year but revenue recognised and funds spent in current year	**–**	–	**(7,448)**	(7,438)
Unspent funds at 30 June	**3,239**	3,739	**32,256**	19,764

(1) Development contributions are not included here. Development contributions are recognised as revenue in the reporting year they are received. Full details of development contributions revenue, expenditure and unspent amounts can be found in Note F3.

Material accounting policy information

Grants and contributions – enforceable agreement with sufficiently specific performance obligations

Grant and contribution revenue from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised as or when control of each performance obligations is transferred.

continued on next page ...

B2-4 Grants and contributions (continued)

The performance obligations vary according to the agreement. Payment terms vary depending on the terms of the grant, cash is received upfront for some grants and on the achievement of certain payment milestones for others.

Performance obligations may be satisfied either at a point in time or over time and this is reflected in the revenue recognition pattern. Point in time recognition occurs when the beneficiary obtains control of the goods / services at a single time (e.g. completion of the project when a report / outcome is provided), whereas over time recognition is where the control of the services is ongoing throughout the project (e.g. provision of community health services through the year).

Where control is transferred over time, generally the input methods being either costs or time incurred are deemed to be the most appropriate methods to reflect the transfer of benefit.

Capital grants

Capital grants received by Council under an enforceable contract for the acquisition or construction of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment to identified specifications which will be under Council's control on completion are recognised as revenue as and when the obligation to construct or purchase is completed.

For construction projects, this is generally as the construction progresses in accordance with costs incurred since this is deemed to be the most appropriate measure of the completeness of the construction project.

For acquisitions of assets, the revenue is recognised when the asset is acquired and controlled by the Council.

Developer contributions

Council has obligations to provide facilities from contribution revenues levied on developers under the provisions of sections 7.4, 7.11 and 7.12 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

While Council generally incorporates these amounts as part of a Development Consents Order, such developer contributions are only recognised as income upon receipt by Council, due to the possibility that individual development consents may not be acted upon by the applicant and, accordingly, would not be payable to Council.

Developer contributions may only be expended for the purposes for which the contributions were required, but Council may apply contributions according to the priorities established in work schedules for the contribution plan.

Other grants and contributions

Assets, including cash, received from other grants and contributions are recognised at fair value when the asset is received. Council considers whether there are any related liability or equity items associated with the asset which are recognised in accordance with the relevant accounting standard.

Once the assets and liabilities have been recognised then income is recognised for any remaining asset value at the time that the asset is received.

B3 Costs of providing services

B3-1 Employee benefits and on-costs

$ '000	2025	2024
Salaries and wages	**38,038**	33,658
Employee leave entitlements (ELE)	**8,623**	7,491
Superannuation	**5,392**	4,789
Workers' compensation insurance	**3,112**	2,030
Fringe benefit tax (FBT)	**587**	384
Other	**20**	169
Less: capitalised costs	**(6,454)**	(6,159)
Total employee costs expensed	**49,318**	42,362

Material accounting policy information

Council participates in a defined benefit plan under the Active Super, however, sufficient information to account for the plan as a defined benefit is not available and therefore Council accounts for its obligations to defined benefit plans on the same basis as its obligations to defined contribution plans, i.e. as an expense when it becomes payable – refer to Note D3-1 for more information.

B3-2 Materials and services *

$ '000	2025	2024
Contractor costs	**15,411**	18,055
Raw materials and consumables [1]	**7,536**	9,216
Insurance	**2,439**	2,132
Consultancy costs	**1,848**	1,081
Election expenses	**524**	5
Electricity and heating	**522**	530
Street lighting	**869**	979
Telephone and communications	**268**	265
Valuation fees	**289**	264
Section 355 committees	**221**	185
Other expenses	**4,228**	2,665
Legal expenses	**3,114**	1,219
Total materials and services	**37,269**	36,596
Total materials and services	**37,269**	36,596

(1) The 2023-24 comparative figures have been updated to reflect changes in categorisation of expenditure.

B3-3 Borrowing costs

$ '000	2025	2024
(i) Interest bearing liability costs		
Interest on leases	**–**	–
Interest on loans	**307**	263
Total interest bearing liability costs	**307**	263
Total interest bearing liability costs expensed	**307**	263
(ii) Other borrowing costs		
Discount adjustments relating to movements in provisions (other than ELE)	**615**	–
Total borrowing costs expensed	**922**	263

B3-4 Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets

$ '000	Notes	2025	2024
Depreciation and amortisation			
Infrastructure, Plant and equipment	C1-6	**24,164**	15,660
Swimming pools & other open space/recreational assets	C1-6	**1,801**	1,667
Other infrastructure	C1-6	**142**	119
Right of use assets		**–**	5
Reinstatement, rehabilitation and restoration assets:			
– Tip assets	C1-6	**95**	5,536
Total gross depreciation and amortisation costs		**26,202**	22,987

Material accounting policy information

Depreciation and amortisation
Depreciation and amortisation are calculated using the straight line method to allocate their cost, net of their residual values, over their estimated useful lives.

Impairment of non-financial assets
Council assets held at fair value that are not held primarily for their ability to generate net cash flow, and that are deemed to be specialised, are not tested for impairment since these assets are assessed on an annual basis to ensure that the carrying amount is not materially different from fair value and therefore an impairment loss would be captured during this assessment.

Other non-financial assets that do not meet the criteria above are tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognised for the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount. The recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use.

For the purposes of assessing impairment, assets are grouped at the lowest levels for which there are separately identifiable cash inflows that are largely independent of the cash inflows from other assets or groups of assets (cash-generating units).

Impairment losses for revalued assets are firstly offset against the amount in the revaluation surplus for the class of asset, with only the excess to be recognised in the Income Statement.

B3-5 Other expenses

$ '000	Notes	2025	2024
Impairment of receivables			
Other		**(4)**	(465)
Total impairment of receivables	C1-4	**(4)**	(465)
Other			
Contributions/levies to other levels of government			
– Emergency services levy (includes FRNSW, SES, and RFS levies)		**235**	292
– NSW fire brigade levy		**500**	500
– NSW rural fire service levy		**793**	804
– Waste levy		**5,549**	4,536
Donations, contributions and assistance to other organisations (Section 356)		**286**	126
Adjustment for remediation provision estimates		**–**	(238)
Total other		**7,363**	6,020
Total other expenses		**7,359**	5,555

B4 Gains or losses

B4-1 Gain or loss from the disposal, replacement and de-recognition of assets

$ '000	Notes	2025	2024
Gain (or loss) on disposal of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-6		
Proceeds from disposal		**1,008**	1,292
Less: carrying amount of assets sold/written off		**(18,413)**	(11,406)
Gain (or loss) on disposal		**(17,405)**	(10,114)
Gain (or loss) on disposal of investments	C1-2		
Proceeds from disposal/redemptions/maturities – investments		**91,000**	40,000
Less: carrying amount of investments sold/redeemed/matured		**(91,000)**	(40,000)
Gain (or loss) on disposal		**–**	–
Gain (or loss) on disposal of non-current assets classified as 'held for sale'	C1-5		
Proceeds from disposal – non-current assets 'held for sale'		**–**	869
Less: carrying amount of 'held for sale' assets sold/written off		**–**	(975)
Gain (or loss) on disposal		**–**	(106)
Net gain (or loss) from disposal of assets		**(17,405)**	(10,220)

B5 Performance against budget

B5-1 Material budget variations

Council's original budget was adopted by the Council on 19 June 2024 and is not required to be audited. The original projections on which the budget was based have been affected by a number of factors. These include state and federal government decisions, including new grant programs, changing economic activity, environmental factors, and by decisions made by Council.

While these General Purpose Financial Statements include the original budget adopted by Council, the Act requires Council to review its financial budget on a quarterly basis, so it is able to manage the variation between actuals and budget that invariably occur during the year.

Material variations of more than 10% between original budget and actual results or where the variance is considered material by nature are explained below.

Variation Key: **F** = Favourable budget variation, **U** = Unfavourable budget variation.

$ '000	2025 Budget	2025 Actual	2025 Variance		
Revenues					
Rates and annual charges	70,359	71,193	834	1%	F
User charges and fees	9,962	9,926	(36)	0%	U
Other revenues	2,522	3,339	817	32%	F
The favourable variance was due to increase in legal costs recovered from ratepayers compared to the budget, an increase in infringements revenue and a one-off emergency reform payment.					
Operating grants and contributions	13,193	15,706	2,513	19%	F
Financial Assistance Grant was budgeted at a 85% pre-payment as per prior years but only 50% pre-payment received resulting in a reduced payment of $2.9m. Favourable variance due to council's success in achieving additional grants under the regionally significant growth area $2.8m, emergency works $0.8m and other general grants programs $1.5m					
Capital grants and contributions	64,736	71,924	7,188	11%	F
Favourable dedicated assets and developer contributions income due to higher than expected housing demand. Capital grant for the landfill development not received as anticipated partially offset by success in obtaining other capital grants.					
Interest and investment revenue	2,784	3,891	1,107	40%	F
Interest and investment income was above the budget due to higher than anticipated cash balance, better than anticipated returns on the investments, and also due to an increase in overdue interest income on outstanding rates than budgeted.					
Other income	–	642	642	∞	F
Expenses					
Employee benefits and on-costs	46,800	49,318	(2,518)	(5)%	U
Materials and services	32,526	37,269	(4,743)	(15)%	U
The unfavourable variance is due to increased expenses relating to grant projects not included in the original budget and operating expenses related to projects originally budgeted in the capital works program. Increased legal expenses partly offset by increased legal cost recovery also contributed to the variance to original budget.					
Borrowing costs	376	922	(546)	(145)%	U
Unwinding of discount on provision for current waste cell and orphan sites following a revision of expected rehabilitation costs.					
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	20,815	26,202	(5,387)	(26)%	U
Depreciation has increased as a result of revaluation of assets as well as increases in infrastructure assets dedicated and acquired by Council, all of which result in an increase in deprecation expense not included in the original budget.					
Other expenses	6,899	7,359	(460)	(7)%	U

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B5-1 Material budget variations (continued)

$ '000	2025 Budget	2025 Actual	2025 Variance		
Net losses from disposal of assets	**5,000**	**17,405**	**(12,405)**	**(248)%**	**U**
Losses on disposal occurred due to infrastructure renewed prior to the end of its effective life. Many of these disposals were as a result of grant funded projects that have led to complete asset renewal.					
Statement of cash flows					
Cash flows from operating activities	**76,959**	**70,379**	**(6,580)**	**(9)%**	**U**
Cash flows from investing activities	**(69,217)**	**(67,778)**	**1,439**	**(2)%**	**F**
Cash flows from financing activities	**12,547**	**12,631**	**84**	**1%**	**F**

C Financial position

C1 Assets we manage

C1-1 Cash and cash equivalents

$ '000	2025	2024
Cash assets		
Cash on hand and at bank	**4,384**	15,509
Deposits at call	**29,842**	3,485
Total cash and cash equivalents	**34,226**	18,994

C1-2 Financial investments

$ '000	2025 Current	2024 Current
Financial assets at fair value through the profit and loss		
Managed funds	**4,474**	4,139
Total	**4,474**	4,139
Debt securities at amortised cost		
Term deposits	**58,000**	60,000
Total	**58,000**	60,000
Total financial investments	**62,474**	64,139

Material accounting policy information

Financial instruments are recognised initially on the date that the Council becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

On initial recognition, all financial instruments are measured at fair value plus transaction costs (except for instruments measured at fair value through profit or loss where transaction costs are expensed as incurred).

Financial assets
All recognised financial assets are subsequently measured in their entirety at either amortised cost or fair value, depending on the classification of the financial assets.

Classification
On initial recognition, Council classifies its financial assets into the following categories – those measured at:

- amortised cost
- fair value through profit and loss (FVTPL)

Financial assets are not reclassified subsequent to their initial recognition.

Amortised cost
Council's financial assets measured at amortised cost comprise trade and other receivables, term deposits and cash and cash equivalents in the Statement of Financial Position. Term deposits with an initial term of more than 3 months are classified as investments rather than cash and cash equivalents.

Subsequent to initial recognition, these assets are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method less provision for impairment.

Interest income, impairment and gains or loss on de-recognition are recognised in profit or loss.

Financial assets through profit or loss
All financial assets not classified as measured at amortised cost or fair value through other comprehensive income as described above are measured at fair value through profit or loss.

Net gains or losses, including any interest or dividend income, are recognised in profit or loss.

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C1-2 Financial investments (continued)

Council's financial assets measured at fair value through profit or loss comprise investments in Treasury Corporation's TCorpIM Medium Term Growth Fund in the Statement of Financial Position.

C1-3 Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments

$ '000	2025	2024
(a) Externally restricted cash, cash equivalents and investments		
Total cash, cash equivalents and investments	**96,700**	83,133
Less: Externally restricted cash, cash equivalents and investments	**(92,682)**	(69,035)
Cash, cash equivalents and investments not subject to external restrictions	**4,018**	14,098
External restrictions		
External restrictions included in cash, cash equivalents and investments above comprise:		
Specific purpose unexpended grants	**29,976**	17,256
Developer contributions	**54,315**	41,945
Stormwater management	**413**	945
Sale of Land for Unpaid Rates - Trust Account	**744**	721
Waste Depot, Rehabilitation & Domestic Waste	**7,234**	8,168
Total external restrictions	**92,682**	69,035

Cash, cash equivalents and investments subject to external restrictions are those which are only available for specific use by Council due to a restriction placed by legislation or third-party contractual agreement.

$ '000	2025	2024
(b) Internal allocations		
Cash, cash equivalents and investments not subject to external restrictions	**4,018**	14,098
Less: Internally restricted cash, cash equivalents and investments	**(14,081)**	(10,789)
Unrestricted and unallocated cash, cash equivalents and investments	**(10,063)**	3,309
At 30 June, Council has internally allocated funds to the following:		
Plant and vehicle replacement	**778**	622
Employees leave entitlement	**1,551**	1,624
Deposits, retentions and bonds	**4,405**	4,205
Bridge replacement	**–**	296
Energy efficiency	**145**	141
Financial assistance grant in advance	**4,816**	–
Insurance provisions	**–**	50
Miscellaneous and property	**385**	494
Operations and programs	**255**	639
Property investment fund	**1,705**	2,133
Unexpended Loan Funds	**41**	585
Total internal allocations	**14,081**	10,789

C1-4 Receivables

$ '000	2025 Current	2025 Non-current	2024 Current	2024 Non-current
Rates and annual charges	**5,776**	**–**	5,188	–
User charges and fees	**26**	**–**	24	–
Interest on investments	**707**	**–**	1,688	–
Competitive building fees	**211**	**–**	171	–
Government grants and subsidies	**5,859**	**–**	6,298	–
Net GST receivable	**854**	**–**	1,437	–
Premises inspections	**152**	**–**	142	–
Transport for NSW	**215**	**–**	265	–
Other debtors	**1,028**	**–**	483	–
Total	**14,828**	**–**	15,696	–
Less: provision for impairment				
Rates and annual charges	**(71)**	**–**	(23)	–
Other debtors	**(140)**	**–**	(244)	–
Total provision for impairment – receivables	**(211)**	**–**	(267)	–
Total net receivables	**14,617**	**–**	15,429	–

Material accounting policy information

Receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. Receivables are generally due for settlement within 30 days.

C1-5 Non-current assets classified as held for sale

$ '000	2025 Current	2025 Non-current	2024 Current	2024 Non-current
Non-current assets held for sale				
Land and Buildings	**3,093**	**–**	1,313	–
Total non-current assets held for sale	**3,093**	**–**	1,313	–
Total non-current assets classified as held for sale	**3,093**	**–**	1,313	–

Material accounting policy information

Non-current assets (or disposal groups) are classified as held for sale if their carrying amount will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through continued use and are measured at the lower of their carrying amount and fair value less costs to sell.

Non-current assets (including those that are part of a disposal group) are not depreciated or amortised while they are classified as held for sale.

C1-6 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

By aggregated asset class	At 1 July 2024			Asset movements during the reporting period							At 30 June 2025		
$ '000	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount	Additions renewals [1]	Additions new assets	Carrying value of disposals	Depreciation expense	Transfers	Tfrs from/(to) 'held for sale' category	Revaluation increments/ (decrements)	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount
Capital work in progress	50,026	–	50,026	**16,713**	**26,783**	**–**	**–**	**(32,681)**	**–**	**–**	**60,841**	**–**	**60,841**
Plant and equipment	30,674	(20,687)	9,987	**–**	**6,564**	**(676)**	**(2,191)**	**24**	**–**	**–**	**31,295**	**(17,586)**	**13,709**
Office equipment	6,278	(5,108)	1,170	**–**	**211**	**(22)**	**(378)**	**3**	**–**	**–**	**2,551**	**(1,567)**	**984**
Furniture and fittings	1,551	(1,418)	133	**–**	**17**	**(5)**	**(14)**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**658**	**(525)**	**133**
Land:													
– Operational land	54,751	–	54,751	**–**	**215**	**(239)**	**–**	**(934)**	**(1,780)**	**(466)**	**51,546**	**–**	**51,546**
– Community land	63,336	–	63,336	**–**	**–**	**(2,530)**	**–**	**934**	**–**	**11,808**	**73,549**	**–**	**73,549**
– Crown land	18,864	–	18,864	**–**	**10**	**(1,864)**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**842**	**17,852**	**–**	**17,852**
– Land under roads (post 30/6/08)	3,081	–	3,081	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**156**	**3,237**	**–**	**3,237**
Infrastructure:													
– Buildings	161,605	(76,849)	84,756	**398**	**320**	**(304)**	**(2,637)**	**73**	**–**	**3,666**	**168,581**	**(82,309)**	**86,272**
– Roads	909,052	(255,028)	654,024	**3,684**	**11,427**	**(9,468)**	**(14,786)**	**26,182**	**–**	**92,235**	**1,021,961**	**(258,663)**	**763,298**
– Bridges	85,956	(8,584)	77,372	**1,106**	**3,268**	**(1,321)**	**(1,092)**	**(2,593)**	**–**	**60,097**	**148,233**	**(11,396)**	**136,837**
– Footpaths	81,449	(7,868)	73,581	**3,256**	**1,611**	**(1,007)**	**(992)**	**3,195**	**–**	**1,920**	**90,588**	**(9,024)**	**81,564**
– Stormwater drainage	169,483	(26,066)	143,417	**393**	**19,068**	**(440)**	**(1,915)**	**4,012**	**–**	**46,646**	**240,466**	**(29,287)**	**211,179**
– Swimming pools	6,338	(3,177)	3,161	**38**	**–**	**–**	**(68)**	**–**	**–**	**60**	**6,455**	**(3,264)**	**3,191**
– Other open space/recreational assets	58,115	(18,386)	39,729	**1,339**	**2,502**	**(533)**	**(1,734)**	**1,772**	**–**	**666**	**63,526**	**(19,784)**	**43,742**
– Other infrastructure	11,504	(167)	11,337	**–**	**–**	**–**	**(142)**	**–**	**–**	**4,469**	**15,941**	**(278)**	**15,663**
Other assets:													
– Library books	6,747	(5,888)	859	**–**	**148**	**(5)**	**(158)**	**36**	**–**	**–**	**1,767**	**(888)**	**879**
Reinstatement, rehabilitation and restoration assets (refer Note C2-5):													
– Tip assets	21,943	(16,407)	5,536	**–**	**–**	**(2,292)**	**(95)**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**19,651**	**(16,503)**	**3,148**
Total infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	1,740,753	(445,633)	1,295,120	**26,927**	**72,144**	**(20,706)**	**(26,202)**	**23**	**(1,780)**	**222,099**	**2,018,698**	**(451,074)**	**1,567,624**

(1) Renewals are defined as the replacement of existing assets (as opposed to the acquisition of new assets).

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C1-6 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (continued)

By aggregated asset class	At 1 July 2023			Asset movements during the reporting period								At 30 June 2024		
$ '000	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount	Additions renewals [1]	Additions new assets	Carrying value of disposals	Depreciation expense	Transfers	Found assets (Other Comprehensive Income)	Tfrs from/(to) 'held for sale' category	Revaluation increments/ (decrements)	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount
Capital work in progress	31,360	–	31,360	21,956	13,744	(804)	–	(16,231)	–	–	–	50,026	–	50,026
Plant and equipment	28,386	(20,635)	7,751	–	5,106	(964)	(2,174)	268	–	–	–	30,674	(20,687)	9,987
Office equipment	5,755	(4,700)	1,055	–	402	–	(404)	118	–	–	–	6,278	(5,108)	1,170
Furniture and fittings	1,496	(1,398)	98	–	55	–	(19)	–	–	–	–	1,551	(1,418)	133
Land:														
– Operational land	40,403	–	40,403	–	–	–	–	(505)	–	(1,313)	16,167	54,751	–	54,751
– Community land	59,322	–	59,322	–	–	–	–	(12,346)	1,850	–	14,509	63,336	–	63,336
– Crown land	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	12,851	–	–	6,013	18,864	–	18,864
– Land under roads (post 30/6/08)	2,039	–	2,039	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,042	3,081	–	3,081
Infrastructure:														
– Buildings	148,660	(71,297)	77,363	948	1,989	(2,186)	(2,613)	3,936	–	–	5,319	161,605	(76,849)	84,756
– Roads	953,518	(161,252)	792,266	10,869	38,412	(5,571)	(7,740)	5,068	–	–	(179,279)	909,052	(255,028)	654,024
– Bridges	75,079	(7,822)	67,257	3,570	3,206	(1,698)	(745)	1,855	–	–	3,926	85,956	(8,584)	77,372
– Footpaths	30,616	(4,149)	26,467	111	5,665	(816)	(394)	2,452	–	–	40,097	81,449	(7,868)	73,581
– Stormwater drainage	143,343	(23,430)	119,913	47	17,946	(36)	(1,397)	1,617	–	–	5,327	169,483	(26,066)	143,417
– Swimming pools	6,152	(3,012)	3,140	–	–	–	(68)	–	–	–	88	6,338	(3,177)	3,161
– Other open space/recreational assets	51,960	(16,710)	35,250	545	4,018	(133)	(1,600)	822	–	–	826	58,115	(18,386)	39,729
– Other infrastructure	10,895	(67)	10,828	–	–	–	(119)	97	–	–	531	11,504	(167)	11,337
Other assets:														
– Library books	6,586	(5,715)	871	–	158	–	(173)	3	–	–	–	6,747	(5,888)	859
Reinstatement, rehabilitation and restoration assets (refer Note C2-5):														
– Tip assets	15,735	(10,871)	4,864	–	6,208	–	(5,536)	–	–	–	–	21,943	(16,407)	5,536
Total infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	1,611,305	(331,058)	1,280,247	38,046	96,909	(12,208)	(22,982)	5	1,850	(1,313)	(85,434)	1,740,753	(445,633)	1,295,120

(1) Renewals are defined as the replacement of existing assets (as opposed to the acquisition of new assets).

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C1-6 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (continued)

Material accounting policy information

Useful Life

Land and road formation is not depreciated. Depreciation on other assets is calculated using the straight-line method to allocate their cost, net of their residual values, over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Plant and equipment	Years	**Other equipment**	Years
Office equipment	4 to 10	Playground equipment	23
Office furniture	4 to 10	Benches, seats etc.	10 to 20
Computer equipment	2 to 5		
Vehicles	6.5 to 8	**Buildings**	
Heavy plant/road making equipment	4 to 8	Sub-structure	30 to 110
Other plant and equipment	4 to 15	Superstructure	35 to 110
		Roof Frame	150
Stormwater Drainage assets		Roof	20 to 110
Culverts	100	Electrical	45
Stormwater Pipes	100	Hydraulic	20 to 105
Stormwater Pits	100	Mechanical	22
		Fit-Out Fittings	35
Transportation assets		Fit-outs Floor Coverings	25
Sealed roads: surface	20 to 25		
Sealed roads: Base and sub base	65 to 200	**Other infrastructure assets**	
Unsealed roads: surface and base	10 to 65	Swimming pools	94
Bridge: concrete: structure	100	Other open space/recreational assets	11 to 120
Bridge: concrete: other	38	Playgrounds	23
Bridge: timber - structure	80	Runways and Taxiways: surface	20
Bridge: timber - other	38	Runways and Taxiways: structure	65 to 200
Kerb, gutter and footpaths	100		

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each reporting date.

Revaluation Model

Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment are held at fair value. Comprehensive valuations are performed at least every 5 years, however the carrying amount of assets is assessed by Council at each reporting date to confirm that it is not materially different from current fair value.

Increases in the carrying amounts arising on revaluation are credited to the IPPE revaluation reserve. To the extent that the increase reverses a decrease previously recognising profit or loss relating to that asset class, the increase is first recognised as profit or loss. Decreases that reverse previous increases of assets in the same class are first charged against IPPE revaluation reserve to the extent of the remaining reserve attributable to the class; all other decreases are charged to the Income Statement.

Land under roads

Land under roads is land under roadways and road reserves including land under footpaths, nature strips and median strips.

Council has elected not to recognise land under roads acquired before 1 July 2008. Land under roads acquired after 1 July 2008 is recognised in accordance with the IPPE accounting policy.

Crown reserves

Crown reserves under Council's care and control are recognised as assets of the council. While ownership of the reserves remains with the Crown, Council retains operational control of the reserves and is responsible for their maintenance and use in accordance with the specific purposes to which the reserves are dedicated. Where the Crown reserves are under a lease arrangement, they are accounted for under AASB 16 Leases, refer to Note C2-1.

Improvements on Crown reserves are also recorded as assets, while maintenance costs incurred by Council and revenues relating to the reserves are recognised within Council's Income Statement.

C2 Liabilities of Council

C2-1 Payables

$ '000	2025 Current	2025 Non-current	2024 Current	2024 Non-current
Goods and services	**13,088**	**–**	8,960	–
Prepaid rates	**2,931**	**–**	2,633	–
Accrued expenses:				
- Salaries and wages	**712**	**–**	467	–
Security bonds, deposits and retentions	**2,418**	**3,208**	1,837	3,924
Other	**87**	**–**	317	–
Total payables	**19,236**	**3,208**	14,214	3,924

Current payables not anticipated to be settled within the next twelve months

$ '000	2025	2024
The following liabilities, even though classified as current, are not expected to be settled in the next 12 months.		
Payables – security bonds, deposits and retentions	**97**	149
Total payables	**97**	149

Payables represent liabilities for goods and services provided to Council prior to the end of financial year that are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

C2-2 Contract Liabilities

$ '000	Notes	2025 Current	2025 Non-current	2024 Current	2024 Non-current
Funds to construct Council controlled assets	(i)	**32,256**	**–**	19,826	–
User fees and charges received in advance	(ii)	**488**	**–**	598	–
Total contract liabilities		**32,744**	**–**	20,424	–

Notes

(i) Council has received funding to construct assets including sporting facilities and other infrastructure. The funds received are under an enforceable contract which require Council to construct an identified asset which will be under Council's control on completion. The revenue is recognised as Council constructs the asset and the contract liability reflects the funding received which cannot yet be recognised as revenue. The revenue is expected to be recognised in the next 12 months.

(ii) Development application fees are recognised when or as the performance obligation is completed and the customer receives the benefit of the goods / services being provided. The undetermined DA fees do not meet the definition of a performance obligation and therefore the funds received are recorded as a contract liability at end of the year.

Revenue recognised that was included in the contract liability balance at the beginning of the period

$ '000	2025	2024
Funds to construct Council controlled assets	**7,510**	7,372
Total revenue recognised that was included in the contract liability balance at the beginning of the period	**7,510**	7,372

Significant changes in contract liabilities

The increase in contract liabilities is due to grant income received for projects to be completed next year.

C2-3 Borrowings

$ '000	2025 Current	2025 Non-current	2024 Current	2024 Non-current
Loans – secured [1, 2]	**6,720**	**13,026**	969	6,146
Total borrowings	**6,720**	**13,026**	969	6,146

(1) Loans are secured over the general rating income of Council.

(2) Council's borrowings from TCorp are subject to covenant clauses, whereby Council is required to meet certain key financial ratios. Council has not met Unrestricted Cash Expense Ratio as on 30 June 2025. Due to this breach of the covenant clause, the lender is contractually entitled to request for immediate repayment of the outstanding loan amount of $6,146,019.

(a) Changes in liabilities arising from financing activities

$ '000	2024 Opening Balance	Cash flows	Non-cash movements: Acquisition	Fair value changes	Acquisition due to change in accounting policy	Other non-cash movement	2025 Closing balance
Loans – secured	7,115	**12,631**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**19,746**
Total liabilities from financing activities	7,115	**12,631**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**19,746**

$ '000	2023 Opening Balance	Cash flows	Non-cash movements: Acquisition	Fair value changes	Acquisition due to change in accounting policy	Other non-cash movement	2024 Closing balance
Loans – secured	8,301	(1,186)	–	–	–	–	7,115
Lease liability (Note C2-1)	2	(2)	–	–	–	–	–
Total liabilities from financing activities	8,303	(1,188)	–	–	–	–	7,115

(b) Financing arrangements

$ '000	2025	2024
Total facilities		
Total financing facilities available to Council at the reporting date are:		
Bank overdraft facilities [1]	**1,000**	1,000
Credit cards/purchase cards	**100**	100
Total financing arrangements	**1,100**	1,100
Undrawn facilities		
Undrawn financing facilities available to Council at the reporting date are:		
– Bank overdraft facilities	**1,000**	1,000
– Credit cards/purchase cards	**100**	100
Total undrawn financing arrangements	**1,100**	1,100

(1) The bank overdraft facility may be drawn at any time and may be terminated by the bank without notice.

C2-4 Employee benefit provisions

$ '000	2025 Current	2025 Non-current	2024 Current	2024 Non-current
Annual leave	**3,896**	**–**	3,596	–
Sick leave	**278**	**–**	318	–
Long service leave	**5,935**	**803**	5,693	770
Total employee benefit provisions	**10,109**	**803**	9,607	770

Current employee benefit provisions not anticipated to be settled within the next twelve months

$ '000	2025	2024
The following provisions, even though classified as current, are not expected to be settled in the next 12 months.		
Provisions – employees benefits	**8,105**	7,695
	8,105	7,695

Material accounting policy information

Other long-term employee benefit obligations

The liability for long-service leave and annual leave that is not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service is recognised in the provision for employee benefits and measured as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the end of the reporting period using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures, and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the end of the reporting period on national government bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

C2-5 Provisions

$ '000	2025 Current	2025 Non-Current	2024 Current	2024 Non-Current
Asset remediation/restoration:				
Asset remediation/restoration (future works)	**42**	**25,301**	42	28,518
Sub-total – asset remediation/restoration	**42**	**25,301**	42	28,518
Total provisions	**42**	**25,301**	42	28,518

Description of and movements in provisions

	Other provisions	
$ '000	Asset remediation	Total
2025		
At beginning of year	**28,560**	**28,560**
Other	**(3,217)**	**(3,217)**
2024		
At beginning of year	22,590	22,590
Additional provisions	5,970	5,970

Material accounting policy information

Provisions are recognised when Council has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events, it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation, and the amount has been reliably estimated.

Where there are a number of similar obligations, the likelihood that an outflow will be required in settlement is determined by considering the class of obligations as a whole. A provision is recognised even if the likelihood of an outflow with respect to any one item included in the same class of obligations may be small.

Provisions are measured at the present value of management's best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the present obligation at the reporting date. The discount rate used to determine the present value reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the liability. The increase in the provision due to the passage of time is recognised as a borrowing cost.

Asset remediation – tips and quarries

Close-down and restoration costs include the dismantling and demolition of infrastructure, and the removal of residual materials and remediation of disturbed areas. Estimated close-down and restoration costs are provided for in the accounting period when the obligation arising from the related disturbance occurs, whether this occurs during the development or during the operation phase, based on the net present value of estimated future costs. Provisions for close-down and restoration costs do not include any additional obligations which are expected to arise from future disturbance. The cost estimates are calculated annually during the life of the operation to reflect known developments, e.g. updated cost estimates and revisions to the estimated lives of operations, and are subject to formal review at regular intervals.

Council uses the Cessnock Waste Management Centre at 1967 Old Maitland Road, Cessnock for current disposal of waste. Council or its past entities, has previously used the following sites for waste disposal:

1. Dunlop Drive, Paxton – former sanitary depot
2. Old Maitland Road, Cessnock – former landfill
3. Albury Street, Abermain – former landfill
4. Off Mitchell Avenue, Kurri Kurri – former sanitary depot adjacent to Hunter Expressway
5. Hollingshed Road, Greta – former landfill
6. Stanford Road, Heddon Greta – former landfill adjacent to Hunter Expressway

Due to the location or access complications, it is unlikely that Council will remediate the following site:

1. Heddon Greta, former landfill

Council resigned as Crown Land Manager on 27 June 2018 for the below sites with care and control of these sites now residing with the state government. Council acknowledges that there is a risk of future rehabilitation of these sites in the event of contamination. Council can not reliably estimate costs on these sites given that access and control is not available to assess any contamination or estimated costs. Further, Council has not been advised of any legal requirement to remediate these sites.

1. Abermain – former landfill
2. Kurri Kurri – former sanitary depot adjacent to Hunter Expressway
3. Greta – former landfill

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C2-5 Provisions (continued)

Council engaged experts to provide cost estimates for remediating the current and former waste sites remaining in the care and control of Council. Australian Government Bond rates (ranging from 3.21% to 5.05%) were used to discount the future cash flows for the sites.

The after-care costs estimated for the current waste site is $976,104 as at 30 June 2025, noting that this does not include the cost of capping and closure of the site.

The ultimate cost of environmental remediation is uncertain and cost estimates can vary in response to many factors, including changes to the relevant legal requirements, the emergence of new restoration techniques, or experience at other locations. The expected timing of expenditure can also change, for example in response to changes in quarry reserves or production rates. As a result, there could be significant adjustments to the provision for close down and restoration and environmental clean-up, which would affect future financial results.

Other movements in the provisions for close-down and restoration costs, including those resulting from new disturbance, updated cost estimates, changes to the estimated lives of operations, and revisions to discount rates, are capitalised within infrastructure, property, plant and equipment. These costs are then depreciated over the lives of the assets to which they relate.

Where movements in provisions relate to change in estimates or discount rates for former landfill sites, adjustments will be made directly to the operating statement. Estimates will continue to be updated as Council continues to investigate its obligations for remediation of contaminated sites.

C3 Reserves

C3-1 Nature and purpose of reserves

D Risks and accounting uncertainties

D1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held

Council's overall risk management program focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the Council.

Council's objective is to maximise its return on cash and investments whilst maintaining an adequate level of liquidity and preserving capital. The finance team manages the cash and Investments portfolio with the assistance of independent advisors. Council has an investment policy which complies with the s 625 of the Act and the Ministerial Investment Order. The policy is regularly reviewed by Council and a monthly investment report is provided to Council setting out the make-up performance of the portfolio as required by local government regulations.

Council does not engage in transactions expressed in foreign currencies and is therefore not subject to foreign currency risk.

Financial risk management is carried out by the finance team under policies approved by the Councillors.

The fair value of Council's financial assets and financial liabilities approximates their carrying amount.

The risks associated with the financial instruments held are:

- Market risk - interest rate risk – the risk that movements in interest rates could affect returns.
- liquidity risk – the risk that Council will not be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.
- credit risk – the risk that a contracting entity will not complete its obligations under a financial instrument, resulting in a financial loss to the Council.

Council manages these risks by diversifying its portfolio and only purchasing investments with high credit ratings or capital guarantees. Council also seeks advice from independent advisers before placing any cash and investments.

(a) Market risk – interest rate and price risk

$ '000	2025	2024
The impact on the result for the year and equity of a reasonably possible movement in the price of investments held and interest rates is shown below. The reasonably possible movements were determined based on historical movements and economic conditions in place at the reporting date.		
Impact of a 1% movement in interest rates		
– Equity / Income Statement	**593**	678
Impact of a 10% movement in price of investments		
– Equity / Income Statement	**447**	414

(b) Credit risk

Council's major receivables comprise (i) rates and annual charges and (ii) user charges and fees.

Council manages the credit risk associated with these receivables by monitoring outstanding debt and employing stringent debt recovery policies. Council also encourages ratepayers to pay rates by the due date.

The credit risk for liquid funds and other short-term financial assets is considered negligible, since the counterparties are reputable banks with high quality external credit ratings.

There are no significant concentrations of credit risk other than Council has significant credit risk exposures in its local area given the nature of Council activities.

The level of outstanding receivables are reviewed monthly and benchmarks are set and monitored for acceptable collection performance.The balances of receivables that remain within initial trade terms are considered to be of high credit quality.

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date is the carrying amount of each class of receivable in the financial statements.

There are no material receivables that have been subjected to a re-negotiation of repayment terms.

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D1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held (continued)

Credit risk profile

Receivables – rates and annual charges

Credit risk on rates and annual charges is minimised by the ability of Council to recover these debts as a secured charge over the land; that is, the land can be sold to recover the debt. Council is also able to charge interest on overdue rates and annual charges at higher than market rates which further encourages payment.

$ '000	Not yet overdue	overdue rates and annual charges < 5 years	≥ 5 years	Total
2025				
Gross carrying amount	**–**	**5,776**	**–**	**5,776**
2024				
Gross carrying amount	–	5,188	–	5,188

Receivables - non-rates and annual charges and contract assets

Council applies the simplified approach for non-rates and annual charges debtors and contract assets to provide for expected credit losses, which permits the use of the lifetime expected loss provision at inception. To measure the expected credit losses, non-rates and annual charges debtors and contract assets have been grouped based on shared credit risk characteristics and the days past due.

The loss allowance provision is determined as follows. The expected credit losses incorporate forward-looking information.

$ '000	Not yet overdue	Overdue debts 0 - 30 days	31 - 60 days	61 - 90 days	> 91 days	Total
2025						
Gross carrying amount	**8,843**	**13**	**1**	**14**	**181**	**9,052**
Expected loss rate (%)	**4.50%**	**9.50%**	**19.50%**	**34.50%**	**49.50%**	**5.46%**
ECL provision [1]	**44**	**1**	**–**	**5**	**90**	**140**
2024						
Gross carrying amount	10,031	–	–	66	411	10,508
Expected loss rate (%)	4.40%	8.90%	18.90%	34.40%	49.40%	6.35%
ECL provision [1]	18	–	–	23	203	244

(1) The provision excludes government grants and government agency payments.

(c) Liquidity risk

Payables, lease liabilities and borrowings are both subject to liquidity risk; that is, the risk that insufficient funds may be on hand to meet payment obligations as and when they fall due.

Council manages this risk by monitoring its cash flow requirements and liquidity levels, and by maintaining an adequate cash buffer. Payment terms can be extended, and overdraft facilities drawn upon in extenuating circumstances.

Borrowings are also subject to interest rate risk: the risk that movements in interest rates could adversely affect funding costs. Council manages this risk through diversification of borrowing types, maturities and interest rate structures.

The finance team regularly reviews interest rate movements to determine if it would be advantageous to refinance or renegotiate part or all of the loan portfolio.

The timing of cash flows presented in the table below to settle financial liabilities reflects the earliest contractual settlement dates. The timing of expected outflows is not expected to be materially different from contracted cashflows.

The amounts disclosed in the table are the undiscounted contracted cash flows for non-lease liabilities (refer to Note C2-3(b) for lease liabilities) and therefore the balances in the table may not equal the balances in the Statement of Financial Position due to the effect of discounting.

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D1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held (continued)

$ '000	Weighted average interest rate	Subject to no maturity	payable in: ≤ 1 Year	1 - 5 Years	> 5 Years	Total cash outflows	Actual carrying values
2025							
Payables	**0.00%**	**5,626**	**16,818**	**–**	**–**	**22,444**	**22,444**
Borrowings	**4.74%**	**–**	**1,575**	**6,071**	**12,100**	**19,746**	**19,746**
Total financial liabilities		**5,626**	**18,393**	**6,071**	**12,100**	**42,190**	**42,190**
2024							
Payables	0.00%	5,761	12,061	–	–	17,822	18,138
Borrowings	3.62%	–	969	3,677	2,469	7,115	7,115
Total financial liabilities		5,761	13,030	3,677	2,469	24,937	25,253

D2-1 Fair value measurement

The Council measures the following asset and liability classes at fair value on a recurring basis:

- Financial assets and liabilities
- Infrastructure, property plant and equipment (excluding work in progress)

Fair value hierarchy
All assets and liabilities measured at fair value are assigned to a level in the fair value hierarchy as follows:
Level 1: Unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the entity can access at the measurement date.
Level 2: Inputs other than quoted prices included within level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.
Level 3: Inputs for the asset or liability that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs).

The table below shows the assigned level for each asset and liability held at fair value by Council:

Recurring fair value measurements

		Fair value measurement hierarchy					
		Level 2 Significant observable inputs		Level 3 Significant unobservable inputs		Total	
$ '000	Notes	**2025**	2024	**2025**	2024	**2025**	2024
Recurring fair value measurements							
Financial assets							
Managed Funds	C1-2	**4,474**	4,138	**–**	–	**4,474**	4,138
Total financial assets		**4,474**	4,138	**–**	–	**4,474**	4,138
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-6						
Plant, equipment, furniture and fittings		**–**	–	**14,825**	11,290	**14,825**	11,290
Land		**51,546**	54,751	**94,638**	85,281	**146,184**	140,032
Roads, bridges and footpaths		**–**	–	**981,698**	80,617	**981,698**	80,617
Buildings		**86,273**	84,757	**–**	–	**86,273**	84,757
Stormwater Drainage		**–**	–	**211,180**	62,933	**211,180**	62,933
Swimming Pools		**–**	–	**3,191**	3,162	**3,191**	3,162
Other Open Space / Recreational Assets		**–**	–	**43,742**	39,729	**43,742**	39,729
Other Infrastructure		**–**	–	**15,663**	11,337	**15,663**	11,337
Library Books		**–**	–	**879**	859	**879**	859
Landfill Rehabilitation		**–**	–	**3,149**	5,536	**3,149**	5,536
Total infrastructure, property, plant and equipment		**137,819**	139,508	**1,368,965**	1,105,588	**1,506,784**	1,245,096
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	C1-5						
Land		**3,093**	1,313	**–**	–	**3,093**	1,313
Total NCA's classified as held for sale		**3,093**	1,313	**–**	–	**3,093**	1,313

Transfers between level 1 and level 2 fair value hierarchies

During the year there were no transfers between level 1 and 2 fair value hierarchies for recurring fair value measurements.

Valuation techniques

Where Council is unable to derive fair valuations using quoted market prices of identical assets (ie. level 1 inputs) Council instead utilises a spread of both observable inputs (level 2 inputs) and unobservable inputs (level 3 inputs).

The fair valuation techniques Council has employed while utilising level 2 and level 3 inputs are as follows:

continued on next page ...

D2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

Financial assets

Council holds units in the TCorpIM Medium Term Growth Fund. Prices are observable, however, no active market exists for these funds as they are only accessible to government agencies. The unit price of each fund is equal to the total fair value of the net assets held by the fund divided by the total number of units on issue for that fund. Unit prices are calculated and published daily.

Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (IPPE)

Operational Land
Operational Land was last comprehensively revalued in 2023 by a registered property valuer. Values were determined based on sales of land in the locality and standard valuation principals adopted. In the years when a comprehensive revaluation is not required, valuations are based on the land values provided by the Valuer-General.
There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting year.

Buildings
Comprehensive revaluations are carried out every five years or sooner if there is any indication that the current carrying value of assets is materially different from their fair value. In years when a comprehensive valuation is not due, indexation has been applied per the appropriate producer price indexes from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Fair value measurements using significant unobservable inputs (level 3)

The valuation process for level 3 fair value measurements

Plant, equipment, office equipment, furniture, fittings and library books
Council reports these assets at depreciated historical cost which is not materially different from fair value.
There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

Community and Council Controlled Crown Land
Valuations of Community land and Council controlled Crown land have been based on the land values provided by the Valuer-General.
There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

Land Under Roads
Land under roads is defined as land acquired after 1 July 2008 and includes land under footpaths, nature strips and median strips in accordance with AASB 1051 Land Under Roads.The valuation was calculated using the average square kilometre rate calculated using the Valuer-General average LGA unit value. A discount of 90% was applied to the average unit value to reflect restrictions placed on land under roads.
There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

Bridges, Footpaths, Roads, Stormwater Drainage, Swimming Pools, Other Open Space/Recreational Assets and Other Infrastructure
Comprehensive revaluations are carried out every five years or sooner if there is any indication that the current carrying value of assets is materially different from their fair value. In years when a comprehensive valuation is not due, indexation has been applied per the appropriate producer price indexes from the Australian Bureau of Statistics or the Department of Primary Industries (Stormwater Drainage).
A Comprehensive revaluation has been undertaken on Bridge, Stormwater, Kerb and street furniture assets by Council's asset management staff uitlising unit rates as at 30/06/25.
Other Infrastructure assets have been comprehensively revalued as at 30/06/25 by an external consultant.
All internally renewed assets have their condition assessed and adjusted.

Landfill Rehabilitation
Council recognises a provision that reflects the estimated future costs to rehabilitate its landfill site at the time the work is needed. A discount rate is applied to reflect the present value of the provision for the current waste site. Council reviews the carrying amount of the provision at each reporting date to determine whether it continues to reflect management's best estimate of the costs to be incurred.
There has been no change to the valuation techniques during the reporting period.

Significant unobservable valuation inputs used (for level 3 asset classes) and their relationship to fair value.

The following table summarises the quantitative information relating to the significant unobservable inputs used in deriving the various level 3 asset class fair values.

	Valuation technique/s	Unobservable inputs

continued on next page ...

D2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

	Valuation technique/s	Unobservable inputs
Plant, equipment, office equipment, furniture, fittings and library books	Cost approach	Current replacement cost of modern equivalent asset, asset condition, useful life and residual value.
Operational Land	Market value, Land values obtained from the NSW Valuer-General	Market value, land value
Community and Crown Land	Land values obtained from the NSW Valuer-General	Land value, land area, level of restriction
Land under roads	Discounted Land values obtained from the NSW Valuer-General	Land value, discount rate
Infrastructure assets	Cost approach	Asset condition, remaining lives using componentisation
Landfill rehabilitation	Cost approach	Environmental legislation, timing of expected cash outflows required to settle the obligation, discount percentage, rehabilitation cost estimates.

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D2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

A reconciliation of the movements in recurring fair value measurements allocated to Level 3 of the hierarchy by class of assets is provided below:

	Plant and equipment		Land		Buildings		Infrastructure	
$ '000	**2025**	2024	**2025**	2024	**2025**	2024	**2025**	2024
Opening balance	**12,149**	9,774	**140,032**	55,788	**84,757**	–	**1,002,619**	1,055,120
Total gains or losses for the period								
Recognised in profit or loss – realised (refer to Note B4-1)	**–**	–	**–**	–	**–**	–	**–**	–
Recognised in other comprehensive income – revaluation surplus	**–**	–	**12,340**	37,731	**3,666**	5,319	**178,217**	(128,484)
Other movements								
Transfers from/(to) level 2 FV hierarchy	**–**	–	**–**	42,841	**–**	77,363	**–**	–
Purchases (GBV)	**6,940**	5,721	**225**	8,746	**63**	2,937	**53,957**	84,389
Disposals (WDV)	**(708)**	(964)	**(4,633)**	(3,761)	**(304)**	(2,186)	**(12,768)**	(8,254)
Depreciation and impairment	**(2,740)**	(2,770)	**–**	–	**(2,622)**	(2,613)	**(20,739)**	(12,063)
Transfer from WIP	**39**	388	**–**	–	**726**	3,937	**54,179**	11,911
Adjustments and transfers	**24**	–	**(1,780)**	(1,313)	**(12)**	–	**9**	–
Closing balance	**15,704**	12,149	**146,184**	140,032	**86,274**	84,757	**1,255,474**	1,002,619

	Rehabilitation Assets		Total	
$ '000	**2025**	2024	**2025**	2024
Opening balance	**5,536**	4,864	**1,245,093**	1,125,546
Recognised in profit or loss – realised (refer to Note B4-1)	**–**	–	**–**	–
Recognised in other comprehensive income – revaluation surplus	**(2,293)**	–	**191,930**	(85,434)
Transfers from/(to) level 2 FV hierarchy	**–**	–	**–**	120,204
Purchases (GBV)	**–**	6,208	**61,185**	108,001
Disposals (WDV)	**–**	–	**(18,413)**	(15,165)
Depreciation and impairment	**(95)**	(5,536)	**(26,196)**	(22,982)
Transfer from WIP	**–**	–	**54,944**	16,236
Adjustments and transfers	**–**	–	**(1,759)**	(1,313)
Closing balance	**3,148**	5,536	**1,506,784**	**1,245,093**

Highest and best use

All of Council's non-financial assets are considered as being utilised for their highest and best use.

D3-1 Contingencies

The following assets and liabilities do not qualify for recognition in the Statement of Financial Position, but their knowledge and disclosure is considered relevant to the users of Council's financial report.

LIABILITIES NOT RECOGNISED

1. Guarantees

(i) Defined benefit superannuation contribution plans
Council is party to an Industry Defined Benefit Plan under the Local Government Superannuation Scheme, named The Active Super Defined Benefit Division of Vision Super (the Fund) which is a defined benefit plan that has been deemed to be a 'multi-employer fund' for purposes of AASB119 Employee Benefits for the following reasons:

– Assets are not segregated within the sub-group according to the employees of each sponsoring employer.

– The contribution rates have been the same for all sponsoring employers. That is, contribution rates have not varied for each sponsoring employer according to the experience relating to the employees of that sponsoring employer.

– Benefits for employees of all sponsoring employers are determined according to the same formulae and without regard to the sponsoring employer.

– The same actuarial assumptions are currently used in respect of the employees of each sponsoring employer.

Given the factors above, each sponsoring employer is exposed to the actuarial risks associated with current and former employees of other sponsoring employers, and hence shares in the associated gains and losses (to the extent that they are not borne by members).

Description of the funding arrangements

Pooled employers are required to pay future service employer contributions and past service employer contributions to the Fund.

The future service employer contributions were determined using the new entrant rate method under which a contribution rate sufficent to fund the total benefits over the working life-time of a typical new entrant is calculated. The current future service employer contribution rates are:

Division B	1.9 times member contributions for non-180 Point Members; Nil for 180 Point Members*
Division C	2.5% salaries
Division D	1.64 times member contributions

*For 180 Point Members, employers are required to contribute 9.5% of salaries from 1 July 2025 of salaries to these members' accumulation accounts in line with current level of Superannuation Guarantee contributions, which are paid in addition to members' defined benefits.

The past service contribution for each pooled employer is a share of the total past service contributions of $20.0m per annum for 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2024, apportioned according to each employer's share of the accrued liabilities as at 30 June. Given the funding position of the Fund as at 30 June 2024, it was recommended to cease these past service contributions effective 1 January 2025.

The adequacy of contributions is assessed at each actuarial investigation which will be conducted annually, the next of which is due effective 30 June 2025.

Description of the extent to which Council can be liable to the plan for other Council's obligations under the terms and conditions of the multi-employer plan

As stated above, each sponsoring employer (Council) is exposed to the actuarial risks associated with current and former employees of other sponsoring employers and hence shares in the associated gains and losses.

However, there is no relief under the Fund's trust deed for employers to walk away from their defined benefit obligations. Under limited circumstances, an employer may withdraw from the plan when there are no active members, on full payment of outstanding past service contributions. There is no provision for allocation of any surplus which may be present at the date of withdrawal of the Council.

There are no specific provisions under the Fund's trust deed dealing with deficits or surplus on wind-up.

continued on next page ...

D3-1 Contingencies (continued)

Council's expected contribution to the plan for the next annual reporting period is $89,918.

The estimated employer reserves financial position for the Pooled Employers at 30 June 2025 is:

Defined Benefits reserves only *	$millions	Asset Coverage
Assets	2,197.6	
Past Service Liabilities	2,092.9	105.0%
Vested Benefits	2,130.4	103.2%

* excluding other accumulation accounts and reserves in both assets and liabilities.

The key economic long term assumptions used to calculate the present value of accrued benefits are:

Investment return	6.0% per annum
Salary inflation *	3.5% per annum
Increase in CPI	2.5% per annum

The contribution requirements may vary from the current rates if the overall sub-group experience is not in line with the actuarial assumptions in determining the funding program; however, any adjustment to the funding program would be the same for all sponsoring employers in the Pooled Employers group. Please note that the estimated employer reserves financial position above is a preliminary calculation, and once all the relevant information has been received by the Funds Actuary, the final end year of review will be completed by December 2025.

Indication of the level of participation of the entity in the plan compared with other participating entities.

An employer's share of any funding surplus or deficit (1.08%) that can be attributed to each organisation provides an indication of the level of participation of that employer compared with other employers in the Pooled Employer sub-group. Given the funding position of the Fund as at 30 June 2025, it was recommended that these past service contributions cease effective 1 January 2025.

(ii) Statewide Mutual Limited

Council is a member of Statewide Mutual Limited, Australia's largest member owned Local Government self-insurance pool, working with Councils to reduce their exposure to risk.

Membership includes the potential to share in either the net assets or liabilities of the fund depending on its past performance. Council's share of the net assets or liabilities reflects Council's contributions to the pool and the result of insurance claims within each of the fund years.

The future realisation and finalisation of claims incurred but not reported to 30 June 2025 this year may result in future liabilities or benefits as a result of past events that Council will be required to fund or share in respectively.

(iii) StateCover Mutual Limited

Council is a member of the StateCover Mutual Limited which provides workplace compensation insurance.

StateCover Mutual Limited provides support and advice to Council on developing return to work programs, incident and claims management and assistance with mooting legislative compliance.

Council has a contingent liability to contribute further equity in the event of the erosion of the company's capital base as a result of the company's past performance and/or claims experience or as a result of any increased prudential requirements from APRA.

These future equity contributions would be required to maintain the company's minimum level of net assets in accordance with its licence requirements.

2. Other liabilities

continued on next page ...

D3-1 Contingencies (continued)

(i) Third party claims
The Council is involved from time to time in various claims incidental to the ordinary course of business including claims for damages relating to its services.

Council believes that it is appropriately covered for all claims through its insurance coverage and at 30 June 2025 and does not expect any material liabilities to eventuate.

Council had the following pending legal matters:
- Various actions in appeal against Council planning decisions.

The potential costs of the claims are unlikely to be significant and amounts of any claims are unable to be quantified at 30 June 2025.

(ii) Rehabilitation Works

Council may own properties that may be subject to rehabilitation works due to possible contamination. This may result in future liabilities but it is not presently known the extent or value of this liability.

Council may also be responsible for rehabilitation works on former sites used by Council due to possible contamination. Having resigned as the Reserve Trust Manager in July 2018 the below sites are not able to be accessed to undertake cost estimates. These are considered a contingent liability due to the unlikely nature of the rehabilitation occurring due to ongoing location and/or access complications:
1. Kurri Kurri, former sanitary depot
2. Heddon Greta, former landfill
3. Abermain, former landfill
4. Greta, former landfill

Council management have assessed the above sites and have determined that council does not have an existing legal obligation to rehabilitate these sites and consequently have not provided for any future rehabilitation as at 30 June 2025. Any confirmation that Council does have a legal obligation will require Council to provide for the sites and face future liabilities to rehabilitate.

ASSETS NOT RECOGNISED

(i) Land under roads

As permitted under AASB 1051, Council has elected not to bring to account land under roads that it owned or controlled up to and including 30 June 2008.

E People and relationships

E1 Related party disclosures

E1-1 Key management personnel (KMP)

The aggregate amount of KMP compensation included in the Income Statement is:

$ '000	2025	2024
Compensation:		
Short-term benefits	**1,592**	1,558
Post-employment benefits	**183**	193
Other long-term benefits	**253**	219
Total	**2,028**	1,970

Other transactions with KMP and their related parties

Council has determined that transactions at arm's length between KMP and Council as part of Council delivering a public service objective (e.g. access to library or Council swimming pool by KMP) will not be disclosed.

Nature of the transaction $ '000	Transactions during the year	Outstanding balances including commitments	Terms and conditions	Impairment provision on outstanding balances	Impairment expense
2025					
Payments for recycling bin services [1]	**2,964**	**–**	14 day terms on invoices	**–**	**–**
Payments made for services received [2]	**112**	**–**	14 day terms on invoices	**–**	**–**
2024					
Payments for recycling bin services [1]	2,502	–	14 day terms on invoices	–	–
Payments made for services received [2]	120	–	14 day terms on invoices	–	–

(1) Relates to payments to Hunter Resources Recovery, a company in which Council has an interest, to provide recycling services. The contract was awarded through a competitive tender process based on market rates for these services. Amounts are payable on a monthly basis for the term of the contract. Hunter Resource Recovery details have not been consolidated into Council's financial statements as the amounts are not material to Council operations.

(2) Council uses Arrow Collaborative Services Limited, a company in which Council has an association with, for a variety of services including legal services, training and environment management.

E1-2 Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses

$ '000	2025	2024
The aggregate amount of Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses included in materials and services expenses in the Income Statement are:		
Mayoral fee	**64**	64
Councillors' fees	**334**	332
Other Councillors' expenses (including Mayor)	**119**	71
Total	**517**	467

E2 Other relationships

E2-1 Audit fees

$ '000	2025	2024
Audit of financial statements	**117**	101
Total fees paid or payable to the Auditor-General	**117**	101

F Other matters

F1-1 Statement of Cash Flows information

(a) Reconciliation of Net Operating Result to Cash provided from Operating Activities

$ '000	2025	2024
Operating result	**38,146**	88,944
Add/(less) non-cash items:		
Depreciation and amortisation	**26,202**	22,987
(Gain) / loss on disposal of assets	**17,405**	10,220
Non-cash capital grants and contributions	**(26,360)**	(64,520)
Revaluation on financial assets	**11**	(213)
Changes in assets and liabilities		
(Increase) / decrease of receivables	**812**	(625)
(Increase) / decrease of inventories	**37**	(17)
(Increase) / decrease of other current assets	**182**	2,035
Increase / (decrease) in payables	**4,306**	3,568
Increase / (decrease) in contract liabilities	**12,320**	11,547
Increase / (decrease) in employee benefit provision	**535**	413
Increase / (decrease) in other provisions	**(3,217)**	5,970
Net cash flows from operating activities	**70,379**	80,309

(b) Non-cash investing and financing activities

Other dedications	**54,237**	70,417
Total non-cash investing and financing activities	**54,237**	70,417

F2-1 Commitments

Capital commitments (exclusive of GST)

$ '000	2025	2024
Capital expenditure committed for at the reporting date but not recognised in the financial statements as liabilities:		
Property, plant and equipment		
Buildings	**5,298**	2
Plant and Equipment	**1,067**	4,969
Roads Infrastructure	**40,504**	12,367
Stormwater Drainage	**3,394**	688
Tip Asset	**9,163**	383
Other Open Space / Recreational Assets	**4,169**	234
Other	**188**	43
Total commitments	**63,783**	18,686

Details of capital commitments

These capital commitments are for the construction of a new landfill development, upgrades and renewals of roads, stormwater and facilities infrastructure, and various refurbishment works at recreation facilities.

F3 Statement of developer contributions

F3-1 Summary of developer contributions

$ '000	Opening balance at 1 July 2024	Contributions received during the year: Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other	Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2025	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
Drainage	43	–	–	–	–	(43)	–	–	–
Roads	4,297	2,215	–	–	313	(2)	–	7,826	–
Parking	141	–	–	–	6	–	–	147	–
Open space	7,569	3,216	–	–	418	(558)	–	10,647	–
Community facilities	4,333	1,047	–	–	256	31	–	5,668	–
Other	382	303	–	–	21	(343)	–	365	–
Tourist facilities	773	–	–	–	1	(189)	–	13	–
Transport	4,767	584	–	–	214	–	–	5,131	–
Cycleway Facilities	2,793	1,490	–	–	158	(146)	–	4,296	–
S7.11 contributions – under a plan	25,098	8,855	–	–	1,387	(1,250)	–	34,093	–
S7.12 levies – under a plan	1,378	534	–	–	72	(71)	–	1,913	–
Total S7.11 and S7.12 revenue under plans	26,476	9,389	–	–	1,459	(1,321)	–	36,006	–
S7.4 planning agreements	15,469	3,233	–	–	668	(852)	–	18,518	–
Total contributions	41,945	12,622	–	–	2,127	(2,173)	–	54,524	–

Under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, local infrastructure contributions, also known as developer contributions, are charged by councils when new development occurs. They help fund infrastructure like parks, community facilities, local roads, footpaths, stormwater drainage and traffic management. It is possible that the funds contributed may be less than the cost of this infrastructure, requiring Council to borrow or use general revenue to fund the difference.

F3-2 S7.11 Contributions - under a plan

$ '000	Opening balance at 1 July 2024	Contributions received during the year: Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other	Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2025	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
S7.11 contributions – under a plan									
CONTRIBUTION PLAN NUMBER 2 - TOURIST DEVELOPMENT									
Tourist facilities	200	–	–	–	1	(189)	–	12	–
Total	200	–	–	–	1	(189)	–	12	–
CONTRIBUTION PLAN NUMBER 4 - NULKABA FLOOD MITIGATION									
Drainage	43	–	–	–	–	(43)	–	–	–
Total	43	–	–	–	–	(43)	–	–	–

continued on next page ...

F3-2 S7.11 Contributions - under a plan (continued)

$ '000	Opening balance at 1 July 2024	Contributions received during the year: Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other	Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2025	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
CONTRIBUTION PLAN NUMBER 5 - CARPARKING CESSNOCK CBD									
Parking	141	–	–	–	6	–	–	147	–
Total	141	–	–	–	6	–	–	147	–
CONTRIBUTION PLAN NUMBER 6 - RESIDENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN									
Open space	–	30	–	–	1	–	–	31	–
Community facilities	619	27	–	–	28	34	–	708	–
Roads	70	(39)	–	–	3	(1)	–	33	–
Other	210	67	–	–	9	–	–	288	–
Total	899	85	–	–	41	33	–	1,060	–
CONTRIBUTION PLAN NUMBER 7 - TOURISM CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN									
Roads	70	4	–	–	29	–	–	675	–
Tourist facilities	573	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Other	149	–	–	–	6	–	–	155	–
Total	792	4	–	–	35	–	–	831	–
CONTRIBUTION PLAN NUMBER 8 - BLACKHILL QUARRY CONTRIBUTION PLAN									
Roads	371	52	–	–	19	–	–	442	–
Total	371	52	–	–	19	–	–	442	–
Site Specific Contributions Plan - Bellbird North									
Open space	1,101	258	–	–	59	–	–	1,418	–
Community facilities	938	219	–	–	50	–	–	1,207	–
Transport	1,925	584	–	–	108	–	–	2,617	–
Other	(27)	18	–	–	–	(2)	–	(11)	–
Total	3,937	1,079	–	–	217	(2)	–	5,231	–
Site Specific Contributions Plan - Nulkaba									
Open space	187	–	–	–	8	–	–	195	–
Roads	–	–	–	–	19	–	–	451	–
Community facilities	235	–	–	–	10	–	–	245	–
Transport	432	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other	12	–	–	–	–	–	–	12	–
Commercial Precincts	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Total	866	–	–	–	37	–	–	904	–
Site Specific Contributions Plan - Mount View Road Millfield									
Roads	–	166	–	–	4	–	–	172	–
Open space	2	17	–	–	1	–	–	20	–
Community facilities	3	203	–	–	5	–	–	212	–
Other	–	131	–	–	4	–	–	135	–
Transport	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

continued on next page ...

F3-2 S7.11 Contributions - under a plan (continued)

$ '000	Opening balance at 1 July 2024	Contributions received during the year: Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other	Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2025	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
Other	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	7	517	–	–	14	–	–	539	–
Site Specific Contributions Plan - Averys Village Heddon Greta									
Open space	1,162	–	–	–	49	(50)	–	1,162	–
Community facilities	1,130	–	–	–	49	–	–	1,179	–
Transport	2,408	–	–	–	106	–	–	2,514	–
Other	47	–	–	–	2	–	–	49	–
Total	4,747	–	–	–	206	(50)	–	4,904	–
City Wide Infrastructure Contributions Plan									
Open space	5,117	2,911	–	–	300	(508)	–	7,821	–
Community facilities	1,408	598	–	–	114	(3)	–	2,117	–
Roads *	3,786	2,032	–	–	239	(1)	–	6,053	–
Cycleway facilities	2,793	1,490	–	–	158	(146)	–	4,295	–
Other	(9)	87	–	–	–	(341)	–	(263)	–
Total	13,095	7,118	–	–	811	(999)	–	20,023	–

(*) City Wide Infrastructure Contributions Plan - Cycleway Facilities & Roads previously consolidated

S7.12 Levies – under a plan

Section 7.12 Contributions									
Commercial Precincts	1,378	534	–	–	72	(71)	–	1,913	–
Total	1,378	534	–	–	72	(71)	–	1,913	–

F3-3 S7.4 planning agreements

S7.4 planning agreements									
Roads	2,183	–	–	–	75	(116)	–	2,553	–
Open space	4,218	30	–	–	173	(660)	–	4,113	–
Community facilities	8,613	49	–	–	357	(71)	–	7,808	–
Other	455	3,154	–	–	47	(5)	–	3,670	–
Cycleway Facilities	–	–	–	–	16	–	–	374	–
Total	15,469	3,233	–	–	668	(852)	–	18,518	–

End of the audited financial statements

G Additional Council disclosures (unaudited)

G1-1 Financial review

Key financial figures of Council over the past 5 years

$ '000	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
Inflows:					
Rates and annual charges revenue	**71,193**	65,986	62,120	59,210	55,899
User charges revenue	**9,926**	9,531	12,069	21,684	14,128
Interest and investment revenue (losses)	**3,891**	3,853	2,288	656	445
Grants income – operating and capital	**75,008**	111,814	67,497	57,619	53,246
Total income from continuing operations	**176,621**	206,927	156,284	150,114	132,554
Sale proceeds from IPPE	**1,008**	2,161	1,749	4,917	3,367
New loan borrowings and advances	**13,600**	–	4,363	–	2,948
Outflows:					
Employee benefits and on-cost expenses	**49,318**	42,362	35,841	33,271	35,449
Borrowing costs	**922**	263	107	188	263
Materials and contracts expenses	**37,269**	36,596	46,653	39,165	33,121
Total expenses from continuing operations	**138,475**	117,983	122,273	99,736	95,910
Total cash purchases of IPPE	**70,440**	71,488	57,546	27,591	20,909
Total loan repayments (incl. leases)	**969**	1,188	1,202	1,577	1,667
Operating surplus/(deficit) (excl. capital income)	**(33,778)**	(15,634)	(23,056)	618	(9,950)
Financial position figures					
Current assets	**115,758**	101,442	92,490	92,792	72,275
Current liabilities	**68,851**	45,256	30,167	29,308	26,824
Net current assets	**46,907**	56,186	62,323	63,484	45,451
Available working capital (Unrestricted net current assets)	**(10,633)**	6,031	10,685	10,479	4,464
Cash and investments – unrestricted	**(10,063)**	3,309	3,810	1,721	1,713
Cash and investments – internal restrictions	**14,081**	10,789	30,331	36,581	29,903
Cash and investments – total	**96,700**	83,133	73,126	73,944	54,766
Total borrowings outstanding (loans, advances and finance leases)	**19,746**	7,115	8,301	5,136	6,689
Total value of IPPE (excl. land and earthworks)	**1,890,366**	1,619,585	1,509,541	1,380,752	1,269,470
Total accumulated depreciation	**451,074**	445,633	331,058	316,556	291,226
Indicative remaining useful life (as a % of GBV)	**76%**	72%	78%	77%	77%

Source: published audited financial statements of Council (current year and prior years)

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Report on the general purpose financial statements

Cessnock City Council

To the Councillors of Cessnock City Council

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Cessnock City Council (the Council), which comprise the Statement by Councillors and Management, the Income Statement and Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2025, the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2025, the Statement of Changes in Equity and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information and other explanatory information.

In my opinion:

- the Council's accounting records have been kept in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Chapter 13, Part 3, Division 2 (the Division)
- the financial statements:
  - have been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the requirements of the Division
  - are, in all material respects, consistent with the Council's accounting records
  - present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Council as at 30 June 2025, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards
- all information relevant to the conduct of the audit has been obtained
- no material deficiencies in the accounting records or financial statements have come to light during the audit.

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under the standards are described in the 'Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements' section of my report.

I am independent of the Council in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Australian Auditing Standards
- Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 'Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)' (APES 110).

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Parliament promotes independence by ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their roles by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of councils
- precluding the Auditor-General from providing non-audit services.

I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with APES 110.

I believe the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Other Information

The Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025 includes other information in addition to the financial statements and my Independent Auditor's Report thereon. The Councillors are responsible for the other information. At the date of this Independent Auditor's Report, the other information I have received comprise the Special Schedules (the Schedules).

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information. Accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion on the other information. However, as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*, I have separately expressed an opinion on the Special Schedule - Permissible income for general rates.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude there is a material misstatement of the other information, I must report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

The Councillors' Responsibilities for the Financial Statements

The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Local Government Act 1993*, and for such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objectives are to:

- obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- issue an Independent Auditor's Report including my opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but does not guarantee an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect material misstatements. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions users take based on the financial statements.

A description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf. The description forms part of my auditor's report.

The scope of my audit does not include, nor provide assurance:

- that the Council carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- on the Original Budget information included in the Income Statement, Statement of Cash Flows, and Note B5-1 'Material budget variations'
- on the Special Schedules. A separate opinion has been provided on Special Schedule - Permissible income for general rates
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited financial statements on any website where they may be presented
- about any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the financial statements.



Cassie Malone
Director, Financial Audit

Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

28 October 2025
SYDNEY

Cr Daniel Watton
Mayor
Cessnock City Council
PO BOX 42
CESSNOCK NSW 2324

Contact: Cassie Malone
Phone no: 02 9275 7388
Our ref: R008-1981756498-6181

28 October 2025

Dear Mayor

Report on the Conduct of the Audit

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Cessnock City Council

I have audited the general purpose financial statements (GPFS) of Cessnock City Council (the Council) for the year ended 30 June 2025 as required by section 415 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act).

I expressed an unmodified opinion on the Council's GPFS.

My audit procedures did not identify any instances of material non-compliance with the financial reporting requirements in Chapter 13, Part 3, Division 2 of the LG Act and the associated regulation or a material deficiency in the Council's accounting records or financial statements. The Council's:

- accounting records were maintained in a manner and form to allow the GPFS to be prepared and effectively audited
- staff provided all accounting records and information relevant to the audit.

This Report on the Conduct of the Audit (the Report) for the Council for the year ended 30 June 2025 is issued in accordance with section 417 of the Act. The Report:

- must address the specific matters outlined in the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting 2024-25
- may include statements, comments and recommendations that I consider to be appropriate based on the conduct of the audit of the GPFS.

This Report should be read in conjunction with my audit opinion on the GPFS issued under section 417(2) of the Act.

INCOME STATEMENT

Financial performance

	2025 $m	2024 $m	Variance %
Rates and annual charges revenue	71.2	66.0	7.9
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes revenue	15.7	19.3	(18.6)
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes revenue	71.9	104.6	(31.2)
Operating result from continuing operations	38.1	88.9	(57.1)
Net Operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	(33.8)	(15.6)	(116)

Operating result from continuing operations

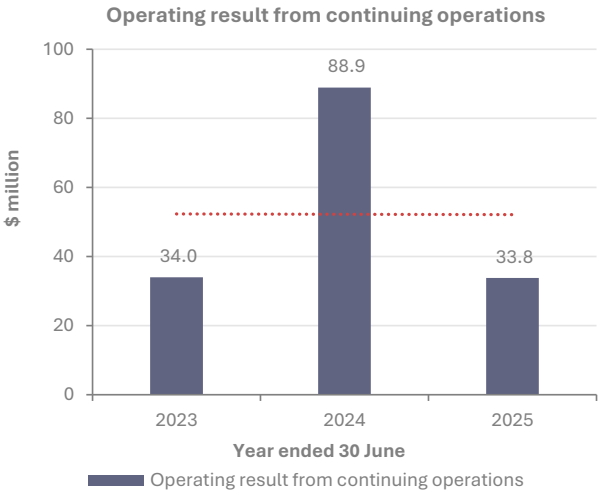
This graph shows the operating result from continuing operations for the current and prior two financial years.

Council's operating result from continuing operations for the year was $50.8 million lower than the 2023–24 result.

In 2024-25:

- depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets expense ($26.2 million) increased by $3.2 million (14.0 per cent) mainly due to asset additions and increases to the fair values of Council's assets
- employee benefits and on-costs ($49.3 million) increased by $7.0 million (16.4 per cent) mainly due increases in the annual award, super guarantee rates and insurance costs.

The net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes was a deficit of $33.8 million. Refer to 'Grants and contributions revenue' below for details.



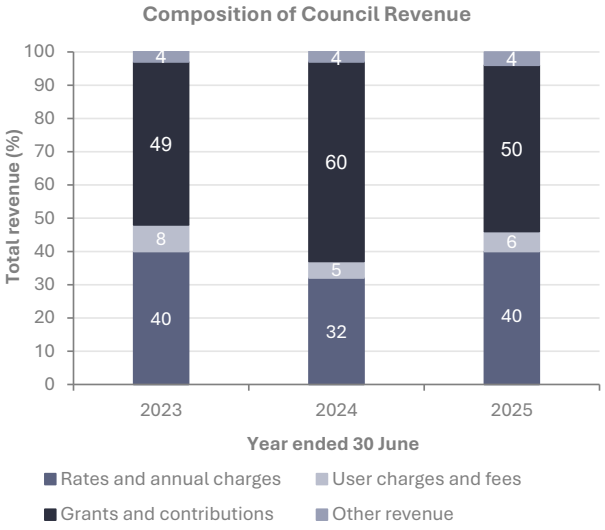
Income

Council revenue

This graph shows the composition of Council's revenue recognised for the current and prior two financial years.

Council revenue ($176.6 million) decreased by $30.3 million (14.6 per cent) in 2024–25 due to:

- rates and annual charges revenue ($71.2 million) which increased by $5.2 million (7.9 per cent) mainly due to:
  - rate peg increase of 4.7 per cent
  - increases in annual charges levied for domestic waste management services by 5.5 per cent from $670 to $707 per levy
  - commercial waste charges increase by 5.5 per cent from $817 to $862 per levy
- grants and contributions revenue ($87.6 million) which decreased by $36.3 million (29.3 per cent) – see additional details below.

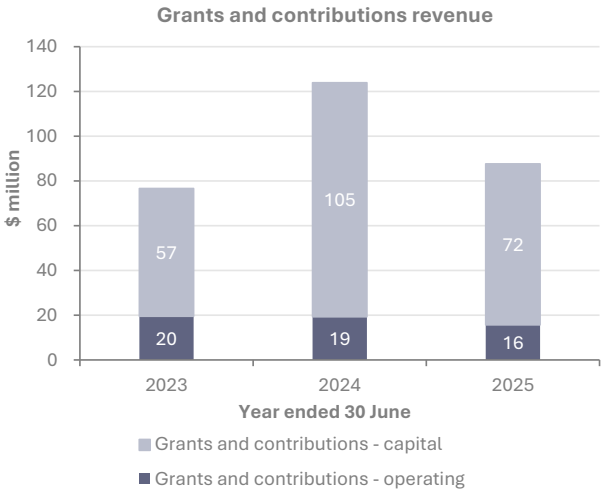


Grants and contributions revenue

This graph shows the amount of grants and contributions revenue recognised for the current and prior two financial years.

Grants and contributions revenue of $87.6 million decreased by $36.3 million (29.3%) in 2024–25 due to:

- decrease of $37.2 million of non-cash capital contributions recognised during the year
- increase of $2.1 million of grants recognised for programs of work responding to natural disasters and drainage / flood mitigation across the local government area
- receiving 50 per cent of the financial assistance grants for 2025-26 in advance (85 per cent for 2024-25).



CASH FLOWS

Statement of cash flows

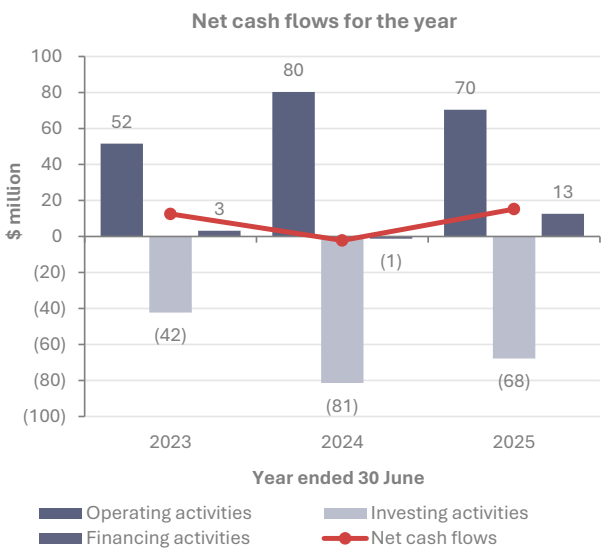
The Statement of Cash Flows details the Council's inflows and outflows of cash over a specific period. It helps in assessing the Council's ability to generate cash to fund its operations, pay off debts, and support future projects. It also aids in identifying any pressures or issues in the Council operating in a financially sustainable manner.

This graph shows the net cash flows for the current and prior two financial years.

The net cash flows for the year were positive $15.2 million (negative $2.2 million in 2023-24).

In 2024-25 the net cashflows:

- from operating activities decreased by $9.9 million, mainly due to increased payments to employees
- used in investing activities increased by $13.6 million, mainly due to higher levels of investment purchases
- from in financing activities increased by $13.8 million, mainly due to the drawing down of loans totalling $13.6 million for works on Council's waste facility, bridges and pathways, and flood mitigation programs.



FINANCIAL POSITION

Cash, cash equivalents and investments

This section of the Report provides details of the amount of cash, cash equivalents and investments recorded by the Council at 30 June 2025.

Externally restricted funds are the cash, cash equivalents and investments that can only be used for specific purposes due to legal or contractual restrictions.

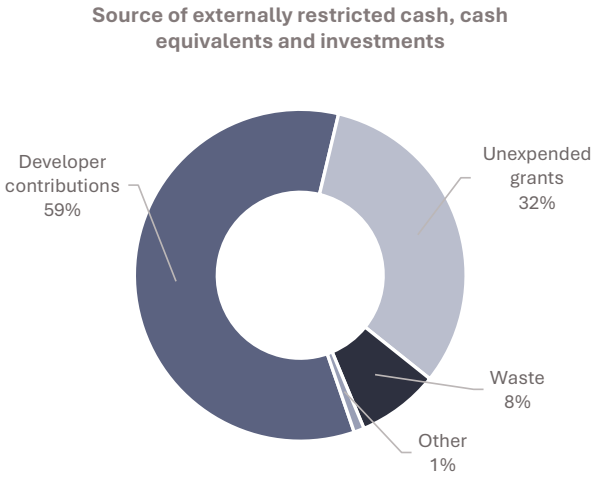
Cash, cash equivalents, and investments without external restrictions can be allocated internally by the elected Council's resolution or policy. These allocations are matters of Council policy and can be changed or removed by a Council resolution.

Cash, cash equivalents and investments	2025	2024	Percentage of total cash and investments 2025	Commentary
	$m	$m	%	
Total cash, cash equivalents and investments	**96.7**	**83.1**		Externally restricted balances are those which are only available for specific use due to a restriction placed by legislation or third-party contract. A breakdown of the sources of externally restricted balances is included in the graph below. Internal allocations are determined by council policies or decisions, which are subject to change. * At 30 June 2025, the Council: • held total cash, cash equivalents and investments of $96.7 million • had externally restricted and internally allocated monies totalling $106.8 million. This means the Council allocated $10.1 million of cash, cash equivalents and investments that it did not have.
Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments:				
• External restrictions	92.7	69.0	95.8%	
• Internal allocations *	14.1	10.8	14.6%	

This graph shows the sources of externally restricted cash, cash equivalents and investments.

In 2024-25 the Council's main sources of externally restricted cash, cash equivalents and investments include:

- developer contributions of $54.3 million which increased by $12.4 million due to higher levels of development activity in the local government area
- unexpended grants of $30.0 million which increased by $12.7 million (73.7%) mainly due to the $15.0 million capital grants received for the Wollombi Road project
- waste depot, rehabilitation and domestic waste management charges of $7.2 million, consistent with last year.



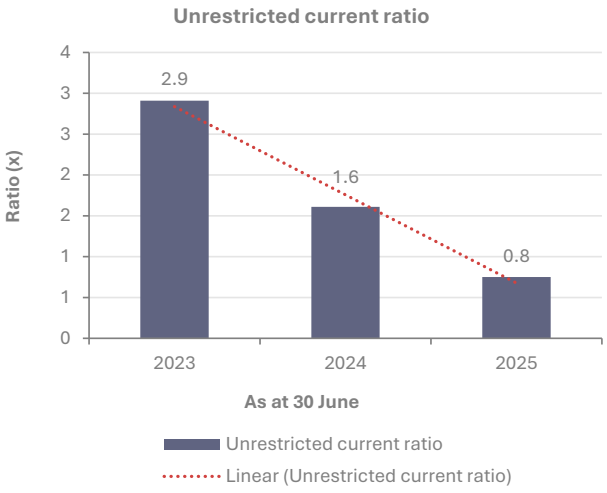
Unrestricted current ratio

This graph shows the Council's unrestricted current ratio for the current and prior two financial years.

The unrestricted current ratio is specific to local government and represents council's ability to meet its short-term obligations as they fall due. The ratio measures the ratio of unrestricted current assets to specific purpose liabilities.

In 2023-24, the average unrestricted current ratio was an average of 3.1x for regional councils.

The 2024-25 ratio was impacted by the negative unrestricted and unallocated cash of $10.1 million, and the increase in unspent grants and contributions due to additional funding received for the Wollombi Road project.

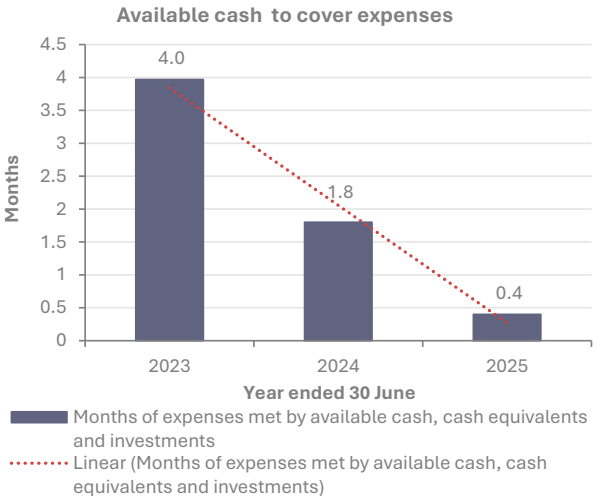


This graph shows the number of months of general fund expenses (excluding depreciation and borrowing costs), Council can fund from its available cash, cash equivalents and investments (not subject to external restrictions).

Further details on cash, cash equivalents and investments including the sources of external restrictions are included in the section above.

In 2023–24, the available cash to cover expenses was an average of 7 months for regional councils.

The 2024-25 ratio was impacted by continued decreases in cash and investments not subject to external restrictions and increases in general expenditure.

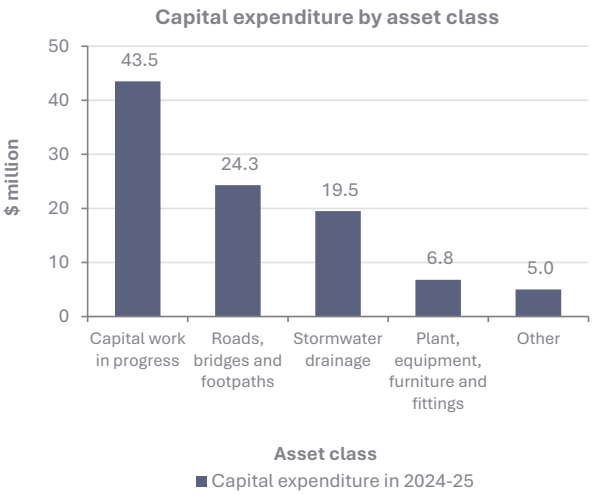


Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

This graph shows how much the Council spent on renewing and purchasing assets in 2024-25.

Council renewed $26.9 million of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment during the 2023-24 financial year, and a further $72.1 million on new assets. These were mainly for road infrastructure, stormwater drainage and plant and equipment assets.

Included in the above is $26.4 million of stormwater drainage, roads, bridges and footpath assets, which were contributed to the Council for no consideration.



Debt

The table below provides an overview of the Council's loans and committed borrowing facilities. Committed borrowing facilities are an element of liquidity management and include bank overdrafts, and credit cards.

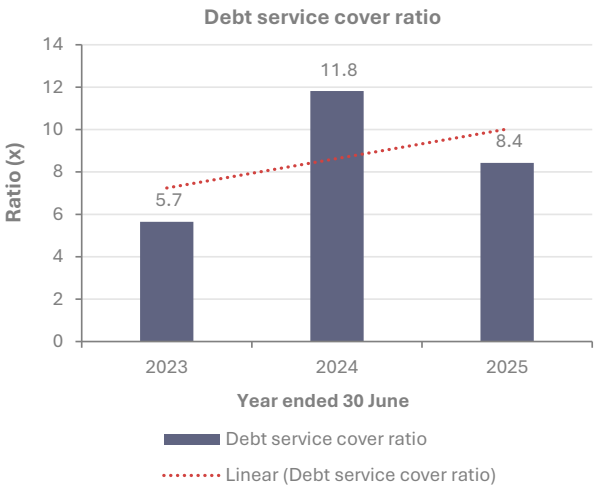
Debt	2025	2024	Commentary
	$m	$m	
Loans	19.7	7.1	Loan facilities of $13.6 million were drawn down during 2024-25 for works on Council's waste facility, bridges and pathways, and flood mitigation programs.
Approved overdraft facility	1.0	1.0	--
Amount drawn down	--	--	
Credit card facility	0.1	0.1	--
Amount drawn down	--	--	

Debt service cover

This graph shows the Council's debt service cover ratio for the current and prior two financial years.

The debt service cover ratio measures the operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments.

The 2024-25 ratio was impacted by the decrease in Council's operating result.



Cassie Malone
Director, Financial Audit

Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

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CITY COUNCIL

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SPECIAL
SCHEDULES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

Cessnock City Council

Special Schedules

for the year ended 30 June 2025

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Cessnock City Council

Permissible income for general rates

$ '000	Notes	Calculation 2024/25	**Calculation 2025/26**
Notional general income calculation [1]			
Last year notional general income yield	a	47,943	**51,437**
Plus or minus adjustments [2]	b	904	**1,093**
Notional general income	c = a + b	**48,847**	**52,530**
Permissible income calculation			
Percentage increase	d	5.30%	**4.70%**
Plus percentage increase amount [3]	f = d x (c + e)	2,589	**2,469**
Sub-total	g = (c + e + f)	**51,436**	**54,999**
Plus (or minus) last year's carry forward total	h	15	**14**
Sub-total	j = (h + i)	**15**	**14**
Total permissible income	k = g + j	51,451	**55,013**
Less notional general income yield	l	51,437	**55,018**
Catch-up or (excess) result	m = k – l	14	**(5)**
Carry forward to next year [4]	p = m + n + o	14	**(5)**

Notes

(1) The notional general income will not reconcile with rate income in the financial statements in the corresponding year. The statements are reported on an accrual accounting basis which include amounts that relate to prior years' rates income.

(2) Adjustments account for changes in the number of assessments and any increase or decrease in land value occurring during the year. The adjustments are called 'supplementary valuations' as defined in the *Valuation of Land Act 1916 (NSW)*.

(3) The 'percentage increase' is inclusive of the rate-peg percentage, and/or special variation and/or Crown land adjustment (where applicable).

(4) Carry-forward amounts which are in excess (an amount that exceeds the permissible income) require Ministerial approval by order published in the *NSW Government Gazette* in accordance with section 512 of the Act. The OLG will extract these amounts from Council's Permissible income for general rates Statement in the financial data return (FDR) to administer this process.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Special Schedule – Permissible income for general rates

Cessnock City Council

To the Councillors of Cessnock City Council

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying Special Schedule – Permissible income for general rates (the Schedule) of Cessnock City Council (the Council) for the year ending 30 June 2026.

In my opinion, the Schedule is prepared, in all material respects in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting 2024–25 (LG Code) and is in accordance with the books and records of the Council.

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under the standards are described in the 'Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Schedule' section of my report.

I am independent of the Council in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Australian Auditing Standards
- Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 'Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)' (APES 110).

Parliament promotes independence by ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their roles by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of councils
- precluding the Auditor-General from providing non-audit services.

I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with APES 110.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

Without modifying my opinion, I draw attention to the special purpose framework used to prepare the Schedule. The Schedule has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Council's reporting obligations under the LG Code. As a result, the Schedule may not be suitable for another purpose.

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GPO Box 12, Sydney NSW 2001 | t 02 9275 7101 | mail@audit.nsw.gov.au | audit.nsw.gov.au

Other Information

The Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025 includes other information in addition to the Schedule and my Independent Auditor's Report thereon. The Councillors are responsible for the other information. At the date of this Independent Auditor's Report, the other information I have received comprise the general purpose financial statements and Special Schedule 'Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2025.

My opinion on the Schedule does not cover the other information. Accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion on the other information. However, as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*, I have separately expressed an opinion on the general purpose financial statements.

In connection with my audit of the Schedule, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the Schedule or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude there is a material misstatement of the other information, I must report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

The Councillors' Responsibilities for the Schedule

The Councillors are responsible for the preparation of the Schedule in accordance with the LG Code. The Councillors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the Schedule that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the Schedule, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Schedule

My objectives are to:

- obtain reasonable assurance whether the Schedule as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- issue an Independent Auditor's Report including my opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but does not guarantee an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect material misstatements. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions users take based on the Schedule.

A description of my responsibilities for the audit of the Schedule is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar8.pdf. The description forms part of my auditor's report.

The scope of my audit does not include, nor provide assurance:

- that the Council carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited Schedule on any website where it may be presented
- about any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the Schedule.



Cassie Malone
Director, Financial Audit

Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

28 October 2025
SYDNEY

Cessnock City Council

Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2025

Asset Class	Asset Category	Estimated cost to bring assets to satisfactory standard $ '000	Estimated cost to bring to the agreed level of service set by Council $ '000	2024/25 Required maintenance [a] $ '000	2024/25 Actual maintenance $ '000	Net carrying amount $ '000	Gross replacement cost (GRC) $ '000	Assets in condition as a percentage of gross replacement cost 1	2	3	4	5
Buildings	Buildings	15,014	45,118	1,765	1,451	86,272	168,581	12.7%	15.4%	41.3%	24.4%	6.2%
	Sub-total	**15,014**	**45,118**	**1,765**	**1,451**	**86,272**	**168,581**	**12.7%**	**15.4%**	**41.3%**	**24.4%**	**6.2%**
Roads	Sealed roads	23,362	106,767	8,598	8,346	495,647	723,202	33.8%	22.4%	36.2%	6.1%	1.6%
	Unsealed roads	3,547	11,368	2,218	1,596	63,702	86,248	48.5%	17.9%	26.0%	3.0%	4.7%
	Bridges	277	1,577	551	258	136,837	148,233	75.6%	22.0%	2.0%	0.2%	0.3%
	Footpaths	414	2,031	918	68	81,564	90,588	68.5%	23.9%	5.7%	1.7%	0.1%
	Other road assets	328	1,550	1,241	218	203,949	212,511	88.4%	9.2%	1.8%	0.5%	0.1%
	Sub-total	**27,928**	**123,293**	**13,526**	**10,486**	**981,699**	**1,260,782**	**51.4%**	**19.9%**	**23.5%**	**3.9%**	**1.3%**
Stormwater drainage	Stormwater drainage	725	6,599	858	448	211,179	240,466	63.2%	25.7%	10.4%	0.5%	0.2%
	Sub-total	**725**	**6,599**	**858**	**448**	**211,179**	**240,466**	**63.2%**	**25.7%**	**10.4%**	**0.5%**	**0.2%**
Open space / recreational assets	Open Space	3,446	9,523	3,832	4,019	43,742	63,526	39.9%	20.2%	23.1%	13.6%	3.3%
	Swimming Pools	230	1,650	309	297	3,191	6,455	0.0%	2.8%	94.7%	2.6%	0.0%
	Sub-total	**3,676**	**11,173**	**4,141**	**4,316**	**46,933**	**69,981**	**36.2%**	**18.6%**	**29.7%**	**12.5%**	**3.0%**
Other infrastructure assets	Other	79	169	288	293	15,663	15,941	97.3%	0.1%	1.4%	0.5%	0.7%
	Sub-total	**79**	**169**	**288**	**293**	**15,663**	**15,941**	**97.3%**	**0.1%**	**1.4%**	**0.5%**	**0.7%**
	Total – all assets	**47,422**	**186,352**	**20,578**	**16,994**	**1,341,746**	**1,755,751**	**49.1%**	**20.1%**	**23.4%**	**5.8%**	**1.6%**

[a] Required maintenance is the amount identified in Council's asset management plans (excluding operational costs).

Infrastructure asset condition assessment 'key'

#	Condition	Integrated planning and reporting (IP&R) description
1	**Excellent/very good**	No work required (normal maintenance)
2	**Good**	Only minor maintenance work required
3	**Satisfactory**	Maintenance work required
4	**Poor**	Renewal required
5	**Very poor**	Urgent renewal/upgrading required

Cessnock City Council

Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2025

Infrastructure asset performance indicators (consolidated) *

$ '000	Amounts 2025	Indicator 2025	Indicators 2024	Indicators 2023	Benchmark
Buildings and infrastructure renewals ratio					
Asset renewals [1, 2] / Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	47,344 / 23,366	202.62%	329.31%	181.96%	> 100.00%
Infrastructure backlog ratio					
Estimated cost to bring assets to a satisfactory standard / Net carrying amount of infrastructure assets [2]	47,422 / 1,402,587	3.38%	3.27%	3.08%	< 2.00%
Asset maintenance ratio					
Actual asset maintenance / Required asset maintenance	16,994 / 20,578	82.58%	123.02%	117.02%	> 100.00%
Cost to bring assets to agreed service level					
Estimated cost to bring assets to an agreed service level set by Council / Gross replacement cost	186,352 / 1,755,751	10.61%	32.89%	17.92%	

(*) All asset performance indicators are calculated using classes identified in the previous table.

(1) Asset renewals represent the replacement and/or refurbishment of existing assets to an equivalent capacity/performance as opposed to the acquisition of new assets (or the refurbishment of old assets) that increases capacity/performance.

(2) As per the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting 2020/21, WIP is now included in the applicable ratios.

Cessnock City Council

Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2025

Buildings and infrastructure renewals ratio



Buildings and infrastructure renewals ratio	Commentary on result
	24/25 ratio 202.62%
To assess the rate at which these assets are being renewed relative to the rate at which they are depreciating.	

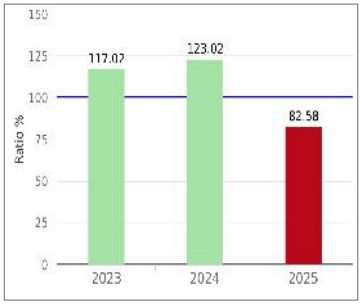
Benchmark: — > 100.00%

Source of benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

Ratio achieves benchmark

Ratio is outside benchmark

Asset maintenance ratio



Asset maintenance ratio	Commentary on result
	24/25 ratio 82.58%
Compares actual vs. required annual asset maintenance. A ratio above 1.0 indicates Council is investing enough funds to stop the infrastructure backlog growing.	

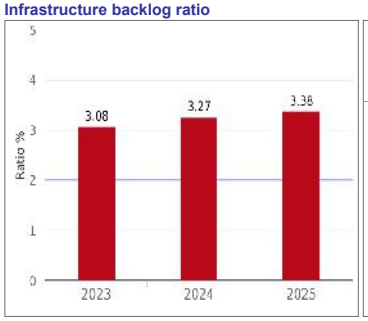
Benchmark: — > 100.00%

Source of benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

Ratio achieves benchmark

Ratio is outside benchmark

Infrastructure backlog ratio



Infrastructure backlog ratio	Commentary on result
	24/25 ratio 3.38%
This ratio shows what proportion the backlog is against the total value of a Council's infrastructure.	

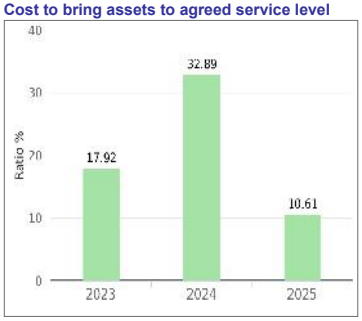
Benchmark: — < 2.00%

Source of benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

Ratio achieves benchmark

Ratio is outside benchmark

Cost to bring assets to agreed service level



Cost to bring assets to agreed service level	Commentary on result
	24/25 ratio 10.61%
This ratio provides a snapshot of the proportion of outstanding renewal works compared to the total value of assets under Council's care and stewardship.	

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Financial Hardship Policy

Last Adopted: **TBA** Revision: **5**

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1 OBJECTIVES

1.1 Council recognises there are cases of genuine financial hardship requiring respect and compassion in special circumstances. This policy establishes guidelines for assessment of payment assistance applications applying the principles of social justice, fairness, integrity, appropriate confidentiality, and compliance with relevant statutory requirements. It applies to all applications for waiving, deferment and alternative payment arrangements, or writing off of rates, fees, annual charges and interest accrued on such debts.

1.2 This policy provides a framework for responding to applications from owners/ratepayers and customers experiencing genuine hardship with the payment of their rates, annual charges and fees in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) (Act) and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (NSW) (Regulation).

2 SCOPE

2.1 This policy applies to all ratepayers and debtors of Council, and Council staff that implement this policy.

3 HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE TO RATEPAYERS AND CUSTOMERS

3.1 A ratepayer may be eligible for consideration for hardship assistance in the payment of overdue rates, annual charges, interest and fees, where:

3.1.1 the person is unable to pay due rates, annual charges, interest and fees when due and payable for reasons beyond the person's control; or

3.1.2 payment when due would cause the person hardship.

3.2 The Act provides for the following assistance to ratepayers and customers who may experience hardship in some circumstances in paying rates, annual charges and fees:

3.2.1 Periodical payment arrangements for overdue rates and charges.

3.2.2 Writing off or reducing interest accrued on rates or charges.

3.2.3 Waiving, reducing or deferring the payment of the increase in the amount of rate payable because of hardship resulting from general revaluation of land in the Cessnock Local Government Area (**LGA**).

3.2.4 Waiving, or reducing rates, charges and interest of eligible pensioners.

3.2.5 Waiving or reducing Council fees when the inability to pay is due to hardship.

3.2.6 Postponing rates for properties that are used differently from how they are zoned.

3.3 Council will consider applications for assistance in accordance with the following principles:

3.3.1 Council will individually assess cases of financial hardship.

3.3.2 Council may reduce rates or annual charges, but will consider alternative available approaches to dealing with cases of financial hardship.

3.3.3 Council may consider a scheme of periodical payment outside the due dates in cases of hardship or extenuating circumstances.

3.4 Applications for hardship must be made in the prescribed form:

3.4.1 The applicant must be the person who is liable for the rates on the property.

3.4.2 The property to which the hardship application applies must be categorised as residential or farmland for rating purposes.

3.4.3 The property to which the hardship application applies must be the principal place of residence of the applicant/s.

3.5 The application for hardship must be accompanied with supporting documentation which may include but is not limited to:

3.5.1 Reasons why the person was unable to pay the rates and charges when they became due and payable.

3.5.2 Copy of recent bank statements for all accounts.

3.5.3 Details of income and expenditure.

3.5.4 Letter from a recognised financial counsellor or financial planner confirming financial hardship.

3.5.5 Letter from a medical professional confirming medical conditions causing hardship.

3.5.6 Evidence that the hardship will have a detrimental effect on the applicant's tenant, where applicable.

3.6 Council may request the applicant to attend an interview to assist Council in the understanding of the issues causing hardship.

4 HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE BY PERIODICAL PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Council may enter into a formal agreement with a ratepayer eligible for alternative periodical payment arrangements for due and payable rates and charges.

4.2 Council or the ratepayer may initiate a proposal for a periodical payment agreement. In accordance with section 568 of the Act, payments will be applied towards the payment of rates and charges in the order in which they become due.

4.3 The following guidelines should be met in determining eligibility:

4.3.1 Payments must be made on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis.

4.3.2 Arranged payments must be of an amount so that all amounts owing are paid in full by a mutually satisfactory timeframe as agreed by Council and the ratepayer.

4.3.3 Extenuating circumstances may be considered if either of the above two conditions cannot be met, however such applications must be referred to the Finance Coordinator or Chief Financial Officer for approval.

4.4 Financial details of the ratepayer including income/outgoings may be required.

4.5 A hardship arrangement may be cancelled if the ratepayer fails to comply with their payment plan, or provides false or misleading evidence of financial hardship to Council.

5 HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE BY WRITING OFF ACCRUED INTEREST AND COSTS

5.1 Council applies interest to overdue rates in accordance with section 566 of the Act. However, Council may write off accrued interest and costs on rates or charges payable by a person under section 567 of the Act and the Regulation where:

5.1.1 Payment of the accrued interest would cause the person hardship.

5.1.2 The person was unable to pay rates or charges when they become due for reasons beyond the person's control. For example, where a medical condition that would cause hardship.

5.2 Council may write off interest and costs in accordance with section 567(c) of the Act under the following circumstances:

5.2.1 The ratepayer is experiencing genuine hardship. In such cases, Council may request the completion of a hardship application.

5.2.2 The ratepayer is a "first-time" defaulter, has previously had a good payment record and

there are mitigating circumstances.

5.2.3 Prolonged or serious illness has prevented the ratepayer meeting their financial obligations to Council.

5.2.4 The ratepayer has complied with all criteria with respect to a section 564 periodic payment agreement.

5.2.5 Council is satisfied that the circumstances giving rise to the default are temporary.

6 HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE DUE TO CERTAIN VALUATIONS CHANGES

6.1 Under section 601 of the Act, any ratepayer who incurs a rate increase following a new valuation of land values may apply to Council for rate relief in the first year the valuation is used for rating purposes, if the new rate payable causes the ratepayer to suffer substantial hardship.

6.2 Notwithstanding the above, Council acknowledges that land valuations are independently determined by the Valuer General under the Valuation of Land Act 1916 (NSW) and that Council has no authority to amend those valuations. Where a ratepayer believes that a new valuation is incorrect, Council will encourage them to seek a review through the appeal provisions of that Act.

6.3 While Council cannot alter valuations, it recognises that sudden valuation-related rate increases may cause short-term financial stress. In such cases, Council may provide temporary hardship assistance in accordance with this policy to help affected ratepayers adjust to the changed circumstances.

6.4 Assistance under this clause will only apply in the first rating year that new valuations are introduced.

6.5 To be eligible for consideration, the applicant must:

6.5.1 be the owner and occupier of the property as their principal place of residence;

6.5.2 hold the property in a residential, rural residential or farmland (excludes Farmland Mixed Use and Business Rural) rating category;

6.5.3 demonstrate the total ordinary rates payable for the current rating year have increased by at least 5% or more compared with the previous year**,** solely as a result of the change in land valuation determined by the Valuer General, and not due to any increase from the IPART-approved rate peg or Council's Special Rate Variation (SRV).

6.6 Assistance will be one half of the ordinary rate increase up to a maximum of $200.

For example, the ordinary rates for the previous financial year were $2,000, and the IPART approved rate peg increase for the current year is 5%, the expected rate amount would be $2,100. If following the latest land revaluation, the actual rates for the current year is $2,500, the valuation increase is 20% which is exceeding the 5% threshold. In this case, the ratepayer may be eligible to apply for a temporary hardship assistance under this section, subject to meeting other criteria in the Policy.

6.7 No assistance will be given for the domestic waste management charges, Hunter Catchment Contribution or other charges.

6.8 The maximum amount of assistance in aggregate for all rate payers will be $20,000.

6.9 Applications will be considered in the order in which they are received by Council. No further applications will be considered once the aggregate annual amount of $20,000 has reached.

6.10 In addition, it is considered that Council has maximised its scope under the Act to adopt a rating structure that cushions the impact of any change in valuations on rates.

7 HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE BY DEFERRING RATES AND CHARGES FOR AGED PENSIONERS

7.1 Aged pensioner ratepayers experiencing ongoing financial hardship may apply to have the payment of their rates and annual charges deferred. If granted, payment of the deferred rates, annual charges will be postponed until one of the following occurs:

7.1.1 The property is sold.

7.1.2 The ownership of the property changes.

7.1.3 The applicant ceases to occupy the property as their principal place of residence.

7.1.4 The applicant passes away, in which case the deferred amount will be payable from the estate.

7.2 To be eligible for consideration, the following criteria must generally be met:

7.2.1 The applicant must be an aged pensioner as defined by Centrelink in receipt of a pensioner rate concession in relation to the property.

7.2.2 The applicant must be the person liable for the rates and charges.

7.2.3 The property must be categorised as residential, rural residential or farmland (excludes Farmland Mixed Use and Business Rural) for rating purposes.

7.2.4 The property must be the applicant's principal place of residence.

7.2.5 The property can have no more than a single dwelling house or residential unit erected upon it.

7.2.6 The applicant must provide a letter from a recognised financial counsellor or financial planner confirming financial hardship and demonstrate that immediate payment would cause substantial financial detriment.

7.2.7 The total annual amount of rates and charges (net of pensioner concession) payable must be more than 10% of the age pension of an individual (if the rate payer is an individual) or 10% of the age pension of the a couple (if the ratepayer is a couple) at the date of the initial application.

7.3 Interest will continue to accrue on the outstanding balance at the rate determined annually under the Local Government Act 1993 (s566). Deferred rates, charges or interest accrued on it will not be written off under this Policy.

7.4 An approved deferral will be reviewed annually to confirm that eligibility criteria remain satisfied. The applicant must respond to Council's requests for updated information within the timeframe specified by Council. Failure to meet this requirement may result in the cancellation of the deferral arrangement.

8 HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE FOR NON-PENSIONERS

8.1 Council recognises that some non-pensioner ratepayers may experience short-term financial hardship but are not eligible for pensioner rebates or other statutory concessions. To provide targeted relief, Council may establish a Rates Assistance Program to offer limited financial assistance under the conditions set out in this section.

8.2 The Rates Assistance Program is designed to complement Council's existing hardship provisions and provide equitable support to households facing temporary affordability pressures, such as illness, or unexpected personal or economic circumstances.

8.3 Eligible applicants must:

8.3.1 be the owner and occupier of the property as their principal place of residence;

8.3.2 be non-pensioner ratepayers (i.e. not receiving a pensioner rebate under section 575 of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*);

8.3.3 demonstrate genuine financial hardship through documentation or a written assessment from a qualified financial counsellor.

8.4 Assistance will be provided as a once-off credit to the rate account, up to a maximum of $250 per assessment per financial year, applied against ordinary rates and accrued interest. No assistance will be provided for domestic waste management charges, the Hunter Catchment Contribution, or any other non-rate fees and charges.

8.5 The total aggregate amount of assistance available under this program in any financial year will be capped at $15,000. Applications will be considered in the order they are received. Once the annual cap is reached, no further applications will be approved for that year.

8.6 Ratepayers must complete the prescribed application form through an accredited financial counsellor. Council may seek confirmation of circumstances from the counsellor before making a determination.

8.7 All applications will be assessed by authorised Council officers under delegated authority, and a written decision will be provided to the applicant.

9 HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE IN RELATION TO COUNCIL FEES

9.1 The General Manager will have the delegated authority to make decisions in relation to the waiving or reducing of fees up to the amount of $3,000. For amounts over $3,000 the decision must be a resolution made by the elected Council.

9.2 Any application for hardship assistance in relation to Council fees or charges other than annual charges by waiving or reducing fees under section 610(E) of the Act will be assessed in accordance with the same eligibility criteria used to assess hardship assistance in respect to rates and annual charges.

10 GENERAL

10.1 Financial hardship cases will remain strictly confidential. Personal information collected as a consequence of this policy will only be used for the purpose of assessing eligibility under the policy and will not be used for any other purpose or disclosed to any other person unless required by law to do so or authorised to do so by the person to whom the personal information relates.

10.2 All hardship applications shall be determined in accordance with Council delegations.

10.3 All hardship applicants shall be advised in writing of Council's decision within thirty (30) days of receipt of the application.

10.4 Council provides additional support to pensioners on their annual rates and domestic waste management charges which is outlined in Granting of Council's Rebate Contribution on Pensioner Rates Policy.

11 RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

11.1 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for compliance with this policy and its review.

Privacy

11.2 Privacy will be maintained in accordance with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW) and other relevant legislation.

Records management

11.3 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in accordance with Council's Records Management Policy.

Complaint Handling

11.4 Any complaints under this policy will be managed in accordance with Council's Complaint Handling Policy.

12 RIGHT OF APPEAL

12.1 Where a ratepayer is not satisfied with the outcome of their application for hardship, they can request a review of that outcome by writing to the Chief Financial Officer.

12.2 A panel comprising the Revenue Team Leader, Finance Coordinator, and the Chief Financial Officer will then review the hardship application and the original outcome, and make recommendations.

13 POLICY DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Act	means the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW).
Council	means Cessnock City Council.
Council Official	includes Councillors, members of staff (permanent, casual or temporary), Council advisors, administrators, Council committee members, volunteers and delegates of Council.
Hardship	means any situation where an individual is having difficulty paying legally owed debt. This can result from life changes (for example, because of illness, unemployment or changed financial circumstances) restricting the short-term capacity to pay.

14 POLICY AUTHORISATIONS

No.	Authorised Function	Authorised Business Unit / Role(s)
	Day to day management of Council's hardship claims.	Debt Management Officer
	Authority to determine 'Financial Hardship applications' received by Council	Finance Coordinator
	Make recommendations regarding requests for review of outcome for Financial Hardship applications	Payment Assistance Panel
	Consider the Payment Assistance Panel's recommendations for review of hardship applications, and making a determination accordingly	Chief Financial Officer

15 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate	Corporate and Community Services
Responsible Officer	Chief Finance Officer

Financial Hardship Policy

Associated Procedure	N/A		
Policy Review Date	<<Enter text…>> [Actual date - three years from date of adoption unless legislated otherwise]	**Is this a local policy pursuant to Part 3, Chapter 7 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)?**	**No**
Document Reference Number	<<Enter text…>> [To be updated by Governance upon finalisation of Policy]		
This policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation: – Sections 564, 567, 575, 582, 601, 610E, *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) – *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (NSW) – *Valuation of Land Act 1916* (NSW) – Office of Local Government – Debt Management and Hardship Guidelines - November 2018			
This policy contributes to the achievement of the following desired outcome or objectives as per Council's Delivery Program: – Objective 5.3 Making Council more responsive to the community			
Related Documents (include reference document numbers)	▪ Records Management Policy (DOC2019/038769) ▪ Complaints Handling Policy (DOC2018/048382) ▪ Privacy Management Plan (DOC2014/005148) ▪ Council's Rebate Contribution on Pensioner Rates Policy (DOC2014/002628)		

16 POLICY HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	21/06/2017	Creation of policy and adoption at Council Meeting 21 June 2017
2	16/04/2020	Review and update to the new template
3	15 July 2020 (CC59/2020)	Review and adopted by Council
4	19 June 2024 (CC37/2024)	Periodic review and adoption by Council.
5	19 November 2025 (CCxx/2025)	Update to new policy template. Policy reviewed to include additional assistance as a part of Special Rate Variation application program. Three changes made: 1. Additional information on Hardship Assistance due to valuation changes 2. Hardship assistance by deferral for pensioners 3. Hardship assistance for non-pensioners.

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Financial Hardship Policy

Last Adopted: **TBA** Revision: **5**

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6.5.2 hold the property in a residential, rural residential or farmland (excludes Farmland Mixed Use and Business Rural) rating category;

6.5.3 demonstrate the total ordinary rates payable for the current rating year have increased by at least 5% or more compared with the previous year**,** solely as a result of the change in land valuation determined by the Valuer General, and not due to any increase from the IPART-approved rate peg or Council's Special Rate Variation (SRV).

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For example, the ordinary rates for the previous financial year were $2,000, and the IPART approved rate peg increase for the current year is 5%, the expected rate amount would be $2,100. If following the latest land revaluation, the actual rates for the current year is $2,500, the valuation increase is 20% which is exceeding the 5% threshold. In this case, the ratepayer may be eligible to apply for a temporary hardship assistance under this section, subject to meeting other criteria in the Policy.

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7.1.2 The ownership of the property changes.

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7.1.4 The applicant passes away, in which case the deferred amount will be payable from the estate.

7.2 To be eligible for consideration, the following criteria must generally be met:

7.2.1 The applicant must be an aged pensioner as defined by Centrelink in receipt of a pensioner rate concession in relation to the property.

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7.2.7 The total annual amount of rates and charges (net of pensioner concession) payable must be more than 10% of the age pension of an individual (if the rate payer is an individual) or 10% of the age pension of the a couple (if the ratepayer is a couple) at the date of the initial application.

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8 HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE FOR NON-PENSIONERS

8.1 Council recognises that some non-pensioner ratepayers may experience short-term financial hardship but are not eligible for pensioner rebates or other statutory concessions. To provide targeted relief, Council may establish a Rates Assistance Program to offer limited financial assistance under the conditions set out in this section.

8.2 The Rates Assistance Program is designed to complement Council's existing hardship provisions and provide equitable support to households facing temporary affordability pressures, such as illness, or unexpected personal or economic circumstances.

8.3 Eligible applicants must:

8.3.1 be the owner and occupier of the property as their principal place of residence;

8.3.2 be non-pensioner ratepayers (i.e. not receiving a pensioner rebate under section 575 of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*);

8.3.3 demonstrate genuine financial hardship through documentation or a written assessment from a qualified financial counsellor.

8.4 Assistance will be provided as a once-off credit to the rate account, up to a maximum of $250 per assessment per financial year, applied against ordinary rates and accrued interest. No assistance will be provided for domestic waste management charges, the Hunter Catchment Contribution, or any other non-rate fees and charges.

8.5 The total aggregate amount of assistance available under this program in any financial year will be capped at $15,000. Applications will be considered in the order they are received. Once the annual cap is reached, no further applications will be approved for that year.

8.6 Ratepayers must complete the prescribed application form through an accredited financial counsellor. Council may seek confirmation of circumstances from the counsellor before making a determination.

8.7 All applications will be assessed by authorised Council officers under delegated authority, and a written decision will be provided to the applicant.

9 HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE IN RELATION TO COUNCIL FEES

9.1 The General Manager will have the delegated authority to make decisions in relation to the waiving or reducing of fees up to the amount of $3,000. For amounts over $3,000 the decision must be a resolution made by the elected Council.

9.2 Any application for hardship assistance in relation to Council fees or charges other than annual charges by waiving or reducing fees under section 610(E) of the Act will be assessed in accordance with the same eligibility criteria used to assess hardship assistance in respect to rates and annual charges.

10 GENERAL

10.1 Financial hardship cases will remain strictly confidential. Personal information collected as a consequence of this policy will only be used for the purpose of assessing eligibility under the policy and will not be used for any other purpose or disclosed to any other person unless required by law to do so or authorised to do so by the person to whom the personal information relates.

10.2 All hardship applications shall be determined in accordance with Council delegations.

10.3 All hardship applicants shall be advised in writing of Council's decision within thirty (30) days of receipt of the application.

10.4 Council provides additional support to pensioners on their annual rates and domestic waste management charges which is outlined in Granting of Council's Rebate Contribution on Pensioner Rates Policy.

11 RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

11.1 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for compliance with this policy and its review.

Privacy

11.2 Privacy will be maintained in accordance with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW) and other relevant legislation.

Records management

11.3 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in accordance with Council's Records Management Policy.

Complaint Handling

11.4 Any complaints under this policy will be managed in accordance with Council's Complaint Handling Policy.

12 RIGHT OF APPEAL

12.1 Where a ratepayer is not satisfied with the outcome of their application for hardship, they can request a review of that outcome by writing to the Chief Financial Officer.

12.2 A panel comprising the Revenue Team Leader, Finance Coordinator, and the Chief Financial Officer will then review the hardship application and the original outcome, and make recommendations.

13 POLICY DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Act	means the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW).
Council	means Cessnock City Council.
Council Official	includes Councillors, members of staff (permanent, casual or temporary), Council advisors, administrators, Council committee members, volunteers and delegates of Council.
Hardship	means any situation where an individual is having difficulty paying legally owed debt. This can result from life changes (for example, because of illness, unemployment or changed financial circumstances) restricting the short-term capacity to pay.

14 POLICY AUTHORISATIONS

No.	Authorised Function	Authorised Business Unit / Role(s)
	Day to day management of Council's hardship claims.	Debt Management Officer
	Authority to determine 'Financial Hardship applications' received by Council	Finance Coordinator
	Make recommendations regarding requests for review of outcome for Financial Hardship applications	Payment Assistance Panel
	Consider the Payment Assistance Panel's recommendations for review of hardship applications, and making a determination accordingly	Chief Financial Officer

15 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate	Corporate and Community Services
Responsible Officer	Chief Finance Officer

Associated Procedure	N/A		
Policy Review Date	<<Enter text…>> [Actual date - three years from date of adoption unless legislated otherwise]	**Is this a local policy pursuant to Part 3, Chapter 7 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)?**	**No**
Document Reference Number	<<Enter text…>> [To be updated by Governance upon finalisation of Policy]		
This policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation: – Sections 564, 567, 575, 582, 601, 610E, *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) – *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (NSW) – *Valuation of Land Act 1916* (NSW) – Office of Local Government – Debt Management and Hardship Guidelines - November 2018			
This policy contributes to the achievement of the following desired outcome or objectives as per Council's Delivery Program: – Objective 5.3 Making Council more responsive to the community			
Related Documents (include reference document numbers)	▪ Records Management Policy (DOC2019/038769) ▪ Complaints Handling Policy (DOC2018/048382) ▪ Privacy Management Plan (DOC2014/005148) ▪ Council's Rebate Contribution on Pensioner Rates Policy (DOC2014/002628)		

16 POLICY HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	21/06/2017	Creation of policy and adoption at Council Meeting 21 June 2017
2	16/04/2020	Review and update to the new template
3	15 July 2020 (CC59/2020)	Review and adopted by Council
4	19 June 2024 (CC37/2024)	Periodic review and adoption by Council.
5	19 November 2025 (CCxx/2025)	Update to new policy template. Policy reviewed to include additional assistance as a part of Special Rate Variation application program. Three changes made: 1. Additional information on Hardship Assistance due to valuation changes 2. Hardship assistance by deferral for pensioners 3. Hardship assistance for non-pensioners.

DRAFT

Division:
Committee: Ordinary Council
Officer:

Date From:
Date To:

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Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
WI2/2021	Ordinary Council 17/02/2021	Waghorn, Peter	Works and Infrastructure	Sale of Land to Bellbird Bowling Club	19/12/2025	
1571		Maginnity, Robert				

MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor Dunn ***Seconded:*** Councillor Fitzgibbon
1571
RESOLVED

1. **That Council authorises the General Manager to undertake the process to reclassify the seven metre strip of land along the southern boundary of the Bellbird Park Bowling Club from Community to Operational.**
2. **That Council agrees to sell the subject parcel of land once reclassified to Bellbird Park Bowling Club at the nominal cost of one dollar ($1.00) provided the Bellbird Park Bowling Club fund associated costs for the land transfer.**
3. **That Council authorises the General Manager to execute documents related to the reclassification and transfer of land between Cessnock City Council and the Bellbird Park Bowling Club.**

04 Mar 2021 11:58am Benson, Nicole - Reallocation
Action reassigned to Rathborne, Michael by Benson, Nicole - Michael please commence the actions as per the resolution. Liaise with my team if required. Thanks

24 Mar 2021 4:49pm Keegan, Robyn - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Keegan, Robyn from 17 March 2021 to 30 June 2021 - Information sent to surveyor for the club to prepare and lodge forms,

29 Mar 2021 4:04pm Rathborne, Michael - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Rathborne, Michael from 30 June 2021 to 30 August 2021 - Surveyor preparing documents for registration.

28 Apr 2021 10:33am Rathborne, Michael - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Rathborne, Michael from 30 June 2021 to 30 September 2021 - Pending survey and documentation being prepared by surveyor.

25 Jun 2021 12:30pm Keegan, Robyn - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Keegan, Robyn from 30 September 2021 to 31 December 2021 - Bellbird Park Bowling Club has taken responsibility for survey registration. Further work by Council Property Services to effect the transfer of land is deferred pending Strategic Property obtaining Council approval for a site-specific planning proposal to reclassify the land.

02 Sep 2021 3:11pm Keegan, Robyn - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Keegan, Robyn from 31 December 2021 to 31 December 2021 - Peter Waghorn advised that there is no further update.

26 Oct 2021 2:19pm Keegan, Robyn - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Keegan, Robyn from 31 December 2021 to 21 January 2022 - Advised by Chief Financial & Administration Officer no update was available but will investigate.

25 Jan 2022 10:12am Waghorn, Peter
In accordance with the resolution, Bellbird Park Bowling Club management are responsible for organising and registering the survey of land to be acquired but are yet to do so. A registered plan and reclassification of the land are required before the land transfer can be transacted.

29 Mar 2022 7:55am Boughton-Ingham, Petra
28 Mar 2022 Peter Waghorn, [Confidential]: BPBC's Secretary Manager was contacted with an offer of assistance and advised that the club had not sought quotes for land survey work to date due to their financial situation. As the cost of a partial survey is not anticipated to be high, Council Officers contacted a local surveyor on the club's behalf and was told that the previous Board had engaged Marshall Scott Surveyors to prepare a plan and the draft was sent to the club last year. MSS is following up directly with club management.

12 Apr 2022 10:21am Keegan, Robyn - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Keegan, Robyn from 21 January 2022 to 15 June 2022 - The Bellbird Park Bowling Club Secretary Manager was contacted with an offer of assistance and advised that the club had not sought quotes for land survey work due to a recent change of voluntary board membership. Council Officers contacted a local surveyor on the club's behalf and were advised that the previous Board had engaged Marshall Scott Surveyors to prepare a plan and the draft was sent to the club last year. Principal of Marshall Scott Surveyors is following up with the new club management directly.

28 Apr 2022 3:32pm Waghorn, Peter
Mark Scott of Marshall Scott Surveyors is still following up with the new club Secretary Manager regarding a survey plan previously prepared and sent to the Club in draft for their review.

26 May 2022 9:22am Waghorn, Peter

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Bellbird Park Bowling Club officials have confirmed that Marshall Scott Surveyors were engaged by the previous Board to prepare a plan of acquisition. Once the draft plan is provided to Council for review and verification, the process to reclassify the identified portion of Bellbird Park can be commenced. Transfer of the land to the Club can only be effected on gazettal of the reclassification.

26 May 2022 9:50am Waghorn, Peter - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Waghorn, Peter from 15 June 2022 to 30 December 2022 - The planning proposal to amend the LEP and reclassify a portion of Bellbird Park is a lengthy process and yet be commenced. Transferring ownership to the Club is deferred pending gazettal of the land reclassification for Community to Operational land.

30 Jun 2022 3:12pm Waghorn, Peter
An LEP amendment request to reclassify the portion of Bellbird Park the Club requires has been scheduled with Strategic Planning.

28 Jul 2022 2:49pm Waghorn, Peter
A survey plan prepared by Marshall Scott Surveyors on behalf of Bellbird Park Bowling Club has been provided to Strategic Planning. A planning proposal requesting amendment of the Cessnock LEP land classification of the nominated portion of Bellbird Park is in progress.

31 Aug 2022 4:46pm Keegan, Robyn
Further updates are subject to progression of a planning proposal to amend the Cessnock LEP and change the community land classification of the nominated portion of Bellbird Park.

25 Nov 2022 3:47pm Waghorn, Peter
Internal Property staff followed up with Marshall Scott Surveyors 24/11/2022 and were advised that the survey plan detailing the area to be acquired by the club and prepared by their firm on behalf of Bellbird Park Bowling Club is yet to be lodged with Land Registry Services for assessment. Council staff actions are deferred pending plan registration and gazettal of the proposed land reclassification.

16 Jan 2023 12:12pm Waghorn, Peter
Property staff visited BPBC on 4/1/2023 to enquire with management as to the status of survey plan approval and were advised that they will follow up with Marshall Scott Surveyors. As at 16/1/2023, Mark Scott of MSS has not been contacted by BPBC.

16 Jan 2023 12:21pm Waghorn, Peter - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Waghorn, Peter from 30 December 2022 to 31 March 2023 - Delayed pending Bellbird Park Bowling Club approval of draft survey plan of acquisition and the outcome of a Council request to reclassify the relevant portion of Carmichael Park to be acquired

03 Apr 2023 10:44am Waghorn, Peter
The Strategic Planning unit has scheduled a report seeking approval to submit the LEP amendment required to reclassify the portion of Bellbird Park the Club requires. Reclassification to operational land is required to facilitate any transfer of council community land. The report will be considered at the April 2023 Ordinary Council Meeting. .

03 Apr 2023 11:11am Waghorn, Peter - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Waghorn, Peter from 31 March 2023 to 30 June 2023 - The report seeking approval to submit an LEP amendment to reclassify the required portion of Bellbird Park is scheduled for the April 2023 OCM. Reclassifications necessarily involve state planning departments and completion of that process cannot be accurately determined at this time.

26 May 2023 3:16pm Waghorn, Peter - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Waghorn, Peter from 30 June 2023 to 31 March 2024 - A planning proposal to amend the Cessnock LEP community land classification of a portion of Carmichael Oval adjoining Bellbird Park Bowling Club was approved for submission to Dept. of Planning & Environment (DPE) on 19 April 2023. Subject to obtaining a DPE Gateway determination to reclassify the land from community to operational use, consultation will be undertaken with public authorities and the community. Unresolved objections must be submitted to Council for consideration before DPE is requested to make the Plan and publish LEP changes in the Government Gazette. This process is anticipated to take six to nine months. On completion, Property staff will prepare contract documentation to transfer the required land.

25 Sep 2023 3:37pm Waghorn, Peter - Email
On 15 September, Officers arranged for surveyors to attend and mark the site, allowing a partially installed fence to be completed along the new boundary with a lockable pedestrian access. Illegal private vehicular use of CCC community land is understood to have been occurring and neighbouring residents will be notified prior to erection of the final stage of fencing. Formal transfer of the land portion to BPBC is subject to land reclassification and the revised target date is still projected as March 2024.

24 Nov 2023 9:41am Waghorn, Peter
No further updates from Property Services pending completion of land reclassification process and subsequent land transfer

28 Mar 2024 11:17am Waghorn, Peter - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Waghorn, Peter from 31 March 2024 to 30 May 2024 - Council's Strategic Planning unit advise the planning proposal seeking to amend the LEP land classification is currently being reviewed by the relevant state government planning department

25 Jun 2024 10:52am Waghorn, Peter - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Waghorn, Peter from 30 May 2024 to 29 November 2024 - On 29/5/2024 Council's Strategic Planner advised Planning proposal PP-2023-1296 to amend Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 (LEP) has received Gateway determination. The advice refers to issues remaining to be addressed and requires the amending LEP to be finalised on or before 6 months of the Gateway determination date.

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27 Nov 2024 4:33pm Waghorn, Peter - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Waghorn, Peter from 29 November 2024 to 31 January 2025 - Department Planning Housing and Infrastructure has endorsed the Planning Proposal to rezone and reclassify the strip of land at Bellbird Park Bowling Club for finalization. Once the public reserve status is removed from title, the portion required by the club can be excised from Carmichael Park and transferred to the Club in accordance with the resolution.

26 Mar 2025 2:27pm Waghorn, Peter - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Waghorn, Peter from 31 January 2025 to 31 March 2025 - Planning Proposal PP-2023-1296 was sent to DPHI for gazettal on 27 November 2024. The Department recently advised to expect further delays associated with the PP dealing with reclassification of land owned by a council.

06 May 2025 3:05pm Waghorn, Peter - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Waghorn, Peter from 31 March 2025 to 30 June 2025 - Planning Proposal PP-2023-1296 to amend Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 (LEP) is still with Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

01 Aug 2025 9:15am Waghorn, Peter - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Waghorn, Peter from 30 June 2025 to 31 October 2025 - It was previously advised the reclassification proposal was sent to the Department of Planning Housing, Planning and Infrastructure (DPHI) for finalisation in November last year. Recent advice from DPHI regarding the extended delay: The proposal is with the Executive Council and must be referred to the NSW Governor for approval prior to finalisation.

21 Oct 2025 10:35am Waghorn, Peter - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Waghorn, Peter from 31 October 2025 to 19 December 2025 - Strategic Planning received formal advice on 13/10/2025 that the land reclassification proposal sent to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) for finalisation in November last year has been approved. The planning proposal sought reclassification of Part of Lot 3 DP 624793 at Carmichael Park, from Community to Operational Land and amendment of land use zone from RE1 Public Recreation to RE2 Private Recreation and Amendment No. 45 to Cessnock Local Environment Plan was Gazetted 10 October 2025.The transfer of land required by the Bellbird Bowling Club can now be processed in accordance with the resolution.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
WI75/2022	Ordinary Council 14/12/2022	McNally, Kate	Works and Infrastructure	Cessnock LGA Hall Booking/Management	31/12/2025	
383		McLachlan, Paul				

MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor Watton ***Seconded:*** Councillor Burke
383
RESOLVED

1. That Council notes the information contained within the report with regard to the implications and resourcing requirements required to overhaul the current practices has adopted relating to hall bookings, maintenance and potential promotions;

2. That Council completes a hall booking trial using the Bookeasy system at four community halls; and

3. That if the hall booking trial is successful, that Council implements the Bookeasy system at all community halls in consultation with the s355 volunteer management committees as resources allow.

16 Jan 2023 4:28pm Eveleigh, Nathan - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Eveleigh, Nathan from 11 January 2023 to 30 June 2023 - Test webpage and platform completed for Bellbird Hall. Officers liaising with BookEasy on some minor amendments required for regular bookings., Additional halls will come online after testing is completed with Bellbird Community Hall as per the Council report.

02 Mar 2023 9:41am Eveleigh, Nathan
BookEasy set-up in final testing phase for Bellbird Community Hall before going live.

27 Mar 2023 11:56am Eveleigh, Nathan
Bellbird Community Hall Bookeasy portal went live on 20/3/2023. Will roll out 3 additional facilities following initial trials and feedback.

28 Jun 2023 11:36am Eveleigh, Nathan
Hunter Valley VIC staff have commenced work on Ellalong & Millfield Community Halls following successful roll-out of the BookEasy online bookings at Bellbird Community Hall for 3 months.

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28 Jun 2023 11:40am Eveleigh, Nathan - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Eveleigh, Nathan from 30 June 2023 to 30 September 2023 - 2 additional halls being set-up. A 4th hall will be added once these two halls are online in the coming months.

25 Aug 2023 8:36am Eveleigh, Nathan - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Eveleigh, Nathan from 30 September 2023 to 20 December 2023 - VIC staff working on 2nd & 3rd hall in consultation with open Space staff and s355 committee's.

01 Mar 2024 11:29am McNally, Kate
1. Noted, 2. The Bookeasy system is in place for Bellbird Hall. Ellalong and Millfield Hall are ready to go live following training and engagement with the s355 committees., 3. To be completed after item 2.

01 Mar 2024 11:31am McNally, Kate - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Harris, Kate from 30 April 2024 to 28 June 2024 - Training must be undertaken with S355 Committee members prior to online bookings progressing.

24 Jun 2024 1:26pm McNally, Kate
1. Noted, 2. The Bookeasy system is in place for Bellbird Hall with Millfield Hall coming on line by the end of July 2024. Ellalong Hall will be the next facility to provide online bookings., 3. To be completed after item 2.

24 Jun 2024 1:29pm McNally, Kate - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Harris, Kate from 28 June 2024 to 30 August 2024 - Council Officers are in the process of transitioning community halls to the online booking system. Millfield Hall will be complete by the end of July and then moving to Ellalong Hall.

30 Oct 2024 1:00pm Dennis, Johanna
Council staff undertook system training with Millfield Hall s355 committee volunteers in August and the booking system has been set up and will go live in November.

30 Oct 2024 1:05pm Dennis, Johanna - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Dennis, Johanna from 30 August 2024 to 31 December 2024 - AGM being held for Ellalong s355 Committee 18 November. New committee will be trained on booking system before implementation.

02 Dec 2024 12:24pm Dennis, Johanna
Booking system for Millfield Hall has gone live and is being utilised.

03 Feb 2025 1:36pm Dennis, Johanna
Booking system for Ellalong Hall is now live. Fourth community hall for online booking system currently being determined in consultation with s355 committees.

03 Feb 2025 1:40pm Dennis, Johanna - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Dennis, Johanna from 31 December 2024 to 30 June 2025 - Fourth site for trial will be determined in consultation with s355 committees and training undertaken.

30 Apr 2025 9:15am Dennis, Johanna
Council Officers are liaising with s355 committees investigating the fourth trial site for online booking system.

27 May 2025 9:23am Dennis, Johanna
Council staff will be meeting with Branxton Community Hall s355 committee on 4 June to discuss this facility being the fourth trial site for the online booking system.

27 May 2025 9:29am Dennis, Johanna - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Dennis, Johanna from 30 June 2025 to 31 July 2025 - Once a fourth facility is determined, volunteers will need to be trained in the booking system.

30 Jun 2025 9:58am Dennis, Johanna
Branxton Community Hall s355 committee have met with staff about being the fourth trial site for the online booking system. Volunteers will undertake system training before implementation.

24 Jul 2025 1:23pm Dennis, Johanna
Hunter Valley VIC staff have been liaising with Branxton Community Hall s355 committee to build the online booking profile for this site.

24 Jul 2025 1:27pm Dennis, Johanna - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Dennis, Johanna from 31 July 2025 to 31 October 2025 - Volunteers will still require training once system is developed for Branxton Community Hall.

28 Aug 2025 9:35am Dennis, Johanna
Hunter Valley VIC staff have confirmed that the intend to train Branxton Community Hall s355 committee in September on the online booking system.

22 Sep 2025 4:22pm Dennis, Johanna
Hunter Valley VIC staff have been liaising with Branxton Community Hall s355 committee, however competing priorities have delayed the building of the online profile and committee training.

22 Sep 2025 4:25pm Dennis, Johanna - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Dennis, Johanna from 31 October 2025 to 31 December 2025 - Competing priorities have delayed the building of the online profile and s355 committee training.

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PE24/2024	Ordinary Council 20/11/2024	Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia	Planning and Environment	Planning Proposal 18 2022 6 1 - Reclassification and Rezoning of Council Land - Post exhibition	1/03/2026	

50 Page, Sue

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

50

RESOLVED

1. That Council note the outcomes of community consultation for Planning Proposal 18/2022/6/1 - Reclassification and Rezoning of Land at Bellbird and Abermain.

2. **That Council forwards the Planning Proposal for Reclassification and Rezoning of Council Land to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces with a recommendation that the plan be made pursuant to Section 3.36 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.***

3. That Council remove the Public Reserve Status from Part of Lot 3 DP 624793.

26 Nov 2024 9:43am Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia from 18 December 2024 to 15 January 2025 - Liaising with PC for finalisation.
24 Jan 2025 1:42pm Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia from 15 January 2025 to 31 March 2025 - Liaising with DPHI to finalise the Planning Proposal.
01 Apr 2025 9:03am Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia from 31 March 2025 to 10 May 2025 - DPHI is the plan making authority. The Planning Proposal is with DPHI for finalisation.
30 Apr 2025 9:11am Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia from 10 May 2025 to 31 May 2025 - Planning Proposal still with the Department for Finalisation.
27 May 2025 10:09am Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia from 31 May 2025 to 01 August 2025 - Currently with Parliamentary Council for Finalisation.
24 Jul 2025 11:19am Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia from 01 August 2025 to 01 October 2025 - DPHI (the Plan Making Authority for this Planning Proposal) have advised it is still with Parliamentary Counsel for finalisation.
26 Sep 2025 9:14am Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Lewis-Curnoe, Olivia from 01 October 2025 to 01 March 2026 - DPHI is the plan making authority. The Planning Proposal is still with DPHI/PC for finalisation.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
BN6/2025	Ordinary Council 19/03/2025	McNally, Kate	Business With Notice	Investigation for Opportunities to Reduce Vandalism in Public Spaces	28/11/2025	

123 McLachlan, Paul

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

123

RESOLVED

That Council reconvene to further consider options available to help address impacts of crime within the Cessnock LGA after further consultation is undertaken between Cessnock Councillors and NSW Police.

05 May 2025 3:53pm Meyers, Kristy
A Councillor Briefing to be organised for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).
05 May 2025 3:55pm Meyers, Kristy - Target Date Revision

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Target date changed by Meyers, Kristy from 30 June 2025 to 30 June 2025 - To organise Councillor Briefing.

30 Jun 2025 9:59am McNally, Kate
A Councillor Briefing to be organised for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

30 Jun 2025 10:01am McNally, Kate - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by McNally, Kate from 30 June 2025 to 29 August 2025 - Competing priorities have resulted in this briefing being delayed.

29 Aug 2025 9:33am McNally, Kate - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by McNally, Kate from 29 August 2025 to 28 November 2025 - Competing priorities have resulted in this briefing being delayed.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
BN7/2025	Ordinary Council 19/03/2025	Martin, Cam	Business With Notice	Report on Unsealed Roads and Costs	31/10/2025	
124		McLachlan, Paul				

MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor Hill ***Seconded:*** Councillor Suvaal
124
RESOLVED

1. That the General Manager provide a report to Council on the unsealed road network review, including information on Unsealed Road Maintenance Schedule, Council's Asset Management Framework and budget in line with the Long Term Financial Plan.

2. Currently what grants are available to help with our unsealed road program.

09 Apr 2025 10:10am Meyers, Kristy
Investigating data set.

05 May 2025 2:49pm Meyers, Kristy
Report expected June/July 2025.

29 Jul 2025 2:17pm Meyers, Kristy - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Meyers, Kristy from 30 July 2025 to 30 September 2025 - Ongoing and expected September Council meeting.

26 Aug 2025 12:04pm Meyers, Kristy
Moved to November 2025 Council meeting.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
PE12/2025	Ordinary Council 21/05/2025	Brown, Keren	Planning and Environment	Planning Proposal 18/2024/6/1 - Reclassification of Council Land - Post Exhibition	31/12/2025	
152		Page, Sue				

MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor King ***Seconded:*** Councillor Harrington
152
RESOLVED

1. That Council notes the outcome of the community consultation for Planning Proposal 18/2024/6/1 - Reclassification of part Lot 312 DP 566724 (Old Maitland Road, Cessnock) from Community Land to Operational Land.

2. That Council forwards the Planning Proposal 18/2024/6/1 for Reclassification of Council Land to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces with a recommendation that the plan be made pursuant to Section 3.36 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

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3. That Council notifies submission makers of the Minister's decision.

05 Aug 2025 7:34am Larsen, Robyn - Reallocation
Action reassigned to Brown, Keren by Larsen, Robyn - .
03 Oct 2025 11:35am Blake, Yvonne
As per Council resolution, awaiting decision from Minister in order to advise people who made submissions of the outcome.
28 Oct 2025 11:46am Brown, Keren - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Brown, Keren from 30 October 2025 to 31 December 2025 - The Planning Proposal is with DPHI for finalisations.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
PE16/2025	Ordinary Council 18/06/2025	Brown, Keren	Planning and Environment	Draft Amendments to Cessnock Development Control Plan Chapter - D8, Events	18/02/2026	

170 Page, Sue
MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor Lea ***Seconded:*** Councillor Pascoe
170
RESOLVED

1. That Council places the draft "D8 – Events" on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, as required by Council's Community Participation Plan.

2. That Council receive a further report following public exhibition of the draft Development Control Plan chapter if unresolved submissions are received or significant amendments are proposed post-exhibition. Where there are no unresolved objections, the draft Development Control Plan chapter be adopted by Council pursuant to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021.

3. That Council repeal the current Cessnock Development Control Plan Chapter D8 - Temporary Events, in the event that the amended Draft chapter D8 – Events is adopted.

05 Aug 2025 7:35am Larsen, Robyn - Reallocation
Action reassigned to Brown, Keren by Larsen, Robyn - .
24 Oct 2025 8:49am Brown, Keren - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Brown, Keren from 27 November 2025 to 18 February 2026 - Draft Chapter D8 Temporary Events of the Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 was exhibited between 30 July 2025 and 24 September 2025. , A significant number of submission have been received and are being reviewed by Council. Subject to the issues raised in the submissions amendments may be made to the draft chapter. Once all submissions have been reviewed the matter will be reported to Council for determination on how to proceed with the draft Chapter.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
BN11/2025	Ordinary Council 20/08/2025	Page, Sue	Business With Notice	Proposal to Remove the Shared Zone and Install Temporary Foot Crossings on Charlton Street, Cessnock	30/09/2026	

226 Page, Sue
MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor Jurd ***Seconded:*** Councillor King
226
RESOLVED

a. That the General Manager investigate options to remove the shared zone at the Cooper and Charlton Streets intersection and reinstate marked foot crossings to enhance pedestrian safety in the area.

b. That Councillors be provided a briefing on the draft CBD Public Domain Plan and how it proposes to address the pedestrian safety concerns before going on public exhibition.

	Division:		**Date From:**
	Committee:	Ordinary Council	**Date To:**
	Officer:		
Action Sheets Report			**Printed:** **Wednesday, 12 November 2025 10:40:01 AM**

CARRIED

28 Aug 2025 3:35pm Meyers, Kristy
Resolution a. being actioned by W&I via a Councillor memo., Resolution b. Councillor Briefing being actioned by P&E.

28 Aug 2025 3:37pm Meyers, Kristy - Reallocation
Action reassigned to Page, Sue by Meyers, Kristy - For P&E to action Councillor Briefing.

04 Sep 2025 10:22am Blake, Yvonne - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Blake, Yvonne from 17 September 2025 to 30 September 2026 - The current CBD Public Domain Plan is currently under review subject to the following two key reports/studies being completed., 1. Traffic Assessment report (received by Council in August 2025 and is currently being reviewed by Strategic Planning)., 2. Flood study to be completed by mid 2026 (this study is broader than just the CBD so will take approximately twelve months to complete)., Once both reports have been received and reviewed allowing the draft plan to progress, a Councillor briefing will be organised.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
WI10/2025	Ordinary Council 17/09/2025	Worthing, Alex	Works and Infrastructure	Naming of new Netball Facility at Booth Park, Kurri Kurri	20/12/2025	
248		McLachlan, Paul				

MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor Hill ***Seconded:*** Councillor Grine
248
RESOLVED

1. That Council endorse the proposed naming of the new netball facility within Booth Park, Kurri Kurri, adopting the name "Molly Worthington Netball Facility".

2. In line with the Geographic Names Board Place Naming Policy, the Board be notified of the Netball Facility name to ensure the name, position and origin is recorded in the Spatial Services' Digital Topographic Database and the name shown on maps, where relevant.

22 Sep 2025 11:21am Worthing, Alex - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Worthing, Alex from 15 October 2025 to 20 December 2025 - Estimated date of completion for the new courts is late 2025. Name will be applied on completion.

22 Sep 2025 11:21am Worthing, Alex
Project Manager has been informed of the approved name for the netball facility and that the name and signage for Booth Park is to remain in place.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
BN12/2025	Ordinary Council 17/09/2025	Booth, Caroline	Business With Notice	Management and use of the land known as Branxton RV Camp	30/06/2026	
249		Page, Sue				

MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor Lea ***Seconded:*** Councillor King
249
RESOLVED

1. That Council engage in open communication with the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) (and other parties as required including but not limited to neighbouring residents) to explore potential management and land use opportunities for the area known as the Branxton RV Park.

	Division:	**Date From:**
	Committee: Ordinary Council	**Date To:**
	Officer:	
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2. That the General Manager present a report to Councillors at a future meeting outlining the outcomes of these discussions and recommended next step.

19 Sep 2025 9:27am Lorenzen, Cherie - Reallocation
Action reassigned to Booth, Caroline by Lorenzen, Cherie - Reassigning to manager to action.
26 Sep 2025 11:26am Booth, Caroline - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Booth, Caroline from 15 October 2025 to 30 June 2026 - Following endorsement of the recommendations, ED will continue conversations with CMCA about alternative sites for RV camping.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
CC65/2025	Ordinary Council 15/10/2025	Gibson, Samantha	Corporate and Community	Drainage Easement Request - George Jeffery Park Kearsley	9/01/2026	
258		Maginnity, Robert				

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.

23 Oct 2025 7:51am Gibson, Samantha - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Gibson, Samantha from 19 December 2025 to 09 January 2026 - Approval is now required from the OLG for the easement over community land at George Jeffrey Park and I have been advised it can take up to 10 weeks. Once approval obtained I will arrange for the invoice of payment to be sent to the applicant and advise of the approval completion.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
WI11/2025	Ordinary Council 15/10/2025	Worthing, Alex	Works and Infrastructure	Update of Council's Cemetery Policy	12/11/2025	
262		McLachlan, Paul				

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.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
BN13/2025	Ordinary Council 15/10/2025	Childs, Jonathan	Business With Notice	Implementation of an Email Notification System for Residents	28/02/2026	
263		Maginnity, Robert				

	Division:	**Date From:**
	Committee: Ordinary Council	**Date To:**
	Officer:	
Action Sheets Report		**Printed: Wednesday, 12 November 2025 10:40:01 AM**

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.

17 Oct 2025 4:25pm Maginnity, Robert - Reallocation
Action reassigned to Childs, Jonathan by Maginnity, Robert - Jon, please coordinate this investigation, noting request to track staff hours involved. May need input from CIO & Manager Customer Service
07 Nov 2025 9:40am Childs, Jonathan - Target Date Revision
Target date changed by Childs, Jonathan from 12 November 2025 to 28 February 2026 - To allow time for council officiers to investigate options

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
BN14/2025	Ordinary Council 15/10/2025	McNally, Kate	Business With Notice	Investigation of collaboration with Cessnock Jail for cost saving initiatives	12/11/2025	

264 McLachlan, Paul
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.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
BN15/2025	Ordinary Council 15/10/2025	McNally, Kate	Business With Notice	Advertising, Sponsorship and Naming Rights Program	31/03/2026	

265 McLachlan, Paul
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.

Division:
Committee: Ordinary Council
Officer:

Date From:
Date To:

Action Sheets Report

Printed: Wednesday, 12 November 2025 10:40:01 AM

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
BN16/2025	Ordinary Council 15/10/2025	Clark, Cameron McLachlan, Paul	Business With Notice	Charlton Street - New Parking Rule	12/11/2025	

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.

Division:
Committee: Ordinary Council
Officer:

Date From: 15/10/2025
Date To: 12/11/2025

Action Sheets Report

Printed: Wednesday, 12 November 2025 10:47:10 AM

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
PE26/2025	Ordinary Council 15/10/2025	Rush, Iain	Planning and Environment	Draft Infrastructure Contributions Plans - Post Exhibition	12/11/2025	21/10/2025

255
Page, Sue
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.**

21 Oct 2025 9:28am Larsen, Robyn - Reallocation
Action reassigned to Rush, Iain by Larsen, Robyn - As Requested
21 Oct 2025 10:18am Rush, Iain - Completion
Completed by Rush, Iain (action officer) on 21 October 2025 at 10:18:43 AM - Project complete. Individuals that made submissions to the draft plans have been notified of the Council resolution to adopt the plans.

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
PE27/2025	Ordinary Council 15/10/2025	Rush, Iain	Planning and Environment	Draft Vineyards Place Strategy and Development Control Plan - Post Exhibition	12/11/2025	21/10/2025

256
Page, Sue
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.

21 Oct 2025 8:44am Rush, Iain - Completion
Completed by Rush, Iain (action officer) on 21 October 2025 at 8:44:24 AM - Project complete. Submitters notified of October Council resolution and correspondence forwarded to DPHI seeking Place Strategy endorsement.

Division:
Committee: Ordinary Council
Officer:

Date From: 15/10/2025
Date To: 12/11/2025

Action Sheets Report

Printed: Wednesday, 12 November 2025 10:47:10 AM

Type	Meeting	Officer/Director	Section	Subject	Est. Compl.	Completed
PE28/2025	Ordinary Council 15/10/2025	Brown, Keren	Planning and Environment	Draft Development Control Plan Chapters - 'Tourist Accommodation on Rural and Conservation lands' and 'Signage and Outdoor Advertising' - Post Exhibition	12/11/2025	24/10/2025

257 Page, Sue

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.

24 Oct 2025 10:26am Brown, Keren - Completion
Completed by Brown, Keren (action officer) on 24 October 2025 at 10:26:08 AM - The amended CDCP 2010 came into effect on Monday 20 October.

Waste Management Policy

Last Updated: **October 2025** Revision: **3**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
Council acknowledges that within its local government area boundaries are the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people, the Awabakal people and the Darkinjung people. We acknowledge these Aboriginal peoples as the traditional custodians of the land on which our offices and operations are located, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now live within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

COUNCIL VALUES
Integrity, Respect, Teamwork, Accountability, and Excellence.

DISCLAIMER
The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of the adoption date and may not be accurate, current or complete at the time of viewing. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this publication, Cessnock City Council expressly disclaims any liability to any person in respect of anything done or not done as a result of the contents of this publication or the data provided therein. Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice when

1 OBJECTIVES

1.1. Clearly identify waste management services provided by Council to the community.

1.2. Details the types of waste management charges, how they are applied, and specify any relevant exemptions.

1.3. Provide direction on the acceptance of waste from outside of the LGA.

2 SCOPE

2.1 This policy applies to waste management services provided by Cessnock City Council (Council).

3 POLICY STATEMENT

3.1. This policy sets out Council's position for waste management and resource recovery in the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA).

3.2. The purpose of the policy is to provide guidance on waste management services, to enable delivery in an efficient manner which promotes environmental and financial sustainability.

3.3. Council will deliver waste services that:

3.3.1 Encourage resource recovery and recycling.

3.3.2 Reduce waste to landfill.

3.3.3 Consider social, environmental and financial impacts on the community.

3.3.4 Meet the needs of the community.

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

4 DOMESTIC WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

4.1. Application of Charges

4.1.1 The Domestic Waste Management Charge (DWMC) is applied in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges, Council's Revenue policy and section 496 of the Act.

4.1.2 Each property rated as Residential or Farmland, or any sub-category, with an approved residence within the Waste Collection Service Area will be charged the DWMC.

4.1.3 New waste management services will be charged from the date Council processes the application for the service. If evidence suggests the service was in use prior to the application, the DWMC will be charged from the date use of the service commenced. Council will only charge for the current financial year in which it becomes aware.

4.1.4 There is no opt-out of the DWMC, unless Council cannot deliver the waste management service at the property boundary. These properties will be subject to the Domestic Waste Availability Charge (DWAC).

4.1.5 The DWAC is applied to vacant Residential and Farmland within the Waste Collection Service Area.

4.2 Waste Collection Service Area

4.2.1 The Domestic Waste Management Service (DWMS) is provided to most residential properties, and some eligible non-residential properties, in the Cessnock LGA. The waste collection service is available if the waste collection vehicle travels past the driveway or private road on which the property is located and Council can safely service the property.

4.2.2 The Waste Collection Service Area is determined by:

i. Capacity in the current collection zone and fleet;

ii. Accessibility of the road for the waste collection vehicle;

iii. Road condition and capacity to accommodate the collection vehicle both during collection and any associated turning manoeuvres;

iv. Road safety for all road users (collection crew and residents);

v. Efficiency of any extension (time, cost, distance, number of services); and

vi. Financial considerations (cost versus return).

4.2.3 The extension of the Waste Collection Service Area will be reviewed on request from a resident. Extensions will only occur if deemed feasible according to the conditions at clause 4.2.2.

4.2.4 Residents outside of the Waste Collection Service Area may be eligible to receive a Remote Waste Service or purchase Alternate Waste Vouchers as outlined in clauses 4.5 and 6.

4.3 Service Days

4.3.1 The kerbside collection service will take place as normal on all public holidays, with the exception of the general waste collection on Christmas Day, Good Friday and Union Picnic Day. Waste collection for these days will take place a day later or as otherwise arranged.

4.3.2 Changes to waste collection days will be advertised.

4.3.3 Changes may be made to service times on Anzac Day so as not to disrupt any ceremonies and recognise the solemnity of the day.

4.4 Service Inclusions

4.4.1 The current service includes kerbside collection of:

i. mixed general waste on a weekly basis (red lid bin),

ii. commingled recyclables on a fortnightly basis (yellow lid bin), and

iii. food organics garden organics (FOGO) on a weekly basis (lime green lid bin).

4.4.2 An alternate Domestic Waste Management Service may be available for residents to opt-in. This alternate service will include fortnightly general waste collection, or 26 collections per year, and will be provided at a discounted fee in accordance with Council's adopted Fees and Charges. Households found to be contaminating the recycling and/or organics service will not be eligible for this alternate service and transferred back to the full rate service. Landlords will require agreement of tenants before this alternate service will be approved.

4.4.3 240L mobile garbage bins are provided to residents for waste collection, with the option to upsize to a 360L bin for recyclables. Arrangements can be made where a smaller number of bins are provided to Multi-Unit Dwellings (MUDs).

4.4.4 Bins for the kerbside collection service are provided and owned by Council or its' contractors. These bins must remain at the relevant property and in the event of damage or theft will be repaired or replaced by Council or its' contractors.

4.4.5 Collection will only occur when waste materials are presented in bins supplied by Council or its contractors.

4.4.6 Elderly residents or those with a disability may be approved to receive an assisted bin collection (Blue Disc) service following application. Application includes documented support from their physician or doctor.

4.4.7 Council and its contractors will return to collect bins that have been missed or half-emptied, however will not return to collect bins:

i. that were not placed on the kerb prior to 5am,

ii. where collection was obstructed by trees, power lines or vehicles,

or

iii. when bins were not collected due to being over-full or heavier than 65kg.

The In Vehicle Management System (IVMS) in the collection truck will be used to determine if a bin was presented at the time the truck passed the property, was obstructed or over weight.

4.4.8 Properties found to be contaminating their recycling and/or organics bins will receive education and advice regarding correct use of the service. Continued contamination may result in their recycling and/or organics bin being removed.

4.4.9 The service also includes the provision of waste vouchers for use by households at the Cessnock Waste Management Centre. These vouchers include strict conditions for use to prevent misuse, including:

i. Waste vouchers are issued each financial year and expire on 30 June.

ii. Each voucher has a unique barcode with the property address and can only be used by, or on behalf of, residents that live at the address to which the voucher is issued. Owners of a property that do not live at the property may request use of a waste voucher for the property if it is vacant. To receive authorisation, they must contact Council and provide written evidence that the property is vacant. If Council agrees, an authorisation letter may be issued for use at the CWMC within one month of issue.

iii. Proof of address (e.g., driver's license or utilities bill) matching that on the voucher is required in order to use the voucher. Council rate notices can be used as proof of residency if the property address and postal address match.

iv. Waste disposed in excess to the value of the voucher will be charged for in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges.

v. Vouchers cannot be used for disposing of tyres or special waste, such as asbestos.

vi. Vouchers can only be used for domestic household waste and will not be accepted for commercial waste. There is a limit of one mattress on each recycling voucher, and disposal of these items is included in the weight limit of the voucher.

vii. Waste materials must not be transported by a commercial enterprise, including businesses appointed by real estate agents or landlords, except in accordance with clause 4.4.9 viii.

viii. Eligible businesses may be approved to bring waste materials on behalf of residents upon submitting the relevant application.

ix. Vouchers will be deemed invalid if the holder does not follow directions from site staff including appropriately disposing of recyclables and mixed waste.

x. Valid vouchers must be presented at the time of disposal and refunds will not be provided for residents that do not present a valid voucher at the time of disposal.

xi. Vouchers are for a single use only and are not transferable, refundable or redeemable for cash.

xii. Council will take into consideration the impact of any interruption to operations and/or services beyond Council control such as pandemic, state or federal legislation.

xiii. Additional vouchers will not be issued under any circumstance. Requests from residents or organisations for assistance will be assessed as a request to waive fees and must be managed in accordance with clause 7.6.

xiv. Properties who pay the DWAC are not eligible to receive vouchers.

xv. Commercial Waste Services are not entitled to receive waste vouchers.

4.4.10 As part of the food organics garden organics (FOGO) service all new domestic services will be issued with kitchen caddies at the time of bin delivery. A replacement caddy may be issued on request at a fee in accordance with Council's adopted Fees and Charges.

4.4.11 Compostable liners will be provided to each domestic premises within the Waste Collection Service Area for use in the FOGO service. Ongoing supply of liners will be provided to domestic premises. Residents being supplied with in excess of 2 rolls (150 liners per roll) per year may be charged a fee in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges. This fee will only be applied if total supply of liners is found to be excessive.

4.5 Remote Waste Services

4.5.1 Residents that live outside of the Waste Collection Service Area can request a Remote Waste Service. This service includes all the provisions of a Domestic Waste Management Service with the bins collected from the nearest Remote Service Point to the residence on the collection route.

4.5.2 Residents with Remote Waste Services must retrieve bins from the collection location between collections. If bins are not removed, liability for any damage caused by bins will be the responsibility of the resident. Failure to comply may result in the service being cancelled.

4.6 Multiple Waste Services

4.6.1 Multiple Waste Services are those provided to MUDs, including any property that contains multiple residences such as units, villas, apartments, townhouses, dual occupancies and residences with granny flats.

4.6.2 Where these properties have strata title, each individual residence will be charged the DWMC via their rates notice. An agreement may be made to reduce the number of bins provided, however the full DWMC will be applied.

4.6.3 For MUDs with a single owner, including dual occupancies, and residences with granny flats, the DWMC will apply for each individual residence within the property.

4.6.4 Upon request made in writing, a subsidy may be applied to the DWMC for MUDs where Council is not able to service the standard number of bins for the property.

4.6.5 If Council is unable to suitably service the property, the DWMC will not apply. These properties will be subject to the DWAC.

4.7 Additional Waste Services

4.7.1 Property owners or managing agents may request additional waste services, including an additional full service, or additional, waste, recycling and/or organics service for an additional charge that appears annually on the rates for the property.

4.7.2 Charges will apply from the date Council process the application for additional services.

4.7.3 Additional waste services will only be provided if Council has the ability to provide the requested service.

4.7.4 Properties with ratings that are categorised as Business with a Residential component or known to be undertaking business on the premises are eligible for one DWMS. Additional services will be classified as Commercial Waste Services.

4.8 Cancellation of Waste Charges

4.8.1 DWMSs cannot be cancelled, in accordance with section 496 of the Act, including Multiple Waste Services.

4.8.2 Additional Waste Services and Remote Waste Services can be cancelled on request, subject to a cancellation fee and bins being retrieved by Council and its contractors.

4.8.3 Premises with residences that have been demolished, have been issued a demolition order or are deemed uninhabitable by Council will, on request, have the DWMC converted to the DWAC, from the date of request.

4.9 Exemption of Waste Charges

4.9.1 An exemption may be granted to residents who generate unavoidable medical waste, requiring additional garbage or recycling capacity. The supply of an additional general waste bin, additional recycling bin and/or 360 L recycling bin, without an additional charge to be imposed and will be considered on a case-by-case basis, where the applicant can demonstrate a legitimate need. Requests for exemption for medical reasons will be required each financial year.

4.10 Requests for Refunds – Non-delivery of Additional Services

4.10.1 Where a customer indicates that Council has not provided an additional service as charged on their rates notice, Council will review the claim and determine an appropriate refund for services not delivered. The following will be considered in the review and determination of a suitable recompense:

i. Record of bins collected from premises;

ii. Record of bins supplied or bins currently on property;

iii. Return of current voucher or portion removed from DWMC refund.

4.10.2 Where claims of overpayment or non-delivery of service are substantiated, the current plus one previous financial year only rates will be reimbursed by a credit or refund on the properties' rates.

5 COMMERCIAL WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICE

5.1 Waste Collection Service Area

5.1.1 Upon request by the commercial property owner or managing agent, businesses within the Waste Collection Service Area can request provision of a Commercial Waste Service by Council.

5.1.2 Council will not extend the waste service area at the request of commercial premises.

5.2 Service Days

5.2.1 Collection of Commercial Waste Services occurs as part of the weekly DWMS and will occur on the same days.

5.3 Service Inclusions

5.3.1 The service includes kerbside collection of:

i. mixed general waste on a weekly basis,

ii. commingled recyclables on a fortnightly basis if requested, and

iii. food organics garden organics (FOGO) collection is provided weekly when requested and deemed necessary for the property (i.e. the property includes gardens or grassed areas).

5.3.2 Generally, 240L mobile garbage bins are provided to businesses for waste collection, with the option to upsize to a 360L bin for recyclables.

5.3.3 Bins for the kerbside collection service are provided and owned by Council or its' contractors. These bins must remain at the relevant property and in the event of damage or theft will be repaired or replaced by Council or its' contractors.

5.3.4 Waste vouchers are not included in the Commercial Waste Service.

5.4 Application of charges

5.4.1 Charges are applied in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges, and the Revenue policy.

5.4.2 Properties with ratings that are categorised as Business with a Residential component are eligible for one DWMS. Additional services to such businesses will be classified as Commercial Waste Services and charged accordingly.

5.4.3 In respect of non-rateable properties such as halls, churches and similar facilities, Council applies commercial waste collection charges on services requested.

5.5 Cancellation of charges

5.5.1 Commercial Waste Services can be cancelled on request, subject to a cancellation fee and bins being retrieved by Council and its contractors.

5.6 Requests for Refunds – Non-delivery of Commercial Services

5.6.1 Where a customer indicates that the Council has not provided a commercial service as charged on their rates notice, Council will review the claim and determine an appropriate refund for services not delivered. The following will be considered in the review and determination of suitable recompense:

i. Record of request for supply or removal;

ii. Record of bins collected from premises;

iii. Record of bins supplied or bins currently on property.

5.6.2 Where claims of overpayment or non-delivery of service are substantiated, the current year plus one previous financial year only rates will be reimbursed by a credit or refund on the properties rates.

6 ALTERNATE WASTE VOUCHERS

6.1 Residential properties outside the Waste Collection Service Area are eligible to purchase alternate waste vouchers for use at the Cessnock Waste Management Centre. These vouchers include strict conditions for use, including:

6.1.1 The vouchers are for residential waste only and cannot be purchased by commercial premises or used for commercially generated waste.

6.1.2 Vouchers are charged in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges and are non-refundable.

6.1.3 Vouchers can be purchased to dispose of up to 20kg of mixed waste or up to 20 kg of commingled recyclables.

6.1.4 A maximum of 110 mixed waste and 110 recyclable vouchers can be purchased per eligible household each financial year.

7 CESSNOCK WASTE MANAGEMENT CENTRE

7.1 The Cessnock Waste Management Centre is operated in a manner to encourage source separation of recyclable materials to minimise waste to landfill.

7.2 The Centre operates in accordance with the NSW Environmental Protection Licence (EPL) 6121.

7.3 Cessnock Waste Management Centre operates seven days per week with the exception of Christmas Day, Good Friday and Union Picnic Day.

7.4 Changes to operating hours, including operation on public holidays will be advertised prior to any change.

7.5 Fees and charges at the Centre are charged in accordance with Council's adopted Fees and Charges.

7.6 Exemptions to fees can be requested in accordance with Council's Community Sponsorship and Fee Waiving Policy, Council's Hardship Policy or Council's Financial Assistance for the Disposal of Waste Policy.

7.7 Commercial customers can apply for an account billed monthly for waste disposed at the Centre. Application for such an account is subject to appropriate financial checks. If accounts are more than 3 months in arrears the account will be cancelled and recovery action initiated.

8 CHARITY CLOTHING BINS

8.1 That charity clothing bins are not placed on Council owned land that is managed by Council.

8.2 That approval for the placement of charity clothing bins may be given on Council owned land that is managed by a third party under licence or lease, on the provision that the clothing bins are managed by and align with the services of the third party.

9 WASTE FROM OUT OF THE CESSNOCK LGA

9.1 Council will not accept waste at its waste facility from the Sydney metropolitan area.

9.2 Council will consider environmental, financial and social impacts prior to accepting waste at its facility from outside of the Cessnock LGA.

10 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

10.1 Environment and Waste Manager

10.1.1 Is responsible for all operational aspect of this policy.

10.1.2 Is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy.

Records Management

10.2 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this policy in accordance with Council's Records Management Policy.

11 POLICY DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Act	Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)
Council	Cessnock City Council
Council Official	includes Councillors, members of staff (permanent, casual or temporary), Council advisors, administrators, Council committee members, volunteers and delegates of Council.
DWMC	Domestic Waste Management Charge The charge under Section 496 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) applied to domestic premises
Farmland	A rating category under Section 514 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)
Residential	A rating category under Section 514 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)
DWAC	Domestic Waste Availability Charge. The charge under Section 496 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) applied to vacant land
Waste Collection Service Area	The area within the Cessnock Local Government Area where kerbside collection of waste is undertaken.
DWMS	Domestic Waste Management Services Waste services provided to residential premises within the Waste Collection Service Area
FOGO	Food Organics and Garden Organics service
Remote Waste Service	Services provided to residents outside the Waste Collection Service Area
Alternate Waste Vouchers	Vouchers available to residents outside the Waste Collection Service Area
MUDs	Multi-Unit Dwellings A dwelling with multiple housing units contained within one building or multiple buildings within a complex
Multiple Waste Services	Services provided to MUDs
Commercial Waste Service	Optional waste services provided to businesses in the local government area by Council
Additional Waste Services	Optional services provided on request
Business	A rating category under Section 514 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)

12 POLICY AUTHORISATIONS

No.	Authorised Function	Authorised Business Unit / Role(s)
	All operational aspects of this policy.	Environment and Waste Manager

13 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Waste Management Policy

Directorate	Works and Infrastructure		
Responsible Officer	Environment and Waste Manager		
Associated Procedure	NA	**Policy Review Date**	three years from date of adoption
Is this policy part of Council's Ethical Behaviour Framework?	**Yes** **No**	**Is this a local policy pursuant to Part 3, Chapter 7 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)?**	**Yes** – is automatically revoked at the expiration of 12 months after the declaration of the poll for that election.
Document Reference Number	DOC2025/187383		
This policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation: – - Sections 356, 496, 501 & 502, Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) – - Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 – - Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Regulation 2014			
This policy contributes to the achievement of the following desired outcome or objectives as per Council's Delivery Program: A sustainable and healthy environment – Objective 3.3 Better waste management and recycling			
Related Documents (include reference document numbers)	▪ Records Management Policy (DOC2019/038769) ▪ Complaints Handling policy (DOC2018/048382) ▪ Privacy Management Plan (DOC2014/005148) ▪ Revenue Policy ▪ Financial Hardship Policy ▪ Financial Assistance for the Disposal of Waste Policy (Charitable and Not for Profit Organisations) ▪ Community Sponsorship and Fee Waiving Policy ▪ Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2026-2031		

14 POLICY HISTORY

Revision	Date Approved / Authority	Description Of Changes
1	21/07/2021	New policy adopted
2	15/06/2022 – WI39/2022	Amend clause 4.4.7viii
3	19/11/2025 – WI??/2025	Amend for *2026-31 Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy* changes

MINUTES OF FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL HELD IN ANTE ROOM ON THURSDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 2025, COMMENCING AT 3.00PM

PRESENT:	The Mayor, Daniel Watton Councillor Lea Vladimir Stojnic (Department of CCEEW) Mandy Bramble - Planning and Research Officer (SES) Jean Brochut – Community Representative Carolyn Storrie – Program Support Officer (SES)
ABSENT:	Peter Keegan - Deputy Zone Commander (SES) Jennifer Ehmsen - Unit Commander (SES) Travis Hall – Local Commander (SES)
IN ATTENDANCE:	Director Works & Infrastructure Stormwater and Flood Mitigation Coordinator Stormwater Engineer Stormwater & Flood Mitigation Officer Senior Business Support Office – Council Services Principal Strategic Planner Councillor Mason
INVITEES:	Nil

Acknowledgment of Country was presented by Mayor Watton

APOLOGIES

APOLOGY:

RECOMMENDED

That the apology tendered on behalf of Councillor Dixon, Charlie Rohwer - Hunter Water Corporation, Lisa Ignatavicius - Planning Coordinator (SES), Cameron Martin – Asset Manager and Martin Johnson – Strategic Planning Manager for unavoidable absence, be accepted.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

MINUTES: ***MOTION*** ***Moved:*** Councillor Lea ***Seconded:*** Jean Brochut

RECOMMENDED

That the Minutes of the Floodplain Risk Management Committee held on 27 February 2025, as circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a correct record.

That Councillor Harrington be added to the Meeting of 27 February 2025 as being in attendance.

CARRIED

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Nil

LISTED MATTERS

LISTED MATTERS - COMMITTEE NO. FLOCLM10/2025

SUBJECT: ***ENDORSEMENT OF GRETA FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY AND PLAN (FRMSP) REPORTS***

MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor Lea ***Seconded:*** Mayor Watton

RECOMMENDATION

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

CARRIED

DISCUSSION

- Jean Brochut - requested an explanation of Table 1 – Recommended Control Measures - *Jean* noted that the actions that seem the easiest to undertake are given the highest priority, whereas the allocation of priority should be based on the community safety. Arun Chhanya - explained that recommendations are developed using a Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) process in accordance with the NSW Floodplain Management Manual (2023). This process considers a broad range of factors, not just social impacts, safety, and the number of affected properties.

- Mayor Watton - are the Flashing Signs at the Old North Road crossing the latest design? Arun Chhanya - confirmed that the Flashing Signs used are the latest technology.

LISTED MATTERS - COMMITTEE NO. FLOCLM11/2025

SUBJECT: ***DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS BLIGH STREET, DAVIS STREET AND PORTLAND STREET, MILLFIELD***

MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor Lea ***Seconded:*** Jean Brochut

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.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION

- Councillor Mason - noted that 3 of the properties do not have dwellings on them, are they council owned properties? Alex Newman - confirmed that there are 3 council owned properties on Portland and Bennett Streets.

LISTED MATTERS - COMMITTEE NO. FLOCLM12/2025

SUBJECT: ***CESSNOCK LGA FLOOD STUDY - STATUS REPORT***

MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor Lea ***Seconded:*** Jean Brochut

RECOMMENDATION

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

CARRIED

DISCUSSION

- Mandy Bramble – How will the SES see this report? Alex Newman - I will send a copy of the report to the SES and it will also be displayed for public exhibition.
- Mayor Watton – Is this study grant funded? Alex Newman – No, this is fully funded by Cessnock City Council.

LISTED MATTERS - COMMITTEE NO. FLOCLM13/2025

SUBJECT: ***BLACK CREEK 1 FLOOD STUDY UPDATE AND FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY AND PLAN***

MOTION ***Moved:*** Councillor Lea ***Seconded:*** Jean Brochut

RECOMMENDATION

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

CARRIED

LISTED MATTERS - COMMITTEE NO. FLOCLM14/2025

SUBJECT: ***SAWYERS GULLY FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY***

MOTION	***Moved:***	Councillor Lea	***Seconded:***	Jean Brochut

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted.

CARRIED

DISCUSSION

Mayor Watton - what has been the feedback from the community and is there any commercial land being considered? Keren Brown - there had not been a lot of feedback thus far from the public and once the study has been completed this will determine the amount of commercial and residential land.

LISTED MATTERS - COMMITTEE NO. FLOCLM15/2025

SUBJECT: ***REVIEW FLOOD PLANNING FRAMEWORK***

MOTION	***Moved:***	Councillor Lea	***Seconded:***	Jean Brochut

RECOMMENDATION

The report be noted.

CARRIED

LISTED MATTERS - COMMITTEE NO. FLOCLM16/2025

SUBJECT: ***BLACK CREEK STAGE TWO (NULKABA TO BRANXTON) FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY AND PLAN (FRMSP) PROJECT UPDATE***

MOTION	***Moved:***	Councillor Lea	***Seconded:***	Jean Brochut

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted.

CARRIED

The Meeting Was Declared Closed at 3:50pm

CONFIRMED AND SIGNED *at the meeting held on*

……CHAIRPERSON

……GENERAL MANAGER