



2007 – 2008 Annual Report

Cessnock City Council



Reporting for Our People Our Place Our Future



Prepared by Cessnock City Council 2008

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	Section	Requirement
Local Government Act	428(2)(a)	Council's audited financial reports.
Local Government Act	428(2)(b)	Comparison of Council's actual performance of its principal activities during the year with projected performance with its principle activities identified in its Management Plan.
Local Government Act	428(2)(c)	State of the Environment Report.
Local Government Act	428(2)(d)	Condition of Public Works under the control of Council and details of maintenance and upgrading costs.
Local Government Act	428(2)(e)	Legal proceedings, progress and costs.
Local Government Act	428(2)(f)	Mayoral and Councillor fees and policy in respect of provision and payment of expenses to Councillors.
Local Government Act	428(2)(g)	Number and employment costs of Senior Staff.
Local Government Act	428(2)(h)	Details of contracts awarded by Council.
Local Government Act	428(2)(i1)	Bushfire hazard reduction activities.
Local Government Act	428(2)(j)	Programs undertaken to promote services and access to services for people with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
Local Government Act	428(2)(k)	Work carried out on private land and whether that work was subsidised by Council.
Local Government Act	428(2)(l)	Amounts granted under Section 356.
Local Government Act	428(2)(m)	Human resource activities.
Local Government Act	428(2)(n)	Activities concerning the Council's Equal Opportunity Management Plan.
Local Government Act	428(2)(o)	External bodies that exercised functions delegated by the Council.
Local Government Act	428(2)(p)	Companies in which Council held a controlling interest.
Local Government Act	428(2)(q)	Partnerships, co-operatives or other joint ventures to which the Council was a party.
Local Government Act	428(2)(r)	Such other information that the regulations may require.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(a)	Details and purpose of any overseas trips taken by Councillors, staff or other persons representing the Council.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(a1)	Details of total cost for payment of expenses to councillors
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(b)	Details of the total remuneration package of each senior staff member.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(c)	Activities undertaken by Council to develop and promote services and programs that provide for the needs of children.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(d)(i)	Council's performance in relation to access and equity activities to meet residents' needs.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(d)(ii)	Category 1 Business Activities.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(d)(iii)	Category 2 Business Activities.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(d)(iv)	Statement of expenses, revenues and assets relation to each in Category 1 Business Activity.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(d)(v)	Progress of implementing competitive neutrality pricing requirements in respect of Category 1 Business Activities.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(d)(vi)	Whether the competitive requirements have neutrality pricing been applied.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(d)(vii)	Establishment of and its a complaints handling mechanism promotion.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(d)(viii)	Comparison of the actual performance of the Category 1 Business Activity measured in accordance with the criteria set out in the Management Plan.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(d)(ix)	Whether any competitive neutrality complaints have been made against the Council and their status.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(e)	Stormwater Management.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(1)(f)	Statement on activities in relation to compliance of the Companion Animals Act.
Local Government Regulation	217(2)	State of the Environment Report.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	217(3) (a, b, c)	Competitive neutrality pricing requirements.
Freedom of Information Act 1989	68(1)	Details of applications received and their status.
Local Government General Regulation 2005	132	Information concerning any rates and charges written off.
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Act 1992	18(4)	Information in respect of any determinations.
Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998	33(3)	A statement of action required by Council complying with the in requirements of the Act.

Part A - Overview

General Manager's Report

This financial year saw significant activity in terms of long term planning for the future growth and development of the Cessnock LGA.

Following the NSW Government's introduction of a range of reforms aimed at streamlining the planning process across local government, Council staff have worked tirelessly on the draft Local Environmental Plan 2008 (LEP).

Council transferred its current planning instrument, the CLEP 1989, into the new format. It then incorporated new planning provisions resulting from local strategies like the City Wide Settlement Strategy prepared by Council in 2003 and the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy undertaken by the NSW Department of Planning in 2006.

On 16 April 2008, subject to various amendments, Council resolved to adopt a draft Local Environmental Plan for the purpose of submitting it to the Department of Planning with a request to issue Council with a certificate to place this draft document on public exhibition. At the time of writing, Council is awaiting a formal response to this request.

Following acceptance by the Department of Planning, Council hopes to exhibit the draft Local Environmental Plan 2008, including the draft City Wide Settlement Strategy 2007 and draft Development Control Plan 2008, for a minimum period of 10 weeks. Council is committed to involving the community, including key organisations and interest groups, and will provide various opportunities for community participation during the exhibition period.

These documents, in conjunction with Council's Strategic and Management Plans, will form the foundations for our organisation's pathway into the future.

In saying this, it must be noted that we are just months away from the election of a new Council, which in itself will bring fresh ideas and new directions to be considered and incorporated into planning for our current and future residents.

Although Council is awaiting a report from the Department of Local Government following an investigation, it has been a reasonable year and it is with great anticipation that Council looks ahead to a positive and productive future for the City of Cessnock.

Bernie Mortomore
General Manager

Understanding the Report

In this section we explain what to look for in the parts of the Annual Report which follow.

PART B – Corporate Statements

Part B contains a number of statements, including a vision statement and corporate goals, which relate to Council's broad directions.

The Council and its responsibilities are described, as is the organisational structure which supports the Council.

PART C – Principal Activities

This part outlines the principal activities of Council and the various service/business centres which operate within those principal activities.

A number of general statements explain Council's achievements relating to the following:

- Asset replacement;
- Capital works projects;
- Business activities;
- Environmental protection programs;
- Multicultural and community services;
- Council management; and
- Human resource activities, including equal employment opportunity programs.

Details relating to requests to Council for information under the Freedom of Information Act is also included.

PART D – Financial Results

This section includes a number of statements relating to Council's financial performance for the year 2007/2008.

Council is required under Section 428 (2)(a) of the Local Government Act, 1993 to show a financial summary of revenues, expenses, assets acquired and assets held by Council at the close of the year. In addition, the report includes copies of the four (4) audited financial statements which are required under Section 413 of the Act.

Part B – Corporate Statements

This section includes a number of statements which are of importance in understanding Council's corporate directions and the local government structure.

The vision statement and corporate goals set Council's broad directions.

The profile will help in understanding the issues Council must address in the management planning process.

VISION STATEMENT

On 6 November 1991 Council adopted a Corporate Vision which, along with a number of major goals, was reviewed in 1997. The revised Vision and Corporate Objectives follow. Since 1997, Council has used the Vision Statement and goals to develop a long term strategy document for the City. This document will be used to inform Council's annual management planning processes.

**“Cessnock City Council's vision is for a safe, healthy
environment where the community can fulfil
a high quality of life.”**

CORPORATE GOALS

Six corporate objectives were adopted by Council and they are:

- a) To communicate with the community, identify their needs, keep them informed and provide opportunities for active participation.
- b) To provide efficient and effective services which meet the needs of the community within the limits of available resources.
- c) To protect and enhance the natural and developed environment.
- d) To plan for, and actively foster, the creation of employment opportunities and encourage development, acceptable to community and environmental standards.
- e) To provide sound financial management which optimises income generation from all sources, and makes best use of resources.
- f) To be a professional, service orientated organisation which achieves its goals through the development of its people and workplace.

COUNCIL PROFILE

The Council derives its authority from the Local Government Act 1993, the regulations thereto and other legislation. The Council is a corporate body created by statute and must act within its statutory limitations.

Councils operate under a charter and the charter makes provision for the Council:

- To provide directly or on behalf of other levels of government, after due consultation, adequate, equitable and appropriate services and facilities for the community and to ensure that those services and facilities are managed efficiently and effectively.
- To exercise community leadership.
- To exercise its functions with due regard for the cultural and linguistic diversity of its community.
- To properly manage, develop, protect, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible.
- To have regard to the long term and cumulative effects of its decisions.
- To bear in mind that it is the custodian and trustee of public assets and to effectively account for and manage the assets for which it is responsible.
- To facilitate the involvement of councillors, members of the public, users of facilities and services and council staff in the development, improvement and co-ordination of local government,
- To raise funds for local purposes by the fair imposition of rates, charges and fees, by income earned from investments and, when appropriate, by borrowings and grants.
- To keep the local community and State government (and through it, the wider community) informed about its activities.
- To ensure that, in the exercise of its regulatory functions, it acts consistently and without bias, particularly where an activity of the Council is affected.
- To be a responsible employer.

The charter is a set of principles that are meant to guide the Council in the carrying out of its functions.

Cessnock City Council currently consists of 12 Councillors who are elected from four (4) Wards, with three (3) representatives from each Ward.

The Mayor is elected by popular vote and is also deemed to be a Councillor.

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The elected representatives comprise the governing body of the Council. The role of the Council is to direct and control the affairs of the Council in accordance with the Local Government Act and the decisions of the Council are formalised through the meeting process.

Committees are an extension of the Council meeting process into particular spheres of activity. The complexity of matters which Council must consider make it appropriate for more detailed analysis and discussion to take place at committee level. The role of committees is to:-

- Allow matters to be examined in a less formal manner and permit a more in-depth understanding of issues;
- Enable elected representatives to be better informed on major issues;
- Utilise the particular expertise of elected representatives; and

- Enable more effective policy formulation and monitoring of activities.

Council has also appointed various sub-committees and “sunset” committees to carry out selected tasks.

Council has a Code of Meeting Practice which provides comprehensive details of meeting procedure, etc. A copy of the Code is available on request at Council’s Administration Building or online at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au.

Council determines dates and times of meetings of Council and Standing Committees.

Excluding the end of calendar year period, the following meeting cycle is presently in force:

1 st Wednesday in the month	Infrastructure & Services Committee Corporate & Community Committee City Planning Committee Ordinary Council
3 rd Wednesday in the month	Infrastructure & Services Committee Corporate & Community Committee City Planning Committee Ordinary Council

Note: the current meeting cycle reflects the new Council Structure adopted on 5 March 2008.



Part C – Principal Activities

The principal activities described here are those which Council has undertaken during 2007/2008 in order to achieve its vision and goals.

LIST OF PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The achievement of Council's Corporate and Strategic goals will be pursued through the following Principal Activities:

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY:

The principal activities listed below refer to activities undertaken within the responsibility areas of the Council Structure prior to 5 March 2008 when a new structure was adopted. For reporting purposes the Annual Report including the Strategic Initiatives respond to those stated in the 2007-2010 City Management Plan.

CORPORATE & REGULATORY	STRATEGIC & COMMUNITY SERVICES	WORKS & SERVICES
SERVICE/BUSINESS CENTRE:		
Mayor & Council	Landuse Planning	Roads Construction & Maintenance
General Manager	Heritage & Civic Design	Bridges Construction & Maintenance
Financial Services	Recreation Planning	Drainage Construction & Maintenance
Information Management	Business Planning	Buildings Construction & Maintenance
Corporate Legal	Financial Planning	Parks Construction & Maintenance
Property Management	Infrastructure & Transport Planning	Plant Management
Risk Management	Environmental Planning	Waste Management Operations
Human Resources	Cultural Planning	Swimming Pools Operations
Development Services	Social Planning	Noxious Weeds
Animal Control	Economic Development	Cleaning Services
Food Surveillance	Library Services	Emergency Services
Public Health	Community Development	Purchasing & Supply Services
Ordinance	Policy Evaluation	Aerodrome Maintenance
Licensing and Inspection	Program Review & Evaluation	
Customer Service	Cemetery Management	

Note: a copy of Council's new structure can be viewed at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au or by visiting Council's Administration Building in Vincent Street, Cessnock.

Our Report Card

PERFORMANCE OF PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES – S.428 (2) (B)

Following are details of the principal activities undertaken by Council during the year under its adopted programs.

Council's actual performance for the year for each of the principal activities is measured against the projected performance shown in the management plan for 2007 - 2010.



Mayor & Council

The elected Mayor and Council is responsible for implementing the Council's Charter including the provision of works and services, regulatory functions, leadership, direction and advocacy for and on behalf of the Community.

Mayor and Council

Council is the link between the Community and Council Officers and is broadly responsible for reflecting the needs and desires of the City's residents as well as for setting the overall direction for the Organisation.

How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
Determine policies for the good of all residents and ratepayers of the City.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop fair and equitable policies as issues are identified. Review and amend individual policies as necessary. During the term of the Council, review all policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies developed as need identified. Revisions/amendments carried out where appropriate. Schedule for review being prepared.
Determine and approve an annual Management Plan for Council's operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set priorities for works and services. Determine the annual budget. Advise the Community what is proposed in the Management Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Plan adopted. Included in Management Plan. Management Plan placed on Council's website and via media releases.
Monitor the Performance of the Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On a quarterly basis, review the progress of the Management Plan. Regularly review Council's financial performance. Review the General Manager's performance. Initiate action to make correction as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviews conducted quarter ending September, December, March, June. Included in quarterly reviews. Two formal reviews carried out. Issues identified for action.
Keep the Community informed about Council's decisions/activities and consult on relevant issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make information available through the media, internet and personal correspondence. Attend public/community meetings as required. Take community input into account before decisions are finalised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated by Council's Community & Media Information Officer and relevant Council officers. Attendance as required. Forums and special project meetings held.

How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
Represent the Council and the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend relevant meetings/seminars, conferences etc, to become and remain aware of industry issues. • Attend functions and community activities as appropriate. • Lead delegations to other levels of government/organisations as necessary. • Make submissions to organisations/ authorities on relevant community issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation at LGA and LGMA Conferences; workshops. • High level of participation achieved. • Issues advocated as they arise on a regular basis. • Submissions prepared and submitted to appropriate authorities.
Carry out its regulatory functions according to the law, fairness and equity for all citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider issues on merit and according to the law. • Take into account submissions by individuals/groups etc. • Enforce approved conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory functions met. • Submissions considered in all assessments and provided to Councillors • Conditions enforced through development surveillance officer.



General Manager

The General Manager has responsibility for the day to day management of the Council's activities including the implementation of this annual Management Plan. Support to the Mayor and the Council is also an important function.

General Manager

The General Manager's role is to both reflect and shape the desired "Cessnock of the future" as expressed by the Community and Council. Through the exercise of leadership and management, the General Manager ensures that all Council Staff are contributing to the Strategic Direction set by Council.

How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
Implement the annual Management Plan adopted by Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategies and priorities for implementation. Put in place processes and systems necessary for the implementation. Monitor activities and financial performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continual review of organisation. Systems developed to ensure timely response. Systems in place, eg Customer Request Management System.
Report to Council on a regular basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep Council informed of relevant issues. Meet all statutory reporting requirements in a timely manner. Seek Council's approval for decisions not able to be made under Delegated Authority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation provided and/or reports prepared for Council. Requirements met. Reports prepared for Council's consideration and resolution.
Provide guidance to the Council and Mayor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep informed about industry/community issues. Propose initiatives for new/enhanced works and services. Assist the Council with its planning processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constant awareness and involvement to monitor relationships and avoidance of duplication.
Act as Council's representative as required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent Council on relevant organisations/authorities. Attend meetings, conferences, seminars etc, to keep abreast of issues. Attend functions/Community activities appropriate to role of General Manager. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in regional activities including Hunter Councils, Hunter Resource Recovery, Hunter Integrated Resources. Attendance at LGA and LGMA conferences; workshops, seminars. Attendance at functions.

How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
Communicate with the Community to determine needs and provide information relevant to Council activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct meetings in the Community. • Produce regular media releases informing of Council activities. • Consult the community on all major policy issues and initiatives. • Carry out surveys as necessary to gauge opinion/response to issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community forums held. • Coordination of media releases with Communication & Media Information Officer. • Advertising and public exhibition of documentation. • Community survey conducted by HVRF in relation to review of Strategic Plan.
Provide general management/leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise appropriate management strategies and practices. • Act consistently and fairly in dealings with Council, Staff and the Community. • By example foster ethical and responsive behaviour in all dealings. • Apply appropriate standards and discipline to the Organisation. • Strive for best practice and continuous improvement. • Foster networks and partnerships both within and outside Council. • Promote personal development, skills development and health, safety and welfare of Council Staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constantly reviewing organisation. • Training and coaching provided as necessary. • Systems in place and personal involvement achieving outcomes as required. • Annual performance management undertaken and appropriate policies in place.
Participate in Regional activities that benefit Council's strategic direction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend meetings and contribute to Regional initiatives. • Inform Council about significant Regional issues. • Encourage Staff to contribute to Regional activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at meetings with feedback to Council where appropriate. • Nominated staff involved with Regional activities.
Implement Council decisions in a professional and timely manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement appropriate systems and processes. • Monitor response for quality and timeliness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Electronic Document Management System to meet State Records Act requirements. • Benchmarking and review of works and services constantly under review.

Our Future – Our First Goal

To promote and provide quality services and facilities which address the needs of the community.

Our Roads

Council activities include the planning, construction, design and maintenance of a safe and accessible network of roads and bridges for residents and visitors to the City. To support growth in the Cessnock area, Council will work to improve access to the Region from both Sydney and Newcastle in two ways ... the upgrading of existing transport corridors and the development of new ones.

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.1.6	Road asset inventory and condition data being linked to Council's Mapping Information System.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete 3 yearly asset inventory and condition rating by 30 June 2008 to update Council's road inventory and condition data to capture changes in the network. Complete 3 yearly roughness ride quality testing of Regional and higher trafficked Local Roads by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Asset Engineer will be investigating the possibilities of adopting Pavement Management System, updating the documentation and calling tenders. Delays due to staff shortages.
1.1.7	Similarly, existing drainage inventory being updated and networked into Mapping Information System.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete 3 yearly asset inventory data collection for drainage by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above

Our Bridges

Bridges are an integral part of the Cessnock road network. Council maintains 174 bridges, many of which are vital links to townships and communities within the Local Government Area. 80 of these bridges were constructed from timber over 80 years ago.

These bridges are deteriorating and are not capable of taking the loads required by today's society. To address this, Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.2.1	Implement its 20 year priority program for the replacement and/or reconstruction of its bridges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a "Bridge Replacement and Maintenance Strategy" for bridges on Local and Regional Roads based on condition (including test bores and structural capacity assessment), strategic importance to the network, traffic volumes by 30 September 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of strategy delayed due to staff shortages across Council and other more pressing work – rezonings, voluntary developer agreements, June 2007 flood event, Cunneens Bridge and Whitebridge. Delays due to staff shortages. Revised date Oct 2008

People and Transport

Transport is about people, accessibility, safety and interaction with our environment. Because of this, Council focuses on more than just the engineering aspects of transport. Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.3.1	Develop and implement Community Road Safety Programs focusing on road user behavioural identification and infrastructure road safety improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review & update the Road Safety Strategic Plan by 30 June 2008. Complete a Traffic, Parking & Pedestrian Study for Branxton and Greta by 30 June 2008. Complete a 10 year Parking Strategy for the Cessnock CBD by 30 June 2008. Prepare a Public Transport Handbook for the Lower Hunter in conjunction with all Lower Hunter Councils by 31 December 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Transport Handbook has been completed. Traffic, Parking & Pedestrian Study for Branxton & Greta completed. Review & Update of Road Safety Strategic Plan commenced 10 year parking strategy awaiting adoption of the City Wide Settlement Strategy before commencing.

Waste Management

Waste management and minimisation are a major part of Council's overall environmental management strategy. Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.5.1	Investigate the regional opportunity to utilise alternate technology to convert waste into a resource, in lieu of waste to landfill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in regional investigation into the opportunity to engage alternate technology solution to meet Council's future waste disposal needs aiming to achieve the following timeframes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> signing of HoA by HIR Board and Council by 31 July 2007. complete Project Deed by 30 June 2008. Review Council's current, medium & long-term waste management needs, available technology and costs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> investigation of "infill" proposal by 31 August 2007. investigation of extension areas by 30 November 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing involvement with RWPT. Completed Nov '07 Work continues to meet target of Nov 2008 for completion of Project Deed. 1st draft released on time (14/2/08). Work completed as much as practical Investigation complete. Work commenced; redesign required after unusual weather conditions and staff concerns. Expect work to recommence April 08 Infill completed July 08 EIS preparation is drawing to close. Expect draft document to be available late August 08 Discussed with GM - Cnl brief/CommConsult to begin Oct '08

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.5.5	Provide an efficient and effective kerbside recycling service to the greatest possible catchment in the LGA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a review of service requests and/or extension areas 3 times per year. In conjunction with HRR review the range of recycling materials and services available 3 times per year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going activity; service introduced to Mt View, Millfield (March 08). 413 additional domestic services and 44 additional commercial services over the year. Launch of Day After Collection Service (Lifecycle) for used clothing & other household items 28/3/08; service to commence 28/4/08

Total Catchment Management

Council is committed to the philosophy of Total Catchment Management (TCM) and the principles of Flood Plain Management. Accordingly, Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.6.1	Complete studies at Lavender/Bellbird Creeks, Cessnock, Deep Creek, Abermain and the major watercourses in both Kurri Kurri and South Cessnock.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete consultancy to review Cessnock town area flood studies covering Black Creek and its tributaries (Lavender/Bellbird, HWC Channels, South Cessnock, East Cessnock, Black Creek and Nulkaba Main Drain.) from its source near Kitchener by 1 December 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variation and Extension of Time granted to consultant DHI to incorporate June 2007 storm flood event.
1.6.3	Commence flood mapping of the Wollombi Valley.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete consultancy to undertake Floodplain Management Study and Plan for Wollombi Village by 31 May 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variation and Extension of Time granted to consultant WBM to incorporate June 2007 storm flood event.
1.6.4	Assist in implementation of the completed TCM studies of Wallis and Fishery Creeks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize completion by consultant of Wallis and Swamp Creek / Fishery Creek Flood Study by 31 August 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultant requested for fee proposal to include data from June 2007 storm flood event. Data from Carman Surveyors of surveyed flood marks has been passed on to consultant.

Civic Precinct

An exciting and progressive Civic Precinct concept has been adopted by Council which sets out to develop specific use precincts within the Cessnock City. Parcels of land are being investigated for the future development of a diverse and high quality range of community facilities and services. The development of a Civic Precinct and its facilities is to be undertaken via joint ventures and partnerships with suitable organisations. Council intends to:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.7.3	Complete feasibility studies, action and financial plans for the development of a multi-purpose centre, youth facility, central park and outdoor sporting facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a management and operational framework for the Cessnock PAC by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model drafted. Investigations ongoing so that options can be presented to Council in September 2008.
1.7.4	Commence the construction phase for the development of the Cessnock Community Performing Arts Centre and Civic Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete construction of Cessnock Performing Arts Centre by 30 September 2008. Finalise the financial plan and scope of works for Civic Park by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised contract completion date is 29 September 2008 Scope of works and estimates to be presented to Council in October 2008.

Recreation and Open Space

The City of Cessnock is fortunate to possess large expanses of diverse open space. Council controls much of this – particularly in the form of parks, pools, playgrounds and sporting fields. Council intends to:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.8.1	Review and update Plans of Management and Masterplans in line with the Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update 8 Plans of Management by 30 June 2008 Develop and/or review and update 6 Masterplans by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vary Park (Weston), Greta Central Oval (3 major areas), North Rothbury playground, Howe Park (Abermain), Baddeley Park and Cessnock Sportsground complete Masterplans for Peace Park, Chinaman's Hollow (Weston), Greta Central Oval, Pokolbin Park and Howe Park (Abermain) complete Masterplans for Miller Park (Branxton) and Carmichael Park (Bellbird) complete

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.8.2	Target the establishment and expansion of centralised high quality parkland and sporting facilities including: Peace Park/ Chinaman's Hollow; Miller Park; Cessnock Indoor Sporting Centre; Carmichael Park; Cessnock Public Swimming Pool.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Stage 2 Peace Park Playground upgrade by 30 June 2008. Complete Stage 5 Miller Park Masterplan by 30 June 2008. Complete redevelopment of Cessnock Indoor Sports Centre by 30 September 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liberty Swing installed at Peace Park Floodlights and shelters installed at Miller Park Redevelopment of Cessnock Indoor Sports Centre scheduled for completion August 2008
1.8.3	Implement Council's Asset Management System.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain a maintenance management system for Recreation Assets by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data bases continually updated Planned maintenance programs are reflective of maintenance needs

Social and Community Planning

Social and Community Planning is a process by which the community, government and non-government agencies, and community service organisations can identify and address various social and community issues. The Social and Community Plan, in a co-ordinated and co-operative manner, must identify the needs and issues facing the following mandatory target groups; children, young people, women, people with disabilities, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and older people. Council intends to:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.10.2	Maintain and make available a detailed community profile outlining a range of key demographic and social indicator data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community profile updated with 8 weeks of census and demographic data being released. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Profile update is complete
1.10.3	Maintain and make available a directory of all community services and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the community directory in March, June, September and December each year incorporating: sporting; recreation; arts and culture; community services; religious organisations; and natural resource groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major annual update completed in February, with other occasional updates being made as required.

Community Development and Facilities

Community Development is the process whereby Council works directly and indirectly with the community to assist them in building their own networks of support and facilities. This is achieved by providing opportunities for communities to identify and meet their own needs through the provision and support of the following:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.11.1	Provision, maintenance and management of community infrastructure including community halls and centres, community based pre-schools and childcare centres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate and implement a management and operational framework for the Cessnock Indoor Sporting Centre by 30 September 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A twelve month Licence Agreement between Council and Cessnock Basketball Association has been drafted with the intent that the Association will manage and operate the facility.
1.11.4	Continued support of the local Tidy Town movement and the ethos of Keep Australia Beautiful Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate the annual inspection of towns entered in the competition by 30 September 2007. Coordinate/arrange representation at the annual awards presentation by 30 November 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete for 07; 5 Committees entered and judged, ongoing for 2008 Complete for 07; 4 Committees attended in Leeton and received awards, ongoing for 2008
1.11.6	Continuation of support for the provision of youth services and facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for young people to be actively involved in Council's activities four (4) times per year. Coordinate four (4) large youth events per year in partnership with other local service providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several events held during Youth Week in partnership with other local service providers, including a breakfast and YouthFest (bike and skateboard competition and live band music). Local youth providers completed outreach to local skateparks in school holidays. New CYCOS centre was used by Centrelink to deliver a program to promote job seeking skills.

Emergency Management

Disasters and emergencies, such as floods, fires and major accidents, can have a profound impact on a close-knit community. Emergencies, while not everyday occurrences, can and do occur. Acknowledging this, Council will work together with other government groups and the community to:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.12.1	Implement Council's Disaster Management Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Cessnock's Local Disaster Plan by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft has been completed.

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.12.6	Continue to review Administration Building Emergency Evacuation Procedure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend Emergency Evacuation Procedures document by 31 December 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interim meeting held with Director in September to determine zones & warden shortfalls. Waiting for updated building layout plan to be produced Volunteer wardens appointed to replace vacancy Warden meeting Jan discussed draft procedures Draft evacuation zones formulated, but held pending corporate restructure and seating layout Fire drill held in June Training to be held in conjunction with Depot staff

Technology

Council recognises that rapid advances in technology can help improve work practices and the provision of services to our community. Council is fully committed to adopting any emerging technology which will benefit the operations of Council and/or its community. As a result Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.13.1	Complete an Information Technology Vision and Strategic Plan which will be reviewed regularly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Information Technology Vision and Strategic Plan by 31 March 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed last quarter
1.13.2	Continue to develop opportunities for conducting electronic business – both with our suppliers and our community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the contract for provision of phone services to Council by 31 December 2007. Commence implementation of an electronic procurement system by 30 June 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telstra GTA pricing completed for all telephony services.
1.13.6	Develop, test and maintain a suitable IT disaster recovery plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop IT Disaster Recovery Plan by 28 February 2008. Fully implement plan by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development DR Plan 90% complete.

Libraries

Council meets many of the information, education and recreation needs of the community through the provision of Cessnock City Library's services, collections and facilities. In continuing to build this key cultural asset, Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.14.2	Upgrade applications, technology and communications to expand and improve access to the Library's information resources.	Increase usage of the Library's online databases by delivering training sessions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of library staff by 30 June 2008 • 10 Council staff by 30 June 2008 • 30 library users from the community by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online database training - 16 Library staff (88%); 8 Council staff (more were scheduled but some could not attend) – further sessions planned for first quarter 2008/2009); at least 30 community users in the course of the year.

Aerodrome Development

Cessnock Aerodrome is recognised as a City asset with enormous potential to contribute to the growth of tourism in the City. To promote this, Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.15.2	Maintain and enhance the Aerodrome in line with the Aerodrome Operations Manual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update the Noise Exposure Forecast for Cessnock Airport surrounds by 30 June 2008. • Liaise with CASA to improve Cessnock Airport CTAF operations by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New computer software has been installed on the GIS making it much easier to view noise level exposure contours; • Completed - liaison with CASA has been completed and they are considering an enlargement of the airport CTAF area as well as changing the radio frequency to separate events occurring at nearby airports from Cessnock Airport. These alterations have been approved by CASA.

Cemeteries

The nine general and two lawn cemeteries in the City of Cessnock are a unique record of our past. They also show the respect we have for those who have gone before us. To preserve this record and clearly demonstrate our respect, Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
1.16.1	Continue to improve the appearance of our cemeteries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, exhibit and implement Masterplans for Kurri Kurri Lawn Cemetery and the following general Cemeteries:- Cessnock, Branxton, Greta, Ellalong, Kurri Kurri, Millfield and Wollombi by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cemetery Management Strategy developed as a result of the review of the Cemeteries Plan of Management review and update. • Masterplans for all cemeteries expected to be outcomes of the Strategy if adopted by Council in early 2009.

Our Future – Our Second Goal

To protect, enhance and promote the natural, developed and cultural environment.

Council's responsibility to protect and enhance the environment incorporates cultural, natural and built aspects. Within each of these areas there are a number of plans, activities and reporting mechanisms which include all areas of Council. While much of this work takes place at a local level, significant effort is put into co-ordinating Council's activities with State and Federal bodies.

Local Environment Planning

Council is responsible for the preparation and implementation of City wide environmental plans and controls. In this way, Council can provide for the organised development of the City, the protection of sensitive areas and species, and the protection of the quality of life for existing residents. Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
2.1.1	Review the City Wide Settlement Strategy (Stages 1 & 2).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review completed by 31 March 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A review of the Council's City Wide Settlement Strategy(s) is now being undertaken. Significant changes are anticipated due to requirements to incorporate Lower Hunter Regional Strategy outcomes. Also formatting of City Wide Settlement Strategy by combining into a single document, removing catchments and adding new infrastructure chapter. NOTE: This document is due to be exhibited with the comprehensive LEP. However, due to the delays in exhibition the new LEP, the review will not be completed by March 2008
2.1.2	Review the Cessnock Local Environment Plan (LEP) regularly, with a major review every eight years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review to be completed to draft form by 31 March 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Comprehensive Local Environmental Plan report to Council 21 November 2007 and 16 April 2008. At those meetings Council resolved, subject to various amendments, to adopt the draft Plan for the purpose of submitting it to the Department of Planning (DoP) on 28 April 2008 with a request to issue Council a certificate to place the draft Plan on public exhibition. Currently awaiting response from DoP. Anticipate a 10 week exhibition period. NOTE: due to delays in response from the DoP on issuing an authorisation to exhibit this document (s.65 Certificate), the new LEP will not be completed to draft form by 31 March 2008.

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
2.1.4	Continue to develop residential development controls which are sensitive to localities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare 4 Development Control Plans in conjunction with proposed rezonings under the Settlement Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of specific DCPs for developments throughout the City are currently being prepared. In the following areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Cliffleigh Kitchener Bellbird Nth Bellbird Heights Anvil Creek Nulkaba Flooding and drainage issues Review of residential requirements These will form new or modified chapters to Cessnock DCP 2006.
2.1.6	Review Development Contribution Plans on an ongoing basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare 4 Contribution Plans in conjunction with proposed rezonings under the Settlement Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A contribution plan will need to be developed for each major land release area. The most advanced are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cliffleigh VPA exhibited July 2008 and to be "signed off" by Council in August 2008. Anvil Creek VPA currently on exhibition August 2008 with "sign off" anticipated September 2008. Kitchener S94 contributions plan on exhibition until 20 August 2008 Huntlee VPA – Report to August Council Meeting to enter into a VPA for Stage 1 of the Huntlee New Town development and commence formal negotiations with the LWP Group on the final content and makeup of this document.

Development Control Plans

Complementing the City Local Environment Plan, Development Control Plans are specific to a location or to a particular development. They are intended to address the circumstances arising out of development at a given site, or for a particular type of development. Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
2.2.1	Develop contemporary planning controls for City localities and precincts, as identified strategies are adopted, and incorporate them into Development Control Plan 2006 to ensure a high quality of development further focussing on environmentally sustainable development principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise the "Flood Liable Lands" document and incorporate it as a chapter in DCP 2006 by 31 March 2008. Complete the review of "Urban Housing" (Chapter D.2, DCP 2006) and amend DCP 2006 accordingly by 30 November 2007. Review the Subdivision Guidelines (Chapter D.1, DCP 2006) and Council's "Engineering Requirements for Development" having regard to WSUD principles by 30 November 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief prepared to obtain fee quotations from external consultants for the revision of the Urban Housing and Subdivision chapters of the DCP. Funding for the work to be addressed. Development engineering services provided on an ongoing basis.

Developed Environment

In addition to the broad planning activities outlined above, Council has undertaken or will soon commence a number of specific studies or activities which are intended to enhance the City's environment. Some of these are:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
2.4.6	Review of development and subdivision controls at an overall planning and individual application level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake 4 developer/applicant forums during 2007-08. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAU providing peer review and feedback to staff. Individual work plans prepared and performance reviews implemented.
2.4.10	Ensure that development is designed, constructed and maintained to deliver improved sustainability outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalise the swimming pool education and inspection programme by 31 October 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming pool inspection program developed and implemented by Development Services and Regulatory Services staff.

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
2.4.11	Ensure that Council's planning policies, land use and regulatory controls/practices enhance the visual amenity of the City.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an Urban Design Review Panel by 30 September 2007 to ensure that new developments enhance the visual amenity of the City. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft sustainability index/guidelines being prepared to support BASIX. Investigations commenced into the feasibility of establishing an Urban Design Review Panel.

Environment Control

Council works in co-operation with its community and developers to ensure its obligation of environmental protection is met. It will continue to implement, monitor and where necessary, enforce appropriate standards, through the consistent application of Council policies and procedures.

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
2.6.4	Continue to provide Council's Building Fire Safety Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a review to ensure all appropriate developments are included in Council's Fire Safety Schedule database by 30 September 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council's high risk buildings have been identified along with the fire safety measures within these buildings and are being placed on Council's Fire Register.

Development Services

Council is aware of the complexities of the statutory approvals process and the subsequent demands placed on prospective developers to meet requirements. In an effort to streamline these processes, Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
2.7.1	Develop greater use of the internet in Council's dealing with the public and other statutory authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the feasibility of electronic referrals by 31 December 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic internal referrals introduced. DCP 2006 and all supporting DA information, forms and guidelines maintained and available on the web.
2.7.6	Provide an efficient and effective development assessment process that provides both quality and timely outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement an electronic DA tracking service by 31 December 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electronic DA tracking services implemented and available on Council's website.

Cultural Environment

The City's cultural environment includes the arts, its public spaces, its buildings, its history and its people. Council, in acknowledging both the tangible and intangible elements of the cultural environment, will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
2.8.1	Complete Management Plans for significant sites such as Kitchener Poppet Head, Richmond Main and the Great North Road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Plan of Management for Richmond Main Heritage Park by 31 March 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No progress to date due to key staff being committed in other areas.
2.8.3	Maintain commitment to the City's Cultural Plan and the Community's cultural development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the Review of the Cultural Plan by 31 December 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No progress to date due to key staff being committed in other areas.



Our Future – Our Third Goal

To actively foster the creation of employment and sustainable development opportunities acceptable to community and environmental standards.

The creation of sustainable employment for members of our community is one of Council's primary concerns. The Survey of Residents undertaken in 2001 has indicated that local residents believe that Council could make Cessnock a better place by increasing employment, attracting industries and supporting local business.

This recognition that Council has a role as a leader and provider in the community beyond what has traditionally been seen as Local Government activity has resulted in Council becoming more actively involved in local economic development.

Economic Development

Council recognises that the greatest number of jobs will be created in the private sector. To generate the right environment to nurture private sector job creation, Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
3.1.1	Develop and consistently apply sustainable employment generating policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence support for the Hunter Region BEC NCAP Program and AEDO Program by 30 June 2008. Support the Hunter Region BEC feasibility study looking at creating an employment brokerage by 31 March 2008. Implement Soft Skills training to long term unemployed in partnership with Job Network Providers by 31 December 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated NCAP and AEDO projects for the 2007/08 period. Provided input to the HRBEC as required. Implemented two soft skill programs in collaboration with Wesley Uniting.
3.1.2	Develop mutually beneficial partnerships between Council and business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist Wollombi Chamber of Commerce in the implementation of a Community Web-Site by 30 June 2008. Implement a pilot program with Lovedale Chamber of Commerce that looks at ESD in Tourism related Business by 31 December 2007. Develop and implement a function to recognise International Women's Day by 31 March 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisted development and launch of the Wollombi community web-site. In collaboration with sustainability officer trialled sustainability in tourism project in Lovedale and Wollombi. This project has now been taken up a regional agenda and is being auspiced by Hunter Tourism, additionally Lovedale iChamber is also developing a sustainability policy. Implemented a Business Breakfast to recognise the role of Women in Business with Jodi Mackey MP as guest speaker.

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
3.1.3	Encourage appropriate industries which offer benefits to the community to establish or relocate to the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a project plan for the Light Metals Task Force by 31 December 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalised action plan for Light Metals Task Force.
3.1.8	Continue to seek funding for the implementation of sections of the Cessnock CBD Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate funding options to implement Quick Access for Small Business by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cessnock Council was unable to meet funding parameters.
3.1.11	Review and update the City's marketing strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in the 2008 new format Investment Prospectus by 31 March 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalised investment prospectus in collaboration with HEDC.
3.1.13	Oversee the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Towns with Heart area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate a feasibility study evaluating the need for a Visitor Information Centre in Kurri Kurri by 31 December 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalised agreement on implementation of feasibility study by September 2008.
3.1.14	Participate in the Cessnock Main Street Program and develop a community Strategic Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence involvement with the Make a Difference Program by 31 December 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding via DSRD for Make a Difference program finalised.

Tourism

As previously indicated, tourism is a major source of employment and economic development to Cessnock City. To promote continued growth in this area, Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
3.2.1	Continue to develop and encourage the private sector to develop tourism infrastructure facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in Jetstar Campaign with HRTO, HVWCT Inc and HVVA by 31 July 2007. Participate in Tourism Media Campaign in partnership with HRTO, HVVA, HVWCT Inc and TNSW by 30 September 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented Jetstar campaign with Industry Partners, HVWCT Inc and HRTO in June 2007. Implemented Tourism media campaign with HRTO, HVWCT Inc, HVVA and Industry Partners in August 2007.
3.2.3	Continue to participate in the collection and dissemination of tourism data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an analysis on Wedding and Events related Tourism Spend by 31 December 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed wedding and conference research program to be incorporated into Tourism Monitor Partnership Project.

Our Future – Our Fourth Goal

To be a professionally managed and customer focused organisation which provides leadership through partnerships with the community

Cessnock City Council exists to serve the community. To do this best it must attract and retain professional staff, communicate with the community, reflect the community's desires and aspirations and, at times, it must take a leadership role.

Professional Management, Professional Services

To provide quality service to its customers, Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
4.2.1	Apply business management practices to Council's operations to ensure that delivery of services is efficient, effective and undertaken using best practice principles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Risk Management Committee by 30 November 2007. Develop a Risk Management Strategy by 31 March 2008. Implement the Integrated Management System in the Building Services area by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation process delayed due to ongoing staff investigations and corporate restructure.
4.2.3	Review the Human Resources Plan each year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalize Human Resource Plan and Recruitment Kit by 30 September 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment Kit is finalized ready for submission to Senior Executive. HR Plan is not completed due to HR involvement in ongoing major workplace investigations.
4.2.4	Assess all current work practices to ensure that they are competitive and offer the City the greatest possible effectiveness and efficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an Internal Audit Program by 30 June 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in the Hunter Councils Internal Audit program Development of program delayed due to major workplace investigation.
4.2.4	Implementation of Council's Integrated Management System.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake 50 Internal System and Project Audits of Council's Integrated Management System to ensure compliance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAI Global completed a full audit Follow-up audit completed in May 2008

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
4.2.5	Continue to recognise the value of staff development and the 'human' resource to customer service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the operation of the performance management system for all employees and review outcomes by 30 June 2008. Undertake a staff attitudinal survey by 31 March 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate training plans and competency assessment is completed. OH&S systems have been reviewed by the Workplace Health & Safety Officer. Risk management is no longer under HR Section and is now in Corporate & Community Dept. Performance Management system implementation is completed up to review stage as the review will be undertaken in the next reporting year. Staff Attitudinal Survey not completed.
4.2.9	Develop formal policies for succession planning of key personnel and internal appeals on recruitment decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop policy for succession planning by 30 September 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Succession Planning policy and procedures not complete due to HR involvement in ongoing major workplace investigations and staff turnover in section.

Financial Management

Any plan should be based on the premise that each of the proposals contained within it will be affordable. To this end, Council will:

Goal	How it will achieve this:	In particular Council will:	What Council has done to achieve this?
4.3.5	Establish a system of Monthly Cost Reporting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop electronic presentation of Monthly Cost Reports to Managers by 31 December 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commenced setup of reporting sheets based upon budget document. Reviewing information presented in & formats of monthly cost reports Budget for 2008/9 distributed in electronic format Revised corporate structure incorporated
4.3.8	Undertake a general review of Council's current Insurance policies to ensure Council's assets are adequately covered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all existing insurance policies by 31 March 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurances monitored throughout year Renewal policies received & being reviewed Policies adjusted and renewed as required



Mayoral & Councillor Fees & Facilities

The following summary shows the amount expended during the year on mayoral fees and councillor fees, the amount expended on provision of facilities for use by councillors and the payment of councillors' expenses.

Nature of Expenses	Amount
Mayoral Fees	\$31,740
Councillor Fees	\$189,020

Mayoral and Councillor fees for the year 2007/2008 were fixed within the range of fees established by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. The fees were as follows:-

Mayor/Deputy Mayor	\$31,740
Councillor	\$14,540

Breakdown of Mayoral and Councillor Expenses:

Nature of Expenses	Amount
Provision of dedicated office equipment, including laptop computers, mobile phones, telephone, fax and installation of internet access.	\$9,850
Telephone calls, including mobiles, landlines, fax and internet services.	\$9,122
Spouse / Partner Accompanying Person	\$480
Conference and Seminar	\$15,888
Training and Skill Development	Nil
Interstate Travel	\$1,559
Overseas Travel	Nil
Care & Other Related Expense	Nil

Council's policy for payment of expenses and provision of facilities was adopted on 9 March 1988 in accordance with Section 252 of the Local Government Act, 1993. The policy for Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors is as follows:

Expenses and Facilities

Objective

To determine what contributions Council will make towards Councillors costs incurred at conferences etc and to determine payment of expenses and provisions of facilities for Mayor/Deputy Mayor and Councillors.

Attendances Conferences/Seminars and Approved Training

To permit Councillors to be kept informed of developments affecting Local Government in order that they are able to develop policies in keeping with community expectations and monitor the performance of Council.

Travel and Accommodation

To provide a method of defining travel and accommodation entitlements and provide a transparent system for the reimbursement of expenses.

A. Payment of Expenses

General

Councillors seeking reimbursement must submit claims for payment with supporting information eg receipts, tax invoices, etc. Such claims are to be lodged within 90 days of the Councillor incurring the expense.

Councillors may request payment in advance in anticipation of expenses to be incurred in attending conferences, seminars and training away from home. Councillors may also request an advance payment for the cost of any other service or facility covered by the policy.

Sustenance

Reimbursement of sustenance expenses shall be paid for Council sponsored attendance at meetings, conferences, seminars, training courses or whilst on Council authorised business. The maximum level of reimbursement must be appropriate to the circumstances of attendances as determined by the Mayor or General Manager.

Travel

- For travel directly related to a Councillor's attendance at Council and Committee meetings and other activities specifically authorised by Council, a per kilometre rate in accordance with the Local Government (State) Award. All claims for reimbursement to be in accordance with the procedures adopted by Council from time to time.
- Where air travel is required up to a distance of 1 500 km, Economy Class is to be utilised.
- Where air travel exceeds 1 500 km, Business Class may be utilised.
- For attendance at conferences:
 - a) where the conference involves a return trip of up to 350 km, travelling allowance in accordance with the Local Government (State) Award be paid where the Councillor elects to utilise their own vehicle;
 - b) in excess of 350 km, the equivalent of a First Class return rail fare.
- Where involved on Council authorised business and the situation necessitates, Council will meet the reasonable cost of taxi fares.

Accommodation

Where a conference, meeting or other Council authorised business necessitates overnight accommodation, Council will meet the reasonable costs for the Councillor. Where a Councillor is accompanied by a spouse/partner, the sharing of accommodation is permitted, subject to Council not incurring any additional costs. The standard of accommodation is not to exceed four (4) stars except where a conference or seminar venue exceeds four(4) stars, or as determined by the general manager.

Telephone expenses

Council provide a phone/facsimile in Councillors' houses and pay the annual rental charges for the phone/facsimile line, and provide an allowance of \$50 per month towards mobile and phone/fax calls.

Childcare

Reasonable expenses of a carer will be reimbursed for childcare expenses incurred while attending Council meetings, Committee meetings and Council briefings or while representing the Mayor in an official capacity.

In relation to attendance at Council approved conferences and seminars, an amount of up to \$1 000 per financial year may be claimed.

B. Provision of Facilities

Secretarial support

Subject to arrangement with the General Manager, staff assistance will be provided as required for matters relating to Council business. Assistance may be in the form of secretarial support, delivery of materials from Council and catering for meetings.

Stationery/Postage

Councillor stationery, business cards and postage for associated mailing subject to the approval of the General Manager.

Meals/Refreshments

Meals and beverages when attending Council, Committee meetings and briefings.

Insignia

Provision of badges, name plates, appropriate to the position of Councillor.

Computers

Provision of appropriate computers and associated software and hardware for the purpose of business papers and electronic mail. (For implementation as technology permits.)

Interview facilities

An office and telephone is provided for the use of Councillors for the purpose of interviewing constituents and Council related business telephone calls.

Mobile phones

A mobile telephone to be provided for each Councillor, to a standard equivalent to that issued to Council staff, at Council's cost, for the use of Councillors to facilitate the conduct of Council business with constituents and Council officers. Councillors will return the phone when leaving office or may make application to purchase the phone.

Council to pay the cost of the annual rental (Plan Fee), and service charges, and provide an allowance of \$50 per month towards mobile and phone/fax calls.

Councillors' mobile phone numbers to be included in the Council Section of the Telephone Directory.

Corporate uniforms

Councillors to be provided with access to the Corporate Wardrobe under the same arrangements as Council staff, ie reimbursed of one third of the cost up to a maximum of \$250.00.

C. Conferences/Seminars and Training

- Councillors may be nominated to attend conferences, seminars or training by a resolution of the Council. If this is not possible then the approval shall be given jointly by the mayor and the general manager or if the mayor requires approval to travel and a resolution of Council is not possible, it shall be given jointly by the deputy mayor and the general manager. Council shall meet all registration and reasonable out of pocket expenses not elsewhere covered by this policy.
- Attendance will be generally confined to:
 - Local Government Association sponsored conferences, workshops, seminars and training.
 - Conferences and Congresses conducted by the principal professional organisation within Local Government, eg LGMA.
 - Seminars or training targeted at specific Council initiatives for which due budget provision has been made.

- Requests for attending conferences shall be in writing outlining the benefits for council. After returning from the conference, councillors shall provide a written report to council on the aspects of the conference relevant to council business and/or local community. No written report is required for the Annual Conference of the Local Government and Shires Association.

D. Insurances

Councillors shall receive the benefit of insurance cover for:

- personal injury/accident;
- public liability;
- professional indemnity;
- travel insurance for overseas travel, including medical expenses.

Subject to all such cover being applicable to occurrences relating to the carrying out of duties associated with Civic Office.

E. Motor Vehicles

The driver is personally responsible for all traffic or parking fines incurred while travelling in private or Council vehicles on Council business.

MAYOR

In addition to the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities applicable to Councillors, the Mayor shall be entitled to the following.

A. Motor Vehicles

A fully serviced and maintained motor vehicle shall be provided for the purposes of discharging the duties of Civic Office.

The Mayor shall be permitted private use of the vehicle subject to the Mayor meeting the cost of fuel associated with any private usage

B. Office

A furnished office suite located in the Administration Building.

C. Telephones

In addition to the normal office phone system, the Mayor shall be provided with a mobile phone which will be serviced and maintained by Council.

D. Secretarial/Administrative Support

Council shall provide secretarial and support services associated with the duties of the office of the Mayor.

E. Childcare

Council shall meet the reasonable cost of childcare by a carer for a maximum of 5 hours per week to permit the carrying out of Civic and ceremonial functions.

F. Office Refreshments

1. Council shall provide the Mayor with refreshments and beverages, as necessary, to enable the Mayor to entertain and host visitors etc in the course of official duties.
2. The fees payable to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors not be reduced for any private benefit gained from the private use of facilities.

Legal Assistance

Council shall provide legal assistance for the payment of legal expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising out of the performance by a Councillor of his or her functions under the Local Government Act, 1993.

Council shall not provide for legal assistance in respect of legal proceedings initiated by the Mayor and/or Councillors in any circumstances.

The fees payable to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors not to be reduced for any private benefit gained from the private use of facilities.

SENIOR STAFF

Council underwent a major restructure and employed a total of 5 senior staff for the 2007/2008 financial year.

The table below sets out the roles that were in place during the financial year.

ANNUAL REPORT – 2007/2008

SENIOR STAFF

	General Manager	Acting Director Corporate & Regulatory	Director City Planning	Acting Director Strategic & Community	Director Corporate & Community	Director Works & Services	Director Infrastructure & Services
	1/07/07 to 30/06/08	1/07/07 to 1/06/08	2/06/08 to 30/06/08	1/07/07 to 9/06/08	10/06/08 to 30/06/08	1/07/07 to 5/03/08	6/03/08 to 30/06/08
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total Value of Salary Component of Package:	176,642	115,460	10,703	98,956	10,703	90,569	51,988
Total amount of any bonus payments, performance or other payments that do not form part of salary:	7,701	5,785	-	438	-	9,940	-
Total payable superannuation (salary sacrifice and employers contribution):	15,898	10,391	963	5,264	963	8,151	4,679
Total value of non-cash benefits – Provision of Motor Vehicle:	10,000	8,525	833	8,525	833	6,667	3,333
Total payable fringe benefits tax for non cash benefits:	3,196	3,343	304	1,846	-	2,593	1,297
Total Remuneration Package	\$213,437	\$143,504	\$12,803	\$115,029	\$12,499	\$117,920	\$61,297

Human Resource & EEO Activities

Managing and improving the quality, performance and conditions of employees whilst maintaining a safe workplace and a work environment free from discrimination still remains the focus of human resource activities.

Council is working towards implementing an Integrated Management System (IMS) that is incorporated across all of Council, this will ensure a safe work environment for employees and visitors in all departments of Council.

In coming months awareness training with its emphasis on Councils IMS, Incident Reporting and dealing with Asbestos will be rolled out for Management and staff. The training will provide much information on accountability and responsibility for line management and staff which will lead to greater understanding across the organisation.

Recruitment and selection, training and development and harmonious industrial relations continue to play a major part in the human resource activities of the organisation.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY ACTIVITIES

Workplace harassment and bullying policy and protocols have been reviewed with staff to be given refresher training in EEO and related protocols beginning late November and into the New Year. Performance Management program was introduced in July 2007, with the first year being measured in June 2008. Staff achieved in excess of the 75% of the Key Performance Indicators.

Business & Commercial Activities

Council conducts a number of activities which can be defined as business or commercial activities. These have been undertaken with the intention of generating financial surpluses which, if achieved, can be used to subsidise other Council operations.

- a) Council does not operate any Category 1 Business Activities as defined under the National competition Policy Guidelines. Council operates the following Category 2 Business activities:
 - Noxious Weeds
 - Lawn Cemeteries
- b) Vineyard Grove – During 2007/08 7 lots were sold.
- c) Council did not hold any controlling interest in any companies during 2007/08.
- d) Council is a member of the New South Wales Local Government (Jardine Lloyd Thompson) Mutual Liability Scheme. This is a self-insurance scheme comprising the majority of Councils in New South Wales. It was established with the purpose of purchasing public liability and professional indemnity insurance. This enables Council to meet its insurance obligations under the Act.
- e) Hunter Resource Recovery is a public company, limited by guarantee. Registered ABN 35071432570. The company was established by the member Councils (Cessnock, Lake Macquarie & Maitland) to manage the kerbside recycling contract. Extension of services will now see the contract continue until November 2012.

The Company is made up of 12 Directors. Each Council is represented by four (4) Directors.

The Company was established by the Councils of Cessnock, Lake Macquarie and Maitland in 1995 to manage the kerbside recycling collection service. The service is provided to almost 114,375 residents across the three local government areas. From commencement of the service to June 2008, 241,000 tonnes of material has been recycled across the three (3) local government areas.

- f) Council is a joint guarantor for a loan which was drawn down on July 1 2003 by Hunter Councils Limited. The total loan borrowing is \$2.86 million and Council's exposure is \$351,416.

Hunter Councils Limited has been established to improve the quality and efficiency of local government service throughout the Hunter Region. One such service is the establishment and provision of a Record Repository Centre for the use of the Member Councils and to outsource this service to other organisations.

- g) Lawn Cemeteries – Council manages and operates two (2) lawn cemeteries which generated a combined profit of \$74,300. The profits have been internally restricted for future cemetery capital works and long-term maintenance.
- h) Hunter Integrated Resources is a public company, limited by guarantee Registered ACN 095 330 813 established by the four (4) member Councils, Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland and Newcastle to manage the alternate waste technology proposal under investigation by the member Councils.

The Heads of Agreement was signed on 14th February 2008.

The Company has 8 Directors, each Council is represented by two (2) Directors.

If adopted the proposal will treat up to 160,000 tonnes of domestic waste annually, producing electricity, soil additive and reduce the regional need for landfill by approx 60%.

External Bodies Exercising Delegated Functions

No external bodies exercised functions delegated by Council as defined under S428(2)(o) of the Local Government Act.

Controlling Interests in Companies

Council held no controlling interests in companies as defined under S428(2)(p) of the Local Government Act.



Tenders

TENDERS

The following tenders over \$150,000 were accepted by Council during the year 2007/2008:

Successful Tenderer	Item	Amount Payable per Tender (incl GST)
Quarry Products	Supply and Delivery of Road base and Sub base	Ongoing 2008/10 (\$1.7m last year)
Boral Asphalt / Pioneer Road Services	Sprayed Bituminous Road Surfacing	Ongoing 2008/10 (\$2.6m last year)
Tropic Asphalt	Supply Delivery and Laying of Asphaltic Road Surface	Ongoing 2008/10 (\$250,000 last year)
Tropic Asphalt	Heavy Patching and Reseal Preparation Services	Ongoing 2008/10 (\$1.8m last year)
Hartcher Hall	Electrical Reactive Maintenance and Repairs	Ongoing 2008/10 (\$426,000 last year)
Lovetts	Hire of Plant and Equipment	Ongoing 2008/10 (\$1.2m last year)
Labour Co-op	Hire of Casual Labour	Ongoing 2008/10 (\$637,000 last year)

Capital Works Projects

Capital Works and Improvement Projects include expenditure on the acquisition and construction of new infrastructure assets and the augmentation or improvement of existing infrastructure assets. Infrastructure assets are all the assets that comprise the public facilities which Council requires to provide essential services. They include roadworks, drainage, parking areas, parks, buildings and works installations.

The following capital works projects have been undertaken in the year 2007/2008. These are compared with the projected capital works from the 2007/2008 Management Plan and approved Program Budget 2007/2008, including funds revoted for works incomplete at 30 June 2007.

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY	PROJECTS	COST	
		Proposed 2007/2008	Actual 2007/2008
Strategic & Community Services / Works & Services			
	LOCAL ROADS		
	Rural Construction	\$1,065,000	\$394,890
	Urban Construction	\$1,223,100	\$810,380
	Infrastructure Improvement (additional rate)	\$1,610,900	\$1,454,090
	"Roads to Recovery"	\$772,660	\$514,680
	Supplementary "Roads to Recovery"	\$86,630	\$86,700
	AusLink Strategic Regional Program	\$2,253,000	220,140
	Urban Resealing	\$493,000	\$497,230
	Rural Resealing	\$331,540	\$346,610
	Gravel Resheeting & Sealing Program	\$564,300	\$150,950
	Drainage Construction	\$651,890	\$391,610
	Stormwater Management Services Program	\$380,000	\$239,270
	Flood Plain Management Program	\$178,230	\$247,270
	Bridge Reconstruction & Maintenance	\$393,000	\$281,940
	Bridge Construction & Improvement	\$427,340	\$66,280
	Council Urban Road Maintenance	\$1,468,600	\$1,459,810
	Council Rural Road Maintenance	\$1,475,300	\$1,456,570
	Traffic Facilities Maintenance	\$91,170	\$69,280
	Traffic Facilities Construction	\$30,800	\$13,100
	Bus Shelter Maintenance Program	\$39,500	\$16,130
	Cycleway Maintenance	\$17,000	\$14,210
	Cycleway Construction	\$0	\$0
	Street Tree Maintenance	\$166,700	\$163,760
	SUB-TOTAL	\$13,719,660	\$8,894,900

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY	PROJECTS	COST	
		Proposed 2007/2008	Actual 2007/2008
Strategic & Community Services / Works & Services			
	STATE ROADS		
	Main Road 220 Upgrade (Acquisitions)	\$63,600	\$0
	State Road Single Invitation Contract Maintenance	\$463,900	\$426,320
	State Road Single Invitation Contract Work Orders (Resurfacing/Resealing, Rehabilitation, Road Safety & Traffic Management)	\$5,234,590	\$5,234,590
	State Roads Apportionment	\$69,350	\$69,350
	Bus Shelters Construction (DOT)	\$21,110	\$17,250
	SUB-TOTAL	\$5,852,550	\$5,747,510
	REGIONAL ROADS		
	Regional Roads Maintenance Block Grant	\$1,105,960	\$1,212,180
	Regional Roads Repair Program	\$873,470	\$865,690
	Regional Roads Traffic Facilities Block Grant	\$150,000	\$159,170
	Regional Roads Bridge Maintenance	\$80,000	\$76,910
	RTA Blackspot Program	\$0	\$0
	SUB-TOTAL	\$2,209,430	\$2,313,950
	STATE NATURAL DISASTER FUNDING (JUNE 2007 STORM) – ALL ROADS		
	SUB-TOTAL	\$3,048,320	\$2,571,700
	TOTAL	\$24,829,960	\$19,528,060

The under expenditure across the programs particularly relates to delays in completion of a number of construction and rehabilitation projects on Regional and Local Roads. Due to the impact of the June 2007 Declared Natural Disaster Council's construction teams had to be diverted to undertake urgent storm and flood damage repairs to council infrastructure. The amount spent will be claimed against the State and Federal Natural Disaster funds. Currently work to a value of \$3,048,320 has been budgeted, of which work to a value of \$2,571,700 has been completed.

Construction work recommenced in August 2007 and the backlog is being addressed. In the Rural construction Program, the two major projects impacted were Majors Lane Rehabilitation and Cunneens Bridge and Approaches on Paynes Crossing Road, Wollombi. Majors Lane currently underway and well advanced. The commencement of construction of the new Cunneens Bridge was delayed due to the need for approvals from the Department of Environment and Climate Change for aboriginal and other archaeological investigation.

The under expenditure in the "AusLink Roads to Recovery Programme" is due to delays in the commencement of reconstruction works in Neath Street and Quarrybylong, Cessnock. These works are well advanced in early 2008/2009 with Neath Street complete.

The Supplementary Road to Recovery Program was for completing reconstruction and sealing of Northcote Street from Kearsley Street to Mulbring Street, Aberdare, which is now complete.

The AusLink Strategic Regional Program has provided funding for four (4) projects – reconstruction and sealing of Debeyers Road et of McDonalds Road, Pokolbin and Cunneens Bridge and approaches and reconstruction, widening and sealing of the 600 m gravel section north west of Wollombi on Paynes Crossing Road. The delays to Cunneens Bridge have been noted above. Design of Debeyers Road is nearing completion by consultants. Concept design is complete for the reconstruction, widening and sealing of the last unsealed section of Paynes Crossing Road. Projects funded under the AusLink Strategic Regional Program must be completed by 30 June 2010.

The main component of the underexpenditure in the Infrastructure Improvement Program is delay in commencement of the Miller Park Amenities upgrade.

The under expenditure in the Drainage Construction Program is primarily due to the delay in commencement of the Mulbring Precinct Drainage Scheme due to the need to undertake storm and flood damage repairs.

The underexpenditure in the Stormwater Management Services Program is due to the backlog of work undertaken to restore flood damage resulting in deferment of a number of projects to 2008/2009.

The under expenditure in the Bridge maintenance and Improvement Program is due to resources being reallocated to undertake bridge repairs resulting from the June 2007 storm flood event. Such repairs were funded in part or in full from RTA Natural Disaster funding eg replacement of Dill Street. Unexpended funds from the Bridge Maintenance and Improvement Program are transferred to Council's Bridge Construction reserve.

The under expenditure in the Bridge Construction and Improvement Program is due to delays in commencement of Cunneens Bridge Replacement caused by satisfying the requirements of the Department of Environment and Climate Change re aboriginal archaeology.

Outstanding acquisitions for laneways are the major component of the under expenditure associated with MR 220 Vincent Street, Cessnock.

A major component (\$788,000) of the unspent funding for the June 2007 Storm Natural Disaster is allocated to the replacement of Whitebridge, Mulbring. Design of the replacement bridge and approaches is underway.

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY	PROJECTS	COST	
		Proposed 2007/2008	Actual 2007/2008
Strategic & Community Services / Works & Services			
	RECREATION & PARKS		
	Parks, Park Buildings & Playgrounds Capital Works	\$449,031	\$337,937
	Pools – Capital	\$83,330	\$105,957
	BUILDINGS		
	Community Buildings Capital Works	\$774,600	\$644,447
	TOTAL	\$1,306,961	\$1,088,341



Financial Assistance to Others

Under the provisions of Section 356 of the Local Government Act, 1993, Council may, for the purpose of exercising its functions, grant financial assistance to other persons.

During the year Council provided rates subsidies totalling \$27,579 to community groups/organisations.

WORK CARRIED OUT ON PRIVATE LAND

Under Section 67 of the Local Government Act, 1993, Council may, by agreement with the owner or occupier of any private land, carry out on the land any kind of work that Council may lawfully undertake.

Council undertook the following private works on private land in 2007/08 to the total of \$153,000.

Kerb and Guttering	\$62,131
Road Restoration, Roads and Bridges	\$90,869

STATEMENT OF LEGAL COSTS

Summarised below are details of legal proceedings taken by Council or taken against Council during the year. The result of the proceedings is shown together with the nature and amount of the legal costs incurred.

Matter	Court	Cost	Result
Alexandra Street, Kurri Kurri 8/2004/861/1 Matter No. 07-10163	Land & Environment Court	\$18,804	Appeal lodged against Council's deemed refusal of the application. The appeal was upheld and consent orders issued by the Court.
Lees & Radford – Sawyers Gully 8/2006/1162/2 Appeal 11050 of 2007	Land & Environment Court	\$4,800	Appeal lodged against Council's refusal of a development application for a dwelling. Amended plans were submitted to the Court. The appeal was upheld and a conditional consent granted by the Court.
Lieberts lane Brunkerville – 8/2004/1349 Matter No. 07-10472	Land & Environment Court	\$10,850	Appeal lodged against Council's refusal of a development application for Tourist Accommodation comprising Additional Tourist Cabins & Camping Ground. The applicant filed a Notice of Discontinuance with the Court following the section 34 conference.
5 Maitland Street Branxton 8/2004/596/1 Matter NO 10587-2007	Land & Environment Court	\$3,000	Appeal lodged against Council's refusal of a development application for a six unit residential development. Amended plans were submitted to the Court. The appeal was upheld and a conditional consent granted by the Court.
Huntacorp - Vineyard Grove 8/2007/410/1 Matter No. 309553	Land & Environment Court	\$5,114	Appeal lodged against Council's refusal of a development application for a dual occupancy. The appeal was upheld and a conditional consent granted by the Court.
Legal Advices		\$14,145	
TOTAL		\$56,713	

Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act

The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act (PPIPA) came into effect from 1 July 2000. In accordance with the PPIPA, Council adopted the Local Government and Shires Association Model Privacy Management Plan on 18 October 2000, which outlines how Council may use and disclose personal information. Personal information may be in written, photographic, video or auditory format.

The twelve Information Protection Principles outlined in the Act provide practical guidance regarding:

- How Council determines what personal information is to be collected,
- From whom it is to be collected,
- Who is to collect it,
- How it is to be collected,
- How it is to be stored and
- Who can access it.

As a result of the Act, Council is required to:

- Comply with, adopt and implement the information protection principles as outlined in the PPIPA.
- Protect the personal information to which Council has access, and not disclose personal information otherwise than in accordance with their official duties and in accordance with the law.
- Adhere to Council's adopted Privacy Management Plan, and comply with the privacy code of practice.
- Inform the public whenever we collect personal information and inform them of the reasons for collection and uses of the information.
- Identify any register which contains personal information and which is provided to third parties, and comply with public register provisions.
- Amend personal records immediately and free of charge to ensure the information held is accurate, relevant, up to date, complete and not misleading.
- Report compliance with the Act in each year's annual report and conduct an internal review of complaints made against it by the public.

Council's Privacy Management Plan and Privacy Code of Practice may be viewed at Council's Libraries and Administration Centre. Information about Privacy and Access to Documents as well as the Privacy Management Plan and Code of Practice are available on Council's web-site (www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au).

Council's Privacy Contact Officer is the Director Corporate & Community, who may be contacted on 02 4993 4100.

Freedom of Information Act & Access to Information

The objective of the Freedom of Information Act is to ensure the right of the public to obtain access to information held by an agency (eg, local councils). The Act requires Council to:

- Publish a statement of affairs (annually), a summary of affairs (twice a year) and to provide access to its policy documents.
- Provide access to documents held by Council, subject to certain qualifications by which Council can, in some cases, deny access.
- Provide documents requested under the FOI Act within specified time limits.

The public officer is responsible for determining applications for access to information. The Director Corporate & Community is Council's Public Officer, and may be contacted at Cessnock City Council, PO Box 152, Cessnock 2325. Advice and assistance on access to Council documents is available by contacting the PA to Director Corporate & Community on 4993 4100. All applications for access to documents under the Freedom of Information Act may be lodged on an application form which is available from Council and is also found on Council's web site. The application form should be accompanied by \$30 application fee, which is payable at Council's administration office or via the web site.

Local Government Act 1993

The Local Government Act entitles the public to view the following documents free of charge. Access to these documents is available through Council's Administration centre, 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock during business hours or via the website at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au. A photocopying charge applies if copies are made of these documents.

- the model code prescribed under section 440 (1) and the code of conduct adopted by the council under section 440 (3)
- the council's code of meeting practice
- annual report
- annual financial reports
- auditor's report
- management plan
- EEO management plan
- the council's policy concerning the payment of expenses incurred by, and the provision of facilities to, councillors
- the council's land register
- register of investments
- returns of the interests of councillors, designated persons and delegates
- agendas and business papers for council and committee meetings (but not including business papers for matters considered when part of a meeting is closed to the public)

- minutes of council and committee meetings, but restricted (in the case of any part of a meeting that is closed to the public), to the resolutions and recommendations of the meeting
- the register of current declarations of disclosures of political donations to councillors kept in accordance with section 328A
- the register of councillor voting on planning matters kept in accordance with section 375A
- any codes referred to in this Act
- register of delegations
- annual reports of bodies exercising delegated council functions
- development applications (within the meaning of the [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979](#)) and associated documents
- local policies adopted by the council concerning approvals and orders
- records of approvals granted, any variation from local policies with reasons for the variation, and decisions made on appeals concerning approvals
- records of building certificates under the [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979](#)
- plans of land proposed to be compulsorily acquired by the council
- leases and licences for use of public land classified as community land
- plans of management for community land
- environmental planning instruments, development control plans and contributions plans made under the [Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979](#) applying to land within the council's area
- the statement of affairs, the summary of affairs and the register of policy documents required under the [Freedom of Information Act 1989](#)
- Departmental representatives' reports presented at a meeting of the council in accordance with section 433
- the register of graffiti removal work kept in accordance with section 67C.

Exemptions

Access may be refused to some documents under the Local Government Act and the Freedom of Information Act. The types of documents most commonly requested which are exempt from disclosure include:

- Documents affecting the personal affairs of others
- Documents subject to legal professional privilege
- Documents which may reveal trade secrets or confidential information
- Plans contained in building and development applications showing the residential parts of the building.

Advice regarding exempt documents is available through the office of the Public Officer.

Freedom of Information Act

The number of requests under the Freedom of Information Act processed by Council increased from 26 in 2006/2007 to 28 during 2007/08. Of the 28 requests, 19 were granted in full, 5 granted in part, 3 refused and 1 transferred to the RTA as holders of the information. Among the reasons for granting partial disclosure or refusal were concerns regarding the privacy of individuals, copyright laws, and the disclosure of internal recommendations or deliberations. Wherever possible, the request for information was granted in part, with exempt material erased. A detailed statistical analysis, in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, is included below.

Throughout 2007/2008 Council implemented a number of strategies to ensure all legislative requirements were fully understood by the public and correctly implemented by Council staff. These strategies included:

- Providing training on Access to Information for new staff responsible for providing information to the public. The training incorporated a basic understanding of the Freedom of Information Act, Section 12 of the Local Government Act and the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act, and the practical implementation of each Act.
- Updating and streamlining electronic filing of all requests for information, resulting in ease of access to information provided, ease of reporting and increased security in storage of information accessed by the public.

Section 12, Local Government Act

Under the provisions of Section 12 of the Local Government Act a number of documents are available to the public free of charge without requiring recourse to the Freedom of Information Act. During 2007/2008 the number of requests for information under the auspices of this Act increased. Information on the types of documents which are available under Section 12 may be obtained on Council's web site, or by contacting the office of the Public Officer.



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

STATISTICAL RETURN

Statistical Return for Year Ending 30/6/2008

Under the provision of the Freedom of Information Act, Council is required to prepare an annual statistical return. Details of requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act received by Council for the year ending 30 June, 2008 are as follows:

SECTION A – NEW FOI APPLICATIONS

How many FOI applications were received, discontinued or completed?	NUMBER OF FOI APPLICATIONS					
	Personal		Other		Total	
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008
A1 New	2	3	24	26	26	28
A2 Brought forward	1	0	0	0	1	0
A3 Total to be processed	3	3	24	26	27	28
A4 Completed	3	2	23	26	26	28
A5 Discontinued	0	0	0	0	0	0
A6 Total processed	3	2	23	26	26	28
A7 Unfinished (carried forward)	0	1	1	0	1	1

SECTION C – COMPLETED APPLICATIONS

What happened to completed FOI applications?	NUMBER OF COMPLETED FOI APPLICATIONS					
	Personal		Other		Total	
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008
C1 Granted or otherwise available in full	2	2	12	17	14	19
C2 Granted or otherwise available in part	1	0	6	5	7	5
C3 Refused	0	0	5	3	5	3
C4 No documents held	0	0	0	1	0	1
B5 Total completed	3	2	23	26	26	28

Note: A request is granted or otherwise available in full if all documents requested are either provided to the applicant (or the applicant's medical practitioner) or are otherwise publicly available. The figures in C5 should correspond to those in A4.

SECTION D – APPLICATIONS GRANTED OR OTHERWISE AVAILABLE IN FULL

How were the documents made available to the applicant?	NUMBER OF FOI APPLICATIONS (GRANTED OR OTHERWISE AVAILABLE IN FULL)					
	Personal		Other		Total	
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008
All documents requested were:						
D1 Provided to the applicant	2	2	12	17	14	19
D8 Total granted or otherwise available in full	2	2	12	17	14	19

Note: The figures in D8 should correspond to those in C1.

SECTION E – APPLICATIONS GRANTED OR OTHERWISE AVAILABLE IN PART

How were the documents made available to the applicant?	NUMBER OF FOI APPLICATIONS (GRANTED OR OTHERWISE AVAILABLE IN PART)					
	Personal		Other		Total	
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008
All documents made available were:						
E1 Provided to the applicant	1	0	6	5	7	5
E8 Total granted or otherwise available in part	1	0	6	5	7	5

Note: The figures in E8 should correspond to those in C2.

SECTION F – REFUSED FOI APPLICATIONS

Why was access to the documents refused?	NUMBER OF REFUSED FOI APPLICATIONS					
	Personal		Other		Total	
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008
F1 Exempt	0	0	5	3	5	3
F2 Deemed refused						
F3 Total refused	0	0	5	3	5	3

Note: The figures in F3 should correspond to those in C3.

SECTION I – FORMAL CONSULTATIONS

How many formal consultations were conducted?	NUMBER	
	2006/2007	2007/2008
I1 Number of applications requiring formal consultation	3	8
I2 Number of persons formally consulted		

Note: Include all formal offers to consult issued irrespective of whether a response was received.

SECTION L – FEES AND COSTS

What fees were assessed and received for FOI applications processed (excluding applications transferred out)?	ASSESSED COSTS		FEES RECEIVED	
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008
L1 All completed applications	\$2,047.50	\$2,129.35	\$735.00	\$780.00

SECTION M – FEE DISCOUNTS

How many fee waivers or discounts were allowed and why?	NUMBER OF FOI APPLICATIONS (WHERE FEES WERE WAIVED OR DISCOUNTED)					
	Personal		Other		Total	
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008
M1 Processing fees waived in full						
M2 Public interest discounts						
M3 Financial hardship discounts – pensioner or child	0		3		3	
M4 Financial hardship discounts – non profit organisation						
M5 Total	0		3		3	

SECTION O – DAYS TAKEN TO COMPLETE REQUEST

How long did it take to process completed applications? (Note: calendar days)	NUMBER OF COMPLETED FOI APPLICATIONS					
	Personal		Other		Total	
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008
O1 0-21 days – statutory determination period	3	2	23	23	26	25
O2 22-35 days – extended statutory determination period for consultation or retrieval of archived records (S.59B)				3		3
O3 Over 21 days – deemed refusal where no extended determination period applies						
O4 Over 35 days – deemed refusal where extended determination period applies						
O5 Total	3	2	23	26	26	28

Note: Figures in O5 should correspond to figures in A4.

SECTION P – PROCESSING TIME: HOURS

How long did it take to process completed applications?	NUMBER OF COMPLETED FOI APPLICATIONS					
	Personal		Other		Total	
	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008	2006/2007	2007/2008
P1 0-10 hours	3	2	22	25	25	27
P2 11-20 hours			1	1	1	1
P3 21-40 hours						
P4 Over 40 hours						
P5 Total	3	2	23	26	26	28

Note: Figures in P5 should correspond to figures in A4.

SECTION Q – NUMBER OF REVIEWS

How many reviews were finalised?	NUMBER OF COMPLETED REVIEWS	
	2006/2007	2007/2008
Q1 Internal reviews	4	1
Q2 Ombudsman reviews	1	
Q3 ADT reviews		

SECTION R – RESULTS OF INTERNAL REVIEWS

What were the results of internal reviews finalised?

GROUNDS ON WHICH THE INTERNAL REVIEW WAS REQUESTED	NUMBER OF INTERNAL REVIEWS					
	Personal		Other		Total	
	Original Agency Decision Upheld	Original Agency Decision Varied	Original Agency Decision Upheld	Original Agency Decision Varied	Original Agency Decision Upheld	Original Agency Decision Varied
R1 Access refused						
R2 Access deferred						
R3 Exempt matter deleted from documents					1	
R4 Unreasonable charges						
R5 Failure to consult with third parties						
R6 Third parties views disregarded						
R7 Amendment of personal records refused						
R8 Total					1	



National Competition Policy

In accordance with the requirements of the National Competition Policy (NCP), Council has, where relevant, categorised its business units.

For the year ended 30 June 2008, Council does not have any Category One business activities. To ensure adherence to the NCP requirements, Council has:

- Instigated a Purchaser/Provider split in the following areas:
 - a) Building Services
 - b) Workshop
 - c) Cleaning Services
 - d) Waste Collection – Sanitary and Waste Depot
 - e) Noxious Weeds
 - f) Cemeteries
 - g) Aerodrome
 - h) Swimming Pools
 - i) Design Unit – Roads, Bridges, Drainage, Parks
 - j) Construction Unit – Roads, Bridges, Drainage
 - k) Maintenance Unit – Roads, Bridges, Drainage
 - l) Parks Unit - Maintenance/Construction
- Adopted an application of Activity Based Costing (ABC) to allocate overheads to appropriate cost centres.

Prior to the introduction of the NCP, Council had a complaints handling mechanism in place which allowed it to record and track the progress of any complaints received. This existing system is able to identify and segregate any complaints received regarding the NCP. No complaints regarding competitive neutrality were received during 2007/08.

Replacement & Sale of Assets

Council's policy is to replace all items of plant at the end of their beneficial economic life.

The general replacement schedule for sedans and station wagons over the past financial year has been no less than 40,000 kilometers and up to 70,000 kilometres or 2 years, whichever comes first. This extension in the kilometres at replacement has been undertaken in an effort to combat rising changeover costs.

The proposed and actual plant replacement program for the 2007-2008 is set out below. In all cases except those noted, the items shown were replaced by a similar unit. The old units were either sold or traded in.

PLANT REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION OF ITEMS	CHANGEOVER COST (Excl GST) AND NUMBER 2007/2008	
	PROPOSED (Note 1) \$	ACTUAL \$
Sedans & Wagons	405,000 (48)	\$412,000 (40)
Utilities and Vans	62,000 (7)	9,600 (2) ^{Note 2}
Twin Cab and Two Tonne Utilities	18,000 (1)	0 (0) ^{Note 2}
Three Tonne Tippers	120,000 (3)	0 (0) ^{Note 2}
Eight Tonne Tipping Trucks	\$140,000 (2)	120,500 (2)
Twelve Tonne Tipping Trucks	170,000 (2)	0 (0) ^{Note 2}
Slashers Mowers Tractor Driven	32,500 (2)	9,000 (1) ^{Note 2}
Tractors	80,000 (2)	47,000 (1) ^{Note 2}
Backhoes	\$75,000 (1)	0 (0) ^{Note 2}
Skidsteer	46,500 (1)	0 (0) ^{Note 2}
Special Plant		
Other Special Plant	\$80,000 (1)	\$46,200 (1)
Excavator 20T	\$150,000 (1)	0 (0) ^{Note 2}
Bridge Truck	0 (0)	\$123,000 (1) ^{Note 3}

Notes:

1. Information sourced from Council 2007-2010 City Management Plan.
2. Replacement(s) postponed
3. Replacement carried over from last year

Transportation and Road Safety

ROAD SAFETY STRATEGIC PLAN

From the Road Safety Strategic Plan this year Council targeted the behavioural factors of Drink Driving, Speeding, Fatigue and Occupant Restraint wearing were statistically regarded as the big factors with Young Drivers, Motorcyclists and Pedestrians identified as the most vulnerable road user groups.

SAFER PEOPLE - CHILDREN

Orientation Day Presentations to Schools

Schools in the Cessnock LGA are offered the services of council's assistance with delivering educational programs to parents of children starting school. Parents are encouraged to be pro-active in road safety matters around schools including ensuring safer pedestrians and passengers and to be diligent in regard to safety around schools, i.e. parking appropriately.

Child Restraints

Following on from the successful Safety Seat Saturdays, council continues to provide Child Restraint checks to parents and grandparents free of charge. The partnering support offered by local businesses and organisations continues to encourage council to provide this community program.

SAFER PEOPLE – YOUNG DRIVERS

Youth on the Move

Youth on the Move continues to meet the needs of our young driving community and their parents. The educational program offers sessions designed to impact attitudes, reducing risk-taking behaviour and improve hazard perception.

YOTM was developed for the youth of the entire Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA) by Cessnock Youth Centre, Kurri Youth Centre, Samaritans JPET and Cessnock City Council. and has been professionally and independently evaluated in 2006/07 (Report due in 2007/08)

Once the report has been received by council the entire program may again endure modification and internal scrutiny to address the new changes impacting young drivers with the introduction of 120 Logged hours and the introduction of passenger and vehicle restrictions.

Funding provided by Cessnock City Council.

Schoolies Week

The aim of this project is to address drink driving related crashes among school leavers, by increasing awareness of the problems associated with drink driving, as well as identifying possible actions and solutions. The target groups of the project are firstly students and secondly, key stakeholders in the community such as Hotel Managers, Club Secretaries, Bottle Shop Owners, parents and homeowners wishing to hold parties where alcohol is present.

Helping Learner Drivers Seminars

Education seminars were offered throughout the year to parents and supervising drivers of Learner Drivers. The 2 hour seminars are designed to provide information about managing the RTA's 50 hour Log Book requirements as well as planning for appropriate lessons needing skill levels and experience. New and up-to-date road rule changes are provided and discussed as well as information for supervising drivers on how to manage stressful situations in car to avoid personality clashes.

SAFER PEOPLE – DRIVERS & PASSENGERS

Drink Safe

With the assistance from Local groups and organisations, council supports an educational program designed to education patrons in hotels/clubs about their current Blood Alcohol Concentration. Council provides resources and information to assist in the delivery of this local education.

Alcoliser Program

Council provides self-testing Alcolisers for patrons at licensed premises as an educational tool to assist in providing patrons with advice in regard to their Blood Alcohol Concentration. Vineyard areas are also included and one Alcoliser is located in the vineyards at all times. The Liquor Accord has shown much interest and is liaising with the cellar doors directly.

Lower Hunter Speed

This program "Lower Hunter Speed" has again fostered a co-ordinated approach between Lower Hunter Police and the Four (4) Lower Hunter Councils. When evaluated, the program's results showed a cost effective way of addressing speed on local streets. The IPWEA (Institute of Public Works Australia) awarded the program with its highest Road Safety award in recognition of its partnershiping strategies and addressing local issues. This program uses all the elements of engineering, education and enforcement working together to ensure a safer community.

Wine Tasting Cards

This program was developed for the local vineyard areas in an attempt to increase awareness in regard to wine tasting and drink driving. The program is fully supported by the local Vineyard Association and encourages Cellar Doors to better manage sampling and their duty of care in alcohol service.

Lower Hunter RBT Rewards

The campaign is a joint Lower Hunter Councils Drink Drive educational campaign operating throughout Cessnock, Maitland, Dungog and Port Stephens LGA's. The program is aimed at providing positive reinforcement to drivers who register under the legal limit when breath tested by Police at RBT sites. Road Safety Officers (RSOs) are on hand at these RBT enforcement sites to congratulate drivers who are under the limit and provide rewards and educational material.

The RTA provided funding for the program with in-kind contribution by Cessnock City Council.

SAFER PEOPLE – RIDERS

Motorcycling in Wine Country

Motorcycling continues to grow as a recreational pursuit in our area although many riders are from other regions and this group are over represented in crashes in NSW. Council continues to work with locals and the community in this area by providing education and signage to assist. This education is ongoing.

SAFER PEOPLE – PEDESTRIANS

Older Wiser Walkers

With the assistance of funding from the IPWEA, Cessnock and other Lower Hunter Councils have developed and presented a package for seniors. Seniors aged over 64 years continue to be over represented in pedestrian casualties in our area. Pedestrians are a vulnerable road user group and the "Older Wiser Walker" presentation package aims to increase skill levels whilst reducing the risk to our senior pedestrians. Presentations are offered to all groups meeting this specific demographic.

TRANSPORT

Traffic Facilities (Linemarking & Signposting)

Various linemarking and signposting installations and maintenance were undertaken throughout the Cessnock Local Government Area as a result of requests received from residents, maintenance inspections and projects approved by the Local Traffic Committee and Council.

Rural addressing signposting in outlying areas is continuing. To ensure accuracy of signposting in remote areas and the safety of staff, Council has aligned its Geographical Information System (mapping) with GPS co-ordinates.

Funding was supplied by Cessnock City Council.

Replacement of damaged or missing signposting in the past has been an extensive project due to the large number of signs and the diverse message each sign contains. Additionally some of the signage has legal requirements under the Roads Act and the Australian Road Rules. To overcome this problem Council has developed a process of recording the location and details of each new sign erected. Each new installation is then captured in Council's Graphical Information System (GIS). In the future the data collected will be used to program signage replacement, saving costs on labour and litigation.

Funding for new and replacement signposting is provided by Cessnock City Council and the RTA.

Public Transport

During the past year Council has installed and maintained bus shelters and seats through the Bus Shelter and Seat program which was developed and adopted by Council as a result of liaison with Rover Motors, public requests and inspections.

In the past, maintenance of shelters and seats has been undertaken on a needs basis. To take a more strategic approach to this infrastructure all bus stops, bus routes, school bus routes, bus zones, shelters and seats have been located and recorded in Council's GIS database where condition and location are noted. This will allow Council to program future maintenance and replacement works efficiently.

New bus stop and bus zone installations have been referred to the Local Traffic Committee then Council for adoption. Installation has occurred where the application is successful.

Cessnock Council is also a member of the five Council Transport Group (Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Newcastle and Port Stephens). This group looks at public transport from a regional viewpoint. In the past 12 months this group has developed a transport guide for the Lower Hunter. This guide provides comprehensive details on all modes of public transport in the Lower Hunter and is available in Cessnock at the Council Administration Building in Vincent Street, both Libraries in Cessnock and Kurri Kurri, Rover Motors Depot and at the Visitors Information Centre at Pokolbin.

Road Safety Infrastructure

The installation of all traffic facility devices (roundabouts, road narrowing points, pedestrian refuges, medians etc) require approval by the Local Traffic Committee and Council. Requests received from the public, developers and other public utility authorities were referred to this Committee and to Council for final adoption. Successful applications were then listed for funding under the appropriate funding source, either

the Roads and Traffic Authority's Traffic Facility Bulk Grant or Cessnock Council's Traffic Facility Maintenance Program or Traffic Facility Construction Program.

To strategically manage and identify hazardous locations Council annually updates crash sites on its GIS database. Additionally, anecdotal information was recorded on a separate database to provide strategic information on locations that are of concern to residents. Hazardous locations and locations where the hazard potential is considered high were referred to the Local Traffic Committee and the RTA for further investigation and/or funding under relevant programs.

Street Sweeping and Cleaning

During the past twelve months Council has funded street sweeping throughout the LGA to reduce the accumulation of debris on the road surface which has positive road safety implications.

Street cleaning operations were also undertaken in Cessnock, Weston and Kurri Kurri to provide acceptable conditions for pedestrians.

Development

Developments identified as Schedule 1 or 2 under the RTA's "Guide to Traffic Generating Developments" were referred to either the Local Development Committee or the Regional Development Committee for assessment in regards to transport and traffic requirements that are needed as a result of the development.

Successful conditions are then incorporated into the Development Application as conditions of consent.

AVIATION

Relocation and improvement to the Airport fuelling depot is also underway and will result in a modern safer facility for the growing Airport.

STREET LIGHTING

Cessnock City Council provides funding for urban and rural residential street lighting. Through the course of the year approvals have been given for the installation of street lighting in existing and new residential areas to ensure that pedestrian and motorist safety is enhanced.

Community Services

Community Services

Council was awarded grant funds as a joint initiative of the Commonwealth and State Governments to deliver a Hunter Community Recovery Project directed to the residents of the June 2007 Storms. Council is in the process of delivering a long term project which aims to collate short stories, poetry and photographs of the June 2007 Storms from the perspective of the resident, to be presented in a booklet.

Council facilitated the Community Development Expenditure Scheme for 2007. The Scheme was introduced under the Gaming Machine Tax Act 2001, to ensure that larger registered clubs with gaming machines contribute 1.5 per cent of their profits over \$1 million to the provision of front line services in the community. Individuals and organisations operating or planning community welfare, social and health service and employment assistance activities were able to apply for funding. Almost \$95,000 in funding was allocated to 18 local and 7 regional projects under the state-wide Community Development and Support Expenditure Scheme.

The Local Area Planning Team, a meeting convened by the Social Planner met on five occasions during the year. The focus of these meetings was to identify community service gaps, review the Social and Community Plan 2004-09, and decide on a strategic direction for the team to target its focus.

Youth Services

Council operates a centre based Youth Service which aims to meet the social, recreational and vocational needs of young people within the Cessnock LGA through the delivery of activities and programs. The Youth Service has the capacity to staff (1) full-time co-ordinator, a permanent-part time youth worker and a pool of casual staff. The full-time coordinator position underwent a recruitment process, given the resignation of Christine Barton. During this period, the existing staff continued to deliver service to the youth community.

In April, the centre relocated from the PCYC building to 49 Aberdare Road, Aberdare (the former Tourist Information Building). The new premises offers greater indoor space and continues to have direct links to outdoor recreational areas. The relocation has resulted in increased attendance and participation in centre based activities.

The Youth Service had success with grant funding during the year. For instance the Life Skills Project was funded by the Department of Community Services, through its Area Assistance Program. Life Skills, a 12 hour program, aims to educate young people skills which promote independence for instance cooking, budgeting, healthy eating and accommodation sourcing. Additionally, Beyond Blue provided funding to deliver a series of workshops to young people highlighting the importance of positive mental health and educating self care strategies.

A number of youth services participated in the organisation and delivery of Youth Week Activities. Council was allocated dollar for dollar funds to deliver a community youth event. The funds were used to assist in the delivery of 'Youth Fest'. 'Youth Fest' featured a bike and skating competition and showcased live music bands.

Child Care Centres

Each of these services has been established through co-operation between Council, the organisation, the local community and various State and Commonwealth agencies. Council's support for these services has entailed the provision of land and buildings and assistance with funding applications.

In addition to childcare centres, Council provides a number of community facilities for use by various playgroup programs.

Aged and Disabled Services

Council also provides significant infrastructure for aged and disabled services currently operating in the Cessnock community.

Home and Community Care (HACC) Services currently located in Council owned and maintained buildings include:-

- Domestic Assistance Service
- Personal Care Service
- Social Support Service
- Home Maintenance & Modification
- Transport Services
- Dementia Support Service

All of these services pay a rental to either Council or community management committees. Council maintains these premises and provides for capital improvements to enhance the ability of these buildings to meet community needs.

Council is actively involved in organising, promoting and delivering a wide range of events as part of Seniors Week Activities. Activities for Seniors Week are co-ordinated via the Seniors Week Advisory Committee, a group convened by Council. In 2008, Council was successful in its application to the Department of Ageing Disability and Home Care (DADHC) for grant funds to deliver a bus trip as part of Seniors Week activities.

Access

Council, through its Access Advisory Committee, comprising elected Council representatives, community representatives and an officer from each Council department, continued to monitor levels of accessibility in the Cessnock Local Government Area (LGA). The Access Advisory Committee has worked towards reviewing the Mobility Maps for the Cessnock and Kurri Kurri CBD. Additionally, the Access Committee worked in partnership with the Sir Roden Cutler Charities to deliver a local event which aimed to raise the

awareness of disability issues within the community. As part of this process, The Sir Roden Cutler Charities awarded a monetary donation to the Hunter Prelude Early Intervention Centre.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

There is one (1) Aboriginal Land Council and two (2) community based indigenous groups active in the Cessnock LGA. The total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resident population of Cessnock currently stands at approximately 1,602 (2006 Census). The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population has increased since the 2001 Census when it stood at 1,226 residents. The Cessnock Local Area Planning Team includes a representative from the Indigenous Community.

Training and Education

The Youth Service Staff, Community Worker and the Social Planner all participated in training opportunities. The Youth Services staff attended training on encouraging youth participation through the use of arts as a form of youth expression, and first aid. The Social Planner attended an educational course focussing on social and community planning. The Community Worker attended an aged care services workshop and seminar.

RECREATION

Cessnock City Council maintains in the vicinity of 552 hectares of open space throughout the Local Government area, in the form of formal gardens and civic spaces, playgrounds, outdoor sports facilities, parkland and drainage reserves.

The open space areas are maintained via a 3-5 week maintenance schedule depending on the time of year and climatic conditions. The majority of outdoor sporting facilities are heavily utilised during the winter period, in particular for soccer, netball and rugby league, whilst during summer the main user groups are cricket and athletics.

Council also operates three (3) public swimming pools at Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and Branxton. There are six (6) major aquatics based clubs in the area, predominantly utilising Cessnock Baths. The establishment of the Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre provides a year round swimming facility which has proven to be highly popular with annual attendance levels in the vicinity of 100,000.

CEMETERIES

Council has care, control and management of Aberdare, Branxton, Cessnock, Ellalong, Greta, Kurri Kurri, Millfield, Rothbury and Wollombi general cemeteries, and Gordon Williams Memorial Lawn Cemetery at Aberdare and Kurri Kurri Lawn Cemetery. All general cemeteries are fully operational cemeteries with the exception of Cessnock, which only allows for interments in reserved lots or in a re-opened grave. A Cemetery Plan of Management has been adopted by Council. This outlines the future development of each cemetery.

Cultural Services

CESSNOCK CITY LIBRARY

Buildings and Equipment

Further improvements were undertaken at Cessnock Library. These included new floor coverings for the Stack Collection area and a significant culling and re-organisation of the Stack Collection.

Investigations were undertaken to determine the feasibility of creating additional storage space in the "basement" underfloor area of Cessnock Library, as well as an additional room in part of the Stack Collection area. It is anticipated that these works can be carried out in 2008/2009.

The Library's public access computers were replaced with new equipment.

Staff Training and Development

There were a number of staff changes during the year. For most of the year, Simon Eade was Acting Director Strategic and Community Services and Rose-marie Walters was Acting Cultural Services Manager. Rose-marie Walters initially commenced duties as Customer Services Co-ordinator, and Lana Sadler, Kellie Auld, Carol Lawrence and Tracy Kedwell were appointed as part time Library Assistants. Internally, Sandra Ryan was appointed to a vacant Library Assistant position with additional hours attached and Janelle Sams was appointed as Home Library Service Officer following the retirement of long standing employee, Don Williams. Rebecca Holmes was replaced for her parental leave by Lynne Macdonald. Christine Williams resigned during the year.

All Library staff attended a number of staff development activities throughout the year, including workshops, seminars and meetings. In total, sixty four (64) staff attended twenty eight (28) different training opportunities locally, in Sydney and elsewhere in the State. This included the Public Libraries NSW – Country 2007 annual conference and AGM.

A highlight of the year was recognition of the Cessnock Library staff team as Cessnock City Council Team of the Quarter.

The Library maintained its commitment to career development by hosting five people for work experience.

New Services and Collections

Cessnock's Let's Read program, in which Cessnock City Library is a key participant, was launched in July.

A review of the Home Library Service was conducted, which resulted in several changes being introduced to the Service. These included the delivery roster being monthly rather than fortnightly, new schedules being introduced and a consolidation of the position which delivers the service into a 25 hours per week position. The 10 hour balance of hours was transferred to Kurri Kurri Library to provide additional staffing resources to cover the lunch time period.

Six (6) public events were held on various topics, including author visits. The three book reading groups continued to thrive. Regular fortnightly Surfing Seniors Internet awareness sessions continued to be popular.

Cessnock City Council was successful with its collaborative Library Development Grant application to the Library Council of NSW on behalf of the Central East Zone of Public Libraries NSW – Country. The application was for funding to establish Reading Group Kits across the thirteen (13) LGAs of the Zone. The project will be delivered during calendar year 2008.

A program to provide Council staff with training to raise awareness of the availability and use of the Library's online databases commenced, with very positive feedback being received. The program will continue in 2008/2009.

A stocktake of the Library's collection commenced, and will continue in 2008/2009.

Displays and Exhibitions

The Libraries held at least 20 displays throughout the year. Topics included exhibitions by local artists and art groups, poetry, bush tucker, glassware, local history and the medieval era.

Events

In addition to regular activities, a number of one off events were held during the year. They included sales of discarded library stock, participation in Library Lovers Day and a range of activities to celebrate Australian Library and Information Week, Seniors Week and Law Week.

Internet training sessions were held as part of Seniors Week.

The various activities and events generated considerable local media interest, with at least 18 articles in local newspapers and 7 radio interviews being held.

Children's Activities

The School Holiday Programs continued to be very successful.

The number of children provided with opportunities to access Library programs continues to expand. The activities associated with just Children's Book Week, Questacon, Pirate Quest and the pre-school outreach program had an audience totaling over 1,600 children and almost 200 adults.

The Library's regular program of activities continued, including the rhyme time program, pre-school storytimes, Kidz Club and the weekly cards and games club. Other activities held during the year included participation in the National Simultaneous Storytimes, competitions, occasional school visits at Cessnock Library, and the regular class visit program at Kurri Kurri Library.

MARTHAVILLE

The interior of the cottage at Marthaville Arts and Cultural Centre was repainted, as was the gazebo, front fence and toilet block. This completes the current program of refurbishment and maintenance.

Improvements were also made to the kitchen, with a new sink, bench, cupboards and hot water system being installed, with the costs being shared by the Marthaville Management Committee.

RICHMOND MAIN HERITAGE PARK

Minor maintenance to buildings and fixtures and fittings were carried out throughout the year.

CULTURAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Community Cultural Development \$ for \$ Grant Program was advertised, with 19 applications being received. A total of \$30,017.34 in funding was sought, with a budgeted sum of \$25,000 available for allocation. Eighteen projects were funded in full.

The City of Cessnock Hall of Fame held its second induction in November. Twelve nominees were recognised with the installation of bronze plaques at various locations across the Local Government Area, and also on Council's Hall of Fame website. This brings the total of inductees into the Hall of Fame to 24.

In December, Council resolved to appoint six community representatives to the Cultural Planning and Development Committee, following a call for new representation. Patricia Marsland, Brian Andrews, Voirrey Cochrane and Cate Sadler as were appointed as new members, and Val Randall and Catherine Parsons were re-appointed.

Council considered two reports in May and June regarding a proposal by members of the community to establish a Cessnock Regional Art Gallery to be operated by a not-for-profit incorporated association. Council supported the concept in principal and also provided a small funding allocation to assist with the establishment phase of the proposal.

Council also agreed to a request from the Wollombi Valley Arts Council to apply the Community Cultural \$ for \$ Grant Program allocation of \$1,500.00 as prize money for an acquisitive award at the 2008 Emerging Artists Exhibition.



Fire Control Services

Whilst Fire Control Staff were employed by the State Government as at July 1 2001, Council has continued to be an equal and important partner in the management of Volunteer Rural Fire Brigades. Council's participation is not only continued through financial support of Volunteers, but also in the ongoing management of the local organisation through the Service Level Agreement between the NSW Rural Fire Service and Council. Council's are also supplied with ongoing monthly reports, giving an overview of the happenings and statistics of the Rural Fire Service.

Staffing over the last reporting period has had a few minor changes as a result of zoning and staff vacancies. Inspector Dave Templeton now fills the Operations Officer position as Paul Jones won a Team Manager position in Singleton/ Muswellbrook area. He is joined by Damian Honor who won the Operations Support officer position previous occupied by the retired Barry Pont. Damian comes to us from Gosford City Council and was a Group Office with the RFS in the Gosford area. Paul Best fills the Fire Mitigation Officer position and comes to us from the NSW Police Force. Paul has also been a volunteer in the Gosford area for a number of years. Melissa Mobberley is currently filling the Team Administration officer position and came to us from an administration role with the RTA. We currently also have a temporary administration officer Mandy Haigh assisting the Community Safety and Business portfolios.

The staffs for the Lower Hunter are:

Fire Control Officer / Zone Manager	Superintendent Jayson McKellar
Deputy Fire Control Officer, Operations	Inspector Dave Templeton
Deputy Fire Control Officer, Operations	Inspector Tami Snowden
Deputy Fire Control Officer, Learning & Development	Superintendent Mark Lewis
Deputy Fire Control Officer, Learning & Development	Inspector Ken Hepplewhite
Deputy Fire Control Officer, Learning & Development	Inspector Bob Gaston
Deputy Fire Control Officer, Community Safety	Inspector Brian Milsom
Deputy Fire Control Officer, Community Safety	Inspector Glenn Byrnes
Deputy Fire Control Officer, Operations Support	Damian Honor
Development Control Officer	Peter Murphy
Fire Mitigation Officer	Ian Bell
Fire Mitigation Officer	Paul Best
Business Officer	Nerissa Downes
Team Administration Officer, Operations	Susan Fernando
Team Administration Officer, Learning and Development	Natalie Doncovski
Team Administration Officer, Community Safety	Mandy Haigh (Temporary as Nadia Southwell on Leave)
Team Administration Officer	Melissa Mobberley

Along with Zone staff members, Fire Control houses three staff from the RFS, Region East office, and one staff member from Head Office.

In September of 2006 a decision was made by Head Office in relation to the Port Stephens and Dungog Rural Fire Service locality. Jayson McKellar will be Acting Manager of the Hunter Zone and Port Stephens/ Dungog Zones and we will start moving towards one Zone. The zoning process is continuing with meetings still being held regularly. Discussions are being held with councils to determine the foundations of the financial agreements and the Service Level Agreements.

A discussion paper has been distributed to all volunteers via their brigade captains for comment. The staff are working together well with each section setting their processes and systems in place to ensure fluidity and synchronicity. It is the focus of all staff that the volunteers are not affected beyond reasonable expectations by the teaming process of staff. Staff at all times strive to be as efficient and effective as possible.

During the period the Zone has received a number of new vehicles; both fire fighting and support vehicles. The new additions are continually improving the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Zone, reducing the average age to around six years and allowing further flexibility in the replacement schedule as fuel and running costs continually increase.

The 2007/08 season was constant for the majority of the year. Weather conditions during the summer months and available fuel within the zone resulted in a very high potential for serious fires. There were several fires that had the potential to develop into major incidents, but the combination of aggressive fire fighting tactics and prudent use of aircraft kept all incidents to relatively minor events.

In addition to local incidents Hunter zone volunteers attended Five S44's throughout the state contributing in excess of 370 person days in combating incidents out of area.

In attempt to combat the arson problems encountered particularly in the Cessnock LGA Operation Lucifer was established. Operation Lucifer is a multi agency approach and involves information and intelligence sharing between the NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW Fire Brigades, National Parks & Wildlife Service, Cessnock Council Rangers and NSW Police.

As a result of Operation Lucifer, 12 individuals have had some form of Police action instigated and several other persons of interests have been identified and remain under investigation. This is an addition to the seven individuals dealt with the previous year.

The increased surveillance and public awareness created by Operation Lucifer as significantly reduced the amount of suspicious fire lighting activity in the target area.

All agencies have agreed to continue the operation and will continue to identify problem areas within the zone and concentrate efforts to identify and prosecute offenders.

The Laguna fire station project plans are still with council. Likewise further funding has been allocated to the new Fire Control Centre/Training Centre. The land for the Laguna shed has been negotiated and work is being scoped in terms of foundations and retaining walls to ensure the continuity and structure of the landscape. The new FCC plans both structural and architectural have been completed and the site drilled for core samples. Due to the zoning process the FCC location is now under discussion.

Membership of the Brigades remains constant. With another relatively quiet season now completed, our focus is moving towards hazard reduction and preparing the Zone for what could be a busy season.

OPERATIONS

Brigade responses

Type of Incident	Number of Incidents
Fire & Explosive	225
Motor Vehicle Accidents	90
Hazardous Conditions	10
Service Calls	15
Good Intent Calls	70
False Alarms	35
Other Responses	35
TOTAL	480

COMMUNITY SAFETY

The community safety functional areas main focus is to reduce the likelihood and severity of uncontrolled fires by regulating their use by the community and by introducing a range of community based incident prevention and mitigation campaigns and programs. Whilst assisting in the prevention of fires through developing, implementing and maintaining a comprehensive fire investigation and research capability. It also looks at improving the management of bushfire risk and the performance of fire operations by monitoring the process and implementing the enhancements to Bush Fire Risk Management and Operational Plans.

Development Application Assessments

One of the Community Safety Officers main duties is to reduce the impact of bush fires on the community through a consistent and equitable planning and development control process, assessing development applications referred by Council to the Rural Fire Service carries this out. Listed below are development referrals processed during the 2006/2007 financial year.

From March 2007 saw the implantation of the new Planning for Bushfire Protection introduced across the State of New South Wales.

Report Month	DA Received	DA Completed
July	44	44
August	38	39
September	46	36
October	50	48
November	41	47
December	33	38
January	35	37
February	38	27
March	42	37
April	58	45
May	50	69
June	41	48
July	39	35
August	42	38
Totals	597	588

For just the Cessnock Government Only

Report Month	DA Received	DA Completed
July	20	20
August	10	14
September	12	11
October	19	16
November	10	14
December	11	12
January	20	17
February	19	10
March	24	25
April	32	18
May	14	31
June	21	21
July	14	14
August	21	15
Totals	247	238

Community Education

Community Education is aimed at developing and/or improving the knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviour of the community in regard to the prevention, control, suppression and mitigation of bush and other fires. The desired outcome is a community that is well aware of the hazards of fire and is well prepared for its threat. The Community Education Section develops programs to achieve the aims of community education. These programs are designed to be delivered by volunteers and staff. Resources are produced to assist in the delivery of these programs, including publications for teachers, adults, children and the general community along with resources including brochures, activity books, stickers, magnets, show bags etc.

The Hunter Zone has carried out the following community education activities.

Event and Number from 1 January 2008 to 30 September 2008 all areas

No. of events	Events	Type Program	Hours	No. Facilitators
4	Static Display	Awareness program	22	11
2	Farm Firewise	Adult Program	3	
6	Fire Guard for Kids	Youth programs	52	18
12	School	Youth programs	131	31
1	Youth Group	Youth Programs	47	19
36	Events	Awareness	897	158
2	Property Inspection	Awareness	12	5
20	Open Day	Awareness	1440	Not known
		TOTAL	2604 hrs	240 people approx

Additionally, Volunteers have conducted 2,075 hours towards community education providing information on general fire safety message. Further more events such as the Maitland's Steamfest, Tocal Field Day and State Open Days are continuous activities within the Community Education Calendar conducted each year and are supported by brigades and the general community.

A number of Projects were continued throughout the Zone which included, Static water Markers being placed and recorded throughout the rural areas of zone to allow easier identification of static supplementary water

sources for fire fighting crews. The Blue Hydrant Marker Program stalled due the lack of funding. The funding for these projects in the past was made available out of the Community Development Support Expenditure (CDSE) provided from Clubs NSW. It is hoped to continue with the project during the 2007/08 year by sourcing funds elsewhere.

The Hunter Zone Firewise Committee continues to have a number of NSW Fire Brigades retain staff as members of the Committee this is currently the only Committee which has this interaction between Fire Services.

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Staff Training

The Learning & Development officers in the Zone will be attending Skills enhancement training required for better education of the Volunteers.

Volunteer Training

The Hunter Zone and Lower Hunter Zone have conducted joint training since early April to fill vacant positions.

The Hunter Zone and NSWFB have not conducted joint training sessions this year due to the staff movements in the Maitland NSWFB zone office.

Since December 07/08, 76 new members have been signed up in the Hunter Zone resulting in three Basic Fire Fighter courses being conducted. Defibrillation courses are continuing in the zone with four brigades being assessed competent and with more looking at starting in 07/08.

The following table indicates the new accreditations and training activity undertaken by the Hunter Zone for the 2007-2008 financial years.

Training Participation for 2007/08

The following table indicates the number of volunteer personnel that participated in formal training activities including skills maintenance training and the hours recorded for each training activity during 2007 & 2008.

Training Course	Course Attendance 07/08
Basic Firefighter	74
Village Firefighter	116
Advanced Firefighter	16
Crew Leader Wildfire	13
Crew Leader Village	12
Crew Leader Safety	10
Group Leader	0
Driving	14
First Aid	156
CABA	12
Chainsaw	13
Other	92
Total	528

This reporting period has seen an increase in the training activity undertaken by the team due to the Rural Fire Service running out new programs last year. This year the committee has sent out a survey asking personnel if mid week training courses would be more suitable. The survey results will be used to plan for the 2009 training plan.

The first Lower Hunter and Hunter combined training committee will be held on the 10th October 07. This will be the start of the new Zone Training committee.

Private Sector Training

Breathing apparatus training is still under way for the Great Lakes and port Stephens areas. The training group has conducted fire extinguisher training for the Cessnock VRA again and will continue to do so for many years to come.



State of Environment Reporting

The Cessnock City Council State of the Environment Report is published as a separate document (Annexure 1 to the Annual Report), and is available to view at the Council's website: www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au.

Increasingly, the actions of local government are being seen as the key to environmental protection and restoration. Local government provides opportunities for the community to become involved in environmental management at a grass roots level. The success of this involvement is dependent on community awareness and participation. State of the Environment reporting is a widely accepted means for educating the community about the environment and its management and restoration activities which are taking place in their local area.

Other values of State of the Environment Reporting include the provision of:-

- An information base for decision-making and monitoring
- A basis for sound planning and policy development
- A community information source
- A social and economic context for environmental issues, and
- A base for comparison of environmental data, both within and across regions.

Cessnock City Council's 2007/08 State of the Environment Report is based on the state-pressure-response model used in previous years. This model requires consideration on the state or condition of the environment, the pressures or impacts upon it, and the policies, projects and programs which respond to the pressures.

The report only discusses new information or projects that have arisen in the reporting period July 2007 – June 2008. Background information may be found in previous State of the Environment Reports that are available for viewing at the local libraries and Council's Website. The focus of the report is not restricted to Council's activities, but takes on a community-wide perspective by drawing together information from many different local sources.

Part D – Our Financial Statements

INTRODUCTION

Under the provisions of Division 2 of Part 3 (Financial Management) of the Local Government Act, 1993, Council's audited financial reports and the auditor's reports for the year 2007/2008 will be presented at an open meeting of Council after due public notice has been given.

The financial reports comprise general purpose financial reports and special schedules. The financial reports, together with the auditor's reports, can be viewed at the Administrative Offices, 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock between the hours of 8.30am and 5.00pm on week days excluding public holidays. The reports cover the period from 1 July, 2007 to 30 June, 2008.

Audited results for the period 2007/2008 are summarised below:-

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS RESULTING FROM OPERATIONS		
(OPERATING RESULT)		
	2007/2008	2006/2007
	\$'000	\$'000
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ 1,492	\$ 1,682
Net Assets Committed		
- Current	\$ 5,368	\$ 2,702
- Non-current	\$376,141	\$310,207
- TOTAL	<u>\$381,509</u>	<u>\$312,909</u>
Equity		
- Accumulated Surplus	\$314,401	\$312,909
- Asset Revaluation Reserve	\$ 67,108	
- Total Equity	\$381,509	\$312,909
Cash		
- Net increase/(decrease) for year	\$ 1,146	\$ 875
- Held at end of year	\$ 17,335	\$ 17,680

RATES AND CHARGES LEVIED AND WRITTEN OFF

Details of gross rates and charges levied and written off are shown below:

GROSS RATES AND CHARGES LEVIED AND WRITTEN OFF		
Ordinary Rates (Specify)		
Residential	\$15,680,837	
Farmland	\$3,797,995	
Business	\$3,619,540	
Mining	<u>\$604,633</u>	
Total Rates		\$23,703,005
Domestic Waste Management Charges		<u>\$4,735,369</u>
Stormwater Management Charges		\$378,917
Gross Rates and Charges		\$28,817,291
Less: Written Off		
Pensioners (Section 575)	\$1,196,502	
Pensioners (Section 582)	\$113,633	<u>\$1,310,135</u>
		\$27,507,156
Net Transfers to and from Postponed Rates		<u>\$3,625</u>
Net Rates and Annual Charges		\$27,510,781
Net Extra Charges – Interest and Legal per note 3		<u>\$172,126</u>
		<u>\$27,682,907</u>

The 2007/08 year was the second year of a special rates variation granted to Council by the Minister for Local Government. An amount of \$1,298,000 was levied under this special variation with the funds being expended on the following capital works:

- Road reconstruction at McDonalds Road, Pokolbin.
- Road reconstruction at Majors Lane, Keinbah.
- Rural Road Reseal at Great North Road.
- Rehabilitation at Sergent Street, Cessnock.
- Road Reseal at Mulbring Street, Kurri Kurri.
- Residential Road Reseal at Filey Street, Greta.
- Residential Road Reseal at Elford Avenue, Weston.