



# 2014–2015 Annual Report

*Delivering Services & Infrastructure for Our Community*

*Cessnock - thriving, attractive and welcoming*

## OUR VISION

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

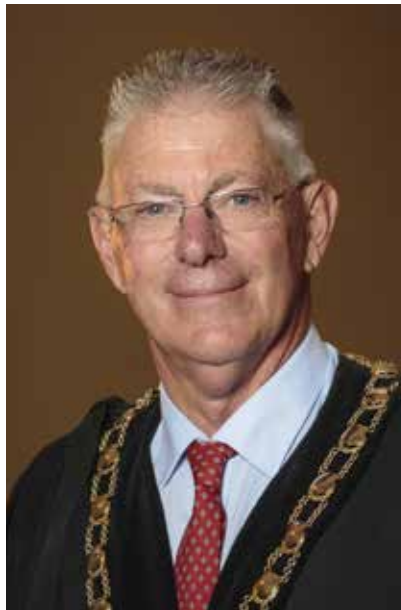
*In summary, the vision is:*

**Cessnock -  
thriving,  
attractive and  
welcoming.**

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# Message from the Mayor



*Mayor Councillor Bob Pynsent*

Our Vision—thriving, attractive and welcoming—underpins everything we strive for at Council and this year has seen a full program contributing to fulfil this vision.

The City of Cessnock is performing well and it gives me great pleasure to present our 2014-15 Annual Report.

Our magnificent region received more than one million visitors over the past year, and we are determined to secure the future of our local community while continuing to be an appealing tourism destination. Cessnock has again made headlines for being recognised among the best tourist spots in Australia, with the city ranking in the top 10 holiday destinations.

We have completed substantial roadworks with the \$20 million Broke Road project under the Hunter Infrastructure and Investment Fund, and look forward to our next big section

of works with the Hermitage and Broke roads intersection secured under the Resources for Regions program. A key challenge for us is to move and adjust with our increasing population to ensure we match our infrastructure to meet demand for our new as well as existing residents.

We have undergone a time of significant reflection to ensure we remain financially sustainable while continuing to provide value to our community. I can honestly say we are feeling ready as a 'fit for the future' Council and all that it will bring.

Enjoy reading the 2014-15 highlights for our local government area. We will continue to support Council in its efforts to create a thriving, attractive and welcoming community.

*Bob Pynsent*

*Mayor of the City of Cessnock*



*General Manager Stephen Glen*

I am proud to say the experience of the people that live, work and visit our beautiful Cessnock City continues to improve. We are looking ahead and planning for the future needs of our dynamic region.

This Annual Report details the progress we have made in implementing our 2014-15 Operational Plan. We have made significant progress with a focus on innovation, continuous improvement and financial sustainability.

We have outlined our commitment to the state government that we are a fit for the future Council, able to provide effective and efficient services which have the scale and capacity to meet the needs of our growing community.

Our governance framework and Audit Committee continue to strengthen us as an organisation and guide us toward better outcomes.

As well as continuing to deliver critical services and capital works, Council continues to implement our Financial Sustainability Initiative. This will keep us on track for a sustainable fiscal future, providing the levels of service and infrastructure our community deserves.

We have been on the international stage, hosting a pre-competition camp for the 2015 AFC Asian Cup right here in Cessnock. We also continued to provide exceptional customer service and were focused on open communication and dialogue with our community to meet their needs.

I am proud of our collective strengths and all we have achieved. My thanks to Mayor Pynsent, Councillors, the Executive Leadership Team and all employees of Cessnock City Council.

*Stephen Glen*  
*General Manager*

## Message from the General Manager

# The Annual Report

The Annual Report has been developed to provide a summary of Council's achievements during the 2014-15 year. Progress is measured against the programs, budget and desired outcomes in the 2014-15 Operational Plan. The Operational Plan aims to achieve the longer term objectives of the Delivery Program and Community Strategic Plan.

This document focuses on Council's implementation of the 2013-17 Delivery Program and Operational Plan because these are the plans that are wholly the responsibility of Council.

The Annual Report provides an insight into Council's financial position and operations, and is prepared to comply with the Local Government Act 1993.

Major highlights, key initiatives, operating performance and achievements are presented against five desired outcomes as identified in the Community Strategic Plan, *Cessnock 2023*.

They are:

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

The Financial Statements are presented in a separate document to this report.



Cessnock City Council is constituted as a body politic of the State under section 220 of the Local Government Act 1993. Section 8 of the Local Government Act states that a Council's charter is:

- 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 in a manner that is consistent with and actively promotes the principles of multiculturalism
- to promote and to provide and plan for the needs of children
- to properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development
- 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 plan for, account for and manage the assets for which it is responsible
- to engage in long-term strategic planning on behalf of the local community
- to exercise its functions in a manner that is consistent with and promotes social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights
- 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 the 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 guide the Council in the carrying out of its functions.

## Council's Charter

# Councillors

## THE MAYOR



Clr B Pynsent

## WARD A



Clr J Hawkins

## WARD B



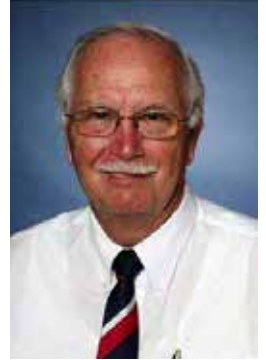
Clr M Campbell

## WARD C

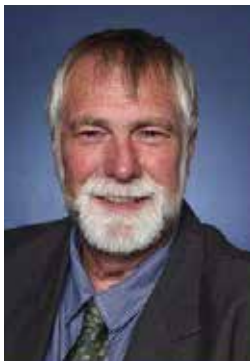


The Late Clr J Maybury

## WARD D



Clr R Doherty



Clr A Stapleford



Clr B Gibson



Clr C Parsons



Clr J Ryan



Clr C Troy



Clr I Olsen



Clr S Wrightson



Clr G Smith

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

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



Cessnock City Council's longest-serving councillor, Jeff Maybury, passed away on Monday 6 July after a battle with cancer.

Having been on council for 35 years, Cr. Maybury was known for providing assistance to those in the community who were in need and was affectionately referred to as the 'Mayor of Weston'.

Besides his council work, he was very active with the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Cr. Maybury lived in the Weston and Abermain area for 71 years and was a huge supporter of the Cessnock region in general.

The father-of-two was president of the Weston RSL Sub-Branch and was committed to helping the Tidy Towns movement.

Cessnock City Mayor Bob Pynsent paid tribute to Cr. Maybury's tireless work.

"I worked alongside Jeff for 16 years and he was so passionate, especially about the Tidy Towns movement and helping people less fortunate," Cr. Pynsent said.

"Over time he saw significant changes in local government and his historical knowledge of council was invaluable."

Cr. Maybury saw many projects he supported come to fruition over the years including the construction of the Multipurpose Centre and restoration of old council chambers at Greta.

He was also a long-time advocate for the general maintenance and improvement of Chinamans Hollow/

Peace Park at Weston.

Throughout his life, he worked as a telephone technician operator, fireman and a coal miner.

In 2011 he was made a life member of the Australian Labor Party, after 40 years' continuous membership with the party.

Cr. Maybury and his wife Pat celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in March 2015.

He is survived by Mrs. Maybury, daughter Karen Jurd (who served a term on council alongside her father), son Justin Maybury and four grandchildren.



# Cessnock Local Government Area

## ABOUT OUR REGION

Cessnock Local Government Area (Cessnock City) covers approximately 1,950 square kilometres within the Hunter Valley of New South Wales, approximately 120 kilometres north of Sydney and 40 kilometres west of Newcastle.

Whilst mining was the principal industrial base and source of employment in the Cessnock area for the first half of this century, changes to the mining industry, including automation and the introduction of sophisticated computerised equipment, led to the closure of the vast majority of mines in the area.

The decline of mining has been paralleled by growth in the wine industry. The Hunter Valley wine-growing area in the Cessnock LGA is Australia's oldest wine region and one of the most famous, with around 4,500 acres under vine. The vineyards of Pokolbin, Mount View and Allandale, with their rich volcanic soils tended by entrepreneurial vigneron, are also the focus of a thriving tourism industry.

As well as vineyards and wineries there are fine restaurants, motels, cabins, guest houses and galleries. Wine-related tourism has also created opportunities for other



attractions, such as the historic Marthaville Arts and Crafts Centre, Wollombi Village, the Richmond Main Mining Museum and the Richmond Vale Railway. Other primary industries in Cessnock City include beef and poultry.

Light and secondary industry have also been a feature of the City's recent economic development, with the production of aluminium, the processing of explosive equipment and mining support services now a significant source of employment in the area.

Support infrastructure across the City now includes two hospitals, two TAFE campuses, community health services, a range of childcare options, and aged care as well as numerous other community support services. Each of the City's towns and villages (which are linked by large

expanses of natural vegetation) provide high quality sporting facilities and parks.

## OUR HISTORY

Cessnock lies between Australia's earliest European settlements - Sydney, the Hawkesbury and the Hunter. Lying on the land route between these important settlements, it provided early European contact with Indigenous people, who have inhabited the Cessnock area for more than 3,000 years. The Darkinjung people were the major inhabitants at the time of European contact, with the tribe divided into a number of clans - to the north around Maitland was the land of the Wonarua tribe, whilst to the south-east, around the shores of Lake Macquarie were the Awabakal, the 'people of the flat surface'.

The City of Cessnock abounds in Indigenous place names and names with Indigenous association which is indicative of this settlement and include Congewai, Kurri Kurri, Laguna, Nulkaba and Wollombi.

Pastoralists commenced settling the land in the 1820s. Wollombi became the established centre of the area from the 1830s after the completion of the Great North Road that linked the Hawkesbury and Hunter Valley. By 1850, Wollombi had three hotels, and was an important resting place for travellers, as well as a rural centre for farmers and cedar getters. Wollombi remained the largest settlement for most of the 19th Century.

The township of Cessnock developed from 1850, as a service centre at the junction of the Great North Road, with branches to Singleton and Maitland.

During the 1860s, land settlement was extensive between Nulkaba and Pokolbin, with wheat, tobacco and grapes the principal crops.

The township of Branxton developed during the late 19th Century, due to its location as a road junction, and its accessibility to water and rich agricultural land.

The establishment of the South Maitland Coalfield generated extensive land settlement between 1903 and 1923. The current pattern of urban development, transport

routes and industrial landscape was laid at this time. Townships sprang up adjacent to pit tops and the rail heads on the Greta seam. The township of Kurri Kurri became established at the northern end of the coal seam.

The surveying of the Greta Coal Seam by Professor Edgeworth David at the turn of the Century became the impetus for considerable social and economic change in the area with the development of the coal mining industry. In late 1939, construction began on the Greta Army Camp, just south of the Greta township. The camp was divided into two discrete sections known as Silver City and Chocolate City - so named because of the galvanised iron and oiled timber cladding used

in the construction of the huts. It is said that up to 60,000 soldiers passed through the camp gates during World War II.

After the war, in 1949, it became one of the largest migrant camps in Australia with an estimated 100,000 people spending some time at the centre. At one stage, 17 different nationalities were represented in the camp. In early 1960, Greta Migrant Camp was closed and all the buildings sold. All that remains today are a few foundations and fences, but the Greta Camp lives on in the memories of those for whom it was the first step in making a new life in Australia. The Migrant Camp also had a profound influence on the social and cultural development of the Greta community.

#### AT A GLANCE

|                                |                             |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Estimated Resident Population  | 54,979 (as at 30 June 2014) |
| Ratepayers (approx)            | 24,500                      |
| Towns, villages and localities | 57                          |
| Chambers of Commerce           | 4                           |
| Roads                          | 1,157 kilometres            |
| Cycle ways                     | 60 kilometres               |
| Libraries                      | 2                           |
| Community Halls                | 18                          |
| Performance Theatre            | 1 (466 seat)                |
| Public Swimming Pools          | 3                           |
| Indoor Sports Centres          | 2                           |
| Parks                          | 52                          |
| Playgrounds                    | 41                          |
| Sports fields/ovals            | 23                          |
| Cemeteries                     | 10 general, 2 lawn          |
| Waste and Recycle Centre       | 1                           |

# Fit for the Future

## BACKGROUND

### *The Road to Change...*

Four years ago, local councils from throughout NSW gathered for an historic summit, Destination 2036, to plan how local government could meet the challenges of the future.

Councils wanted to be strong and sustainable and to make a positive difference in their communities, but there were various views as to how this could be achieved. The local government sector asked the State to appoint an independent expert panel to carry out a review. The Independent Local Government Review Panel consulted widely in developing its final recommendations.

The Panel concluded that for councils to become strong and sustainable, both the NSW Government and the local government sector would have to play a part.

The State has stated that it is prepared to change the way it works with councils and to support them through meaningful reform.

While local councils have signalled they are prepared to consider new ways of working and new structural arrangements.

The Fit for the Future program brings these changes together to lay the foundations for a stronger system of local government and stronger communities.

### *What is a Fit for the Future council?*

A Fit for the Future council is one that is:

- Sustainable
- Efficient
- Effectively manages infrastructure and delivers services for communities
- Has the scale and capacity to engage effectively across community, industry and government.

## THE NSW GOVERNMENT ASKED COUNCILS TO...

### *Review their current situation*

Each council was asked to look at its current situation and consider the future needs of its community and the recommendations of the Independent Panel.

The NSW Government provided a self-assessment tool to help guide the discussion. The assessment helped councils to get a clear picture of how they are performing in financial management, service delivery and scale of operations. It also helped them to identify what they may need to do ensure they are Fit for the Future.

### *Prepare a submission*

Councils prepared and submitted a proposal (by 30 June 2015) on how they intended to become Fit for the Future.

The Panel's recommendation was the starting point for how councils can achieve the scale and capacity they require to become Fit for the Future.

For some councils joining forces with their neighbours may be the best option. For others, adopting a new Rural Council Model may give them the flexibility and support they need. Larger councils who are already performing well may develop strategies to strengthen their operations and improve efficiencies.

### *Cessnock City Council Fit for the Future Proposal*

Visit the Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal website to view the Cessnock City Council Fit for the Future proposal.

### *Assessing submissions*

The submissions were assessed by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) which had been appointed as the Expert Panel by Government.

Cessnock City Council was assessed, by the IPART, as fit for the future - satisfying both the scale and capacity and financial criteria.

### *Make the transition*

The Minister has advised that the State Government will respond to the Panel's recommendations, so Councils can implement their Fit for the Future proposals by the end of 2015.

Part of becoming Fit for the Future for regional areas, including Cessnock, will involve participating in a regional Joint Organisation.

### *Joint Organisations*

Joint Organisations will provide a forum for local councils and the State to work together to delivery regional priorities, such as jobs, education, housing, roads and transport. They will help connect local priorities from local councils' Community Strategic Plans with regional planning for growth, infrastructure and economic development and provide a means of delivering projects across council boundaries.

The NSW Government is providing \$5.3 million to get the new organisations up and running in regional NSW, with the final model being developed by local councils, in partnership with the State. Joint Organisations will be established across regional NSW by September 2016.

#### *What will Joint Organisations do?*

Regional Joint Organisations will have three core functions;

- Regional strategic planning
- Working with State Government
- Regional leadership and advocacy

They may also decide to undertake optional functions such as:

- Regional service delivery
- Sharing skills and best practice (to build strategic capacity)

### *Piloting the program*

Five groups of NSW councils are currently working with the NSW Government to develop the Joint Organisation (or JO) model and build better working relationships between councils and State agencies.

Hunter Councils, along with groups of councils from Illawarra, Central West, Namoi and Riverina regions have commenced piloting the Joint Organisation program.

Each Pilot is trialling a slightly different model, to reflect the different working relationships and priorities of their region. The Pilots will be sharing their learning with other councils along the way and helping to develop the Joint Organisation model, which will be finalised in early 2016.

#### *Want to know more?*

Find out more about Fit for the Future by visiting the NSW Government Fit for the Future website at [www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au)

Visit the Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal website for information on the review of the Local Council Fit for the Future proposals.

[www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au)

Visit Hunter Councils website for information on their Joint Organisation pilot program.

[www.strategicservicesaustralia.com.au](http://www.strategicservicesaustralia.com.au)





*Delivering  
a connected,  
safe and creative  
community*

## COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME:

# A connected, safe & creative community

*This Desired Outcome relates to community wellbeing, connectedness and safety. During the community engagement program in 2010 participants expressed the desire for a healthy, active, engaged and cohesive community that maintained its unique local identity and friendliness into the future.*

*Council has undertaken the following principal activities during 2014-15 to achieve the objectives established in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.*



### Community & Cultural Activities

- Community planning
- Events
- Libraries
- Youth services
- Cessnock Performing Arts Centre



### Community Health & Safety

- Animal management
- Building compliance and safety
- Parking enforcement
- Public health inspections
- Regulation enforcement programs
- Road Safety programs and facilities
- Emergency Management



### Community Assets

- Community halls and centres
- Early childhood facilities
- Cycleways

## Promoting Social Connections

### ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS

The total Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander resident population in the LGA is approximately 2,457 (2011 Census).

A successful program of community activities and events for NAIDOC Week 2014 was delivered in July, with Council facilitating the process for a number of agencies and organisations. Over 1,110 people attended 9 events held across the LGA.

The Aboriginal Advisory Committee continued to hold regular meetings throughout the year and further developed the draft Reconciliation Action Plan.

National Reconciliation Week was celebrated with an afternoon tea for Indigenous Elders from the Local Government Area hosted by the Mayor, Councillors and the Executive Leadership Team.

### ACCESS

The Access Advisory Committee (comprising Councillors, community representatives and Council officers) continued to meet to consider issues of access for people with disabilities.

### PEOPLE WITH DIVERSE CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC BACKGROUNDS

The 2011 Census found that there were over 30 languages being spoken by residents in the LGA and that 6.6% of residents were born overseas.

### CONTRIBUTIONS AND GRANTS

During 2014-15 Council provided \$91,443.60 in general financial assistance to community groups/organisations. This amount included a total of \$6,000 to local RSL Sub-Branches for community events commemorating the Centenary of ANZAC Day in 2015.

Harmony Day was celebrated in March 2015 with a significant community event in the plaza adjacent to the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre. The event was well attended.

### CLUB GRANTS

For the 2014-15 Club Grants Funding Round, the Committee received 57 applications and was able to partially or fully fund 24 projects. The total allocation of grant funds was \$94,784.

### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

In July 2015 Cessnock City Council joined councils from across Australia in a campaign to lobby the federal government to restore indexation to Financial Assistance Grants (in response to a three-year indexation freeze announced in the May 2014 federal budget).

Council's 2014-15 Financial Assistance Grant totalled \$7m representing approximately 10% of total revenue. (A similar amount to the \$8m allocated to the final stage of work on Broke Road Pokolbin during the financial year).

Financial Assistance Grants are discretionary allocations that can be used for essential community infrastructure and services such as local roads and parks to swimming pools and libraries.

The impact of the indexation freeze resulted in a reduction of nearly \$170,000 from Council's expected 2014-15 allocation.

| GROUP/ORGANISATION                                 | AMOUNT             |
|--|--------------------|
| <b>RECREATION MINOR PROJECTS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM</b> |                    |
| Abermain/Weston Hawks RLFC                         | \$1,884.25         |
| Branxton Croquet Club                              | \$1,850.00         |
| Cessnock District Netball Association              | \$1,786.00         |
| Cessnock Minor Rugby League                        | \$13,000.00        |
| Cessnock Rugby League Football Club                | \$5,086.94         |
| Kurri Kurri Athletic Centre                        | \$1,467.35         |
| North Rothbury Tidy Towns                          | \$1,600.00         |
| Piranhas Cricket Club Inc.                         | \$3,447.50         |
| Wollombi Valley Pony Club Inc.                     | \$2,064.42         |
| <b>SUB-TOTAL</b>                                   | <b>\$32,186.46</b> |



| GROUP/ORGANISATION                                       | AMOUNT             |
|--|--------------------|
| <b>COMMUNITY HALLS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM</b>                 |                    |
| Abermain Plaza Hall Management                           | \$1,536.00         |
| Cessnock Multi Purpose Childrens Centre                  | \$7,241.36         |
| Kurri Kurri Community Centre                             | \$2,318.18         |
| Wollombi Tennis & Sports Association                     | \$6,387.50         |
| Wollombi Tennis & Sports Association                     | \$2,900.55         |
| <b>COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM</b> |                    |
| Abermain Elsteddfod Society                              | \$1,915.19         |
| Anglican Parish of Mount Vincent                         | \$3,500.00         |
| Cessnock Community & Youth Development                   | \$1,950.00         |
| Cessnock District Historical Society                     | \$7,476.35         |
| Central Hunter Community Broadcasters                    | \$799.00           |
| Cessnock Woodturners Inc                                 | \$2,400.00         |
| Kurri Kurri Quills                                       | \$651.00           |
| Richmond Vale Preservation Co-operative Society          | \$2,500.00         |
| Wollombi Valley Arts Council                             | \$2,000.00         |
| <b>TIDY TOWNS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM</b>                      |                    |
| Branxton Tidy Towns                                      | \$2,391.00         |
| Bucketty Tidy Bush                                       | \$2,000.00         |
| Gingers Lane Tidy Towns                                  | \$1,461.06         |
| Kurri Kurri Tidy Towns                                   | \$750.00           |
| North Rothbury Tidy Towns                                | \$670.31           |
| Weston Heritage & Tidy Towns                             | \$969.64           |
| Wollombi Valley Tidy Towns                               | \$1,440.00         |
| <b>RSL SUB-BRANCH ANZAC DAY CENTENARY EVENTS</b>         |                    |
| Abermain RSL Sub-Branch                                  | \$1,000.00         |
| Branxton RSL Sub-Branch                                  | \$1,000.00         |
| Cessnock RSL Sub-Branch                                  | \$1,000.00         |
| Greta RSL Sub-Branch                                     | \$1,000.00         |
| Kurri Kurri RSL Sub-Branch                               | \$1,000.00         |
| Weston RSL Sub-Branch                                    | \$1,000.00         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>\$91,443.60</b> |

### Delivery Program Performance

| Action   | 2014-15 Result   | Delivery Program Result |
|--|------------------|-------------------------|
| Promote the range of community services across the Local Government Area.  |                  |                         |
| Engage with the indigenous community.<br>- Organise and deliver a range of NAIDOC Week events.   |                  |                         |
| Develop a program to increase social connections across the Local Government Area.<br>- Organise and deliver a range of Seniors' Week events.<br>- Organise and deliver a range of Youth Week events.<br>- Organise other civic events - Australia Day, Carols in the Park, Citizenship Ceremonies, etc.<br>- Work with the Cessnock Chamber of Commerce to develop a major festival.<br>- Support the Kurri Kurri Nostalgia Festival. | <br><br><br><br> |                         |
| Commence implementation of the Cessnock City Bicycle Plan.<br>- Finalise the Cessnock City Cycle Strategy and Action Plan.   |                  |                         |

Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 2 Not Yet Achieved 0 At Risk 2

# Strengthening Community Culture

## CHILD CARE AND PRE-SCHOOL SERVICES

Council continued to provide space for nine child care and pre-school services across the LGA.

## YOUTH SERVICES

Council's Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) is now in its 17th year of operation. CYCOS has a suite of programs for the LGA's youth, including in-house and outreach drop-in facilities, informal educational programs in schools, referral for young people to other services, court support and youth events. During 2014–15 CYCOS had 9,948 occasions of service (i.e. interactions with young people).

Council and community organisations also delivered a very successful Youth Week 2015, with CYCOS playing a lead role in the planning and programming of activities. The program of 15 activities and events engaged and entertained more than 1,818 young people. The activities included a big breakfast at all four local high schools; two outdoor movie nights; an open mic night at the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre showcasing local performers; workshops on graffiti art, Indigenous art and making cupcakes; and the annual YouthFest.

The Cessnock City Youth Council Committee continued to meet and discuss topics of interest to young people such as public transport, bullying, mental health, sexual health, domestic violence, Youth Week and anti-social behaviour.

## AGED AND DISABLED SERVICES

Cessnock City Council provides significant infrastructure for aged and disabled services operated by Home and Community Care Services across the LGA including:

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

Council was actively involved in organising, promoting and/or delivering 29 events to 724 attendees as part of Seniors' Week 2015. Cessnock City Library and Cessnock Performing Arts Centre organised a significant number of those activities. The program, planned by Council's Seniors Week Advisory Committee, included aqua aerobics classes; open days at men's sheds, the gem and mineral club and the croquet club; classes in creative writing, chair yoga, the internet, music appreciation, ebooks, photography and French conversation; concerts; movie screenings and an excursion to a local rainforest park.

## Delivery Program Performance

| Action   | 2014-15 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Collaborate with the community to develop and deliver services.<br>- Review the Places, Spaces & Faces: Social & Cultural Plan   |                |                         |
| Develop a strategic plan for social welfare and community facilities needs across the Local Government Area.   |                |                         |
| Support groups to manage and improve community and sporting facilities.<br>- Continue to support community, cultural and sporting facilities and projects \$ for \$ grants.<br>- Finalise the Section 355 Voluntary Committee Operations Manual. |                |                         |
| Commence implementation of the priority projects from the CYCOS Business Plan.   |                |                         |
| Delivery Program Performance:  Achieved 4  Not Yet Achieved 0  At Risk 0   |                |                         |

## Promoting Safe Communities

### CRIME PREVENTION

Projects continue to be delivered in collaboration with NSW Police including the "Smart Choices Program", an eight-week youth crime prevention education program designed by Council, Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service and the Central Hunter Local Area Command (NSW Police). The program was delivered to a secondary high school on one occasion and approximately 70 year seven students participated.

Representatives from Cessnock City Council continued to attend the Community Safety Precinct Committee Meetings facilitated by the Central Hunter Local Area Command.

### COMPANION ANIMALS

Council actively enforces the Companion Animals Act 1998 through the following activities and community education programs:

- Free microchipping day for Companion Animals in the LGA.
- Regular patrols of the local government area.
- Educating the community on responsible pet ownership including distribution of pooch pouches, dog leads, brochures and promotional materials (magnets, pencils and balloons).
- Companion Animal Lifetime Registration audits and reminder letters.
- Dangerous and restricted dog audits and inspections.
- Attending to complaints and ensuring that Companion Animal Owners adhere to the NSW Companion Animals Act 1998 and regulations.

Council's Companion Animal Management Plan was adopted by Council on 4 February 2015.

Council has an agreement with the RSPCA to provide pound facilities for the Cessnock City local government area. From August 2011 all impounded animals have been taken to the RSPCA Rutherford Shelter.

### DE-SEXING OF DOGS AND CATS

Council refers Companion Animal owners to Hunter Animal Watch to assist with desexing of animals for pension card holders. Council Rangers engage with animal owners and discuss the options of desexing their animal.



### ANIMAL SHELTER DATA

The RSPCA Rutherford completes and lodges pound data collection returns with the Office of Local Government as part of Council's Agreement.

There were 40 reported dog attacks involving 58 attacking dogs in the LGA in 2014-15.

For the year ended 30 June 2015 there were 93 actions relating to these dog attacks including:

- 5 were declared dangerous;
- 33 were infringed;
- 7 received warnings;

- 2 were seized and taken to the pound;
- 6 dogs were destroyed;
- 5 are still under investigation;
- 17 were declared menacing;
- 12 other actions were taken;
- 5 no action; and
- 1 seized and returned to the owner.

#### ALTERNATIVES TO EUTHANASIA FOR UNCLAIMED ANIMALS

As part of Council’s ongoing agreement with the RSPCA, animals are held for the prescribed time and, if unclaimed, their ownership transfers to the RSPCA, and the animals are put through an assessment program to establish if they are suitable for rehoming.

#### OFF LEASH AREAS IN THE LGA

Council currently has six leash-free areas for the community to use:

- Branxton: the very western end of Miller Park
- Cessnock: northern end of Manning Park in Blackwood Avenue
- Cessnock West: northern end of Hall Park
- Greta: northern portion of Greta Central Park
- Stanford Merthyr: Stanford Merthyr Park in Maitland Street
- Weston: south-eastern portion of Varty Park

#### COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Council spent approximately \$33,000 on community education programs in 2014-15 including a free

microchip day and free microchip service throughout the year. Council also conducts a bulk mail out of companion animal brochures to promote responsible pet ownership.

#### ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

In June 2014 Council adopted the Cessnock City Road Safety Strategic Plan 2014-18. The objectives of the Plan are to:

- Establish clear road safety goals for Council and the community;
- Strive towards a reduction in road trauma and associated social and monetary costs to Council and the local community;
- Enhance community awareness and ownership of road safety issues to encourage a voluntary compliance with traffic laws amongst all road users;
- Continue to highlight road safety as a priority within Council design, development and delivery processes; and
- Improve Council’s capacity to take advantage of Commonwealth and State road safety funding programs.

The Plan is the foundation document for the development of a Local Road Safety Three Year Action Plan, which will provide the framework for the development and implementation of linked road safety projects. These projects will be based on the internationally adopted Safe System approach to road safety.

#### Delivery Program Performance

| Action  | 2014-15 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Participate in collaborative partnerships to prevent crime.   |                |                         |
| Carry out regulatory and education programs to protect residential amenity and community health and safety.<br>- Commence implementation of high priority projects from the Companion Animal Management Plan. |                |                         |
| Commence implementation of priority projects from the Road Safety Strategy.<br>- Identify priority projects from the Community Road Safety Strategy.  |                |                         |
| Delivery Program Performance:  Achieved 3  Not Yet Achieved 0  At Risk 0  |                |                         |

# Fostering an Articulate and Creative Community

## CESSNOCK CITY LIBRARY

Council adopted the Cessnock City Library Review, Report and Strategy 2014-2024 which provides the overall framework for the future development and delivery of library services and articulates a vision and statement of purpose for Council's library services.

The Library implemented an RFID (Radio Frequency Identification Disks) system at both Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries, a project made possible by a NSW State Government Public Library Infrastructure Grant. This system will greatly assist with collection management, provides a self-check system for library patrons and improves resource security.

Additional new furniture and fittings were purchased for both Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries.

An extremely well-received ANZAC Centenary display was hosted at Cessnock Library. The display was developed and installed by Library staff with assistance from a community organising committee.

There were 194,893 visits to Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries during the year, and 13,141 hits on the Library's website.

## CULTURAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Council administered its Community Cultural Development \$ for \$ Grant Program in 2014-15 and \$23,351 was allocated to nine projects.

Throughout the year two people were inducted into the City of Cessnock Hall of Fame. This brings the total number of inductees into the Hall of Fame to 54. All inductees are listed on the Cessnock City Council Website.

## Delivery Program Performance

| Action   | 2014-15 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Continue implementation of the priority projects from the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre business plan.<br>- Continue to investigate and implement new ways of promoting and marketing the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre. | ✓              | ✓                       |
| Commence implementation of the priority projects from the Library Strategic Plan.<br>- Identify the priority projects from the Library Strategic Plan.   | ✓              | ✓                       |
| Promote and participate in a range of cultural and heritage activities across the Local Government Area.   | ✓              | ✓                       |
| Delivery Program Performance: ✓ Achieved 3   ✗ Not Yet Achieved 0   ⚠ At Risk 0  |                |                         |

A review of Places, Spaces & Faces: Social & Cultural Plan 2009-2014 was undertaken. The review established that of the 117 strategies to which Council had committed during the five year life of the Plan, 98 (84%) were completed.



## CESSNOCK PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

The Cessnock Performing Arts Centre continued its strong cultural presence with the community. In addition to the delivery to a total combined audience of 12,859 of its successful performance program, the Centre maintained its commitment to both co-presenting and hosting free events to strengthen ties with the broader community. The Centre partnered with the Samaritans Neighbourhood Centre to host Harmony Day in the outdoor plaza area. In addition, the Centre hosted the Mayoral Scholarships and the School Leaders' Breakfast.

The Performing Arts Centre presented Cessnock City Council's second Spring Awakening festival, which was attended by approximately 2,000 people.

## MEASURES:

| MEASURES  | CONTEXT/BENCHMARK  | BASE  | 2014-15 RESULT  | TARGET                     |
|---|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| <b>Km of Cycleways in the LGA</b>                               | <p>This is a measure of the bitumen and concrete off-road linkages within and between the towns and villages of the Local Government Area.</p> <p>At 30 June 2012, there was 13.6 km of sealed off-road cycleways in the Local Government Area.</p>  | 13.6 km<br>2012   | N/A   | Increase                   |
| <b>Engagement with young people</b>                             | <p>This measure is the number of young people attending and participating in structured programs and drop-in services with CYCOS each year.</p> <p>This is a measure of the effectiveness of Council's provision of services to young people.</p> <p>This measure was 8,708 in 2010-11.</p>  | 8,708<br>2010-11  | 9,948   | >8,700 p.a.                |
| <b>Completion of programmed health &amp; safety inspections</b> | <p>This measure is the number of registered premises at 1 July: and the number of public health inspections carried out divided by the programmed public health inspections during a year.</p> <p>Public health inspections include food shop inspections, hairdressing shop inspections, and public swimming pool inspections. This is a measure of Council's contribution to the health of the community.</p> <p>In 2011-12 there were 658 premises and 100% of programmed inspections were carried out.</p> | 658<br><br>100%<br>2011-12                              | 662<br><br>100%                                       | N/A<br><br>100%            |
| <b>Completion of water cooling system inspections</b>           | <p>This measure is the number of registered premises at 1 July: and the number of water cooling towers inspected for legionnaires' disease divided by the programmed number of water cooling tower inspections during a year.</p> <p>This is a measure of Council's contribution to the health of the community.</p> <p>In 2011-12 there were 51 premises and 100% of programmed inspections were carried out.</p>   | 51<br><br>100%<br>2011-12                               | 35<br><br>100%  | N/A<br><br>100%            |
| <b>Library Utilisation</b>                                      | <p>These measures are the number of visits to Council's libraries plus the number of hits on the library page of Council's website.</p> <p>This data is sourced from the counters at the entrances to the libraries and from Council's internal website analysis.</p> <p>This is a measure of the community's utilisation of Council's library resources for the purpose of both recreation and education.</p>   | 206,485 visits<br>2011-12<br><br>25,814 hits<br>2011-12 | 194,893 visits<br>13,141 hits<br><br>208,034 combined | > 235,000 p.a.<br>Combined |
| <b>Cessnock Performing Arts Centre Audience</b>                 | <p>This measure is the number audience members that have attended performances at the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre in a calendar year.</p> <p>This measure is sourced from the centre's ticketing system.</p> <p>This is a measure of the community's exposure to community events and cultural experiences at the centre.</p>  | 16,873<br>2012  | 12,859<br>2014-15                                     | 18,500 p.a.                |



*Delivering  
a sustainable  
and prosperous  
economy*

COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME:

## A Sustainable & Prosperous Economy

*This Desired Outcome identifies the need to attract a diverse range of businesses, industries and services together with improved access to education, training and employment opportunities to ensure we have a sustainable and prosperous economy in Cessnock in 2023.*

*Council has undertaken the following principal activities during 2014-15 to achieve the objectives established in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.*



### Economic Development

- Supporting business growth and investment
- Strategic infrastructure
- Economic governance
- Securing grants



### Education

- Scholarships and academic competitions
- Building workforce capability



### Strategic Land Use Planning

- Industrial land



## Diversifying Local Business Options

### HUNTER COUNCILS

Councils from the Hunter Region have worked together for 60 years to ensure communities in the Hunter benefit from positive cooperation and collaboration.

Hunter Councils is currently participating in the State Government's Fit for the Future Joint Organisation pilot program. The focus of the Joint Organisation is on regional advocacy and government partnerships.

The activities of Hunter Councils are managed through an incorporated association and a company limited by guarantee. An incorporated legal practice is also part of Hunter Councils Ltd.

A series of professional teams derived from staff from member and adjacent Councils also operates under the guidance of the General Managers' Group.

More information on the Joint Organisation pilot and Fit for the Future can be found on pages 12 & 13.

### PARTNERSHIPS

- Council is a member of the Statewide 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 affordable public liability and professional indemnity insurance. This enables Council to meet its insurance obligations under the Act.

- Hunter Resource Recovery is a company, limited by guarantee. (Registered ABN 35071432570) that manages the kerbside recycling collection service contract with Solo Resource Recovery on behalf of member Councils.

The company is made up of 16 Directors representing each of the four member councils (Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland and Singleton).

During the period 2014-15 Cessnock Council recycled 4,868 tonnes via the kerbside service.

- Hunter Integrated Resources is a company, limited by guarantee (Registered ACN 095 330 813) established by the four (4) member Councils (Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland and Newcastle) to investigate alternative waste technology that may benefit member Councils through economies of scale.



## CONTRACTS

Council awarded the following contracts for amounts over \$150,000 (not including employment contracts) during 2014-15.

| SUCCESSFUL TENDER                                  | ITEM  | AMOUNT PAYABLE PER TENDER (incl. GST) |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Bitzios Consulting                                 | Traffic and Transport Strategy for the Local Government Area        | \$362,560.00                          |
| Timber Restoration Systems Pty Ltd                 | Refurbish Four Bridges  | \$338,675.57                          |
| Opus International Consultants (Australia) Pty Ltd | Data Capture and Condition Assessment of Road Infrastructure Assets | \$265,440.40                          |

## Delivery Program Performance

| Action  | 2014-15 Result  | Delivery Program Result   |
|---|---|---|
| Continue to update marketing material for the Local Government Area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop an Investment Prospectus for the Cessnock Local Government Area.</li> <li>- Develop a Business and Investment website and e-business newsletter.</li> </ul>   |   |  |
| Support local business support agencies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support the "mainstreet" programs for Cessnock and Kurri Kurri.</li> <li>- Facilitate four major business networking functions.</li> </ul>  |    |  |
| Commence implementation of the Economic Development Strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finalise the Business Capability Study.</li> <li>- Develop a Business Investment Program.</li> </ul>   |   |  |
| Commence implementation of the Cessnock CBD Masterplan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue implementation of the Cessnock CBD Masterplan.</li> <li>- Continue a development strategy for Cessnock CBD (including draft development control plan and draft contributions plan).</li> </ul>                          |    |  |
| Prepare a Kurri Kurri CBD Masterplan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commence development of the Kurri Kurri CBD Masterplan.</li> </ul>   |    |  |
| Delivery Program Performance:  Achieved 2  Not Yet Achieved 0  At Risk 3 |   |   |

# Achieving more Sustainable Employment Opportunities

## EMPLOYMENT

### Employed Residents

At March 2015 there were 20,355 employed residents in Cessnock LGA, a reduction of nearly 4,000 on the previous year. Successive mine closures are directly related to reduced employment. 45% of employed residents work in the LGA, the remaining travel to surrounding regions for work.

### Workers in Cessnock

It is estimated 14,045 people work in Cessnock LGA. 15% are professionals, 14% are technical and trades workers and 13% are community and personal services workers. Accommodation & food services, retail trade and manufacturing are the highest employing sectors.

| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE | MAR 2014 | JUN 2014 | SEPT 2014 | DEC 2014 | MAR 2015 |
|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Cessnock LGA      | 8.2%     | 8.3%     | 9.7%      | 11%      | 12.8%    |
| NSW               | 6.0%     | 5.5%     | 5.7%      | 5.8%     | 6.5%     |
| Australia         | 6.5%     | 5.8%     | 6.0%      | 5.9%     | 6.6%     |

Source: REMPLAN

## INDUSTRY SECTORS

Cessnock LGA's Gross Regional Product (GRP) is estimated at \$2.559 billion. Cessnock represents 5.75 % of Hunter Region's GRP of \$ 44.490 billion and 0.52% of New South Wales' Gross State Product (GSP) of \$492.478 billion.

Cessnock LGA has a long history of coal mining, manufacturing, construction, agriculture (e.g. grazing, poultry), viticulture and related tourism activities. Cessnock town centre is the administrative, retail and service centre for the LGA with Kurri Kurri town centre being an important secondary retail node and the industrial heart of the LGA. Local villages service the basic needs of more rural and outlying areas.

### Delivery Program Performance

| Action  | 2014-15 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Support programs that promote education and training for local people.<br>- Continue to award scholarships for academic, professional and trade excellence.   |                |                         |
| Support programs that promote employment for local people.<br>- Implement programs from the Economic Development Strategy that support employment in the local government area (within existing resources). |                |                         |

Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 2 Not Yet Achieved 0 At Risk 0

## Agriculture

The main agricultural activities in the LGA are poultry (egg and meat) production, grazing, equine industries and viticulture. In recent years there has been a diversification of the agricultural base, with new activities including hydroponic vegetable production, production of organic vegetables and herbs for the local restaurant trade, olives, lavender, finger limes, garlic, snails and cut flowers. The equine and canine sectors in the LGA are also expanding.

## Extractive Industries

Extractive Industries within the LGA include two underground coal mines, 5 quarries providing gravel and road base materials and a sandstone quarry providing decorative and building stone.

Cessnock LGA has a cluster of companies, including Orica Explosives that provide services to the mining industry. No new coal mines are proposed for the LGA.

Based on current estimates of resources, coal mining is likely to continue in the LGA for the next 20-30 years.

## Manufacturing

Cessnock is a recognised centre for manufacturing in the Hunter Region, with output including industrial and metal based products, wine making, and boutique food and beverage products.

## Wine

The Hunter Valley is Australia's oldest surviving wine region and one of the highest profile wine areas in Australia.

The industry is concentrated in Cessnock LGA with around 90 wineries / cellar doors in the area. The wine industry in the LGA is dominated by small and boutique businesses, most of which are independently owned and operated. These wineries rely on local and regional sales outlets (including Wine Selectors), wine clubs, cellar doors and internet sales to sell bottled wine. The concentration of cellar door outlets in the Cessnock LGA is a major tourist attraction.

## Increasing Tourism Opportunities & Visitation in the Area

### TOURISM

The Hunter Region consistently places in the top five destinations in NSW for visitor numbers and expenditure, with the Wine Country area in Cessnock LGA being one of the primary destinations. Cessnock LGA was again recognised as a top tourist destination, placing 10th – ahead of the Gold Coast - in the 2015 Trip Advisor Top Australian Destinations.



The Wine Country area is the focus for visitor attractions, events and activities with a secondary node centred on Wollombi. Events held in the vineyard areas are major generators of visitors. Protection of the scenic assets, physical environment and character of the vineyards area is critical to the ongoing sustainability of the tourism sector.

In the year ended December 2014 domestic visitors to the Hunter Region made just over 3 million overnight trips, spending 8.6 million nights in the region – a 19% increase on the previous years. Domestic visitors made 5.6 million day trips, a modest 1.6% increase on the previous year. In the year ended September 2014 the estimated domestic and international visitor spend in Cessnock LGA was \$215 million.

#### *Hunter Valley Visitor Centre*

Under Council management the Hunter Valley Visitor Centre has achieved Level 1 Accredited Visitor Information Centres (AVIC) accreditation and taken on a renewed presence for the local community and visitors. Figures show that the new operating model has been effective in reducing costs while maximising on

the visitor experience. The Centre expanded product offerings through the gift shop, implemented a well-supported Fee for Service, and continues to innovate in marketing and advertising initiatives. Visitation was 102,000 in 2014-15.

#### *Asian Cup*

Cessnock LGA hosted Japan's National Football team, Samurai Blue, during its pre-competition camp ahead of the 2015 AFC Asian Cup. The team's activities throughout the camp were reported extensively in the Japanese media, boosting the region's profile not only as a tourist destination but as a destination capable of delivering world-class training facilities. Cessnock LGA's profile on the international stage was further bolstered by a televised charity match between the Japanese and New Zealand teams.

#### *Resources for Regions*

A joint submission between Cessnock and Singleton Councils delivered \$16.7 million through the Resources for Regions Program. The Restart NSW funding deed will be used to upgrade the intersection at Hermitage and Broke Roads and improve the visitor experience through improved signage and rest areas.



## Delivery Program Performance

| Action   | 2014-15 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Support programs that promote visitation across the Local Government Area.<br>- Implement the Hunter Valley Visitor Information Centre Strategy and Action Plans.  | ✓              | ✓                       |
| Support programs that promote a diversification of visitor experiences.<br>- Continue the strategic review of the Richmond Vale Railway Museum Precinct.<br>- Commence implementation of relevant projects from the Destination Management Plan (within existing resources). | ✓              | ✓                       |
| Delivery Program Performance: ✓ Achieved 2   ✗ Not Yet Achieved 0   ⚠ At Risk 0  |                |                         |



## MEASURES:

| MEASURES                                | CONTEXT/BENCHMARK   | BASE                | 2014-15 RESULT | TARGET   |
|---|---|---------------------|----------------|----------|
| <b>Grants secured for the community</b> | These three measures are:<br>- the number of grants applied for; and<br>- the number and value of grants and sponsorships that were secured for the community with assistance by Council. | 94 Applied for 2012 | 41             | Maintain |
|   | This is a measure of Council's contribution to economic and community capacity building – by gaining funding for projects and services within the Local Government Area.                  | 46 Secured 2012     | 32             | Improve  |
|   | For the period January 2012 to February 2013, 46 grants and sponsorships totalling \$2,318,041.04 were secured, with Council assistance, for the community.                               | \$2.3m Secured 2012 | \$9.6m         | Improve  |

A large tree with purple and yellow flowers against a blue sky with clouds. The tree is the central focus, with its branches spreading out. The purple flowers are in the foreground, and the yellow flowers are in the background. The sky is a clear blue with some white clouds. The overall scene is bright and colorful.

*Delivering*  
**a sustainable  
and healthy  
environment**

COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME:

# A Sustainable & Healthy Environment

*This Desired Outcome focuses on the conservation and preservation of the natural environment whilst balancing the impact of development to ensure a sustainable and healthy community.*

*Council has undertaken the following principal activities during 2014-15 to achieve the objectives established in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.*



## Strategic Land Use Planning

- Assess planning proposals
- Development Contributions planning
- Heritage
- Planning policy
- Strategic land use planning



## Development Assessment



## Health

- Environmental pollution monitoring & enforcement
- On-site sewage management system inspections



## Recreation

- Aquatic facilities
- Recreation facilities and management
- Weed management
- Develop and review Plans of Management



## Natural Environmental Planning

- Biodiversity management



## Environment & Waste

- Kerbside waste and recycling service
- Waste management facility

# Protecting & Enhancing the Natural Environment & the Rural Character of the Area

## PLANNING AGREEMENTS

The following planning agreements have been entered into in accordance with Section 93F of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*:

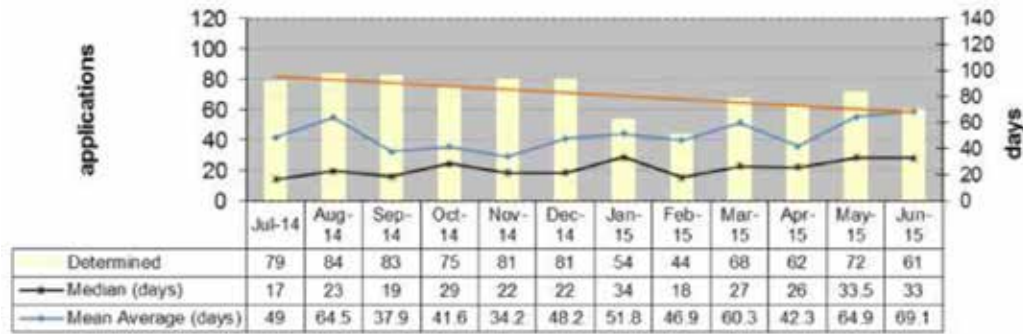
| Name                                    | Short Description   | Date Entered Into | Parties   | Land to which Agreement Applies   |
|---|---|-------------------|---|---|
| Anvil Creek                             | This agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Anvil Creek, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. | 20 August 2008    | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; and<br>Greta Estates Pty Limited (Greta) of 12 Woodside Avenue, Burwood, NSW, 2134.   | Lots 1-6 of DP 1036942 and Lots 263-264 of DP 755211  |
| Averys Village                          | This agreement provides a mechanism to provide environmental offset land to the area commonly known as Averys Village.  | 3 October 2013    | Minister for the Environment of Level 32 Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney, NSW, 2000;<br>Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325;<br>Hunter Land Holdings of 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, NSW, 2322;<br>Averys Rise Investor Pty Limited of Level 2, 77 Hunter Street, Newcastle, NSW, 2300;<br>Lindsay James George Elliott of 57 Averys Lanes, Buchanan, NSW, 2323;<br>Graham John Field of P.O. Box 30, Murgon, Qld, 4605;<br>Pamela Joy Field of P.O. Box 30, Murgon, Qld, 4605; and<br>HL Eco Trades Pty Ltd of 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, NSW, 2322. | Lot 20 DP 11823, Lot 12 DP 755231, Lot 13 DP 755231, Lot 5 DP 1082569, Lot 8 DP 10443 and Lot 119 752445 Averys Lane, Heddon Greta. |
| Bellbird Heights (Local Infrastructure) | This agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Bellbird, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979     | 26 June 2015      | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325;<br>Winton Partners Pty Limited of Level 2, 95 Pitt Street Sydney, NSW, 2000   | Lot 1 DP 1164334  |



| Name   | Short Description   | Date Entered Into | Parties  | Land to which Agreement Applies   |
|--|---|-------------------|--|---|
| Bellbird Heights (Environmental Land)        | This agreement provides a mechanism to provide environmental offset land to the area commonly known as Bellbird.  | 19 November 2014  | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325;<br>Winton Partners Pty Limited of Level 2, 95 Pitt Street Sydney, NSW, 2000  | Lot 1 DP 1164334  |
| Cessnock Civic                               | This agreement provides a mechanism to provide for the management of mine subsidence and environmental offset land within the area commonly known as Cessnock Civic.  | 21 August 2012    | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325;<br>Cessnock Land Management P/L of C/- Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000;<br>Vincent Street Holdings P/L of C/- 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, NSW, 2322;<br>and<br>Hardie Oceanic P/L of C/-Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000 | Lot 251 DP 606348,<br>Lot 1 DP 1036300, Lot 23 DP 845986 and Lot 22 DP 845986.  |
| Cliftleigh                                   | This agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Cliftleigh, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.  | 20 August 2008    | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; and<br>Winten (No 23) Pty Limited of Level 10, 61 Lavender Street, Milsons Point, NSW, 2061  | Lots 61 & 62 DP 1076974, Lot 23 DP 607899, Lots 61 & 62 DP 785115, Lot 3 DP 1039042, Lots 1&2 DP 1072111, Lot 22 DP 607899 and Lot 1 DP 1039042 Main Road, Cliftleigh.            |
| Heddon Greta                                 | This agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Heddon Greta, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 | 3 November 2010   | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; and<br>Kurri Autos Pty Limited of P.O. Box 61 Kurri Kurri, NSW, 2327   | Part Lot 404 of DP 1127085 and Part Lot 102 of DP 1112059 off Main Road, Young and Bowden Streets, Errol Crescent, Madeline and Ashley Close and Forbes Crescent at Heddon Greta. |
| Rose Hill                                    | This agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Millfield, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979    | 20 October 2014   | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325;<br>Fame Cove Three Pty Limited of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000   | Lot 1 DP 1197775  |
| West & Wyndham Street (Local Infrastructure) | This agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Greta, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979        | 5 November 2014   | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325;<br>Hardie Greta Pty Limited of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000.   | Lot 2 DP 808354 and Lot 2 DP 1151267  |

## DEVELOPMENT

During 2014-15 Council determined 844 development applications (including Section 96).



### Delivery Program Performance

| Action  | 2014-15 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Prepare a City Wide Development Strategy.<br>- Commence review of the City Wide Settlement Strategy.  | ✓              | ✓                       |
| Commence implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy.<br>- Continue implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy.  | ✓              | ✓                       |
| Complete further Flood Studies and Risk Management Plans for major catchments in the Local Government Area.<br>- Continue Lower Black Creek (North) Flood Study.<br>- Commence implementation of priority floodplain risk management plan projects (subject to grant funding).<br>- Seek funding for implementation of priority projects the Cessnock Flood Risk Management Plan. | ✓              | ✓                       |
| Commence implementation of Council's Trunk Stormwater Drainage Strategy.<br>- Complete Trunk Stormwater Drainage Strategy.<br>- Complete the Trunk Stormwater Drainage Needs Analysis component of the City Wide Infrastructure Strategy.   | ✗              | ⚠                       |
| Carry out regulatory and education programs to protect and enhance the natural environment.   | ✓              | ✓                       |
| Continue to efficiently and effectively process development applications and respond to planning-related enquiries.<br>- Implement on-line applications relating to development assessment.<br>- Progress the integration and implementation of the on-line application module for development assessment.  | ✗<br>✓         | ⚠                       |
| Prepare a comprehensive Carbon Management Strategy and commence implementation.<br>- Complete the development of a Carbon Management Strategy.  | ✓              | ✓                       |
| Establish Council's position in relation to climate change adaptation and mitigation and implement priority actions.<br>- Identify priority projects from the Carbon Management Strategy.<br>- Draft a Climate Change Policy.   | ✓              | ✓                       |
| Commence implementation of the Vineyard Vision.<br>- Commence implementation of a Cessnock Local Government Area Signage Strategy.  | ✓              | ✓                       |
| Delivery Program Performance: ✓ Achieved 7 ✗ Not Yet Achieved 0 ⚠ At Risk 2   |                |                         |

## Better Utilisation of Existing Open Space

### RECREATION PLANNING

During 2014-15 Council commenced the Recreation Needs Analysis to effectively plan for recreational facilities over the next 20 years and beyond. The analysis involved consultation with local sporting groups, sporting clubs, school students and the general public to identify the opportunities and constraints facing Cessnock City Council in the provision of recreational facilities. Council also commenced the preparation of the Cessnock Cycling Strategy to plan for the provision of cycleways throughout Cessnock local government area and work towards making cycling irresistible. Both the Recreation Needs Analysis and Cycling Strategy are due to be completed by the end of 2015. While on the topic of cycling, Council also assisted in the preparation of the Richmond Vale Rail Trail Feasibility Study. The proposed cycleway would utilise disused rail corridor extending from Kurri Kurri to Hexham and would traverse the local government

areas of Lake Macquarie, Newcastle and Cessnock. The feasibility study will inform the final design of the cycleway.

Looking ahead to 2015-16, Council is conducting a feasibility study for the Cessnock Aquatic Centre. The feasibility study will build on the recommendations of the Aquatics Needs Analysis completed in 2014. The study will include preliminary designs and layout, and provide Council with the cost and resources required to construct and operate a new aquatic centre. Council will also be completing the remaining Generic Plans of Management for community land and revising its Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan (2009). The Plans of Management will guide the development and use of existing community land, while the Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan will be integrated with Council's planning framework and guide the future provision and management of recreational facilities.



## RECREATION FACILITIES

Council maintains in the vicinity of 555 hectares of open space throughout the LGA, in the form of formal gardens and civic spaces, playgrounds, outdoor sports facilities, parkland and drainage reserves.

The majority of open space areas are maintained on a 4-6 week maintenance schedule depending on the time of year and climatic conditions. Many 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 public swimming pools at Branxton, Cessnock and Kurri Kurri. There are six major aquatics based clubs in the area, predominantly utilising Cessnock Pool. The Kurri Kurri Aquatic & Fitness Centre provides a year round indoor aquatic and gym facility which has proven to be highly popular with the average attendance at the facility for the past 5 years being 122,125 per annum. The types of visits to the centre included aqua and dry land fitness, squad swimming, aquatic education, recreational swimming and birthday parties.

Major events and projects at Council's recreation facilities in 2014-2015 included hosting the Japanese football team for a pre-Asian Cup training camp, Cancer Council Relay for Life, Cinema Under the Stars as well as capital improvements at Cessnock Sportsground, Greta

Central Oval Skate Park, Slacks Park Wollombi public amenities and picnic shelter replacement, Cessnock CBD Masterplan Garden renewals, War Memorial upgrades across the LGA and planning approval for the replacement of the amenities building at Birrale Senior Park.

## CEMETERIES

Council has care, control and management of Aberdare, Branxton, Cessnock, Ellalong, Glenmore, Greta, Kurri Kurri, Millfield, Rothbury and Wollombi general cemeteries, and Gordon Williams Memorial Lawn Cemetery at Aberdare and Kurri Kurri Lawn Cemetery.

Council is working closely with Cemetery Industry Professionals to continuously improve Cemetery operations. Council has developed a set of Guidelines for external contractors working with in Cessnock Council Cemeteries and have been conducting random audits to ensure compliance with guidelines and Australian Standards.

Cessnock City Council has been identified as an industry leader in Cemetery Operations with several organization's benchmarking against Councils Procedures and continuous improvement principals.

Future development works are planned for Gordon Williams Memorial Park and Kurri Cemetery which will ensure Cessnock City Council continues to provide for the future needs of the community.

## Delivery Program Performance

| Action   | 2014-15 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Complete the Recreation Needs Analysis and review the Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan 2009-2014.<br>- Commence the Open Space Needs Analysis.<br>- Commence the review of the Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan. |                |                         |
| Develop new Plans of Management.<br>- Commence the development of the remaining generic community land Plans of Management.  |                |                         |
| Finalise implementation of the Recreation & Open Space Recreation Strategic Plan 2009-2014.  |                |                         |
| Continue to implement the adopted Masterplans for Council's recreation and community facilities.   |                |                         |
| Delivery Program Performance:  Achieved 4  Not Yet Achieved 0  At Risk 0   |                |                         |

# Better Waste Management & Recycling

## WASTE MANAGEMENT

Council adopted a new Cessnock Waste Management Strategy in 2014.

As part of the comprehensive review Council prioritised investigations toward reducing the green waste stream (approximately 20% of total) and the organic waste stream (approximately 20% of total) from entering our landfill. The Strategy aims to deliver the community a Waste Strategy that:

- is appropriate for our community
- informs and educates our community
- is financially robust
- meets legislative requirements
- delivers on commitments to other strategies and plans.

Considerable knowledge and data has been collected by Council in relation to the existing waste stream and areas that have the potential to make significant contribution to reducing the volume of waste to landfill, including:

- Kerbside audit of both waste and recycling bins






- Comprehensive analysis of audit data
- Community survey relating to service satisfaction and focus
- Input into the specification for the next kerbside recycling contract
- Secured approval for landfill expansion
- Inclusion of transfer facility in expansion proposal
- Arrangements for landfill gas management
- Numerous “free” drop off facilities on site.

The Strategy encompasses objectives and actions for issues that extend beyond kerbside and business-generated waste management, to include waste generation, education and illegal waste flows. The Strategy will provide a sustainable and least cost waste service to the people of Cessnock, whilst complying with environmental, legislative and safety obligations as well as encouraging waste minimisation.

The Cessnock Waste Management Strategy can be viewed at [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au)



## Delivery Program Performance

| Action  | 2014-15 Result  | Delivery Program Result   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Commence implementation of the priority projects from the revised Waste Management Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue stage 1 construction of Waste Management &amp; Reuse Centre extension project.</li> <li>- Commence implementation of the priority projects from the revised Waste Management Strategy.</li> <li>- Implement the priority actions of the EPA - Waste Less Recycle More Program.</li> </ul> |  |  |
| Delivery Program Performance:  Achieved 1  Not Yet Achieved 0  At Risk 0   |   |   |

## MEASURES:

| MEASURES  | CONTEXT/BENCHMARK   | BASE                    | 2014-15 RESULT | TARGET          |
|---|---|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Development Application Processing Times</b>         | This measure is the mean and the median number of days to process Development Applications (for all DAs which have been determined).  | 75 Mean<br>2011-12      | 48.16<br>Mean  | Maintain        |
|   | This data is sourced from the Local Development Performance Monitoring Report.  | 31<br>Median<br>2011-12 | 26<br>Median   | Maintain        |
| <b>Environmental health and protection inspections</b>  | <p>This measure is the number of on-site sewage management inspections carried out in line with Council's On-Site Sewage Management System Strategy.</p> <p>This is a measure of Council's contribution to the health of the local environment.</p> <p>This measure was 1,193 in 2011-12.</p> | 1,193<br>2011-12        | 1,481          | >900            |
| <b>Completion of Capital Works Program - Recreation</b> | This measure is the number of completed projects divided by the total number of projects (in the CFR, CBR, CFP, CBC, and CFC sections) of the adopted Recreation & Buildings Capital Works Program.   | N/A                     | 89%            | >85%            |
| <b>Waste &amp; Recycling</b>                            | <p>This is a measure of the number of tonnes recycled via the kerbside recycling service.</p> <p>The kerbside recycling service was provided to 18,881 properties in 2011-12.</p> <p>This measure is sourced from Hunter Resource Recovery.</p>   | 4,447t<br>2011-12       | 4,868t         | >4,500t<br>p.a. |
| <b>Waste &amp; Recycling</b>                            | <p>This is a measure of the number of domestic waste collection services provided by Council.</p> <p>In 2011-12 there were 23,781 rateable properties and approximately 17,500t of domestic waste (out of a total of 38,892t) was disposed of at Council's landfill site.</p>                 | 18,881<br>2011-12       | 20,224         | Increase        |



*Delivering  
accessible  
infrastructure,  
services and  
facilities*

COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME:

# Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities

*This Desired Outcome identifies the local, state and federal infrastructure, services and facilities needed to serve the current and future community of Cessnock while ensuring there is adequate access to these facilities and services.*

*Council has undertaken the following principal activities during 2014-15 to achieve the objectives established in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.*



### Strategic Asset Planning

- Capital Works Program development
- Community Buildings
- Flooding & Drainage
- Public transport stops
- Recreation Facilities
- Roads and Bridges



### Design Delivery

- Contract management
- Project management



### Works Delivery

- Construction of new infrastructure
- Infrastructure renewal
- Road, footpath & drainage maintenance



### Depot & Support Services

- Building Maintenance
- Plant & Fleet
- Procurement



### Council Assets

- Cessnock Airport
- Cemeteries



# Better Transport Links

## CESSNOCK AIRPORT

In January 2014 Council adopted the Cessnock Airport Strategic Plan to ensure that the airport is well-planned and well-managed, focuses on economic development and is sensitive to the local environment.

The Strategic Plan identified Cessnock Airport as being uniquely placed to be *"the gateway to the Hunter Valley"* and, in order to realise this vision, Council is focused on three objectives for the aerodrome.

- To be a safe and complying facility that minimises negative impacts on residential amenity;
- To promote economic and tourism development across the local government area; and
- To provide a sustainable revenue stream to Council.

To follow-up the 2014 registration of the airport by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority; during 2014-15 work commenced on a preparation of a masterplan to guide the future development of the facility.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Council is an active member of the Lower Hunter Transport Group consisting of representatives from Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Newcastle and Port Stephens Councils. This group looks at public transport issues from a regional perspective.



The Hunter Regional Transport Plan was adopted in 2014. The Plan outlines specific actions to address the unique challenges of the Hunter area.

The following actions have been identified for the LGA:

- Improve opportunities for walking and cycling
- Improve public transport services
- Manage road capacity and safety.

If you would like more information please visit [www.transport.nsw.gov.au](http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au)

## Delivery Program Performance

| Action   | 2014-15 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Contribute to the Transport for NSW's Hunter Regional Transport Masterplan.  | ✔              | ✔                       |
| Advocate for increased transport funding.  | ✔              | ✔                       |
| Complete all components of the City Wide Infrastructure Strategy.<br>- Complete the Transport & Land Use Planning Needs Analysis component of the City Wide Infrastructure Strategy. | ✘              | ⚠                       |
| Commence implementation of priority projects from the City Wide Infrastructure Strategy.   | ✔              | ✔                       |
| Commence implementation of the Cessnock Airport Strategic Plan.<br>- Commence implementation of the priority projects from the Airport Strategic Plan.                               | ✔              | ✔                       |
| Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 4   ✘ Not Yet Achieved 0   ⚠ At Risk 1  |                |                         |

## Improving the Road Network

### ROADS

The Cessnock Local Government Area contains, 1157 kilometres of road network, 74 bridges, 59 major culverts and 120 kilometres of storm water drainage which are under Council's care and control.

Around two-thirds of roads in the LGA are sealed while one-third are unsealed.

The road maintenance and construction schedules can be viewed on Council's website and are updated regularly.

If you wish to report a maintenance requirement, please contact Customer Service on 4993 4100.

There are 172 Major Waterway Structures in our LGA, which includes 34 concrete / composite bridges, 39 timber bridges, 62 major concrete culverts and 37 pedestrian bridges. Some bridges have load limits so please be aware of this when travelling with heavy loads.

### PUBLIC WORKS

The condition of the infrastructure under Council's control, an estimate of the expenditure to bring it up to a satisfactory standard and the maintenance expenditure

incurred during 2014-15 is included in Special Schedule 7 of Council's financial reports.

The financial reports, together with the auditor's reports, form part of this report and can be viewed at the Administrative Offices, 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock or online at [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au). The reports cover the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

### WORK 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 works during 2014-15:

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Private Works on Public Land | NIL |
| Public Works on Private Land | NIL |

### CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM

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.

| PROGRAM 2014-15                | ADOPTED BUDGET      | REVISED BUDGET      | ACTUAL              |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMS</b>  |                     |                     |                     |
| Local Road Construction        | \$185,000           | \$230,813           | \$168,941           |
| Local Road Renewal             | \$3,722,400         | \$3,764,775         | \$3,233,563         |
| Vineyard Roads Construction    | \$8,000,000         | \$11,206,000        | \$8,650,297         |
| Pathways Construction          | \$150,000           | \$264,500           | \$307,497           |
| Bridge Construction            | \$635,000           | \$1,976,078         | \$1,729,104         |
| Drainage Construction          | \$580,000           | \$1,126,500         | \$287,392           |
| Traffic Facilities             | \$60,000            | \$76,000            | \$68,605            |
| Public Transport Facilities    | -                   | \$197,700           | \$10,089            |
| <b>SUB-TOTAL</b>               | <b>\$13,332,400</b> | <b>\$18,842,366</b> | <b>\$14,455,488</b> |
| <b>SPECIAL RATE</b>            |                     |                     |                     |
| Local & Regional Roads Program | \$2,161,994         | \$2,161,994         | \$2,161,994         |
| <b>SUB-TOTAL</b>               | <b>\$2,161,994</b>  | <b>\$2,161,994</b>  | <b>\$2,161,994</b>  |



| PROGRAM 2014-15                    | ADOPTED BUDGET      | REVISED BUDGET      | ACTUAL              |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>RECREATION &amp; PARKS</b>      |                     |                     |                     |
| Recreation Facilities Construction | \$135,000           | \$155,039           | \$137,730           |
| Recreation Facilities Renewal      | \$298,000           | \$338,530           | \$332,134           |
| Pools Facilities Renewal           | \$100,000           | \$119,000           | \$118,942           |
| Cemeteries Facilities Construction | \$25,000            | \$41,200            | \$42,178            |
| SUB-TOTAL                          | <b>\$558,000</b>    | <b>\$653,769</b>    | <b>\$630,984</b>    |
| <b>BUILDINGS</b>                   |                     |                     |                     |
| Recreation Buildings Construction  | \$250,000           | \$404,792           | \$268,952           |
| Recreation Buildings Renewal       | \$120,000           | \$115,000           | \$105,798           |
| Community Buildings Construction   | \$25,000            | \$25,000            | \$21,914            |
| Community Buildings Renewal        | \$133,500           | \$166,527           | \$155,190           |
| SUB-TOTAL                          | <b>\$528,500</b>    | <b>\$711,319</b>    | <b>\$551,854</b>    |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                       | <b>\$16,580,894</b> | <b>\$22,369,448</b> | <b>\$17,800,320</b> |

#### FUTURE FUNDING FOR COUNCIL'S ROADS

In June 2014 the Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) announced that Cessnock City Council was successful in its Special Rate Variation application for 2014-15.

The special rate variation that was approved allows for 9.55% to remain permanently in the rate base, comprising two components: the rate peg of 2.30% that was available to all NSW councils and an increase of 7.25% for road infrastructure renewal. This increase will replace a 6.5% special variation that was already in place.

The impact on ratepayers was not significant, with a net increase in rates of 3.5 per cent or approximately \$39 per annum for the average residential ratepayer. (although the impact on individual ratepayers will varied depending on the land value and rating classification of their property).

The IPART noted in its determination that while the special variation will improve Council's operating position over the next ten years, it will not secure the Council's financial sustainability.

The ability of Council to deliver the desired level of service to the community, as well as improvements in its infrastructure such as roads, remains a challenge for Cessnock and many other local government areas.

This special rate variation is only one of a number of projects that Council is proposing in order to be financially sustainable and provide the levels of service and infrastructure agreed with the community.

#### Delivery Program Performance

| Action  | 2014-15 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Improve the corporate asset management system.<br>- Complete Asset Management Implementation Project Round 2.   |                |                         |
| Advocate for road funding to better manage traffic impacts on the local road network.   |                |                         |
| Deliver prioritised capital works programs in line with adopted asset management plans.   |                |                         |
| Improve support services and facilities to assist works delivery.<br>- Continue implementation of other (next priority) initiatives from the Procurement Review.<br>- Commence development of a masterplan for the Works Depot. |                |                         |
| Adopt the City Wide Section 94 Contributions Plan.<br>- Continue preparation of the City Wide Section 94 Contributions Plan.  |                |                         |

Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 4 Not Yet Achieved 0 At Risk 1






## Improving Access to Health Services Locally

### IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES LOCALLY

During the year Council made representations to Hunter New England Health Service to maintain and upgrade health service levels in the local government area.

| RATIO OF GPs TO POPULATION BENCHMARKS | 2014    |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Cessnock Local Government Area        | 1:1,597 |
| Australia                             | 1:1,400 |

### Delivery Program Performance

| Action   | 2014-15 Result  | Delivery Program Result   |
|--|---|---|
| Advocate for health services on behalf of the community.<br>- Finalise the development of a Health Strategic Plan for the Cessnock Local Government Area.  |  |  |
| Delivery Program Performance:  Achieved 0  Not Yet Achieved 0  At Risk 1 |   |   |



### MEASURES:

| MEASURES  | CONTEXT/BENCHMARK   | BASE  | 2014-15 RESULT     | TARGET |
|---|---|-------|--------------------|--------|
| <b>Asset Management Maturity</b>                                      | This measure is the qualitative assessment of Council's Asset Management maturity.<br><br>The measure is assessed on a scale of basic, core and advanced.   | Basic | Basic<br>June 2015 | Core   |
| <b>Completion capital works program – roads, bridges and drainage</b> | This measure is the number of completed projects divided by the total number of projects (in the <u>CRL</u> , <u>CRR</u> , <u>CRV</u> , <u>CBS</u> , <u>CDR</u> , <u>RRL</u> and <u>RRR</u> sections) of the adopted Roads, Bridges & Drainage Capital Works Program. | N/A   | 87%                | >85%   |



*Delivering*  
**civic leadership  
and effective  
governance**

COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME:

## Civic leadership and effective governance

*This Desired Outcome focuses on the need for strong civic leadership and effective governance with an engaged community actively participating in decision making processes affecting their future.*

*Council has undertaken the following principal activities during 2014-15 to achieve the objectives established in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.*



### Community Engagement

- Communications
- Customer Service



### Governance

- Corporate Administration
- Mayor & Councillors secretariat
- Internal Audit
- Integrated Planning
- Policies
- Property



### Finance

- Rates
- Accounting
- Risk and Insurance



### Information

- Information Systems
- Corporate Records
- Geographic Information Systems

## Fostering & Supporting Community Leadership

### COUNCILLOR PAYMENTS AND EXPENSES

Council has in place a Councillors' Expenses & Facilities Policy that governs the expenses paid and facilities provided to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors in the discharge of their civic duties. The Councillors' Expenses & Facilities Policy is published as a separate document and can be viewed at the Administrative Offices, 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock or online at [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au).

In 2014-15 the cost of expenses incurred by and facilities provided to Councillors was \$39,185. This includes domestic travel expenses such as accommodation and registration fees for seminars and conferences, as well as office administration such as telephones, faxes, postage, meals and refreshments.



Annual fees were paid to the Mayor and Councillors as required by the Local Government Act 1993 and in accordance with the determination of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.

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.

Mayoral and Councillor fees for the year 2014-15 were fixed within the range of fees established by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. The Mayoral fee was fixed at \$39,110 and the Councillor fee at \$17,930.

In 2014-15 there were no overseas visits by elected Councillors.

| NATURE OF EXPENSES  | AMOUNT          |
|---|-----------------|
| Mayoral Fees  | \$39,110        |
| Councillor Fees   | \$233,090       |
| BREAKDOWN OF MAYORAL AND COUNCILLORS' EXPENSES  |                 |
| NATURE OF EXPENSES  | AMOUNT          |
| Provision of dedicated office equipment, including laptop computers, mobile phones, telephone, fax and installation of internet access. | NIL             |
| Telephone calls, including mobiles, landlines, fax and internet services  | \$14,158        |
| Spouse / Partner Accompanying Person  | NIL             |
| Conferences and Seminars  | \$17,904        |
| Training and Skill Development  | NIL             |
| Interstate Travel   | \$1,029         |
| Overseas Travel   | NIL             |
| Meetings - Travel   | \$6,094         |
| Care and Other Related Expenses   | NIL             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>\$39,185</b> |

### Delivery Program Performance

| Action  | 2014-15 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Establish a professional development program for Councillors.<br>- Provide professional development for Councillors.  | ✔              | ✔                       |
| Explore opportunities within the Council workforce for traineeships, apprenticeships and work experience programs.<br>- Implement the priority actions from the Workforce Plan. | ✔              | ✔                       |
| Recognise the work of community leaders.<br>- Continue to support the Youth Council.  | ✔              | ✔                       |

Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 3 ❌ Not Yet Achieved 0 ⚠ At Risk 0

# Encouraging More Community Participation in Decision Making

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Cessnock City Council is a strong advocate of community consultation and uses this process to ensure it is meeting the community's needs and establishing the type of future the residents of Cessnock desire.

Some of the ways Council invites public participation and comment include:

Residents are welcome to contact Council in person, by telephone, in writing or via social media with their views or suggestions for improving the local government area.

Council seeks public comment on important matters. This may be by way of public meetings, public exhibitions or more formalised public hearings.

Details of all public meetings and exhibitions are published in local newspapers.

The elected Council considers all policy matters at Council meetings which are open to the public.

Council's Code of Meeting Practice makes provision for members of the public to address Council meetings and prescribes the framework for such participation.

There are also avenues for members of the public to personally participate in the policy development functions of the Council.

## COUNCIL MEETINGS

The elected representatives comprise the governing body of the Council. The role of the elected Council is

to set the strategic direction and determine policies of Council. The decisions of the Council are formalised through the meeting process.

Council has regular meetings in the Council Chambers on the first and third Wednesday of each month commencing at 6.30pm, with the exception that no meetings are held on the last meeting scheduled for December and the first meeting scheduled for January each year.

Council has a Code of Meeting Practice which provides comprehensive details of meeting procedure. A copy of the Code is available on request at Council's Administration Building or online at [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au).









The General Manager is responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the Council organisation and for ensuring the implementation of decisions of the Council.

## YOUTH COUNCIL

The committee includes a number of young people aged 12 to 24 years who reside in our Local Government Area. They meet on a regular basis to discuss topics of interest or concern to them as well as matters of social concern.

Information gathered and the ideas generated from Youth Council meetings are used by Council to develop plans and strategies for the future. It also enables Council to advocate to agencies and levels of Government on behalf of the young people of our communities.

## Delivery Program Performance

| Action  | 2014-15 Result   | Delivery Program Result   |
|---|--|---|
| Commence implementation of priority projects from the Communications & Engagement Strategy.<br>- Finalise design and implement new Council website.   |   |  |
| Improve Council's use of technology to inform and engage the community.<br>- Implement on-line customer requests.<br>- Commence implementation of smart phone applications to improve Council processes.  | <br> |  |
| Delivery Program Performance:  Achieved 1  Not Yet Achieved 0  At Risk 1 |  |   |



# Making Council More Responsive to the Community

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

Each year Council receives thousands of requests for information and/or assistance via correspondence, counter enquiries and telephone calls. This information is recorded as a 'request' within Council's Customer Request Management (CRM) system and forwarded to an appropriate Council officer to action.

During 2014-15 Council received a total of 13,207 requests from community members, businesses and external government agencies.

A month by month breakdown of the number of enquiries has been provided below.

| MONTHLY CRM ACTIVITY 2014-15 | NO. OF REQUESTS RECEIVED |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| July                         | 1276                     |
| August                       | 1362                     |
| September                    | 1433                     |
| October                      | 1090                     |
| November                     | 968                      |
| December                     | 936                      |
| January                      | 1020                     |
| February                     | 1171                     |
| March                        | 1142                     |
| April                        | 636                      |
| May                          | 1183                     |
| June                         | 990                      |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                 | <b>13,207</b>            |

In addition, countless general enquiries and questions are dealt with straight away by Council staff and are not recorded within the CRM system (or included in the figures).

## PRIVACY & PERSONAL INFORMATION

Council has adopted a Privacy Management Plan to meet its legislative requirements under the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, to confirm Council's commitment to privacy protection, and to outline Council's practice for dealing with privacy and personal information in accordance with the information protection principles.

Council also uses the Privacy Management Plan to comply with the Health Privacy Principles as set out in the Health Records and Information Privacy Act. During the 2014-15 period Council received Nil privacy review applications.

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE (FSI)

In July 2014, Council endorsed a Financial Sustainability Initiative (FSI) to ensure that, over the long-term, Council has sufficient funds to provide the levels of service and infrastructure agreed with our community.

The FSI incorporates a number of projects that aim to reduce costs, increase revenues and/or improve value-for-money. FSI Projects include:

- Service Review
- Productivity improvements & cost savings project
- Sponsorship & subsidies review
- Strategic property review
- Fees & charges review
- Assets, depreciation & capital commitments review
- Developer contributions review
- Business opportunities framework
- Special rate variation strategy.

## PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES

Council adopted a Public Interest Disclosure Act 1994: Internal Reporting Policy 2011 on 19 October 2011.

Cessnock City Council has met its obligations in relation to staff awareness of its Public Interest Disclosures Internal Policy by delivering organisation wide training to all staff and Councillors and ensuring this forms part of the standard staff induction process.

During the 2014-15 period Council received NIL public interest disclosures.

## ACCESSING COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

Members of the public are entitled to have access to Council information and records under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (the GIPA Act) which, from 1 July 2010, replaced the Freedom of Information Act 1989 and Section 12 of the Local Government Act 1993.

The GIPA Act introduces a new scheme for providing public access to government information, and focuses on the legislative requirement in favour of disclosure of the information through consideration of the public's best interest.

Open access information (or mandatory release information) must be published on Council's website, unless to do so would impose unreasonable additional costs. It can also be made available in any other way. At least one of the ways in which Council makes the open access information publicly available must be free of charge.

The GIPA Act establishes four ways to access information:

1. Open Access (e.g. obligatory publication of information on the web)
2. Proactive release (e.g. certain publications and application tracking)
3. Informal release (e.g. documents under the repealed Section 12 of Local Government Act)
4. Formal Access (e.g. previously Freedom of Information application)

Open access information includes the following:

- a publication guide
- policy documents
- a disclosure log of access applications
- a register of Council contracts

Information can generally be made available free of charge although you may have to pay reasonable

photocopying charges if you want your own copy. If you have a simple request that can be satisfied by reference to a single file or entry in a register Council can usually respond on the spot, and at no charge. However, in the case of a more complex request or access to third party information, you may be requested to complete a Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 application form to allow Council to process your request.



## AMENDING COUNCIL RECORDS

Members of the public interested in obtaining access to information or who wish to seek an amendment to the Council's records concerning their personal affairs, should contact Council's Public Information Officer.

If you are unhappy with the accuracy or use of your personal information held by Council you can ask that the information be amended. This can be done by writing to the Public Information Officer outlining the reasons for your request.

Further information regarding Accessing Council Information can be found in Council's Access to Information Policy or by contacting Council's Public Information Officer, Cessnock City Council, P.O. Box 152, Cessnock, 2325.

## GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) REGULATION 2009

Council has reviewed its program for the release of government information in accordance with section 7. Details of requests for information received by Council for the year ending 30 June, 2015 are as follows:

*Clause 7A: Details of the review carried out by the agency under section 7 (3) of the Act during the reporting year and the details of any information made publicly available by the agency as a result of the review.*

|      | Reviews carried out by the agency | Information made publicly available by the agency |
|------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 7(a) | 1                                 | 1   |

*Clause 7B: The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year (including withdrawn applications but not including invalid applications)*

|      | Total number of applications received |
|------|---------------------------------------|
| 7(b) | 53                                    |

*Clause 7C: The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year that the agency refused either wholly or partly, because the application was for the disclosure of information referred to in Schedule 1 to the Act (information for which there is conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure)*

| Number of Applications Refused | Wholly | Partly | Total |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|
|                                | 0      | 0      | 0     |
| % of Total                     | 0%     | 0%     |       |

### Schedule 2 Statistical information about access applications to be included in annual report

| Table A: Number of applications by type of application and outcome* | Access granted in full | Access granted in part | Access refused in full | Information not held | Information already available | Refuse to deal with application | Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held | Application withdrawn | Total | % of Total |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-------|------------|
| Media   | 0                      | 0                      | 0                      | 0                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 0     | 0%         |
| Members of Parliament   | 0                      | 0                      | 0                      | 0                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 0     | 0%         |
| Private sector business   | 17                     | 0                      | 0                      | 0                    | 1                             | 0                               | 0  | 5                     | 23    | 43%        |
| Not for profit organisations or community groups                    | 0                      | 0                      | 0                      | 0                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 0     | 0%         |
| Members of the public (application by legal representative)         | 1                      | 0                      | 0                      | 0                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 1     | 2%         |
| Members of the public (other)                                       | 20                     | 3                      | 1                      | 0                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 5                     | 29    | 55%        |
| Total   | 38                     | 3                      | 1                      | 0                    | 1                             | 0                               | 0  | 10                    | 53    |            |
| % of Total  | 72%                    | 6%                     | 2%                     | 0%                   | 2%                            | 0%                              | 0%   | 19%                   |       |            |

\* More than one decision can be made in respect of a particular access application. If so, recording must be made in relation to each such decision. This also applies to Table B.

| Table B: Number of applications by type of application and outcome*                    | Access granted in full | Access granted in part | Access refused in full | Information not held | Information already available | Refuse to deal with application | Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held | Application withdrawn | Total     | % of Total |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Personal information applications*   | 0                      | 0                      | 0                      | 0                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 0         | 0%         |
| Access applications (other than personal information applications)                     | 38                     | 3                      | 1                      | 0                    | 1                             | 0                               | 0  | 10                    | 53        | 100%       |
| Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other | 0                      | 0                      | 0                      | 0                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 0         | 0          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>38</b>              | <b>3</b>               | <b>1</b>               | <b>0</b>             | <b>1</b>                      | <b>0</b>                        | <b>0</b>   | <b>10</b>             | <b>53</b> |            |
| % of Total   | 72%                    | 6%                     | 2%                     | 0%                   | 2%                            | 0%                              | 0%   | 19%                   |           |            |

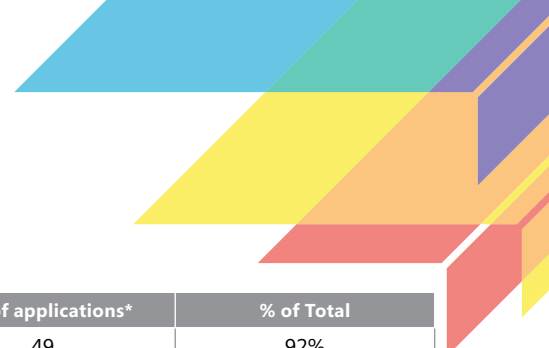
\* A personal information application is an access application for personal information (as defined in clause 4 of Schedule 4 to the Act) about the applicant being an individual

| Table C: Invalid applications<br>Reason for invalidity                        | No. of applications | % of Total |
|---|---------------------|------------|
| Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)  | 0                   | 0%         |
| Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act) | 0                   | 0%         |
| Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)              | 0                   | 0%         |
| Total number of invalid applications received                                 | 0                   | 0%         |
| Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications              | 0                   | 0%         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>0</b>            |            |

| Table D: Conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure: matters listed in Schedule 1 to Act | No. of times consideration used* | % of Total |
|---|----------------------------------|------------|
| Overriding secrecy laws   | 0                                | 0%         |
| Cabinet information   | 0                                | 0%         |
| Executive Council information   | 0                                | 0%         |
| Contempt  | 0                                | 0%         |
| Legal professional privilege  | 0                                | 0%         |
| Excluded information  | 0                                | 0%         |
| Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety   | 0                                | 0%         |
| Transport safety  | 0                                | 0%         |
| Adoption  | 0                                | 0%         |
| Care and protection of children   | 0                                | 0%         |
| Ministerial code of conduct   | 0                                | 0%         |
| Aboriginal and environmental heritage   | 0                                | 0%         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>0</b>                         |            |

\* More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application). This also applies in relation to Table E

| Table E: Other public interest considerations against disclosure: matters listed in table to section 14 of Act | No. of times consideration used* | % of Total |
|--|----------------------------------|------------|
| Responsible and effective government   | 0                                | 0%         |
| Law enforcement and security   | 0                                | 0%         |
| Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice  | 0                                | 0%         |
| Business interests of agencies and other persons   | 0                                | 0%         |
| Environment, culture, economy and general matters  | 0                                | 0%         |
| Secrecy provisions   | 0                                | 0%         |
| Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation   | 0                                | 0%         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0</b>                         |            |



| Table F: Timeliness  | No. of applications* | % of Total |  |  |
|--|----------------------|------------|--|--|
| Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions) | 49                   | 92%        |  |  |
| Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)                  | 4                    | 8%         |  |  |
| Not decided within time (deemed refusal)                             | 0                    | 0%         |  |  |
| Total  | 53                   |            |  |  |

| Table G: Number of applications reviewed under Part 5 of the Act (by type of review and outcome) | Decision varied | Decision upheld | Total | % of Total |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-------|------------|
| Internal review  | 0               | 1               | 1     | 100%       |
| Review by Information Commissioner   | 0               | 0               | 0     | 0%         |
| Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act                                 | 0               | 0               | 0     | 0%         |
| Review by NCAT   | 0               | 0               | 0     | 0%         |
| Total  | 0               | 1               | 1     |            |
| % of Total   | 0%              | 100%            |       |            |

| Table H: Applications for review under Part 5 of the Act (by type of applicant)                                   | No. of applications for review | % of Total |  |
|---|--------------------------------|------------|--|
| Applications by access applicants   | 0                              | 0%         |  |
| Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act) | 0                              | 0%         |  |
| Total   | 0                              |            |  |

| Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies | No. of applications transferred | % of Total |  |
|---|---------------------------------|------------|--|
| Agency - Initiated Transfers                        | 0                               | 0%         |  |
| Applicant - Initiated Transfers                     | 0                               | 0%         |  |
| Total   | 0                               |            |  |

## HUMAN RESOURCES

Cessnock City Council's future success depends upon the skills, energy and commitment of its people. Council strives to attract, develop and retain employees of the highest quality and provide a working environment that will enable employees to maximise their contribution to the achievement of Council's strategic goals.

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

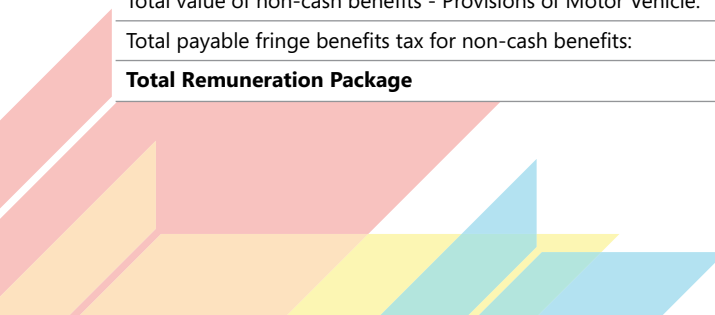
During 2014-15 Financial Year, Cessnock City Council

introduced a revised EEO, Bullying and Harassment Policy and associated complaints handling form. All Cessnock City Council employees received training on the new policy conducted by the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board in early 2015. Subsequently, expressions of interest were sought from interested Council employees to be Workplace Contact Officers and during the 2015-16 financial year, those employees will receive contact officer training. The conclusion of this project will involve updating Council's EEO Management Plan and it is anticipated this will occur prior to December 2015.

## SENIOR STAFF

Statement of the total amount paid to each senior staff member employed during 2014-15.

|  | General Manager             | Directors                   |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|  | <i>01/07/14 to 30/06/15</i> | <i>01/07/14 to 30/06/15</i> |
| Total Value of Salary Component of Package:  | \$212,439.65                | \$561,011.71                |
| Total amount of any bonus payments, performance or other payments that do not form part of salary: | Nil                         | Nil                         |
| Total payable superannuation (salary sacrifice and employers contribution):                        | \$42,673.14                 | \$65,581.94                 |
| Total value of non-cash benefits - Provisions of Motor Vehicle:                                    | \$10,000.00                 | \$30,000.00                 |
| Total payable fringe benefits tax for non-cash benefits:   | \$11,190.00                 | \$34,006.00                 |
| <b>Total Remuneration Package</b>  | <b>\$276,302.79</b>         | <b>\$690,599.65</b>         |



## CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL AUDIT COMMITTEE

Council approved the Audit Committee Charter in April 2010.

The Audit Committee provides Council with independent assurance and assistance on risk management, internal control, governance and external accountability procedures.

In addition, the Committee needs to be satisfied there is an adequate and effective system of internal control throughout Council and assists in the operation and implementation of internal and external audit plans.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Reviewing Council's risk management, including business continuity, processes that ensure significant risks are identified and appropriately treated;
- Reviewing Council's business continuity planning arrangements;
- Ensuring Council's internal controls are adequate and effective, creating a positive control environment;
- Overseeing the external audit of Council's financial statements, that provides assurance they are consistent with the underlying records;
- Reviewing Council's frameworks designed to ensure compliance with relevant laws, regulations and Government policies; and
- Reviewing and monitoring internal audit plans, progress in implementing those plans, internal audit reports and progress in implementing management action plans arising from audits.

### *Membership*

The Audit Committee has five voting members and eight required attendees, including the General Manager, Directors, Chief Financial Officer, Internal

Auditor, Enterprise Risk Management Coordinator and external auditor.

The members of the Committee in 2014-15 were:

- Mayor Councillor Pynsent
- Councillor Campbell
- Jason Masters (Chair) - Independent member
- Felicity Barr - Independent member
- Neal O'Callaghan - Independent member

### *Meetings*

The Audit Committee met five times during 2014-15.

Minutes of the meetings including recommendations to Council where required are considered at subsequent Council meetings. The Audit Committee also provides an annual report to Council on its performance, including a self-assessment by its members.

The Audit Committee adopts an annual calendar to ensure it considers reports on all areas within its responsibility.





*Internal Audit*

Each year the Audit Committee reviews, and recommends to Council, a three year strategic audit plan and annual audit plan.

At each meeting the Audit Committee considers a quarterly report from the Internal Auditor outlining the status of the internal audit progress against agreed plans and identifying priorities for the forthcoming quarter.

During 2014-15 the Audit Committee received internal audit reports relating to:

- Roads and Maritime Services DRIVES24;
- Waste Operations; and

- Section 94 Contributions Planning.

The Audit Committee monitors the implementation of management action plans resulting from completed internal audits.

*External Audit*

The Audit Committee reviews the outcome on each occasion the Council tenders for external audit services. A representative from the auditor, Forsyths Business Services, attends most Audit Committee meetings and is able to provide advice in relation to external audit matters. Forsyths works collaboratively with management and the Audit Committee to review and improve the external audit process.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Summarised below are details of the costs incurred in regard to legal proceedings taken by Council or taken against Council during 2014-15. The result of the proceedings is shown together with the amount of the legal costs incurred.

| MATTER   | COURT                    | COST        | RESULT   |
|--|--------------------------|-------------|--|
| Cessnock City Council v ATM Removals<br>Proceedings for committing the offence of carrying out earthworks on land without consent.                             | Local Court              | \$7,714.80  | Matter closed.<br>Council ordered to pay costs.  |
| Dawson Properties (Ventures) Pty Ltd v Cessnock City Council<br>Class 1 LEC Proceedings - 15/10035   | Land & Environment Court | \$88,617.56 | Listed for Hearing.  |
| Cessnock City Council v Mattick<br>Proceedings regarding the orders for demolition of a dwelling and the provision of sanitary facilities in another dwelling. | Land & Environment Court | \$21,370.49 | Following the first mention Council orders were complied with.<br>Matter discontinued. |
| Cessnock City Council v Wehbe<br>Proceedings 10351 of 2015, 16 Cumberland St, Cessnock   | Land & Environment Court | \$10,772.66 | Court orders issued. \$500 fine imposed and ordered to pay costs up to \$1,000.        |

In addition, during 2014-15 Council incurred costs totalling \$366,269.08 pursuing unpaid rates, charges and sundry debtor accounts via debt recovery agents and through the courts.

During 2014-15, Council also incurred other legal costs of \$174,773.03 for legal advice, negotiating agreements, and undertaking workplace and code of conduct investigations.



## RATES AND CHARGES

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                                       | \$23,194,868 |                     |
| Farmland  | \$3,562,245  |                     |
| Business  | \$4,566,166  |                     |
| Mining  | \$1,013,840  |                     |
| <b>Total Rates</b>                                |              | <b>\$32,337,119</b> |
| Domestic Waste Management Charges                 |              | \$10,635,351        |
| Stormwater Management Charges                     |              | \$487,928           |
| Gross Rates and Charges                           |              | \$43,460,398        |
| Less: Written Off                                 |              |                     |
| Pensioners (Section 575)                          | \$1,194,866  |                     |
| Pensioners (Section 582)                          | \$121,620    | \$1,316,486         |
|   |              | \$42,143,912        |
| Net Transfers to and from Postponed Rates         |              | \$5,934             |
| Net Rates and Annual Charges                      |              | \$42,137,978        |
| Net Extra Charges - Interest and Legal per note 3 |              | \$134,693           |
|   |              | <b>\$42,272,671</b> |

2014-15 was the first year of a special rates variation granted to Council by the Minister for Local Government.

An amount of \$2,161,994 was levied under this special variation with the funds being expended on the following renewal works:

| INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS FROM ADDITIONAL RATE INCREASE 2014-15                               |                      |                               |                          |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Local Road Renewal Program   |                      |                               |                          |
| Alexander St Cessnock  | Hall St Paxton       | Neath St Cessnock             | Scholey St Cessnock      |
| Barton St Kurri Kurri  | Hecla St Ellalong    | Oakey Creek Rd Pokolbin       | Sixth East St Weston     |
| Chidgey St Cessnock  | High St Greta        | Old Maitland Rd Sawyers Gully | Stanford St Kitchener    |
| Coronation St Kurri Kurri  | Lang St Cessnock     | O'Neill St Cessnock           | Station St Weston        |
| First St Cessnock  | Londons Rd Lovedale  | Quarrybylong St Cessnock      | Undine St Ellalong       |
| Frances St Paxton  | Marlton St Cessnock  | Railway St Cessnock           | Vernon St Cessnock       |
| Gallagher St Cessnock  | Millfield Rd Paxton  | Rawson St Aberdare            | Whitburn St Greta        |
| Goron Ave Cessnock   | Mulbring St Aberdare | Rothbury St North Rothbury    | Whitings La Quorrobolong |
| Hall St Cessnock   | Mulbring St Ellalong | Russell St Branxton           | Yango Creek Rd Wollombi  |
| Regional Road Renewal Program - Regional Road Special Rate Variation Resurfacing Program |                      |                               |                          |
| Wollombi Rd  | Great North Rd       | George Downs Rd               |                          |





## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

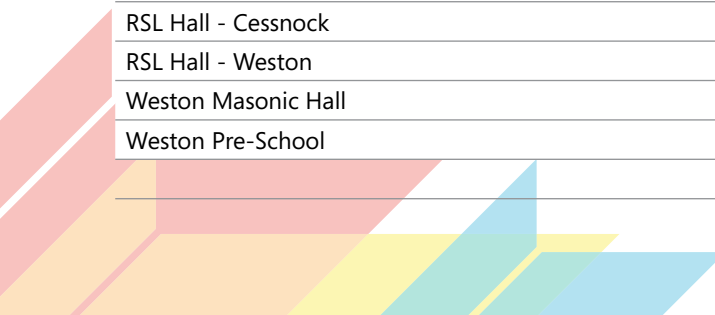
| ADOPTED 2014-15                   | ACTUAL 2014-15                    |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Flood Mapping & Strategic Studies | Flood Mapping & Strategic Studies |
| Northcote Street Aberdare         |                                   |
| Macquarie Street Cessnock         |                                   |
| Northcote Street Kurri Kurri      |                                   |
| John Street Ellalong              |                                   |
| Quarry Street Cessnock            |                                   |
| Armidale Street Abermain          |                                   |
| Main Road Heddon Greta            |                                   |
| Orange Street Abermain            |                                   |
| Mount View Flood Detention Basin  |                                   |
| <b>\$478,000</b>                  | <b>\$271,207</b>                  |

## RATE SUBSIDIES

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 2014-15 Council provided rates subsidies totalling \$29,318.12 to community groups/organisations.

| GROUP/ORGANISATION                              | AMOUNT             |
|---|--------------------|
| Aberdare Pre-School                             | \$1,942.23         |
| Bellbird Pre-School                             | \$1,438.19         |
| Cessnock Homing Pidgeon Club                    | \$1,036.70         |
| Cessnock Masonic Hall                           | \$1,594.61         |
| Cessnock Mini Bike Club                         | \$369.96           |
| Cessnock Multi Purpose Children's Centre        | \$1,603.30         |
| Cessnock Pistol Club                            | \$849.45           |
| Challenge Disability Services                   | \$2,454.95         |
| Country Womens Association & Branxton Greta CWA | \$1,091.45         |
| Country Womens Association NSW                  | \$1,742.35         |
| Day Care Centre - Dudley Street, Cessnock       | \$1,525.09         |
| Greta Pre-School Kindergarten                   | \$1,568.54         |
| Kurri Kurri Day Care Centre                     | \$2,037.82         |
| Kurri Kurri Motor Cycle Club                    | \$282.68           |
| Paxton Masonic Hall                             | \$1,194.86         |
| Pre-School - Dudley Street, Cessnock            | \$2,255.08         |
| Richmond Vale Preservation Co-op Society        | \$934.71           |
| RSL Hall - Branxton                             | \$2,011.75         |
| RSL Hall - Cessnock                             | \$1,168.79         |
| RSL Hall - Weston                               | \$682.14           |
| Weston Masonic Hall                             | \$1,203.55         |
| Weston Pre-School                               | \$329.92           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                    | <b>\$29,318.12</b> |



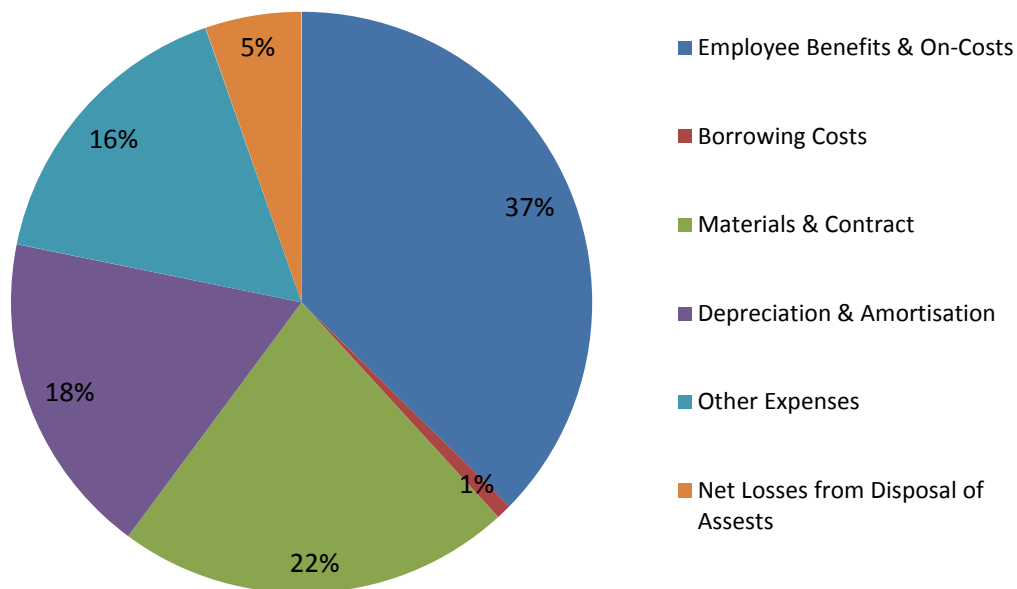


## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

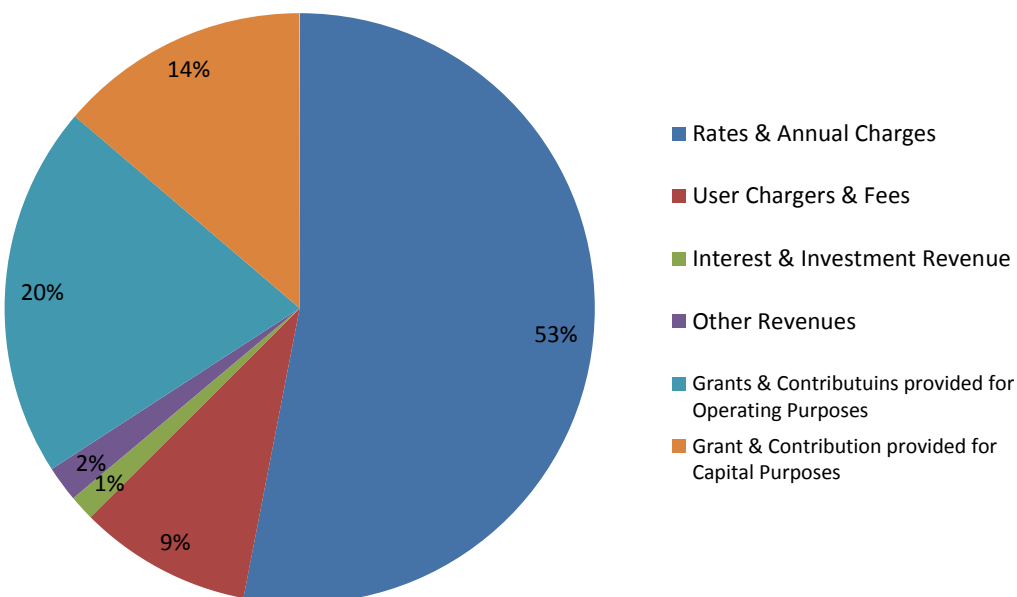
Under the provisions of Division 2 of Part 3 (Financial Management) of the Local Government Act, 1993, Council's audited financial reports and the auditor's reports for the year 2014-15 were presented to Council and the public on 18 November 2015.

The financial reports comprise general purpose financial reports, special purpose financial reports and special schedules. The financial reports, together with the auditor's reports, are part of this report and can be viewed at the Administrative Offices, 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock or online at [www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au). The reports cover the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

### OPERATING EXPENDITURE 2014-15



### OPERATING REVENUE 2014-15



## REPLACEMENT AND SALE OF ASSETS

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

The general replacement schedule for sedans and station wagons over the past financial year has been no less than 40,000 kilometres or one year old and up to 100,000 kilometres or 3 years.

The proposed and actual plant replacement program for the 2014-15 year is set out below. In all cases except those noted, the items shown were replaced by a similar unit. The replacement program was adjusted significantly in 2014-15 to provide the necessary plant for restructure of the Works Delivery operations area.

| PLANT REPLACEMENT PROGRAM<br>Description of Items | CHANGEOVER COST (EX GST) AND NUMBER 2014-15 |                       |
|---|---|-----------------------|
|   | Proposed \$ (No. items)                     | Actual \$             |
| Passenger Fleet                                   | \$693,000 (45)                              | \$503,099 (34) Note 1 |
| Utilities and Vans                                | \$105,700 (5)                               | 0 (0) Note 2          |
| 2T Trucks   | \$50,000 (1)                                | 0 (0) Note 2          |
| 3T Truck  | \$168,000 (3)                               | \$121,207 (1) Note 3  |
| 4T Truck  | \$81,300 (1)                                | 0 (0) Note 2          |
| 12T Truck   | \$120,000 (1)                               | \$121,077.10 (1)      |
| Ride on Mowers                                    | \$17,200 (1)                                | \$15,341 (1)          |
| Tractors  | \$166,000 (3)                               | \$171,836 (3)         |
| Skid Steer Loader                                 | \$65,000 (1)                                | \$71,451 (1) Note 4   |
| Backhoes  | \$140,000 (2)                               | 0 (0) Note 5          |
| Graders   | \$480,000 ( 2)                              | 0 (0) Note 5          |
| Compaction Rollers                                | \$300,000 (2)                               | 0 (0) Note 5          |
| <b>Special Plant</b>                              |   |                       |
| Slasher/Mulch mower attachments                   | \$25,000 (2)                                | \$28,445 (2)          |
| 3 Tonne Excavator                                 | \$60,000 (1)                                | \$56,900 (1)          |

### Notes:

1. Less vehicles replaced due to increase in replacement thresholds from previous years .
2. Replacement postponed due to increase in replacement thresholds.
3. Truck upgraded to tipping with crane and emulsion.
4. Wheeled loader replaced with tracked loader and income from sale carried over to 2015-16 FY.
5. Ordered in 2014-15 FY but arriving in 2015-16 FY.

## Delivery Program Performance

| Action  | 2014-15 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Commence implementation of the priority projects from the Customer Service Strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the priority projects from the Customer Service Strategy.</li> <li>- Commence implementation of priority projects from the Customer Service Strategy.</li> </ul>   |                |                         |
| Implement systems and strategies to improve productivity across the organisation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to implement the Performance Management System.</li> <li>- Continue to implement a new remuneration system.</li> </ul>  |                |                         |
| Develop and implement a strategic and operational internal audit program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement the annual internal audit program.</li> </ul>  |                |                         |
| Review and implement a revised Risk Management Strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review Council's risk profile.</li> <li>- Update and test the effectiveness of Council's business continuity plans.</li> <li>- Continue the update of the Enterprise Risk Management Strategy.</li> </ul>   |                |                         |
| Carry out governance functions, provide advice and conduct education programs to comply with legislation and best practice. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commence the development of a statutory compliance policy.</li> </ul>  |                |                         |
| Review the Community Strategic Plan.  |                |                         |
| Develop and implement a special rate variation strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commence scoping of projects as part of the Financial Sustainability Initiative (within existing resources).</li> <li>- Develop property investment and management policies, plans and guidelines and commence a strategic review of Council's property portfolio.</li> </ul> |                |                         |

Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 4 Not Yet Achieved 0 At Risk 3

## MEASURES:

| MEASURES   | CONTEXT/BENCHMARK   | BASE             | 2014-15 RESULT | TARGET |
|--|---|------------------|----------------|--------|
| <b>Satisfaction with Council's performance overall</b> | This measure is from a random survey of residents where they are asked to rate their satisfaction with Council's performance overall on a scale of 1-5, where 1 = low satisfaction and 5 = high satisfaction.<br><br>The benchmark in 2009 from similar surveys with over 15,000 residents across 25 local government areas was 3.5.<br><br>Current Rating = 2.4 (compared with 3.2 in August 2009) | 2.4<br>2012      | 3.2            | >3     |
| <b>Response to Telephone Calls</b>                     | The number of telephone calls to the call centre that are not abandoned divided by the total number of telephone calls to the call centre.<br><br>This data is sourced from Council's telephone system.   | 87.7%<br>2011-12 | 87.1%          | 90%    |
| <b>Response to Customer Requests</b>                   | The number of customer requests that are completed within agreed timeframes divided by the total number of customer requests completed.<br><br>This data is sourced from the workflows in Council's Customer Request Management system.   | N/A              | 74%            | 80%    |



# Statutory Requirements

## STATUTORY REPORTING INDEX

| Requirement   | Section/Clause             | Page                     |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Local Government Act 1993 and General Regulation</b>   |                            |                          |
| 1. Completed within 5 months after end of financial year.   | s428(1)                    | <b>N/A</b>               |
| 2. Copy provided to the Minister for Local Government (via the Office of Local Government).   | s428(5)                    | <b>N/A</b>               |
| 3. Copy posted on council's website.  | s428(5)                    | <b>N/A</b>               |
| <b>Contains:</b>  |                            |                          |
| 4. Council's achievements in implementing the delivery program and the effectiveness of the principal activities undertaken in achieving the objectives at which those principal activities are directed. | s428(1)                    | <b>14-60</b>             |
| 5. Copy of Council's audited financial reports and notes and information required by the Regulation or the Guidelines.  | s428(4)(a)                 | <b>Separate document</b> |
| 6. Amount of rates and charges written off during the year.   | cl 132                     | <b>56</b>                |
| 7. Details of overseas visits by councillors, council staff or other persons representing council (including visits sponsored by other organisations).  | s428(4)(b)<br>cl 217(1)(a) | <b>47</b>                |
| 8. Total cost during the year of the payment of expenses of , and the provision of facilities to, councillors in relation to their civic functions. Including separate details on the total cost of:      | cl 217(1)(a1)              | <b>47</b>                |
| • Provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to councillors.   | cl 217(1)(a1)(i)           | <b>47</b>                |
| • Telephone calls made by councillors.  | cl 217(1)(a1)(ii)          | <b>47</b>                |
| • Attendance of councillors at conferences and seminars.  | cl 217(1)(a1)(iii)         | <b>47</b>                |
| • Training of councillors and provision of skill development.   | cl 217(1)(a1)(iv)          | <b>47</b>                |
| • Interstate visits by councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses.   | cl 217(1)(a1)(v)           | <b>47</b>                |
| • Overseas visits by councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses.   | cl 217(1)(a1)(vi)          | <b>47</b>                |
| • Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a councillor, being expenses payable in accordance with the Guidelines.   | cl 217(1)(a1)(vii)         | <b>47</b>                |
| • Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member of a councillor.   | cl 217(1)(a1)(vii)         | <b>47</b>                |
| 9. Details of each contract awarded for amounts greater than \$150,000. Includes:   | cl 217(1)(a2)              | <b>26</b>                |
| • Name of contractor.   | cl 217(1)(a2)              | <b>26</b>                |
| • Nature of goods or services supplied.   | cl 217(1)(a2)              | <b>26</b>                |
| • Total amount payable under the contract.  | cl 217(1)(a2)              | <b>26</b>                |
| 10. Summary of the amounts incurred by the council in relation to legal proceedings. Includes:  | cl 217(1)(a3)              | <b>55</b>                |
| • Amounts, costs and expenses paid or received.   | cl 217(1)(a3)              | <b>55</b>                |
| • Summary of the state of progress of each legal proceeding and (if it has been finalised) result.  | cl 217(1)(a3)              | <b>55</b>                |
| 11. Summary of resolutions made under section 67 concerning work carried out on private land. Includes:   | s67(3)<br>cl 217(1)(a4)    | <b>42</b>                |
| • Summary or details of work.   | cl 217(1)(a4)              | <b>42</b>                |
| • Cost of work fully or partly subsidised by council.   | cl 217(1)(a4)              | <b>42</b>                |
| • Total amount by which council has subsidised any such work.   | cl 217(1)(a4)              | <b>42</b>                |
| 12. Total amount contributed or otherwise granted under section 356 (financially assist others).  | cl 217(1)(a5)              | <b>16</b>                |
| 13. Statement of all external bodies that exercised functions delegated by council.   | cl 217(1)(a6)              | <b>25</b>                |
| 14. Statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which council held a controlling interest.   | cl 217(1)(a7)              | <b>25</b>                |
| 15. Statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which the council participated.  | cl 217(1)(a8)              | <b>25</b>                |
| 16. Statement of activities to implement its EEO management plan.   | cl 217(1)(a9)              | <b>53</b>                |
| 17. Statement of the total remuneration comprised in the remuneration package of the general manager. Includes:   | cl 217(1)(b)               | <b>53</b>                |
| • Total value of the salary component of the package.   | cl 217(1)(b)(i)            | <b>53</b>                |
| • Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of the salary component.   | cl 217(1)(b)(ii)           | <b>53</b>                |

| Requirement  | Section/Clause  | Page               |
|--|---|--------------------|
| <b>Contains:</b>   |   |                    |
| • Total amount payable by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the general manager may be a contributor.                     | cl 217(1)(b)(iii)   | <b>53</b>          |
| • Total value of any non-cash benefits for which the general manager may elect under the package.  | cl 217(1)(b)(iv)  | <b>53</b>          |
| • Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits.   | cl 217(1)(b)(v)   | <b>53</b>          |
| 18. Statement of the total remuneration comprised in remuneration packages of all senior staff members, expressed as the total (not of the individual members). Includes:            | cl 217(1)(c)  | <b>53</b>          |
| • Total value of salary components of their packages.  | cl 217(1)(c)(i)   | <b>53</b>          |
| • Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of salary components of their packages.   | cl 217(1)(c)(ii)  | <b>53</b>          |
| • Total amount payable by the council by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which any of them may be a contributor.              | cl 217(1)(c)(iii)   | <b>53</b>          |
| • Total value of any non-cash benefits for which any of them may elect under the package.  | cl 217(1)(c)(iv)  | <b>53</b>          |
| • Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits.   | cl 217(1)(c)(v)   | <b>53</b>          |
| 19. A statement detailing the stormwater management services provided ( <i>if levied</i> ).  | cl 217(1)(e)  | <b>57</b>          |
| 20. A statement detailing the coastal protection services provided ( <i>if levied</i> ).   | cl 217(1)(e1)   | <b>N/A</b>         |
| 21. In the year of an ordinary election of councillors is to be held the Annual Report must include a report as to the state of the environment in the local government area.        | s428A(1)  | <b>N/A</b>         |
| 22. Particulars of any environmental upgrade agreement entered into, in accordance with any requirements imposed under s406.   | s54P  | <b>N/A</b>         |
| 23. Report on special variation expenditure if required to do so by the instrument made by the Minister.   | s508(2)<br>s508A  | <b>56</b>          |
| 24. Report on capital works projects.  | Capital Expenditure Guidelines  | <b>42-43</b>       |
| <b>Companion Animals Act 1998 and Companion Animals Regulation 2008</b>  |   |                    |
| 25. Statement on activities relating to enforcing and ensuring compliance with the Companion Animals Act and Regulation. Includes:   | Local Government (General) Regulation 2005<br>cl 217(1)(f)<br>Guidelines on the Exercise of Functions under the Companion Animals Act | <b>19 &amp; 20</b> |
| • Lodgement of pound data collection returns with the Division.  | 16.2 (a) Guidelines   | <b>19</b>          |
| • Lodgement of data relating to dog attacks with the Division.   | 16.2 (b) Guidelines   | <b>19</b>          |
| • Amount of funding spent on companion animal management and activities.   | 16.2 (c) Guidelines   | <b>20</b>          |
| • Companion animal community education programs carried out.   | 16.2 (d) Guidelines   | <b>20</b>          |
| • Strategies council has in place to promote and assist the de-sexing of dogs and cats.  | 16.2 (d) Guidelines   | <b>19</b>          |
| • Strategies in place to comply with the requirement under section 64 of the Act to seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals.   | 16.2 (e) Guidelines   | <b>20</b>          |
| • Off leash areas provided in the council area.  | 16.2 (f) Guidelines   | <b>20</b>          |
| <b>Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and Regulation</b>  |   |                    |
| 26. Information included on GIPA activity.   | s125(1) cl 7 Sch. 2   | <b>51</b>          |
| <b>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</b>  |   |                    |
| 27. Particulars of compliance with and effect of planning agreements in force during the year.   | s93G(5)   | <b>32</b>          |
| <b>Public Interest Disclosure Act 1994 and Regulation</b>  |   |                    |
| 28. Information on number of public interest disclosures and whether public interest disclosure policy is in place.  | s31 cl4   | <b>49</b>          |
| <b>Carers Recognition Act 2010</b>   |   |                    |
| 29. Councils considered to be 'human service agencies' under the Act must report on compliance with the Act for the reporting period in the reporting period in their Annual Report. | s8(2)   | <b>N/A</b>         |