



2016–2017 Annual Report

Delivering Services & Infrastructure for Our Community

Cessnock - thriving, attractive and welcoming

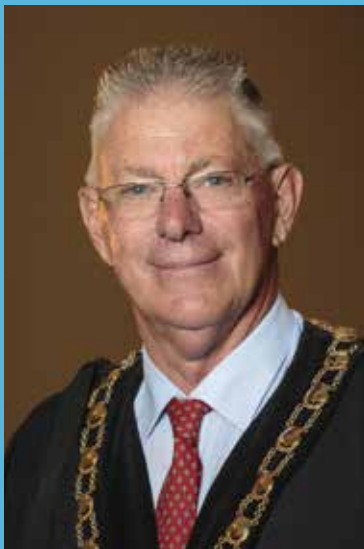
Acknowledgement of Country

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

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Message from the Mayor



Mayor Councillor Bob Pynsent

It is a delight to present Cessnock City Council's 2016-2017 Annual Report. This report is an opportunity to reflect back on a very successful year for our local government area and on some of the challenges we overcame.

The Community Strategic Plan - *Cessnock 2023* has provided us with a clear path forward as we continue building a community that is thriving, attractive and welcoming. It is our actions today that determine the future of our great community and this remains at the forefront of each decision and action undertaken at our Council.

This document provides valuable information as we progress towards our community vision and highlights our achievements.

We have invested more than \$21 million in to our Capital Works Program, the majority of which is for improvements to roads, bridges and drainage. Major milestones in the past twelve months include the opening of Frame Drive Bridge and securing \$4.45 million in funding under the NSW Governments Fixing Country Roads program for Frame Drive safety upgrades. Another highlight was the finalisation of the \$16.7 million Hermitage Road and Broke Road upgrade and Cycleway project. Cessnock Council staff did an exceptional job in delivering this project and their high quality work should be acknowledged.

Completed in partnership with Singleton Council and funded by the Restart NSW Resources

for Region Program, this project marks an exciting time for our local tourism industry. There is no doubt we will reap the benefits of this new and improved route which provides better and safer access to visitors exploring our local vineyards.

The Cessnock community also enjoyed huge advances in waste management as March 2017 saw the introduction of the Garden Organics kerb side collection and nearing the end of the financial calendar, construction of the Waste Transfer Station commenced.

As a community we shared joy at many Council events and our award winning Youth Week and Seniors Week celebrations were absolutely outstanding, attracting thousands of participants.

We have also overcome many challenges, through team work and innovative thinking, it is no easy task to meet our community's needs while also remaining financially stable however we remained focus on this long term objective.

It has been a privilege to lead a financially responsible and stable Council that has delivered high quality services, amenities and facilities. Thank you to my fellow Councillors for their efforts and Council staff for their commitment. It is now with great pleasure I commend this report to the Cessnock community.

Bob Pynsent

Mayor of the City of Cessnock

The 2016-17 Annual Report is a reflection of a productive and rewarding year for Cessnock City Council as we continue to achieve objectives under the Community Strategic Plan - *Cessnock 2023*.

This report is an opportunity for community members to gain a better understanding of how we have performed financially and what we've achieved for the community.

I am pleased to report Council has emerged from the last financial year in a strong position, putting us in great stead for 2017-18 financial year. We have successfully maintained our long standing balanced budget strategy whereby expenditure is matched to a funding source.

Council continues its commitment to improvement through constant review of operations and services. The implementation of multiple financial sustainability projects has resulted in money being returned to the community through improved services and infrastructure despite the rapid growth our local government area continues to experience.

Development Applications (DAs) and building approval figures for 2016-17 are at a record high, while staff continue to achieve short turnaround times.

The Hunter Regional Plan outlined Cessnock City Council will have a projected increase in dwelling approvals of 6,350 between 2016 and 2036, which averages out to be 318 applications per year.

Council exceeded this figure by a whopping 44% in this financial year by approving approximately 459 residential buildings across the LGA.

Council staff are committed to values of integrity, respect, teamwork, accountability and excellence, and we will continue to reflect these values in our work for the community, now and into the future.

Thank you to our staff for their ongoing hard work and to Councillors for their support. We all share a common goal of delivering a high standard of services to our residents and ensuring this fantastic LGA is well placed for a thriving and sustainable future.

Stephen Glen
General Manager

Message from the General Manager



General Manager Stephen Glen

The Annual Report

This Annual Report provides a summary of Council's achievements during the 2016-17 year. Progress is measured against the programs, budget and desired outcomes in the 2016-17 Operational Plan. The operational plan aims to achieve the longer term objectives of the delivery program and the community strategic plan.

This document focuses on Council's implementation of the 2013-17 Delivery Program and 2016-17 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 the five desired outcomes

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.

FIT FOR THE FUTURE

In September 2014 the NSW Government announced the *Fit for the Future* reform package, its response to the Independent Local Government's Review Panel's final report on NSW Local Government Reform. The *Fit for the Future* reform package includes proposals for councils across NSW to

strengthen efficiency, performance and move towards a more sustainable position.

As part of the *Fit for the Future* reform package Council has benchmarked itself against seven criteria to assess its sustainability, efficiency, effectiveness, scale and capacity.

While Council has been assessed (by both the IPART and the State Government) as a "fit for the future" organisation, we continue to work towards achieving greater efficiencies across the organisation.

The *Fit for the Future* reform package recommends the establishment of a system of regional Joint Organisations across the State to provide a platform for local councils to work together to reduce duplication of effort, maximise efficiencies, and collaborate with the State to achieve regional outcomes.



Councillors

Cessnock City Council comprises 13 Councillors: three Councillors elected from each of four Wards plus a popularly-elected Mayor (who is also a Councillor).



Paul Dunn
Councillor
Ward A



Di Fitzgibbon
Councillor
Ward B



Melanie Dagg
Councillor
Ward C



Anthony Burke
Councillor
Ward D



Mark Lyons
Councillor
Ward A



Ian Olsen
Councillor
Ward B



John Fagg
Councillor
Ward C



Rod Doherty
Councillor
Ward D



Allan Stapleford
Councillor
Ward A



Jay Suvaal
Councillor
Ward B



Anne Sander
Councillor
Ward C



Darrin Gray
Councillor
Ward D

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.*



*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. Through community engagement the community have expressed the desire for a healthy, active, engaged and cohesive community that maintains its unique local identity and friendliness into the future.

Council has undertaken the following principal activities during 2016-17 to achieve the deliverables in the 2013-17 Deliberation Program and, ultimately, the objectives in the community strategic plan.



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

In the 2016 Census, 4,007 people in the Cessnock local government area identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. This represents 7.2 per cent of the total local government area population and is significantly higher than the national average of 2.8 per cent.



Wonnarua Elder Aunty Cynthia Morris, members of Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee, Cessnock City Mayor, Councillor Doherty and Uncle Perry Fuller at the 2017 National Reconciliation Week Elders Morning tea held at the Council Administration Building.

Council has made a strong commitment to reconciliation and building productive relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. Council's first ever Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was completed in 2016. This one year Plan called "Reflect" was developed with the support of the previous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee, and endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. The Plan provided Council with a framework and vision for reconciliation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The outcomes and achievements of the Plan have been evaluated and all 13 actions listed were addressed. Some of the key achievements of the Reflect RAP include:-

- Receipt of an Elsa Dixon School based scholarship in 2016-17.

- Development and delivery of staff cultural awareness training.
- Installation of two additional flag poles in the Council Administration Building, allowing Council to fly the Torres Strait Islander flag alongside the National and Aboriginal flags.
- Hosting an Elders morning tea to recognise National Reconciliation Week.
- Delivery of local NAIDOC Week events with approximately 2,780 people attending local events.

Council is currently developing its second Reconciliation Action Plan, the Innovate RAP. The Innovate RAP will be a two year plan that builds on the actions in the first RAP and provides further opportunities for Council to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to reconciliation at a local level. The Plan is being developed in consultation with Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee. A community forum was also held to bring together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, agencies, elders, and student representatives to inform the development of Council's next RAP.

PEOPLE WITH DIVERSE CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC BACKGROUNDS

The 2016 Census found that over 30 languages are being spoken by residents in the Cessnock local government area and that 6.2 per cent of residents were born overseas.

In 2017, Council collaborated with a number of organisations and the community to plan a local Harmony Day celebration. The event was proposed to be held outdoors and was to include music, fashion and food from around the world. Unfortunately, due to inclement wet weather the planning committee was forced to cancel the event.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Council's 2016-17 Financial Assistance Grant totalled \$10.23m representing approximately 10.74 per cent of total revenue.

The Financial Assistance Grant received in 2016-17 (\$10.23m) included an advance payment of approximately 50 per cent of the 2017-18 allocation being \$3.482m.

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

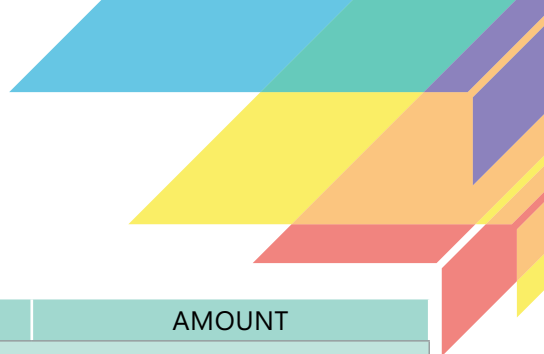


Poppethead Reserve, Kitchener

CONTRIBUTIONS AND GRANTS

During 2016-17 Council provided \$75,300.53 in general financial assistance to community groups/organisations.

GROUP/ORGANISATION	AMOUNT
COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM	
Abermain Eisteddfod Society	\$2,370.00
Central Hunter Community Board	\$379.50
Cessnock Community and Youth Development	\$1,950.00
Cessnock Multipurpose Childrens Centre	\$2,355.80
Cessnock Regional Art Gallery	\$2,000.00
Cessnock Woodturners Inc	\$1,245.00
Coalfields Heritage Group	\$1,500.00
Korreil Wonnai Aboriginal Education	\$1,500.00
Marthaville Arts and Culture Centre	\$559.50
Richmond Vale Railway Museum	\$2,249.00
Sculpture in the Vineyards	\$3,000.00
Towns with Heart	\$2,370.00
Wine Country Music Association	\$770.90
Wollombi Valley Arts Council	\$2,000.00
Wollombi Valley Progress Association	\$2,150.00
SUB-TOTAL	\$26,399.70

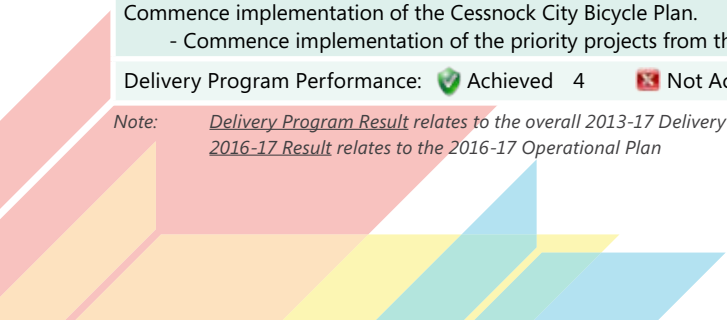


GROUP/ORGANISATION	AMOUNT
COMMUNITY FACILITIES \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM	
Abermain Plaza Hall	\$567.73
Abermain - Weston Hawks RLFC	\$263.62
Branxton Community Hall	\$2,000.00
Branxton Playgroup Inc	\$99.17
Cessnock Multipurpose Childrens Centre	\$3,000.00
Kurri Early Childhood Centre	\$3,000.00
North Cessnock Community Hall	\$1,000.00
Richmond Vale Railway Museum	\$1,000.00
Weston Civic Centre	\$3,000.00
Weston Community Pre School Inc	\$3,000.00
Wollombi Valley Progress Association	\$2,727.27
RECREATION MINOR PROJECTS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM	
Cessnock District Hockey Association	\$3,960.00
Cessnock Minor Rugby League	\$2,000.00
Cessnock Rugby League Football Club	\$2,500.00
Kurri Kurri Junior Football Club	\$2,727.27
Kurri Kurri Rugby League Club	\$2,000.00
Valley Aquatic Club Inc	\$2,727.27
Weston Workers Bears Football Club	\$2,500.00
Wollombi Valley Pony Club Inc	\$750.00
TIDY TOWNS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM	
Branxton Tidy Town	\$5,583.00
Greta Tidy Town	\$4,161.50
North Rothbury Tidy Towns	\$334.00
TOTAL	\$75,300.53

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Promote the range of community services across the Local Government Area.		
Engage with the indigenous community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise and deliver a range of NAIDOC Week events. - Continue to implement the actions from the Reconciliation Action Plan. 		
Develop a program and commence implementation to increase social connections across the Local Government Area. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise and deliver a range of Seniors' Week events. - Organise and deliver a range of Youth Week events. - Organise and deliver the Spring Awakening Festival. - Organise other civic events - Australia Day, Carols in the Park, Citizenship Ceremonies, etc. - Support the Cessnock Chamber of Commerce Stomp Festival. - Support the Kurri Kurri Nostalgia Festival. - Complete development of the Pedestrian and Access Mobility Plan. - Finalise and adopt the Disability Inclusion Action Plan. 		
Commence implementation of the Cessnock City Bicycle Plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commence implementation of the priority projects from the Cessnock City Cycle Strategy. 		
Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 4 Not Achieved 0		

Note: *Delivery Program Result* relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan



Strengthening Community Culture

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Council owns or is the Reserve Trust Manager of nine pre-school and child care facilities (including out of school hours and vacation care) and two playgroup facilities. These facilities are leased to the not-for-profit sector and are managed and operated externally to Council.

YOUTH SERVICES

Council's Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) is now in its 19th year of operation. CYCOS continues to provide a suite of programs for the local government area'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 the year, CYCOS had a total of 11,574 occasions of service (i.e. interactions with young people), well above the target of 8,700.

Council, community organisations, local businesses and local young people delivered a very successful Youth Week 2017, with CYCOS playing a lead role in the planning and programming of activities. The program of 24 activities and events engaged and entertained more than 1,800 young people. This year's Youth Week program was again nominated for a Local Government Award in the category "Best Youth Week Program 2017". Although the committee did not win the award, it was a great honour to be nominated.

The redevelopment of the CYCOS building has been finalised with two newly created office rooms, refurbished toilets and storage space. Hiring of the new office space as well as the main programming room has commenced in order to maximise the usage potential of the facility by the broader community and also to maximise the opportunities for young people to access youth services in our area.



Cessnock Youth Week 2017 Nominated for Best Youth Week Program 2017 at the NSW Local Government Awards

AGED AND DISABILITY SERVICES

In June 2017, Council adopted its Disability Inclusion Action Plan. All councils under the Disability Inclusion Regulation 2014 were required to have a Plan in place by 1 July 2017. In developing the Plan, Council consulted with 160 people and included people with disability, carers of people with disability, families of children with disability, community groups and service providers to understand opportunities to improve inclusion and access. The Plan lists actions for all areas of Council and includes the services it delivers, the facilities it provides and its business practices and they being accessible and inclusive. It also guides Council in how it can be responsive to the needs of people with disability living and visiting the Cessnock local government area.

Council also provides a range of infrastructure to support aged and disability services. These services are operated by the not-for-profit sector and include domestic assistance, personal care, social support, home maintenance and modification, community transport and disability respite services.

SENIORS WEEK 2017

The Cessnock City Seniors Festival 2017 provided a free, accessible program of events and activities aimed at engaging, entertaining and celebrating the seniors community of the Cessnock local government area. Over 1,900 people participated in the week-long program, with 34 community organisations delivering 45 events and activities. The program listed activities

under five broad categories; Health and Wellbeing; Arts and Culture; Learning; History and Heritage; and Clubs and Special Interest.

The Cessnock City Seniors Festival 2017 aimed to cater to the diversity of ages, interests and abilities of the Cessnock local government area seniors community, offering opportunities to learn skills, build relationships, be active, be creative and to connect with their community. The Festival was awarded the RH Dougherty Award for Innovation in Special Events at the 2017 NSW Local Government Awards for its 2016 program. The Festival is coordinated by the Cessnock Seniors Week Advisory Committee and includes representatives from local organisations. Former Cessnock City Senior Citizens of the Year also sit on the Committee.



The Mayor Bob Pynsent and Robert Maginnity, Director Corporate & Community Services, accept the RH Dougherty Award for Innovation in Special Events for the 2016 Seniors Festival

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Collaborate with the community to develop and deliver services.	✔	✔
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. - Continue to support community, cultural and sporting facilities and projects \$ for \$ grants.	✔	✔
Commence implementation of the priority projects from the CYCOS Business Plan.	✔	✔
Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 4 ❌ Not Achieved 0		

Note: *Delivery Program Result relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program*
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan

Promoting Safe Communities

CRIME PREVENTION

Representatives from Council continue to attend the Community Safety Precinct Committee 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 days for companion animals in the local government area and promoting the free microchipping of companion animals by Rangers as part of our service to the community.
- Regular patrols of the local government area.
- Community education 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 to promote compliance with the Act.
- 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 local government area. From August 2011, all impounded animals have been taken to the RSPCA Rutherford Shelter.

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 65 reported dog attacks involving 93 attacking dogs in the local government area in 2016-2017.

For the year ended 30 June 2017 there were 128 actions relating to these dog attacks including:

- 2 were declared dangerous;
- 31 were infringed;
- 22 received warnings;
- 3 were seized and taken to the pound;
- 3 dogs were destroyed;
- 3 are still under investigation;
- 15 were declared menacing;
- 33 other actions were taken;
- 13 no action; and
- 3 seized and returned to the owner.

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.

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 \$25,000 on community education programs in 2016-17. Council's free microchipping days was held across four different occasions in May. Each event was held at a local off-leash dog park in the local government area and more than fifty dogs and cats microchipped.

Council now has a school education program where Council Rangers attend schools to teach children the importance of caring for a companion animal. Council Rangers also attend community events with a purpose built promotional trailer.

Council also introduced the following initiatives and promotions:

- The publication of an activity book targeted at ages 4 to 7 to promote responsible pet ownership and behaviour around dogs.
- Council's 'Cutest Pet Competition' run through Council's Facebook and other social media platforms.
- The attendance of Council Rangers at community events such as school fares and community celebrations.
- The supply of free dog name tags to pet owners in the community. Council Rangers are also equipped with an engraver and can engrave the name tags in the field.

PEDESTRIAN AND MOBILITY PLAN

In July 2016 Council adopted the Cessnock Pedestrian and Mobility Plan (PAMP).

The main objective of the PAMP is to provide Council with a long-term strategy and action plan for pedestrian

facilities within the Cessnock local government area. It will facilitate a strategic and coordinated approach to the provision of safe, convenient and connected pedestrian routes and infrastructure to the community.

The core deliverables of the PAMP include:

- Mapping existing pedestrian networks and identifying opportunities to complete existing, or establish new networks;
- A long term strategy for the development of pedestrian routes and facilities to assist Council in planning future infrastructure projects;
- A costed works program for improving pedestrian facilities.

The PAMP recommendations are based on a comprehensive document review, pedestrian facilities audit, community and key stakeholder consultation, industry trends analysis and consideration of local environmental, economic and social influences.

The identified priority works program will form the basis of Council's 10 year Pathways Construction Program. It will also assist Council in seeking external funding opportunities as they become available. The priorities identified in the PAMP take into consideration the contribution that each action makes to; pedestrian safety, ease of accessibility and the amenity of the surrounding environment.

A copy of the PAMP is available online at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au

SWIMMING POOL INSPECTIONS

Council inspected 145 backyard swimming pools during the 2016-17 reporting period and, as a result, 140 certificates of compliance and 14 certificates of non-compliance were issued.

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 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.		
Commence implementation of priority projects from the Road Safety Strategy.		
Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 3 Not Achieved 0		

Note: Delivery Program Result relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan

Fostering an Articulate and Creative Community

CESSNOCK CITY LIBRARY

The popularity of the Cessnock Libraries continued to grow with 181,415 people visiting our library service, which was a 2 per cent increase on the previous year. 2016-17 saw a strong focus on technology and includes:-

- PC usage increased by 8.2 per cent with 20,539 bookings throughout the year. To assist with the management of the public computers, the library introduced a new computer booking and print management system along with new photocopiers.
- The Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) self-check machines continue to grow in popularity with about 35 per cent of annual loans being issued via this method. This initiative has allowed staff to re-direct resources responding more promptly to customers who seek support for Reader Advisory and Reference Services.
- Cessnock City Library continues to deliver a wide range of programs throughout the year. Most notable was Code Club for kids. This program assists children to understand how to create with technology - not just interact with it. Learning to code strengthens problem solving skills and logical

thinking and supports key academic subjects such as science, maths and technology.

- Tech Help sessions continue to be popular, with 30 minutes one on one help being offered to patrons to assist them to get online and access a wide range of programs and apps.
- Our digital collections continue to grow and overall usage of e-resources increased by 35.7 per cent with 47,168 e-resources being accessed.



Mr Noel 'Bill' Hicks and Mayor Pynsent at the 2017 Cessnock City Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony.

CULTURAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Council allocated \$26,399 through its Community Cultural Development Dollar for Dollar Grant Scheme to fund 15 community projects with the aim celebrating culture and heritage, fostering community spirit, supporting diversity and inclusion, creating opportunities to celebrate together and improving usage of our cultural facilities.

Council inducted Mr Amos Fogg, posthumously awarded for Business, and Mr Noel 'Bill' Hicks, awarded for Science into the Cessnock City Hall of Fame. The achievements of these two outstanding citizens were celebrated at a ceremony held at Cessnock Performing Arts Centre 28 June 2017.





CESSNOCK PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

The centre continues to attract high calibre productions from Australian and international performance companies and producers. As our reputation grows so does our audience; with many regulars now coming from outside of the Cessnock local government area.

Encouraging new audiences and sharing the excitement of live performance is an important part of our business. Performances such as Swan Lake, The World of Musicals, and Justice Crew continually bring new patrons. Our school holiday programs, aimed at engaging children



Cessnock Performing Arts Centre - Russian National Ballet Theatre - Romeo & Juliet



Cessnock Performing Arts Centre - Earth's Prehistoric Aquarium Photo by Heidrun Lohr

and families, are also proving to be popular and attracting families and vacation care groups; many of whom book up to 6 months ahead of a performance to ensure ticket availability.

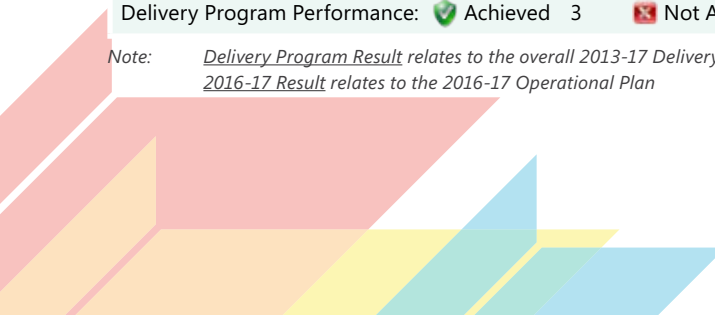
Our Facebook profile has a 4.4 star rating and many of our posts have a reach in excess of 5,000. Community partnerships have been nurtured and strengthened. We are pleased to welcome The Children's University as a new partner and look forward to collaborating to develop new ideas to engage further with young people.

Spring Awakening continues to grow and is fast becoming a signature event for the local government area, with broad appeal and strong support from the community. As a result of this success the centre is now developing and designing Council's Carols in the Park and Australia Day events.

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Continue implementation of the priority projects from the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre business plan.	✔	✔
Commence implementation of 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 Achieved 0		

Note: *Delivery Program Result* relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan



MEASURES:

MEASURES	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	2016-17 RESULT	TARGET
Km of Cycleways in the LGA	<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 2012	10.9 km 2017	Increase
Engagement with young people	<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 2010-11	11,574 2016-17	>8,700 p.a.
Completion of programmed health & safety inspections	<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>	658 100% 2011-12	918 100% 2016-17	N/A 100%
Completion of water cooling system inspections	<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>	51 100% 2011-12	34 100% 2016-17	N/A 100%
Library Utilisation	<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 2011-12 25,814 hits 2011-12	181,415 visits + 13,032 hits = 194,447 Combined = 83%	> 235,000 p.a. Combined
Cessnock Performing Arts Centre Audience	<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 2012	13,849 CPAC Audience 2016-17 3,500 Spring Awakening 2,500 Carols in the Park = Total 19,849	18,500 p.a.

Note: References to base years relate to the 2013-17 Delivery Program



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.

Council has undertaken the following principal activities during 2016-17 to achieve the deliverables in the 2013-17 Delivery Program and, ultimately, the objectives in the community strategic plan.



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.

During 2016-17 Hunter Councils continued to participate in the State Government's Fit for the Future Joint Organisation pilot program. The focus of Joint Organisations is on strategic planning, regional advocacy and intergovernmental collaboration.

The activities of Hunter Councils are managed through an incorporated association (Hunter Councils Joint Organisation) and a company limited by guarantee (Strategic Services Australia Pty Ltd). An incorporated legal practice is also part of Strategic Services Australia.

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

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 *Local Government Act 1993*.

- 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 eight Directors representing each of the four member councils (Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland and Singleton).

During the period 2016-17 Cessnock Council recycled 4,968 tonnes via the kerbside service.

- Council introduced a kerbside organics collection service in March 2017. This service was undertaken as a joint initiative of Cessnock, Maitland and Singleton Councils to achieve economies of scale.

During the period 2016-17 Cessnock Council recycled 1,700 tonnes via the kerbside organics service. (3 months).



Kerbside organics collection service commenced in March 2017

CONTRACTS

Council awarded the following contracts for amounts over \$150,000 (not including employment contracts) during 2016-17.

SUCCESSFUL TENDER	ITEM	AMOUNT PAYABLE PER TENDER (incl. GST)
A Plus Contracting Pty Ltd Ian Rich Asphalt Pty Ltd Australian Civil & Environmental Services Pty Ltd J & L Plant Hire Pty Ltd Base Course Management NSW Pty Ltd Keegan Civil Pty Ltd Coates Hire Limited Kennards Hire Pty Ltd Conplant Pty Ltd Lovetts Cessnock Earthmoving D & S Lock Pty Limited Mr Diggitt Pty Ltd Dannenberg Earthmoving Pty Ltd Newpro Pty Limited Daracon Contractors Pty Ltd Rollers Queensland Double S Industries Pty Ltd Sharpe Bros (Aust) P/L Downer EDI Works Pty Ltd Sherrin Rentals Pty Ltd Fenech Group Pty Ltd Specialised Pavement Services Pty Ltd Fenworx Pty Ltd Trading as Newpave Stabilcorp Pty Ltd Goldsprings Equipment Hire Pty Ltd Stabilised Pavements of Australia Pty Ltd Hartcher's Water Haulage Woodbury Civil Pty Ltd	Hire of Plant and Equipment	\$2,500,000 - \$3,500,000 (schedule of rates)
DoneSafe Pty Ltd	Work Health and Safety (WHS) Online Management System	\$212,564
Regional Workshop Pty Ltd	Architectural Consultancy for the redesign of Cessnock Waste Transfer Station	\$1,398,975
Bolte Civil Pty Ltd	Lemming Corner Great North Road Laguna Upgrade	\$916,251
Daracon Contractors Pty Ltd	Construction of Waste Transfer Station	\$4,364,810
Caloola Vocational Services Inc.	Cemetery Mowing and Trimming	\$302,160
Hitachi Construction Machinery (Australia) Pty Ltd	Supply and Delivery of Motor Grader	\$383,901



Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Continue to update marketing material for the Local Government Area.		✓
- Develop an Investment Prospectus for the Cessnock Local Government Area.	✗	
Support local business support agencies.	✓	✓
- Support the "mainstreet" programs.		
Commence implementation of the Economic Development Strategy.		✓
- Develop a Business Investment Program.	✗	
- Implement the Business Investment Program.		
Commence implementation of the Cessnock CBD Masterplan.	✓	✓
- Complete the development strategy for Cessnock CBD (including draft development control plan and draft contributions plan).		
- Commence implementation of Stage 1 of the Cessnock Precinct Revitalisation Project.		
Prepare a Kurri Kurri CBD Masterplan.	✓	✓
- Continue development of the Kurri Kurri CBD Masterplan.		
Delivery Program Performance: ✓ Achieved 5 ✗ Not Achieved 0		

Note: *Delivery Program Result* relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan



Cessnock Council road construction

Achieving more Sustainable Employment Opportunities

EMPLOYMENT

Employed Residents

At June 2017 there were 20,355 employed residents in the Cessnock local government area. The retraction of mining and traditional industries are directly impacting resident employment status. 45 per cent of employed residents work in the local government area, the remaining travel to surrounding regions for work.

Workers in Cessnock

It is estimated 14,045 people work in the Cessnock local government area. 15 per cent are professionals, 14 per cent are technical and trades workers and 13 per cent are community and personal services workers. Accommodation & food services, retail trade and manufacturing are the highest employing sectors. Tourism is a critical industry for jobs in the Cessnock local government area.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	MAR 2016	JUNE 2016	SEP 2016	DEC 2016	MAR 2017
Cessnock LGA	11.7%	9.7%	7.9%	6.4%	6.6%
NSW	5.6%	5.4%	4.9%	4.8%	5.5%
Australia	6.0%	5.9%	5.6%	5.5%	6.2%

Source: *Small Area Labour Markets (March 2017)*

INDUSTRY SECTORS

Cessnock Gross Regional Product is estimated at \$2.490 billion. Cessnock represents 5.60 per cent of Hunter Region's GRP of \$44.435 billion, 0.46 per cent of New South Wales' Gross State Product (GSP) of \$538.513 billion and 0.15 per cent of Australia's GRP of \$1.655 trillion.

Cessnock 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 local government area with Kurri Kurri town centre being an important secondary retail node and the industrial heart of the local government area. Branxton and Greta are emergent centres which support growing populations. Local villages service the basic needs of more rural and outlying areas.



Agriculture

The main agricultural activities in the local government area 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 local government area are also expanding.

Extractive Industries

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

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

Based on current estimates of resources, coal mining is likely to continue in the local government area 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 commercial wine region and one of the highest profile wine areas in Australia.

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

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Support programs that promote education and training for local people. - Continue to award scholarships for academic, professional and trade excellence.	✔	✔
Support programs that promote employment for local people. - Implement employment programs with a focus on youth unemployment.	✔	✔
Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 2 ❌ Not Achieved 0		

Note: Delivery Program Result relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan



Enjoy the vineyards scenery with a horse and carriage ride

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 Hunter Valley Wine Country area of Cessnock City being one of the primary 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 2016 domestic visitors to the Hunter Region made 3.4 million overnight trips, spending 8.8 million nights in the region up by 8.8 per cent on the previous year. Domestic visitors to the Hunter Region made 6.6 million day trips, a significant 7.5 per cent increase on the previous year. The region received 16.1 per cent of visitors and 12.4 per cent of nights in regional NSW.

At 2015, the estimated number of visitors to Cessnock local government area alone was 1.05 million and the estimated domestic and international visitor spend in the Cessnock local government area was \$294 million (TRA at June 2017).



One of the many murals in Kurri Kurri and surrounding towns

Hunter Valley Visitor Centre

Under Council management, the Hunter Valley Visitor Centre has achieved Level 1 Accredited Visitor Information Centres (AVIC) accreditation in 2017 and services more businesses in Hunter Valley Wine Country than ever before. Visitation numbers and operational figures show that the new operating model has been effective in reducing costs while maximising the visitor experience. The centre expanded product offerings through the gift shop, art galley and Les Elvin Aboriginal Cultural gallery, pet friendly initiatives, implemented a well-supported "fee for service" (340 businesses subscribed), and continues to innovate in marketing and advertising initiatives including introduction of Wifi and an interactive iPad bar. Improvements to the landscaping, tenancies and internal spaces are increasing the attractiveness and functionality of the centre for visitors with free wine tastings and a café supporting the visitor experience. The centre has achieved status as a crucial event promoter, promoting 1035 events over the previous two years. Visitation through the centre doors was over 100,000 in 2016-17.



Spring Awakening
photo by Nicole Spears



National Stronger Regions program – Cessnock CBD Revitalisation Project

In 2015 Council received a grant from the Federal Governments National Stronger Regions Fund to commence a project called the Cessnock Civic Precinct Revitalisation. The works are those listed in the CBD Masterplan Implementation Plan and specifically entailed installation of wayfinding signage, upgrades to car parks, roads and pathways to improve pedestrian safety and connectivity in and around the CBD, laneway upgrades, bicycle parking and lockup areas as well as upgrades to open spaces incorporating public art, lighting and signage. These works are underway and are scheduled to be completed by early 2019.



Cessnock CBD comes alive during the annual Spring Awakening Lantern Parade
Photo credit: Nicole Spears

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Support programs that promote visitation across the Local Government Area. - Continue to implement the Hunter Valley Visitor Information Centre Strategy and Action Plans.	✔	✔
Support programs that promote a diversification of visitor experiences. - Continue implementation of relevant projects from the Destination Management Plan (within existing resources).	✔	✔
Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 2 ✘ Not Achieved 0		

Note: Delivery Program Result relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan

MEASURES:

MEASURES	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	2016-17 RESULT	TARGET
Grants secured for the community	These three measures are: - the number of grants applied for; and - the number and value of grants and sponsorships that were secured for the community with assistance by Council.	94 Applied for 2012	138	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	93 Secured	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	\$47.958m Secured For period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2017	Improve

Note: References to base years relate to the 2013-17 Delivery Program





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 2016-17 to achieve the deliverables in the 2013-17 Delivery Program and, ultimately, the objectives in the community strategic plan.



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

INFORMATION ABOUT PLANNING AGREEMENTS 93G(5)

A planning authority that has entered into one or more planning agreements must, while any such planning agreements remain in force, include in its annual report particulars of compliance with and the effect of the planning agreements during the year to which the report relates.

Name	Short Description	Date	Parties	Land to which Agreement Applies
Anvil Creek Project Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Anvil Creek, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.	20 August 2008	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; and Greta Estates Pty Limited (Greta) of 12 Woodside Avenue, Burwood, NSW, 2134.	Lots 1-6 of DP 1036942 & Lots 263-264 of DP 755211.
Averys Village Planning Agreement Biodiversity	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide environmental offset land to the area commonly known as Averys Village.	15 September 2013	Minister for the Environment of Level 32 Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney, NSW, 2000; Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; Hunter Land Holdings of 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, NSW, 2322; Averys Rise Investor Pty Ltd of Level 2, 77 Hunter St, Newcastle, NSW, 2300; Lindsay James George Elliott of 57 Averys Lanes, Buchannan, NSW, 2323; Graham John Field of P.O. Box 30, Murgon, Qld, 4605; Pamela Joy Field of P.O. Box 30, Murgon, Qld, 4605; and 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 & Lot 119 752445 Averys Lane, Heddon Greta.
Bellbird Heights Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Bellbird Heights, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.	19 November 2014	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; Winton Partners Pty Limited of Level 2, 95 Pitt Street Sydney, NSW, 2000.	Lot 1 DP 1164334
Bellbird Heights Planning Agreement Biodiversity	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide environmental offset land to the area commonly known as Bellbird.	19 November 2014	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; Winton Partners Pty Limited of Level 2, 95 Pitt Street Sydney, NSW, 2000.	Lot 1 DP 1164334
Black Hill Planning Agreement Biodiversity	This objective of this Planning Agreement is to require the conservation of the natural environment, which is a public purpose associated with the carrying out of development.	21 November 2016	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325 The Trustees of the Roman Catholic Church for the dioceses of Maitland-Newcastle, 841 Hunter Street, Newcastle, New South Wales, 2302.	Lot 1131 DP 1057179.

Name	Short Description	Date	Parties	Land to which Agreement Applies
Cessnock Civic Planning Agreement Biodiversity	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide for the management of mine subsidence and environmental offset land within the area commonly known as Cessnock Civic.	21 August 2012	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; Cessnock Land Management P/L of C/-Level 1, 106 King St Sydney, NSW, 2000; Vincent Street Holdings P/L of C/- 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, NSW, 2322; and Hardie Oceanic P/L of C/-Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000.	Lot 251 DP 606348, Lot 1 DP 1036300, Lot 23 DP 845986 & Lot 22 DP 845986.
Cliftleigh Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Cliftleigh, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.	20 August 2008	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; and 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 & Lot 1 DP 1039042 Main Rd, Cliftleigh.
Heddon Greta Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Heddon Greta, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.	3 November 2010	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; and Kurri Autos Pty Limited of P.O. Box 61 Kurri Kurri, NSW, 2327.	Part Lot 404 of DP 1127085 & Part Lot 102 of DP 1112059 off Main Rd, Young & Bowden Sts, Errol Cres, Madeline & Ashley Cl & Forbes Cres at Heddon Greta.
Huntlee Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	This Agreement applies to Stage 1 of the Huntlee precinct approved by the State Government in April 2013. In total, the Huntlee Planning Agreement includes more than \$38.9 million of local infrastructure in the form of monetary contributions valued at \$9,546,588, works-in-kind valued at \$29,429,643, and 81.45ha of land dedication.	18 November 2015	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325 Huntlee Pty Ltd of 34 Main Street Ellenbrook, Western Australia.	Part of Lot 200 DP 828486, Lot 201 DP 828486, Part of Lot 230 DP 79198, Lot 231 DP 879198, Lot 33 DP 755211, Lot 36 DP 755211, Lot 37 DP 755211, Lot 38 DP 755211, Lot 39 DP 755211, Lot 43 DP 755211, Part of Lot 241 DP 11005591, Lot 2 DP 729973, Lot 3 DP 729973, Lot 4 DP 729973, Lot 6 DP 729973, Lot 7 DP 729973, Lot 9 DP 729973, Lot 10 DP 729973, Lot 11 DP 729973, Part of Lot 12 DP 729973, Part of Lot 21 DP 1050597, Part of Lot 221 DP 1064738, Lot 10 DP 1105639, Lot 287 DP 1209109.
Kitchener Residential Subdivision Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide \$12,057.46 per lot (subject to indexation) for the provision of local infrastructure supporting the development of fifty nine (59) allotments in the Kitchener Urban Release Area.	4 November 2015	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325 JPG 58 Pty Ltd of Level 12, 48 Hunter Street, Sydney.	Lot 2 DP 862493

Name	Short Description	Date	Parties	Land to which Agreement Applies
Orica Planning Agreement Biodiversity	This Planning Agreement commits the landowner to enter into a BioBanking Agreement in relation to part of the site with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage.	19 October 2016	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; and Orica Australia Pty Limited C/Level 1, 1 Nicholson Street, Melbourne, Victoria, 3001.	Lot 2 DP 809377.
Rose Hill Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Millfield, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.	20 October 2014	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; Fame Cove Three Pty Limited of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000.	Lot 1 DP 1197775
West and Wyndham Street Greta Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Greta, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.	6 August 2014	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; Hardie Greta Pty Limited of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000.	Lot 2 DP 808354 & Lot 2 DP 1151267
West and Wyndham Street Greta Planning Agreement Biodiversity	This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide environmental offset land associated with development of the 'West and Wyndham Street, Greta' Urban Release Area, including the on-site protection of 7.7ha, and the off-site dedication of Lots 9, 102, and 207 DP753817 (297ha) for integration into the Wollemi National Park in the Singleton LGA.	20 August 2015	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325 Minister administering the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974 of Level 32 Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, NSW, Sydney, 2000 Hardie Greta Pty Ltd of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000 Biodiversity Lands Pty Ltd of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000.	Lot 2 DP 808354, Lot 2 DP 1151267, Lot 9 DP 753817, Lot 102 DP 753817, Lot 207 DP 753817
1443 Wine Country Drive Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure	This objective of the Planning Agreement is to provide suitable funding for various public facilities to meet the demand generated by Development of the Land.	28 June 2017	Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325 Peter Vizzard, 1443 Wine Country Drive, Rothbury, New South Wales, 2335.	Lot 11 DP 1105639.

DEVELOPMENT

The Hunter Regional Plan 2036 forecast Cessnock City Council would have a projected increase in dwelling approvals of 6,350 between 2016 and 2036, which averages out to be 318 applications per year.

Council exceeded this figure in the 2016-17 financial year with 459 residential buildings across the LGA.

The total number of DAs determined (excluding s96) was up 7.7 per cent, reaching 784 and the total value of Council's DAs was \$207,097,876, an increase of 23 per cent on the 2015-16 financial year. Complying development value for the same period was another \$61 million on top of this.



This boom is reflective of an increase in housing activity across the region, in particular the growth occurring in greenfield Urban Release Areas, including Huntlee and Cliftleigh. Council staff have also been working hard to

improve both processes and timeframes when it comes to building approvals and in 2016-17, the average processing time was 52 days, yet the median time was just 28 days.



HUNTLEE DEVELOPMENT EARLY 2014

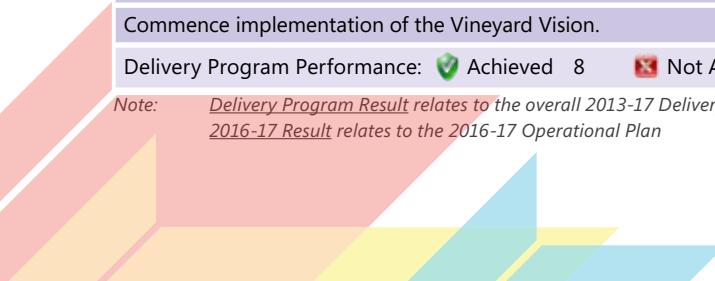


HUNTLEE DEVELOPMENT 2017

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Prepare a City Wide Development Strategy. - Complete phase 1 of the City Wide Planning Strategy. (replacing the City Wide Settlement Strategy)	✔	✔
Commence implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy.	✔	✔
Complete further Flood Studies and Risk Management Plans for major catchments in the Local Government Area. - Finalise procurement of consultants for the Greta/Anvil Creek Flood Study.	✔	✔
Commence implementation of Council's Trunk Stormwater Drainage Strategy. - Complete Trunk Stormwater Drainage Strategy. - 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 implementation of the regional Weeds Action Plan.	✔	✔
Continue to efficiently and effectively process development applications and respond to planning-related enquiries. - Implement on-line applications relating to development assessment. - Continue to progress the integration and implementation of the on-line application module for development assessment.	✔	✔
Prepare a comprehensive Carbon Management Strategy and commence implementation.	✔	✔
Establish Council's position in relation to climate change adaptation and mitigation and implement priority actions. - Continue to implement the priority projects from the Energy Reduction & Carbon Management Strategy.	✔	✔
Commence implementation of the Vineyard Vision.	✔	✔
Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 8 ✘ Not Achieved 1		

Note: *Delivery Program Result relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program*
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan



Better Utilisation of Existing Open Space

RECREATION PLANNING

In 2016-17 Council completed the Recreation Needs Analysis that will inform the revision of the Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan. The Cessnock Aquatic Centre Feasibility and Design Report was also adopted and this has guided Council's current direction towards investigating aquatic facility options that do not require a Special Rate Variation. The Concept Design for the Richmond Vale Rail Trail continued to be developed along with the associated environmental impact reports in an effort to obtain planning approval in 2017-18. The Concept Design for Bridges Hill Park Regional Playground also commenced which has sought input from a number of stakeholders including local primary and secondary school students. Council's draft Generic Plans of Management for community land were further developed along with the draft Masterplans for Mount View Park, Miller Park and Turner Park and the draft Concept Design for the new Cessnock Skatepark. 2016-17 was another successful year in attracting grant funding with \$40,000 awarded for the preparation of strategic planning documents for the Poppet Head Park at Kitchener, \$20,000 awarded to replace the roof at Greta Preschool and \$41,000 awarded to upgrade the Kurri Kurri Ambulance Hall.



Council staff keep our gardens looking great all year round

Looking ahead to 2017-18, Council will be finalising the draft Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan along with the draft Masterplans for Mount View Park, Miller Park and Turner Park, the Generic Plans of Management for community land and the Concept Design for Cessnock Skate Park. Council will also be commencing the development of the Trail Strategy which was identified as a high priority in the Cessnock Cycling Strategy to build on the opportunities introduced by the Richmond Vale Rail Trail. To cater for the recreational needs of the youth, Council will revise the Cessnock Skate and BMX Facilities Needs Assessment to address current and future demand for such facilities. Strategic planning documents will also be prepared for Kitchener Poppet Head Park to protect the historic value of the site thanks to funding received by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage.

RECREATION FACILITIES

Council maintains in the vicinity of 555 hectares of open space throughout the local government area, in the form of, recreation & community facilities, playgrounds, parkland, formal gardens and civic spaces 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 recreation facilities are heavily utilised during the winter season (April – September), in particular for soccer, rugby league and netball, whilst during summer season, the main user groups are cricket and athletics.

Council also operates three public swimming pools at Branxton, Cessnock and Kurri Kurri. There are several major aquatics based clubs in the area, predominantly utilising Cessnock Pool. Branxton Pool and Cessnock Pool had 42,102 and 25,771 recorded attendances from October – March respectively. The Kurri Kurri Aquatic & Fitness Centre provides a year round indoor aquatic and gym facility which has proven to be highly popular with 116,781 attendances at the facility for the for 2016-2017. The types of visits to the centre included aqua and dry land fitness, squad swimming, aquatic education, recreational swimming and birthday parties.



Council's major recreation facilities projects during 2016-17 included the completion of the accessible pathways and car parking at Kitchener Poppet Head Heritage Park, Kurri Kurri RV Area, accessible BBQ, shelter and seating at Peace Park, roof replacement and verandah extension to the Stanford Merthyr Pony Club building, replacement of the Birralee (Snr) Amenities Building, Cessnock Civic Indoor Sports Centre internal refurbishment, Norman Brown Park playground improvements, Laguna Community Hall car park and Turner Park fence replacement.

Council accessed grant funding to assist with the delivery of Bellbird Community Hall kitchen replacement, Greta Preschool roof replacement, Kurri Kurri Ambulance Hall toilet refurbishment. Council was successful in receiving \$950,000 from the National Stronger Regions grant program for Bridges Hill Playground Replacement, pathway upgrades from the CBD to Bridges Hill, CBD Way-Finding Signage and other CBD improvement projects.

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.



Gordon Williams Memorial Lawn Cemetery at Aberdare

Council continues to meet and work closely with cemetery industry professionals to gain valuable feedback and to increase awareness within the community about Council's cemetery facilities.

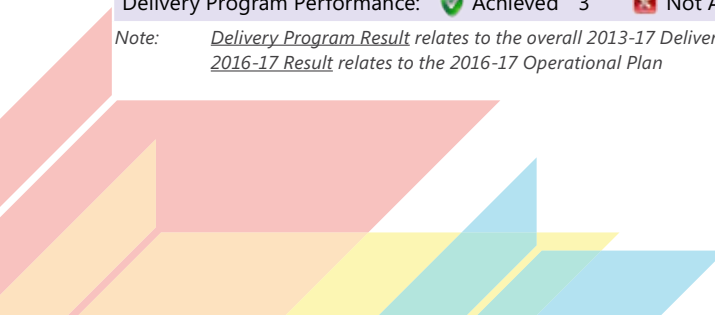
Council has been identified as an industry leader in cemetery operations with several organisations benchmarking against Council's procedures and continuous improvement principles.

Stage one of the Gordon Williams Memorial Park Cemetery Masterplan Extension have commenced which will ensure Council continues to provide for the future needs of the community.

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Complete the Recreation Needs Analysis and review the Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan 2009-2014. - Complete the Open Space Needs Analysis. - Complete the review of the Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan.	❌	❌
Develop new Plans of Management. - Continue 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 3 ❌ Not Achieved 1		

Note: *Delivery Program Result* relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan



Better Waste Management & Recycling

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Council's adopted Cessnock Waste Management Strategy in 2014-19 provides a comprehensive review and prioritised investigations toward reducing waste to landfill and the capture of resources. The Strategy identifies priorities, actions and expectations that:

- are appropriate for our community
- inform and educate our community
- are financially robust
- meet legislative requirements
- deliver on commitments to other strategies and plans.



The strategy identified organics as the prioritised stream that could deliver the greatest diversion based on audit data that indicated the garden waste stream accounted for approximately 20 per cent of the total stream while other organics (i.e. food) also accounted for approximately 20 per cent of the total stream. In response, Council introduced the kerbside collection of garden organics in March 2017 with capacity to expand to include food organics at a future time.

To assist in the decision making process considerable knowledge and data has been collected 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, they include:

- 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
- 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 cost effective 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



New kerbside organics collection commenced in March 2017

NEW WASTE TRANSFER STATION

Construction of the new waste transfer station at the Cessnock Waste Management Centre commenced and is due to open in October 2017.

Every part of the waste management service whether it is recycling or landfill has a cost component that applies to all users. The most effective way to reduce the cost impact is through recycling and diverting material from landfill.

The new waste transfer station is the first stage of site development that will deliver a modern, safer and more convenient facility for residents.

The new waste transfer station will feature:

- A series of drop off areas for disposal of different recyclable materials including garden organics, bricks and concrete, metal items, mattresses, e-waste, paints, oils and batteries.
- Ease of one way traffic flow with slip lanes around individual drop off areas.
- Sealed, undercover load/unload area.
- A separate road network for operational vehicles.

In NSW, waste facilities and landfill sites are licenced by the NSW Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). As

part of this licence:

- Every tonne must be recorded via a weighbridge (providing accurate records and recording both waste and recyclables).
- A monthly return must be provided to the EPA of tonnes received (from weighbridge records).
- The NSW State Waste Levy of \$138.20 for every tonne received must be paid.

Councils current levy contribution is in the order of \$6.8 million per year.

The redevelopment of the site will:





- comply with the reporting requirements recording all material via the weighbridge.
- provide increased opportunities for material to be recycled or diverted from landfill, which will help reduce the levy charges and conserve landfill space.

The introduction of the new kerbside organic collection complements the redevelopment. This service has the potential to divert around 10,000 tonne of material away from landfill annually. Garden organics delivered to the waste management centre will also be sent to a garden organics processor.



Council Waste Transfer Station due to open in October 2017

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
<p>Commence implementation of the priority projects from the revised Waste Management Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commence construction of stage 1 redevelopment of Waste Management & Reuse Centre extension project. - Continue implementation of the priority projects from the revised Waste Management Strategy 2014-19. - Implement the priority actions of the EPA - Waste Less Recycle More Program. 		
Delivery Program Performance:  Achieved 1  Not Achieved 0		

Note: *Delivery Program Result* relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan

MEASURES:

MEASURES	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	2016-17 RESULT	TARGET
Development Application Processing Times	<p>This measure is the mean and the median number of days to process Development Applications (for all DAs which have been determined).</p> <p>This data is sourced from the Local Development Performance Monitoring Report.</p>	75 Mean 2011-12 31 Median 2011-12	53.81 Mean 2016-17 30 Median 2016-17	Maintain Maintain
Environmental health and protection inspections	<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 2011-12	1059 2016-17	>900
Completion of Capital Works Program - Recreation	<p>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.</p>	N/A	85%	>85%
Waste & Recycling	<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 2011-12	4,968t 2016-17 89,747t 2016-17 1,701t March - June 2016	>4,500t p.a.
Waste & Recycling	<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 2011-12	21,230 2016-17	Increase

Note: References to base years relate to the 2013-17 Delivery Program



*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 2016-17 to achieve the deliverables in the 2013-17 Delivery Program and, ultimately, the objectives in the community strategic plan.



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

The Cessnock Airport Strategic Plan was adopted in 2014 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.

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 local government area:

- 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



Final checks before takeoff at Cessnock Airport

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the Transport & Land Use Planning Needs Analysis component of the City Wide Infrastructure Strategy. - Complete the umbrella City Wide Infrastructure Strategy. 	✗	✗
Commence implementation of priority projects from the City Wide Infrastructure Strategy.	✓	✓
Commence implementation of the Cessnock Airport Strategic Plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue implementation of the priority projects from the Airport Strategic Plan. 	✓	✓

Delivery Program Performance: ✓ Achieved 4 ✗ Not Achieved 1

Note: Delivery Program Result relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan

Improving the Road Network

ROADS

The Cessnock local government area contains, 1,111 kilometres of road network, 76 road bridges, 63 major culverts, 38 foot bridges and 126 kilometres of storm water drainage which are under Council's care and control.

Around two-thirds of the roads in the local government area are sealed, while the other one-third is unsealed.

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

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 2016-17 is included in Special Schedule 7 of Council's financial reports.

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.

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.

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 2016-17:

Private Works on Public Land	
Power pole guard rail for Astar Coal Mine - Quorrobolong Road, Quorrobolong	Full cost to client \$45,719.74
Public Works on Private Land	NIL

PROGRAM 2016-17	ADOPTED BUDGET	REVISED BUDGET	ACTUAL
ROADS, BRIDGES & DRAINAGE			
Infrastructure Forward Planning	\$790,000	\$802,654	\$499,659
Bridge Construction	\$4,302,500	\$4,432,413	\$1,818,689
Drainage Construction	\$2,132,500	\$3,001,559	\$1,463,245
Floodplain Management	\$334,377	\$317,377	\$180,318
Local Road Construction	\$185,000	\$658,000	\$581,800
Local Road Renewal	\$1,608,006	\$1,815,969	\$1,501,440
Pathways Construction	\$255,000	\$681,319	\$468,246
Blackspot Safer Roads Program	\$795,000	\$900,202	\$854,265
Vineyard Roads Construction	\$3,920,000	\$4,468,800	\$5,380,119
Gravel Rehab-Resheeting	\$350,000	\$312,120	\$426,823
Regional Road Renewal	\$1,000,880	\$1,593,969	\$1,334,524
SUB-TOTAL	\$15,673,263	\$18,984,382	\$14,509,128
SPECIAL RATE VARIATION			
Local & Regional Roads Program	\$1,498,322	\$2,160,000	\$2,160,000
SUB-TOTAL	\$1,498,322	\$2,160,000	\$2,160,000

PROGRAM 2016-17	ADOPTED BUDGET	REVISED BUDGET	ACTUAL
RECREATION & PARKS			
Cemeteries Facilities Construction	\$40,000	\$70,000	\$35,981
Cessnock Civic Precinct Revitalisation	\$360,000	\$340,359	\$42,569
Pools Facilities Renewal	\$200,000	\$210,000	\$222,371
Recreation Facilities Construction	\$110,000	\$347,829	\$374,099
Recreation Facilities Renewal	\$158,300	\$221,112	\$201,794
SUB-TOTAL	\$868,300	\$1,189,300	\$876,814
BUILDINGS			
Community Buildings Renewal	\$95,000	\$171,577	\$138,817
Recreation Buildings Construction	\$60,000	\$790,300	\$897,693
Recreation Buildings Renewal	\$131,400	\$158,944	\$93,144
SUB-TOTAL	\$286,400	\$1,120,821	\$1,129,654
New Landfill Development Program	\$7,000,000	\$5,967,850	\$4,828,877
SUB-TOTAL	\$7,000,000	\$5,967,850	\$4,828,877
TOTAL	\$25,326,285	\$29,422,353	\$23,504,473

FUTURE FUNDING FOR COUNCIL'S ROADS

In June 2014 the Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) approved a special rate variation that allowed for 9.55 per cent to remain permanently in the rate base, comprising two components: the rate peg of 2.30 per cent that was available to all NSW councils and an increase of 7.25 per cent for road infrastructure renewal. This increase replaced a 6.05 per cent 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 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 undertaking in order to be financially sustainable and provide the levels of service and infrastructure agreed with the community.

Details of the expenditure from this special rate variation are included on page 59.

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Improve the corporate asset management system.		
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.		
Adopt the City Wide Section 94 Contributions Plan.		
- Continue preparation of the City Wide Section 94 Contributions Plan.		
Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 4 Not Achieved 1		

Note: *Delivery Program Result* relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan

Improving Access to Health Services Locally

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING

In April 2017, Council adopted its Health and Wellbeing Plan. The aim of the Plan is to provide Council with strategic direction for how it can play its part in improving the health status of residents living within the local government area. The Cessnock Healthy Lifestyle Network, whose membership includes local health professionals, community representatives and a Council representative, assisted in guiding the development of the Plan.



Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Advocate for health services on behalf of the community. - Finalise the development of a Health Strategic Plan for the Cessnock Local Government Area.		

Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 1 Not Achieved 0

Note: *Delivery Program Result* relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan

MEASURES:

MEASURES	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	2016-17 RESULT	TARGET
Asset Management Maturity	This measure is the qualitative assessment of Council's Asset Management maturity. The measure is assessed on a scale of basic, core and advanced.	Basic	Basic June 2016	Core
Completion capital works program – roads, bridges and drainage	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%

Note: References to base years relate to the 2013-17 Delivery Program



*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 2016-17 to achieve the deliverables in the 2013-17 Delivery Program and, ultimately, the objectives in the community strategic plan.



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.

In 2016-17 the cost of nominated expenses incurred by and facilities provided to Councillors was \$34,503. 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 2016-17 were fixed within the range of fees established by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. The Mayoral fee was fixed at \$41,090 and the Councillor fee at \$18,840.

In 2016-17 there were no overseas visits by elected Councillors.

MAYORAL FEES	\$41,043
COUNCILLOR FEES	\$230,633
Breakdown of Mayoral and Councillors' Expenses	
	Amount
Provision of dedicated office equipment, including laptop computers, mobile phones, telephone, fax and installation of internet access, and vehicle running expenses.	\$11,176
Telephone calls, including mobiles, landlines, fax and internet services	\$8,605
Spouse / Partner Accompanying Person	NIL
Conferences and Seminars	\$7,469
Training and Skill Development	\$1,640
Interstate Travel	\$700
Overseas Travel	NIL
Meetings - Travel	\$4,913
Care and Other Related Expenses	NIL
TOTAL	\$34,503

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Establish a professional development program for Councillors. - Develop & deliver pre & post Council-election training sessions & induction (for prospective & successful candidates).	✔	✔
Explore opportunities within the Council workforce for traineeships, apprenticeships and work experience programs.	✔	✔
Recognise the work of community leaders.	✔	✔
Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 3 ✘ Not Achieved 0		

Note: *Delivery Program Result* relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan

Encouraging More Community Participation in Decision Making

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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 LGA 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.

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE 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 of January and December each year.

Council can also appoint various sub-committees and "sunset" committees to carry out selected tasks.

- Council can form Committees and determine their functions, powers, membership and voting rights. Membership of a Council Committee is not restricted to Councillors.
- A Council Committee could be advisory or it could have decision-making powers as delegated by the Council.
- Advisory Committees or Sub-Committees are common and usually have the power to make recommendations but not make decisions. The recommendations of Advisory Committees can assist a Council in making informed decisions on complex matters.

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.

Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Commence implementation of priority projects from the Communications & Engagement Strategy.		
Improve Council's use of technology to inform and engage the community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement on-line customer requests. - Update Council's telephony products. - Investigate the implementation of a Council app for smart devices to improve communication with the community. 		
Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 2 Not Achieved 0		

Note: *Delivery Program Result* relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan

Making Council More Responsive to the Community

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Each year Council receives thousands of requests for information and/or assistance via correspondence, face-to-face 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 2016-17 Council received a total of 22,015 requests from community members, businesses and external government agencies.

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 above figure).

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 2016-17 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.

In June 2015 the FSI projects were included in Council's adopted Improvement Proposal as part of the State Government's Fit for the Future reform program.



Kurri Kurri Rotary Park

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES

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

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 incorporating this information into the standard staff induction process.

During the 2016-17 period Council received no 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)*.

The GIPA Act provides public access to government information, and favours disclosure of information unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

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. development consents)
4. Formal Access (e.g. complaint information)

Open access information includes the following:

- Council's Agency Information Guide
- policy documents
- Annual Report
- a register of Council contracts
- Council business papers

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 located on Council's website www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/council/accessinfo



Spring Awakening 2016
Photo by Nicole Spears

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) ACT & REGULATION

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, 2017 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)	No	No

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)	22

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	1	1
% of Total	0%	100%	

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	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	14%
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)	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	18%
Members of the public (other)	10	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	15	68%
Total	16	2	1	1	0	0	0	2	22	
% of Total	73%	9%	5%	5%	0%	0%	0%	9%		

* 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*	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	14%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	14	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	19	86%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	16	2	1	1	0	0	0	2	22	
% of Total	73%	9%	5%	5%	0%	0%	0%	9%		

* 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 Reason for invalidity	No. of applications	% of Total
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	2	100%
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	2	100%

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	1	100%
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%
Total	1	

* 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	1	50%
Law enforcement and security	0	0%
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	1	50%
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%
Total	2	

Table F: Timeliness	No. of applications*	% of Total
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	22	100%
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	0	0%
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0	0%
Total	22	

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	0	0	0%
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	0	0	
% of Total	0%	0%		

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

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 enables employees to maximise their contribution to the achievement of Council's strategic goals.



Council outdoor staff showing support for breast cancer awareness

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

During 2016-2017 Council has continued to develop its Wellbeing@Work program including the ongoing professional development of its workplace contact people. The workplace contact people meet regularly to discuss workplace issues associated with Council's EEO, Bullying and Harassment Policy. The contact people are often the first point of call if an employee is faced with a harassment, bullying or EEO issue and can provide information on options that can be taken to work through any such issue.

Council continues to capture EEO data for all new and existing employees and now includes EEO questions as part of the process for applying for jobs at Council.

SENIOR STAFF

Statement of the total amount paid to each senior staff member employed during 2016-17.

	General Manager	Directors (x3)
	01/07/16 to 30/06/17	01/07/16 to 30/06/17
Total Value of Salary Component of Package:	\$216,696	\$586,563
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):	\$47,400	\$82,288
Total value of non-cash benefits - Provisions of Motor Vehicle:	\$12,653	\$35,128
Total payable fringe benefits tax for non-cash benefits:	\$13,307	\$36,919
Total Remuneration Package	\$290,056	\$740,898

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Council first approved the Audit Committee Charter in April 2010. Minor amendments were made to the Charter in September 2015. The Charter is currently due for review, however the State Government amended the *Local Government Act, 1993* in 2015 making Audit Risk and Improvement Committees (ARIC) mandatory and extending the scope of those committees to include strategic planning, governance, service reviews and performance measurement data. The specific level of assurance required by the ARIC in relation to these areas will be explained in regulations and guidelines supporting the new section of the Act. The Audit Committee Charter will be amended once these regulations and guidelines are published.

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

In addition, the Committee ensures 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:

- Overseeing Council's risk management process to 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, ensuring 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. The Executive Leadership Team, Chief Financial Officer and Internal Auditor attend each meeting. Other officers attend when relevant to reports being considered or to make presentations. The NSW Auditor General became Council's external auditor in 2016-17. A representative of the Auditor General and the contracted external auditor attend most Audit Committee meetings in person, or via teleconference.

The following Councillors were members of the Committee during 2016-17:

- Mayor, Councillor R Pynsent; and
- Councillor M Campbell (until September 2016)
- Councillor P Dunn (from October 2016).

Independent members in 2016-17 were:

- Jason Masters (Chair until December 2016) – Jason has a strong background in internal audit and is the Chair of a number of other private and public sector audit committees.
- Jennifer Hayes (Chair from March 2017) – Jennifer has a strong background in corporate finance and executive management and currently serves on several other public and private sector boards and audit committees. Jennifer is a CPA, holds a Master of Business and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.
- Felicity Barr (external independent member) – Felicity has a strong background in the health sector, including senior level governance of complex organisations and is currently a member of boards and audit committees in the government and not for profit sector.
- Neal O'Callaghan (external independent member) – Neal has a strong background in governance and general management and is currently board and audit committee member for several organisations in the health and not for profit sectors.

Meetings

The Committee met four times during 2016-17, in August, November, January and May.

Minutes of the meetings contain recommendations to Council and are considered at the next available Council meeting once they are finalised. The Audit Committee also provides an annual report to Council on its performance.

Risk Management

The Committee oversees Council's risk management process to ensure significant risks are identified and appropriately treated.

When reviewing the Strategic Audit Plan 2017-2020 the Committee considered the outcomes of a corporate risk assessment prepared by the Executive Leadership Team in 2016.



Internal Audit

The Committee reviews and monitors internal audit plans, progress in implementing those plans, internal audit reports and progress in implementing management action plans arising from audits.

During 2016-17 the Committee reviewed, and endorsed a Strategic Audit Plan for 2017–2020 and an Annual Audit Plan for 2017-18.

At each meeting the Committee considered a quarterly report from the Internal Auditor outlining the status of internal audit progress against agreed plans and confirming priorities for the next quarter.

During 2016-17 the Committee received internal audit reports relating to:

- Environmental Management Systems;
- Planning Reform Fund;
- DRIVES24; and
- Records Management.

The Audit Committee monitors the implementation of management action plans resulting from completed internal audits, external audits and other relevant reviews received by the Committee. A system to manage the monitoring of action plans was implemented in 2015-16 and first reported to the Committee in May 2016. The Committee noted that 61 out of 101 original recommendations were showing as completed in 2016-17.

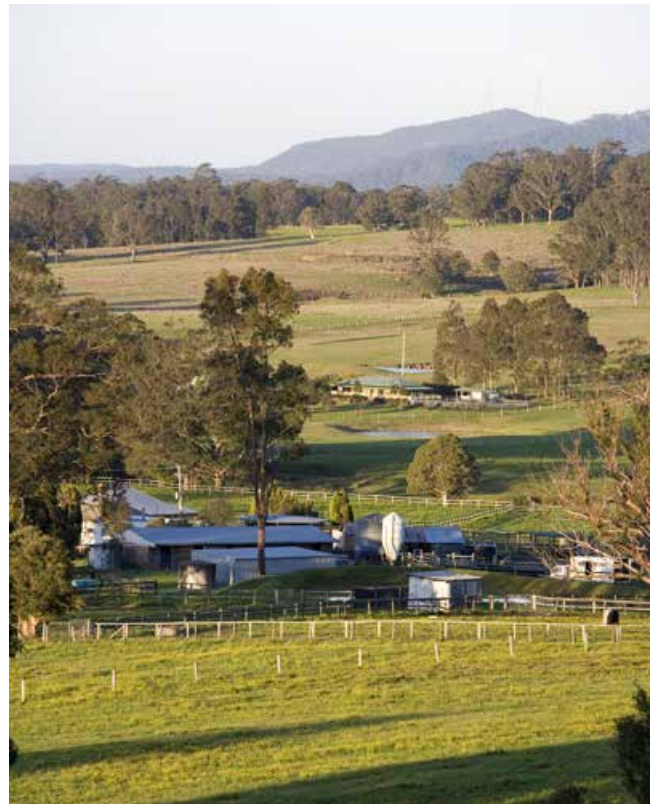
Compliance

The Committee reviews Council's frameworks designed to ensure compliance with relevant laws, regulations and Government policies.

The Committee did not consider any reports in relation to corporate compliance during 2016-17.

External Audit

The Committee oversees the external audit of Council's financial statements, ensuring they are consistent with the underlying records.



Amendment to the Local Government Act resulted in the NSW Auditor General becoming Council's external auditor in 2016-17. A representative of the Auditor General and the contracted external auditor (Forsyths Business Services) attend most Audit Committee meetings in person, or via teleconference. The Audit Committee reviews management comments and monitors the implementation of recommendations in the interim and final governance letters.

During 2016-17 the Audit Committee considered reports on:

- The audited 2015-16 financial statements;
- A presentation from Forsyths Business Services on the outcome of the 2015-16 external audit;
- External Audit Interim and Final Governance Letters for 2015-16; and
- Auditor General Client Service Plan for the 2016-17 audit.



LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Summarised below are details of the costs incurred in regard to legal proceedings taken by Council or taken against Council during 2016-17. The result of the proceedings is shown together with the amount of the legal costs incurred.

MATTER	COURT	COST	RESULT
TMV Devco Pty Limited v Cessnock City Council Proceedings No. 2015/10573	Land & Environment Court	\$7,001.28	Judgment handed down on 4 May 2016. Appeal dismissed and DA refused.
Geary v Cessnock City Council Class 1 Appeal	Land & Environment Court	\$11,767.01	This matter was set down for a Section 34AA Conference and Hearing on 26 and 27 July 2017.
Binnorie Dairy P/L v Cessnock City Council Proceedings No. 2017/64888	Land & Environment Court	\$6,285.28	Class 2 Application discontinued. Council to issue Notice of Determination.
Appeal - Schwartz Family Co Pty Ltd. Class 1 Appeal Proceedings No. 2017/102796 & 2017/102797	Land & Environment Court	\$8,816.96	The applicant lodged DA's relating to the marquee and workers cottage on 18 May 2016. The DA's are currently being assessed by Council. Appeal discontinued. Section 34 Conference on 14 August.

During 2016-17 Council incurred costs totalling \$85,291.07 for legal advice and other related services.

During 2016-17 Council incurred costs totalling \$536,326.50 pursuing unpaid rates, charges and sundry debtor accounts via debt recovery agents and through the courts.

RATES AND CHARGES

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

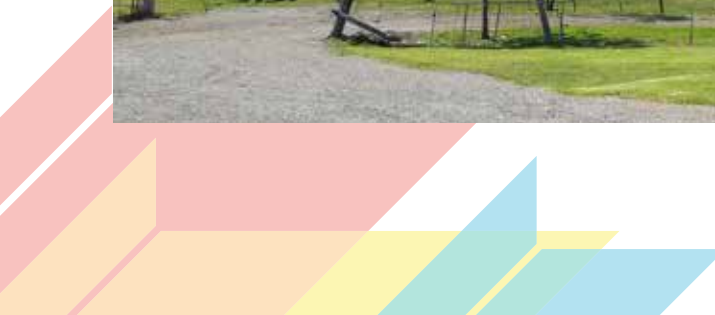
GROSS RATES AND CHARGES LEVIED AND WRITTEN OFF		
Ordinary Rates (Specify)		
Residential	\$25,642,295	
Farmland	\$3,046,700	
Business	\$4,691,149	
Mining	\$1,046,300	
Total Rates		\$34,426,444
Domestic Waste Management Charges		\$12,344,611
Stormwater Management Charges		\$499,460
Gross Rates and Charges		\$47,270,515
Less: Written Off		
Pensioners (Section 575)	\$1,191,156	
Pensioners (Section 582)	\$126,580	\$1,317,736
		\$45,952,779
Net Transfers to and from Postponed Rates		\$1,804
Net Rates and Annual Charges		\$45,950,975
Net Extra Charges - Interest and Legal per note 3		\$141,449
		\$46,092,424



SPECIAL RATE VARIATION EXPENDITURE

An amount of \$2,160,000 was levied under this special variation with the funds being expended on the following renewal works:

INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS FROM ADDITIONAL RATE INCREASE 2016-17			
Local Road Renewal Program			
Tamworth St, Abermain	Love St, Cessnock	Maitland St, Kurri Kurri	Currawong Cl, Weston
Ferguson St, Abernethy	Matthew St, Cessnock	Stanford St, Kurri Kurri	Davies Cl, Weston
Knox St, Abernethy	Old Maitland Rd, Cessnock	Wermol St, Kurri Kurri	Fourth St, Weston
Munro St, Abernethy	George St, East Branxton	Londons Rd, Lovedale	Harle St, Weston
Echidna Cl, Bellbird	Glissan St, East Branxton	Palmer St, Mulbring	Keirs St, Weston
Lings Rd, Buttai	Lindsay St, East Branxton	Stone St, Mulbring	McBlane St, Weston
Belmont Av, Cessnock	Middle St, East Branxton	Reid St, North Rothbury	O'Toole St, Weston
Desmond St, Cessnock	Clift St, Greta	Thomas St, North Rothbury	Perris St, Weston
Duguid Cl, Cessnock	Sale St, Greta	Evatt St, Pelaw Main	Rawson St, Weston
Dover St, Cessnock	Clift St, Heddon Greta	McDonalds Rd, Pokolbin	Stringybark Pl, Weston
Fairview Pl, Cessnock	Aberdare St, Kurri Kurri	Old Maitland Rd, Sawyers Gully	Teece St, Weston
Lightfoot St, Cessnock	Burns St, Kurri Kurri	Maitland St, Stanford Merthyr	Woodlands Dr, Weston
Lindeman Gr, Cessnock	Greta St, Kurri Kurri	Richmond Vale Rd, Richmond Vale	
Regional Road Renewal Program			
Great North Rd, Laguna		Wollombi Rd, Cessnock	
George Downes Dr, Bucketty		Wollombi Rd, Millfield (Stage 3)	
Wollombi Rd, Bellbird			



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

Council levies a stormwater management charge under Section 496A of the *Local Government Act, 1993* to carry out a program of works to manage the quantity and/or quality of stormwater that flows off land.

ADOPTED 2016-17	ACTUAL 2016-17
Flood Mapping & Strategic Studies	Flood Mapping & Strategic Studies
Whitburn Estate Drainage	Whitburn Estate Drainage
Hillview Road East Branxton	Hillview Road, East Branxton
Anvil Street, Greta	Wine Country Drive, Nulkaba
Cooper Street, Heddon Greta	
Lindsay Street, Cessnock	
Railway Street, Branxton	
Wine Country Drive, Nulkaba	
\$495,000	\$264,193

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 2016-17 Council provided rates subsidies totalling \$30,793.48 to community groups/organisations.

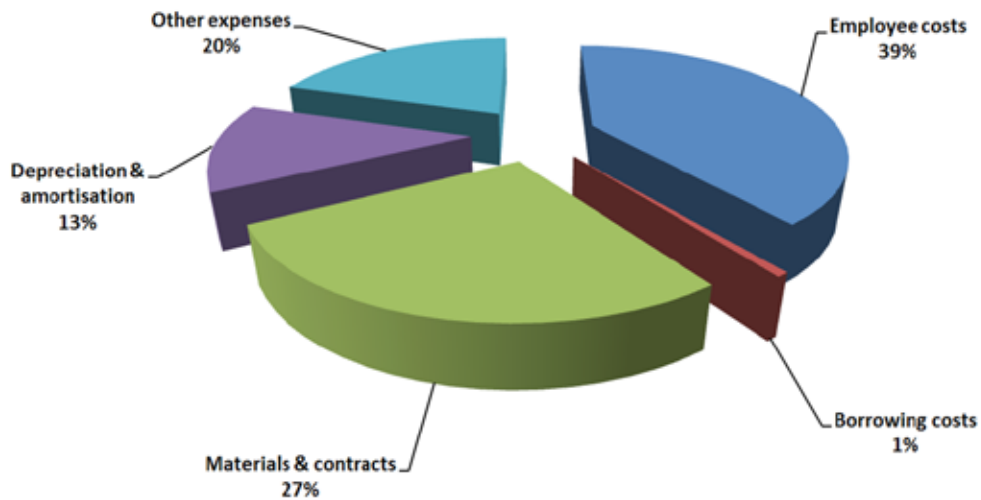
GROUP/ORGANISATION	AMOUNT
Aberdare Pre-School	\$2,258.04
Bellbird Pre-School	\$1,681.34
Cessnock Homing Pigeon Club	\$1,206.96
Cessnock Masonic Hall	\$1,625.53
Cessnock Mini Bike Club	\$375.92
Cessnock Multi Purpose Children's Centre	\$4,953.25
Cessnock Pistol Club	\$910.15
Challenge Disability Services	\$2,611.50
Country Womens Association NSW Cessnock	\$2,053.40
Greta Pre-School Kindergarten	\$1,802.26
Kurri Kurri Day Care Centre	\$2,165.02
Kurri Kurri Motor Cycle Club	\$294.39
Paxton Masonic Hall	\$1,318.58
Richmond Vale Preservation Co-op Society	\$858.66
RSL Hall - Branxton	\$1,951.09
RSL Hall - Cessnock	\$1,355.79
RSL Hall - Weston	\$827.46
Weston Masonic Hall	\$1,346.48
Weston Pre-School	\$1,197.66
TOTAL	\$30,793.48

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

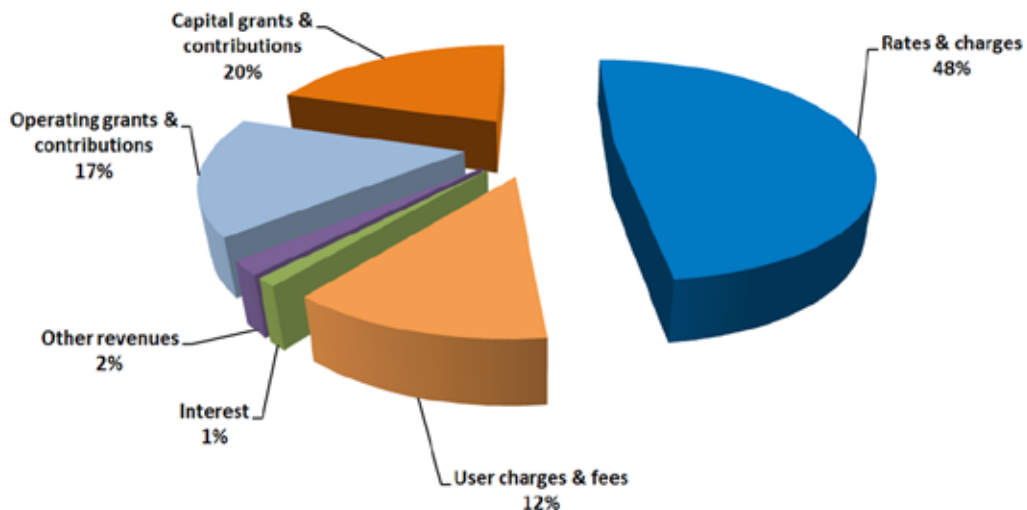
Under the provisions of Division 2 of Part 3 (Financial Management) of the *Local Government Act, 1993*, Council's audited financial reports and the auditor's reports for the year 2016-17 were presented to Council and the public on 1 November 2017.

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

OPERATING EXPENDITURE 2016-17



OPERATING REVENUE 2016-17



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 2016-17 year is set out below. In all cases except those noted, the items shown were replaced by a similar unit. The replacement program was changed significantly in 2016-17 as part of the Service Review Projects so actual replacements departed from planned.

PLANT REPLACEMENT PROGRAM Description of Items	CHANGEOVER COST (EX GST) AND NUMBER 2016-17		
	Proposed \$ (No. items)	Actual \$	Note
Passenger Fleet	\$600,000 (35)	\$375,519 (34)	
Utilities and Vans	\$194,058 (7)	\$93,860 (3)	2
7500 GVM Truck	\$60,000 (1)	\$76,956 (1)	
8500 GVM Truck	\$65,040 (1)	\$0 (0)	1
15000 GVM Truck	\$133,600 (2)	\$0 (0)	1
Tractors	\$151,500 (3)	\$151,816 (3)	
Graders	\$350,000 (1)	\$383,901 (3)	
Special Plant			
Street sweeper	\$236,800 (1)	\$0 (0)	2
Roller mower attachment	\$20,000 (1)	\$22,250 (1)	
Dingo	\$48,000 (1)	\$45,392 (1)	

Notes:

1. Replacement of some items postponed.

2. Ordered in 2016-17 and not received until 2017-18.



Delivery Program Performance

Deliverables and Actions	2016-17 Result	Delivery Program Result
Commence implementation of the priority projects from the Customer Service Strategy. - Continue implementation of priority projects from the Customer Service Strategy.	✔	✔
Implement systems and strategies to improve productivity across the organisation. - Continue to implement the Performance Management System. - Continue to implement a new remuneration system. - Develop an Enterprise Agreement that satisfies the needs of Council and its employees.	✔	✔
Develop and implement a strategic and operational internal audit program. - Implement the annual internal audit program. - Implement the annual 2016-17 internal audit program.	✔	✔
Review and implement a revised Risk Management Strategy. - Commence implementation of the Enterprise Risk Management Strategy.	✔	✔
Carry out governance functions, provide advice and conduct education programs to comply with legislation and best practice.	✔	✔
Review the Community Strategic Plan.	✔	✔
Develop and implement a special rate variation strategy. - Progress the Financial Sustainability Initiative/Council Improvement Proposal projects.	✔	✔

Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 7 ❌ Not Achieved 0

Note: *Delivery Program Result* relates to the overall 2013-17 Delivery Program
2016-17 Result relates to the 2016-17 Operational Plan

MEASURES:

MEASURES	CONTEXT/BENCHMARK	BASE	2016-17 RESULT	TARGET
Satisfaction with Council's performance overall	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. The benchmark in 2009 from similar surveys with over 15,000 residents across 25 local government areas was 3.5. Current Rating = 2.4 (compared with 3.2 in August 2009)	2.4 2012	3.27 2016	>3
Response to Telephone Calls	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. This data is sourced from Council's telephone system.	87.7% 2011-12	90% 2016-17	90%
Response to Customer Requests	The number of customer requests that are completed within agreed timeframes divided by the total number of customer requests completed. This data is sourced from the workflows in Council's Customer Request Management system.	N/A	79.2% 2016-17	80%

Note: References to base years relate to the 2013-17 Delivery Program



Statutory Requirements

STATUTORY REPORTING INDEX

Requirement	Section/Clause	Page
Local Government Act 1993 and General Regulation		
1. Completed within 5 months after end of financial year.	s428(1)	N/A
2. Copy provided to the Minister for Local Government (via the Office of Local Government).	s428(5)	N/A
3. Copy posted on council's website.	s428(5)	N/A
Contains:		
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)	9-63
5. Copy of Council's audited financial reports and notes and information required by the Regulation or the Guidelines.	s428(4)(a)	Separate document
6. Amount of rates and charges written off during the year.	cl 132	59
7. Details of overseas visits by councillors, council staff or other persons representing council (including visits sponsored by other organisations).	s428(4)(b) cl 217(1)(a)	49
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)	49
• Provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to councillors.	cl 217(1)(a1)(i)	
• Telephone calls made by councillors.	cl 217(1)(a1)(ii)	
• Attendance of councillors at conferences and seminars.	cl 217(1)(a1)(iii)	
• Training of councillors and provision of skill development.	cl 217(1)(a1)(iv)	
• Interstate visits by councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses.	cl 217(1)(a1)(v)	
• Overseas visits by councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses.	cl 217(1)(a1)(vi)	
• 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)	
• Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member of a councillor.	cl 217(1)(a1)(viii)	
9. Details of each contract awarded for amounts greater than \$150,000. Includes:	cl 217(1)(a2)	24
• Name of contractor.	cl 217(1)(a2)	
• Nature of goods or services supplied.	cl 217(1)(a2)	
• Total amount payable under the contract.	cl 217(1)(a2)	
10. Summary of the amounts incurred by the council in relation to legal proceedings. Includes:	cl 217(1)(a3)	58
• Amounts, costs and expenses paid or received.	cl 217(1)(a3)	
• Summary of the state of progress of each legal proceeding and (if it has been finalised) result.	cl 217(1)(a3)	
11. Summary of resolutions made under section 67 concerning work carried out on private land. Includes:	s67(3) cl 217(1)(a4)	44
• Summary or details of work.	cl 217(1)(a4)	
• Cost of work fully or partly subsidised by council.	cl 217(1)(a4)	
• Total amount by which council has subsidised any such work.	cl 217(1)(a4)	
12. Total amount contributed or otherwise granted under section 356 (financially assist others).	cl 217(1)(a5)	12 & 60
13. Statement of all external bodies that exercised functions delegated by council.	cl 217(1)(a6)	23
14. Statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which council held a controlling interest.	cl 217(1)(a7)	25
15. Statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which the council participated.	cl 217(1)(a8)	23
16. Statement of activities to implement its EEO management plan.	cl 217(1)(a9)	55
17. Statement of the total remuneration comprised in the remuneration package of the general manager. Includes:	cl 217(1)(b)	55
• Total value of the salary component of the package.	cl 217(1)(b)(i)	
• Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of the salary component.	cl 217(1)(b)(ii)	
• 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)	
• Total value of any non-cash benefits for which the general manager may elect under the package.	cl 217(1)(b)(iv)	
• Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits.	cl 217(1)(b)(v)	

Requirement	Section/Clause	Page
Contains:		
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)	55
• Total value of salary components of their packages.	cl 217(1)(c)(i)	
• 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)	
• 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)	
• Total value of any non-cash benefits for which any of them may elect under the package.	cl 217(1)(c)(iv)	
• Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits.	cl 217(1)(c)(v)	
19. A statement detailing the stormwater management services provided (<i>if levied</i>).	cl 217(1)(e)	60
20. A statement detailing the coastal protection services provided (<i>if levied</i>).	cl 217(1)(e1)	N/A
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)	N/A
22. Particulars of any environmental upgrade agreement entered into, in accordance with any requirements imposed under s406.	s54P	N/A
23. Report on special variation expenditure if required to do so by the instrument made by the Minister.	s508(2) / s508A	59
24. Report on capital works projects.	Capital Expenditure Guidelines	44-45
Companion Animals Act 1998 and Companion Animals Regulation 2008		
25. Statement on activities relating to enforcing and ensuring compliance with the Companion Animals Act and Regulation. Includes:	Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 cl 217(1)(f)	16 & 17
• Lodgement of pound data collection returns with the Division.	16.2 (a) Guidelines	
• Lodgement of data relating to dog attacks with the Division.	16.2 (b) Guidelines	
• Amount of funding spent on companion animal management and activities.	16.2 (c) Guidelines	
• Companion animal community education programs carried out.	16.2 (d) Guidelines	
• Strategies council has in place to promote and assist the de-sexing of dogs and cats.	16.2 (d) Guidelines	
• 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	
• Off leash areas provided in the council area.	16.2 (f) Guidelines	
Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and Regulation		
26. Information included on GIPA activity.	s125(1) cl 7 Sch. 2	53
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979		
27. Particulars of compliance with and effect of planning agreements in force during the year.	s93G(5)	32
Public Interest Disclosure Act 1994 and Regulation		
28. Information on number of public interest disclosures and whether public interest disclosure policy is in place.	s31 cl4	51
Carers Recognition Act 2010		
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)	N/A
Disability Inclusion Act 2014 *Note: Councils are not required to report on this until the 2017/18 financial year		
30. Information on the implementation of council's Disability Inclusion Plan.	s13(1)	N/A
Fisheries Management Act 1994		
31. Recovery and threat abatement plans - Councils identified in a plan as responsible for implementation of measures included in the plan, to report on actions taken to implement measures as to the state of the environment in its area.	s220ZT	N/A

This checklist includes the requirements of the Local Government Act, Local Government General Regulation, Companion Animals Act and Regulation, Government Information (Public Access) Act and Regulation, Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, Public Interest Disclosures and Regulation, Carers Recognition Act, Disability Inclusion Act 2014, Fisheries Management Act 1994).



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