



10 September 2025

To All Councillors

Notice is hereby given, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993, that the next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held in the Council Chambers, on Wednesday, 17 September 2025 at 6.30pm, for the purposes of transacting the undermentioned business.

AGENDA:

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(3) RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE , OR ATTENDANCE BY AUDIO-VISUAL LINK	
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‡ - Denotes that Report is for notation only.



Principles for Local Government

Exercise of functions generally

The following general principles apply to the exercise of functions by Councils:

- a) Councils should provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making.
- b) Councils should carry out functions in a way that provides the best possible value for residents and ratepayers.
- c) Councils should plan strategically, using the integrated planning and reporting framework, for the provision of effective and efficient services and regulation to meet the diverse needs of the local community.
- d) Councils should apply the integrated planning and reporting framework in carrying out their functions so as to achieve desired outcomes and continuous improvements.
- e) Councils should work co-operatively with other Councils and the State government to achieve desired outcomes for the local community.
- f) Councils should manage lands and other assets so that current and future local community needs can be met in an affordable way.
- g) Councils should work with others to secure appropriate services for local community needs.
- h) Councils should act fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the local community.
- i) Councils should be responsible employers and provide a consultative and supportive working environment for staff.

Council's Values

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Respect
- Excellence
- Teamwork

Our Community's Vision

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

Cessnock – thriving, attractive and welcoming.

Our Community's Desired Outcomes

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



Council Code of Conduct

Council adopted its current Code of Conduct on 23 October 2024. This Code provides details of statutory requirements and gives guidance in respect of the way in which pecuniary and conflict of interest issues must be disclosed. Councillors took an oath or affirmation at the commencement of their term of office under section 233A of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) and are therefore obligated under Council's Code of Conduct to disclose and appropriately manage their conflicts of interest.

Generally, the Code outlines the following issues:

1. Councillors are under an obligation at law to disclose any interest they may have in any matter before the Council as soon as practicable and to refrain from being involved in any consideration or to vote on any such matter where required and out outlined in the Code of Conduct.
2. Councillors must disclose any interest in any matter noted in the business paper prior to or at the opening of the meeting.
3. The nature of the interest shall be included in the disclosure.
4. Councillors shall immediately and during the meeting disclose any interest in respect of any matter arising during the meeting which is not referred to in the business paper.
5. All disclosures of interest shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
6. All disclosures of interest shall as far as is practicable be given in writing.
7. Any member having a pecuniary or non-pecuniary significant conflict of interest shall leave the meeting and remain absent while the subject of the interest is being considered by Council.
8. The meeting shall not discuss any matter in which a Councillor has a pecuniary or non-pecuniary significant conflict of interest while the Councillor is present at the meeting.



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**MINUTES OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF THE CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON WEDNESDAY, 20 AUGUST 2025, COMMENCING
AT 6.30PM**

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Interim General Manager (Director Planning and Environment)
Director Corporate and Community Services
Acting Director Works and Infrastructure (Works & Operations Manager)
Acting Director Planning and Environment (Regulatory Services Manager)
People and Culture Manager
Chief Financial Officer
Communications & Engagement Manager
Principal Community Engagement Officer
Help Desk Support Officer
Council Services Team Leader
Senior Business Support Officer – Council Services

The Prayer was presented by Pastor Rachel Main

**ATTENDANCE BY
AV LINK:**

MOTION

Moved: Councillor Hill
Seconded: Councillor Harrington

213

RESOLVED that Council permit Councillor Madden to attend the 20 August 2025 Ordinary Council meeting by audio-visual link due to work commitments.

FOR

AGAINST

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

Total (13)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MINUTES:

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Harrington
 Seconded: Councillor Grine

214

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 16 July 2025, as circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a correct record.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST NO. DI8/2025

SUBJECT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

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

CC50/2025 – Carry Forwards and Revotes – Councillor Madden declared a Non Pecuniary Less Than Significant Conflict for the reason that he is the VP of the Cessnock Hockey Club which had a fence repaired RFR-2025 for \$45,000. Councillor Madden advised that he would remain in the meeting and take part in discussion and voting as the conflict has not influenced him in carrying out his public duty.

BN11/2025 - Proposal to Remove the Shared Zone and Install Temporary Foot Crossings on Charlton Street, Cessnock - Councillor Pascoe declared a Non Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that she owns a business within the plaza adjacent to Charlton street. Councillor Pascoe advised she would remain in the chamber and take part in discussion and voting as the temporary foot traffic changes will not affect her or her business directly.

WI8/2025 – Request for Sponsorship & Fee Waiving – Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix - Councillor Hawkins declared a Non Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that an Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix Committee Member previously stood on the same Council ticket as him. Councillor Hawkins advised he would remain in the chamber and participate in discussion and voting as this has not influenced him in carrying out his public duty because the Conflict does not influence his long standing support for this community event.

WI8/2025 – Request for Sponsorship & Fee Waiving – Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix - Councillor Jurd declared a Non Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that a family member may be an Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix Committee Member. Councillor Jurd advised she would remain in the chamber and take part in the discussion and voting.

WI8/2025 – Request for Sponsorship & Fee Waiving – Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix - Councillor Dixon declared a Non Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that she ran in the election with a candidate who may be an Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix Committee Member. Councillor Dixon advised she would remain in the chamber and take part in the discussion and voting.

WI8/2025 – Request for Sponsorship & Fee Waiving – Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix - Mayor Watton declared a Non Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that he ran in the election with a candidate who may be an Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix Committee Member. Mayor Watton advised he would remain in the chamber and take part in discussion and voting.

PETITIONS

Nil

ADDRESS BY INVITED SPEAKERS

Nil

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

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Dixon **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe
215
RESOLVED

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

OFFICERS REPORTS

CC52/2025	Investment Report - July 2025.....	52
CC53/2025	Resolutions Tracking Report	57

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

FOR	AGAINST
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Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MAYORAL MINUTES

MAYORAL MINUTES NO. MM7/2025

SUBJECT: DIGITAL INCLUSION AND MOBILE COVERAGE BLACKSPOTS IN THE CESSNOCK LGA

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Watton
216

RESOLVED

1. That Council writes to the Federal Minister for Communications, the NSW Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, the Federal Member for Hunter and relevant telecommunications providers outlining the urgent need to address mobile coverage blackspots in our LGA, such as Bucketty and surrounding communities.
2. That Council request inclusion of Cessnock LGA in future rounds of the Mobile Black Spot Program and any relevant funding initiatives.
3. That Council advocate for a coordinated approach to mobile service delivery in regional NSW that prioritises public safety and economic participation.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MAYORAL MINUTES NO. MM8/2025

**SUBJECT: NSW GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS
INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING**

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Watton
217

RESOLVED

1. That Council write to both the NSW Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, and the State Members for Cessnock, Maitland and the Upper Hunter requesting that the NSW Government begin contributing to telecommunications infrastructure funding in line with other states and territories.
2. That Council seek the support of the Hunter Joint Organisation to lobby collectively for this policy change.
3. That Council request that the NSW Government prioritise high-risk, no-coverage areas such as Bucketty in any future mobile coverage funding programs.
4. That Council raise this as a motion for submission to the LGNSW annual conference.

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Dixon
Councillor Grine
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor King
Councillor Lea
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton
Total (13)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOTIONS OF URGENCY

MOTIONS OF URGENCY NO. MOU8/2025

SUBJECT: MOTIONS OF URGENCY

Councillor Mason

Motion of Urgency – Council Meeting dated 20 August 2025

Concerning the Draft Amendments to Cessnock Development Control Plan Chapter – D8 Events, that Council resolve to:

1. Extend the period of public exhibition for a further 28 days, to close at 4pm on 24 September 2025; &
2. Consider a further report from Council staff after the period of public exhibition is closed, in respect to feedback received during the exhibition period, before the proposed amendments are adopted.

After advice from the Interim General Manager the Urgency Motion was withdrawn.

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT NO. PE23/2025

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POLICY

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Grine **Seconded:** Councillor Hill
218
RESOLVED

That Council adopt the revised Compliance and Enforcement Policy 2025 to replace the existing policy.

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

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

Total (13)

Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC48/2025

SUBJECT: PROPERTY MANAGEMENT POLICY REVIEW

MOTION

Moved: Councillor Hill

Seconded: Councillor Grine

219

RESOLVED

1. **That Council adopts the revised Property Management Policy 2025.**
2. **That Council notes that a lease or licence decision can be brought before the Council for determination by resolution.**

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC49/2025

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF THE DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2025-2029

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Harrington
220

RESOLVED

That Council adopts the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2025-2029.

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

Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC50/2025

SUBJECT: CARRY FORWARDS AND REVOTES 2025-26

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Lea **Seconded:** Councillor Hill
221
RESOLVED

1. That Council notes that there are no revotes proposed.
2. That Council notes that the following carry forward expenditure is automatically carried forward as per Clause 211(3) of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*:
 - Carry forward operating expenditure of \$1,641,541.
 - Carry forward capital expenditure of \$8,453,393 for capital projects commenced prior to 30 June 2025.And that General Funds component of the above is \$767,092.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC51/2025

**SUBJECT: LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2025 -
ATTENDANCE, VOTING DELEGATES, AND MOTIONS**

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Hill **Seconded:** Councillor Grine

1. That Council notes that Mayor Watton and Councillors Palmowski, Hawkins, Hill and Lea have expressed interest in attending the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025.
2. That Council supports attendance at the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025 of Mayor Watton and Councillors Palmowski, Hill and Lea with Councillor Hawkins as an alternate delegate.
3. That Council determines that Mayor Watton and Councillors Palmowski, Hill and Lea each exercise one of the four voting entitlements, with Councillor Hawkins as an alternate voting delegate for the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025.

AMENDMENT **Moved:** Councillor Jurd **Seconded:** Councillor King

1. That Council notes that Mayor Watton and Councillors Palmowski, Hawkins, Hill and Lea have expressed interest in attending the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025.
2. That Council supports attendance at the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025 of Mayor Watton.
3. That Council determines that Mayor Watton exercise all four voting entitlements for the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025.

FOR

Councillor Dixon
Councillor Jurd
Councillor King

Total (3)

AGAINST

Councillor Grine
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Lea
Councillor Madden
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton

Total (10)

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

AMENDMENT *Moved:* Councillor Hawkins *Seconded:* Councillor Grine

1. That Council notes that Mayor Watton and Councillors Palmowski, Hawkins, Hill and Lea have expressed interest in attending the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025.
2. That Council supports attendance at the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025 of Mayor Watton and Councillors Palmowski, Hill and Lea.
3. That Council determines that Mayor Watton and Councillors Palmowski, Hill and Lea each exercise one of the four voting entitlements for the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025.
4. That in the event of non-attendance, the Mayor is to exercise the voting right of the absent Councillor and should the Mayor be absent, Deputy Mayor exercises the voting right of the absent Councillor.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	Councillor King
Councillor Grine	Councillor Madden
Councillor Harrington	Councillor Mason
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (10)	Total (3)

The Amendment was **PUT** and **CARRIED** and as such became the **MOTION**.

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

MOTION *Moved:* Councillor Hawkins *Seconded:* Councillor Grine

222

RESOLVED

1. That Council notes that Mayor Watton and Councillors Palmowski, Hawkins, Hill and Lea have expressed interest in attending the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025.
2. That Council supports attendance at the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025 of Mayor Watton and Councillors Palmowski, Hill and Lea.
3. That Council determines that Mayor Watton and Councillors Palmowski, Hill and Lea each exercise one of the four voting entitlements for the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025.
4. That in the event of non-attendance, the Mayor is to exercise the voting right of the absent Councillor and should the Mayor be absent, Deputy Mayor exercises the voting right of the absent Councillor.

FOR

Councillor Dixon
Councillor Grine
Councillor Harrington
Councillor Hill
Councillor Jurd
Councillor Lea
Councillor Mason
Councillor Palmowski
Councillor Pascoe
Councillor Hawkins
Councillor Watton

Total (11)**AGAINST**

Councillor King
Councillor Madden

Total (2)***CARRIED***

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC52/2025

SUBJECT: INVESTMENT REPORT - JULY 2025

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Dixon **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe
223
RESOLVED

That Council receives the Investment Report for July 2025 and notes that:

- Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy, which is in accordance with the Ministerial Investment Order.
- Council's month end cash and investments balance was \$88,860,580.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC53/2025

SUBJECT: RESOLUTIONS TRACKING REPORT

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Dixon **Seconded:** Councillor Pascoe
224
RESOLVED

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

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (13)	Total (0)

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE NO. WI8/2025

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR SPONSORSHIP & FEE WAIVING - AUSTRALIAN POSTIE BIKE GRAND PRIX

Councillor Hawkins declared a Non Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that an Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix Committee Member previously stood on the same Council ticket as him. Councillor Hawkins remained in the chamber and took part in discussion and voting.

Councillor Jurd declared a Non Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that a family member may be an Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix Committee Member. Councillor Jurd remained in the chamber and took part in discussion and voting.

Councillor Dixon declared a Non Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that she ran in the election with a candidate who may be an Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix Committee Member. Councillor Dixon remained in the chamber and took part in discussion and voting.

Mayor Watton declared a Non Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that he ran in the election with a candidate who may be an Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix Committee Member. Mayor Watton remained in the chamber and took part in discussion and voting.

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Hill **Seconded:** Councillor Harrington
225
RESOLVED

That Council supports the Australian Postie Bike Grand Prix on the weekend of 25 and 26 October 2025, by providing the following in-kind support:

- a) Waive all Council application fees require to run the 2025 event by way of transfer from the Tourism Related Projects Reserve;**
- b) Erection and removal of relevant variable message boards and road closure/detour signage as required by Council and Transport for NSW, under the approved Traffic Management Plan and Traffic Control Plan; and**
- c) Install banner pole and waste receptacle promotional signs; provide additional general waste bins throughout the designated event area of the circuit; and removal of collected waste at the conclusion of the event.**

FOR

AGAINST

Councillor Grine	Councillor Dixon
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Pascoe	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
Total (12)	Total (1)

CARRIED

BUSINESS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

BUSINESS WITH NOTICE NO. BN11/2025

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL TO REMOVE THE SHARED ZONE AND INSTALL TEMPORARY FOOT CROSSINGS ON CHARLTON STREET, CESSNOCK

MOTION **Moved:** Councillor Jurd **Seconded:** Councillor King
226

RESOLVED

- a. That the General Manager investigate options to remove the shared zone at the Cooper and Charlton Streets intersection and reinstate marked foot crossings to enhance pedestrian safety in the area.
- b. That Councillors be provided a briefing on the draft CBD Public Domain Plan and how it proposes to address the pedestrian safety concerns before going on public exhibition.

FOR

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

Total (10)

AGAINST

Councillor Grine
Councillor Hill
Councillor Hawkins

Total (3)

CARRIED

COUNCILLOR REPORTS

MAYORAL SUMMARY

16 July 2025 to 20 August 2025

16 July – Anglican Church meeting re: Youth Event
21 July – Mini Woollies Cessnock TAFE Campus Visit
26 July – VRA NSW Cessnock & Kurri Kurri, formal launch of new Heavy Rescue Vehicle.
29 July – Mt View High School – Student Leader Induction
30 July – Mayor's Prayer Breakfast Planning meeting
30 July – Meeting with Mayor Penfold – Maitland
31 July – Hunter Correctional Centre NAIDOC Day event
4 August – Hunter Central Coast Regional Reference Group meeting in Singleton
5 August – Regional Leaders Summit & Dinner – Newcastle
7 August – School Leaders Morning Tea & Youth Engagement Forum, PACC
7 August – Prison Fellowship in Cessnock Region
7 August – Motorcycling Cessnock LGA meeting
9 August – Cessnock Community Garden – Blue Tree Unveiling meeting
10 August – Middle East Area of Operations (MEAO) Memorial Service, Aberdare
12 August – Telstra Regional team – engagement
12 August – Youth Key Stakeholder meeting
13 August – HV Tours, Pilot Job Shuttle program
13 August – Mayor & GM catch up
14 August – Hunter JO Board Meeting, Glendale
18 August - Vietnam Veterans (Long Tan) Day Service
20 August – Speaking at the Cessnock Mens Probus Group

The Meeting Was Declared Closed at 8:01pm

CONFIRMED AND SIGNED at the meeting held on 17 September 2025

.....**CHAIRPERSON**

.....**GENERAL MANAGER**

Disclosures Of Interest

Report No. DI9/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Corporate Governance Manager

RECOMMENDATION

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

SUMMARY

The provisions of Chapter 14 of the Local Government Act, 1993 regulate the way in which Councillors and nominated staff of council conduct themselves to ensure that there is no conflict between their private interests and their public trust.

The Act prescribes that where a member of Council (or a Committee of Council) has a direct or indirect financial (pecuniary) interest in a matter to be considered at a meeting of the Council (or Committee), that interest must be disclosed as soon as practicable after the start of the meeting and the reasons for declaring such interest.

As members are aware, the provisions of the Local Government Act restrict any member who has declared a pecuniary interest in any matter from participating in the discussions, voting on that matter, and require that member to vacate the Chamber.

Council's Code of Conduct provides that if members have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest, the nature of the conflict must be disclosed. The Code also provides for a number of ways in which a member may manage non pecuniary conflicts of interest.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Mayoral Minute

Report No. MM9/2025

General Manager's Unit



MAYORAL MINUTE No. MM9/2025

SUBJECT: REGIONAL MOTIONS FOR 2025 NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council endorse the regional motions prepared by the Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) and their lodgment to the 2025 Local Government NSW Annual Conference (23-25 November 2025).
2. That Council directly lodge endorsed regional motions to Local Government NSW by the closing date of 30 September 2025.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

This Mayoral Minute is seeking endorsement of seven priority regional motions developed through the Hunter Joint Organisation for lodging to the 2025 Local Government NSW Annual Conference. These motions link directly to the LGNSW conference priority areas of:

- Jobs and Skills
- Housing and Homelessness
- Roads and Infrastructure

BACKGROUND

The LGNSW Annual Conference is the main policy making event for the local government sector where issues are debated, and motions put forward for the consideration of delegates. Proposed motions should be strategic, affect members state-wide and introduce new or emerging policy issues and actions.

SUGGESTED MOTIONS

In preparation for the 2025 LGNSW Conference, the Hunter JO Chair and Deputy Chair have worked with Hunter JO staff to prepare the following motions on the basis that they are consistent with the LGNSW guidelines for valid motions, as well as being relevant to the Hunter JO's regional advocacy agenda.

The list of shared regional motions ***Enclosure 2*** prepared to be put forward at the Local Government NSW Conference on behalf of the ten Hunter Councils seeks to:

- Amplify the shared advocacy priorities of the Hunter's councils at both state-wide and national scales.
- Emphasise to the NSW and Federal Governments the strength of alignment across the ten Hunter councils regarding the region's challenges, opportunities and agreed strategic directions.

Mayoral Minute

Report No. MM9/2025

General Manager's Unit



The regional motions:

- Are consistent with the objectives and strategic directions included in the [Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2035](#), which are themselves drawn from the Community Strategic Plans of the ten Hunter JO Member Councils
- Have been adapted from the shared regional [advocacy priorities](#) of the Hunter Mayors, to reflect the broader NSW and industry wide local government focus required for Local Government NSW motions.

Lodging of Regional Motions

Because the Hunter JO entity itself is not a financial member of the NSW Local Government Association (given that Member Councils already are), the actual process of lodging the motions to LGNSW needs to be undertaken by individual Member Councils. These will then be collated by the conference organisers and presented as a shared regional motion including the names of each of the Councils who have lodged the motion.

ENCLOSURES

- [1⇒](#) Functions and membership of the Hunter Joint Organisation
- [2⇒](#) Proposed Hunter JO Regional Motions for LGNSW Annual Conference
- [3⇒](#) Criteria for Motions

Mayoral Minute

Report No. MM10/2025

General Manager's Unit



MAYORAL MINUTE No. MM10/2025

SUBJECT: WASTE LEVY REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION

That Council write to the NSW Minister for the Environment, the Hon. Penny Sharpe MLC, and the Member for Cessnock, Mr Clayton Barr MP, seeking that Cessnock City Council be reclassified from a Metropolitan Levy Area (MLA) to a Regional Levy Area (RLA).

REPORT/PROPOSAL

Cessnock City Council is currently charged the Metropolitan Levy Area (MLA) waste levy rate of **\$174.20 per tonne**, the same rate applied to inner Sydney councils. In contrast, Regional Levy Area (RLA) councils are charged **\$100.30 per tonne**.

This discrepancy places a significant and unfair burden on our ratepayers. For example:

- At 10,000 tonnes per year, Cessnock pays around **\$739,000 more** than if we were an RLA council.
- At 20,000 tonnes per year, this rises to around **\$1.478 million more**.

Despite being clearly a regional community, Cessnock was included in the Metropolitan Levy Area when the levy boundaries were extended in 2006/2007 to the Hunter and Illawarra. This classification has remained unchanged, even though our economic, social and geographic profile aligns with regional councils, not metropolitan Sydney.

Council has also committed around **\$80 million over the next 20 years** for a new waste cell to manage our own waste responsibly. This investment strengthens the case for fairer treatment in how levy categories are applied.

The ongoing NSW Waste Levy Review provides an opportunity for the Government to correct this inequity. Both LGNSW and the Hunter Joint Organisation have already called for a reassessment of levy boundaries to ensure rural and regional LGAs are not unfairly penalised.

Reclassification to a Regional Levy Area will reduce costs for Council and ratepayers, and better reflect the reality of our community

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report

Motions of Urgency

Report No. MOU9/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *MOTIONS OF URGENCY*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Corporate Governance Manager*

RECOMMENDATION

That Councillors now indicate if there are any matters of urgency which they believe should be conducted at this meeting of Council.

SUMMARY

Under Clause 9.3 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice, business may be transacted at a meeting of Council even though due notice of the business has not been given to the Councillors. This can only happen if a motion is passed to have the business transacted at the meeting, the Mayor rules that the business is of great urgency and the business notified in the agenda for the meeting has been disposed of.

Only the mover of such a motion can speak to the motion before it is put.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

General Manager's Unit
Report No. GMU2/2025
General Manager's Unit



SUBJECT: *REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S ORGANISATION STRUCTURE*
AUTHOR: *People and Culture Manager*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to re-determine Council's organisation structure in accordance with Section 332 and 333 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act).

RECOMMENDATION

1. That following review and consultation with the Interim General Manager, Council has determined that the existing three (3) directorate organisational structure under the General Manager will remain.
2. That the senior staff positions within Council remain unchanged being the General Manager, Director of Corporate and Community Services, Director of Planning and Environment and the Director of Works and Infrastructure.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with Section 333 of the Act "the organisation structure may be re-determined by the Council from time to time. It must be re-determined within 12 months after any ordinary election of Council."

The ordinary local government elections took place on 14 September 2024. This report addresses the process Council has undertaken to review and redetermine the organisational structure as required by the Act.

REPORT

Section 332 and Section 333 of the Act contain provisions with respect to the organisational structure of Council. Council may review its structure from time to time, and must review, and may redetermine its structure within 12 months following an ordinary election.

332 Determination of structure

(1) A council must, after consulting the general manager, determine the resources to be allocated towards the employment of staff.

(1A) The general manager must, after consulting the council, determine the positions within the organisation structure of the council.

(1B) The positions within the organisation structure of the council are to be determined so as to give effect to the priorities set out in the strategic plans (including the community strategic plan) and delivery program of the council.

333 Re-determination and review of structure

The organisation structure may be re-determined under this Part from time to time. The council must review, and may re-determine, the organisation structure within 12 months after any ordinary election of the council.

General Manager's Unit

Report No. GMU2/2025

General Manager's Unit



Council's Organisational and General Manager's Performance Review Committee has responsibility for identifying the most appropriate and effective organisational structure capable of delivering strategic objectives of the organisation and making recommendations to Council of the senior staff positions within the organisational structure, the roles and reporting lines of senior staff positions and the resources to be allocated towards the employment of staff (undertaken as part of adopting the annual budget).

On 3 September 2025, the Organisational and General Manager's Performance Review Committee were informed by Councillor Memo that the organisational structure will remain unchanged at the Director level, and noted the introduction of new resources at a Manager level in the areas of Corporate Governance and Information Technology

CONSULTATION

Executive Leadership Team
Organisational & General Manager's Performance Review Committee

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The Delivery Program 2022-2026 - *Civic Leadership and Effective Governance, 5.3.7 Continue to manage Council governance functions and statutory requirements.*

b. Other Plans

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Cessnock City Council Workforce Management Plan

b. Financial Implications

N/A

c. Legislative Implications

This Report is provided to ensure adherence with Section 332 and 333 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

d. Risk Implications

N/A

e. Environmental Implications

N/A

General Manager's Unit

Report No. GMU2/2025

General Manager's Unit



f. Other Implications

N/A

CONCLUSION

The organisation structure review is submitted for Council's consideration.

ENCLOSURES

[1⇒](#) Organisational Chart

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE24/2025

Planning and Environment



SUBJECT: *DA 8/2024/533/1 DWELLING, TOURIST & VISITOR ACCOMMODATION, FUNCTION CENTRE, RESTAURANT OR CAFÉ, AND ANCILLARY WELLNESS CENTRE, INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS, SIGNAGE AND LANDSCAPING*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Acting Development Services Manager*

APPLICATION NUMBER:	8/2024/533/1
PROPOSAL:	Dwelling, Tourist & Visitor Accommodation, Function Centre, Restaurant or Café, and Ancillary Wellness Centre, Infrastructure Works, Signage and Landscaping
PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:	Lot 511, DP 1298208
PROPERTY ADDRESS:	509 De Beyers Road POKOLBIN
ZONE:	RU4 – Primary Production Small Lots
OWNER:	Mr CR Crump
APPLICANT:	SHAC Pty Ltd

RECOMMENDATION

1. That:

- (i) Development Application No. 8/2024/533/1 proposing construction of a dwelling (to be used as a manager's residence), tourist and visitor accommodation, function centre, restaurant or café, and ancillary wellness centre, infrastructure works, signage and landscaping at 509 De Beyers Road Pokolbin be approved pursuant to Sections 4.16 and 4.17 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* subject to the conditions contained in Enclosure 2.
- (ii) The reasons for the decision (having regard to any statutory requirements applying to the decision), and consideration of community views are as follows:
 - The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, is consistent with the objectives of the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 (CLEP 2011)*.

- The proposed development is, subject to the recommended conditions, consistent with the objectives of the Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 (DCP 2010); any variations to prescribed standards within this Plan have been adequately addressed.
 - The proposed development is considered to be of an appropriate scale and form for the site.
 - The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, will not result in unacceptable adverse impacts upon the natural or built environments.
 - Any issues raised in submissions have been taken into account in the assessment report and where appropriate, conditions of consent have been imposed to reasonably mitigate potential impacts. Council has given due consideration to community views when making the decision to determine the application.
- (iii) The details contained above be publicly notified pursuant to Section 2.22 and Clause 20(2) of Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
2. That Council notifies in writing the persons who made a submission with regard to the proposed development, of Council's decision

REASON FOR REPORT

Development Application No. 8/2024/533/1 is being referred to Council for determination as a number of objections and planning concerns were received in response to the public exhibition period.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is in receipt of Development Application No. 8/2024/533/1 seeking approval for construction of a dwelling (to be used as a manager's residence), tourist and visitor accommodation, function centre, restaurant or café, and ancillary wellness centre, infrastructure works, signage and landscaping at 509 De Beyers Road Pokolbin.

Specifically, the development application proposes a:

- Dwelling for use as a manager's residence;
- Fifty-nine (59) tourist and visitor accommodation units (utilising the 1.5 units per hectare provision) within fifteen (15) tourist and visitor accommodation buildings;

Planning and Environment

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Planning and Environment



- A function centre – one hundred (100) person capacity;
- Services and storage building;
- An arrivals building incorporating reception, lounge area with small bar, outdoor BBQ area and café;
- Wellness building, containing pool, spa, yoga studio and gym;
- A games pavilion, with small pool and children's playground;
- Internal walking tracks, regeneration of the riparian zone along Pokolbin Creek, and vegetation spray drift buffer.

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

While the development proposes a minor variation to the prescribed numerical spray drift buffer width required under Council's DCP 2010 (Chapter E3 – Vineyards District), the underlying aims and objectives of this requirement is considered to have been met in relation to surrounding established vineyards and land use conflict with other land-uses adjoining the site.

The Development Application was publicly exhibited between 24 September 2024 and 23 October 2024. Twenty-six (26) submissions were received during the exhibition period representing twelve (12) households (the adopted Community Participation Plan provides for one submission per household). Of the twelve (12) submissions received, nine (9) were in objection to the proposal, two (2) were in support of the proposal and one (1) was impartial. The issues and concerns raised in the submissions are addressed in the assessment report.

The concerns raised by the public to the proposed development relate to amenity impacts associated with noise and traffic generation, characterisation of the development, density of the development, the objectives of the zone, visual appeal of the proposal, and land use conflicts.

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

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

Based on the assessment, it is recommended that the Development Application be approved subject to the conditions of consent included in this report.

ENCLOSURES

- 1 ➡ Assessment Report
- 2 ➡ Conditions of Consent
- 3 ➡ Plans

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE25/2025

Planning and Environment



SUBJECT: *DA 8/2024/530/1 PROPOSING THE ERECTION OF A DWELLING AND ANCILLARY SWIMMING POOL*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Acting Development Services Manager*

APPLICATION NUMBER:	8/2024/530/1
PROPOSAL:	Erection of a Dwelling and Ancillary Swimming Pool
PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:	Lot 136 DP: 1243665
PROPERTY ADDRESS:	William Street Paxton
ZONE:	C2 Environmental Conservation
OWNER:	Ms J G Schellnack-Dixon
APPLICANT:	Ms J G Schellnack-Dixon

RECOMMENDATION

1. That:

- (i) Development Application No. 8/2024/530/1 proposing the erection of a dwelling and ancillary swimming pool on Lot 136 DP No. 1243665 William Street Paxton be approved pursuant to Sections 4.16 and 4.17 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* subject to the conditions contained in this report.
- (ii) The reasons for the decision (having regard to any statutory requirements applying to the decision), are as follows:
 - The proposal is consistent with the objectives of the C2 Environmental Conservation zone under the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011*;
 - The proposal is consistent with the relevant State Environmental Planning Policies;
 - The proposal is compliant with the relevant provisions under the *Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010*;

- The proposal incorporates adequate measures to ensure the development does not result in any adverse impacts on the natural and built environment;
 - The site is considered suitable for the proposed development; and
 - The development proposal is considered to be in the public interest.
- (iv) The details contained above be publicly notified pursuant to Section 2.22 and Clause 20(2) of Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

REASON FOR REPORT

Development Application No. 8/2024/530/1 is being referred to Council for determination as a variation greater than 10% is proposed to the required minimum lot size for the erection of a dwelling in the C2 Environmental Conservation Zone under Section 4.2A of the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan (CLEP) 2011*.

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's (former Department of Planning and Environment) Guide to Varying Development Standards (2023), specifies that where the variation to a development standard is greater than 10% the elected Council is the determining authority.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is in receipt of Development Application No.8/2024/530/1 seeking approval for the erection of a dwelling and swimming pool on the subject land.

The Development Application has been assessed against the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021*, relevant Environmental Planning Instruments and Council policies.

The application proposes a variation to Clause 4.2A of the *CLEP 2011* which prescribes a minimum lot size of 80 hectares for the erection of a dwelling on the subject land. The land has a total site area of 15.69 hectares which represents a variation of 80.4% to the prescribed development standard. While this variation is significant, the history behind the creation of the subject land is such that there has always been the intention for a dwelling house to be erected on the property.

The subject land was created as a residue lot as part of a broader residential subdivision, approved by Council in 2015 (DA 8/2014/416/1). At the time the subdivision was approved, a building envelope was identified on the land to accommodate a future dwelling, which would be subject to the lodgment of a future development application. Since this time, the provisions of the *CLEP 2011* have changed and the minimum lot size requirement for the erection of a dwelling on conservation zoned land has increased to 80 hectares.

Planning and Environment

Report No. PE25/2025

Planning and Environment



Given the circumstances of the case and the history behind the creation of the subject land, the Applicant has provided sound planning justification for the variation to the prescribed development standard under the *CLEP 2011*.

The application was advertised for 28 days with two (2) submissions received in support of the proposal.

Based on the assessment, it is recommended that the Development Application be approved subject to the conditions attached as Enclosure 2.

A detailed assessment of the Development Application has been undertaken and is attached as Enclosure 1.

ENCLOSURES

- 1 ➡ Assessment Report
- 2 ➡ Conditions of Consent
- 3 ➡ Architectural Plans

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC54/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *DRAFT CESSNOCK CITY LIBRARY STRATEGY 2025-35*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Acting Community and Cultural Development Manager*

SUMMARY

This report seeks to place the Draft Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35 and the Draft Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35 on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

RECOMMENDATION

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

BACKGROUND

Council previously adopted the Cessnock City Library Strategic Plan 2014-2024 on 6 August 2014. As the life span of that plan has now expired and the majority of actions achieved, a new Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35 has been developed (enclosed). The new strategy will continue to expand the vision and framework for building and developing library services that meet the needs of our changing communities across the Cessnock Local Government Area. Also enclosed for ease of reference is the Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35 and that document predominantly lists the 31 actions proposed.

Both the draft Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35 and the Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35 was developed by Jan Richards Consulting.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

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

- Spaces
- People
- Collections
- Connections
- Programs

These pillars are guided by the Framework for Australian Public Libraries and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.

As the Cessnock Local Government Area continues to undergo significant social and economic transformation, Council's library branches will remain a vital community space that is trusted, inclusive and welcoming to all.

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

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Corporate and Community Services



OPTIONS

N/A

CONSULTATION

The development of the draft strategy commenced in 2024 and was in collaboration with Council and Cessnock City Library officers, and members of the local community.

The development of the strategy's actions was an outcome of the following consultation processes:

- 14 focus groups held with community members.
- Availability of a library survey and was launched on Library Lover's Day 14 February 2025 at a pop-up event in Cessnock Shopping Plaza. The survey was made accessible via hardcopy at both library branches and online. A total of 387 responses were received.
- Discussion with library users attending library programs.
- 2 internal stakeholder meetings, they being one held with Library Staff and the second with other staff from key Council Business Units.
- One on one discussions with several library staff.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

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

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

b. Other Plans

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

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

NIL

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Corporate and Community Services



b. Financial Implications

Many of the actions can be resourced using existing operational budgets. However, new and upgraded infrastructure projects will be either grant funding dependent or subject to development infrastructure contributions.

The development of the strategy was funded by the State Library of NSW Local Priority Grants Program 2024/2025.

c. Legislative Implications

N/A

d. Risk Implications

NIL

e. Environmental Implications

NIL

f. Other Implications

NIL

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council place the Draft Cessnock City Library Strategy 2025-35 and Draft Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary 2025-35 on public exhibition.

ENCLOSURES

- [1](#) ➡ Cessnock City Library Strategy
- [2](#) ➡ Cessnock City Library Strategy Summary

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC55/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: ***MINUTES OF THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 1 AUGUST 2025***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Acting Community and Cultural Development Manager*

SUMMARY

The minutes of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee (the Committee) are presented to Council for consideration for adoption as a resolution of the Ordinary Council.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee meeting held 1 August 2025 be adopted as a resolution of the Ordinary Council.

BACKGROUND

Following the 2024 elections, at the Extraordinary Council meeting held 16 October 2024, Council resolved to reestablished the Committee for the term of Council. Council has historically recognised the value and expertise of the Committee. Whilst the Committee makes recommendations to Council on their area of expertise, such advisory Committees are usually established without delegations. This means that recommendations from the Committee need to be reported to Council for consideration and adoption.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The Minutes from the Committee meeting held 1 August 2025 are provided to Council and this report seeks endorsement to adopt the recommendations as a resolution of Council.

Note that the meeting became inquorate at the last agenda item AACLM9/2025 *Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities within Cessnock LGA*. A general discussion occurred for this item with no recommendations moved by the Committee.

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

AACLM5/2025 - 2025 - 2026 MEETING DATES AND VENUES

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Committee determine the meeting schedule for the remainder of 2025 and 2026.
2. That the Committee consider and identify venues for the holding of future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee Meetings.

AACLM6/2025 – ADOPTION OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN 2025-2029

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee notes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Action Plan was adopted by Council.

AACLM7/2025 - OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLANNING PROJECT FOR ANAMBAH TO BRANXTON REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT GROWTH AREA

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee notes that the preparation of supporting technical studies and Structure Plan for the Anambah to Branxton Regionally Significant Growth Area has commenced.

AACLM8/2025 - NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK AND NATIONAL NAIDOC WEEK
RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee note the report on local activities held for National Reconciliation Week 2025 and National NAIDOC Week 2025.

AACLM9/2025 - EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES WITHIN CESSNOCK LGA

MEETING NOTES

The Committee became inquorate and a general discussion occurred for this item.

CONSULTATION

The Committee is an advisory committee.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This report aligns with the Delivery Program outcomes of:

- A connected, safe and creative community
 - Objective 1.1 Promoting social connections and wellbeing
 - Action 1.1.1 Engage with the community in reconciliation activities
- 'Civic Leadership and Effective Governance'
 - Objective 'Encouraging more community participation in decision making'

b. Other Plans

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Action Plan 2025-2029

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

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

b. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the report.

c. Legislative Implications

The Committee has been established and operates in accordance with legislation.

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



d. Risk Implications

Matters referred to and recommendations from the Committee are made to reduce potential cultural risk implications in Council operations and plans.

e. Environmental Implications

N/A

f. Other Implications

N/A

CONCLUSION

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

ENCLOSURES

1 ➞ Minutes 1 August 2025

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC56/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR - 2025/2026*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Corporate Governance Manager*

SUMMARY

Council may elect a Deputy Mayor who will assume all the duties and powers of the Mayor in their absence.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council elect a Deputy Mayor for a term of office of 12 months and notes the annual fee applicable to the term of the appointment was set at \$1,200.
2. That Council elect a Deputy Mayor by Open Voting.
3. That Council note the declaration of the Returning Officer that [insert name of Councillor] is elected as Deputy Mayor for the term of office 17 September 2025 to the day prior to the Ordinary Council meeting in September 2026.

BACKGROUND

The *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) provides that Councillors may elect a person from among their number to be the Deputy Mayor, to assume the duties of the Mayor if they are prevented by illness, absence or otherwise from exercising a function under the Act.

There is no statutory requirement for the election of a position of Deputy Mayor. If Council decides to elect a Deputy Mayor, the term and the method of election to be used needs to be resolved. Council has historically elected a Deputy Mayor for a term of (generally) twelve months.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The election of, and term of the Deputy Mayor is determined by resolution of Council. Council needs to be cognisant of s290(1) of the Act when determining the term of the Deputy Mayor. This is to align with local government elections normally held in the month of September. Accordingly, the proposed term of office is adjusted to account for this and means that future terms will run September – September.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC56/2025

Corporate and Community Services



The election of the Deputy Mayor must be conducted in accordance with section 394 and Schedule 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation) as summarised:

1. The General Manager (or a person appointed by the General Manager) is the Returning Officer.
2. A nomination is to be made in writing by two or more Councillors, one of whom may be the nominee. The nominee must indicate consent to the nomination in writing.
3. The nomination form has been provided as **Enclosure 1** and is to be delivered or sent to the Returning Officer.
4. The Returning Officer will announce the names of the nominees at the Council meeting at which the election is to be held.
5. If only one Councillor is nominated, that Councillor is elected. If more than one Councillor is nominated, Council must resolve how the election will be undertaken. It is recommended that this be by way of Open Voting, meaning a show of hands or similar means.
6. The Returning Officer shall conduct the election of Deputy Mayor and declare the result of the election.

OPTIONS

1. Council decides not to elect a Deputy Mayor.
2. Council decides to elect a Deputy Mayor, subject to:
 - 2.1 Term of Office
 - for a 12 month period
 - for the remainder of the Mayoral term
 - for another designated term
 - 2.2 Method of Election
 - by preferential ballot
 - by ordinary ballot
 - by open voting (show of hands)

CONSULTATION

N/A

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This reports links to the Community Strategic Plan theme of “*Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*”, in particular Objective 5.1 Fostering and supporting community leadership.

b. Other Plans

N/A

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IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

N/A

b. Financial Implications

The fee payable to the Deputy Mayor must be paid from the annual allocation to the Mayor in accordance with section 249(5) of the Act, with the fee for 2025-26 having already been set at the 18 June 2025 meeting of Council in the amount of \$1,200.

c. Legislative Implications

Section 231 of the Act provides that Councillors may elect a person from among their number to be the Deputy Mayor. Schedule 7 of the Regulation outlines the election process.

Section 290(1)(b) of the Act states that an election of a mayor (or deputy mayor), if it is not the first election of the term, nor an election to fill a casual vacancy, must occur during the month of September.

d. Risk Implications

N/A

e. Environmental Implications

N/A

f. Other Implications

N/A

CONCLUSION

The Act provides for the election of a Councillor to be the Deputy Mayor if that suits the functions of the Council. Council needs to determine if it is to elect a Deputy Mayor, the term and the method of election to be used.

ENCLOSURES

[1](#) Deputy Mayor Nomination Form

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC57/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMITTEES FOLLOWING CASUAL VACANCY*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Corporate Governance Manager*

SUMMARY

Council is required to appoint a Councillor representatives to various Committees and Panels following the casual vacancy from the resignation of former Councillor Suvaal.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council appoints Councillor Quintin King as member and *[insert name of Councillor]* as alternate member to the Austar Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee for the current Council term.
2. That Council appoints *[insert name of Councillor]* to the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel as an alternate member for the current Council term.
3. That Council appoints *[insert name of Councillor]* to the Council Initiated Awards Committee as an alternate member for the current Council term.
4. That Council notes the dissolution of the Local Traffic Committee following changes to the Transport for NSW delegation to councils.

BACKGROUND

Council's committee framework provides a mechanism for community input into decision-making and assists the elected Council in exercising its functions. The framework includes various internal committees that report to the elected Council, including:

- Committees of Council,
- Advisory Committees,
- Statutory Committees, and
- Section 355 Committees.

To assist Council with effective decision-making and operations, the elected Council may use this structure to appoint Councillors to those committees. In addition, Councillors are invited to participate in External Committees where the care and control of the committee is outside of Council, but provides an alternate mechanism to engage with other organisations.

External committee Councillor membership is subject to the terms of each external committee's or panel's constitution or governing document. Because they are managed by organisations external to Council they do not come under the oversight of Council and are subject to their own individual governance arrangements. It is however, Councils responsibility to appoint appropriate members and or alternates.

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In October 2024, the Council appointed members and representatives to internal, external, statutory and s355 committees, panels and advisory groups (Reports CC66/2024 and CC67/2024) post the completion of the local government election.

The purpose of this report is to seek nominations for representation on the following groups in light of the recent resignation of Jay Suvaal from civic office:

- Austar Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee – Member,
- Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel – Alternate Member, and
- Council Initiated Awards Committee – Alternate Member.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

Following the resignation of Mr Suvaal, it is recommended that a Councillor be appointed to fill each vacancy.

Austar Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee

The Committees membership comprises of local community members, NSW Police Service Cessnock representative, Yancoal Austar Coal Mine representatives and two Councillor representatives (one member, and one alternate). The committee now meets annually.

Councillor King is the current alternate for the committee. It is therefore recommended that Council appoint Councillor King as the member and appoint a new alternate member for the committee. Councillor King attended the last meeting of the committee as Council's representative.

Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel

The membership for the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Planning Panel (HCCRPP) consists of three members, including the chair appointed by the Minister (State members), and two members appointed by the relevant Council. Council may also appoint a minimum of four alternate members.

Mayor Watton and Councillor Hill are Council's members with Councillors Jurd, Mason and Harrington appointed as alternative representatives.

The operating procedures of the HCCRPP require in appointing members, council has regard to any conflict of duties that would be created. The council member must have expertise in one or more of the following areas: planning, architecture, heritage, the environment, urban design, land economics, traffic and transport, law, engineering, or tourism. The council member cannot be a property developers or real estate agent and is subject to a range of probity checks.

It is recommended that Council appoint one Councillor as a new alternate representative.

Council Initiated Awards Committee

Membership to the Council Initiated Awards Committee is limited to members and attendees. Membership comprises of the Mayor, two Councillors, two alternates and the General Manager (or their delegate) in the case of appointment of an Administrator.

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Mayor Watton is the Chair of the Council Initiated Awards Committee, with Councillor Harrington and Grine members. Councillor Pascoe is an alternate member leaving one vacant alternate member position.

It is recommended that Council appoint one Councillor as an additional alternate member.

Local Traffic Committee

The Local Traffic Committee was established under the delegations received from Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW).

TfNSW has now changed its delegation to NSW councils for the regulation of traffic which results in the dissolution of Local Traffic Committees from 1 August 2025.

What was previously known as the Local Traffic Committee (LTC) is to be renamed Local Transport Forum (LTF) with a shift in focus on advice and collaboration.

The (2025) Authorisation and Delegation Instrument, as well as relevant fact sheets are available on the TfNSW website at: <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/operations/roads-and-waterways/committees-communities-and-groups/committees-and-groups/transport>

Council officers are preparing further information on how the change from the previous Local Traffic Committee (LTC) to the new Local Traffic Forum (LTF) will work operationally in accordance with the direction and guidance provided by TfNSW.

OPTIONS

Option 1 – As per the Recommendation. **This is the preferred option.**

Option 2 – Councillors resolve to not appoint replacements for former Councillor Suvaal.

CONSULTATION

Interim General Manager
Directors
Relevant Committees and Panels

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The appointment of Councillors as representatives to external committees is consistent with Council's Delivery Program objectives, with an emphasis on Outcome 5: Civic leadership and effective governance Committee encouraging participation and consultation in the wider community.

b. Other Plans

Nil

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Corporate and Community Services



IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Nil. External Committees of Council maintain their own Terms of Reference.

b. Financial Implications

External committees are not controlled or resourced by Council. Councillor expenses for attendance at external committee meetings is covered by the Councillor Facilities and Expenses Policy. Existing committee operations for internal committees are provided for under Councils financial budget.

c. Legislative Implications

The relevant committees have no legislative jurisdiction.

d. Risk Implications

There is minimal risk if Council chooses not to appoint alternative representatives as the committees are generally already fully constituted.

e. Other Implications

Councillor interaction with the community and participation in matters that concern the community increases their familiarity with pressing issues and trending expectations. Consequently, Councillors are able to build on the trust the community and link to Council strategies and plans.

Councillor non-attendance at committee meetings may impact the quorum, and may result in committee meetings being inquorate.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council nominate delegates and alternates to various external committees to fill the vacancy following the resignation of former Councillor Suvaal.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC58/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *DRAFT FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 24/25FY*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Chief Finance Officer*

SUMMARY

The draft financial reports for the year ended 30 June 2025 are required to be formally referred for external audit.

Section 413 of the *Local Government Act 1993* and the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting require a statement in the approved form to be adopted by Council in regards to the financial reports.

The draft financial reports are submitted to the Audit and Risk Committee for review prior to being referred for external audit and for Council's consideration of issuing the statement in the required format.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council formally refer the draft Financial Statements to Council's external auditor, the Audit Office of NSW, to provide an opinion and report to Council.
2. That Council authorise the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, General Manager and Responsible Accounting Officer to sign the Statement by Councillors and Management for the General Purpose Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025.
3. That Council fix the date of 19 November 2025 as the date for the public meeting to present the audited Financial Statements and the Audit Reports for the year ended 30 June 2025, and that Council's external auditor be requested to be present to answer questions.
4. That the Interim General Manager be delegated authority to seek an extension of time for lodgment of the Financial Statements to the Office of Local Government should the need arise during finalisation of the audit.

BACKGROUND

Section 413(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires Council to prepare General Purpose Financial Reports for the financial year ending 30 June. Council must also prepare Special Purpose Financial Reports in accordance with the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting. Both of these financial reports require a Council resolution to formally refer them for audit and separate statements in the approved form as to Council's opinion on the reports as referred for audit.

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

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



Section 413 of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires Council to prepare financial reports each year and refer them for audit. The financial reports must include a general purpose financial report, any other matter prescribed by the regulations and a statement in the approved form by the Council as to its opinion on the general purpose financial reports.

The Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting requires Council to prepare Special Purpose Financial Statements and to provide a statement in the approved form by the Council as to its opinion on the special purpose financial reports.

The statement by Councillors and Management is required to be authorised by a resolution of Council and needs to be signed in accordance with that resolution by the Mayor, a Councillor, the General Manager and the Responsible Accounting Officer.

REPORT

The financial statements for the year ending 30 June 2025 are enclosed in draft form. They are complete noting the requirement to have the Council endorse the financial statements for audit by Council's external auditors acting under contract for the Audit Office of NSW, commencing in September 2025.

Section 419 of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires that following audit the Annual Financial Statements are to be presented to Council and the community.

The draft Annual Financial Statements are provided at *Enclosure 1* and Council is requested to formally refer to audit as per the recommendation.

The draft Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025 were presented to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee on 4 September 2025. The Committee is scheduled to meet again in October 2025 to review the audited Financial Statements and external auditor documentation for comment prior to presentation to Council and the community.

It is highlighted that if there are material changes to the financial statements identified during the audit process there may be a requirement from the Audit Office of NSW for the financial statements to be resubmitted to Council for the signed statement by Councillors and Management.

Commentary on Financial Year Performance

1. Headline Results

- The Net Operating Result including capital grants was a \$66.0m surplus, higher than the projected \$38.7m surplus reported at the March quarterly review.
- The Net Operating Result before capital grants and contributions was a \$(33.8m) deficit, compared to a projected \$(29.5m) deficit, a deterioration of \$4.3m.

2. Key Variances

- Loss on disposal of assets: Actual \$17.4m vs projected \$10.0m (unfavourable \$7.4m).
 - Driven by infrastructure renewals and grant-funded projects leading to complete asset replacement.
- Depreciation: Actual \$26.2m vs projected \$30.9m (favourable \$4.7m). Higher than the original budget due to revaluation increments and new asset dedications.
- Employee costs: Higher by \$2.5m, mainly wages and superannuation.
- Materials and services: Higher by \$4.7m, largely due to *grant-related projects not in the original budget* and some operating costs initially allocated to capital programs.
- Borrowing costs: \$0.9m actual vs \$0.4m budget, reflecting the unwinding of waste and orphan site remediation provisions. This difference is a non-cash entry required under the adjustments for provisions.
- Grants and contributions:
 - Operating grants exceeded projections by \$2.5m.
 - Capital grants and contributions exceeded projections by \$35.1m, mainly from higher developer contributions and dedicated assets linked to growth.
- Other revenues: \$0.8m favourable, from legal recoveries, infringements, and a one-off emergency reform payment.

3. Comprehensive Income

- Total Comprehensive Income was \$260.2m, driven by a \$194.2m revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment.
- While this strengthens Council's balance sheet (net assets increased to \$1.57b), it does not increase available cash for service delivery and in essence increases future depreciation costs by the same amount.

Corporate and Community

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4. Capital Works

- Council paid for \$64.03m in capital works in 2025. This represents the direct cash expenditure on infrastructure renewal and new projects during the year.
- In addition, Council recognised \$56m of dedicated and found assets contributed by developers or identified through asset discovery. These are non-cash additions that increase the value of Council's asset base.
- Together, these brought total capital additions to \$126.95m in the accounts (\$26.93m renewals; \$100.02m new assets).
- Work in Progress (WIP) closed at \$60.8m, up from \$50.0m at the start of the year, reflecting a strong pipeline of ongoing projects.
- Committed capital expenditure at 30 June 2025 was \$63.8m, including:
 - Wollombi Road major upgrade (\$21m, grant funded)
 - New landfill development (\$9.2m)
 - Western Bears amenities & grandstand (\$5.3m, grant funded)
 - Kurri Kurri Netball Facilities (\$3.9m, grant funded)
 - Thomas Street, North Rothbury stormwater (\$3.1m, grant funded)
 - Sawyers Gully Road rehabilitation (\$0.9m, grant funded)
- Infrastructure performance ratios show mixed outcomes:
 - Renewals ratio: 202.6% (above benchmark, strong reinvestment but highlights council's past experience of not meeting the demand for renewals).
 - Backlog ratio: 3.38% (below benchmark, showing council is not keeping up with the demand for our assets).
 - Asset maintenance ratio: 82.6% (below benchmark, indicating maintenance pressures).
 - Cost to bring assets to agreed service levels: \$186.4m. Noting that council only spent circa \$27m on assets renewals in the past year, council clearly does not have the financial capacity to meet the spending required to bring assets to the necessary level.

While Council is successfully delivering a large capital works program of around \$64m cash, the recognition of dedicated and found assets increases the reported additions to \$126.9m. These developer handovers increase infrastructure in the LGA but critically also add to Council's future maintenance and renewal liabilities, contributing to backlog and funding challenges.

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Corporate and Community Services



5. Cash Position

- At 30 June 2025, Council held \$96.7m in cash, cash equivalents and investments.
- Of this, \$92.7m is externally restricted (grants, developer contributions, waste and other reserves).
- It should also be noted that the prepaid Financial Assistance Grant will become unrestricted on 1 July, providing additional flexibility early in the new year.

Despite a large headline balance, Council's cash flexibility is limited. This position, coupled with the underlying operating deficit, highlights the importance of ongoing financial sustainability strategies and the ongoing need for the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) to ensure Council can fund services without over-reliance on external grants or restricted reserves.

Rural Fire Service Mobile Assets

As per Council resolution, Council has not accounted for, nor undertaken a stocktake on Rural Fire Service fleet assets within the Local Government Area but has reviewed maintenance records of "vested" assets to ensure they exist. Council officers continue to believe these do not meet the definition of assets and accordingly have not accounted for them.

Key Takeaways

Forecasting accuracy

- Broadly forecasting was accurate. Changes affecting underlying results mainly come from end of year accounting entries. Spending is broadly in line with strong budget controls.
- Council's headline result was better than projected, mainly due to stronger capital grants and developer contributions.
- The underlying deficit before capital worsened by \$4.3m, driven by disposals and higher operating costs.

Sustainability risk

- The \$(33.8m) operating deficit before capital demonstrates the structural imbalance between operating revenues and expenses.
- This reinforces the importance of financial sustainability initiatives, including the proposed SRV.

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



Capital works

- Council delivered \$64m of cash-funded capital works and recognised \$56m of developer/dedicated assets, bringing total additions to \$126.9m.
- While renewal investment exceeds benchmarks, maintenance shortfalls and asset backlog remain risks.

Cash position

- Council's available cash was only \$4m at year end, with most funds externally or internally restricted.
- Liquidity will improve slightly when the prepaid Financial Assistance Grant becomes unrestricted in July.
- This tight cash position reinforces the need for financial sustainability measures, including the SRV.

Financial Implications

- Without corrective measures, Council will remain under financial pressure to fund ongoing services.
- The capital program demonstrates strong delivery capacity but highlights ongoing challenges in maintenance funding and asset backlog management.

CONSULTATION

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
Senior Finance Staff
Asset Management Staff

STRATEGIC LINKS

Delivery Program

This report is a crucial part of the organisation's governance framework – providing information on the financial results for Council for the year. This is in line with the community's desired outcome of "*Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*."

IMPLICATIONS

Policy / Procedural / Financial / Legislative / Risk Implications

Council's General Purpose Financial Reports in draft form have been prepared in accordance with Section 413 of the *Local Government Act 1993* and the Special Purpose Financial Reports have been prepared in accordance with the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting (Guidelines).

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



OPTIONS

Endorse the recommendation or choose not to endorse the recommendation.

CONCLUSION

Council is required to prepare financial reports each year and refer them for audit. The financial reports must include a statement in the approved form by the Council as to its opinion on the reports and the statements by Councillors and Management are required to be authorised by a resolution of Council and signed in accordance with that resolution by the Mayor, a Councillor, the General Manager and the Responsible Accounting Officer.

ENCLOSURES

- [1](#) Draft Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC59/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *MEDIA POLICY*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Communications and Engagement Manager*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement to adopt the Media Policy (Policy) following its periodic review.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the revised Media Policy.

BACKGROUND

Council staff have undertaken a periodic review of the Policy. Since the last review, the Office of Local Government (OLG) finalised and published the OLG Model Media Policy (Model Policy).

The periodic review has incorporated sections from the Model Policy not previously included to align with sector best practice, and amended other sections to align with the Model Policy.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The Policy provides the framework that underpins Council's interactions with the Media. The Policy is guided by principles of openness, consistency, accuracy and timeliness, and applies to Council Officials and their liaison, engagement and communication with the media.

The key changes proposed to the Policy are:

1. Inclusion of the following sections of the Model Policy:
 - Principles
 - Appointment and role of the Communications and Engagement Manager
 - Media during emergencies
 - Media engagement in the lead up to elections
2. Amendment of the following sections to align with the Model Policy
 - Standards of Conduct
 - Records Management Requirements

OPTIONS

N/A

CONSULTATION

Senior Leadership Group

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

This report aligns with Cessnock City Council's Delivery Plan, specifically objective 5.2 Encourage community collaboration in decision making and 5.3 Ensure we are accountable and responsive to our community.

b. Other Plans

N/A

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

N/A

b. Financial Implications

Nil

c. Legislative Implications

This Policy supports Council's compliance with the following legislation:

- Division 2 of Part 2, Clause 26 of Schedule 1, *Defamation Act 2005* (NSW)
- Part 2 of *State Records Act 1998* (NSW)
- *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW)
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW)

d. Risk Implications

N/A

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The Policy review ensures that we are continuing to improve our policy framework, and alignment with sector best practice.

ENCLOSURES

- 1 ➡ Media Policy
- 2 ➡ Old Media Policy

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC60/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *RESOLUTIONS TRACKING REPORT*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Corporate Governance Manager*

SUMMARY

The enclosure contains pending actions from previous meetings as well as completed actions for period 12 August 2025 to 09 September 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

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

ENCLOSURES

- 1 ➡ Outstanding
- 2 ➡ Completed

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC61/2025

Corporate and Community Services



SUBJECT: *INVESTMENT REPORT - AUGUST 2025*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Chief Finance Officer*

SUMMARY

Section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), Clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (the Regulation) and Council's Investment Policy (the Policy) requires a monthly report to Council detailing all money invested.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives the Investment Report for August 2025 and notes that:

- **Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy, which is in accordance with the Ministerial Investment Order.**
- **Council's month end cash and investments balance was \$98,167,716.**

BACKGROUND

A monthly report to Council detailing money invested as per the Act, Regulation and Policy.

REPORT

Statement by the Responsible Accounting Officer

The Responsible Accounting Officer has certified that this report is produced in accordance with Clause 212 of the Regulation and that all investments have been made in accordance with the Act, Regulation and Policy.

General Investment Commentary

Council officers monitor and manage the cash and investment portfolio by taking into consideration credit ratings of financial institutions, interest rates offered for periods of investment, counterparty exposures and cash flow requirements.

Following assessment of projected cash flow requirements, surplus funds are invested in accordance with the Policy. Investment returns of the portfolio to the end of August 2025 are exceeding budget.

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services

Investment Portfolio Information**Table 1** Total cash and investments held by Council as at 31 August 2025

Invest No	Financial Institution Investment Held With	Invest Type	Interest Coupon Term	Maturity	Current Coupon Rate	Par Value \$'000
	Commonwealth Bank	CASH			3.25%	12,270
	Commonwealth Bank	At Call			3.85%	22,041
	Commonwealth Bank	At Call			3.50%	748
1243	AMP Bank	At Call			2.00%	560
1523	National Bank	TD	363	23-Sep-25	4.90%	4,000
1527	Suncorp Bank	TD	312	19-Nov-25	5.05%	5,000
1528	Suncorp Bank	TD	245	05-Nov-25	4.70%	3,000
1529	Bank of Queensland	TD	189	10-Sep-25	4.75%	2,000
1530	Suncorp Bank	TD	182	23-Sep-25	4.70%	4,000
1531	National Bank	TD	147	24-Sep-25	4.42%	5,000
1532	National Bank	TD	209	25-Nov-25	4.32%	5,000
1533	National Bank	TD	270	10-Feb-26	4.33%	2,500
1534	Bank of Queensland	TD	275	05-Mar-26	4.20%	6,000
1535	Bank of Queensland	TD	183	03-Dec-25	4.30%	2,500
1536	Bank of Queensland	TD	218	07-Jan-26	4.30%	5,000
1537	Suncorp Bank	TD	365	03-Jun-26	4.14%	4,000
1538	Suncorp Bank	TD	299	21-Apr-26	4.24%	2,500
1539	AMP Bank	TD	183	03-Dec-25	4.45%	2,500
1540	Bank of Queensland	TD	218	28-Jan-26	4.37%	2,000
1541	Suncorp Bank	TD	272	30-Mar-26	4.30%	3,000
1463	Treasury Corporation	Growth Fund				4,549
TOTAL						98,168

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

Financial Institution	Credit Rating	Institution Maximum	Amount \$'000	% of Portfolio
National Australia Bank	AA-	40%	16,500	26.38%
Suncorp Bank	AA-	40%	21,500	34.37%
AMP Bank	BBB+	15%	2,500	4.00%
Bank of Queensland	A-	40%	17,500	27.98%
Treasury Corporation	Unrated	30%	4,549	7.27%
TOTAL			62,549	100.00%

In accordance with the Policy, figures in Table 2 above exclude cash and at call balances in Council's main operating account held with the Commonwealth and AMP banks.

Corporate and Community

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Corporate and Community Services



Investment in NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp)

TCorpIM Funds are unit trusts. Distributions are made annually and are automatically reinvested into the fund to buy additional units. As this investment is held for medium to long-term capital appreciation, gains or losses will only be realised on redemption of the investment.

The August 2025 unrealised return was a gain of \$48,085 or 1.07% (1.69% annualised).

Table 3 NSW Treasury Corporation Performance Summary (June 2025)

	10 years (% pa)	7 years (% pa)	3 years (% pa)	1 year %	FYTD %	1 month %
IM Medium Term Growth Fund	4.35	4.13	6.75	7.74	1.62	1.07
Benchmark: CPI + 2.0% p.a. (over rolling 5 years)	4.75	5.19	5.91	4.57	0.73	0.37
Return above benchmark p.a.	(0.40)	(1.06)	0.84	3.17	0.89	0.70

Table 4 Investment types, risk, amount and percentage invested compared to total.

Investment Type	Risk Assessment		Amount	% Of
	Capital	Interest	\$'000	Portfolio
Term Deposits	Low	Low	58,000	59.08%
Cash/At Call Deposits	Low	Low	35,619	36.29%
Capital Growth Fund	Medium	Medium	4,549	4.63%
TOTAL			98,168	100.00%

Table 5 Comparison of interest rates, earnings and balances this year to last year

Performance Measures	This Year	Last Year
Investment Portfolio Average Interest Rate (year to date)	5.04%	5.64%
BBSW Average Interest Rate (year to date) *	3.84%	4.52%
Actual Investment Interest Earned (for the current month)	\$306,730	\$287,001
Actual Investment Interest Earned (year to date) ^	\$612,003	\$589,365
Revised Budget Investment Interest (year to date)	\$458,333	\$458,333
Original Budget Investment Interest (annual)	\$2,750,000	\$2,500,000
Revised Budget Investment Interest (annual)	\$2,750,000	\$2,750,000
TCorp unrealised movement (year to date)	1.69%	1.98%

Investment and Cash Balances (Par Value) #	This Year	Last Year
Opening Balance as at 1 July	\$97,128,204	\$83,084,775
Closing Balance as at 31 August	\$98,167,716	\$78,651,658

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

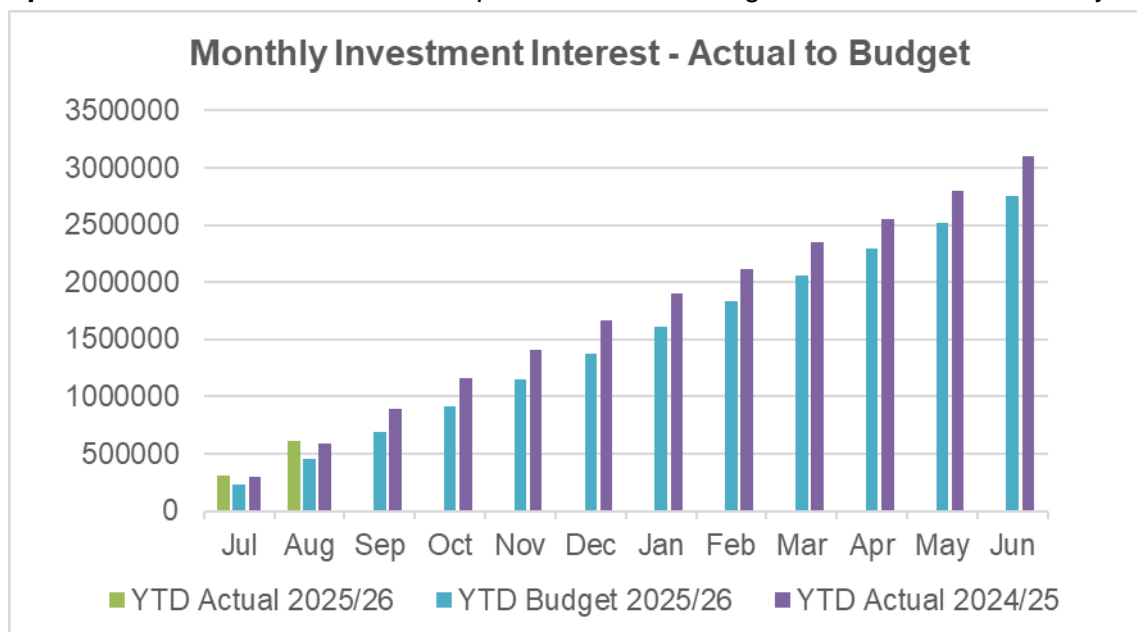
^ Excludes TCorp unrealised returns

Excludes Section 355 Committee cash held

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC61/2025

Corporate and Community Services

**Graph 1** Actual interest earned compared to revised budget and actual interest last year**Table 6** Internal and external restrictions over cash and investments held

Month End Totals \$'000	Aug 2025	Jul 2025	Jun 2025	May 2025	Apr 2025	Mar 2025
External Restrictions	89,117	81,418	87,214	75,097	65,828	59,434
Internal Restrictions	8,198	7,349	9,823	9,671	3,450	3,450
Total Restrictions	97,315	88,767	97,037	84,768	69,278	62,884
<i>Prepaid grant expenditure to be reimbursed</i>				-	-	-
Unrestricted	853	94	91	399	942	303
Total Cash & Investments	98,168	88,861	97,128	85,167	70,220	63,187

*The restricted funds shown above for July and August are provisional and are subject to change through the financial statement process. This will only be final once audited and published in the annual financial statements. Material changes will be advised to Council.

CONSULTATION

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

Corporate and Community

Report No. CC61/2025

Corporate and Community Services



STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

Investment returns are an integral part of funding for future services and community expectations within the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. This report is a part of Council's governance framework – providing feedback on the progress against the investment policy and budget. This is in line with the community's desired outcome of: "*Civic Leadership and Effective Governance*" and more specifically links to strategic direction:

5.3.2: Our Council's processes are efficient and transparent;

5.3.3: Our Council is financially sustainable.

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy.

b. Financial Implications

Investment returns are included in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Amendments are affected through the Quarterly Budget Review process. Investment portfolio performance is detailed within the report with comparisons to prior year and budget.

A portion of the portfolio and its associated investment income is restricted as it relates to funds from developer contributions, payments in advance for grant projects, Domestic Waste Management, and stormwater management income to be applied to specific purposes and not available for general operational projects.

c. Legislative Implications

This report meets Council's statutory obligations under the Act and Regulation.

d. Risk Implications

Investment risks are detailed within this report.

e. Other Implications

There are no environmental, community, consultative or other implications to this report.

CONCLUSION

The report details investments held at month end and meets Councils reporting obligations.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI9/2025

Works and Infrastructure



SUBJECT: *DRAFT WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICY*

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: *Environment and Waste Services Manager*

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of the draft Waste Management Policy 2025 for public exhibition following amendments to meet the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2026-31.

RECOMMENDATION

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

BACKGROUND

Council first adopted the Waste Management Policy in 2021 (WI23/2021). The document combined several separate waste policies that had existed up to that time. It provides crucial guidance in relation to waste management procedures for staff and the community with clear guidelines on how waste management services and charges are administered.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

The proposed Waste Management Policy has been drafted to provide clear guidance to staff and the community on the administration of waste management services and charges.

The policy includes updates for service changes with the commencement of weekly food and garden organics (FOGO collection) and from the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2026-31 including:

- Weekly collection of organic bins (sections 4.4.1 and 5.3.1) and delivery of kitchen caddies and liners for food scrap separation in homes (new sections 4.4.10 and 4.4.11).
- Provision of an alternative waste service with an opt-in fortnightly waste collection at a discounted charge (new section 4.4.2). This section also provides guidance on procedures if the service is being abused by contaminating resource recovery bins.
- Processes for managing contaminated resource recovery bins (section 4.4.8).
- Updates to waste vouchers removing information relating to the former postal delivery with rates notices, opening up vouchers to tenants (section 4.4.9) and allowing mattresses on resource recovery vouchers as requested in the Community Waste Survey October 2024.
- Updates to position titles and responsibilities (sections 10 and 13).

Works and Infrastructure**Report No. WI9/2025****Works and Infrastructure****Exhibition:**

It is proposed to exhibit the draft Policy for 28 days from Tuesday 23 September 2025 until Friday 24 October 2025 to allow the community time to review and provide comments. At the conclusion of the exhibition period, if necessary, a further report will then be presented to Council summarising the detail of the comments received and any subsequent changes to the draft Policy before seeking adoption.

Hard copies of the draft Policy will be exhibited at Council's Administration Building, Kurri Kurri and Cessnock Libraries and electronic copies will be available via Council's Together Cessnock engagement portal. In addition, Council's Waste Team will conduct the following pop-up sessions in conjunction with FOGO information sessions for community members wishing to discuss any specific issues.

Date	Time	Location
9 October	10.30am – 12pm	Cessnock Village Plaza
TBC		Outside Kurri Kurri Library
TBC		Huntlee Shopping Centre

OPTIONS

1. Support the recommendation that Council place the Waste Management Policy on public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

This is the recommended option.

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

(To be provided by Council).

This option is not recommended as updates are required to implement the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2026-31.

CONSULTATION

Internal Consultation: Consultation with internal stakeholders has occurred as follows:

- Environment and Waste Manager
- Waste and Resource Recovery Coordinator
- Environment and Waste staff.

External Consultation: Feedback from the community in the waste survey undertaken in October 2024 have been considered and included in the review of the policy.

STRATEGIC LINKS**a. Delivery Program**

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

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI9/2025

Works and Infrastructure



b. Other Plans

Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2026-31

IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

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

b. Financial Implications

Nil

c. Legislative Implications

NA

d. Risk Implications

NA

e. Environmental Implications

NA

f. Other Implications

NA

CONCLUSION

It is appropriate that Council endorse the proposed Waste Management Policy to be placed on public exhibition for 28 days, and for the existing policy to be rescinded.

The proposed document has been created to provide staff and the community with guidance on the administration of waste management services and charges.

ENCLOSURES

- 1 ➡ Draft Waste Management Policy 2025

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI10/2025

Works and Infrastructure



SUBJECT: ***NAMING OF NEW NETBALL FACILITY AT BOOTH PARK, KURRI KURRI***

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: ***Open Space and Community Facilities Manager***

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement to officially name the netball facility currently under construction at Booth Park, Kurri Kurri, the 'Molly Worthington Netball Facility'. The proposal will not change the name of Booth Park.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council endorse the proposed naming of the new netball facility within Booth Park, Kurri Kurri, adopting the name "Molly Worthington Netball Facility".
2. In line with the Geographic Names Board Place Naming Policy, the Board be notified of the Netball Facility name to ensure the name, position and origin is recorded in the Spatial Services' Digital Topographic Database and the name shown on maps, where relevant.

BACKGROUND

On the 19 May 2021, Council resolved that Booth Park be identified as an alternate site for the relocation of Kurri Kurri Netball Courts.

Construction of a new netball facility within Booth Park commenced in early 2025 with funding provided by; the Australian Government via the Priority Community Infrastructure Program (\$7,500,000); NSW Government via Level Playing Field Program 2023/24 (\$1,898,400) and Developer contributions (\$880,000).

The new netball facility will include the following improvements:

- 12 new plexipave surfaced netball courts
- Floodlighting
- A multipurpose half-court
- A new amenities building featuring storage, canteen, changerooms, referee's room, first aid room, meeting space, office, and toilet facilities
- Formalised car parking
- Park furniture
- Installation of Onsite Stormwater Detention to manage stormwater runoff
- Landscaping

The new netball facility is expected to be completed in late 2025.

Council received an application form from the Kurri Kurri Netball Association to formally name the new netball facility the "Molly Worthington Netball Facility". This application has been considered in accordance with Council's Naming of Asset's Policy.

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In line with Council's Naming of Asset's Policy (section 4.6) personal names may be used for Council's Assets e.g., amenities buildings, sporting facilities etc., however these features are not formally assigned by the Geographic Names Board (GNB) and do not require Board endorsement. Naming of these features occurs via a Council resolution, prior to notification to the GNB, which is the basis for this report.

REPORT/PROPOSAL

In response to the application submitted by the Kurri Kurri Netball Association, this report is seeking Council endorsement to name the new facility the "Molly Worthington Netball Facility". The proposal recognises the significant contribution Molly Worthington made to netball in Kurri Kurri. As a local resident of note and founding member of the Kurri Kurri Netball Association, Molly Worthington played a key role in bringing netball to the local community. Her dedication to the sport was instrumental in the establishment of the current netball courts on Maitland Street, Kurri Kurri, known as the "Molly Worthington Netball Courts" in her honour.

Following the completion of the new netball facility, the existing netball courts on the corner of Maitland Street and Mitchell Avenue Kurri Kurri will no longer carry the Molly Worthington name. Instead, her legacy is proposed to continue through the naming of the new, purpose-built "Molly Worthington Netball Facility" located within Booth Park, Rawson Street Kurri Kurri. The proposal does not impact the name of Booth Park.

OPTIONS

Nil

CONSULTATION

In line with Council's Naming of Asset's Policy, public exhibition of the naming proposal is not required. Notice of the proposal to name the new facility the "Molly Worthington Netball Facility" was placed on Council's Together Cessnock public engagement webpage for two weeks between Wednesday 30 July and Wednesday 13 August 2025.

A post with information and a link to the proposal webpage was also posted on Council's Facebook page on August 6 2025. The Facebook post on this proposal was shared five times, received 26 comments and 34 positive reactions. The naming proposal page was visited 188 times. Twelve formal submissions were received through the survey tool on the Together Cessnock project webpage with 11 of these being supportive of the naming proposal. Survey responses are summarised in **Enclosure 1**.

STRATEGIC LINKS

a. Delivery Program

The proposal aligns with objective 5.1 'Fostering and Supporting Community Leadership'.

b. Other Plans

Nil.

Works and Infrastructure

Report No. WI10/2025

Works and Infrastructure



IMPLICATIONS

a. Policy and Procedural Implications

The proposal is in line with Council's Naming of Council Assets Policy.

b. Financial Implications

Existing budget for the delivery of the new netball facility will cover all costs associated with the supply and installation of appropriate signage to acknowledge the naming of the Netball Facility.

c. Legislative Implications

Nil

d. Risk Implications

Nil

e. Environmental Implications

Nil

f. Other Implications

Nil

CONCLUSION

The proposed name for the new netball facility is a fitting way to continue recognition of the contribution made by local resident of note, Molly Worthington in bringing netball to the local community. Following Kurri Kurri Netball Association's application and associated consultation findings, it is recommended the naming proposal be supported.

ENCLOSURES

[1](#) ➡ Summary of Submissions _ Molly Worthington Netball Facility Naming Proposal

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN12/2025

General Manager's Unit



NOTICES OF MOTION No. BN12/2025

SUBJECT: ***MANAGEMENT AND USE OF THE LAND KNOWN AS BRANXTON RV CAMP***

COUNCILLOR: ***Mitchell Lea***

MOTION

1. That Council engage in open communication with the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) (and other parties as required including but not limited to neighbouring residents) to explore potential management and land use opportunities for the area known as the Branxton RV Park.
2. That the General Manager present a report to Councillors at a future meeting outlining the outcomes of these discussions and recommended next step.

It is my intention to move the above motion at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council on 17 September 2025.

RATIONALE

This motion is about re-opening a constructive dialogue with the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia, who were previously successful when an EOI was put out for the management of the facility, regarding the future management of the Branxton RV Park.

Council has looked at this concept in the past, but circumstances, operational models, and tourism trends have evolved since then. The CMCA is a national organisation with proven experience in operating RV-friendly sites across Australia, supporting both short-stay travellers and the communities they visit.

Re-engaging with the CMCA presents an opportunity to explore:

- Improved utilisation of the Branxton RV Park.
- Potential cost-effective management models that may reduce Council's operational burden.
- Increased visitation to Branxton's local businesses through well-managed RV tourism.

Importantly, this motion is not about locking in an arrangement today. It is about ensuring we are open to discussion, exploring all options, and obtaining clear, up-to-date information before making any decisions.

The Branxton RV Park is a community asset, and we have a responsibility to ensure it is managed in a way that delivers the greatest benefit to residents, businesses, and visitors. This motion simply starts that conversation again, with the aim of getting a report back to Council so we can make an informed choice.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Nil

Notices Of Motion

Report No. BN12/2025

General Manager's Unit



DELIVERY PROGRAM:

1.1.1, 1.1.3, 1.1.4, 1.3.3, 1.4.1, 2.1.1, 2.1.3, 2.3.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.3, 5.3.1, 5.3.4,

Sgd: Mitchell Lea
Date: 13 August 2025

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY

The site is currently used as an camping ground, however no approvals for this land use have been granted. During previous discussions held with the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia Ltd (CMCA) in 2023, several significant constraints were raised with the proposed land use on the site including reclassification of the site, flooding, bushfire, social impact/crime prevention, and access. The subject site does not have direct public road frontage and vehicular access to the site is currently across Crown Land. A development application was lodged in 2023 and subsequently withdrawn on the basis that the environmental constraints could not be readily overcome.

Notably, the subject site sits within the Anambah to Branxton Regionally Significant Growth Investigation Area (RSGA). The aims of the RSGA, as identified in the Hunter Regional Plan 2041, is to provide a substantial amount of new housing and employment opportunities over the next forty+ years. Council received a \$3.9M grant from the Federal Government to progress (with Maitland and Singleton Councils) a structure plan that will consider a range of issues and will identify areas for infrastructure provision, environmental protection, residential uses, new recreation areas and employment areas. It is considered premature to address this site in isolation from the broader Anambah to Branxton land use planning work.

Separate to the planning legislation, the subject site is classified as Community Land under the under the *Local Government Act 1993*. The use of the site as an RV Park is considered contrary to the core objectives of the Plan of Management which has been adopted by Council and applies to the site.

Council officers have recently reengaged with the CMCA and a meeting was held on 3 September 2025. CMCA reiterated its interest in establishing and managing an RV Park on the subject site however noted the awareness of environmental constraints on the site and the planning work being undertaken for the Anambah to Branxton area.

Alternate Recommendation

1. That Council notes the on-going discussions with the CMCA and that the proposed RV Park is located within the Anambah to Branxton Regionally Significant Growth Investigation Area.
2. That the General Manager continue discussions with the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) regarding an RV Friendly Plan for alternative opportunities to support RV tourism in the Cessnock LGA more broadly.

ENCLOSURES

There are no enclosures for this report