



2015–2016 Annual Report

Delivering Services & Infrastructure for Our Community

Cessnock - thriving, attractive and welcoming



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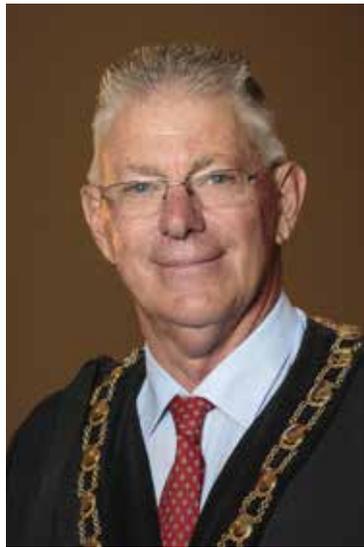
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Message from the Mayor



Mayor Councillor Bob Pynsent

Cessnock City Council's 2015-16 Annual Report demonstrates our commitment to community is unwavering as we continue to strive towards our vision- thriving, attractive and welcoming.

Over the last year Council has achieved a great deal as we have reached the goals and outcomes set out under the 2015-16 Operational Plan.

We are investing in a connected, safe and creative community while ensuring we are sustainable and prosperous into the future. The improvement of ageing infrastructure remains a top priority with \$13.9 million spent on Capital Works. We have approved over \$168.4 million in developments this financial year, marking one of the highest approvals ever experienced in this local government area.

Significant works have been undertaken across our local government road network. This includes the \$20 million Broke Road and Hermitage Road upgrade boosted by funding under the NSW Government's NSW Resources for Regions program. The project is

gathering momentum with the works on Hermitage Road now the focus. This road is a key link to our extraordinary wine region which attracts around 1 million visitors per year. We continue to welcome these people into our community and look for new ways to encourage their visit.

We have continued our commitment to remain financially sustainable and make a positive difference in our community. The growth of Spring Awakening, Youth Week and Seniors' Week all evidence of commitment to improving and building on the previous year's successes.

Please enjoy reading some of the highlights and achievements of Cessnock City Council over the last financial year. It will give residents a greater insight into our delivery of services. I look forward to the next financial year and what we can achieve as a collective.

Bob Pynsent

Mayor of the City of Cessnock



General Manager Stephen Glen

The 2015-16 financial year has been one of great success for Cessnock City Council as we progress towards our objective of being a thriving regional hub and plan for the future needs of our local government area.

This Annual Report details the achievements we have made, striking a balance between delivering our growing community with effective and efficient services while remaining financially sustainable. Our commitment to the vision of Cessnock as thriving, attractive and welcoming is articulated in this report.

Council has delivered key infrastructure in the community upgrading road, bridges and recreational facilities to ensure our increasing population has access to updated services. Continuous improvement and financial sustainability remain our key challenges. We are committed to providing our community with the services and infrastructure they deserve and with a sustainable fiscal future.

Council is committed to the future development and growth of our region. This includes remaining Fit for the Future as Local Government across New South Wales faces change and transformation.

Cessnock City Council remains Fit for the Future and is on track as we move into the next financial year.

Our accomplishments are the result of a team effort and rely on the contributions of focused Council staff. I congratulate all staff for working together to secure a positive future for the Cessnock local government area.

Mayor, Councillor Pynsent and former Councillors should also be commended on their valuable efforts and commitment to the flourishing of our community. It is with great pleasure I welcome the new Councillors and look forward to another year of hard work.

Stephen Glen

General Manager

Message from the General Manager

The Annual Report

This Annual Report provides a summary of Council's achievements during the 2015-16 year. Progress is measured against the programs, budget and desired outcomes in the 2015-16 Operational Plan. The operational plan aims to achieve the longer term objectives of the delivery program and the *Cessnock 2023* community strategic plan.

This document focuses on Council's implementation of the 2013-17 Delivery Program and 2015-16 Operational Plan because these are the plans that are wholly the responsibility of Council.

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

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

They are:

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

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

As this is the final Annual Report for the elected Council of 2012-16, it also includes a State of Environment Report and, as a separate document, the End of Term Report.

FIT FOR THE FUTURE

In September 2014 the NSW Government announced the *Fit for the Future* reform package, its response to the Independent Local Government's Review Panel's final report on NSW Local Government Reform. The *Fit for the Future* reform package includes proposals for councils across NSW to strengthen efficiency, performance and move towards a more sustainable position.

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

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

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



Councillors

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

NEWLY ELECTED MAYOR & COUNCILLORS - FROM SEPTEMBER 2016

| | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| The Mayor | Clr Bob Pynsent | | |
| Ward A | Ward B | Ward C | Ward D |
| Clr Paul Dunn | Clr Di Fitzgibbon | Clr Melanie Dagg | Clr Anthony Burke |
| Clr Mark Lyons | Clr Ian Olsen | Clr John Fagg | Clr Rod Doherty |
| Clr Allan Stapleford | Clr Jay Suvaal | Clr Anne Sander | Clr Darrin Gray |

FORMER MAYOR & COUNCILLORS - TO SEPTEMBER 2016

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|---|------------------|
| The Mayor | Clr Bob Pynsent | | |
| Ward A | Ward B | Ward C | Ward D |
| Clr James Hawkins | Clr Morgan Campbell | Clr Catherine Parsons | Clr Rod Doherty |
| Clr Allan Stapleford | Clr Bryce Gibson | Clr Suellen Wrightson (resigned June 2016) | Clr James Ryan |
| Clr Cordelia Troy | Clr Ian Olsen | | Clr Graham Smith |



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

AT A GLANCE

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Estimated Resident Population | 55,862 (ABS ERP 2015) |
| Ratepayers (approx) | 24,500 |
| Towns, villages and localities | 57 |
| Chambers of Commerce | 4 |
| Roads | 1,111 kilometres |
| Cycle ways (on and off road) | 60 kilometres |
| Libraries | 2 |
| Community Halls | 18 |
| Performance Theatre | 1 (466 seat) |
| Public Swimming Pools | 3 |
| Indoor Sports Centres | 2 |
| Parks | 52 |
| Playgrounds | 41 |
| Sports fields/ovals | 23 |
| Cemeteries | 10 general, 2 lawn |
| Waste and Recycle Centre | 1 |

Our Vision

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

In summary, the vision is:

*Cessnock -
thriving, attractive and welcoming.*



Australia Day Celebrations

A photograph of a teacher in a library setting, wearing a grey cardigan and a patterned top, with her arms raised. In the foreground, many children are also raising their hands, some wearing green bucket hats. The background shows bookshelves filled with books. The overall atmosphere is one of an active and engaged classroom.

*Delivering
a connected,
safe and creative
community*

COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME:

A connected, safe & creative community

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

Council has undertaken the following principal activities during 2015-16 to achieve the deliverables in the 2013-17 Deliberation Program and, ultimately, the objectives in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.



Community & Cultural Activities

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



Community Health & Safety

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



Community Assets

- Community halls and centres
- Early childhood facilities
- Cycleways

Promoting Social Connections

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS

The 2011 Census recorded that approximately 2,457 people or 4.8 per cent of the Cessnock City Council population identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, a number well above the national average.

A successful program of community activities and events for NAIDOC Week 2015 was coordinated by Council and delivered in July 2015, involving a number of agencies and organisations. Over 1,200 people attended 15 events held across the local government area.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee (comprising Councillors and community representatives) continued to hold regular meetings throughout the year.

In December 2015, Council adopted its Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. The plan, developed with strong support from Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee, provides Council with a framework and vision for reconciliation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The plan lists 13 actions and is structured around 4 themes; Relationships, Respect, Opportunities and Tracking Progress.

An Elders' Morning Tea was held for National Reconciliation Week 2016, hosted by the Mayor and Councillors and attended by Elders from both Barkuma Neighbourhood Centre and Black Creek Aboriginal Corporation Elders groups, members of Black Creek Aboriginal Corporation, CEO of Mindaribba LALC and heads of the Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and Lovedale Chambers of Commerce. The event began in the Council foyer with an Acknowledgement of Country by a member of Black Creek Aboriginal Corporation, and a performance by the Imi-Wonna-Roi dancers.

PEOPLE WITH DIVERSE CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC BACKGROUNDS

The 2011 Census found that there were over 30 languages being spoken by residents in the LGA and that 6.6 per cent of residents were born overseas. Council participated in a Harmony Day celebration in March 2016 with a significant community event in the plaza adjacent to the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre. The event was well attended, with an increase in the participation levels from previous years.



NAIDOC Week 2016

CLUB GRANTS

For the 2015-16 Club Grants Funding Round, the Club Grants Committee received 49 applications and was able to partially or fully fund 19 projects. The total allocation of grant funds was \$83,271. Council provided administrative support to, and facilitation of, the funding program.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

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

Council's 2015-16 Financial Assistance Grant totalled \$6.9m representing approximately 7.99 per cent of total revenue.

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

The impact of the indexation freeze resulted in a reduction of nearly \$86,000 from Council's expected 2015-16 allocation.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND GRANTS

During 2015-16 Council provided \$97,152.26 in general financial assistance to community groups/organisations.

| GROUP/ORGANISATION | AMOUNT |
|--|--------------------|
| COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM | |
| Abermain Elsteddfod Society | \$1,900.00 |
| Anglican Parish of Mount Vincent | \$3,000.00 |
| Branxton/Greta Community Chamber | \$1,300.00 |
| Central Hunter Community Chamber | \$1,100.00 |
| Cessnock City RSL Pipes | \$2,550.00 |
| Cessnock Community & Youth Development | \$1,850.00 |
| Cessnock Multipurpose Childrens Centre | \$1,100.00 |
| Cessnock Regional Art Gallery | \$2,850.00 |
| Cessnock Woodturners Inc | \$1,700.00 |
| Coalfields Heritage Group | \$2,000.00 |
| Kurri Kurri Quills | \$400.00 |
| Pelaw Main Public School | \$500.00 |
| Wollombi Valley Arts Council | \$1,900.00 |
| Wollombi Sculpture in the Vines | \$2,850.00 |
| COMMUNITY HALLS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM | |
| Cessnock Multi Purpose Childrens Centre | \$14,637.65 |
| Greta Community Preschool Inc | \$7,915.99 |
| Kearsley Community Hall | \$799.65 |
| North Cessnock Community Hall | \$2,079.00 |
| Weston Community Pre School | \$2,919.65 |
| Wollombi Community Hall | \$3,054.59 |
| RECREATION MINOR PROJECTS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM | |
| Abermain/Weston Hawks RLFC | \$5,909.10 |
| Cessnock Dog Club Inc. | \$4,636.35 |
| Cessnock Minor Rugby League | \$1,443.91 |
| Cessnock Rugby League Football Club | \$4,638.80 |
| Greta Branxton Pony Sports Club | \$1,590.90 |
| Kurri Kurri Rugby League Club | \$112.47 |
| Mulbring Park Tennis Club | \$3,201.80 |
| Weston Workers Bears Football | \$8,134.00 |
| Wollombi Valley Pony Club Inc. | \$800.00 |
| Wollobmi Valley Progress Association | \$1,183.20 |
| TIDY TOWNS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM | |
| Bucketty Tidy Town Committee | \$1,780.00 |
| Kurri Kurri Tidy Towns | \$850.00 |
| Weston Heritage & Tidy Towns | \$5,337.20 |
| Wollombi Valley Tidy Towns | \$1,128.00 |
| TOTAL | \$97,152.26 |



Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Promote the range of community services across the Local Government Area. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Engage with the indigenous community. - Organise and deliver a range of NAIDOC Week events. - Implement the actions from the Reconciliation Action Plan. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Develop a program to increase social connections across the Local Government Area. - Organise and deliver a range of Seniors' Week events. - Organise and deliver a range of Youth Week events. - Organise other civic events - Australia Day, Carols in the Park, Citizenship Ceremonies, etc. - Work with the Cessnock Chamber of Commerce to develop a major festival. - Support the Kurri Kurri Nostalgia Festival. - Commence development of the Pedestrian and Access Mobility Plan. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Commence implementation of the Cessnock City Bicycle Plan. - Finalise the Cessnock City Cycle Strategy and Action Plan. - Identify the priority projects from the Cessnock City Cycle Strategy. | ✔ | ✔ |

Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 4 ❌ Not Yet Achieved 0 ⚠ At Risk 0



Australia Day 2016



Strengthening Community Culture

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

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



Youth Week 2016 Cupcake Workshop

YOUTH SERVICES

Council's Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) is now in its 18th year of operation. CYCOS provides a suite of programs for the local government area's youth, including in-house and outreach drop-in facilities, informal educational programs in schools, referral for young people to other services, court support and youth events. During the year, CYCOS had more than 10,000 occasions of service (i.e. interactions with young people), well above its target of 8,700.

Council, community organisations, local businesses and local young people delivered a very successful Youth Week 2016, with CYCOS playing a lead role in the

planning and programming of activities. The program of 18 activities and events engaged and entertained more than 1,800 young people. The activities included a big breakfast at all four local high schools, an outdoor movie night, an open mic night at the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre showcasing local performers, workshops on cupcake decorating, skateboard building, song writing, as well as the annual YouthFest Skate event with live music performed by young people. This year's Youth Week was awarded "Best Youth Week Program 2016" at the 2016 NSW Local Government Week Awards.

The Cessnock City Youth Council Committee (comprising Councillors and community representatives) continued to meet and discuss topics of interest to young people such as mental health, sexual health, Youth Week and environmental sustainability.

CYCOS has begun hiring its drop-in space for community groups in order to maximise the usage potential of the facility by the broader community.



Youth Week



AGED AND DISABLED SERVICES

Council provides a range of infrastructure for aged and disabled services. These services are operated by the not-for-profit sector and operations include:

- Domestic assistance service
- Personal care service
- Social support service
- Home maintenance and modification
- Transport services
- Disability respite services

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

During the year, Council commenced the community consultation process for its Disability Inclusion Action Plan. All councils under the *Disability Inclusion Regulation 2014* are required to have a Plan in place by 1 July 2017.

SENIORS WEEK 2016

Council was actively involved in organising, promoting and / or delivering 45 events to over 1,500 attendees as part of Seniors' Week 2016, with over 30 community organisations participating in the program. The 2016 program provided opportunities for seniors to participate in a wide range of social, recreational, educational and physical activities and events. The

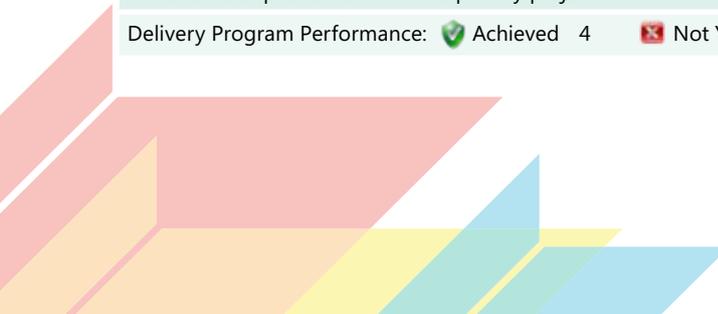
Seniors' Week Program is designed by the Seniors' Week Advisory Committee, and demonstrates the active partnership of local seniors and community groups, our Senior Citizen of the Year, and Council. Many of the organisations participating in the week run activities all year round, with the week, also being an opportunity for promotion and attracting new members. The week provided a showcase of the number and diversity of activities and organisations available for seniors in our community.



Seniors Week 2016 - Abermain Variety Concert

Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Collaborate with the community to develop and deliver services. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Develop a strategic plan for social welfare and community facilities needs across the Local Government Area. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Support groups to manage and improve community and sporting facilities. - Continue to support community, cultural and sporting facilities and projects \$ for \$ grants. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Commence implementation of the priority projects from the CYCOS Business Plan. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 4 ✘ Not Yet Achieved 0 ⚠ At Risk 0 | | |



Promoting Safe Communities

CRIME PREVENTION

Representatives from Council continued to attend the Community Safety Precinct Committee Meetings facilitated by the Central Hunter Local Area Command. Council also continued to consider crime prevention through environmental design when assessing development applications.

COMPANION ANIMALS

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

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

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

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

ANIMAL SHELTER DATA

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

There were 89 reported dog attacks involving 110 attacking dogs in the LGA in 2015-16.

For the year ended 30 June 2016 there were 185 actions relating to these dog attacks including:

- 1 was declared dangerous;
- 67 were infringed;
- 15 received warnings;
- 4 were seized and taken to the pound;
- 5 dogs were destroyed;
- 13 are still under investigation;
- 19 were declared menacing;
- 44 other actions were taken;
- 13 no action; and
- 4 seized and returned to the owner.



Australia Day 2016

SWIMMING POOLS

Council inspected 242 backyard swimming pools during the 2015-16 reporting period and, as a result, 119 certificates of compliance and 13 certificates of non-compliance were issued.



DE-SEXING OF DOGS AND CATS

Council was successful in receiving a grant from the Office of Local Government of \$10,000 to conduct a de-sexing program with the RSPCA, where 114 companion animals were de-sexed. Council also refers companion animal owners to Hunter Animal Watch to assist with desexing of animals for pension card holders. Council Rangers engage with animal owners and discuss the options of desexing their animal.

ALTERNATIVES TO EUTHANASIA FOR UNCLAIMED ANIMALS

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

OFF LEASH AREAS IN THE LGA

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

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

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Council spent approximately \$25,000 on community education programs in 2015-16 including a free microchip day. Council now has a school education program where Council Rangers attend schools to teach children the importance of caring for a companion animal. Council Rangers also attend community events with a new purpose built promotional trailer.

ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

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

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

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

Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Participate in collaborative partnerships to prevent crime. | | |
| Carry out regulatory and education programs to protect residential amenity and community health and safety. | | |
| Commence implementation of priority projects from the Road Safety Strategy. | | |
| Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 3 Not Yet Achieved 0 At Risk 0 | | |



Fostering an Articulate and Creative Community

CESSNOCK CITY LIBRARY

In 2015-16 a major focus area was the delivery of outreach programs that support the development of literacy skills within the wider community by nurturing a love of reading.

Key components of this program were:

- The Bookweek Road Show “Books Light Up Our Lives”, that saw library staff bring to life some of the 2015 Children’s Bookweek shortlisted books. 14 schools were visited and 2,103 children participated.
- Local preschools and playgroups were offered storytime sessions, with 64 groups visited and 1,123 children and 441 adults participating.
- Library staff told stories to 200 children at the 2015 Spring Awakening Festival.
- Author John Larkin gave very well-received author talks at Cessnock High, Kurri Kurri High, and Mt View High Schools, with 300 students from Years 7 to 10 attending the sessions.

Another major focus area was the promotion of the Library’s online e-resources. This was achieved by Library staff visiting senior primary and high school students to demonstrate the suite of e-resources to which the Library currently subscribes. The most popular of these resources to date have been Britannica Library, which is now freely available 24/7 to Library members who have Internet connection and YourTutor, an online tutoring service for English, Maths, Science, research and study skills.

New radio-frequency identification technologies were engaged for the first time to undertake stocktakes, proving to be a more time effective methodology, whilst also reducing the physical input of staff.

Throughout the year, there were 177,771 visits to Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries; 207,681 resources were borrowed and 34,748 e-resources accessed.



Mayor Bob Pynsent reading to children at Cessnock Library



CULTURAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Council administered its Community Cultural Development \$ for \$ Grant Program in 2015-16 and \$25,000 was allocated to 14 projects (refer to page 15 for details).

The Cultural Planning and Development Committee (comprising Councillors and community representatives) continued to hold regular meetings throughout the year.

Throughout the year three people were inducted into the City of Cessnock Hall of Fame. This brings the total number of inductees into the Hall of Fame to 57. All inductees are listed on the Council’s website.

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

CESSNOCK PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

Productions such as Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, Celtic Illusion and John Paul Young all attracted audience from as far afield as Sydney, the Central Coast, Muswellbrook and Newcastle. This provides strong evidence that the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre has become a quality venue that promoters seek out and to which patrons return again and again.

People attending events at Cessnock Performing Arts Centre from out of the area are starting to make comments about the centre on Trip Advisor and this, coupled with our 4.5 star rating on Facebook, is enhancing the profile of the venue.

Cessnock Performing Arts Centre continues to develop community partnerships that result in regular community involvement with the venue. These include the Cessnock Pensioners and Senior Citizens Association; the community choir “The Undeniably Noisy Project”; youth drama classes; the Pokolbin branch of the Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Society and the Children’s University.



Cessnock Performing Arts Centre - Erth’s Dinosaur Zoo

With its fourth iteration just around the corner, Spring Awakening continues to grow, delighting people of all ages as they step out of the ordinary and into the extraordinary. It is fast becoming a signature event for the local government area, with broad appeal and strong support from the community, attendance will continue to build.

Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2014-15 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Continue implementation of the priority projects from the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre business plan. - Review and update the CPAC business plan. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Commence implementation of the priority projects from the Library Strategic Plan. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Promote and participate in a range of cultural and heritage activities across the Local Government Area. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 3 ✘ Not Yet Achieved 0 ⚠ At Risk 0 | | |



MEASURES:

| MEASURES | CONTEXT/BENCHMARK | BASE | 2015-16 RESULT | TARGET |
|---|--|---|---|--------------------------------|
| Km of Cycleways in the LGA | <p>This is a measure of the bitumen and concrete off-road linkages within and between the towns and villages of the Local Government Area.</p> <p>At 30 June 2012, there was 13.6 km of sealed off-road cycleways in the Local Government Area.</p> | 13.6 km 2012 | 9.7 km 2016 | Increase |
| Engagement with young people | <p>This measure is the number of young people attending and participating in structured programs and drop-in services with CYCOS each year.</p> <p>This is a measure of the effectiveness of Council's provision of services to young people.</p> <p>This measure was 8,708 in 2010-11.</p> | 8,708 2010-11 | 11,234 2015-16 | >8,700 p.a. |
| Completion of programmed health & safety inspections | <p>This measure is the number of registered premises at 1 July: and the number of public health inspections carried out divided by the programmed public health inspections during a year.</p> <p>Public health inspections include food shop inspections, hairdressing shop inspections, and public swimming pool inspections. This is a measure of Council's contribution to the health of the community.</p> <p>In 2011-12 there were 658 premises and 100% of programmed inspections were carried out.</p> | 658 100% 2011-12 | 826 95% 2015-16 | N/A 100% |
| Completion of water cooling system inspections | <p>This measure is the number of registered premises at 1 July: and the number of water cooling towers inspected for legionnaires' disease divided by the programmed number of water cooling tower inspections during a year.</p> <p>This is a measure of Council's contribution to the health of the community.</p> <p>In 2011-12 there were 51 premises and 100% of programmed inspections were carried out.</p> | 51 100% 2011-12 | 29 100% 2015-16 | N/A 100% |
| Library Utilisation | <p>These measures are the number of visits to Council's libraries plus the number of hits on the library page of Council's website.</p> <p>This data is sourced from the counters at the entrances to the libraries and from Council's internal website analysis.</p> <p>This is a measure of the community's utilisation of Council's library resources for the purpose of both recreation and education.</p> | 206,485 visits 2011-12 25,814 hits 2011-12 | 177,771 visits 13,642 hits = 191,413 Combined = 81.5% YTD | > 235,000 p.a. Combined |
| Cessnock Performing Arts Centre Audience | <p>This measure is the number audience members that have attended performances at the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre in a calendar year.</p> <p>This measure is sourced from the centre's ticketing system.</p> <p>This is a measure of the community's exposure to community events and cultural experiences at the centre.</p> | 16,873 2012 | 17,528 2015 | 18,500 p.a. |



*Delivering
a sustainable
and prosperous
economy*

COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME:

A Sustainable & Prosperous Economy

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

Council has undertaken the following principal activities during 2015-16 to achieve the deliverables in the 2013-17 Delivery Program and, ultimately, the objectives in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.



Economic Development

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



Education

- Scholarships and academic competitions
- Building workforce capability



Strategic Land Use Planning

- Industrial land

Diversifying Local Business Options

HUNTER COUNCILS

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

During 2015-16 Hunter Councils participated in the State Government's Fit for the Future Joint Organisation pilot program. The focus of Joint Organisations is on strategic planning, regional advocacy and intergovernmental collaboration.

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

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

PARTNERSHIPS

- Council is a member of the Statewide Mutual Liability Scheme. This is a self-insurance scheme comprising the majority of Councils in New South Wales. It

was established with the purpose of purchasing affordable public liability and professional indemnity insurance. This enables Council to meet its insurance obligations under the *Local Government Act 1993*.

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

The company is made up of eight (8) Directors representing each of the four member councils (Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland and Singleton).

During the period 2015-16 Cessnock Council recycled 5,013 tonnes via the kerbside service.

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



Vincent Street Cessnock

CONTRACTS

Council awarded the following contracts for amounts over \$150,000 (not including employment contracts) during 2015-16.

| SUCCESSFUL TENDER | ITEM | AMOUNT PAYABLE PER TENDER (incl. GST) |
|--|---|---|
| Advance Sweepers Pty Ltd Allcott Hire Pty Ltd Cessnock Water Cartage and Plant Hire Pty Ltd Coates Hire Operations Pty Ltd Conplant Pty Ltd D&D Lumsden Earthmoving Pty Ltd Hartchers Water Haulage J&L Plant Hire Pty Ltd Johnno's Haulage Pty Ltd Julcat Earthmoving Pty Ltd Kennards Hire Koppman Earthmoving Pty Ltd t/as Noraville Lantry Earthmoving Pty Ltd Lovetts Cessnock Earthmoving Mining Logistics Pty Ltd T/A Fleetmaster Hire Mitchell Bros Earthmoving Pty Ltd Onsite Rental Group Operations Pty Ltd Paragon Civil Construction and Design Pty Ltd Perway Rail Pty Ltd Premitay Pty Ltd Pryor Plant Hire Pty Ltd Rollers Australia Pty Ltd Sharpe Bros (Aust) Pty Ltd Shearer Contracting Pty Ltd Sherrin Rentals Pty Ltd Solution Plant Hire Pty Limited Stabilised Pavements of Australia Pty Ltd Subzero Group Limited T & D Earthworks Pty Ltd Tomago Transport Earthmoving Pty Ltd Tutt Bryant Hire | Hire of Plant and Equipment | \$2,500,000 - \$3,500,000 (schedule of rates) |
| Buttai Gravel Pty Limited t/as Daracon Quarries Hebden Quarries Pty Ltd Metromix Pty Ltd, Quarry Products (Newcastle) Pty Ltd SCE Recycling Hunter | Supply and/or Supply and Delivery of Road Base, Sub-base and Rockfill Materials | ~\$1,000,000 (schedule of rates) |
| Colourworks Pty Ltd | Provision of multi-function devices (MFD's) and associated management software | \$186,070.70 |
| Conybeare Morrison International Pty Ltd | Cessnock Commercial Precinct Project | \$266,120.00 |
| Kenpass Pty Ltd | Design and Construction of Lomas Lane Bridge Nulkaba | \$349,600.00 |
| RTC Commercial Pty Ltd | Birrilee Park – New Amenities Building | \$872,520.00 |
| SGS Economics and Planning Pty Limited | Cessnock City Planning Strategy Project | \$301,135.00 |
| Solo Resource Recovery – Part A Bettergrow Pty Ltd – Part B | Collection of Organics for Cessnock, Maitland and Singleton Councils | \$11,101,877.60 – Part A \$474,508.10 – Part B |
| Waeger Constructions Pty Ltd | Frame Drive Bridge Replacement, Abermain | \$889,350.00 |
| Waeger Constructions Pty Ltd | Williams Bridge rectification | \$616,550.00 |

Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Continue to update marketing material for the Local Government Area. - Develop an Investment Prospectus for the Cessnock Local Government Area. | ✘ | ⚠ |
| Support local business support agencies. - Support the "mainstreet" programs for Cessnock and Kurri Kurri. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Commence implementation of the Economic Development Strategy. - Finalise the Business Capability Study. - Develop a Business Investment Program. - Implement the Business Investment Program. | ✘ | ⚠ |
| Commence implementation of the Cessnock CBD Masterplan. - Complete the development strategy for Cessnock CBD (including draft development control plan and draft contributions plan). | ✘ | ⚠ |
| Prepare a Kurri Kurri CBD Masterplan. - Commence development of the Kurri Kurri CBD Masterplan. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 2 ✘ Not Yet Achieved 0 ⚠ At Risk 3 | | |



Cessnock laneway project

Achieving more Sustainable Employment Opportunities

EMPLOYMENT

Employed Residents

At June 2016 there were 24,221 employed residents in the Cessnock local government area, successive mine closures are directly related to reduced employment. 45 per cent of employed residents work in the local government area, the remaining travel to surrounding regions for work.

Workers in Cessnock

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

| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE | SEP 2015 | DEC 2015 | MAR 2016 | JUNE 2016 |
|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Cessnock LGA | 14.4% | 14.2% | 11.7% | 9.7% |
| NSW | 5.9% | 5.8% | 5.6% | 5.4% |
| Australia | 6.2% | 6.1% | 6.0% | 5.9% |

Source: Small Area Labour Markets June 2016



Vincent Street Cessnock

INDUSTRY SECTORS

Cessnock City's Gross Regional Product (GRP) is estimated at \$2.405 billion. Cessnock represents 5.55 per cent of Hunter Region's GRP of \$43.316 billion and 0.47 per cent of New South Wales' Gross State Product (GSP) of \$513.309 billion.

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

Agriculture

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

Extractive Industries

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

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

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

Manufacturing

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

Wine

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

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

Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Support programs that promote education and training for local people. - Continue to award scholarships for academic, professional and trade excellence. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Support programs that promote employment for local people. - Implement programs from the Economic Development Strategy that support employment in the local government area (within existing resources). | ✔ | ✔ |
| Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 2 ✘ Not Yet Achieved 0 ⚠ At Risk 0 | | |



Vineyard

Increasing Tourism Opportunities & Visitation in the Area

TOURISM

The Hunter Region consistently places in the top five destinations in NSW for visitor numbers and expenditure, with the Wine Country area of Cessnock City being one of the primary destinations.

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

In the year ended December 2015 domestic visitors to the Hunter Region made just over 3 million overnight trips, spending 8.6 million nights in the region – consistent with the previous year. Domestic visitors to the Hunter Region made 6.1 million day trips, a significant 9.62 per cent increase on the previous year. In the year ended September 2014 the estimated domestic and international visitor spend in the Cessnock local government area was \$215 million.



Japanese National Football Team

Hunter Valley Visitor Centre

Under Council management the Hunter Valley Visitor Centre has achieved Level 1 Accredited Visitor Information Centres (AVIC) accreditation and taken on a renewed presence for the local community and visitors. Figures show that the new operating model has been effective in reducing costs while maximising the visitor experience. The centre expanded product offerings through the gift shop, art galley and Les Elvin Aboriginal Cultural gallery, pet friendly initiatives, implemented a well-supported "fee for service" (300 businesses subscribed), and continues to innovate in marketing and advertising initiatives including introduction of Wifi and an interactive iPad bar in 2016. Improvements to the landscaping, tenancies and internal spaces are increasing the attractiveness and functionality of the centre for visitors. The centre has achieved status as a crucial event promoter, promoting 872 events over the previous two years. Visitation through the centre doors was over 100,000 in 2015-16.



Hunter Valley Visitor Centre

National Stronger Regions program – Cessnock CBD Revitalisation Project

Cessnock City Council submitted a successful proposal for a four year CBD revitalisation project under the National Stronger Regions Program. Road upgrades, street improvements, art spaces, green spaces, cycling and walking and associated infrastructure improvements totalling \$2 million will be delivered to restore the vibrancy, connectedness and functionality of the CBD.



Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Support programs that promote visitation across the Local Government Area. - Implement the Hunter Valley Visitor Information Centre Strategy and Action Plans. | 🟢 | 🟢 |
| Support programs that promote a diversification of visitor experiences. - Complete the preliminary phase of the strategic review of the Richmond Vale Railway Museum Precinct. - Continue implementation of relevant projects from the Destination Management Plan (within existing resources). | 🟢 | 🟢 |
| Delivery Program Performance: 🟢 Achieved 2 🟡 Not Yet Achieved 0 ⚠️ At Risk 0 | | |

MEASURES:

| MEASURES | CONTEXT/BENCHMARK | BASE | 2015-16 RESULT | TARGET |
|---|---|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------|
| Grants secured for the community | These three measures are: - the number of grants applied for; and - the number and value of grants and sponsorships that were secured for the community with assistance by Council. | 94 Applied for 2012 | 81 | Maintain |
| | This is a measure of Council’s contribution to economic and community capacity building – by gaining funding for projects and services within the Local Government Area. | 46 Secured 2012 | 43 Secured 2015-16 | Improve |
| | For the period January 2012 to February 2013, 46 grants and sponsorships totalling \$2,318,041.04 were secured, with Council assistance, for the community. | \$2.3m Secured 2012 | \$9.5m Secured 2015-16 | Improve |



Delivering
**a sustainable
and healthy
environment**

COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME:

A Sustainable & Healthy Environment

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

Council has undertaken the following principal activities during 2015-16 to achieve the deliverables in the 2013-17 Delivery Program and, ultimately, the objectives in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.



Strategic Land Use Planning

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



Development Assessment



Health

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



Recreation

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



Natural Environmental Planning

- Biodiversity management



Environment & Waste

- Kerbside waste and recycling service
- Waste management facility

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

INFORMATION ABOUT PLANNING AGREEMENTS 93G(5)

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

| Name | Short Description | Date | Parties | Land to which Agreement Applies |
|---|---|-------------------|---|--|
| Anvil Creek Project Planning Deed Local Infrastructure | This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Anvil Creek, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. | 20 August 2008 | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; and Greta Estates Pty Limited (Greta) of 12 Woodside Avenue, Burwood, NSW, 2134. | Lots 1-6 of DP 1036942 & Lots 263-264 of DP 755211. |
| Averys Village Planning Agreement Biodiversity | This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide environmental offset land to the area commonly known as Averys Village. | 15 September 2013 | Minister for the Environment of Level 32 Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney, NSW, 2000; Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; Hunter Land Holdings of 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, NSW, 2322; Averys Rise Investor Pty Ltd of Level 2, 77 Hunter St, Newcastle, NSW, 2300; Lindsay James George Elliott of 57 Averys Lanes, Buchanan, NSW, 2323; Graham John Field of P.O. Box 30, Murgon, Qld, 4605; Pamela Joy Field of P.O. Box 30, Murgon, Qld, 4605; and HL Eco Trades Pty Ltd of 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, NSW, 2322. | Lot 20 DP 11823, Lot 12 DP 755231, Lot 13 DP 755231, Lot 5 DP 1082569, Lot 8 DP 10443 & Lot 119 752445 Averys Lane, Heddon Greta. |
| Bellbird Heights Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure | This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Bellbird, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. | 19 November 2014 | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; Winton Partners Pty Limited of Level 2, 95 Pitt Street Sydney, NSW, 2000. | Lot 1 DP 1164334 |
| Bellbird Heights Planning Agreement Biodiversity | This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide environmental offset land to the area commonly known as Bellbird. | 19 November 2014 | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; Winton Partners Pty Limited of Level 2, 95 Pitt Street Sydney, NSW, 2000. | Lot 1 DP 1164334 |
| Cessnock Civic Planning Agreement Biodiversity | This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide for the management of mine subsidence and environmental offset land within the area commonly known as Cessnock Civic. | 21 August 2012 | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; Cessnock Land Management P/L of C/- Level 1, 106 King St Sydney, NSW, 2000; Vincent Street Holdings P/L of C/- 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, NSW, 2322; and Hardie Oceanic P/L of C/-Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000. | Lot 251 DP 606348, Lot 1 DP 1036300, Lot 23 DP 845986 & Lot 22 DP 845986. |
| Cliftleigh Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure | This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Cliftleigh, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. | 20 August 2008 | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; and Winten (No 23) Pty Limited of Level 10, 61 Lavender Street, Milsons Point, NSW, 2061. | Lots 61 & 62 DP 1076974, Lot 23 DP 607899, Lots 61 & 62 DP 785115, Lot 3 DP 1039042, Lots 1&2 DP 1072111, Lot 22 DP 607899 & Lot 1 DP 1039042 Main Rd, Cliftleigh. |

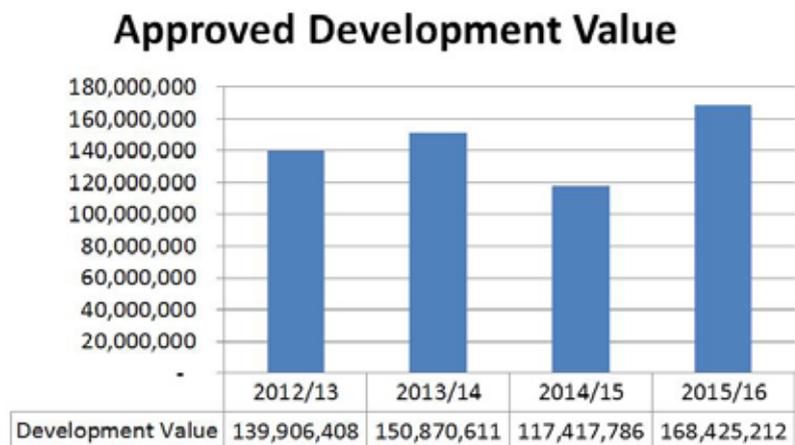
| Name | Short Description | Date | Parties | Land to which Agreement Applies |
|---|---|------------------|---|---|
| Heddon Greta Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure | This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Heddon Greta, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. | 3 November 2010 | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; and Kurri Autos Pty Limited of P.O. Box 61 Kurri Kurri, NSW, 2327. | Part Lot 404 of DP 1127085 & Part Lot 102 of DP 1112059 off Main Rd, Young & Bowden Sts, Errol Cres, Madeline & Ashley Cl & Forbes Cres at Heddon Greta. |
| Huntlee Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure | This Agreement applies to Stage 1 of the Huntlee precinct approved by the State Government in April 2013. In total, the Huntlee Planning Agreement includes more than \$38.9 million of local infrastructure in the form of monetary contributions valued at \$9,546,588, works-in-kind valued at \$29,429,643, and 81.45ha of land dedication. | 18 November 2015 | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325 Huntlee Pty Ltd of 34 Main Street Ellenbrook, Western Australia. | Part of Lot 200 DP 828486, Lot 201 DP 828486, Part of Lot 230 DP 79198, Lot 231 DP 879198, Lot 33 DP 755211, Lot 36 DP 755211, Lot 37 DP 755211, Lot 38 DP 755211, Lot 39 DP 755211, Lot 43 DP 755211, Part of Lot 241 DP 11005591, Lot 2 DP 729973, Lot 3 DP 729973, Lot 4 DP 729973, Lot 6 DP 729973, Lot 7 DP 729973, Lot 9 DP 729973, Lot 10 DP 729973, Lot 11 DP 729973, Part of Lot 12 DP 729973, Part of Lot 21 DP 1050597, Part of Lot 221 DP 1064738, Lot 10 DP 1105639, Lot 287 DP 1209109. |
| Kitchener Residential Subdivision Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure | This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide \$12,057.46 per lot (subject to indexation) for the provision of local infrastructure supporting the development of fifty nine (59) allotments in the Kitchener Urban Release Area. | 4 November 2015 | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325 JPG 58 Pty Ltd of Level 12, 48 Hunter Street, Sydney. | Lot 2 DP 862493 |
| Rose Hill Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure | This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Millfield, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. | 20 October 2014 | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; Fame Cove Three Pty Limited of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000. | Lot 1 DP 1197775 |
| West and Wyndham Street Greta Planning Agreement Local Infrastructure | This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Greta, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. | 6 August 2014 | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325; Hardie Greta Pty Limited of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000. | Lot 2 DP 808354 & Lot 2 DP 1151267 |
| West and Wyndham Street Greta Planning Agreement Biodiversity | This Agreement provides a mechanism to provide environmental offset land associated with development of the 'West and Wyndham Street, Greta' Urban Release Area, including the on-site protection of 7.7ha, and the off-site dedication of Lots 9, 102, and 207 DP753817 (297ha) for integration into the Wollemi National Park in the Singleton LGA. | 20 August 2015 | Cessnock City Council of 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock, NSW, 2325 Minister administering the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974 of Level 32 Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, NSW, Sydney, 2000 Hardie Greta Pty Ltd of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000 Biodiversity Lands Pty Ltd of Level 1, 106 King Street Sydney, NSW, 2000. | Lot 2 DP 808354, Lot 2 DP 1151267, Lot 9 DP 753817, Lot 102 DP 753817, Lot 207 DP 753817 |

DEVELOPMENT

In 2014-15 Council delivered the quickest turnaround time for development applications (DAs) in the Hunter with an average gross time of 47 days (24 days faster than the state average). For applications for single new dwellings, Cessnock's mean gross time during the 2014-15 reporting period was 27 days— the fastest of the Hunter Councils.

The value of development approvals during the period 2012-16 was \$576.6 million.

In 2015 Council has commenced a trial of electronic lodgement of combined DAs and CCs for applications associated with dwellings.



Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Prepare a City Wide Development Strategy. - Commence review of the City Wide Settlement Strategy. | | |
| Commence implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy. - Continue implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy. | | |
| Complete further Flood Studies and Risk Management Plans for major catchments in the Local Government Area. - Complete Lower Black Creek (North) Flood Study. - Commence implementation of priority floodplain risk management plan projects (subject to grant funding). - Seek funding for implementation of priority projects the Cessnock Flood Risk Management Plan. | | |
| Commence implementation of Council's Trunk Stormwater Drainage Strategy. - Complete Trunk Stormwater Drainage Strategy. - Complete the Trunk Stormwater Drainage Needs Analysis component of the City Wide Infrastructure Strategy. - Identify the priority sub-catchment works for inclusion in the Trunk Stormwater Drainage Strategy. | | |
| Carry out regulatory and education programs to protect and enhance the natural environment. | | |
| Continue to efficiently and effectively process development applications and respond to planning-related enquiries. - Implement on-line applications relating to development assessment. - Continue to progress the integration and implementation of the on-line application module for development assessment. | | |
| Prepare a comprehensive Carbon Management Strategy and commence implementation. | | |
| Establish Council's position in relation to climate change adaptation and mitigation and implement priority actions. - Commence implementation of priority projects from the Carbon Management Strategy. | | |
| Commence implementation of the Vineyard Vision. | | |
| Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 7 Not Yet Achieved 0 At Risk 2 | | |

Better Utilisation of Existing Open Space

RECREATION PLANNING

During 2015-16 Council continued development of the Recreation Needs Analysis to effectively plan for recreational facilities over the next 20 years and beyond. The Analysis will inform the revision of the Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan which also commenced in 2015-16. Council adopted the Cessnock Cycling Strategy to plan for the provision of cycling infrastructure and services throughout Cessnock local government area and work towards making cycling irresistible. To assist in implementing the Cycling Strategy, Council contributed \$30,000 to the completion of a concept design and planning approvals for the Richmond Vale Rail Trail after completing a feasibility study at the end of 2014. Council also continued development of the remaining Generic Plans of Management for community land and adopted the Convent Hill, Bridges Hill Park and East End Oval

Masterplan which assisted in attracting \$950,000 through the National Stronger Regions Fund for the \$2 million Cessnock CBD revitalisation project. The Cessnock Aquatic Centre Feasibility and Design Report was also drafted and publicly exhibited.

Looking ahead to 2016-17, Council will be wrapping up the Recreation Needs Analysis, Cessnock Aquatic Centre Feasibility and Design Report, Generic Plans of Management for community land and the revision of the Recreation and Open Space Strategic Plan. Council will also be preparing Masterplans for Turner Park, Miller Park and Mt View Park and completing a design for the long-awaited Cessnock Skate Park at its proposed new location on Mt View Road. Council will also be preparing a set of Design Guidelines for the construction and improvement of its recreation and open space areas.



Ride2School event

RECREATION FACILITIES

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

The majority of open space areas are maintained on a 4-6 week maintenance schedule depending on the time of year and climatic conditions. Many outdoor sporting facilities are heavily utilised during the winter period, in particular for soccer, netball and rugby league, whilst during summer the main user groups are cricket and athletics.

Council also operates three public swimming pools at Branxton, Cessnock and Kurri Kurri. There are several major aquatics based clubs in the area, predominantly utilising Cessnock Pool. The Kurri Kurri Aquatic & Fitness Centre provides a year round indoor aquatic and gym facility which has proven to be highly popular with the average attendance at the facility for the past five years being 122,125 per annum. The types of visits to the centre included aqua and dry land fitness, squad swimming, aquatic education, recreational swimming and birthday parties.

Council's major recreation facilities projects during 2015-16 included the completion of stage 1 of the Branxton RV Area, the completion of the final stage of Greta Skate Park, replacement of the roof on the Mt View Park amenities building, extension to the verandah

at Wollombi Tennis Courts, and Weston Civic Centre roof, floor and kitchen renewal. Council also secured grant funding to assist with the delivery of Kearsley Community Hall painting and outdoor area, Birrale Park amenities replacement, Kitchener Poppethead accessible pathways & car parking, Carmichael Park playground shade sail and renewal of several war memorials.

CEMETERIES

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

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

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

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

Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|---|---|
| Complete the Recreation Needs Analysis and review the Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan 2009-2014. - Commence the Open Space Needs Analysis. - Commence the review of the Recreation & Open Space Strategic Plan. |  |  |
| Develop new Plans of Management. - Commence the development of the remaining generic community land Plans of Management. |  |  |
| Finalise implementation of the Recreation & Open Space Recreation Strategic Plan 2009-2014. |  |  |
| Continue to implement the adopted Masterplans for Council's recreation and community facilities. |  |  |
| Delivery Program Performance:  Achieved 4  Not Yet Achieved 0  At Risk 0 | | |

Better Waste Management & Recycling

WASTE MANAGEMENT

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

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

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

To assist in the decision making process considerable knowledge and data has been collected by Council in

relation to the existing waste stream and areas that have the potential to make significant contribution to reducing the volume of waste to landfill, they include:

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

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

The Cessnock Waste Management Strategy can be viewed at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au



Council Recycle Right information booth

Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Commence implementation of the priority projects from the revised Waste Management Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and monitor the need for and timing of the new cell construction as part of stage 1 of Waste Management & Reuse Centre extension project. - Commence implementation of the priority projects from the revised Waste Management Strategy 2014-19. - Implement the priority actions of the EPA - Waste Less Recycle More Program. |  |  |
| Delivery Program Performance:  Achieved 1  Not Yet Achieved 0  At Risk 0 | | |

MEASURES:

| MEASURES | CONTEXT/BENCHMARK | BASE | 2015-16 RESULT | TARGET |
|---|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| Development Application Processing Times | <p>This measure is the mean and the median number of days to process Development Applications (for all DAs which have been determined).</p> <p>This data is sourced from the Local Development Performance Monitoring Report.</p> | 75 Mean 2011-12 31 Median 2011-12 | 49 Mean 2015-16 23 Median 2015-16 | Maintain Maintain |
| Environmental health and protection inspections | <p>This measure is the number of on-site sewage management inspections carried out in line with Council's On-Site Sewage Management System Strategy.</p> <p>This is a measure of Council's contribution to the health of the local environment.</p> <p>This measure was 1,193 in 2011-12.</p> | 1,193 2011-12 | 749 2015-16 | >900 |
| Completion of Capital Works Program - Recreation | <p>This measure is the number of completed projects divided by the total number of projects (in the CFR, CBR, CFP, CBC, and CFC sections) of the adopted Recreation & Buildings Capital Works Program.</p> | N/A | 64% | >85% |
| Waste & Recycling | <p>This is a measure of the number of tonnes recycled via the kerbside recycling service.</p> <p>The kerbside recycling service was provided to 18,881 properties in 2011-12.</p> <p>This measure is sourced from Hunter Resource Recovery.</p> | 4,447t 2011-12 | 5,015t 2015-16 | >4,500t p.a. |
| Waste & Recycling | <p>This is a measure of the number of domestic waste collection services provided by Council.</p> <p>In 2011-12 there were 23,781 rateable properties and approximately 17,500t of domestic waste (out of a total of 38,892t) was disposed of at Council's landfill site.</p> | 18,881 2011-12 | 21,022 2015-16 | Increase |



*Delivering
accessible
infrastructure,
services and
facilities*

COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME:

Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities

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

Council has undertaken the following principal activities during 2015-16 to achieve the deliverables in the 2013-17 Delivery Program and, ultimately, the objectives in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.



Strategic Asset Planning

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



Design Delivery

- Contract management
- Project management



Works Delivery

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



Depot & Support Services

- Building Maintenance
- Plant & Fleet
- Procurement



Council Assets

- Cessnock Airport
- Cemeteries

Better Transport Links

CESSNOCK AIRPORT

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

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

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

To follow-up the 2014 registration of the airport by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority; during 2015-16 work continued on the preparation of a masterplan to guide the future development of the facility.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

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

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

The following actions have been identified for the LGA:

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

If you would like more information please visit www.transport.nsw.gov.au



Bus shelter

Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Contribute to the Transport for NSW's Hunter Regional Transport Masterplan. | ✓ | ✓ |
| Advocate for increased transport funding. | ✓ | ✓ |
| Complete all components of the City Wide Infrastructure Strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commence development of the umbrella City Wide Infrastructure Strategy. - Complete the Transport & Land Use Planning Needs Analysis component of the City Wide Infrastructure Strategy. | ✓ | ⚠ |
| Commence implementation of priority projects from the City Wide Infrastructure Strategy. | ✓ | ✓ |
| Commence implementation of the Cessnock Airport Strategic Plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commence implementation of the priority projects from the Airport Strategic Plan. | ✓ | ✓ |

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

Improving the Road Network

ROADS

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

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

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

PUBLIC WORKS

The condition of the infrastructure under Council's control, an estimate of the expenditure to bring it up to a satisfactory standard and the maintenance expenditure incurred during 2015-16 is included in Special Schedule 7 of Council's financial reports.

CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM

Capital works and improvement projects include expenditure on the acquisition and construction of new infrastructure assets and the augmentation or improvement of existing infrastructure assets.

The financial reports, together with the auditor's reports, form part of this report and can be viewed at the Administrative Offices, 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock or online at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au.

WORK ON PRIVATE LAND

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

Council undertook the following works during 2015-16:

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

| PROGRAM 2015-16 | ADOPTED BUDGET | REVISED BUDGET | ACTUAL |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| ROADS, BRIDGES & DRAINAGE | | | |
| Infrastructure Forward Planning | \$778,000 | \$1,404,472 | \$1,065,525 |
| Bridge Construction | \$1,454,439 | \$2,484,475 | \$2,053,633 |
| Drainage Construction | \$1,080,000 | \$2,109,421 | \$1,289,553 |
| Floodplain Management | \$155,000 | \$195,100 | \$74,954 |
| Local Road Construction | \$795,000 | \$890,363 | \$299,720 |
| Local Road Renewal | \$1,881,671 | \$1,166,730 | \$443,166 |
| Pathways Construction | \$250,000 | \$544,523 | \$332,751 |
| Public Transport Facilities | - | \$187,600 | \$187,600 |
| Regional Road Construction | \$460,000 | \$795,000 | \$14,472 |
| Regional Road Renewal | \$612,447 | \$1,019,147 | \$1,426,459 |
| Vineyard Roads Construction | \$4,680,000 | \$7,316,695 | \$3,899,306 |
| SUB-TOTAL | \$12,146,557 | \$18,113,526 | \$11,087,139 |
| SPECIAL RATE VARIATION | | | |
| Local & Regional Roads Program | \$2,213,882 | \$2,213,882 | \$2,059,131 |
| SUB-TOTAL | \$2,213,882 | \$2,213,882 | \$2,059,131 |

| PROGRAM 2015-16 | ADOPTED BUDGET | REVISED BUDGET | ACTUAL |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| RECREATION & PARKS | | | |
| Cemeteries Facilities Construction | \$40,000 | \$40,000 | \$29,798 |
| Cessnock Civic Precinct Revitalisation | - | \$50,000 | \$11,900 |
| Pools Facilities Renewal | \$184,000 | \$184,000 | \$112,046 |
| Recreation Facilities Construction | \$220,000 | \$372,819 | \$174,467 |
| Recreation Facilities Renewal | \$155,200 | \$167,264 | \$179,359 |
| SUB-TOTAL | \$599,200 | \$814,083 | \$507,570 |
| BUILDINGS | | | |
| Community Buildings Construction | \$15,851 | \$16,110 | \$16,110 |
| Community Buildings Renewal | \$150,000 | \$190,392 | \$180,312 |
| Recreation Buildings Construction | \$600,000 | \$747,142 | \$35,255 |
| Recreation Buildings Renewal | \$120,000 | \$116,943 | \$86,308 |
| SUB-TOTAL | \$885,851 | \$1,070,587 | \$317,985 |
| TOTAL | \$15,845,490 | \$22,212,078 | \$13,971,825 |

FUTURE FUNDING FOR COUNCIL'S ROADS

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

The special rate variation that was approved allowed for 9.55% to remain permanently in the rate base, comprising two components: the rate peg of 2.30% that was available to all NSW councils and an increase of 7.25% for road infrastructure renewal. This increase replaced a 6.05% special variation that was already in place.

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

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

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

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

Details of the expenditure from this special rate variation are included in the Rates and Charges section on page 59.

Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Improve the corporate asset management system. | | |
| Advocate for road funding to better manage traffic impacts on the local road network. | | |
| Deliver prioritised capital works programs in line with adopted asset management plans. | | |
| Improve support services and facilities to assist works delivery. - Commence development of a masterplan for the Works Depot. | | |
| Adopt the City Wide Section 94 Contributions Plan. - Continue preparation of the City Wide Section 94 Contributions Plan. | | |
| Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 4 Not Yet Achieved 0 At Risk 1 | | |

Improving Access to Health Services Locally

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING

During 2015-16 Council finalised the community consultation process for the development of a Health and Wellbeing Plan. The aim of the Plan will be to provide Council with strategic direction for how it can play its part in improving the health status of residents living within the LGA. The Cessnock Healthy Lifestyle Network, whose membership includes local health professionals, community representatives and a Council representative, assisted in guiding the development of the Plan.

Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Advocate for health services on behalf of the community. - Finalise the development of a Health Strategic Plan for the Cessnock Local Government Area. | | |
| Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 0 Not Yet Achieved 0 At Risk 1 | | |

MEASURES:

| MEASURES | CONTEXT/BENCHMARK | BASE | 2015-16 RESULT | TARGET |
|---|---|-------|--------------------|--------|
| Asset Management Maturity | This measure is the qualitative assessment of Council's Asset Management maturity. The measure is assessed on a scale of basic, core and advanced. | Basic | Basic June 2016 | Core |
| Completion capital works program – roads, bridges and drainage | This measure is the number of completed projects divided by the total number of projects (in the <u>CRL</u> , <u>CRR</u> , <u>CRV</u> , <u>CBS</u> , <u>CDR</u> , <u>RRL</u> and <u>RRR</u> sections) of the adopted Roads, Bridges & Drainage Capital Works Program. | N/A | 84% | >85% |



Council staff supporting the National Breast Cancer Foundation

A field of colorful, illuminated teepees at night. The teepees are made of translucent fabric and are lit from within, creating a warm glow. The colors range from bright yellow and orange to light blue and white. The background is dark, suggesting a night sky. In the top right and bottom left corners, there are decorative geometric shapes in shades of teal, yellow, and purple.

Delivering
**civic leadership
and effective
governance**

COMMUNITY'S DESIRED OUTCOME:

Civic leadership and effective governance

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

Council has undertaken the following principal activities during 2015-16 to achieve the deliverables in the 2013-17 Delivery Program and, ultimately, the objectives in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.



Community Engagement

- Communications
- Customer Service



Governance

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



Finance

- Rates
- Accounting
- Risk and Insurance



Information

- Information Systems
- Corporate Records
- Geographic Information Systems

Fostering & Supporting Community Leadership

COUNCILLOR PAYMENTS AND EXPENSES

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

In 2015-16 the cost of nominated expenses incurred by and facilities provided to Councillors was \$34,199. This includes domestic travel expenses such as accommodation and registration fees for seminars and conferences, as well as office administration such as telephones, faxes, postage, meals and refreshments.

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

The following summary shows the amount expended during the year on Mayoral fees and Councillor fees, the amount expended on provision of facilities for use by Councillors and the payment of Councillors' expenses.

Mayoral and Councillor fees for the year 2015-16 were fixed within the range of fees established by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. The Mayoral fee was fixed at \$40,090 and the Councillor fee at \$18,380.

In 2015-16 there were no overseas visits by elected Councillors.

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| MAYORAL FEES | \$40,090 |
| COUNCILLOR FEES | \$220,221 |
| Breakdown of Mayoral and Councillors' Expenses | Amount |
| Provision of dedicated office equipment, including laptop computers, mobile phones, telephone, fax and installation of internet access, and vehicle running expenses. | \$7,138 |
| Telephone calls, including mobiles, landlines, fax and internet services | \$15,908 |
| Spouse / Partner Accompanying Person | NIL |
| Conferences and Seminars | \$7,829 |
| Training and Skill Development | NIL |
| Interstate Travel | NIL |
| Overseas Travel | NIL |
| Meetings - Travel | \$3,324 |
| Care and Other Related Expenses | NIL |
| TOTAL | \$34,199 |

Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Establish a professional development program for Councillors. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Explore opportunities within the Council workforce for traineeships, apprenticeships and work experience programs. - Implement the priority actions from the Workforce Plan. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Recognise the work of community leaders. | ✔ | ✔ |
| Delivery Program Performance: ✔ Achieved 3 ✘ Not Yet Achieved 0 ⚠ At Risk 0 | | |

Encouraging More Community Participation in Decision Making

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

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

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

Council seeks public comment on important matters. This may be by way of public meetings, public exhibitions or more formalised public hearings. Details of all public meetings and exhibitions are published in local newspapers.

The elected Council considers all policy matters at Council meetings which are open to the public. Council's Code of Meeting Practice makes provision for members of the public to address Council meetings and prescribes the framework for such participation.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

The elected representatives comprise the governing body of the Council. The role of the elected Council is to set the strategic direction and determine policies of

Council. The decisions of the Council are formalised through the meeting process.

Council has regular meetings in the Council Chambers on the first and third Wednesday of each month commencing at 6.30pm, with the exception of January and December each year.

Council has a Code of Meeting Practice which provides comprehensive details of meeting procedure. A copy of the Code is available on request at Council's Administration Building or online at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au. A Model Code of Meeting Practice is being prepared by the Office of Local Government and will be introduced during the new term of Council.

YOUTH COUNCIL

The Youth Council is made up of a number of young people aged 12 to 24 years who reside in our Local Government Area. They met on a regular basis to discuss topics of interest or concern to them, as well as matters of broader social concern.

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

Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|---|---|---|
| Commence implementation of priority projects from the Communications & Engagement Strategy. |  |  |
| Improve Council's use of technology to inform and engage the community. - Implement on-line customer requests. |  |  |
| Delivery Program Performance:  Achieved 1  Not Yet Achieved 0  At Risk 1 | | |

Making Council More Responsive to the Community

CUSTOMER SERVICE

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

During 2015-16 Council received a total of 13,492 requests from community members, businesses and external government agencies.

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

| MONTHLY CRM ACTIVITY 2015-16 | NO. OF REQUESTS RECEIVED |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| July | 1,103 |
| August | 1,170 |
| September | 1,096 |
| October | 1,089 |
| November | 1,136 |
| December | 760 |
| January | 1,140 |
| February | 1,257 |
| March | 1,086 |
| April | 1,385 |
| May | 1,123 |
| June | 1,147 |
| TOTAL | 13,492 |

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

PRIVACY & PERSONAL INFORMATION

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

Council also uses the Privacy Management Plan to comply with the Health Privacy Principles as set out in the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act*.

During the 2015-16 period Council received Nil privacy review applications.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE (FSI)

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

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

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

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

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES

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

Council has met its obligations in relation to staff awareness of its Public Interest Disclosures Internal Policy by delivering organisation-wide training to all staff and Councillors and incorporating this information into the standard staff induction process.

During the 2015-16 period Council received no public interest disclosures.

ACCESSING COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

Members of the public are entitled to have access to Council information and records under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (the GIPA Act)*.

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

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

The GIPA Act establishes four ways to access information:

1. Open Access (e.g. obligatory publication of information on the web)
2. Proactive release (e.g. certain publications and application tracking)
3. Informal release (e.g. development consents)
4. Formal Access (e.g. complaint information)

Open access information includes the following:

- a publication guide
- policy documents
- Annual Report
- a register of Council contracts
- Council business papers

Information can generally be made available free of charge although you may have to pay reasonable photocopying charges if you want your own copy.

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

AMENDING COUNCIL RECORDS

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

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

Further information regarding Accessing Council Information can be located on Council's website www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au/council/accessinfo



Customer Service Desk

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) REGULATION 2009

Council has reviewed its program for the release of government information in accordance with section 7. Details of requests for information received by Council for the year ending 30 June, 2016 are as follows:

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

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

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

| | Total number of applications received |
|------|---------------------------------------|
| 7(b) | 35 |

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

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

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

| Table A: Number of applications by type of application and outcome* | Access granted in full | Access granted in part | Access refused in full | Information not held | Information already available | Refuse to deal with application | Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held | Application withdrawn | Total | % of Total |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-------|------------|
| Media | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Members of Parliament | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Private sector business | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 29% |
| Not for profit organisations or community groups | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Members of the public (application by legal representative) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3% |
| Members of the public (other) | 18 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 24 | 69% |
| Total | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 35 | |
| % of Total | 83% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 3% | 0% | 14% | | |

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

| Table B: Number of applications by type of application and outcome* | Access granted in full | Access granted in part | Access refused in full | Information not held | Information already available | Refuse to deal with application | Refuse to confirm/deny whether information is held | Application withdrawn | Total | % of Total |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-------|------------|
| Personal information applications* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Access applications (other than personal information applications) | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 35 | 100% |
| Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 35 | |
| % of Total | 83% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 3% | 0% | 14% | | |

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

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

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

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

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

| Table F: Timeliness | No. of applications* | % of Total |
|--|----------------------|------------|
| Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions) | 27 | 90% |
| Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant) | 3 | 10% |
| Not decided within time (deemed refusal) | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 30 | |

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

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

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



HUMAN RESOURCES

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



EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Following on from the introduction of a new EEO, Bullying and Harassment Policy and associated complaints handling form in 2015-16 Council launched its Wellbeing@Work program. A key initiative of this program is its workplace contact people. The workplace contact people were appointed following an expression of interest process and all have received workplace contact officer training. The contact people are the first point of call if an employee is faced with a harassment, bullying or EEO issue and can provide information on options that can be taken to work through any such issue.

In addition Council is now capturing EEO data for all new and existing employees and will shortly launch EEO questions as part of the application process for a position at Council.

SENIOR STAFF

Statement of the total amount paid to each senior staff member employed during 2015-16.

| | General Manager | Directors (x3) |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| | 01/07/15 to 30/06/16 | 01/07/15 to 30/06/16 |
| Total Value of Salary Component of Package: | \$214,541 | \$571,805 |
| Total amount of any bonus payments, performance or other payments that do not form part of salary: | Nil | Nil |
| Total payable superannuation (salary sacrifice and employers contribution): | \$46,088 | \$69,271 |
| Total value of non-cash benefits - Provisions of Motor Vehicle: | \$12,491 | \$35,219 |
| Total payable fringe benefits tax for non-cash benefits: | \$13,137 | \$37,039 |
| Total Remuneration Package | \$286,257 | \$713,334 |



Williams Bridge Construction



CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL AUDIT COMMITTEE

Council approved the Audit Committee Charter in April 2010.

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

The Committee needs to be satisfied there is an adequate and effective system of internal control throughout Council and reviews the operation and implementation of internal and external audit plans.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Reviewing Council's risk management (including business continuity) processes that ensure significant risks are identified and appropriately treated;
- Receiving assurance regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of Council's internal controls, and that there is a positive control environment;
- Oversight of the external audit of Council's financial statements, that provides assurance the statements are consistent with the underlying records;
- Reviewing Council's frameworks designed to ensure compliance with relevant laws, regulations and Government policies;
- Reviewing and monitoring internal audit plans, progress in implementing those plans, internal audit reports and progress in implementing management action plans arising from audits.

Membership

The Audit Committee has five voting members, being two Councillors and three independents. Officers who also attend meetings include, the General Manager, Directors, Manager Human Resources, Chief Financial Officer, Internal Auditor and, Enterprise Risk

Coordinator. Council's external auditor also attends most meetings.

Councillor members of the Committee in 2015-16 were:

- Mayor Councillor Pynsent
- Councillor Campbell



Council Administration Building

Independent members in 2015-16 were:

- Jason Masters (Chair). Jason has a strong background in internal audit, risk and governance and is currently the chair of a number of other private and public sector audit committees as well as an independent non-executive director for a number of organisations.
- Felicity Barr (Deputy Chair). Felicity has a strong background in the health sector, including senior level governance of complex organisations and is currently a member of a number of boards and audit committees in the government and not for profit sectors.
- Neal O'Callaghan. Neal has a strong background in governance and general management and is currently board and audit committee member for several organisations in the health and not for profit sectors.



Meetings

The Audit Committee met four times during 2015–16. Minutes of the meetings contain recommendations to Council and are considered at the next available Council meeting. The Audit Committee also provides an annual report to Council on its performance, including a self-assessment by its members.

Risk Management

The Audit Committee considered reports in relation to the development and implementation of a risk management framework and the status of Council’s business continuity plan following the major storm event in April 2015.

Internal Audit

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

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

During 2015–16 the Audit Committee received internal

audit reports relating to:

- S94 Contributions Planning;
- RMS DRIVES24; and
- Planning Reform Fund.

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

Compliance

During 2015-16 the Audit Committee considered a report in relation to Council’s annual statutory compliance reporting requirements and a presentation on proposed amendments to the Local Government Act likely to impact on the Audit Committee.

External Audit

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



Council Administration Building



LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Summarised below are details of the costs incurred in regard to legal proceedings taken by Council or taken against Council during 2015-16. The result of the proceedings is shown together with the amount of the legal costs incurred.

| MATTER | COURT | COST | RESULT |
|---|--------------------------|--------------|--|
| TMV Devco Pty Limited v Cessnock City Council Proceedings No. 2015/10573 | Land & Environment Court | \$296,731.62 | Judgment handed down on 4 May 2016. Appeal dismissed and DA refused. |
| Appeal - Schwartz Family Co Pty Ltd. | Land & Environment Court | \$22,060.00 | The applicant lodged DA's relating to the marquee and workers cottage on 18 May 2016. The DA's are currently being assessed by Council. Appeal discontinued. |
| Council v Wehbe 16 Cumberland St, Cessnock Proceedings No. 10351 of 2015 | Land & Environment Court | \$19,693.00 | Adjourned |
| Friends of Tumblebee Inc v Cessnock City Council Lot 1 Cessnock Road, Weston. Proceedings No. 40027 of 2014 | Land & Environment Court | \$13,129.50 | Decision delivered by Justice Pepper dated 11 March 2016. |
| Compulsory Acquisition from Crown at Pelaw Main (HEZ) | | \$12,569.60 | The Proposed Acquisition Notice has been extended to 10 November 2017. Letters have been received from NTS Corp's Solicitor regarding the Native Title Determination NSD1680/13. |
| Douglass Appeal - 43 Ferguson Street, Cessnock | Land & Environment Court | \$11,891.95 | Appeal discontinued. |
| Cessnock City Council v Kennedy Court Class 1 Proceedings | Land & Environment Court | \$3,115.00 | Orders made by the Commissioner. |
| Dawson Properties (Ventures) Pty Ltd v Cessnock City Council Class 1 LEC Proceedings - 15/10035 | Land & Environment Court | \$2,065.68 | Listed for hearing. |
| Cessnock City Council v Hellen Perkins 2015/00216637 re dog | Local Court | \$1,980.00 | Instructions to withdraw proceedings due to evidence served by defendant. |
| R v Nick Scott | Local Court | \$1,173.70 | Mr Scott ordered to pay fine and professional costs. |
| Walton v Cessnock City Council Appeal against order issued by Council - 33 Second Street, Weston. Proceedings No. 10240 of 2016 | Land & Environment Court | \$1,475.00 | A Notice of Discontinuance has been filed in this matter. |
| Raeshel Phelps v Cessnock City Council | Local Court | \$669.90 | Letter forwarded to the Cessnock Local Court requesting withdrawal of the proceedings. |
| Prosecution under s.96 of the POEO Act - McMurrich 143 Aberdare Street, Aberdare | Local Court | | \$500 fine imposed and ordered to pay costs of \$2,000 |

During 2015-16 Council incurred costs totalling \$379,406.48 for legal advice and other related services.

During 2015-16 Council incurred costs totalling \$420,107.11 pursuing unpaid rates, charges and sundry debtor accounts via debt recovery agents and through the courts.

RATES AND CHARGES

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

| GROSS RATES AND CHARGES LEVIED AND WRITTEN OFF | | |
|---|--------------|---------------------|
| Ordinary Rates (Specify) | | |
| Residential | \$24,120,232 | |
| Farmland | \$3,502,644 | |
| Business | \$4,642,547 | |
| Mining | \$1,095,000 | |
| Total Rates | | \$33,360,423 |
| Domestic Waste Management Charges | | \$11,440,979 |
| Stormwater Management Charges | | \$492,713 |
| Gross Rates and Charges | | \$45,294,115 |
| Less: Written Off | | |
| Pensioners (Section 575) | \$1,187,253 | |
| Pensioners (Section 582) | \$121,856 | \$1,309,109 |
| | | \$43,985,006 |
| Net Transfers to and from Postponed Rates | | <u>\$6,874</u> |
| Net Rates and Annual Charges | | \$43,991,880 |
| Net Extra Charges - Interest and Legal per note 3 | | <u>\$144,637</u> |
| | | \$44,136,517 |

2015-16 was the second year of a special rates variation granted to Council by the Minister for Local Government. An amount of \$2,213,882 was levied under this special variation with the funds being expended on the following renewal works:

| INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS FROM ADDITIONAL RATE INCREASE 2015-16 | | | |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Local Road Renewal Program | | | |
| Alexander St Cessnock | Carroll Ave Cessnock | Lings Rd Buttai | Oakey Creek Rd Pokolbin |
| Appleton Ave Weston | Casey Cl | Lomas Lane Nulkaba | O'Connors Lane |
| Askew Close | Darwin St | Mayfield St Cessnock | Old Maitland Rd Sawyers Gully |
| Barraba Lane | Flemming St Nulkaba | Mt View Rd | |
| Bathurst St Sawyers Gully | Hampdens St | Murrays Run Rd | |
| Regional Road Renewal Program | | | |
| Broke Rd East | | Wollombi Rd Cedar Creek | |
| Great North Rd Laguna | | Wollombi Rd Pelton | |
| Wilderness Rd | | York St Greta | |

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

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

| ADOPTED 2015-16 | ACTUAL 2015-16 | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Flood Mapping & Strategic Studies | Boundary Street Millfield | Kent Street to York Street Greta |
| Whitburn Estate Drainage | Bowden Street Heddon Greta | Laneway Works Weston |
| | Brandis & Rawson Streets Aberdare | Second Street Millfield |
| | Charlton Street Cessnock | Stringybark Place Weston |
| | Cliff Street Greta | Third Street Millfield |
| | Congewai Street Aberdare | Water Street Branxton |
| | First Street Millfield | Whitburn Estate Drainage |
| | Fleet Street Branxton | York Street Greta |
| | Flood Mapping & Strategic Studies | |
| \$490,000 | \$744,376 | |

RATE SUBSIDIES

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

During 2015-16 Council provided rates subsidies totalling \$27,751.41 to community groups/organisations.

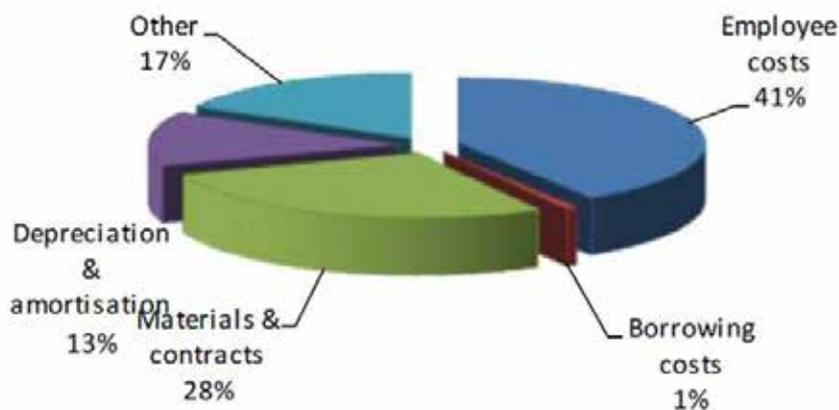
| GROUP/ORGANISATION | AMOUNT |
|--|-------------|
| Aberdare Pre-School | \$1,978.64 |
| Bellbird Pre-School | \$1,464.41 |
| Cessnock Homing Pidgeon Club | \$1,054.80 |
| Cessnock Masonic Hall | \$1,624.00 |
| Cessnock Mini Bike Club | \$381.16 |
| Cessnock Multi Purpose Children's Centre | \$4,453.78 |
| Cessnock Pistol Club | \$879.20 |
| Challenge Disability Services | \$2,501.74 |
| Country Womens Association NSW Cessnock | \$1,774.72 |
| Greta Pre-School Kindergarten | \$1,597.40 |
| Kurri Kurri Day Care Centre | \$2,076.17 |
| Kurri Kurri Motor Cycle Club | \$290.49 |
| Paxton Masonic Hall | \$1,216.17 |
| Richmond Vale Preservation Co-op Society | \$967.76 |
| RSL Hall - Branxton | \$2,049.57 |
| RSL Hall - Cessnock | \$1,189.57 |
| RSL Hall - Weston | \$693.07 |
| Weston Masonic Hall | \$1,225.03 |
| Weston Pre-School | \$333.73 |
| TOTAL | \$27,751.41 |

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

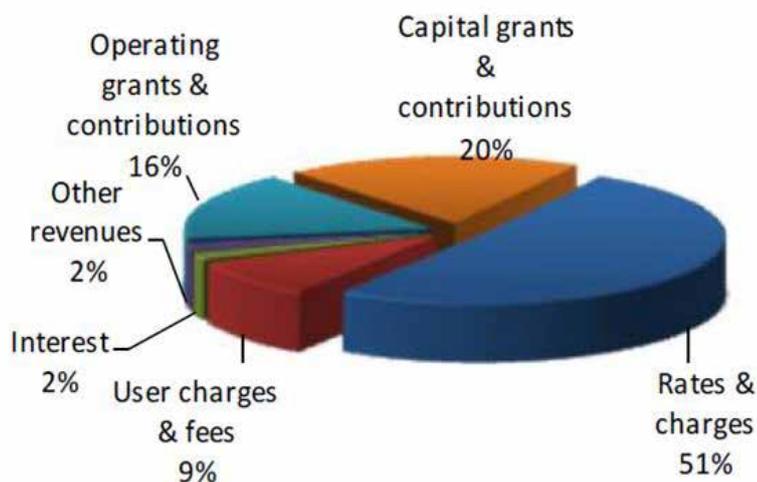
Under the provisions of Division 2 of Part 3 (Financial Management) of the *Local Government Act, 1993*, Council's audited financial reports and the auditor's reports for the year 2015-16 were presented to Council and the public on 16 November 2016.

The financial reports comprise general purpose financial reports, special purpose financial reports and special schedules. The financial reports, together with the auditor's reports, are part of this report and can be viewed at the Administrative Offices, 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock or online at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au.

OPERATING EXPENDITURE 2015-16



OPERATING REVENUE 2015-16



REPLACEMENT AND SALE OF ASSETS

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

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

The proposed and actual plant replacement program for the 2015-16 year is set out below. In all cases except those noted, the items shown were replaced by a similar unit.

| PLANT REPLACEMENT PROGRAM Description of Items | CHANGEOVER COST (EX GST) AND NUMBER 2015-16 | | |
|---|---|----------------|------|
| | Proposed \$ (No. items) | Actual \$ | Note |
| Passenger Fleet | \$560,000 (35) | \$429,283 (34) | |
| Utilities and Vans | \$105,700 (4) | \$71,010 (2) | 1 |
| 2T Trucks | \$0 (0) | \$45,109 (1) | 2 |
| 3T Truck | \$60,000 (1) | \$68,158 (1) | |
| 8T Truck | \$280,960 (3) | \$64,382 (1) | 1 |
| Ride on Mowers | \$32,000 (3) | \$31,520 (3) | |
| Tractors | \$125,000 (2) | \$0 (0) | 3 |
| Backhoes | 0 (0) | \$233,987 (3) | 4 |
| Graders | \$0 (0) | \$517,982 (2) | 4 |
| Compaction Rollers | \$150,000 (1) | \$308,750 (3) | 4 |
| Special Plant | | | |
| Slasher/Mulch mower attachments | \$45,000 (2) | \$44,500 (2) | |
| Woodchipper | \$60,000 (1) | \$72,627 (1) | |

Notes:

1. Replacement of some items postponed .
2. Replacement carried over from previous years.
3. Ordered in 2015-16 and not received until 2016-17.
4. Ordered in 2014-15 and received in 2015-16.

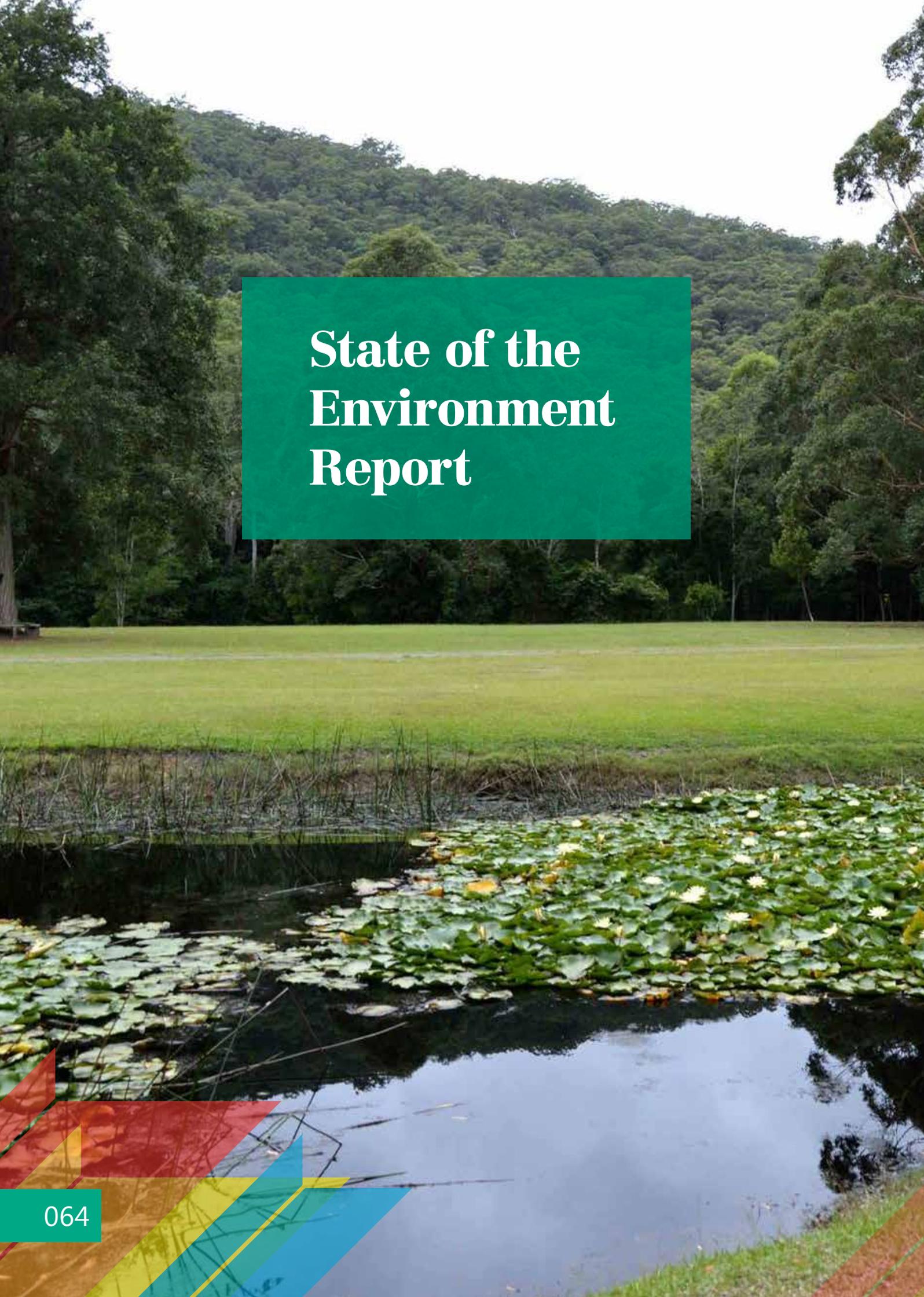


Delivery Program Performance

| Deliverables and Actions | 2015-16 Result | Delivery Program Result |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|
| Commence implementation of the priority projects from the Customer Service Strategy. - Update and commence implementation of priority projects from the Customer Service Strategy. | | |
| Implement systems and strategies to improve productivity across the organisation. - Continue to implement the Performance Management System. - Continue to implement a new remuneration system. | | |
| Develop and implement a strategic and operational internal audit program. - Implement the annual internal audit program. | | |
| Review and implement a revised Risk Management Strategy. - Review Council's risk profile. - Update and test the effectiveness of Council's business continuity plans. - Complete the update of the Enterprise Risk Management Strategy. | | |
| Carry out governance functions, provide advice and conduct education programs to comply with legislation and best practice. - Commence the development of a statutory compliance policy. | | |
| Review the Community Strategic Plan. | | |
| Develop and implement a special rate variation strategy. - Progress the Financial Sustainability Initiative and other projects from Council's Improvement Proposal. | | |
| Delivery Program Performance: Achieved 5 Not Yet Achieved 0 At Risk 2 | | |

MEASURES:

| MEASURES | CONTEXT/BENCHMARK | BASE | 2015-16 RESULT | TARGET |
|--|---|------------------|------------------|--------|
| Satisfaction with Council's performance overall | This measure is from a random survey of residents where they are asked to rate their satisfaction with Council's performance overall on a scale of 1-5, where 1 = low satisfaction and 5 = high satisfaction. The benchmark in 2009 from similar surveys with over 15,000 residents across 25 local government areas was 3.5. Current Rating = 2.4 (compared with 3.2 in August 2009) | 2.4 2012 | 3.27 2016 | >3 |
| Response to Telephone Calls | The number of telephone calls to the call centre that are not abandoned divided by the total number of telephone calls to the call centre. This data is sourced from Council's telephone system. | 87.7% 2011-12 | 86.5% 2015-16 | 90% |
| Response to Customer Requests | The number of customer requests that are completed within agreed timeframes divided by the total number of customer requests completed. This data is sourced from the workflows in Council's Customer Request Management system. | N/A | 74% 2015-16 | 80% |



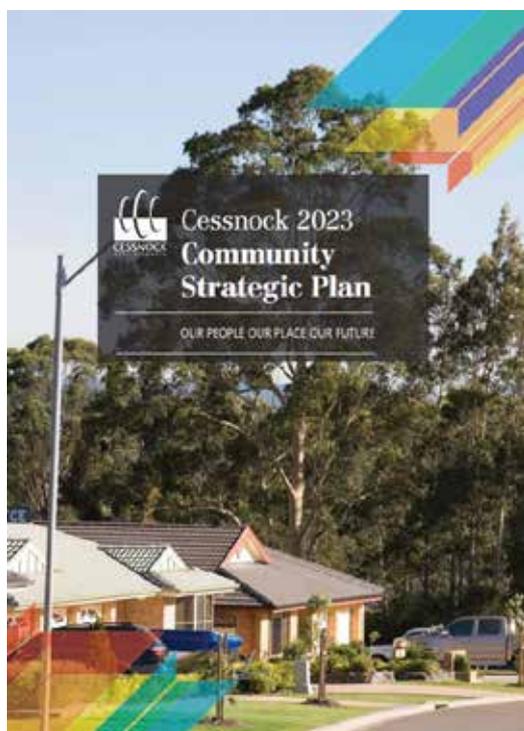
State of the Environment Report

Introduction

Section 428A of the *Local Government Act 1993* requires a report as to the state of the environment in the local government area for the environmental objectives established by the community strategic plan.

The state of the environment report reports on the environmental measures identified in the community strategic plan and identifies major environmental impacts and trends in the local government area.

This report contains information about the condition of the local environment, pressures the local environment is subject to and the measures being taken to alleviate those pressures during the period from July 2012 to June 2016. It outlines what has been done to address adverse impacts and whether those actions have been successful in delivering results.



Peace Park Weston

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Council undertook a comprehensive program of community consultation activities during 2010 to develop Cessnock's original community strategic plan *Cessnock 2020*. During 2013 the vision, outcomes and objectives from the original document were confirmed with the community and *Cessnock 2023* was adopted. This document is the community's plan for the future of the Cessnock local government area and it provides the strategic directions for our community over the next 10 years.

The desired environmental outcome in the *Cessnock 2023 community strategic plan* – a sustainable and healthy environment – was supported by three environmental objectives:

- Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and rural character of the area
- Better utilisation of existing open space
- Better waste management and recycling.

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

In community research (undertaken with a random sample of local people) residents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that the statement '**A sustainable and healthy environment**' described the Cessnock local government area.

47% of residents 'agreed or strongly agreed' with this statement, consistent with the result in 2014.

3.35 – Moderate agreement

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither | Agree | Strongly Agree |

Mean Rating Trend

| 2012 | 2014 | 2016 |
|------|------|------|
| 3.41 | 3.26 | 3.20 |

Cessnock City Council Community Research 2016

Environmental indicators from the community strategic plan

The following targets were adopted as part of *Cessnock 2023*, they are sourced from Council operational data and community research.

| MEASURES | CONTEXT/BENCHMARK | BASE | TARGET | RESULT |
|------------------------------|--|--------------|---|--------------|
| Open Space & Green Corridors | This measure is the number of lots zoned residential (R2, R3, R5 and RU5) within 500m of open space and green corridors (zoned RE1, RE2 and E1). | 15,844 lots |  | 16,675 lots |
| | This measure identifies the number and proportion of residents with access to open space for passive and active recreation purposes. | 79.2% (2013) | | 80.0% (2016) |
| | This measure is sourced from Council's geographic information system. | | | |
| Waste & Recycling | This is a measure of the number of tonnes recycled via the kerbside recycling service. | 4,447t |  | 5,501t |
| | The kerbside recycling service was provided to 18,881 properties in 2011-12. | 2011-12 | | 2015-16 |
| | This measure is sourced from Hunter Resource Recovery. | | | |

To further gauge community perceptions residents were also ask to rate their agreement with the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

| QUALITATIVE MEASURES | 2012 | 2014 | 2016 |
|---|------|------|------|
| The area has an attractive appearance | 3.23 | 3.50 | 3.49 |
| The natural environment is well managed | 3.06 | 3.26 | 3.14 |
| Environmental issues are handled well | 2.89 | 3.03 | 2.71 |
| The bushland that supports a diversity of native plants and animals is valuable | 4.19 | 4.11 | 4.04 |
| The area's heritage is well conserved | 3.62 | 3.61 | 3.65 |
| Development overall is well planned and well managed | 2.71 | 2.85 | 2.82 |
| Residential development is well managed | 2.76 | 2.94 | 2.89 |
| There are enough good quality open spaces | 3.21 | 3.34 | 3.35 |
| There is a wide range of recreation and leisure opportunities | 3.10 | 2.98 | 3.07 |
| Waste collection and disposal are well managed | 3.61 | 3.64 | 3.67 |

Cessnock City Council Community Research 2012, 2014 and 2016

Sustainability action plan

Council's Sustainability Action Plan was developed as part of the Waste and Sustainability Improvement Payments program funded by the NSW government and administered by the Office of Environment & Heritage. This program has now become the Better Waste and Recycling Program and is administered by the NSW Environment Protection Authority.

The Sustainability Action Plan has identified sustainability actions across adopted Council documents in the areas of waste, energy, water, biodiversity, climate change, procurement and transport.



Solar panels installed at the Council Works Depot

Partnerships

Council partners with non-government, government and community organisations to manage the environment and achieve shared environmental objectives. Council is responsible for implementing various elements of environmental legislation and collaborates with a range of organisations to implement its own, and others', environmental plans and policies.

Some of the collaborative relationships in the Cessnock local government area and Hunter Region include:

- Council's Environment Committee:

Council convenes an Environmental Strategy & Management Committee as an advisory body

on environmental matters. This committee has representation from the local community and met five times annually throughout the term of Council. The committee received guest presentations from staff of Council and from a range of agencies and organisations including the Office of Environment & Heritage and Local Land Services. The committee spearheaded the Coal Seam Gas forum whereby around a hundred community members received information regarding coal seam gas from government and industry.

- Local Land Services (LLS) Hunter –

Local Land Services (LLS) Hunter replaced the Catchment Management Authority in 2014 to deliver quality, customer-focussed services to farmers, landholders and the community across rural and regional New South Wales. LLS bring together agricultural production advice, biosecurity, natural resource management and emergency management into a single organisation. The guiding document of LLS Hunter is their Local Strategic Plan 2016-21 which sets the vision and goals for Local Land Services for the next 10 years and outlines the strategies through which these goals will be achieved. A series of key performance indicators provides guidance on what success will look like and how investors and stakeholders will be able to measure performance.



- Hunter Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy

The Hunter Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy is a framework to guide and coordinate the efforts of the 11 member councils (of which Cessnock is one) in addressing a range of environmental issues that are best managed within a strategic regional context. The Strategy is reviewed and updated every three years under the guidance of Council General Managers and Directors of Planning & Environment. The program has been operating successfully for over 18 years and attracts significant funding and partners to develop and implement regional scale projects in theme areas including biodiversity, climate change, roadside environments, water, weeds, sustainability, environmental compliance, and community education.

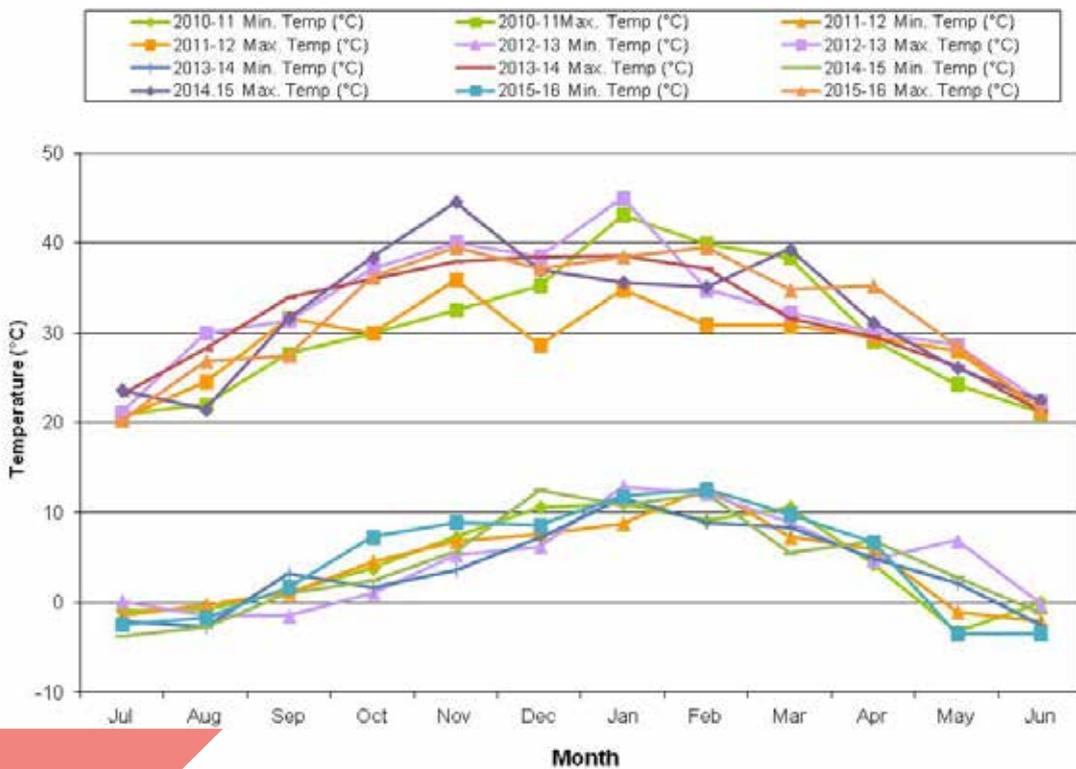
- Tom Farrell Institute for the Environment

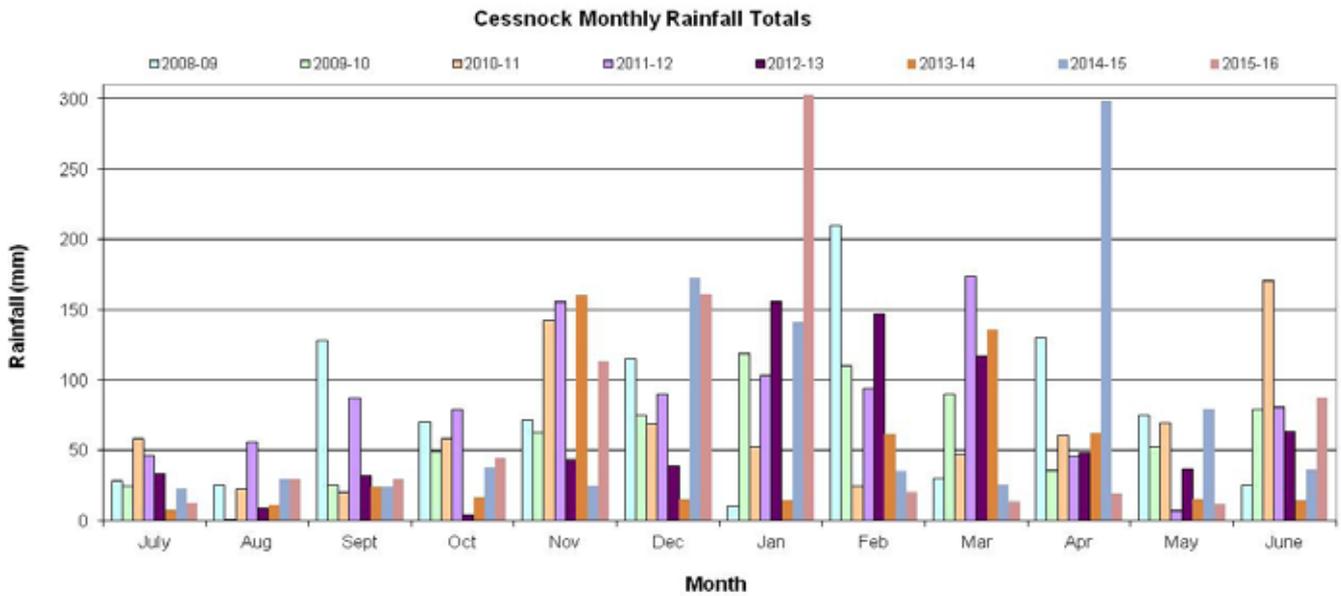
The Tom Farrell Institute for the Environment is based at the University of Newcastle and aims to integrate the University's teaching, research and community engagement into regional solutions for a sustainable future. Their focus is on developing partnerships with and building support from governments, community groups, and business and industry interests.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Cessnock local government area is subject to a temperate climate, characterised by mild winters and hot summers. Records of temperature and rainfall for July 2008 till June 2016 are shown below. Further summaries of weather extremes in the Cessnock local government area are contained in the table on the following page.

Cessnock Monthly Minimum and Maximum Temperatures





Summary of weather data from Cessnock Airport weather station.

| Year | Maximum Temperature (°C) | Minimum Temperature (°C) | Total Rainfall (mm) | No. Days over 40°C |
|---------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 2008-09 | 40.6 | 15/02/2009 | 930.8 | 4 |
| 2009-10 | 43.2 | 20/11/2009 | 724.4 | 4 |
| 2010-11 | 43.1 | 26/1/2011 | 794.4 | 1 |
| 2011-12 | 35.9 | 14/11/2011 | 1018.3 | 0 |
| 2012-13 | 45 | 18/12/2012 | 730 | 6 |
| 2013-14 | 38.6 | 18/01/2014 | 540 | 0 |
| 2014-15 | 44.5 | 23/11/2014 | 927.8 | 1 |
| 2015-16 | 39.5 | 25/02/2016 | 845.9 | 0 |

Council has implemented actions with respect to climate change mitigation, including solar installations across a number of its site. Council incorporates adaptation elements within its planning approach primarily in the area of floodplain management and response to severe weather events. Council will be increasing its concentration on the area of climate change and

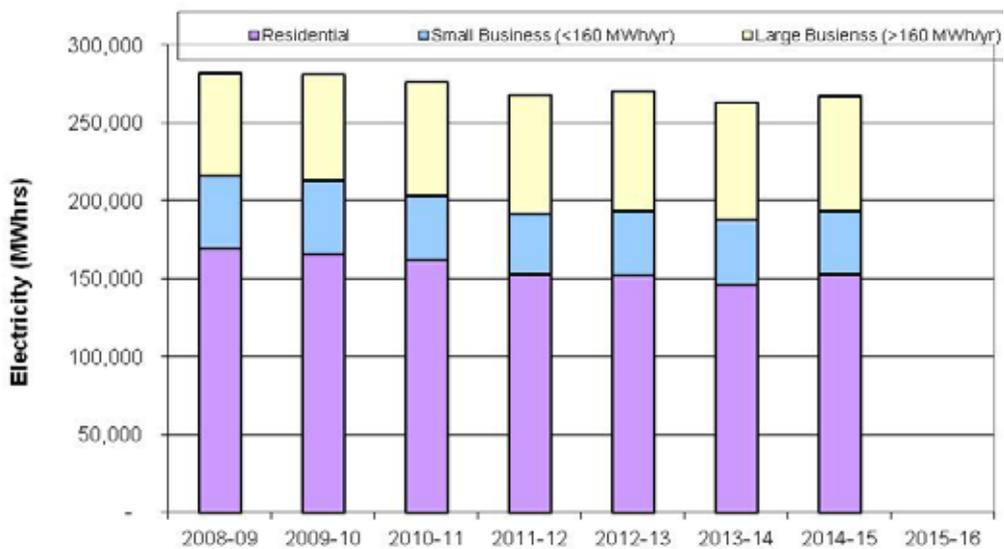
associated natural hazards as it begins the integration of Direction 16 of the Hunter Regional Plan 2036. This will include the consideration of a holistic Climate Change Policy and implementation of its Carbon Management and Energy Reduction Strategy.



Council has been undertaking energy efficiency programs for several years. Initially as part of the Cities for Climate Protection program and more recently as part of the Waste and Sustainability Improvement Payment program.

| Year | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Total electricity consumption in LGA (MWh) *A breakdown of this by section is shown below. | 270,609 | 263,369 | 267,664 | TBC |
| Total Council electricity consumption (MWh) *A breakdown of this by site is shown on the next page. | 4,871 | 4,904 | 4,998 | 4,879 |
| Total solar power generated in LGA (MWh) | 4,129 | 5,155 | 5,837 | TBC |

Electricity Consumption

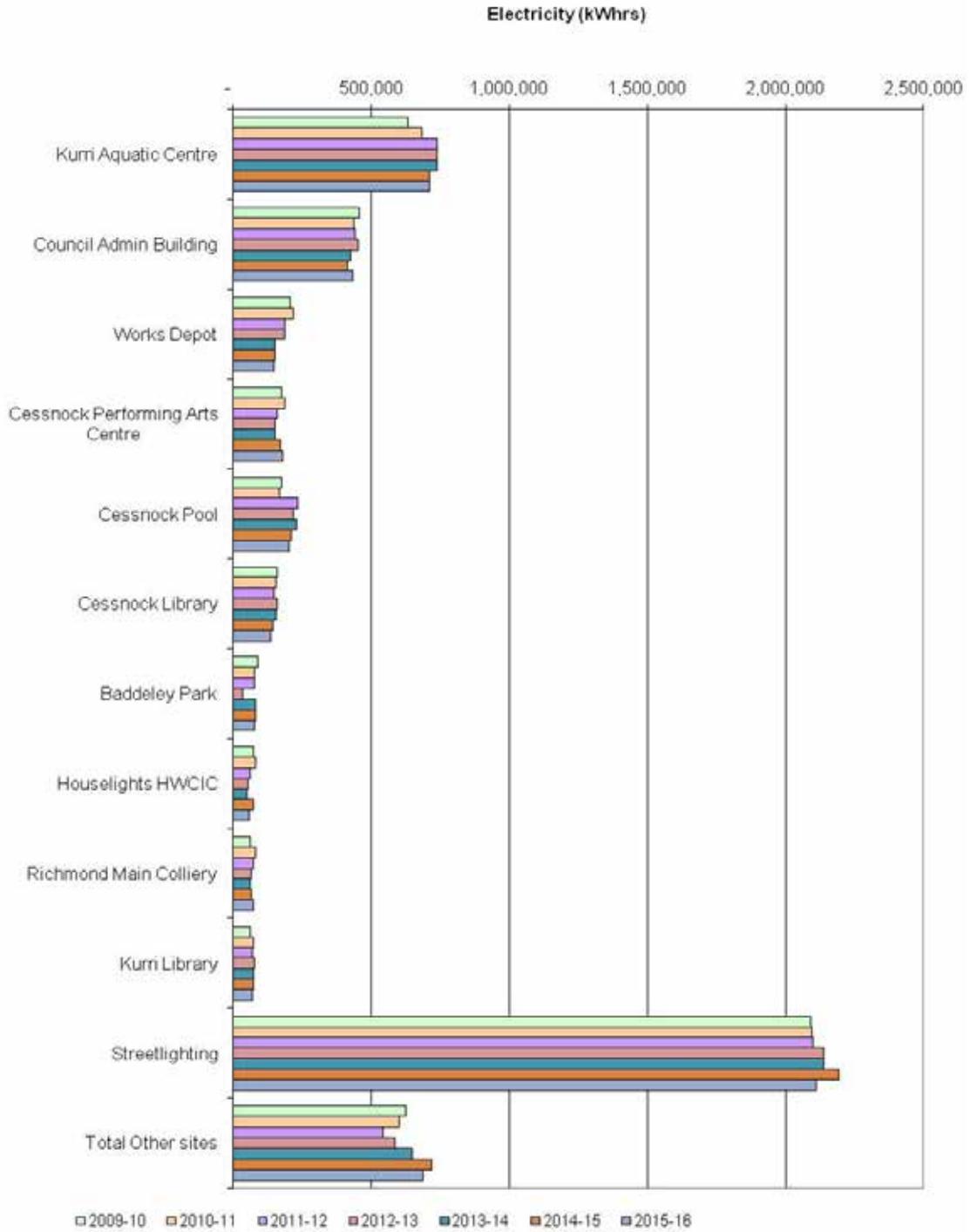


Cessnock local government area electricity consumption



Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre

Cessnock Council Electricity Consumption



Council top 10 sites for electricity consumption

Environmental Objective:

Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the rural character of the area

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS:

- Our area's rural character and heritage is protected.
- Our community is aware of the value of natural resources and biodiversity.
- Our environmental amenity is protected and enhanced.
- Our waterways and catchments are maintained and enhanced.

PRESSURE:

Human population growth is a potential cause of environmental change worldwide. A higher population has generally translated into an amplified demand for resources, a larger physical footprint for our settlements and more waste going back into the environment (Australian SoE, 2011 p.52). In the five years between 2006 and 2011 the population of the Cessnock local government area has grown by almost 5,000 people. During this period 2,165 residential dwellings were approved to be built.

In terms of planning for future development, the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy (LHRS) identifies Cessnock as a major regional centre and proposes to double the population of the Cessnock local government area. The projections are for 21,700 new dwellings to largely be achieved through significant greenfield residential land rezonings, providing for an additional 29,600 people over the next 25 years (NSW DoP 2006).

Over the last five years Council has approved 7,100 allotments for residential purposes. The major release areas where planning is well advanced are Bellbird (3,500 new dwellings), Greta (1,364 new dwellings) and Cliftleigh (977 new dwellings).

This is in addition to the Branxton-Huntlee area (Cessnock and Singleton Councils), where a concept plan for a total 7,200 new residential dwellings and up to 300 rural-residential lots have been approved by the Department of Planning.

Threats to existing biodiversity need to be actively managed. Areas of native vegetation that are healthy and functioning have the potential to decline if threats to their viability are not actively managed. In Cessnock local government area, the main threats are pest animals and weeds, urban development, inappropriate fire (including wildfire) and climate change.



Kitchener Reserve

It is important to prioritise biodiversity investment to ensure that the greatest benefit can be achieved in the most cost-efficient way. It is equally important to recognise the value of agricultural production and other land uses in the Cessnock local government area.

In balancing the management of development with the adequate protection of biodiversity, mechanisms such as offsetting need to be considered and tailored to ensure the outcomes are sustainable for the future viability of both.

Biodiversity

STATE:

Approximately 27% of the land within the local government area is National Park (Watagan, Werakata, and Yengo National Park with much of the latter listed as World Heritage Area), a further 13% State Forest.

Another 52% of the local government area is rural land (with the balance being industrial, commercial or residential land).

Table 1: Area and percentage of land in each land zone for Cessnock local government area.

| | ZONE | AREA (Ha) | % |
|-----|------------------------------------|------------|---------|
| B1 | Neighbourhood Centre | 11.45 | >0.01% |
| B2 | Local Centre | 25.64 | 0.01% |
| B3 | Commercial Core | 21.13 | 0.01% |
| B4 | Mixed Use | 323.04 | 0.16% |
| B7 | Business Park | 23.97 | 0.01% |
| E1 | National Parks and Nature Reserves | 54,587.59 | 27.76% |
| E2 | Environmental Conservation | 2,638.99 | 1.34% |
| E3 | Environmental Management | 165.48 | 0.08% |
| IN1 | General Industrial | 878.18 | 0.45% |
| IN2 | Light Industrial | 67.61 | 0.03% |
| IN3 | Heavy Industrial | 75.69 | 0.04% |
| R1 | General Residential | 233.06 | 0.12% |
| R2 | Low Density Residential | 2,570.07 | 1.31% |
| R3 | Medium Density Residential | 543.47 | 0.28% |
| R5 | Large Lot Residential | 1,380.31 | 0.70% |
| RE1 | Public Recreation | 565.11 | 0.29% |
| RE2 | Private Recreation | 88.01 | 0.04% |
| RU2 | Rural Landscape | 90,498.22 | 46.03% |
| RU3 | Forestry | 25,654.62 | 13.05% |
| RU4 | Primary Production Small Lots | 13,251.98 | 6.74% |
| RU5 | Village | 513.48 | 0.26% |
| SP2 | Infrastructure | 1,825.67 | 0.93% |
| SP3 | Tourist | 669.66 | 0.34% |
| | TOTAL | 196,624.75 | 100.00% |



RESPONSE:

In 2014 Council adopted a Biodiversity Strategy which identified the local government area as supporting a range of ecosystems, ecological communities and vegetation types, many of which are of exceptional value. The strategy identified a number of activities to be undertaken to better protect and manage these assets.

The potential introduction of coal seam gas mining across rural and vineyard areas in 2014 posed a threat to the local government area's rural character. In response, Council, on behalf of the community, (effectively exercising the precautionary principle) articulated a policy position and subsequently the industry relinquished its Petroleum Exploration Licence in 2015.

Weed management is one part of protecting the natural environment and, in 2015 the Hunter Regional Weeds Committee was established to reduce the impact of weeds on productive and natural environments.

To mitigate and adapt to climate change a range of measures have been put in place including heatwave resilience programs to better prepare for extreme weather events.

Water

STATE:

Water availability depends on rainfall and temperature and the volume of water held in storage varies with climatic conditions. Hunter Water supplies potable water and treats wastewater to most residences in the Cessnock local government area. The drinking water they supply is regularly tested throughout the water supply system, and complies with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Australian Drinking Water Quality Guidelines.

RESPONSE:

From 1 July 2014 permanent Water Wise Rules were introduced for all Hunter Water customers to secure the water supply for the next 20 years under the Lower Hunter Water Plan.

The Water Wise Rules require:

- Watering with a sprinkler, irrigation system or trigger nozzle hose, is permitted any day before 10am or after 4pm to avoid the heat of the day.
- All hand held hoses must have a trigger nozzle.
- No hosing of hard surfaces such as concrete, paths and driveways.



Chinaman's Hollow Weston

Environmental Objective:

Better utilisation of existing open space

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS:

- Our open spaces are distributed where people live.
- We have green corridors connecting our open space areas.
- We have high quality, centralised multi-purpose sporting and recreation facilities.
- Our open spaces have suitable amenities and plenty of shade.

PRESSURE:

Local councils are responsible for contributing to the health and well-being of their communities through the provision of recreation and sporting facilities. The provision of safe and appealing environments suitable for sport and recreation activities are just a few ways that councils can encourage physical activity within the community.

Council's current population is expected to grow to over 68,000 by the year 2031 and subsequently, Council needs to plan to provide appropriate recreation opportunities for the increased number of residents in a sustainable manner.

STATE:

Council can influence positive outcomes through its role as a strategic and land use planning authority; a provider and manager of facilities and services; a community leader and as an employer at a local level. As the tier of government closest to the local community, council leadership on sport, recreation and open space can complement the role of other government agencies and non-government organisations.

The following recreation facilities are provided across the local government area:

| FACILITY | NUMBER |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Athletics | 3 |
| Cricket ovals | 24 |
| Football (soccer fields) | 23 |
| Hockey | 2 |
| Netball courts | 22 |
| Rugby league fields | 12 |
| Tennis courts | 36 |

Draft Recreation Needs Analysis - May 2016

RESPONSE:

To ensure Council meets the future needs of residents in regard to recreation, it will need to include the provision of low/no cost opportunities, especially in regard to informal recreation. Through the provision of walk- and cycle-ways, recreation parks offering a range of activities (passive and active) and access to natural areas, Council can provide these opportunities for relatively low infrastructure costs and cater for the prevalent social characteristics of its population into the future.



Margaret Johns Park

Generally, Council is well placed to meet future open space demands, through both recreation and sport parks, and the level of embellishments/features within. The rationalisation of some facilities/parks will be needed in the future, as will a range of improvements to existing facilities, but the required amount of recreation land to be acquired to meet the community's future needs is not significant.

Environmental Objective:

Better waste management and recycling

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS:

- We divert more of our waste for recycling or re-processing.

Waste is generally defined as any product or substance that has no further use and which is, or will be, discarded. It is what is thrown away because it is no longer needed or wanted and is a by-product of almost every human activity.



Waste display - Spring Awakening 2016

PRESSURE:

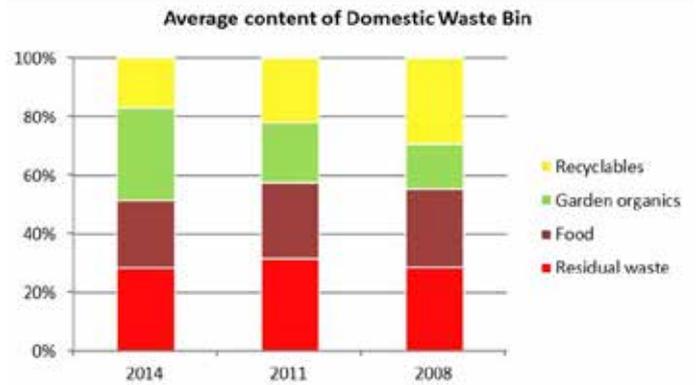
Improper management of waste presents issues for the environment, the economy and the community. Impacts of waste include odour, noise, dust, greenhouse gas emissions and harm to flora and fauna. Hazardous wastes can cause serious health problems, significant pollution and the leaching of toxins or nutrients into groundwater and land. Litter and illegal dumping are anti-social behaviours that reduce the amenity of public spaces. Landfill facilities remove space from the community and may compromise the use of land in the future.

STATE:

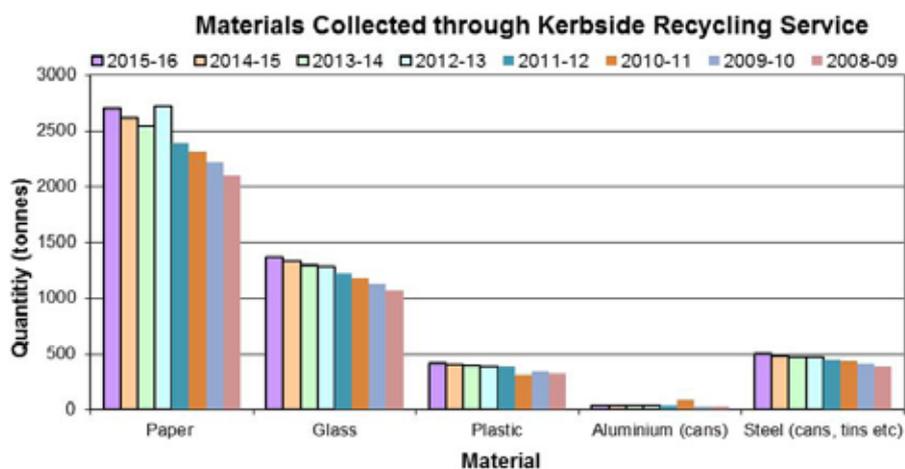
Council is included in the NSW waste regulatory framework established under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997. The key objective of this framework is to ensure a healthy and clean environment by regulating pollution and other adverse environmental impacts that may result from waste activities.

Cessnock local government area is identified as being in the Extended Regulatory Area and our Waste and Reuse Centre is a licensed waste facility that is required to pay a contribution in respect of each tonne of waste received for disposal at the facility.

Monitoring of waste streams is undertaken with audits of domestic waste bins being conducted every few years and programs developed to increase diversion of material from landfill. The results of the 2014 waste bin audit (depicted below) provided further data to support the introduction of a kerbside collection for garden organics and an education campaign called Recycle Right to increase the recovery of dry recyclable materials.



Summary of Domestic Waste bin contents 2014, 2011 and 2008



Materials Collected through Kerbside Recycling Service

Hunter Resource Recovery is the joint provider of household recycling collection to Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland and Singleton Councils. A summary of the quantities of recyclable materials collected in the Cessnock local government area is contained in the figure above. Hunter Resource Recovery has also carried out a number of programs and activities aimed at increasing recycling recovery rates including:

- Schools Program - 20 schools in the Cessnock local government area now participate in the free schools recycling service. Community group and schools talks and school waste audits are undertaken on request.
- Advertising Program - advertisements were placed in newspapers, radio and TV.
- Sponsorship – of the Mayoral Academic Awards and the Mayoral Schools Challenge.
- Provision of recycling at events such as the Postie Bike Challenge and Stomp Festival.

For more information on Hunter Resource Recovery go to www.hrr.com.au

RESPONSE:

The economy depends on the environment and natural resources to provide raw materials and absorb the waste and emissions we produce. Recycling such raw materials, keeps them in the productive economy for longer. This has the dual benefit of lowering demand for new resources and reducing the need to dispose, treat or manage waste. (NSW SoE, 2015 section 7).

Council's adopted Waste Management Strategy 2014-19 aims to encourage and maximise opportunities for residents to minimise waste going to landfill. Convenience, cost and consistency are recognised as factors that can influence attitudes to waste reduction and resource recovery. Council's overriding objective is to develop a sustainable waste management strategy. In quantitative terms, Council is aiming to, as a minimum, achieve the 2014 New South Wales Waste and Resource Recovery target of 66% diversion of waste from landfill and commence achievement of the 2022 target of 70%.

Council currently diverts approximately 27% of kerbside domestic waste from landfill. System analysis has shown that the introduction of a kerbside organics collection (initially for garden organics (GO) then for both food and garden organics (FOGO)) will significantly increase Council's diversion from landfill. Council has worked with Maitland and Singleton Councils to tender for this service which will commence in March 2017.



The Mayor at mattress collection - September 2015

Information about all Council's waste and recovery programs is available on Council's website. Regional projects with other Councils through the Hunter Waste Education Group currently overseen by Hunter Councils under the Hunter Region Waste Strategy are also undertaken (see Small Acts Big Change at <http://smallactsbigchange.com.au/>).

Council's litter program is multi-layered and includes:

- Main Road Litter Collection Program undertaking regular clean ups of litter on major roads around the local government area working on the premise that litter attracts litter and that clean roadsides discourage litter.

- The Adopt-a-Road Program (commenced in 1996) currently has 17 sponsors covering 47.1kms of roadside. These sponsors are a mixture of corporate and community groups and are recognised through road signs that are highly visible.
- NSW EPA Hey Tosser program participation including encouraging resident to report littering from vehicles and distribution of reusable car garbage bags.
- Annual promotion and assistance with national Clean up Australia Day.

Cessnock is a founding member of the Hunter/Central Coast Regional Illegal Dumping (RID) squad established in 2014 to reduce the costs of illegal dumping and build capacity within the region. The Hunter/Central Coast RID Squad covers a wide geographical area and works with other public land managers (such as National Parks and Crown Lands) to combat illegal dumping.



Live with less chemicals at Cessnock Library



WASTE MANAGEMENT MEASURES:

| YEAR | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|---|---------|----------|----------|----------|
| Total waste deposited into landfill (tonnes) | 32,456 | 38,071 | 32,875 | 35,617 |
| State Government Waste and Environment Levy (\$/tonne) | \$93.00 | \$107.80 | \$120.90 | \$133.10 |
| Kerbside recycling collection (summary of breakdown by type in figure 3 below) | 4,717 | 4,734 | 4,686 | 5,012 |
| Recycling at Cessnock Waste and Reuse Centre: | | | | |
| • Paper and cardboard (tonnes) | 187 | ~50 | 136 | 210 |
| • Greenwaste (tonnes) | 1,853 | 1,753 | 2,694 | 1,854 |
| • Tyres (each) | 761 | 891 | 832 | 163 |
| • Mattresses* (each) | 1,016 | 851 | 1,206 | 3,627* |
| • Electronic waste (tonnes) | 195 | 193 | 137 | 134 |
| • Concrete (tonnes) | 781 | 850 | 1,053 | 610 |
| • Metal (tonnes) | ~1,100 | ~1,500 | ~1,300 | ~2,700 |
| Clean up Australia Day: | | | | |
| • No. registered sites | 20 | 21 | 18 | 20 |
| • No. schools | 7 | 10 | 12 | 14 |
| • Waste collected (tonnes) | 6.7 | 8.9 | 5.7 | 10.4 |
| Adopt-a-Road Program: | | | | |
| • No. of sponsors | 19 | - | - | 17 |
| • kms road covered | 51.3 | - | - | 47.1 |
| No. of illegal dumping reports on public land | - | - | - | 460 |

* Note: 2,421 mattresses collected at drop off events, rest delivered to landfill



Grow your own food workshop



Conclusion

People value the environment and progress towards the community's desired outcome of a sustainable and healthy environment is being achieved.

The local government area has 223.92ha of open space and is well serviced with recreation facilities.

The entire community benefits from the commitment of participants in Tidy Towns and Keep Australia Beautiful activities; as well as the positive response to recycling initiatives by both residents and businesses.

Climate change adaptation programs are being put in

place to reduce the risks and improve preparedness for heatwaves and other extreme weather events.

There is strong state, regional and local support to protect important agricultural land and retain and enhance the rural character and amenity of the local government area. However, regional growth strategies have signalled significant population growth and development to cater for that growth which poses a threat to the continuation of commercial agriculture and protection of the rural landscape.

Recommendations and future directions

It is recommended that Council:

1. Reaffirm its sustainability aspirations as part of the 2017-2021 Delivery Program.
2. Incorporate into its 2017-21 Delivery Program a focus on climate change adaptation and mitigation.
3. Adopt a Climate Change Policy.
4. Continue to collect appropriate data to provide a meaningful indication of the state of the environment to complement the community indicators adopted in the community strategic plan.
5. Continue to partner with organisations such as Local Land Services & the Tom Farrell Institute for the Environment to value add to local environmental programs.
6. Prioritise and determine appropriate conservation mechanisms for areas of high biodiversity value and integrate these priorities into Council's planning and operational activities.
7. Engage with the local community and visitors on the value of the environmental assets within the Local Government Area and implement behaviour change actions to sustain increased awareness.
8. Ensure appropriate recreation facilities are provided by developers to address the deficiencies identified in the gap analysis (of the Recreation Needs Analysis).
9. Rationalise recreation and sport parks that do not meet standards/are surplus to requirements as part of the Strategic Property Review.
10. Continue to implement the adopted Waste Management Strategy 2014-19.
11. Continue to implement the Carbon Management and Energy Reduction Strategy.

References

Cessnock City Council, Carbon Management and Energy Reduction Strategy 2015.

Cessnock City Council, Cessnock 2023 community strategic plan, 2013.

Cessnock City Council, Waste Management Strategy 2014-19.

Bureau of Meteorology, www.bom.gov.au - weather data, climate summaries and reports.

Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy, Cessnock Climate Change Risk Assessment and Adaptation Plan, November 2010.

Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy (2010) Potential Impacts of Climate Change on the Hunter, Central and Lower North Coast of NSW.

Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy (2010) Rural Councils Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

Ross Planning, Cessnock City Council Recreation Needs Analysis (draft), May 2016.

State of NSW and Department of Environment, (2015) Climate Change and Water, NSW State of the Environment 2015.



WEATHER
◊ ROCK ◊

Statutory Requirements

WEATHER

• ROCK

• ROCK WET - RAINING •

• ROCK WHITE - SNOWING •

• ROCK SWINGING - WINDY •

ROCK SHAKING - EARTHQUAKE

STATUTORY REPORTING INDEX

| Requirement | Section/Clause | Page |
|---|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Local Government Act 1993 and General Regulation | | |
| 1. Completed within 5 months after end of financial year. | s428(1) | N/A |
| 2. Copy provided to the Minister for Local Government (via the Office of Local Government). | s428(5) | N/A |
| 3. Copy posted on council's website. | s428(5) | N/A |
| Contains: | | |
| 4. Council's achievements in implementing the delivery program and the effectiveness of the principal activities undertaken in achieving the objectives at which those principal activities are directed. | s428(1) | 11-63 |
| 5. Copy of Council's audited financial reports and notes and information required by the Regulation or the Guidelines. | s428(4)(a) | Separate document |
| 6. Amount of rates and charges written off during the year. | cl 132 | 59 |
| 7. Details of overseas visits by councillors, council staff or other persons representing council (including visits sponsored by other organisations). | s428(4)(b) cl 217(1)(a) | 49 |
| 8. Total cost during the year of the payment of expenses of , and the provision of facilities to, councillors in relation to their civic functions. Including separate details on the total cost of: | cl 217(1)(a1) | 49 |
| • Provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to councillors. | cl 217(1)(a1)(i) | |
| • Telephone calls made by councillors. | cl 217(1)(a1)(ii) | |
| • Attendance of councillors at conferences and seminars. | cl 217(1)(a1)(iii) | |
| • Training of councillors and provision of skill development. | cl 217(1)(a1)(iv) | |
| • Interstate visits by councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses. | cl 217(1)(a1)(v) | |
| • Overseas visits by councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses. | cl 217(1)(a1)(vi) | |
| • Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a councillor, being expenses payable in accordance with the Guidelines. | cl 217(1)(a1)(vii) | |
| • Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member of a councillor. | cl 217(1)(a1)(viii) | |
| 9. Details of each contract awarded for amounts greater than \$150,000. Includes: | cl 217(1)(a2) | 62 |
| • Name of contractor. | cl 217(1)(a2) | |
| • Nature of goods or services supplied. | cl 217(1)(a2) | |
| • Total amount payable under the contract. | cl 217(1)(a2) | |
| 10. Summary of the amounts incurred by the council in relation to legal proceedings. Includes: | cl 217(1)(a3) | 58 |
| • Amounts, costs and expenses paid or received. | cl 217(1)(a3) | |
| • Summary of the state of progress of each legal proceeding and (if it has been finalised) result. | cl 217(1)(a3) | |
| 11. Summary of resolutions made under section 67 concerning work carried out on private land. Includes: | s67(3) cl 217(1)(a4) | 44 |
| • Summary or details of work. | cl 217(1)(a4) | |
| • Cost of work fully or partly subsidised by council. | cl 217(1)(a4) | |
| • Total amount by which council has subsidised any such work. | cl 217(1)(a4) | |
| 12. Total amount contributed or otherwise granted under section 356 (financially assist others). | cl 217(1)(a5) | 14 & 60 |
| 13. Statement of all external bodies that exercised functions delegated by council. | cl 217(1)(a6) | 25 |
| 14. Statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which council held a controlling interest. | cl 217(1)(a7) | 25 |
| 15. Statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which the council participated. | cl 217(1)(a8) | 25 |
| 16. Statement of activities to implement its EEO management plan. | cl 217(1)(a9) | 55 |
| 17. Statement of the total remuneration comprised in the remuneration package of the general manager. Includes: | cl 217(1)(b) | 55 |
| • Total value of the salary component of the package. | cl 217(1)(b)(i) | |
| • Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of the salary component. | cl 217(1)(b)(ii) | |
| • Total amount payable by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the general manager may be a contributor. | cl 217(1)(b)(iii) | |
| • Total value of any non-cash benefits for which the general manager may elect under the package. | cl 217(1)(b)(iv) | |
| • Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits. | cl 217(1)(b)(v) | |

| Requirement | Section/Clause | Page |
|--|--|---------|
| Contains: | | |
| 18. Statement of the total remuneration comprised in remuneration packages of all senior staff members, expressed as the total (not of the individual members). Includes: | cl 217(1)(c) | 55 |
| • Total value of salary components of their packages. | cl 217(1)(c)(i) | |
| • Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of salary components of their packages. | cl 217(1)(c)(ii) | |
| • Total amount payable by the council by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which any of them may be a contributor. | cl 217(1)(c)(iii) | |
| • Total value of any non-cash benefits for which any of them may elect under the package. | cl 217(1)(c)(iv) | |
| • Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits. | cl 217(1)(c)(v) | |
| 19. A statement detailing the stormwater management services provided (<i>if levied</i>). | cl 217(1)(e) | 60 |
| 20. A statement detailing the coastal protection services provided (<i>if levied</i>). | cl 217(1)(e1) | N/A |
| 21. In the year of an ordinary election of councillors is to be held the Annual Report must include a report as to the state of the environment in the local government area. | s428A(1) | 64 |
| 22. Particulars of any environmental upgrade agreement entered into, in accordance with any requirements imposed under s406. | s54P | N/A |
| 23. Report on special variation expenditure if required to do so by the instrument made by the Minister. | s508(2) / s508A | 59 |
| 24. Report on capital works projects. | Capital Expenditure Guidelines | 44-45 |
| Companion Animals Act 1998 and Companion Animals Regulation 2008 | | |
| 25. Statement on activities relating to enforcing and ensuring compliance with the Companion Animals Act and Regulation. Includes: | Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 cl 217(1)(f) | 18 & 19 |
| • Lodgement of pound data collection returns with the Division. | 16.2 (a) Guidelines | |
| • Lodgement of data relating to dog attacks with the Division. | 16.2 (b) Guidelines | |
| • Amount of funding spent on companion animal management and activities. | 16.2 (c) Guidelines | |
| • Companion animal community education programs carried out. | 16.2 (d) Guidelines | |
| • Strategies council has in place to promote and assist the de-sexing of dogs and cats. | 16.2 (d) Guidelines | |
| • Strategies in place to comply with the requirement under section 64 of the Act to seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals. | 16.2 (e) Guidelines | |
| • Off leash areas provided in the council area. | 16.2 (f) Guidelines | |
| Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and Regulation | | |
| 26. Information included on GIPA activity. | s125(1) cl 7 Sch. 2 | 53 |
| Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 | | |
| 27. Particulars of compliance with and effect of planning agreements in force during the year. | s93G(5) | 34-35 |
| Public Interest Disclosure Act 1994 and Regulation | | |
| 28. Information on number of public interest disclosures and whether public interest disclosure policy is in place. | s31 cl4 | 52 |
| Carers Recognition Act 2010 | | |
| 29. Councils considered to be 'human service agencies' under the Act must report on compliance with the Act for the reporting period in the reporting period in their Annual Report. | s8(2) | N/A |
| Disability Inclusion Act 2014 *Note: Councils are not required to report on this until the 2017/18 financial year | | |
| 30. Information on the implementation of council's Disability Inclusion Plan. | s13(1) | N/A |
| Fisheries Management Act 1994 | | |
| 31. Recovery and threat abatement plans - Councils identified in a plan as responsible for implementation of measures included in the plan, to report on actions taken to implement measures as to the state of the environment in its area. | s220ZT | N/A |

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

