



2012–2013 Annual Report

REPORTING FOR OUR PEOPLE
OUR PLACE OUR FUTURE

Cessnock - thriving, attractive and welcoming





Contents

INTRODUCTION

Our Vision	4
The Annual Report	5
Message from the Mayor	6
Councillors	7
Council's Charter	8
Cessnock Local Government Area	9
General Manager's Report	11

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR YEAR IN BRIEF

A connected, safe and creative community	14
A sustainable and prosperous economy	24
A sustainable and healthy environment	30
Accessible infrastructure, services and facilities	36
Civic leadership and effective governance	42

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

55

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.**

The Annual Report has been developed to provide a summary of Council's achievements during the 2012-13 year. Progress is measured against the programs, budget and desired outcomes in the 2012-13 Operational Plan. The Operational Plan aims to achieve the longer term objectives of the Delivery Program and Community Strategic Plan.

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

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

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

They are:

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

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



Message from the Mayor



On behalf of Cessnock City Council, it gives me great pleasure to present Council's 2012-13 Annual Report, which details the great strides we have made since this Council's election in September 2012.

This Council has united to work tirelessly in an endeavour to achieve progressive and well-balanced outcomes for our community whilst having high regard for the social, environmental and economic impacts of our decisions.

After a period of administrative turmoil, Council has settled and is now consolidating to ensure our community receives exemplary service provision including customer service of the highest order.

Our Operational Plan and Delivery Program, which form the solid foundations for this report, are tracking well and I can confidently say that Council has achieved a great deal in a short period of time.

As Mayor, I take this opportunity to thank the Council staff for their commitment, hard work and loyalty to both the organisation and the community they serve. Our decisions as the elected representatives, no matter how worthy, are only made possible by the efforts of the staff and their understanding of, and respect for, this community.

As has been the case for several years, Council continues to struggle to meet all our residents' wishes because of limited finances and constantly competing priorities. I believe, however, that you will find in this report that we have managed to find a happy medium and, further, that we have sown the seeds for a prosperous and sustainable community into the future.

**Council
elections are
held every
4 years**

*Bob Pynsent
Mayor of the City of Cessnock*

Councillors

THE MAYOR



Clr B Pynsent

WARD A



Clr J Hawkins

WARD B



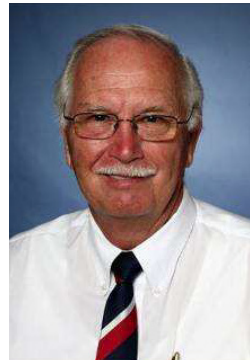
Clr M Campbell

WARD C

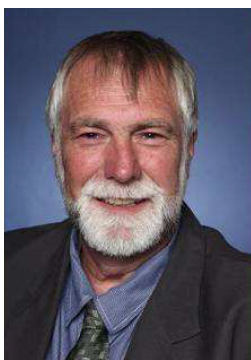


Clr J Maybury

WARD D



Clr R Doherty



Clr A Stapleford



Clr B Gibson



Clr C Parsons



Clr J Ryan



Clr C Troy



Clr I Olsen



Clr S Wrightson



Clr G Smith

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

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

Council's Charter

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

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

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

**Council
elections
were held on
8 September
2012**

Cessnock Local Government Area

LOCATION

Cessnock City is located in the Hunter Valley, New South Wales, about 120 kilometres north of Sydney and 40 kilometres west of Newcastle.

Cessnock City is bounded by Maitland City in the north; the Cities of Newcastle and Lake Macquarie in the east, Wyong Shire and the Cities of Gosford and Hawkesbury in the south; and the Singleton Council area in the west.



AT A GLANCE

The population of Cessnock City was 53,289 as of the 30th June 2012.

Population density in the Cessnock LGA sits at just 0.27 people per hectare.

In the Cessnock City local government area (LGA), 14% of households earned \$2,500 or more per week.

Only 8% of the dwellings are medium or high density, compared to 16% in regional NSW.

Almost 20% of our population is aged between 35 and 49 with 12.3% aged 25 to 34 and 13.4% aged 50 to 59. Just over 11% are aged 60 to 69 years.

HISTORY

Cessnock is named after Cessnock Castle in Ayrshire, Scotland.

The local government area is largely made up of the traditional lands of the Wonnarua people. European settlement dates from the 1820s when pastoralists arrived using land mainly for farming, market gardening and timber getting.

The Great North Road was constructed in the 1830s, linking the Hawkesbury and Hunter Valleys. Wollombi was the centre of the area till the late 1800s. The township of Branxton emerged from 1848, spurred by its accessibility to water, rich agricultural land and its location as a road junction.

The three largest ancestry groups in the Cessnock LGA are Australian, English and Scottish. Only 3% of the LGA's population come from countries where English is not the first language.

Almost half (43%) of working residents travel out of the area for work. Only 1% of the working population use public transport to get to work. 19% of those employed work as technicians and trades workers followed by 14.6% as machinery operators and drivers and 13.4% as labourers. Together, managers and professionals make up 19.5% of the working population.

The township of Cessnock developed from 1850 as a service centre at the junction of the Great North Road. There was some growth in the 1850s and 1860s with wheat, tobacco and grapes being grown, especially around Cessnock, Nulkaba and Pokolbin.

Significant development in Cessnock occurred when coal was struck in 1892 and several coal mines were established.

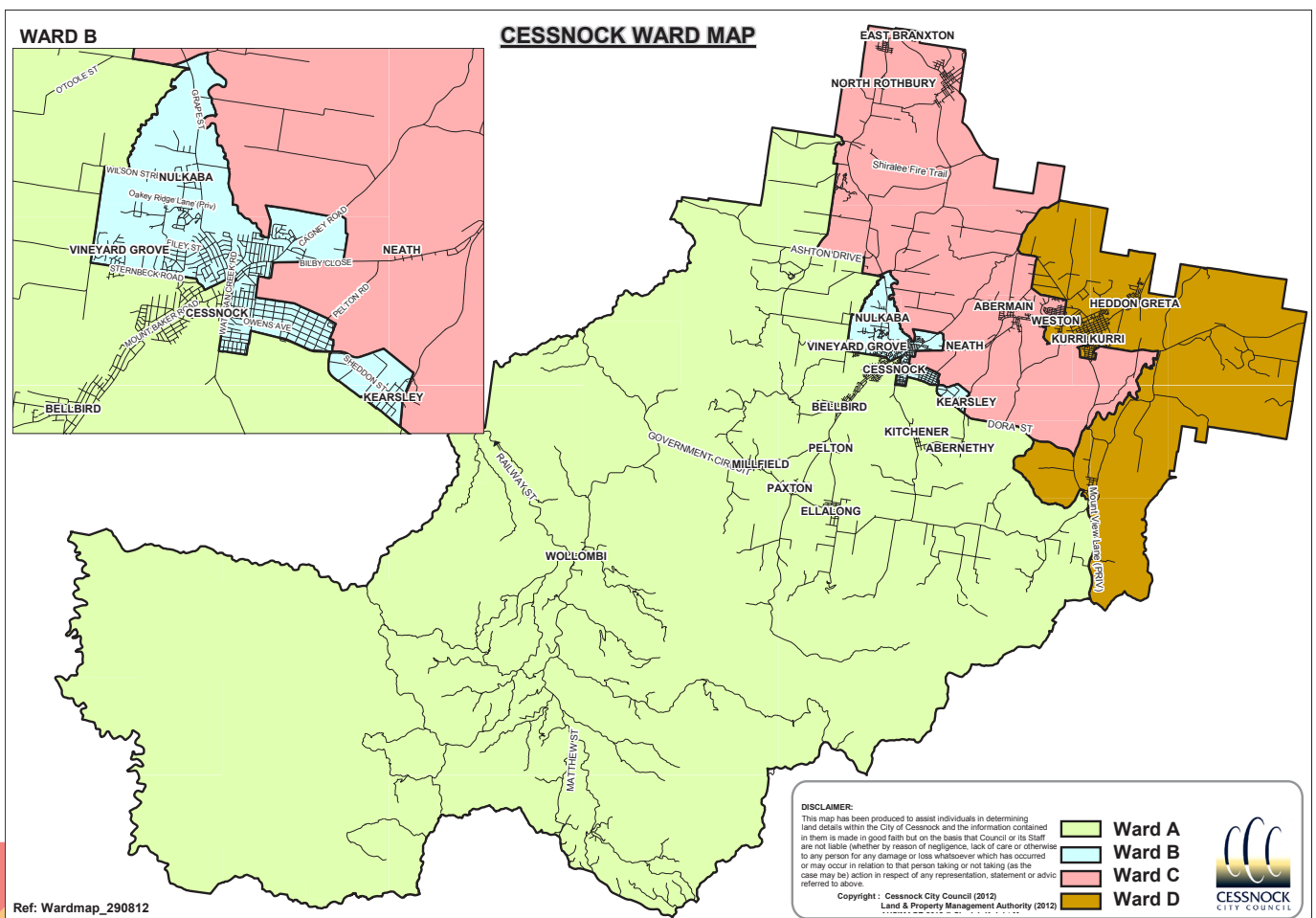
By 1926 the Cessnock local government area had a population of 12,000 increasing to 18,000 by the 1940s. Until the 1960s mining was the principal industrial base and source of employment in the Cessnock area.

The Cessnock Local Government Area covers approximately 1,950 square kilometres within the Hunter Valley of New South Wales.

Whilst mining was the principal industrial base and source of employment in the Cessnock area for the first half of the 20th century, changes to the mining industry, including automation and the introduction of sophisticated computerised equipment, led to the closure of the vast majority of mines in the area.

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

As well as vineyards and wineries there are fine restaurants, motels, cabins, guest houses and galleries. Wine-related tourism has also created opportunities for other attractions, such as the historic Marthaville Arts and Crafts Centre, Wollombi Village, the Richmond Main Mining Museum and the Richmond Vale Railway. Other primary industries in Cessnock City include beef and poultry.



General Manager's Report

Cessnock City Council experienced a great deal of change this year with a new Mayor and Councillors elected in September 2012, bringing fresh ideas and new directions for consideration, and the resignations of the General Manager and one Group Leader in early 2013.

I joined Cessnock City Council at the beginning of June 2013 and although I have only been with Council for a short period of time, I have witnessed much to commend to you. I have thoroughly enjoyed overseeing the operational aspect of Council as staff work to achieve the goals set by you, the community, as outlined in our Community Plan, *Cessnock 2023* and working closely with Council to develop long term strategies across key areas.

As an example, Council undertook a great deal of community consultation and engagement this year in order to fully inform the development and/or review of several major strategies. These documents, in conjunction with Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan, will form the basis for our organisation's pathway into the future.

Council has not only focused on strategic planning during the past year; operationally, major initiatives and improvements have led to improved customer service across the Council. For instance, the Development Application processes have been refined and enhanced with the result being that we have reduced our mean gross time for determining development applications from 93 days to 75 days and we are determined to reduce that figure even further.

Further operational improvements have included the roll out of a Work Health and Safety Management System throughout the organisation which has resulted in improved employee work health and safety practices as well as contributing to savings in Council's workers compensation premium.

Council is ever mindful of trying to address the shortfall in available funding for its operations including the maintenance and construction of infrastructure as our constantly growing population places an increasing demand on existing infrastructure.

With the Hunter Expressway nearing completion, we can be certain that our residential and industrial population bases will expand dramatically in the coming years and Council must ensure that our services and infrastructure keep pace with the LGA's growth.

Stephen Glen
General Manager



An aerial photograph of a two-lane asphalt road winding through a vast vineyard. The rows of grapevines are neatly spaced and extend across the foreground and middle ground. In the background, there are clusters of trees, a small pond, and some farm buildings. A semi-transparent grey rectangle is overlaid on the middle of the image, containing white text.

The highlights of our year in brief



2012/13 Highlights in brief

Vineyards Road Project (*see photo facing page*)

Reconstruction of Broke Road West between McDonalds Road and the Cessnock City boundary to the west commenced. Construction works are being undertaken on smaller sections to minimise impacts to traffic and residents. Construction of the first sub section is nearing completion, with section 2 works, moving east towards Tyrrell's Vineyard currently underway.

DA process time improvements

In March, the NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure published the 'Local Development Performance Monitoring Report 2011-12'.

Whilst the number of determined development applications for Cessnock Council increased from 751 in 2010-11, to 803 in 2011-12, Council's mean gross time for determining development applications has reduced from 93 days in 2010-11, to 75 days in 2011-12.

Cessnock CBD Masterplan

More than 200 residents contributed to the formation of the draft during nine months of community consultation through workshops, drop-in sessions and an innovative online collaborative map. As well as building owners and tenants, people who use the centre on a daily or intermittent basis were also involved in determining what the CBD should look and feel like into the future.

Arts and Cultural Award for the PAC

Council through its highly successful Performing Arts Centre was recognised in the 2012 Local Government Arts and Culture Awards. Council was presented the Developing Arts and Culture: Performing Arts Initiatives award.

David Burton's *April's Fool* is a verbatim theatre performance based on the true story of 19 year old Toowoomba teenager, Kristjan Terauds who passed away from illicit drug use in 2009.

Council was able to offer hundreds of local school students the opportunity to attend the powerful, sometimes confronting, performance for free thanks to the sponsorship and assistance of Smart Choices, the Samaritans Information and Neighbourhood Centre and Rover Coaches.

Floodplain Management Plans

Development of Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans for the Black Creek area and the Swamp/Fishery Creek area commenced.

Youth & Seniors Weeks

Both Youth Week and Seniors' Week were again very popular week-long events which saw 15 youth and 19 seniors' activities and events organised for our ever increasing participants in both celebrations.

Kurri Kurri Skate Park

Construction of a new skating and BMX facility at Margaret Johns Park, Kurri Kurri was completed in 2012. The aim of the project was to replace the ageing existing skate park at the same location. The project included removal of sections of the existing skate park; major earthworks to form the new skate area as well as installation of new elements and concreting. The Skate Park is used on a daily basis by young people and organised youth events are held on a regular basis.

Recycling contract renewed

Council endorsed a new kerbside recycling collection contract with Solo Resource Recovery in August, with the new contract commencing on 1 July 2013.

The original recycling service commenced in 1997 with Cessnock, Lake Macquarie and Maitland Councils joining together to form the contract management company, Hunter Resource Recovery. Presently, the service represents one of the largest recycling contracts in Australia, with the service area covering three times the metropolitan area of Sydney.

Online calendar on website

Council launched a free online calendar of events for the Cessnock LGA called *What's On*. Community groups and other organisations submit details of their upcoming events and activities at no charge with the calendar proving popular as an information and planning tool.

60th Anniversary of Council's Libraries

Another highlight during the year was the celebration of Cessnock City Library's 60th anniversary. Around 50 current and former staff attended the formalities, where Cessnock born author, John Hughes, was guest speaker, and other official guests were the Mayor of Cessnock Councillor Bob Pynsent and the then Deputy Mayor Councillor Graham Smith, who is also chair of Public Libraries NSW.



**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 2012-13 to achieve the objectives established in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.



Community & Cultural Activities

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



Community Health & Safety

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



Community Assets

- Community halls and centres
- Early childhood facilities
- Cycleways

Promoting Social Connections

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Promote and update the Community Services Directory and actively encourage new and existing services to be listed in the directory	✓
Appoint a permanent Community Planning Officer	✓
Facilitate delivery of priority community based events and festivals identified in the Social and Cultural Plan	✓
Undertake a City Wide Cycleway and Footpath Study	✗
Undertake an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Study	✓
Performance: ✓ Achieved 4 ✗ Not Achieved 1 📅 Revised Timeframe 0	
Notes: The final review of the draft City Wide Cycleway and Footpath Study is estimated to be completed by December 2013	

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDERS

The total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resident population in Cessnock local government area is approximately 2,457 (2011 Census). In 2012 Cessnock City Council worked in partnership with local Aboriginal services non-government organisations to deliver 11 local NAIDOC Week events.

Council resolved to re-instate its Aboriginal Advisory Committee following a number of years in abeyance, with a number of community representatives appointed. The first meeting was scheduled for July 2013.

PEOPLE WITH DIVERSE CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC BACKGROUNDS

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

The Hunter Valley Multicultural Friendship Group (Cessnock Branch) continues to meet and has been involved in many successful community projects. The group was established by representatives from the Social Work Service, Cessnock Hospital (Hunter New England Area Health Service), Northern Settlement Services (NSS) and Cessnock City Council.

This group provides an opportunity for culturally and linguistically diverse communities to come together and celebrate diversity.

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

ACCESS









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

CLUB GRANTS 2012

For the 2012/13 Club Grants Funding Round, the Committee received 31 applications and was able to partially or fully fund 19 projects. The total allocation of grant funds was \$100,903.

Strengthening Community Culture

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Contribute to the planning, coordination and promotion of projects that aim to engage the community in the participation in community life	
Seek, encourage and actively support joint partnerships that allow for the development and implementation of services that have been identified by the community as an area of need	
Upgrade Millfield Community Hall and playground facilities	
Produce a discussion paper which analyses the future community need for child care services	
Produce a discussion paper to understand the future community need for aged care services	
Performance:  Achieved 5  Not Achieved 0  Revised Timeframe 0	
Notes: NAIDOC Week held in July 2012, Seniors' Week held in March 2013, Clean Up Australia Day held in March 2012 and Youth Week held in April 2013. Council continues to support Tidy Towns committees, hall committees and Adopt-a-Road groups.	

CHILD CARE AND PRE-SCHOOL SERVICES

Cessnock City Council assisted local Pre-school providers with support.

Council also provided space for 8 Child care and Pre-school services across the Cessnock local government area.

YOUTH SERVICES

Council's Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service (CYCOS) is now in its 15th year of operation. CYCOS has a suite of programs for the LGA's youth, including in-house and outreach drop-in facilities, informal educational programs in schools, referral for young people to other services, court support and youth events. During 2012-13 CYCOS had 7,736 occasions of service.

CYCOS plays a major role in the planning and programming for Youth Week. This year the program of activities and events engaged and entertained more than 1,600 young people in Youth Week. The Week included a big breakfast at each of the 4 local high schools, a cooking competition, photography workshop and competition, two manga workshops, a yoga class, an open mic night, outdoor activities and a free BBQ, a scooter bike and skate competition, the pool challenge at Kurri Aquatic Centre and a band night! It was fantastic to see so many happy and engaged young people displaying positive youth culture in its many forms.

CYCOS continue to grow and develop the informal educational programs provided to schools. In 2013 CYCOS delivered programs to the three public high schools in the areas of health promotion, crime prevention and prevention of domestic violence and sexual assault.

AGED AND DISABLED SERVICES

Cessnock City Council provides significant infrastructure for aged and disabled services operated by Home and Community Care Services in the local government area including:

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

Council was actively involved in organising, promoting and/or delivering 19 events as part of 2013 Seniors' Week activities.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND GRANTS

During 2012-13 Council provided \$75,883.71 in general financial assistance to community groups/organisations.

GROUP/ORGANISATION	AMOUNT
COMMUNITY HALLS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM	
Branxton Community Hall	\$1,436.98
Cessnock Multi Purpose Children's Centre	\$2,381.50
Crawfordville Community Hall	\$1,425.00
Kurri Kurri Community Centre	\$5,557.00
Wollombi Community Hall	\$863.00
Laguna Community Hall	\$2,631.08
SUB-TOTAL	\$14,294.56
COMMUNITY CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM	
Weston Art Show	\$2,000.00
Abermain Eisteddfod Society	\$2,690.00
Bellbird Pre-School	\$998.00
Central Hunter Community Broadcasters	\$3,913.80
Cessnock Wood Turners	\$1,250.00
Cessnock Community & Youth Development	\$1,950.00
Coalfield Heritage Group	\$1,200.00
Abermain Plaza Hall	\$1,500.00
Sculpture in the Vineyards Inc.	\$4,231.35
Wollombi Valley Arts Council	\$2,186.00
SUB-TOTAL	\$21,919.15
RECREATION MINOR PROJECTS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM	
Branxton District Netball Assoc.	\$893.20
Cessnock Dog Club	\$4,214.50
Cessnock District Cricket Assoc.	\$8,214.50
Cessnock Hockey Assoc.	\$4,000.00
Cessnock District Netball Assoc.	\$2,951.80
Cessnock Minor Rugby League	\$2,232.50
Greta Branxton Pony Sports Club	\$1,008.49
Kurri Kurri Junior Football Club	\$1,000.00
Weston Bears Football Club	\$3,612.50
Wollombi Valley Pony Club	\$2,242.50
SUB-TOTAL	\$30,369.99
TIDY TOWNS \$ FOR \$ PROGRAM	
Cessnock Tidy Towns	\$58.20
Weston Heritage & Tidy Towns	\$1,406.53
Gingers Lane Tidy Towns	\$1,162.95
Branxton Tidy Towns	\$722.30
Kurri Kurri Tidy Towns	\$2,170.00
Bucketty Tidy Towns	\$3,306.30
Wollombi Valley Tidy Towns	\$473.73
SUB-TOTAL	\$9,300.01
TOTAL	\$75,883.71

Promoting Safe Communities

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Develop a media and community promotional campaign highlighting the need to report malicious property crime	✓
Promote youth with crime prevention education	✓
Review the effectiveness of the Crime Prevention Plan	✓
Review and update the Community Road Safety Strategy	✗
Continue representation on the Cessnock Liquor Accord, Community Safety Precinct Committee and the Cessnock Anti-Violence Network	✓
Performance: ✓ Achieved 4 ✗ Not Achieved 1 📅 Revised Timeframe 0	
Notes: Currently recruiting for a Road Safety Officer to update and review the Community Road Safety Strategy.	

CRIME PREVENTION

On 17 June 2009, Cessnock City Council resolved to adopt the Cessnock Local Government Area Crime Prevention Plan (July 2009 - June 2012).

In summary, the Cessnock Local Government Area Crime Prevention Plan listed eight action strategies and all were developed for the purpose of reducing the incidence of Malicious Property Damage within the Cessnock local government area.

With the Plan now expired, Council has undertaken 'An Evaluation Study for the Cessnock Local Government Area Crime Prevention Plan (2009 to 2012)'. The Study provides a thorough analysis as to the outcomes of the Crime Prevention Plan.

The Study highlights that the Cessnock Local Government Area Crime Prevention Plan achieved many project outputs. They are listed and analysed in the Study, and include:

- Development of the 'Community Hall Application Booking Form'. The Booking Form enquires about alcohol and liquor licensing for events proposed to be held in local Council owned Halls. The application form also requires the hirer to inform the Local Area Command (NSW Police) of the event.
- Development of a 'Consultation Protocol for the Referral of Development Applications to the NSW Police by Cessnock City Council'.
- An outdoor activity trailer was purchased by the Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service. The activity trailer aims to deliver youth activities to young people who reside within smaller townships of the Cessnock Local Government for example Millfield, Paxton, Ellalong, Greta and Branxton.
- As a result of a Community Safety Audit for Rotary Park Kurri Kurri, Cessnock City Council installed a Public Reserve Offence sign within the park.
- In partnership with the Roads and Maritime Service (formerly Road and Traffic Authority) a 'Late Night Transport Card' was developed. The transport card lists the contact details for late night transport services and includes late night licensed premises courtesy bus services and taxi providers within the townships of Cessnock and Kurri Kurri.
- The study components for the Crime Prevention Plan were completed and presented to Council in November 2010 and April 2011. The aim of the Study was twofold: firstly, it included strategies for reducing pedestrian traffic travelling from licensed premises to residential areas within the Central Cessnock area particularly on Friday and Saturday nights. Secondly, it included researching the benefits, limitations and costs of Closed Circuit Television for the Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Central Business Districts.

- Following a safety audit of Turner Park, Cessnock a funding application was submitted to the Department of Attorney General and Justice for improved lighting. As a result of this grant application, Cessnock City Council was awarded a small, partial funding amount of \$6,000. The \$6,000 was used to improve lighting near the Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service, Turner Park, Cessnock.
- A Security and Safety Exhibition was held in a local licensed club auditorium on the 26 May 2010 and was attended by 55 people.
- The NSW Police Crime Prevention Brochure was sent to 19,968 households and commercial premises within the Cessnock local government area. The brochure educated residents on how to protect their property and the importance of reporting crime.
- 5,700 copies of the 'Reporting Crime' high gloss fridge magnet were circulated to local community groups and via the print media.
- 'Smart Choices', a youth crime prevention education program designed by Cessnock City Council, Cessnock Youth Centre and Outreach Service and the Central Hunter Local Area Command (NSW Police), was rolled out to 418 students across the four high schools within the Cessnock local government area.
- In March 2011, after successfully running the program with local high schools, 'Smart Choices' was presented at a national Australian Institute of Criminology Conference held in Melbourne, 'Young people, risk and resilience: The challenge of alcohol, drugs and violence'. The paper was titled 'Smart

Choices: an early intervention initiative between NSW Police and Cessnock City Council'.

- April's Fool, (written by David Burton) was delivered to high schools within the Cessnock local government area. The theatre performance had a focus on the dangers of alcohol and illicit drug use.

In total, 1065 students, teachers and parents attended an April's Fool performance. In November 2012, 'April's Fool', was an awards finalist for the Arts and Cultural Awards from Local Government NSW including the category of 'Inter-disciplinary Arts & Culture: Arts & Health Initiative'.

- A pilot project was delivered in partnership with Juvenile Justice and Cessnock City Council and sought to involve young people (who had committed a crime) in the removal of graffiti at designated locations within Kurri Kurri.

With the Crime Prevention Plan endorsed by the Department of Justice and Attorney General, Council recently received \$44,000 worth of grant funding to implement a project at Margaret Johns Park, Kurri Kurri (Skate Park area). The project aims to encourage natural surveillance by installing durable, crime resistant street furniture (seats), a vandal proof permanent shade structure, a vandal resistant water bubbler and solar lighting within the Skate Park area. Given the funding was announced February 2013 the project is in the process of being implemented.

COMPANION ANIMALS

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

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

Cessnock City Council's Companion Animal Management Plan was adopted by Council in January 2010.

Cessnock City Council has entered into an agreement with the RSPCA to provide pound facilities for the Cessnock City local government area. From the 1 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 Division of Local Government as part of Council's Agreement.

There were 52 reported dog attacks involving 77 attacking dogs in the Cessnock City Council LGA in 2012-13.

For the year ended 30 June 2013 there were 74 actions relating to these dog attacks:

- 6 were declared dangerous;
- 26 were infringed;
- 26 received warnings;

- 3 were seized and taken to the pound;
- 4 dogs were destroyed;
- 1 was still under investigation; and
- 8 other actions were taken.

DE-SEXING OF DOGS AND CATS

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

ALTERNATIVES TO EUTHANASIA FOR UNCLAIMED ANIMALS

As part of Cessnock City 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

Cessnock City Council currently has 6 leash free areas for the community to use:









- The south-eastern portion of Varty Park, Weston
- The northern portion of Greta Central Park, Greta
- Stanford Merthyr Park at Maitland Street, Stanford Merthyr
- Northern end of Manning Park, Blackwood Avenue, Cessnock
- Northern end of Hall Park, West Cessnock
- The very western end of Miller Park, Branxton

MANAGEMENT & ACTIVITIES FUNDING

The 2012-13 Ranger Service's community education budget was \$25,048. A large portion of this budget was spent on Council's free microchip day. Council also conducts a bulk mail out of companion animal brochures to promote responsible pet ownership.

Fostering an Articulate and Creative Community

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Complete the Library Strategic Plan	
Implement the priority strategies in the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre Strategic Plan	
Work with the Cessnock Mainstreet Committee to develop a program of events that will activate the town centre	
Prepare detailed plans for the Cessnock Central Business District including a structure plan, development control plan and development contributions plan	
Implement priority cultural strategies in the Social & Cultural Plan	
Performance:  Achieved 3  Not Achieved 1  Revised Timeframe 1	

Notes: The Library Strategic Plan is nearing completion following consultation with Councillors, staff, stakeholder groups and Library surveys of users and non-users. Estimated completion date - December 2013.

Highlights: Sustainable Cessnock has been supported to deliver various activities which harness the unique strengths of the CBD and energise the local economy. Initiatives included the Street Banner project, Cessnock Coffee Challenge, Cessnock Country Music Festival, Cessnock Customer Service Awards and the Cessnock CBD Events Strategy.

CESSNOCK CITY LIBRARIES

Cessnock City Library has focused strongly throughout 2012/13 on building better partnerships with all educational institutions in our LGA. To this end the library has:

- collaborated in the delivery of Paint the Town Read program
- delivered database training sessions at all high schools
- delivered a presentation to the Principals of the Cessnock Community of Great Public Schools
- attended parent teacher night at a local high school to promote online resources
- organised and delivered children's author talks and writing workshops

There has also been a strong focus on developing and promoting our E-resource collections. Cessnock City Library has purchased an Apple Ipad, Samsung Galaxy Tablet, Kindle and Sony Reader in response to demand for classes on these technologies, E-book workshops having proved most popular. Library staff have also been made available to assist customers with individual technological queries/problems at designated times.

Funds received from Revitalising Regional Libraries were allocated to the Cessnock City Library Digitalisation project. To date 612 local history files have been digitised and are accessible via the library catalogue. Cessnock Library is now in the process of scanning Cessnock High School's production of the Black Diamond 1935-2012. Some historical photos have also been added to the collection.

Copies of The Cessnock Eagle and South Maitland Recorder from 1913 to 1954 in digital format were also made available via Trove as part of the State Library of NSW's \$22.4 million digitisation project.

Another highlight during the year was the celebration of Cessnock City Library's 60th anniversary. Around 50 current and former staff attended the formalities, where Cessnock born author, John Hughes, was guest speaker, and other official guests were the Mayor of Cessnock Councillor Bob Pynsent and the then Deputy Mayor Councillor Graham Smith, who is also chair of Public Libraries NSW.

CULTURAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Cessnock City Council administered its Community Cultural Development \$ for \$ Grant Program in 2012-13 and \$21,919 was allocated to 10 projects.

The City of Cessnock Hall of Fame held a special induction for an inductee as part of the ANZAC Day commemoration at Kearsley, including the installation of a bronze plaque. This brings the total number of inductees into the Hall of Fame to 49.

CESSNOCK PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

Since the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre opened in November 2008, the centre's reputation has grown as a cultural facility providing a program of professional arts events and performance experiences by leading Australian companies.

The centre also hosts a number of community and Council run events such as the Mayoral Academic Challenge, Senior Citizen of the Year and the Mayoral Academic Scholarship Awards.

These activities coupled with the performance program have positioned the Centre as a cultural hub for the Cessnock local government area.

The Performing Arts Centre partnered with Council's Smart Choices program in the April's Fool project which won the Performing Arts Initiative category in the Local Government Arts & Cultural Awards in November 2012.

The Performing Arts Centre also conducted a series of free events (during NAIDOC Week and Seniors' Week) to strengthen its ties with the broader community. The Performing Arts Centre regularly partners with the Samaritans Neighbourhood Centre to host family events for Harmony Day and Grandparents Day in the outdoor plaza area.



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 2012-13 to achieve the objectives established in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.



Economic Development

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



Education

- Scholarships and academic competitions
- Building workforce capability











Strategic Land Use Planning

- Industrial land

Diversifying Local Business Options

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Update business marketing material for the Cessnock Local Government Area	
Prepare a New Residents' Guide	
Develop an inventory of industrial and commercial land and floor space	
Review zoning for Hunter Economic Zone	
Provide specialist advice in the evaluation, planning and timing for a freight hub on the redundant Bloomfield/Donaldson mining leases	
Performance:  Achieved 3  Not Achieved 1  Revised Timeframe 1	
Highlights: 'Circle Cessnock' concept reinforced on the website and in printed materials and promotional media across consultations for the Economic Development Strategy. Banners acquired for ongoing events.	
Inventory of industrial and commercial land and floor space included in the draft Economic Development Strategy.	

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 public liability and professional indemnity insurance. This enables Council to meet its insurance obligations under the Act.
- Hunter Resource Recovery is a public company, limited by guarantee. Registered ABN 35071432570.
The company is made up of 16 Directors. Each Council is represented by four (4) Directors.
During the period 2012-13 Cessnock Council recycled 4,716 tonnes via the kerbside service.
Singleton Council joined the company in August 2012 and will participate in a new contract commencing 1 July 2013.
- Council is a joint guarantor for a loan which was drawn down on 1 July 2003 by Hunter Councils Limited. The total loan borrowing is \$2.86 million and Council's exposure is \$351,416.

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

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

CONTROLLING INTERESTS

During 2012-13 Council held no controlling interests in companies as defined under S428(2) (p) of the Local Government Act.



CONTRACTS

Council awarded the following contracts for amounts over \$150,000 (not including employment contracts) during 2012-13.

SUCCESSFUL TENDER	ITEM	AMOUNT PAYABLE PER TENDER (incl. GST)
Accurate Asphalt & Road Repairs Pty Ltd Active Hire Group Brad's Excavations & Haulage Bruce's Water Cartage Cessnock Water Cartage & Plant Hire Pty Ltd Coates Hire Operations Pty Ltd Conplant Pty Ltd Dannenberg Earthmoving Pty Ltd Dean Reilly Earthmoving & Excavation Economy Sweepers Pty Ltd ETURF Pty Ltd Hartcher's Water Haulage J. & L. Plant Hire Julestan Pty Ltd T/A Stan Davies Excavations Kingston Industries T/A Tutt Bryant Hire Lovetts Cessnock Earthmoving Max Hire Pty Ltd Mitchell Bros Earthmoving Pty Ltd Noraville Earthmovers Porter Excavations Pty Ltd Rollers Australia Pty Ltd Sherrin Rentals Pty Ltd T.A.T.S. Downunder Pty Ltd	T1112/07 Hire of Plant and Equipment	\$6,123,000.00
Mullane Infrastructure Pty Ltd	T1213/01 Millview Estate Sewer System	\$240,570.00

Achieving more Sustainable Employment Opportunities

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Promote Mayoral Academic Challenge to assist young people develop their skills	✓
Coordinate a project with the business community to establish a program for youth mentoring towards enhancing their employability	✓
Performance: ✓ Achieved 2 ✗ Not Achieved 0 📅 Revised Timeframe 0	
Highlights: The annual Mayoral Academic Challenge was held in September 2012.	

EMPLOYMENT

At June 2013, there were 24,988 employed residents in the Cessnock local government area an increase of 1,556 on the previous year.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	JUNE 2012	SEPT 2012	DEC 2012	MARCH 2013	JUNE 2013
Cessnock Local Government Area	6.0%	6.5%	6.6%	6.8%	7.5%
New South Wales	5.2%	5.1%	5.1%	5.1%	5.2%
Australia	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%	5.3%	5.4%

Source: Small Area Labour Markets (Dept. of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations)

INDUSTRY SECTORS

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

AGRICULTURE

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

EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

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

Cessnock LGA has a cluster of companies, including Orica Explosives that provide services to the mining industry.

No new coal mines are proposed for the LGA. Based on current estimates of resources, coal mining is likely to continue in the LGA for the next 20-30 years.

MANUFACTURING

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

Increasing Tourism Opportunities & Visitation in the Area

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Work with Tourism Hunter Advisory Group and Hunter Valley Wine Country Tourism to identify and promote opportunities for diversifying the tourism experience	✓
Assist Chambers of Commerce to develop localised tourism strategies for their villages and niche markets	✓
Develop an inclusive cultural events, heritage and tourism calendar	✓
Establish a centralised one-stop website for community events and information	✓
Performance: ✓ Achieved 4 ✗ Not Achieved 0 📅 Revised Timeframe 0	
Highlights: Participation in the development of a Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan in partnership with Hunter Valley Wine Country Tourism and Singleton Council. Contributed to the broader Destination Management Plan for Tourism Hunter. The proposed Economic Development Strategy will also highlight the actual and potential diversification of tourism offerings.	
Cessnock CBD Plan adopted and Wollombi Strategic Plan complete. Proposed Economic Development Strategy to address placemaking for individual towns and villages. This is to be further enhanced and captured via the Hunter Valley Destination Management Plan.	

TOURISM

The Hunter Region is one of the most visited regions in Australia with the Wine Country area in Cessnock LGA 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 to the vineyards area is critical to the ongoing sustainability of the tourism sector.

In the year ended March 2012 the Hunter Tourism Region ranked 12th in Australia and 4th in NSW (behind Sydney, the North Coast and South Coast) in terms of visitor expenditure. In 2012 the Hunter Region attracted 2.172 million domestic overnight visitors, 5,278 million domestic day trippers and 113,400 international overnight visitors (information on international day trippers is not published). Domestic overnight visitors spent 6.237 million nights in the Region. In 2012 the Hunter was the fourth most visited region in NSW for domestic and international overnight visitors, ranking behind Sydney, the North Coast (3.2million visitors) and the South Coast (3.059m) for domestic overnight visitors, and behind Sydney, the Northern Rivers (190,600) and North Coast Regions (129,200) for International Visitors. In terms of domestic day trips, the Hunter ranked 3rd in NSW behind Sydney and the South Coast.

TOURISM AWARDS

The 2012 Tourism Awards were successful for Cessnock LGA with the following Awards:

- Brand Hunter Valley - Gold Award in Tourism Marketing
- Bimbadgen - Silver in Tourism Wineries, Distilleries and Breweries
- Somewhere Unique - Gold in Unique Accommodation
- The Vintry - Silver in Deluxe Accommodation

WINE

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

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

In 2012, there were 2,664 hectares under wine grapes in the Hunter Valley of which 1,511 hectares were white wine grapes and 1,153 hectares were red wine grapes.

A photograph of a wooden fence in a green field. The fence is made of weathered wooden posts and rails. A dark blue rectangular text box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text 'A sustainable and healthy environment' in white serif font. In the bottom left corner, there are colorful geometric shapes (red, orange, yellow, green, blue) and a small white box containing the number '030'.

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 2012-13 to achieve the objectives established in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.



Strategic Land Use Planning

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



Development Assessment



Health

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



Recreation

- Aquatic facilities
- Recreation facilities and management
- Weed management



Strategic Asset Planning

- 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

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Undertake an Agricultural Lands Study	✓
Complete Vineyards Visioning Plan	✓
Review the heritage, flooding and urban housing chapters of the Development Control Plan	📅
Commence the review of the City Wide Settlement Strategy to identify future development areas, settlement patterns and conservation outcomes	📅
Implement comprehensive sustainability reporting to the community	✓
Develop a program to educate the community about weed management	✓
Develop a range of sustainability programs and undertake community engagement activities in relation to these programs	✓
Prepare a comprehensive Biodiversity Strategy in conjunction with relevant agencies	✓
Work with Tourism Hunter and Hunter Valley Wine Country Tourism to develop and promote environmental tourism projects	✓
Complete Flood Studies and Flood Risk Management Plans for two major local government area catchments	✗
Performance: ✓ Achieved 7 ✗ Not Achieved 1 📅 Revised Timeframe 2	
Notes: The Federal Government, in partnership with the NSW Government, has released <i>Mapping Important Agricultural Lands in the Lower Hunter</i> . The study is being reviewed to determine if any further action/information is needed to meet Council's requirements.	
The draft Swamp/Fishery Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan were adopted for public exhibition in August. Black Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan progressing and presentation to the Floodplain Management Committee is scheduled for December 2013.	

DEVELOPMENT

During 2012-13 Council determined 790 development applications (excluding Sec. 96 applications).

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS	2011-12	2012-13
Number of determinations	834	790
Mean gross determination time (days)	75	77
Median gross determination time (days)	31	30

BUSHFIRE REDUCTION

Cessnock City Council is an important partner in the management of Volunteer Rural Fire Brigades. Council's participation includes financial support of volunteers and ongoing management of the local organisation through the Service Level Agreement between the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) and Council.

There are 14 brigades and 3 shared support brigades in the Cessnock local government area and 640 active members.

Bushfire hazard reduction works, including firebreaks and slashing (mechanical fire breaks), were carried out during the past year, particularly in the areas of Greta, Bucketty, Wollombi, Kurri Kurri and Neath.

During 2012-13 the RFS has completed several hazard reductions, our window of opportunity to conduct further burning has been limited by a wet winter and an unseasonable hot dry windy start to the fire season, we continue to plan and undertake hazard reductions throughout the year and those not completed in Spring / Summer 2013 will be followed up in Autumn / Winter 2014 (Pending favourable weather conditions).












PLANNING AGREEMENTS

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

Name	Short Description	Date Entered Into	Parties	Land to which Agreement Applies
Cliftleigh	This agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Cliftleigh, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the <i>EP&A Act 1979</i> .	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 and Lot 1 DP 1039042 Main Rd, Cliftleigh.
Anvil Creek	This agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Anvil Creek, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the <i>EP&A Act 1979</i> .	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 and Lots 263-264 of DP 755211.
Heddon Greta	This agreement provides a mechanism to provide public infrastructure to the area commonly known as Heddon Greta, that would normally be provided under Section 94 of the <i>EP&A Act 1979</i> .	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 and Part Lot 102 of DP 1112059 off Main Road, Young and Bowden Streets, Errol Crescent, Madeline and Ashley Close and Forbes Crescent at Heddon Greta.
Cessnock Civic	This agreement provides a mechanism to provide for the management of mine subsidence and environmental offset land within the area commonly known as Cessnock Civic.	21 August 2012	Cessnock City Council; Cessnock Land Management P/L of C/-Level 1, 106 King Street 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 and Lot 22 DP 845986.
Averys Village	This agreement provides a mechanism to provide environmental offset land to the area commonly known as Averys Village.	3 October 2013	Minister for the Environment; Cessnock City Council; Hunter Land Holdings of 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, NSW, 2322; Averys Rise Investor Pty Limited of Level 2, 77 Hunter Street, Newcastle, NSW, 2300; L Elliott of NSW; G & P Field of Qld; HL Eco Trades Pty Ltd of 1 Hartley Drive, Thornton, NSW, 2322.	Lot 20 DP 11823, Lot 12 DP 755231, Lot 13 DP 755231, Lot 5 DP 1082569, Lot 8 DP 10443 and Lot 119 752445 Averys Lane, Heddon Greta.

Better Utilisation of Existing Open Space

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Include the outcomes of the Recreation & Open Space Plan as an amendment to the new Local Environmental Plan	
Formalise the Green Corridor identified in the Lower Hunter Regional Strategy by investigating an environmentally significant land overlay to the maps in the Local Environmental Plan	
Redevelop Greta Central Oval by undertaking works identified in the masterplan and funded in the budget	
Redevelop Kurri Kurri Central oval by undertaking works identified in the masterplan and funded in the budget	
Upgrade facilities at Carmichael Park Bellbird	
Develop a masterplan for Civic Park providing links to Turner Park	
Performance:  Achieved 4  Not Achieved 1  Revised Timeframe 1	
Notes: Outcomes of the Recreation & Open Space Plan are to be included as an amendment to the new Local Environmental Plan following the review of the Open Space & Recreation Strategy.	
Masterplan for Civic Park project has been included in the 2013-17 Delivery Program (item 2.1.4)	

RECREATION FACILITIES

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

The 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 (3) public swimming pools at Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and Branxton. There are six (6) major aquatics based clubs in the area, predominantly utilising Cessnock Pool. The establishment of the Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre provides a year round swimming

facility which has proven to be highly popular with annual attendance levels increasing from 121,918 in 2011-12 to 126,261 during 2012-13. The types of visits to the centre included aqua and dry land fitness, squad swimming, aquatic education, recreational swimming and birthday parties.

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.

A Cemetery Strategy outlining the future development of each cemetery has been adopted by Council.

Better Waste Management & Recycling

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Construct Transfer Facility	
Implement priority actions in the Waste Strategy and prioritised projects from the Department of Environment, Climate and Water's Waste & Sustainability Improvement Program	
Review Waste Strategy	
Conduct an audit of types and volumes of waste collected	
Review technological developments to process materials to achieve the highest landfill diversion	
Complete Stage 1 extension to existing landfill site including construction of landfill cells ready to accept waste	
Participate in regional programs for education and surveillance of illegal waste dumping	
Performance:  Achieved 4  Not Achieved 1  Revised Timeframe 2	
Notes: The transfer facility will not be built in 2012-13 financial year but does form part of the development strategy for the landfill expansion. The landfill expansion project is in the process of developing the Project Plan and Project Management brief.	
Stage 1 extension to existing landfill site Development Strategy is complete. Project Management brief underway to allow calling of tenders.	
Preparation of the revised Waste Strategy is underway.	
Surveillance cameras were trialed in local illegal waste dumping blackspots in June 2012. Council is participating in a feasibility assessment of a regional illegal dumping squad which may attract funding from the State Government under the revised levy program.	

DELEGATED FUNCTIONS

Hunter Resource Recovery (HRR) is the provider of Council's domestic kerbside recycling service. It is jointly owned and operated by Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland and Singleton Councils.

HRR manages the kerbside recycling collection service contract with Solo Resource Recovery.





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 2012-13 to achieve the objectives established in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.



Strategic Asset Planning

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



Design Delivery

- Contract management
- Project management



Works Delivery

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



Depot & Support Services

- Building Maintenance
- Plant & Fleet
- Procurement












Council Assets

- Cessnock Airport
- Cemeteries

Better Transport Links

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Develop a long-term strategic plan for Cessnock Airport	
Provide input into the development of the Lower Hunter Transport Strategy by Transport NSW	
Undertake priority strategic infrastructure planning activities, including 'gap analysis' (to identify gaps in the existing infrastructure) and capacity studies (to identify upgrade of existing infrastructure and planned expansion of new infrastructure from future development)	
Investigate rail options during the development of the City Wide Transportation Study	
Conduct workshops with public and community transport operators during development of City Wide Transportation Study	
Distribute the Lower Hunter Transport Guide and newsletters to the community	
Lobby state and federal governments through local members of parliament and Hunter transport groups	
Performance:  Achieved 4  Not Achieved 1  Revised Timeframe 0	
Notes: The priority strategic infrastructure planning activities being finalised include: Review of Engineering Guidelines for Development; Aquatics Needs Analysis Study; Trunk Stormwater Drainage Strategy; draft consultancy brief prepared.	

CESSNOCK AIRPORT

Cessnock Airport was constructed during World War II and was gifted to Council by the Commonwealth in 1992.

Council took back management of the airport in December 2011 and during the past eighteen months has focussed on addressing safety issues, remedial maintenance and administrative matters.

The draft Cessnock Airport Strategic Plan is an opportunity for Council to lay the foundation for the future development of this valuable community asset.

The draft Cessnock Airport Strategic Plan is a high-level plan and, once adopted, it will be underpinned by a range of other more detailed documents (such as a detailed masterplan, commercial business plan, financial analysis and development control plan) so that the airport can be run as a commercially competitive enterprise for the benefit of the community.

The development of the draft Cessnock Airport Strategic Plan has taken into account the differing views of various stakeholder groups. The draft document reflects

a balanced position and will provide the platform for Council to undertake the more detailed planning work for this asset (once there is agreement to the high-level position presented in the Strategic Plan).

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

During 2012-13 Council upgraded twenty five (25) priority public transport stops to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act, 1992.

Cessnock 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.

STREETSWEEPING & CLEANING

During 2012-13 Council undertook street sweeping throughout the local government area to reduce the accumulation of debris on the road surface and improve road safety. Street cleaning operations were undertaken in Cessnock, Weston, and Kurri Kurri to provide acceptable conditions for pedestrians.

Improving the Road Network

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Review infrastructure delivery programs in accordance with long-term asset management plans	✓
Establish Council's infrastructure upgrade and expansion requirements to support the Hunter Expressway	✓
Lobby state and federal governments through local members of parliament and Hunter transport groups	✓
Review road upgrades required in the Vineyards district	✓
Review the City Wide Section 94 Contributions Plan	✓
Performance: ✓ Achieved 5 ✗ Not Achieved 0 📅 Revised Timeframe 0	
Highlights: Asset Management Implementation Plan (Round 2) progressing.	
Council negotiations with Road & Maritime Services progressing in preparation of a recommendation to Council regarding the proposed reclassification of roads impacted by the Hunter Expressway.	

STREET LIGHTING

Cessnock City Council's street lighting network is maintained by an external public utility authority (Ausgrid). Annual maintenance of the network has seen replacement of a large number of older technology street lighting luminaries with newer, efficient lamps that consume less energy per annum and are less costly to maintain.

New subdivisions have adopted energy efficient luminaries in their street lighting designs.

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 2012-13 is included in Special Schedule 7 of Council's financial reports.

The financial reports, together with the auditor's reports, form part of this report and can be viewed at the Administrative Offices, 62-78 Vincent Street, Cessnock or online at www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au. The reports cover the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013.

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 2012-13:

Private Works on Public Land	Leogate Vineyard, Broke Rd Pokolbin. Property access works in conjunction with adjacent roadworks. Full cost to owner.
Private Works on Private Land	Narone Creek Road, Wollombi. Maintenance grading and supply of gravel. Council cost approx. \$3,000. Remaining costs funded by residents approx. \$3,500.
Public Works on Private Land	Brokenback Vineyard, Broke Road, Pokolbin. Property access works in conjunction with adjacent roadworks. Full cost to owner.
Public Works on Private Land	Moon Mountain Vineyard, Broke Road Pokolbin. Property access works in conjunction with adjacent roadworks. Full cost to owner.

CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM

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

PROGRAM 2012-13	ADOPTED BUDGET	REVISED BUDGET - A	ACTUAL
CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAMS			
Local Road Construction	\$3,395,130	\$5,304,625	B \$4,203,875
Local Road Renewal	\$2,109,966	\$1,796,826	\$1,524,038
Regional Road Construction	\$1,010,003	\$1,078,958	\$524,358
Regional Road Renewal	\$4,378,993	C \$778,993	\$646,124
Vineyard Roads Construction	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	B \$3,242,203
Pathways Construction	\$56,000	\$76,000	\$75,946
Bridge Construction	\$1,739,000	\$1,746,900	B \$83,269
Drainage Construction	\$778,667	\$611,945	B \$317,107
Traffic Facilities	-	\$100,850	\$17,919
Public Transport Facilities	\$109,000	\$238,300	\$96,631
SUB-TOTAL	\$18,576,759	\$16,733,397	\$10,731,470
SPECIAL RATE			
Regional Roads Program	\$934,582	\$961,782	\$961,649
Local Roads Program	\$700,799	\$700,799	\$700,799
SUB-TOTAL	\$1,635,381	\$1,662,581	\$1,662,448
RECREATION & PARKS			
Recreation Facilities Construction	\$214,500	\$652,725	\$520,490
Recreation Facilities Renewal	\$126,500	\$124,500	\$117,378
Floodlighting	\$30,000	\$22,500	\$18,753
Pools Facilities Renewal	\$15,000	\$153,000	\$141,238
Cemeteries Facilities Construction	\$108,800	\$128,470	\$109,420
SUB-TOTAL	\$494,800	\$1,081,195	\$907,279
BUILDINGS			
Recreation Buildings Construction	\$363,500	\$591,200	\$584,988
Recreation Buildings Renewal	\$53,000	\$53,000	\$55,005
Community Buildings Construction	\$95,000	\$223,575	\$164,692
Community Buildings Renewal	\$144,000	\$144,000	\$138,084
SUB-TOTAL	\$655,500	\$1,011,775	\$942,769
TOTAL	\$21,362,440	\$20,488,948	\$14,243,966

NOTES:

- The revised budget includes funds carried forward for incomplete works from 2011-12 and grant funds received during 2012-13 that were not originally budgeted for and, in some cases, are to fund works that span more than one financial year.
- Where the budgeted works were not completed during 2012-13, funds have been carried forward to 2013-14.
- When Council received notification that it would not receive funding for \$3.5m in Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme works, the budget for regional road renewal was revised.

Improving Access to Health Services Locally

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Lobby state and federal governments through local members of parliament and Hunter New England Health Service to ensure that current service levels are maintained and upgraded as required.	✓
Assist and support local services with information that enables the submission of grant applications that aim for improved and increased health services and infrastructure	✓
Understand the future community needs for aged care services, including health needs and document in a discussion paper	✓
Lobby federal government for a change in the Australian Standards Geographical Remoteness Areas for the townships for Kurri Kurri, Abermain and Weston from a major city classification to inner regional	✓
Performance: ✓ Achieved 4 ✗ Not Achieved 0 📅 Revised Timeframe 0	
Highlights: Draft discussion paper on future community needs for aged care services, including health needs adopted for public exhibition during August 2013.	

IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES LOCALLY

During the year Council made representations to the Department of Health & Ageing, Hunter New England Health Service, and Hunter Rural Division of GPs to maintain and upgrade health service levels in the local government area.

RATIO OF GPs TO POPULATION BENCHMARKS	2012
Cessnock Local Government Area	1:1,575
Australia	1:1,400



A photograph of a white Seiko clock mounted on a white tripod stand. The clock face is white with black numbers and hands, and the brand name 'SEIKO' is visible. The stand is positioned in a park-like setting with green bushes and purple and white flowers in the foreground. In the background, there are trees and a blue sky with white clouds. A blue rectangular box is overlaid on the image, containing the title text.

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 2012-13 to achieve the objectives established in the community strategic plan, Cessnock 2023.



Community Engagement

- Communications
- Help & Information



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

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Contribute to the planning, coordination and promotion of community projects that foster participation in volunteering, mentoring and leadership	✓
Develop scholarships for academic, professional and trade excellence	✓
Contribute to the planning and coordination of projects that aim to inform community members of the range of organisations that exist within the area	✓
Establish a data base of the leaders of community organisations who can be ambassadors for community engagement activities	✓
Performance: ✓ Achieved 4 ✗ Not Achieved 0 📅 Revised Timeframe 0	
Highlights: Council continues to support 355 Tidy Town committees, hall management committees and Adopt-a-Road groups. Council also runs a Schools' Environmental Program to promote volunteering and leadership.	
Council coordinates the Mayoral Academic Scholarships - comprising sixteen annual scholarships for people pursuing tertiary studies in areas including environment and sustainability, arts, tourism, mining, health, information technology, engineering, building and associated trades, occupational health & safety and local government.	

COUNCILLOR PAYMENTS AND EXPENSES

Cessnock City 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 2012-13 the cost of expenses incurred by and facilities provided to Councillors was \$53,621. 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 2012-13 were fixed within the range of fees established by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. The Mayoral fee was fixed at \$37,230 and the Councillor fee at \$17,060.

In 2012-13 there were no overseas visits by elected Councillors.

NATURE OF EXPENSES	AMOUNT
Mayoral Fees	\$37,230
Councillor Fees	\$214,710
BREAKDOWN OF MAYORAL AND COUNCILLORS EXPENSES	
NATURE OF EXPENSES	AMOUNT
Provision of dedicated office equipment, including laptop computers, mobile phones, telephone, fax and installation of internet access.	\$14,436
Telephone calls, including mobiles, landlines, fax and internet services	\$14,652
Spouse / Partner Accompanying Person	NIL
Conferences and Seminars	\$11,508
Training and Skill Development	\$1,205
Interstate Travel	\$392
Overseas Travel	NIL
Meetings - Travel	\$10,418
Care and Other Related Expenses	\$1,010
TOTAL	\$53,621

Encouraging More Community Participation in Decision Making

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Establish mechanisms to increase community access to Councillors	✓
Prepare an updated Communications Strategy	✓
Investigate adoption of web 2.0 (e.g. blogs, wikis)	✓
Undertake a broad-based Community Survey of perceptions about Cessnock as a place to live	✓
Investigate the re-establishment of ward meetings	✓
Performance: ✓ Achieved 5 ✗ Not Achieved 0 📅 Revised Timeframe 0	

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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

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

- Residents are welcome to contact Council in person, by telephone, in writing or via social media with their views or suggestions for improving the local government area.
- Council seeks public comment on important matters. This may be by way of public meetings, public exhibitions or more formalised public hearings.
- Details of all public meetings and exhibitions are published in local newspapers.
- The elected Council considers all policy matters at Council meetings which are open to the public.
- Council's Code of Meeting Practice makes provision for members of the public to address Council meetings and prescribes the framework for such participation.

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

COUNCIL MEETINGS

The elected representatives comprise the governing body of the Council. The role of the elected Council is to set the strategic direction and determine policies of Council. The decisions of the Council are formalised through the meeting process.


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

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

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

Making Council More Responsive to the Community

Operational Plan Performance

Action	Result
Review the interim Customer Service Strategy	
Review the Cessnock 2020 Community Plan including extensive community consultation	
Implement a new remuneration system	
Implement an OH&S system which is legislatively compliant	
Develop a Preferred Supplier/Contractors Panel for goods and services regularly contracted by Council	
Replace Council's Enterprise Content Management System	
Replace Council's Customer Request Management System	
Review Council's electronic Fire Safety Register program	
Develop guidelines for social impact assessment of key development applications	
Provide an e-service for booking building inspections	
Performance:  Achieved 7  Not Achieved 2  Revised Timeframe 1	
Notes: E-services building inspections are being implemented as part of Council's new Customer Request Management System and will go live in late 2013.	
Highlights: The Community Strategic Plan, <i>Cessnock 2023</i> was adopted in June 2013.	

HELP AND INFORMATION CENTRE

As part of the refurbishment of the Council's Administration building, Stage 2 of the upgrade to the Help and Information Centre was completed with the laying of new carpet throughout the foyer area.

During 2012-13 a major review of Council's Interim Customer Service Strategy commenced.

CUSTOMER REQUESTS

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

During 2012-13 Council received a total of 29,662 requests from community members, businesses and external government agencies.

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

MONTHLY CRMS ACTIVITY 2012-13	NO. OF REQUESTS RECIEVED
July	3,644
August	3,772
September	2,920
October	3,388
November	2,998
December	1,643
January	1,647
February	2,018
March	2,279
April	1,968
May	1,517
June	1,868
TOTAL	29,662

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



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 2012-13 period Council received Nil privacy review applications.

ACCESSING COUNCIL DOCUMENTS

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

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

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

The GIPA Act establishes four ways to access information:

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

Open access information includes the following:

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

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

PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES

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

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

During the 2012-13 period Council received NIL public interest disclosures.

AMENDING COUNCIL RECORDS

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

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

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

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) REGULATION 2009

Council has reviewed its program for the release of government information in accordance with section 7. Details of requests for information received by Council for the year ending 30 June, 2013 are as follows:

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
Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private sector business	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Members of the public (application by legal representative)	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Members of the public (other)	34	0	4	1	0	0	0	7
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
Personal information applications	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	47	0	4	1	0	0	0	7
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Table C: Invalid applications								No. of applications
Reason for invalidity								
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)								1
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)								0
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)								0
Total number of invalid applications received								1
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications								0
Table D: Conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure: matters listed in Schedule 1 to Act								No. of times consideration used
Overriding secrecy laws								0
Cabinet information								0
Executive Council information								0
Contempt								0
Legal professional privilege								0
Excluded information								0
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety								0
Transport safety								0
Adoption								0
Care and protection of children								0
Ministerial code of conduct								0
Aboriginal and environmental heritage								0

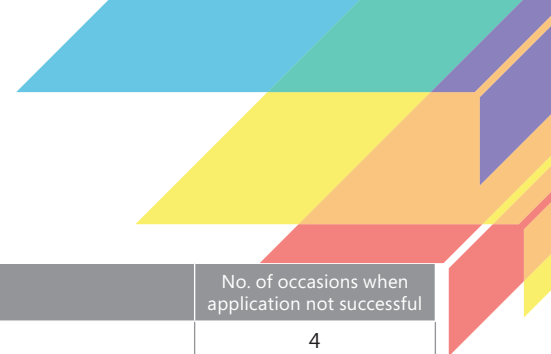


Table E: Other public interest considerations against disclosure: matters listed in table to section 14 of Act		No. of occasions when application not successful	
Responsible and effective government		4	
Law enforcement and security		0	
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice		0	
Business interests of agencies and other persons		0	
Environment, culture, economy and general matters		0	
Secrecy provisions		0	
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation		0	
Table F: Timeliness		No. of applications	
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)		48	
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)		3	
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)		1	
Total		52	
Table G: Number of applications reviewed under Part 5 of the Act (by type of review and outcome)	Decision varied	Decision upheld	Total
Internal review	0	0	0
Review by Information Commissioner	0	0	0
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	0	0	0
Review by ADT	0	0	0
Total	0	0	0
Table H: Applications for review under Part 5 of the Act (by type of applicant)			No. of applications for review
Applications by access applicants			0
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)			0

HUMAN RESOURCES

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

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Council continues to demonstrate a commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and strategies to deter workplace bullying and harassment. Council is currently undertaking a review into its EEO and Bullying and Harassment Policies and procedures.

SENIOR STAFF

Statement of the total amount paid to each senior staff member employed during 2012-13.

	General Manager	Group Leaders
	01/07/12 to 30/06/13	01/07/12 to 30/06/13
Total Value of Salary Component of Package:	\$214,567.01	\$792,001.06
Total amount of any bonus payments, performance or other payments that do not form part of salary:	-	-
Total payable superannuation (salary sacrifice and employers contribution):	\$21,848.04	\$70,311.28
Total value of non-cash benefits - Provisions of Motor Vehicle:	\$8,465.75	\$37,592.04
Total payable fringe benefits tax for non-cash benefits:	\$6,142.81	\$35,422.07
Total Remuneration Package	\$251,023.61	\$935,326.45

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

Summarised below are details of the costs incurred in regard to legal proceedings taken by Council or taken against Council during 2012-13. The result of the proceedings is shown together with the amount of the legal costs incurred.

MATTER	COURT	COST	RESULT
ATB Morton Pty Ltd v Cessnock City Council. Branxton Proceedings 10313 of 2012. Application 8/2011/400/1	Land & Environment Court	\$3,734.14	DA approved. Proceedings discontinued.
Cessnock City Council v Aviation & Leisure Corporation Pty Ltd.	Expert Determination	\$207,365.20	Council ordered to pay \$500,000
Cessnock City Council v Bimbagen Estate Pty Ltd 2011 NSWLEC 140. Proceedings for committing the offence of carrying out earthworks on land without consent.	Land & Environment Court	\$662.44	The respondent pleaded guilty and was convicted of offence.
Biwazu Pty Ltd v Cessnock City Council. Defence of an appeal for refusal of a s68 wastewater application at Morgan St, North Rothbury. Application 15/2012/31/1	Land & Environment Court	\$41,465.00	s34 Conciliation Conference. Modified approval issued by Court Orders.
Cessnock City Council v Burcham & ors. 89946 of 2012 Proceedings to prevent the dismissal of the General Manager.	NSW Supreme Court - Common Law Division	\$276,177.03	Proceedings discontinued.
Covercopy Pty Ltd v Cessnock City Council 2011 NSWLEC 1136 Appeal against refusal by Council to modify consent.	Land & Environment Court	\$60.00	Appeal dismissed.
Cessnock City Council v Laila Investments Pty Ltd NSWLEC 40598 of 2012. Class 4 Proceedings regarding the issuing of an occupation certificate.	Land & Environment Court	\$52,767.46	Occupation certificate declared invalid.
Makeig v Cessnock City Council. Bimbadeen Rd, Mt View. Proceedings 11001 of 2009. Application 8/2009/506/1	Land & Environment Court	\$383.30	Matter closed.
RSPCA - Socares Support Group Inc v Cessnock City Council 2012 NSWLEC 23. Proceedings against Council for breaching its tendering obligations under the Local Government Act.	Land & Environment Court	\$1,607.90	Appeal dismissed.
Cessnock City Council v Rush & ors. NSWLEC 178 of 2012. Proceedings to prevent the delegation of the management of Council's court matters.	Land & Environment Court	\$51,873.80	Orders issued to prevent delegation of the management of court proceedings.
Signature Gardens Retirement Resort Pty Ltd v Cessnock City Council Proceedings 10874 of 2012. Application 8/2011/415/1	Land & Environment Court	\$414,342.16	Appeal dismissed.
Telstra Corporation Limited v Cessnock City Council. Proceedings 10787 of 2012. Application 8/2011/815/1	Land & Environment Court	\$9,946.92	Consent Orders issued.

In addition, during 2012-13 Council incurred costs totalling \$325,676 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	\$20,991,628	
Farmland	\$3,295,360	
Business	\$4,298,634	
Mining	\$912,023	
Total Rates		\$29,497,645
Domestic Waste Management Charges		\$11,422,281
Stormwater Management Charges		\$469,769
Gross Rates and Charges		\$41,389,695
Less: Written Off		
Pensioners (Section 575)	\$1,190,074	
Pensioners (Section 582)	\$133,041	\$1,323,115
		\$40,066,580
Net Transfers to and from Postponed Rates		<u>-\$12,133</u>
Net Rates and Annual Charges		\$40,054,447
Net Extra Charges - Interest and Legal per note 3		<u>\$228,613</u>
		\$40,283,060

2012-13 was the second and final year of a special rates variation granted to Council by the Minister for Local Government. An amount of \$1,635,381 was levied under this special variation with the funds being expended on the following renewal works:

INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS FROM ADDITIONAL RATE INCREASE 2012-13		
Cessnock Road, Weston	Margaret Street, Cessnock	Sandy Creek Road, Brunkerville
Dalwood Road, Branxton	Wollombi Road	Sawyers Gully Road
Cessnock Road, Weston	James Street, Cessnock	Mount View Road, Cessnock
Melbourne Street, Aberdare	Barret Ave, Cessnock	Government Road, Weston
Dalwood Road	Main Road, Paxton	Oakey Creek Road

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 2012-13 Council provided rates subsidies totalling \$34,276.70 to community groups/organisations.

GROUP/ORGANISATION	AMOUNT
Aberdare Pre-School	\$1,608.45
Bellbird Pre-School	\$1,190.22
Cessnock Homing Pigeon Club	\$841.21
Cessnock Masonic Hall	\$1,356.07
Cessnock Mini-Bike Club	\$441.42
Cessnock Multi Purpose Children's Centre	\$1,226.27
Cessnock PCYC	\$11,570.92
Cessnock Pistol Club	\$765.53
Challenge Disability Services	\$2,062.75
Day Care Centre - Dudley St, Cessnock	\$1,168.58
Greta Pre-School Kindergarten	\$1,543.56
Kurri Kurri Day Care Centre	\$1,759.88
Kurri Kurri Motor Cycle Club	\$269.06
Paxton Masonic Hall	\$908.99
Pre-School - Dudley St, Cessnock	\$1,911.31
Richmond Vale Preservation Co-op Society	\$885.65
RSL Hall - Cessnock Rd, Weston	\$833.27
RSL Hall - Maitland St, Branxton	\$1,738.25
RSL Hall - Wollombi Rd, Cessnock	\$908.99
Weston Masonic Hall	\$972.45
Weston Pre-School	\$313.87
TOTAL	\$34,276.70

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SERVICE PROGRAM

ADOPTED 2012-13	ACTUAL 2012-13
Whitburn Estate Drainage	Old Buttai Road
	Wollombi Floodplain Risk Management Study & Plan
	Cessnock Floodplain Risk Management Study & Plan
	Fishery Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study & Plan
\$913,827	\$612,110

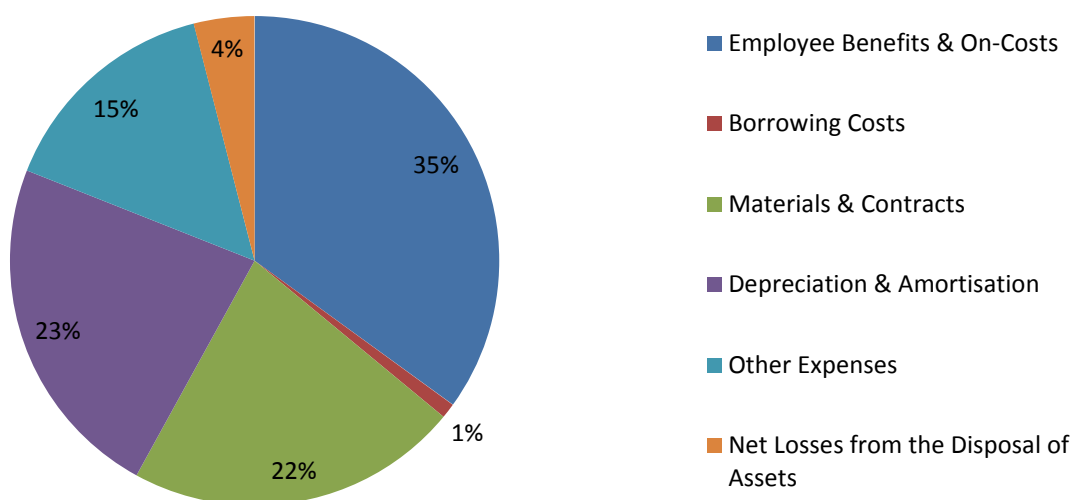


FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

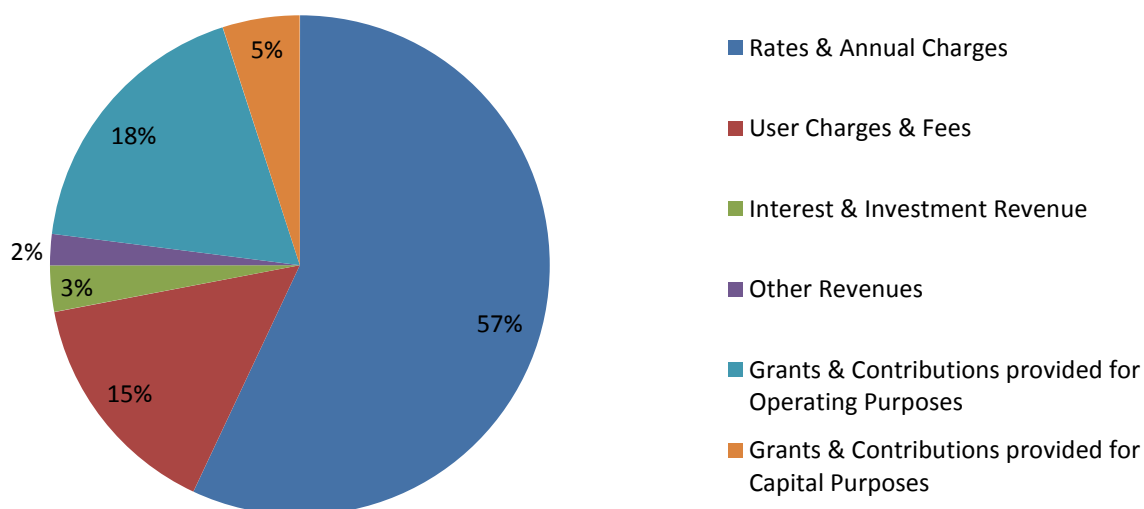
Under the provisions of Division 2 of Part 3 (Financial Management) of the Local Government Act, 1993, Council's audited financial reports and the auditor's reports for the year 2012-13 were adopted by Council on 20 November 2013.

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. The reports cover the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013.

OPERATING EXPENDITURE 2012-13



OPERATING REVENUE 2012-13



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 and up to 100,000 kilometres or 2 years, whichever comes first.

The proposed and actual plant replacement program for the 2012-13 year is set out below. In all cases except those noted, the items shown were replaced by a similar unit. A restructure of the Works Delivery operations area in 2012-13 meant that the proposed replacement program for 2012-13 was adjusted significantly to provide appropriate plant for the new structure.

PLANT REPLACEMENT PROGRAM Description of Items	CHANGEOVER COST (EX GST) AND NUMBER 2012-13	
	Proposed \$	Actual \$
Sedans and Wagons	672,000 (56)	531,490 (33) Note 1
Utilities and Vans (Group owned)	144,000 (12)	114,945 (7) Note 1
Utilities and Vans (Plant owned)	43,000 (2)	74,000 (4) Note 2
Two Tonne Trucks	81,000 (2)	Note 3
Three Tonne Tippers	\$68,000 (1)	Note 3
Twelve Tonne Tipping Trucks	\$80,000 (1)	Note 3
5/6 Dual Cab Trucks with Hiabs		90,000 (1) Note 4
Ride-on Mowers/Heavy Duty	38,000 (2)	2,589 (1)
Graders	180,000 (1)	Note 3
Special Plant		
Other Special Plant – Jet patcher sweeper and scrubber	\$112,000 (3)	\$354,955 (3) Note 2

Notes:

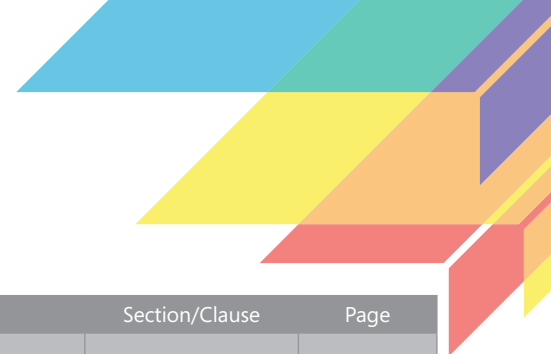
1. Some replacements postponed due to Vehicle Leaseback Policy Review.
2. Replacement carried over from previous year.
3. Replacement postponed.
4. Purchased for Works Delivery restructure.



Statutory Requirements

STATUTORY REPORTING

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 Division 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)	14-54
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	51
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)	44
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)	44
• Provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to councillors.	cl 217(1)(a1)(i)	44
• Telephone calls made by councillors.	cl 217(1)(a1)(ii)	44
• Attendance of councillors at conferences and seminars.	cl 217(1)(a1)(iii)	44
• Training of councillors and provision of skill development.	cl 217(1)(a1)(iv)	44
• Interstate visits by councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses.	cl 217(1)(a1)(v)	44
• Overseas visits by councillors, including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses.	cl 217(1)(a1)(vi)	44
• 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)	44
• Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member of a councillor.	cl 217(1)(a1)(viii)	44
9. Details of each contract awarded for amounts greater than \$150,000. Includes:	cl 217(1)(a2)	27
• Name of contractor.	cl 217(1)(a2)	27
• Nature of goods or services supplied.	cl 217(1)(a2)	27
• Total amount payable under the contract.	cl 217(1)(a2)	27
10. Summary of the amounts incurred by the council in relation to legal proceedings. Includes:	cl 217(1)(a3)	50
• Amounts, costs and expenses paid or received.	cl 217(1)(a3)	50
• Summary of the state of progress of each legal proceeding and (if it has been finalised) result.	cl 217(1)(a3)	50
11. Summary of resolutions made under section 67 concerning work carried out on private land. Includes:	s67(3) cl 217(1)(a4)	39
• Summary or details of work.	cl 217(1)(a4)	39
• Cost of work fully or partly subsidised by council.	cl 217(1)(a4)	39
• Total amount by which council has subsidised any such work.	cl 217(1)(a4)	39
12. Total amount contributed or otherwise granted under section 356 (financially assist others).	cl 217(1)(a5)	18
13. Statement of all external bodies that exercised functions delegated by council.	cl 217(1)(a6)	35
14. Statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which council held a controlling interest.	cl 217(1)(a7)	26
15. Statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which the council participated.	cl 217(1)(a8)	26
16. Statement of activities to implement its EEO management plan.	cl 217(1)(a9)	49



Requirement	Section/Clause	Page
Contains:		
17. Statement of the total remuneration comprised in the remuneration package of the general manager. Includes:	cl 217(1)(b)	49
• Total value of the salary component of the package.	cl 217(1)(b)(i)	49
• Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of the salary component.	cl 217(1)(b)(ii)	49
• 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)	49
• Total value of any non-cash benefits for which the general manager may elect under the package.	cl 217(1)(b)(iv)	49
• Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits.	cl 217(1)(b)(v)	49
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)	49
• Total value of salary components of their packages.	cl 217(1)(c)(i)	49
• 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)	49
• 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)	49
• Total value of any non-cash benefits for which any of them may elect under the package.	cl 217(1)(c)(iv)	49
• Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits.	cl 217(1)(c)(v)	49
19. A statement detailing the stormwater management services provided (<i>if levied</i>).	cl 217(1)(e)	52
20. A statement detailing the coastal protection services provided (<i>if levied</i>).	cl 217(1)(e1)	N/A
21. In the year of an ordinary election of councillors is to be held the Annual Report must include a report as to the state of the environment in the local government area.	s428A(1)	N/A
22. Particulars of any environmental upgrade agreement entered into, in accordance with any requirements imposed under s406.	s54P	N/A
23. Report on special variation expenditure if required to do so by the instrument made by the Minister.	s508(2) s508A	40 & 51
24. Report on capital works projects.	Capital Expenditure Guidelines	40
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) Guidelines on the Exercise of Functions under the Companion Animals Act	21
• Lodgement of pound data collection returns with the Division.	16.2 (a) Guidelines	21
• Lodgement of data relating to dog attacks with the Division.	16.2 (b) Guidelines	21
• Amount of funding spent on companion animal management and activities.	16.2 (c) Guidelines	21
• Companion animal community education programs carried out.	16.2 (d) Guidelines	21
• Strategies council has in place to promote and assist the de-sexing of dogs and cats.	16.2 (d) Guidelines	21
• 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	21
• Off leash areas provided in the council area.	16.2 (f) Guidelines	21
Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and Regulation		
26. Information included on GIPA activity.	s125(1) cl 7 Sch. 2	48
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979		
27. Particulars of compliance with and effect of planning agreements in force during the year.	s93G(5)	33
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	47
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