



LEETON
SHIRE COUNCIL

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

**Tuesday 26 November 2024
6:30 pm**

TO BE HELD IN THE Leeton Shire Council Chambers
23-25 Chelmsford Place, Leeton NSW 2705

Authorised for release: Jackie Kruger (General Manager)

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS

OBLIGATIONS	
Oath [Affirmation] of Office by Councillors	I swear [solemnly and sincerely declare and affirm] that I will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the people of Leeton Shire Council and that I will faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> or any other Act to the best of my ability and judgement.
Code of Conduct / Conflicts of Interest	
It is also a requirement that the Mayor and Councillors disclose conflicts of interest in relation to items listed for consideration on the Agenda or which are considered at this meeting in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.	
Pecuniary Interests	<p>A Councillor who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the Council is concerned, and who is present at a meeting of the Council at which the matter is being considered, must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting.</p> <p>The Councillor must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> at any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed, or at any time during which the Council is voting on any question in relation to the matter.
Non-pecuniary conflict of interests	A Councillor who has a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter, must disclose the relevant private interest in relation to the matter fully and on each occasion on which the non-pecuniary conflict of interest arises in relation to the matter.
Significant nonpecuniary interests	A Councillor who has a significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest in relation to a matter under consideration at a Council meeting, must manage the conflict of interest as if they had a pecuniary interest in the matter.
Non-significant nonpecuniary interests	A Councillor who determines that they have a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in a matter that is not significant and does not require further action, when disclosing the interest must also explain why conflict of interest is not significant and does not require further action in the circumstances.
Code of Meeting Practice	
Council Meetings	Meetings of Leeton Shire Council are conducted in accordance with the Code of Meeting Practice which supports open, accessible and accountable government.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Recording of Council Meetings	
Videorecording	<p>In the spirit of open, accessible and transparent government, this meeting of the Leeton Shire Council is being streamed live on Council's website. By speaking at a Council meeting, members of the public agree to being recorded and must ensure their speech to the Council is respectful and use appropriate language. A person who uses defamatory, discriminatory or offensive language may be exposed to liability for which Council takes no responsibility. Any part of this meeting that is held in closed session will not be recorded.</p> <p>Council meetings are uploaded to Council's website and social media accounts. This allows our community greater access to Council proceedings, decisions and debate.</p>
Speaking / Addressing Council (Public Forum)	
Pre-Registration to Speak at Council Meetings	<p>Members of the public must register by Midday via Councils' website or email council@leeton.nsw.gov.au of the day of the Meeting to speak at Council Meetings.</p> <p>If you wish to register to speak, please fill the Apply to Address Council Form, available from the Leeton Shire Council website, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• your name;• contact details;• item on the agenda you wish to speak to; and <p>whether you are for or against the recommendation in the agenda.</p>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. CIVIC PRAYER.....	6
2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY.....	6
3. APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS.....	6
4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND ANY MATTERS ARISING	6
5. PROCEDURAL MOTIONS	6
6. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS.....	6
7. MAYORAL MINUTES.....	7
7.1.MAYORAL MINUTE - PALM SCHEME POSITION PAPER.....	7
8. REPORTS TO COUNCIL.....	11
8.1. GENERAL MANAGER'S MATTERS.....	11
8.1.1. State of the Shire Report 2021-2024.....	11
8.1.2. Leeton Shire Council Annual Report 2024	97
8.1.3. Minutes of Country Mayors Association Meeting - 9 August 2024	204
8.1.4. Minutes of RAMJO Meeting - 16 August 2024	219
8.2. CORPORATE MATTERS	231
8.2.1. Investment Report - October 2024	231
8.2.2. 2024/25 Budget Review for the Quarter Ending 30 September 2024	244
8.2.3. Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting - Friday 25 October 2024 - Minutes and Chairman's Report	272
8.3. ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MATTERS	284
8.3.1. Regional Drought Resilience Plan.....	284
8.3.2. Heritage Grants 2024/25	344
8.3.3. Community Strengthening Grants Round 1 2024/2025.....	368
8.3.4. Minutes of the Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum Committee ..	386
9. NOTICES OF MOTION.....	403
10. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS	403
11. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS	403
12. CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING	404

- 1. CIVIC PRAYER**
- 2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**
- 3. APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS**
- 4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND ANY MATTERS ARISING**
- 5. PROCEDURAL MOTIONS**
- 6. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**
- 7. MAYORAL MINUTES**

ITEM 7.1. MAYORAL MINUTE - PALM SCHEME POSITION PAPER

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

Former Mayor, Cr Tony Reneker, together with the Mayors of Griffith and Wagga Wagga and Welcoming Australia, co-founded the Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific. This was in response to systemic issues emerging across host communities in rural and regional Australia for the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme.

Today there are 20 Mayors signed up to the Alliance.

As Mayor I am continuing to help lead this forum and took part in a meeting with the Minister for International Development and the Pacific, the Hon Pat Conroy, on 19 November 2024 along with Council's General Manager and our Multicultural Advisor. The attached position paper outlines the gist of the messaging we are conveying to the Federal Government.

Key messages are:

1. We strongly support the intent of the PALM scheme and welcome PALM workers to Australia.
 2. We ask for improved, early and timely engagement with government departments involved with planning and administering the PALM scheme, and appropriate resourcing when Council services are required.
 3. We seek improved preparedness for workers, employers and host communities.
 4. We seek greater investment for support services at the local level to troubleshoot when issues do arise (or reallocation of the current centralised investment).
 5. We strongly recommend a revision to visa conditions to support worker retention and integration, including greater flexibility, as well as reapproval pathways for "disengaged" PALM workers.
-

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific position paper on the "Re-Imagined" PALM Scheme be noted and endorsed.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific PALM Scheme Position Paper 14 Nov 24 [**7.1.1** - 3 pages]

Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific and a 'Re-imagined' PALM Scheme

Position Paper—November 2024

The Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific, co-founded by Welcoming Australia and Leeton Shire Council, aims to equip local councils to engage more effectively in the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) Scheme and deliver better outcomes for communities, employers, and workers.

The Alliance discusses, develops and promotes a cohesive local government voice centred on the benefits and challenges of the PALM Scheme to ensure better economic, social, and cultural outcomes for all community members. While collaboratively advocating for constructive solutions to “disengaged” workers, our collective voice seeks to amplify and enhance the likelihood of attaining win-win-win outcomes for workers, local communities, employers and diplomatic relations.

The PALM Scheme

For rural Australia, the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme, which took effect on 4 April 2022, has been a vital source of workers. Businesses find recruiting low-to-medium-skilled agricultural workers, forklift workers, factory floor workers, and labourers increasingly challenging. Growing numbers of PALM workers are also engaged in aged care and health care settings. The PALM scheme helps close these workforce gaps, making PALM workers vital to local economic sustainability and growth. As of August 2024, [Australia hosts 30,805 PALM scheme workers stationed at 481 employers](#).

“Disengaged” describes PALM workers who leave the program for various reasons. The reasons may include workers being poached by employers on the promise of better pay and conditions or those who flee their workplaces due to exploitation. It should be noted that when workers officially request to transfer farms, it can take months to find a new placement—moreover, [stories of low pay, poor conditions and unsatisfactory housing plague the program](#).

The families of PALM workers who remain in the Pacific and Timor-Leste often face significant challenges. With many workers spending extended periods in Australia, [families back home—especially children left without one or both parents—experience considerable emotional strain](#). Additionally, long separations can lead to [complexities such as extra-marital relationships in Australia, sometimes resulting in unplanned pregnancies](#). Without Medicare access, these situations [impose severe financial and extensive social burdens](#).

Another pressing issue is that many PALM workers are highly skilled professionals in their home countries, such as police officers, teachers, and nurses. However, people often join the PALM scheme for higher wages, creating a significant “brain drain” that strains Pacific nations. This loss of skilled talent and the departure of workers from other sectors result in labour shortages across the region, [profoundly impacting their communities' financial and social sustainability and well-being](#).

Rural and regional Australia and the Pacific nations involved both need and want the PALM scheme to succeed—and in many cases, it does. However, there is growing concern about the abovementioned issues and the increasing social and healthcare needs within the PALM community. These issues add responsibilities to local councils, who must address the related social and welfare outcomes.

PALM Future – Reimagining the Scheme

As more PALM workers move and temporarily settle in regional and rural communities, more people-to-people links are being established for an aspirational united, connected and stronger Pacific ‘family’. However, this qualitative goal will remain illusory if program gaps are unresolved. The recommendations below reflect the recently released NSW Office of the Anti-Slavery Commissioner’s report titled [Be Our Guests: Addressing urgent modern slavery risks for temporary migrant workers in rural and regional New South Wales](#) and the previously released Federal Government’s [White Paper on Jobs and Opportunities](#).

Recommended Actions

1. Inter-governmental liaison

Action: Develop and implement a consultative framework that ensures local governments and state and federal agencies are actively and routinely involved in program planning and delivery. This framework should incorporate regular feedback mechanisms, open communication channels for addressing concerns, and a structured process for co-designing policy and budget recommendations.

Action: The Australian Government should foster collaborative engagement with Welcoming Cities and the Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific through a cross-departmental approach to improve the support network for the PALM scheme and enhance community outcomes.

2. Prepared Employers

Action: Mandate approved and enhanced culturally responsive training for employers to foster positive workplace relationships and enhance employer-employee interactions.

Action: Encourage participation in the *Welcoming Workplaces* initiative to create inclusive work environments. Equally require PALM Approved Employers to be certified as “Employers of Choice” through the *Welcoming Workplaces* initiative.

Action: The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) should implement mandatory training on Australian labour laws for PALM scheme employers to ensure compliance and protect worker rights.

Action: Establish clear deliverables for Country Liaison Officers to ensure accountability and effective execution of the PALM deed, promoting genuine collaboration among stakeholders.

Action: Simplify the PALM Scheme's administrative structure and implement a proactive communication campaign to enhance stakeholder engagement.

Action: Resource local partners in regional communities to support employers and engage them on an ongoing basis to ensure they meet their commitments.

3. Proactive Visa Conditions

Action: Reapprove the current cohort of “disengaged” PALM workers for return into the scheme and support employers who extend them job offers. Additionally, this category should encompass disengaged workers who were misinformed and applied for protection or asylum.

Action: Revise visa conditions to support worker retention and integration, ensuring Australia meets its commitments to PALM workforce training, development, and community connections.

Action: Create flexible mechanisms and supportive policies that allow employees to change employers or employment locations as needed, ensuring PALM workers are not tied to a single employer.

Action: Ensure Departmental officers are regularly present on the ground and addressing regional issues with local partners

4. Coordinated Community Engagement

Action: Provide funding and resources to local organisations to establish regional migrant centre hubs to enhance support networks and monitoring conditions for PALM workers.

Action: Connecting Approved Employers with community services and facilities (churches, sports clubs, community groups) to support opportunities for PALM workers to engage with and participate in their local community using a place-based approach that is appropriately resourced.

5. Quality Accommodation Assurance

Action: DEWR to clarify the minimum standard for workers' accommodation across all industries engaged in the PALM Scheme.

Action: Empower and financially resource Host Councils (Local Governments) to assess and periodically monitor the quality of accommodation for PALM workers, promoting safe living conditions.

6. Prepared and Supported Workers

Action: Strengthen Australia's commitment to workers' countries of origin by facilitating pre-departure briefings, including training, providing information resources for families, and addressing challenges such as loneliness and community integration.

Action: Ensure and guarantee PALM workers have seamless access to Medicare and necessary healthcare supports, prioritising their health and well-being.

Action: Provide in-place resourcing to address the broad range of daily matters facing workers, employers, and the community. Current arrangements are not fit for purpose.

8.1. GENERAL MANAGER'S MATTERS

ITEM 8.1.1 STATE OF THE SHIRE REPORT 2021-2024

AUTHOR/S: Acting IPR Coordinator

APPROVER/S: General Manager

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a status update on the State of the Shire Report.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council notes for information the status update on the State of the Shire Report 2021-2024.

REPORT

(a) Background

Under the *Local Government Act 1993* (Section 428(2)) all NSW local Councils must, in the year in which an ordinary election of Councillors is to be held, compile a report on Council and community achievements in implementing the Community Strategic Plan over the last Council's term of office. This report must be provided to the second meeting of the new Council.

It is intended that the report covers the period of the last Council term, which is from December 2021 to August 2024.

The full report will be presented to the November 2024 Council meeting. This report is a status update.

(b) Discussion

The State of the Shire Report 2021–2024 provides an overview of Council's and the community's progress toward achieving the vision and outcomes of Liveable Leeton Community Strategic Plan (CSP) during the identified term.

The main section of the report will be divided into five (5) key focus areas:

FOCUS AREA 1: A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community

FOCUS AREA 2: A Safe, Active and Healthy Community

FOCUS AREA 3: A Thriving Regional Economy

FOCUS AREA 4: A Quality Environment

FOCUS AREA 5: Strong Leadership and Civic Participation

Details of the key activities undertaken to achieve the CSP goals will be listed under each focus area. Council activities are listed, as are the activities of other stakeholders

and agencies. This is because responsibility for furthering the goals of the CSP does not rest solely with Council but is shared with others in the community.

Actual progress in achieving the community's goals, as outlined in the CSP, will be demonstrated using data 'indicators' that show changes in data over the period of time under review. The data indicators do not measure everything, instead they give a general sense of whether or not the community aspirations are being achieved.

A summary of key highlights is provided below:

- Quality of life in Leeton Shire is rated as "good" to "excellent".
- The Shire's gross regional product has increased.
- The diversity of artistic and cultural opportunities has expanded, including initiatives such as the Survival Day Mural, numerous exhibitions at LMAG, and the launch of the Roxy Institute of Performing Arts.
- There has been an increase in childcare placements due to the expansion of the LELC.
- Completed projects include the installation of a twin slide, enhancements at Chelmsford Place, and improvements to CBD facades.
- Usage of the indoor stadium has grown.
- The total number of dwellings has increased.
- Unemployment has decreased, and job opportunities have expanded.
- More students are successfully completing their secondary education.
- Support for tertiary students has been enhanced through the Country Universities Centre (CUC).
- Numerous community initiatives have been launched to provide services for all ages and enhance local employment, including the Leeton Living website, Grow Our Own, career expo and recruitment summit, and events like the SunRice Festival and Fiesta La Leeton.
- Community connection and inclusivity have been strengthened through groups and initiatives such as Leeton Connect, the Game Changer Program, the Leeton Multicultural Support Group, Kurrajong and the Leeton and District Local and Aboriginal Land Council, among many others.
- An increase in community participation in events and volunteering rates.
- A rise in the amount of waste diverted from landfill.
- Strong efforts to ensure quality environments including improvements at Fivebough Wetlands, hosting of the Australasian Bittern Summit, rally against water buybacks and further advocacy for a balanced Murray-Darling Basin Plan.
- Notable improvements in health outcomes include the establishment of a new emergency department at Leeton Hospital and reductions in hospitalizations related to alcohol and diabetes.

Areas that the community feel need attention include:

- New residents feeling welcomed by the community.
- Wait times for social housing, which range from 2 to 10 years.
- Access to health services and schools.
- Domestic violence.

(c) Options

Nil – this report is for information only.

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

Nil

(b) Policy

Nil

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Local Government Act 1993

Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines for Local Government in NSW, September 2021

Integrated Planning and Reporting Handbook for Local Councils in NSW, September 2021

Management identified the second meeting of Council to be the Ordinary meeting scheduled for November and resources were allocated to ensure the State of the Shire report completion by that date. However, the OLG has clarified that the Extraordinary meeting held in October counts as the first meeting.

Therefore, management provides this status update as a provisional report ahead of the full report being tabled in November.

(d) Risk

The IP&R role is vacant, with a mix of casual resources being used to complete planning and reporting requirements.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

A range of community groups, organisations, businesses and other levels of Government were asked to provide details of their actions/achievements relevant to furthering the goals of the Community Strategic Plan. Many responded and their activities are included in the State of the Shire Report.

These bodies to date include:

- Adapt Community Services
- Aboriginal Consultative Group
- Argyle Homes*
- Assumption Villa
- Boys to the Bush Leeton*
- Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder
- Country Universities Centre Western Riverina*
- CWA*
- Department of Planning, Industry and Environment –

- Crown Lands*
- Fivebough Wetlands Committee*
- FRRR*
- Get Set Inc
- Gralee School*
- Griffith Post School Options Leeton
- Jumpstart*
- Kurrajong*
- Leeton & District Local Aboriginal Land Council*
- Leeton Art Society Inc*
- Leeton Business Chamber*
- Leeton Community Care Development Inc
- Leeton Connect*
- Leeton Early Learning Centre*
- Leeton Eisteddfod Society*
- Leeton Golf Club*
- Leeton Health Advisory Committee (LHAC)*
- Leeton High School*
- Leeton Historical Society*
- Leeton Local Aboriginal Education Consultative
- Leeton Men's Shed Inc
- Leeton Multicultural Support Group*
- Leeton preschools*
- Leeton Public School
- Leeton Rainbow Pride Collective Inc*
- Leeton Sport and Recreation Precinct Parkrun
- (Leeton Parkrun)*
- Leeton VRA Rescue Squad
- Leeton/Yanco Swimming Club*
- LEMC*
- Lions Club*
- Local developers
- Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists
- Murrumbidgee Irrigation
- Murrumbidgee Local Health District*
- Murrumbidgee Police District*
- Murrumbidgee Primary Health Care Network*
- My Plan Connect*
- Nuranurra Support Service*
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service*
- OCTEC Leeton (TTW)
- OneSchool Global Leeton
- Parkview Public School
- RAMJO*
- Rapid Relief Team Leeton*
- Regional Development Association Riverina
- Reviva Recycling Shop Leeton*
- RFBI Leeton Masonic Village*
- Riverina Local Land Services*
- Riverina Writing House*
- Rotary Clubs*
- Roxy Institute of Performing Arts*

- Rural Fire Services*
- Safe Work NSW
- Salvation Army Leeton*
- Sporting organisations*
- St Francis High School*
- St Joseph Primary School
- St Vincent's De Paul Leeton
- TAFE NSW*
- The Personnel Group
- U3A
- Valmar Support Services Ltd*
- Wamoon Public School
- Western Riverina Arts*
- Western Riverina Community College*
- Whitton-Murrumbidgee Primary School
- Whitton Museum
- Workforce Australia*
- WR Connect*
- Yanco Agricultural Institute
- Yanco Ag High School*
- Multicultural NSW
- Yanco and Whitton Town Improvement Committees*
- Murray-Darling Association (MDA)*
- Murray-Darling Basin Authority*
- Yanco Powerhouse Museum*
- Yanco Public School

Council appreciates the activities of these organisations and their time to respond to its request for information to include in the State of the Shire Report 2021-2024.

(b) Internal

General Manager
Senior Management Team
Managers
Town Planner
Library Supervisor
Waste and Recycling Coordinator
Events Officer
Recreation Facilities and Program Coordinator
Communications Coordinator
Regulatory Services Coordinator
Road Safety Officer

[LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN \(DPOP\)](#)

9. Governance and Administration

9.3 Provide respected and effective representation, leadership and advocacy

This is in accordance with the Councilor Induction and Professional Development Guidelines and Committee Terms of Reference

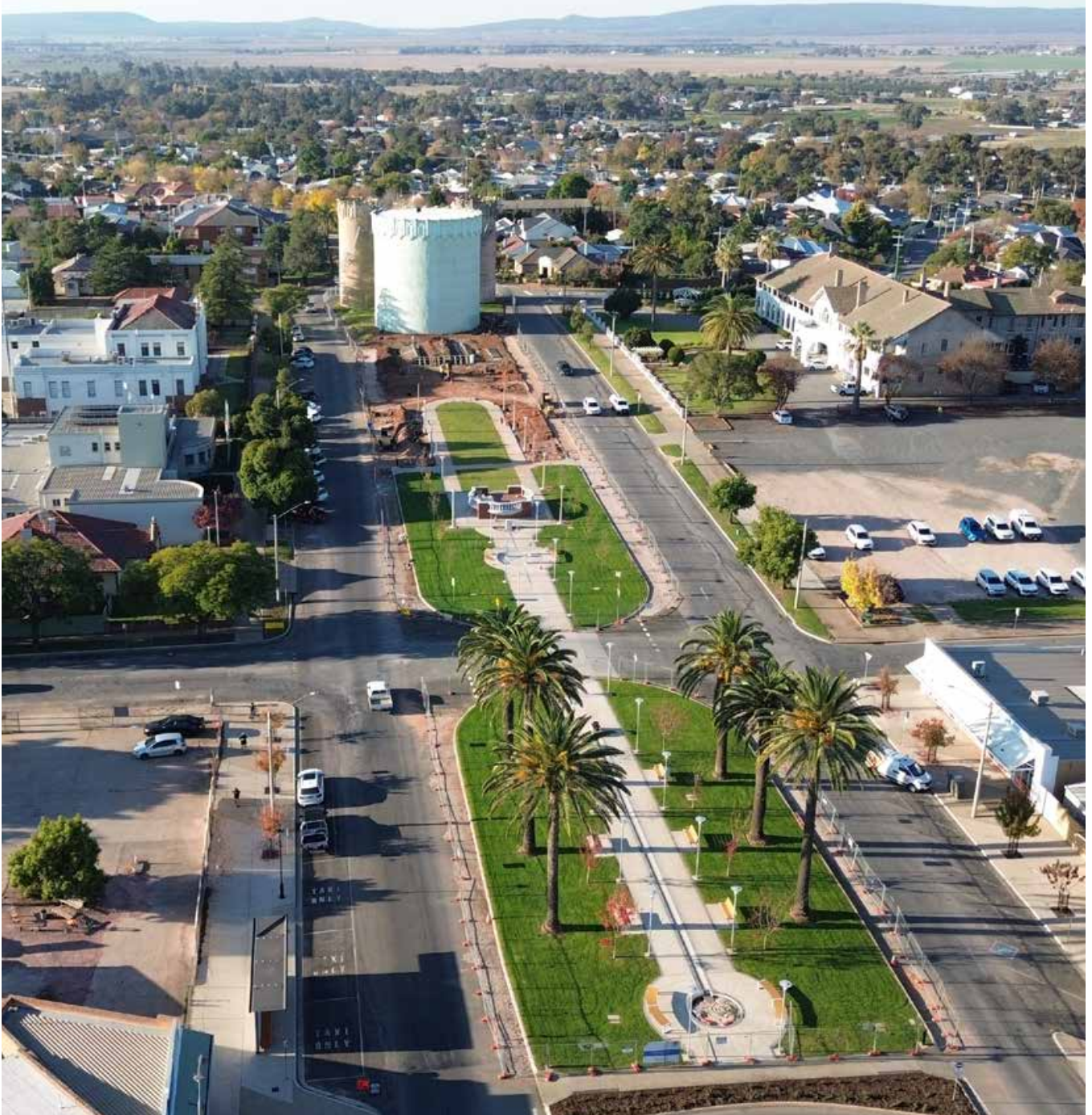
ATTACHMENTS

1. DRAFT - State of Shire Report [**8.1.1.1** - 80 pages]

DRAFT

Progress in delivering
the goals of Liveable Leeton 2035 –
Community Strategic Plan

State of the Shire Report





Leeton Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Wiradjuri Country and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters, and community. We pay our respects to all Aboriginal people and their cultures, and Elders, past, present and emerging of our Shire.

Wiradjuri People's connection to the land, sky and water is continual and unbroken.



Contents

About this Report	5
Summary	6
How Council has Helped Achieve Community Strategic Plan Aspirations – Highlights	9
Snapshot of Council Achievements – 3 years	11
Community Satisfaction Survey – Highlights	14
Achieving our Community Aspirations	17
Focus Area 1: A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community	22
Focus Area 2: A Safe, Active and Healthy Community	31
Focus Area 3: A Thriving Regional Economy	45
Focus Area 4: A Quality Environment	57
Focus Area 5: Strong Leadership and Civic Participation	67
Photo Captions and Credits	76
Stakeholders and Contributors	78



About this Report

The State of the Shire Report is a report on progress in implementing the Community Strategic Plan (CSP): Liveable Leeton 2035 over the last three years. The aim of the report is to provide the community with a status update on how Council and other stakeholders are progressing toward achieving the goals set out in the CSP.

As stewards of this report on behalf of the community, Council thanks everyone who has contributed. All stakeholders and contributors are listed on page 78.

Liveable Leeton 2035 is a long-term plan that describes where the Leeton Shire community was in 2021 when the document was developed, where it wanted to be in the future (goals) and how it wanted to get there (strategies). *Liveable Leeton 2035* identifies the aspirations of our community for making Leeton Shire a better place to live, work and play.

As well as community goals and strategies, *Liveable Leeton 2035* identifies a series of data 'indicators' that can be used to measure whether there have been improvements for the community over time. The indicators don't measure everything. They just give a general sense of whether or not the community goals are being achieved.

The principle behind the CSP is that the community's plan and achieving the goals set out in the CSP is a whole-of-community responsibility. Everyone has a part to play: Council, other levels of government, businesses, organisations, groups and individuals.

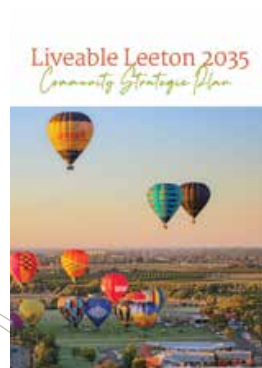
For Council, the CSP is a key guiding document in Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting

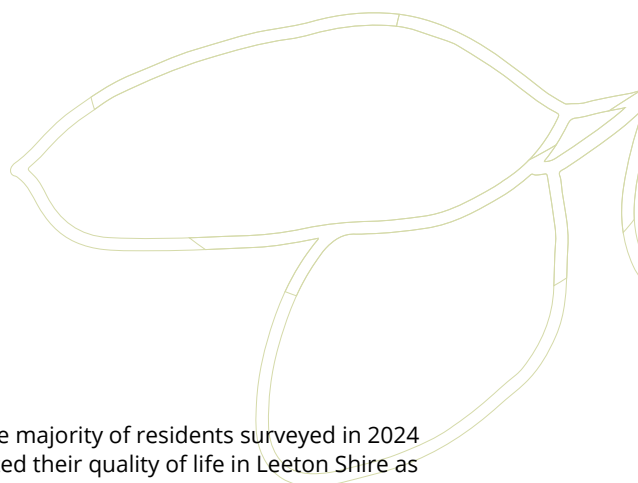
Framework. All Council's strategic documents have regard to and are linked to the CSP and feed into Council's Delivery Program (usually a 4-year plan but in this case a 3-year plan). Together with the Operational Plan (1-year plan) detail the activities Council will undertake in order to help the community achieve its aspirations.

The State of the Shire Report 2021–2024 provides an overview of Council's and the community's progress toward achieving the vision and outcomes of *Liveable Leeton 2035* during the term of Council.

The main section of the report, the section called Achieving our Community's Aspirations, is divided into the focus areas used in the CSP. Details of the strategies and key activities undertaken to achieve the CSP goals are listed under each theme. Council activities are listed, as are the activities of the stakeholders and state agencies who provided information. If the activity is not a Council activity, the name of the responsible stakeholder/agency is provided in brackets at the end of the activity.

The effectiveness of these actions and progress in achieving the community's goals is measured by changes in the trend data 'indicators' identified in the CSP. The data is presented graphically in each focus area. Data for some, but not many, of the indicators was found not to be available. Where this is the case, it has been noted.





Summary

Council is pleased to steward this 'State of the Shire' report on behalf of the Leeton Shire community. This report outlines the key achievements of the Council and the community from 2021/22 to 2023/24 in achieving the goals expressed in the Community Strategic Plan: Liveable Leeton 2035.

Leeton Shire continues to be one of the best places to live, work, play, and raise a family. This outstanding result is due to the fabulous contributions of many Leeton-based agencies, industries, businesses, non-profits, and individuals. We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who has made a positive impact.

Council reached out to as many of our partners as possible, inviting them to contribute information about their activities over the term to be included in this report. We are pleased with the response we received, but we recognise that there are still many whose significant contributions remain unshared. We hope this report will encourage them to showcase their successes in the future. As a community—encompassing the Council, local businesses, organisations, and individuals—our collective efforts have fostered significant progress in several key areas, as reflected in our trend data and indicator graphs used to 'Measure Our Success Over Time.'

The majority of residents surveyed in 2024 rated their quality of life in Leeton Shire as "good" to "excellent." We have observed increases in the Shire's gross regional product, the amount of waste diverted from landfill, and the percentage of residents who appreciate the diverse artistic and cultural opportunities available in Leeton Shire.

Additionally, there has been a rise in the use of the indoor stadium, an increase in the total number of dwellings, a decrease in unemployment, a growth in available job opportunities, and a higher number of students completing secondary education. Numerous community initiatives have been implemented to provide services for all ages and enhance local employment.

Encouragingly, volunteering rates have increased, and there have been improvements in several health outcomes, including the establishment of a new emergency department at Leeton Hospital and reductions in hospitalisations related to alcohol and diabetes.

Some areas that the community feels need attention include welcoming new residents, reducing the long wait times for social housing—ranging from 2 to 10 years—improving access to health services and schools, and addressing domestic violence.

As a community—encompassing the Council, local businesses, organisations, and individuals—our collective efforts have fostered significant progress in several key areas over the past three years, as reflected in our trend data and indicator graphs used to 'Measure Our Success Over Time.'



The State of Shire report provides us with a good opportunity to pause and reflect on all of the achievements and highlights of the past three years. It is a great point in time for us to look at how far we have come, what is ahead for us and what we will need to make the progress our community desires.

State of the Shire Report

Difficulties we are having to face as a community include the cost of living and the increasing cost of having to do business. There is a misalignment between service levels and the ability to pay. Community and Council have yet to resolve what are needs and what are wants and how best to afford services and manage spend going forwards.

Over the past three years, the Council has implemented a targeted capital works and infrastructure refurbishment program to enhance the essential services and facilities we provide to the community.

Stage 1 of the Roxy Community Theatre redevelopment is nearly complete, with 95% of the work finished, successfully preserving the building's heritage while creating a multifunctional, fully accessible space.

Council also added a new waterslide at the Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre, which has been well-received by both locals and visitors. The CBD Enhancement Stage 3 Project successfully delivered a bold and beautifully designed Chelmsford Place Town Square, providing an attractive new gathering space that reflects our heritage.

Additionally, Council expanded its network of fully accessible public toilets, upgrading facilities in Sycamore Street, Leeton, Wattle Hill, Gogeldrie Weir and Wamoon.

The Wamoon Sewer Scheme has been finalised and the Leeton Early Learning Centre has been extended to accommodate more children. Ongoing major projects include the advancement of the WRConnect Freight Intermodal Project and the expansion of the Vance Industrial Estate, both of which have commenced.

The State of Shire report provides us with a good opportunity to pause and reflect on all of the achievements and highlights of the past three years. It is a great point in time for us to look at how far we have come, what is ahead for us and what we will need to make the progress our community desires.

We extend our gratitude to the community, clubs, not-for-profits, state agencies, Council staff and Councillors for their unwavering support and dedication over the past three years. Your hard work has been crucial in ensuring that Leeton Shire continues to thrive and prosper.

As the new Council steps into the role of stewarding the next Community Strategic Plan, we wish them every success. May they build upon the strong foundation laid and continue to serve the residents of Leeton Shire well.

The majority of those surveyed rated their quality of life in Leeton Shire as 'good' to 'excellent.'

Note: All photo captions and credits can be found on pages 76-77.

Your Councillors and The General Manager for the 2021-2024 Term



How Council has Helped Achieve Community Strategic Plan Aspirations – Highlights

A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community

- Established the new Youth Council
- Community Art Project-Survival Day Mural
- NAIDOC week events
- New 'Leeton Living' website
- Welcoming Cities Program
- Roxy Theatre redevelopment

A Safe, Active and Healthy Community

- Leeton Sporting Walk of Fame
- Shared pathway along Acacia Avenue, Palm Avenue and Corbie Hill loop
- Brobenah Road pedestrian bridge
- New Gamechanger Program
- Foodbank event collaboration in Leeton

A Thriving Regional Economy

- Ambition 2030 – An Economic, Tourism and Events Strategy for Leeton Shire
- Updated Housing Strategy for the Shire
- Vance Industrial Estate expansion
- Annual Australian Art Deco Festival and SunRice Festival (2022 and 2024)
- Art Deco Way touring route
- 15m tall soldier by artist Carla Gottgens on Whitton water tower and Whitton mural

A Quality Environment

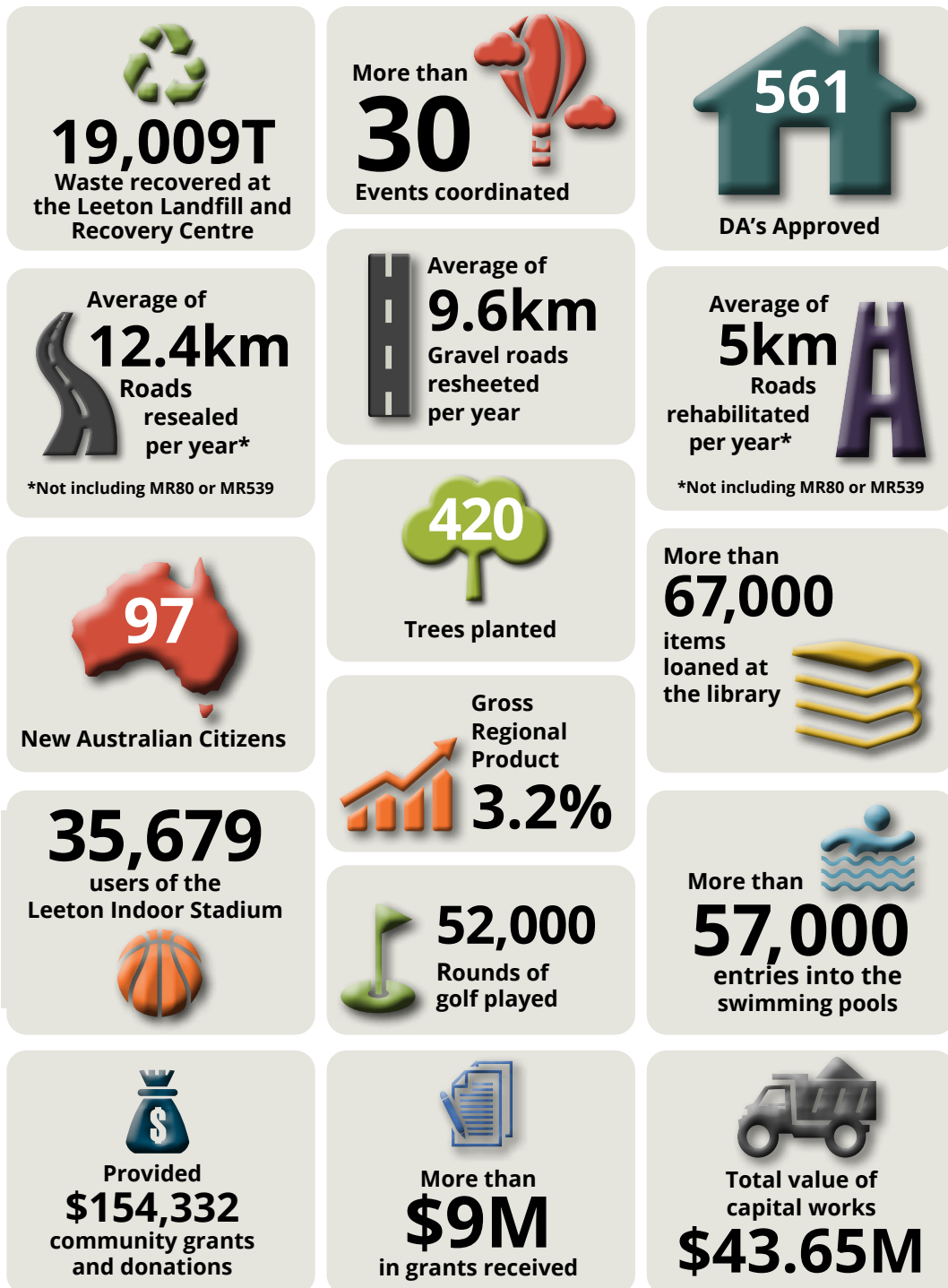
- Leeton CBD Enhancement Project Phase 3 – Chelmsford Place Town Square
- New Wamoon Sewer Scheme
- CBD Facade Painting Project
- New twin slide – Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre
- Western Riverina Intermodal Freight Terminal (WRIFT) master plan and business case
- FOGO and solar installation projects
- Road rehabilitation and resealing works
- Upgraded park equipment and amenities

Strong Leadership and Civic Participation

- Advocacy on water security, housing and health services
- Councillor catchups
- Two community satisfaction surveys
- After hours call centre
- New CRM system



Snapshot of Council Achievements – 3 Years





12





Community Satisfaction Survey – Highlights

Independent contractor Micromex Research and Consulting conducted a Community Satisfaction Survey on behalf of Leeton Shire Council in May 2024.

A total of 400 residents participated in the survey, which measured residents' satisfaction with various aspects of Council and their perceptions of their quality of life.

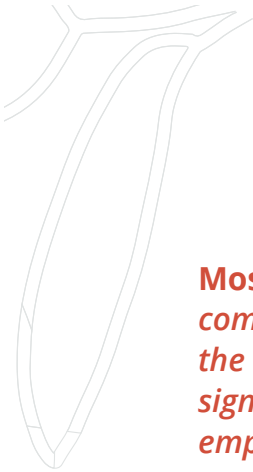
A similar survey was conducted in May 2019 and June 2021, which meant that Council could compare the data from both surveys and track changes in the community's quality of life and satisfaction ratings over time.

Some of the key results of the survey were:

- **Quality of life in the LGA:** Ninety-four percent (94%), of those surveyed rated their quality of life in Leeton Shire as 'good' to 'excellent', Good (21%), Very Good (42%) or Excellent (30%) which is on par with 2021 and 2019. Encouragingly, this result is higher than the Regional Benchmark

Ninety-four percent (94%), of those surveyed rated their quality of life in Leeton Shire as 'good' to 'excellent'

- **Highest satisfaction ratings:** As demonstrated by a higher rating out of 5, residents were most satisfied with Council's provision of: library services (4.33); ovals, sportsgrounds and sporting facilities (4.24); cemeteries (4.21); parks (4.14); golf course (3.99); festivals and events programs (3.95); and support for the multicultural community (3.94)
- **Lowest satisfaction ratings:** As demonstrated by a lower rating out of 5, residents were least satisfied with: local unsealed roads (2.87); Roxy Theatre (2.52); Council's efforts to advocate for water security, health services and housing (2.83); Council's ability to make good decisions (2.64); and Council's ability to demonstrate sound financial management (2.35)
- **Levels of importance:** When asked to rate levels of importance, respondents rated local sealed town roads (4.74) as being of most importance, followed by water supply services (4.72), parks (4.58), waste management including recycling and landfill (4.57) and cemeteries (4.56)
- **High levels of agreement:** When asked whether they agreed with a number of statements, the majority of respondents agreed that they feel safe during the day (90%), that Leeton Shire gives you a sense of living in community (85%), traffic systems provide for safe and efficient traffic flow (78%); people in Leeton Shire have fair opportunity to participate in community life (77%); and there is urban vitality and a good lifestyle quality in Leeton Shire communities (76%)
- **Low levels of agreement:** There were much lower levels of agreement with the statements: we have access to a good range of health services (21%), police services in Leeton Shire are responsive and effective (23%); public transport is adequate for needs (35%); weed incursions are adequately managed in the LGA (38%) and shops and services in shopping areas meet residents' needs (46%).



Most valued aspects: *Consistent with 2021, the sense of community, rural lifestyle and peacefulness/quiet atmosphere are the most valued aspects living in Leeton Shire 2024. Noticeably, significantly more residents mentioned that there are more good employment and business opportunities*

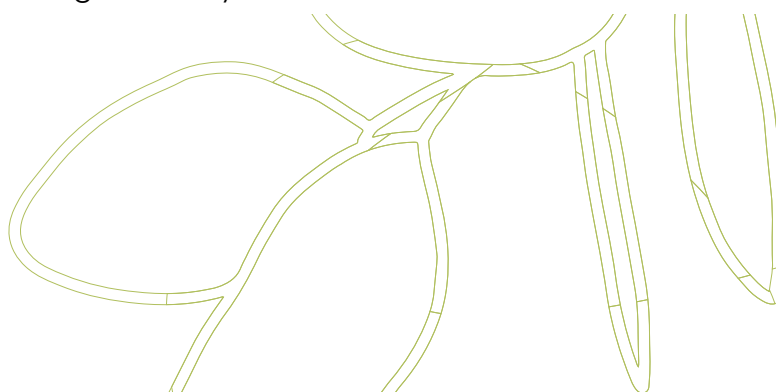
State of the Shire Report



- **Most valued aspects:** Consistent with 2021, the sense of community, rural lifestyle and peacefulness/quiet atmosphere are the most valued aspects living in Leeton Shire. Noticeably, significantly more residents mentioned that there are more good employment and business opportunities compared to 2021.

For more information, please see the *Leeton Shire Council Community Satisfaction Results* available on Council's website.





Draft 1st Shire Report

Achieving our Community Aspirations

Details of the key actions taken to progress the outcomes set by the Leeton Shire community are outlined in the following pages.

The information is organised according to the focus areas and outcomes set out in the *Liveable Leeton 2030*.

FOCUS AREA 1: A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community	19
We are friendly, inclusive and connected	20
We value and celebrate our local history and diversity	22
We are rich in arts and culture	23
We have access to a range of local education opportunities for students of all ages and abilities	25
FOCUS AREA 2: A Safe, Active and Healthy Community	31
Our community is safe to live in and move about	32
We eat well, drink moderately and participate in active sports and leisure	33
We have access to health and support services that cater for all our needs	34
We have supported accommodation that meets the needs of all community members	36
FOCUS AREA 3: A Thriving Regional Economy	45
Our local businesses are prospering	46
We attract and retain new businesses and residents, and our population is growing	46
We have the infrastructure we need to support the economy	47
We have the skills and knowledge to undertake the work available	47
We have access to a range of housing options that suit the needs of short-term and long-term residents	48
We have diverse employment opportunities	49
We are a popular tourist destination	49
FOCUS AREA 4: A Quality Environment	57
We enjoy a protected natural environment and quality agricultural land	58
We live sustainably, use our resources responsibly and have adapted to climate change	59
Our built environment is attractive and serviceable	60
We balance the needs of our natural and built environments	61
FOCUS AREA 5: Strong Leadership and Civic Participation	67
We are well informed and engaged in decision-making	68
Our leaders speak out for the good of our community	68
We work together to achieve our goals	69
We are active community members who recognise we all have a role to play	69
Our Council operates effectively and efficiently	70
We demonstrate leadership in the face of disaster	71
	17



18

1

FOCUS AREA 1: A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community

What You Said:

We love living in Leeton because it is friendly, inclusive, and provides an exceptional quality of life at every stage, from childhood to senior years.

Our rich history, shaped by diverse cultures and events, is something we celebrate regularly and cherish as a community. Learning is a constant here, with quality education opportunities available for all ages.

There were four goals selected to move us towards our 10-year aspiration. Let's see how we are tracking.



Focus Area 1. A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
<p>We are friendly, inclusive and connected</p>   	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented a new Ageing Well Strategy 2021–2025 • Launched the 'Leeton Living' website – a partnership between Leeton Business Chamber, Leeton Connect and Council • Established the refreshed Youth Council to provide an avenue for young people to engage with Council • Supported Leeton-Narrandera Community Transport in delivering community transport services • Provided venues of hire to the community such as the Leeton Multipurpose Centre and community halls in Murrami, Whitton and Yanco • Updated Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022–2025 • Replaced the Transport for the NSW railbus shelter on Benerembah Street in Whitton. This included replacing the concrete slab and platform, providing DIAP access to the existing footpath • Improved disabled access to Council building entry and Council chambers • Facilitated engagement opportunities for clients of all ages, including participation in community activities such as the Leeton SunRice Festival, Leeton Show, sports at Leeton Indoor Stadium, fishing at the river, and visits to the Fivebough Wetlands and Yanco Duck Park (Kurrajong Leeton) • Facilitated a social group 'Kurrajong Thursday Troopers' to provide members with opportunities to connect with local organisations (Kurrajong Leeton) • Conducted workshops on older driver licensing, mobility scooters and pedestrian safety • Assisted people living with a disability to achieve their hopes and dreams and lead an inclusive lifestyle (My Plan Connect) • Hosted 11 citizenship ceremonies with 97 people naturalised • Curated 'Still Here' exhibition at the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery with the message that behind every person living with dementia is a unique individual with dignity and grace (Joanne Edwards, RFB Masonic Village Leeton) • Collaborated with community groups to celebrate the Seniors Festival, featuring a range of speaker talks and craft activities at the library

FOCUS AREA 1: A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
<p>We are friendly, inclusive and connected cont.</p>   	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated annual Youth Week events, including a mental health awareness presentation by Headspace Griffith, youth iPads, games, treasure hunts, a writing seminar and craft activities. Additionally, organised four events: Yoga, a Basketball Shootout, Zumba and Paint & Pizza at the Leeton Indoor Stadium Raised public awareness and promoted inclusion for the LGBTQIA+ community through various initiatives, including Wear It Purple Day, community Bazaar, a monthly support group called Coffee and a Chat, and the launch of an inaugural three-day Festival, which featured a street parade and exhibition (Leeton Rainbow Pride Collective Inc.) Supported Harmony Week celebrations, which included the unveiling of TAFE NSW's new multilingual welcome sign and a lunch at the Leeton Uniting Church with presentations from the Solomander Islander, Fijian, Afghani and Zimbabwean communities. Additionally, staff hosted a morning tea Participated in the Welcoming Cities Program—an initiative that supports local councils to build and sustain a welcoming community. Additionally made progress towards achieving advanced membership accreditation under the Leeton Shire Welcoming Cities Action Plan Featured in an episode of the ABC television program Back Roads, which focused on the Leeton Shire community's warm welcome of immigrants including refugees Operated Leeton Multicultural Support Group (LMSG) – a charity that works with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community members in Leeton Shire, ensuring integration and participation in vocation and life (LMSG) Led Aboriginal Interagency meetings to discuss support services for the local Aboriginal community (Leeton and District Local Aboriginal Land Council LDLALC) Provided an informal hub space for agencies, including Interrelate, Interreach, Murrumbidgee Pathways, Salvation Army Homeless Service and Service NSW to connect with community regarding programs and services (LDLALC) Provided a space for Narcotics Anonymous to meet (LDLALC) Hosted networking events between students, alumni and local professionals to enhance a sense of community and belonging (Country Universities Centre Western Riverina) Implemented the Plant the Seed Program comprising various activities such as cultural dancing and fitness. This program aims to enrich the life of youth to become leaders and thrive, promotes resilience, creates positive energy and encourages youth to be active (Nuranurra Support Service)

FOCUS AREA 1: A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
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We are friendly, inclusive and connected
cont.



- Coordinated Year 10 boarder visits to local nursing homes weekly for two terms each school year. Students engaged with residents through activities, creating handmade gifts and providing afternoon tea. Additionally, students contributed to the Leeton Christmas Community Lunch by preparing gifts and supporting the event (St Francis High School)
- Provided a Community Strengthening Grants Program to support groups and organisations in community projects
- Assisted with the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan for Leeton Shire (LDLALC)
- Promoted diversity and inclusivity through events and programs that cater to students from varied backgrounds, recognising and celebrating their unique contributions to the community. 7.31% are Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander heritage and 10% indicated English as a second language (Country Universities Centre)
- Provided essential, nutritious food services to vulnerable populations, particularly seniors, individuals with disabilities, and those experiencing food insecurity. Volunteers play a crucial role in building personal connections, while partnerships with organisations such as CWA, Inner Wheel, and church groups strengthen service delivery (Valmar Support Services Ltd)
- Hosted a Family Fun Day and annual twilight market in Yanco (Yanco Town Improvement Committee)



We value and celebrate our local history and our diversity



- Delivered the Council Heritage Grants Program to help owners, custodians and communities recognise, value and care for heritage buildings
- Provided expert heritage advice to assist with the conservation of heritage places
- Supported and coordinated efforts to enhance the appearance of CBD building facades through the Facade Painting Project
- Maintained and operated the Henry Lawson Cottage
- Collaborated with local schools and the LDLALC to organise a series of events to celebrate and recognise the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through NAIDOC week
- Collaborated with community organisations to deliver Australia Day events to recognise the contributions and efforts of everyone in our community, and worked towards a more inclusive and accessible event
- Coordinated Aboriginal elders to undertake Welcome to Country and smoking ceremonies including at Australia Day events (LDLALC)



FOCUS AREA 1: A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
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We value and celebrate our local history and our diversity cont.



- Coordinated Gossamer Park NAIDOC Family Fun Day (LDLALC)
- Worked with community groups to deliver Survival Day celebrations at Gossamer Park
- Unveiled Community Art Project Survival Day Mural created by Parkview Public and Leeton High Schools auspiced by Elijah Ingram
- Promoted participation in the Survival Day Mural event at Gossamer Park working in collaboration with community members, schools and Council (LDLALC)
- Projected a collection of photos of Aboriginal artworks and activities completed by schools in the district onto the Chelmsford Place water tower
- Led the delivery of a Wiradjuri film and book showcase by Leeton's Miil Miil Productions at Gossamer Park and the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery in partnership with Council (LDLALC)
- Acquired additional historical objects including a restored bakers cart and expanded photo display area at the Museum (Yanco Powerhouse Museum)

We are rich in arts and culture



- Progressed the Roxy Community Theatre Redevelopment Stage 1. Completion will achieve a multifunctional and fully accessible Theatre and civic space that honours the building's special heritage values
- Launched the Roxy Institute of Performing Arts (RiPA) and its collaboration with NIDA (National Institute of Performing Arts)
- Operated the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery (LMAG) – home to a permanent exhibition: Water by design, the Leeton water story, and hosted multiple exhibitions
- Launched 'Miniature Marvels: Memories of Architects & Builders' at LMAG (Leeton Family and Local History Society)
- Coordinated the annual Penny Paniz Arts Acquisitive Prize (Leeton Art Society Inc.)
- Coordinated the annual Leeton Eisteddfod (Leeton Eisteddfod Committee)
- Conducted regular art classes and workshops (Leeton Art Society Inc.)
- Completed the art-deco themed Whitton town mural project and installed a 15m soldier on the Whitton Water Tower
- Worked with Illuminart to develop plans and conduct community engagement in preparation for the Leeton water tower large scale public art projects

FOCUS AREA 1: A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
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We are rich in arts and culture cont.



- Delivered a range of professional development opportunities, workshops and grant programs in collaboration with several agencies across Leeton (Western Riverina Arts)
- Continued to provide library services through the Leeton Shire Major Dooley Library offering a diverse program of activities including story time, brain games, baby rhyme time, school holiday activities and special events
- Completed major upgrades at the Leeton Library, including the replacement of all carpeted areas, the installation of new shelving and a reception counter, the addition of new chairs and furniture and the installation of new computers
- Collaborated with the Leeton Multicultural Support Group on various activities, including the launch of the inaugural Fiesta La Leeton event, and provided auspicing for a staff member funded by FRRR
- Participated in quarterly Multicultural Interagency Network Meetings – a network of services, agencies and organisations which provide support and action for local CALD communities
- Provided creative, skill-building programs such as Hands on Learning, Boys to the Bush and cultural programs such as Yindymarra Girls Group (Leeton High School)
- Involved students in a variety of arts activities, including dance in local events such as the Leeton Eisteddfod and state-wide events like the Schools Spectacular (Gralee School)
- Delivered the Annual Creative Arts Showcase Event, highlighting student talent in visual arts, music, and drama, with active participation from the broader Leeton community (St Francis High School)
- Established the Riverina Writing House and the Leeton Young Writers Collective, creating a welcoming space for community members to engage in book-making and attend workshops, including film writing. Also mentored writers and facilitated networking opportunities to foster creative collaboration (Riverina Writing House and the Leeton Young Writers Collective)
- Hosted community information nights and openings with the SunRice Festival and the Art Deco Festival (Yanco Powerhouse Museum)

FOCUS AREA 1: A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
<p>We have access to a range of local educational opportunities for students of all ages and abilities</p>   	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operated the Leeton Early Learning Centre (LELC) and after school/vacation care service and expanded the LELC to provide an additional 20 childcare places• Improved access to academic, administrative and wellbeing support to students pursuing a higher education in Leeton (Country Universities Centre CUC)• Provided a safe, well-equipped and well supported space for local students to achieve their higher education dreams (Country Universities Centre)• Provided academic skills support through the Learning Skills Advice Program, catering to students at different stages of their educational journey (Country Universities Centre)• Expanded outreach efforts to increase awareness of the educational opportunities and support provided by the CUC, ensuring accessibility for students of all abilities (Country Universities Centre)• Conducted the widening participation program federally funded through EARUCP, Parents and Pathways Program (Country Universities Centre)• Collaborated with local high schools to support students' transition from school to further education, including the UOW Future Me Program (Country Universities Centre)• Implemented specialised learning support for students with diverse needs, ensuring all students have access to tailored educational opportunities (St Francis High School)• Hosted the Western Riverina Careers Expo which attracts an average over 1,000 students and 80 exhibitors to the Shire (Leeton High School/TAFE)• Collaborated with local early childhood centres and local feeder primary schools to create pathways for young learners, enhancing school readiness through joint programs and workshops (St Francis High School)• Worked in partnership with the Murrumbidgee Academy of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Excellence to provide students with access to cutting edge STEM connections and resources (Leeton High School)• Provided a fully operational farm on site at school, focusing on a wide range of agricultural practices, including livestock and pasture (Yanco Ag High School)• Opened a new state of the art female boarding facility to cater for approximately 95 female boarders in addition to the existing female dormitory (Yanco Ag High School) <p>Please note: If an activity isn't attributed to an organisation in brackets, it is a Council undertaking.</p>

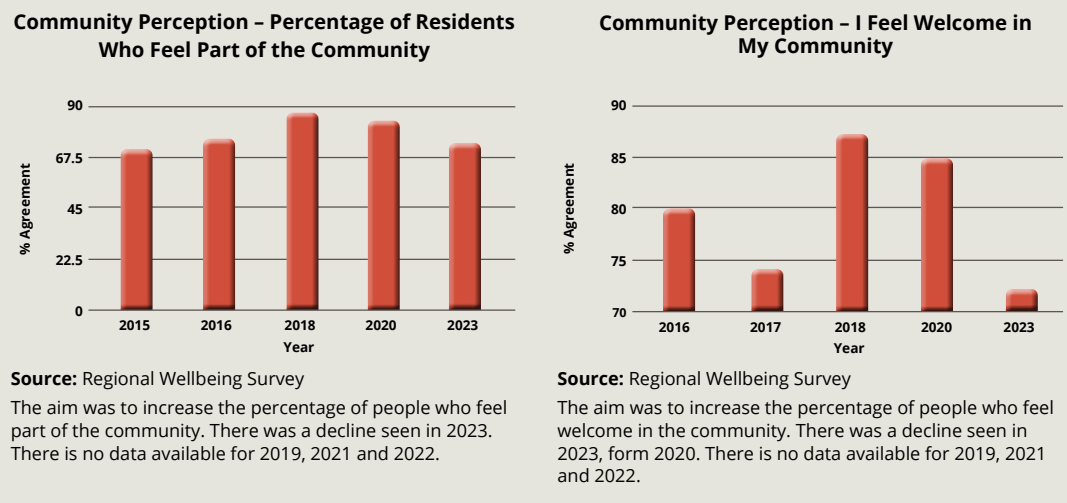




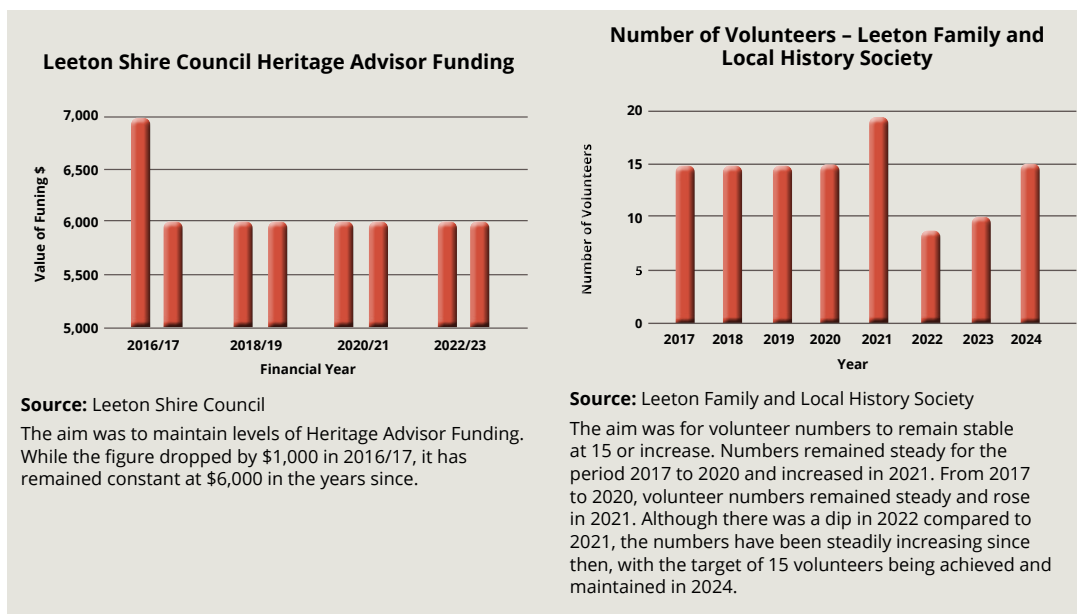
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FOCUS AREA 1: A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community cont.

Outcome Cc1: We are friendly, inclusive and connected – indicators of success

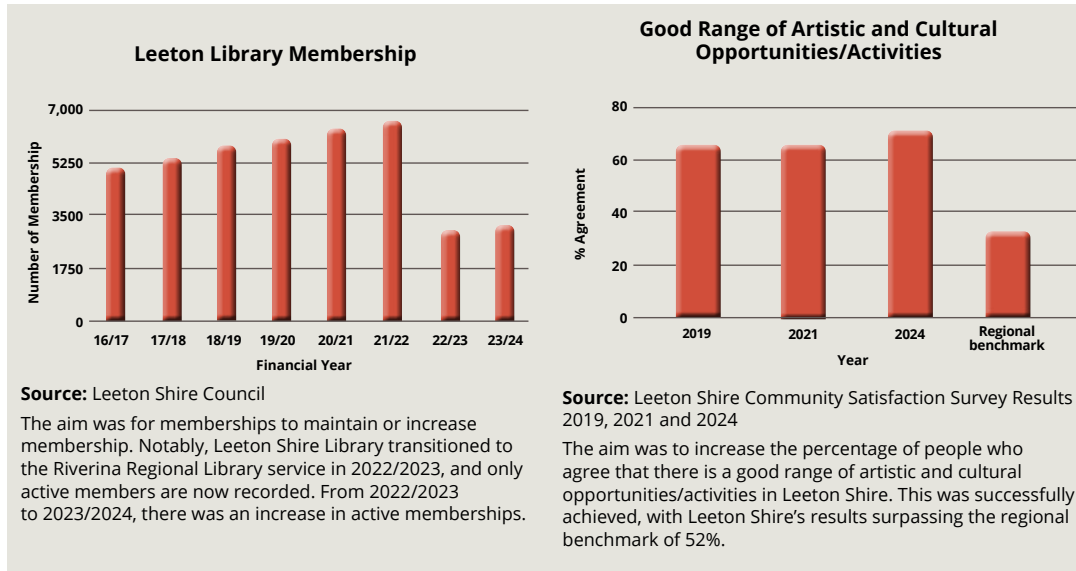


Outcome Cc1: We value and celebrate our local history, culture and diversity – indicators of success

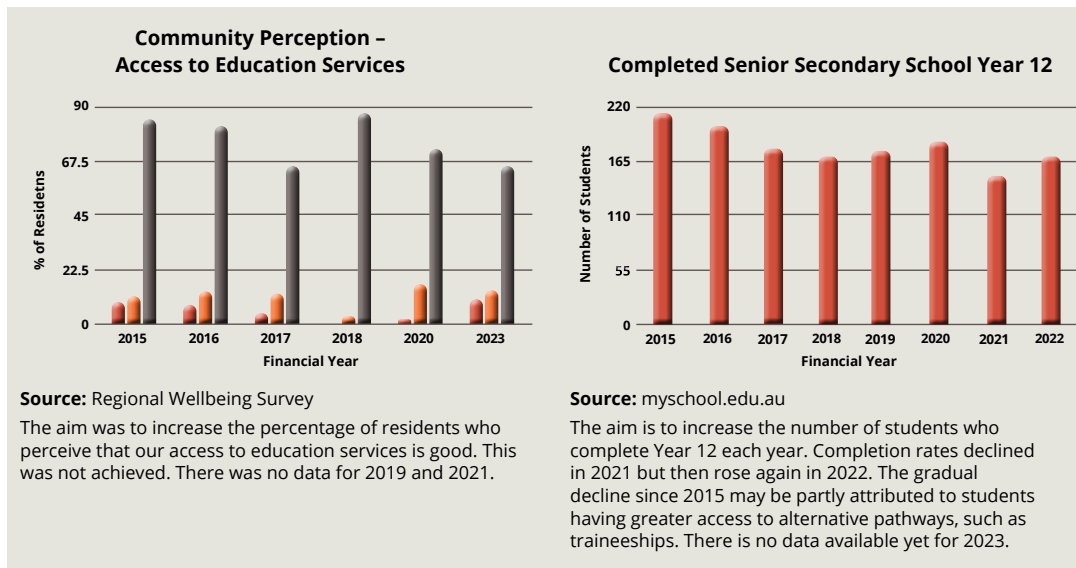


FOCUS AREA 1: A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community cont.

Outcome Cc3: We are rich in arts and culture – Indicators of success



Outcome Cc4: We have access to a range of local educational opportunities for students of all ages and abilities – Indicators of success







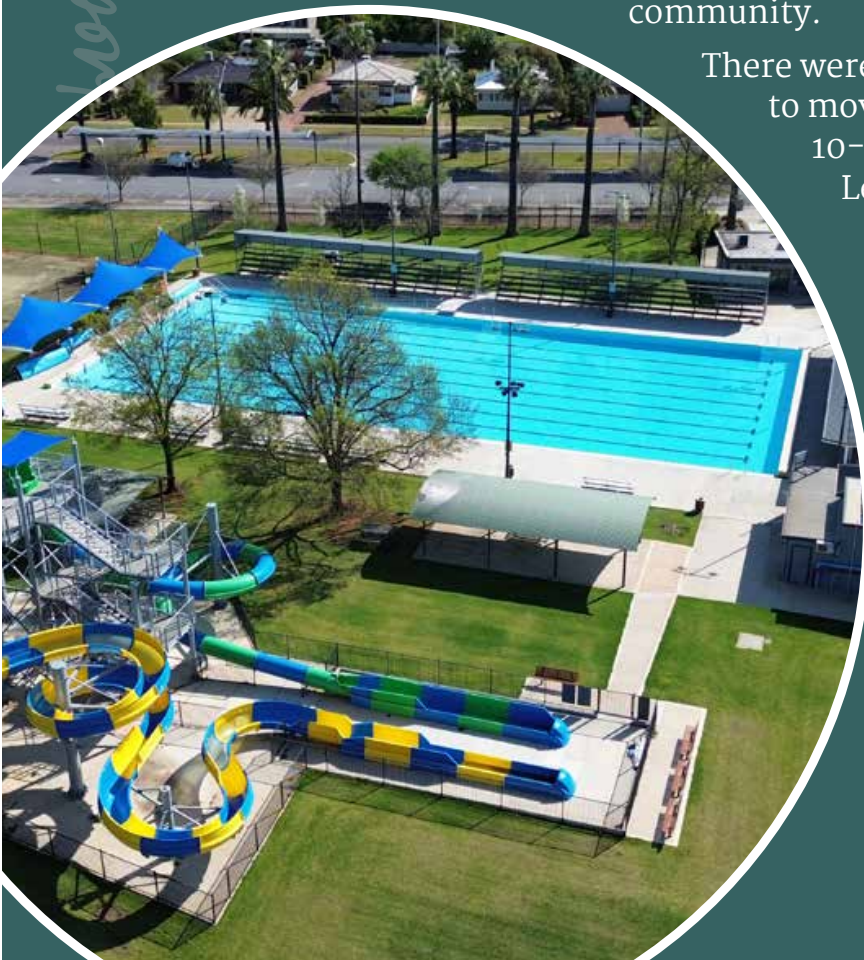
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FOCUS AREA 2: A Safe, Active and Healthy Community

What You Said:

We enjoy healthy lifestyles within a safe environment, and there a variety of sports and leisure activities for all ages, which helps us stay physically and emotionally healthy while fostering a strong sense of community.

There were four goals selected to move us towards our 10-year aspiration. Let's see how we are tracking.



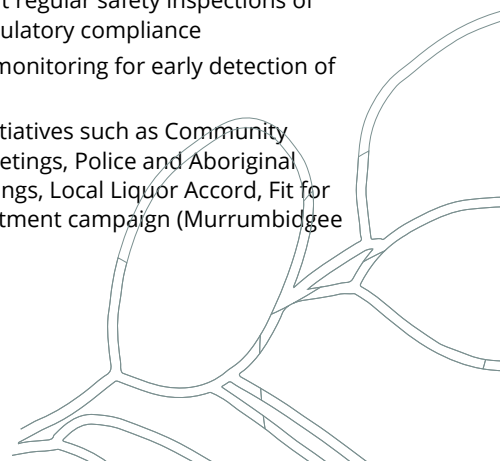
Focus Area 2. A Safe, Active and Healthy Community

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
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Our community is safe to live in and move about



- Developed a new Active Transport Plan to support active transport the needs of pedestrians and cyclists
- Completed a new pedestrian bridge, linking the shared pathways along Palm Ave and Brobenah Rd
- Completed the construction of the loops for the shared pathway and footpath along Acacia Ave and Palm Ave. Additionally, completed the network connection link on Corbie Hill Rd ensuring connectivity throughout the area
- Undertook footpath renewal works in front of Madonna Pl
- Planned and managed the addition of 16 streetlights in conjunction with Essential Energy
- Completed the renewal and replacement of seven bus shelters
- Coordinated a range of road safety initiatives including speed campaigns, drink driving campaigns, Mobility Scooter and 65 plus Driving Workshops, a Rotary Youth Driver Awareness Program and Child Restraint Workshops
- Maintained or replaced over 600 signs including road, street name blades, bridge markers, hazard, give way, stop and speed signs
- Undertook vegetation/weed management to improve visibility
- Coordinated Leeton Local Traffic Committee meetings
- Commenced plans to build an adult changing facility at Sycamore St car park
- Enforced disability car parking restrictions to ensure equitable car parking access for people with disabilities
- Extended CCTV camera network in the Shire
- Conducted annual food safety inspections of all food premises in collaboration with the NSW Food Authority. Additionally, performed annual inspections at skin penetration establishments and carried out regular safety inspections of swimming pools to ensure regulatory compliance
- Carried out annual mosquito monitoring for early detection of Arbovirus
- Coordinated programs and initiatives such as Community Safety Precinct Committee meetings, Police and Aboriginal Consultative Committee meetings, Local Liquor Accord, Fit for Life and 'Become a Cop' recruitment campaign (Murrumbidgee Police District)



FOCUS AREA 2: A Safe, Active and Healthy Community cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
Our community is safe to live in and move about cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided emergency responses to call outs for dog attacks• Provided subsidised microchipping services for companion animals and offered a free pet microchipping day each year• Conducted a domestic and family violence awareness campaign to coincide with Domestic and Family Violence Awareness and Prevention Month
We eat well, drink moderately and participate in active sports and leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launched the Leeton Sporting Walk of Fame celebrating the achievements of local sporting legends• Continued to operate the Leeton Golf Course and work with the Golf Club Committee to advance plans to develop a new club house• Installed a twin slide at Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre• Operated Leeton Sport and Recreation Precinct Parkrun – a free, fun, and friendly weekly 5km community event (Leeton Parkrun Committee)• In partnership with the Office of Sport, Be You and local schools, launched ‘Gamechanger’ – an innovative new program aimed at fostering sports participation and enhancing wellbeing among students across seven schools in the Shire• Hosted the Annual Riggz Cup Riverina Skate Championships in partnership with Boys to the Bush, Totem Skateboarding and the Rapid Relief Team• Installed new scoreboards at the Leeton Indoor Stadium and introduced new sports – croquet and pickleball• Constructed a new dog park in Yanco• Introduced a fine dining experience for aged care residents at facility monthly with house chef (RFB Leeton Masonic Village)• Provided athletics opportunities through participation in small schools carnivals, special schools carnivals and an annual Sensory Run that brought together students with and without disabilities in the Shire (Gralee School)• Hosted and participated in various sports events and interschool sports competitions, including athletics, netball and football, promoting physical activity and community engagement among students (St Francis High School)• Facilitated Leeton Running and Walking Group every Sunday (Nuranurra Support Service)



FOCUS AREA 2: A Safe, Active and Healthy Community cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
<p>We have access to health and support services that cater for all our needs</p>   	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed the \$3.7M Emergency Department upgrade at Leeton Hospital to provide an enhanced experience for patients, staff and visitors. The upgrade includes an expanded and modernised emergency department, as well as new medical equipment, upgrades to clinical spaces, improvements to the inpatient units and realignments to public and staff access (Murrumbidgee Local Health District MLHD) Completed the Leeton Health Service Plan outlining the service needs for the Leeton and surrounding communities for the next 10 years (MLHD) Provided support through the Leeton-Narrandera cluster nurse practitioner role to emergency departments, follow up of complex patients and a range of clinics to help bridge the gap in health care for chronic and complex patients (MLHD) Participated in a networked Drug and Alcohol Treatment (IDAT) Program – a structured drug and alcohol treatment program that provides medically supervised withdrawal, rehabilitation and supportive interventions for patients with severe substance dependence (MLHD) Provided through the diabetes service, a comprehensive and person-centred diabetes service to individuals living with or at risk of developing diabetes in a coordinated and integrated framework (MLHD) Promoted MLHD Health Services Survey to help shape the future of Health Services in the Shire Convened ‘Community Inspired Innovation’ forum for community members to join together to discuss health issues and ideas and share their initiatives with health services (Leeton Health Advisory Committee) Collaborated with Foodbank and community groups to host a Leeton Pop Up to provide 6,000kgs fresh fruit and veggies and 900kgs of pantry staples to the Leeton community, which equates to over 12,400 meals for people in need (FoodBank, Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network, Leeton Multicultural Support Group, Lions Club, River of Life Church, Boots Civil and Council) Operated Doorways community support and assistance through gift cards. Additionally, ran a Positive Lifestyle Program focusing on enhancing overall well-being and Women’s Group Camo offering social activities for women. Also managed a community garden to further support these initiatives and a food hall for those in need (Salvation Army Leeton)

FOCUS AREA 2: A Safe, Active and Healthy Community cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
<p>We have access to health and support services that cater for all our needs cont.</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the Meals on Wheel service ensured that homebound, elderly and vulnerable individuals have access to a wide array of health and social services that cater to their physical, emotional, and social needs (Valmar Support Services Ltd) • Sought to understand the health needs of the Leeton community through our Yarns on the Couch in May 2024 and Conversations on the Couch in July 2024 (Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network MPHn) • Worked with the community and health care providers to establish a GP telehealth after hours service for Leeton delivered by Health Access, providing over 200 occasions of service to date (MPHN) • Delivered a Foodbank and popup clinic on 18 July 2024, providing free fresh produce to the community; Impact as reported by Foodbank: 6,900kgs of fresh fruit, vegetables and pantry staples; 12,400 meals (MPHN) • Piloted the Pulmonary and Chronic Cardiac Rehabilitation Program (PCCR); a community-based chronic respiratory and heart failure rehabilitation 8-week program (MPHN) • Worked with a general practice in Leeton to improve pediatric screening and assessment through the Enhancing Pediatrics in Primary Care program and providing access to allied health screening through the WARATAH for Kids program (MPHN) • Delivered the WARATAH program which includes dietitian services available on a fortnightly basis for people living with chronic conditions (MPHN) • Worked with general practices to improve management of people living with chronic conditions over the winter period through our Winter Strategy program (MPHN) • Piloted a pharmacy screening program to help with screening and referral for people with COPD and chronic heart failure symptoms (MPHN) • Supported general practices and pharmacies to continue to offer COVID vaccinations. Worked with vulnerable population groups to ensure access to vaccinations e.g. providing vaccinations at the Foodbank Activity. Also regularly engaged with Residential Aged Care Homes to facilitate residents maintaining their COVID vaccination (MPHN) • Implemented the Care Finder program supporting older people in the community to navigate the aged care system (MPHN)

FOCUS AREA 2: A Safe, Active and Healthy Community cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
We have access to health and support services that cater for all our needs cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivered the MyStep Western mental health program, offering a range of mental health services from low, medium and high intensity, to severe and complex, along with in-reach to residential aged care (MPHN)• Provided care coordination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with chronic and complex disease, including supporting access to allied health and specialist services through the Integrated Team Care program (MPHN)• Supported people with complex health care needs (and their carers and families) through the Integrated Care Coordination program delivered by Marathon Health, to improve management of chronic disease and complex healthcare needs, along with reduce unplanned hospital admissions (MPHN)



We have supported accommodation that meets the needs of all community members



- Provided an accessible respite house in Leeton that offers accommodation for NDIS participants and serves as emergency housing for vulnerable individuals through Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) (My Plan Connect). My Plan Connect is registered with the Office of Children's guardian, this allows the organisation to provide safe accommodation for children under 18 years with the support of trained professionals. Respite house is also available to individuals and families who are linked with external support services (My Plan Connect)
- Supported participants to apply for housing, provided documentation for their applications and helped individuals link to services that can support them in a crisis (My Plan Connect)
- Provided housing support for those in need from 10am to 12pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays (Salvation Army)
- Provided an ongoing affordable housing service in Yanco of 14 units (Argyle Homes)
- Provided aged care accommodation for 46 residents and engaged residents in wellbeing activities tailored to their needs for examples bus trips, regular entertainment and intergenerational activities with local schools (RFBI Leeton Masonic Village)

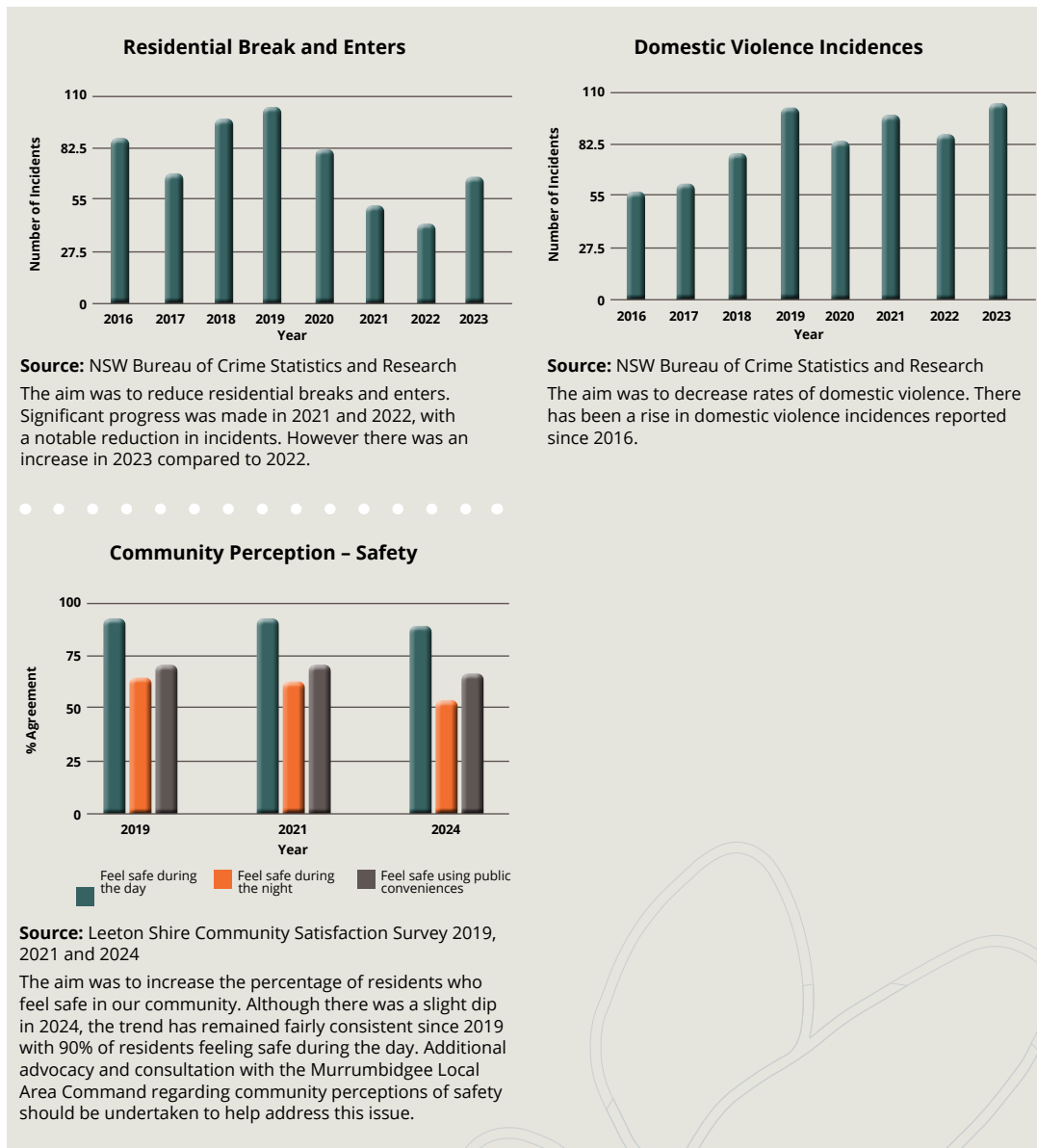
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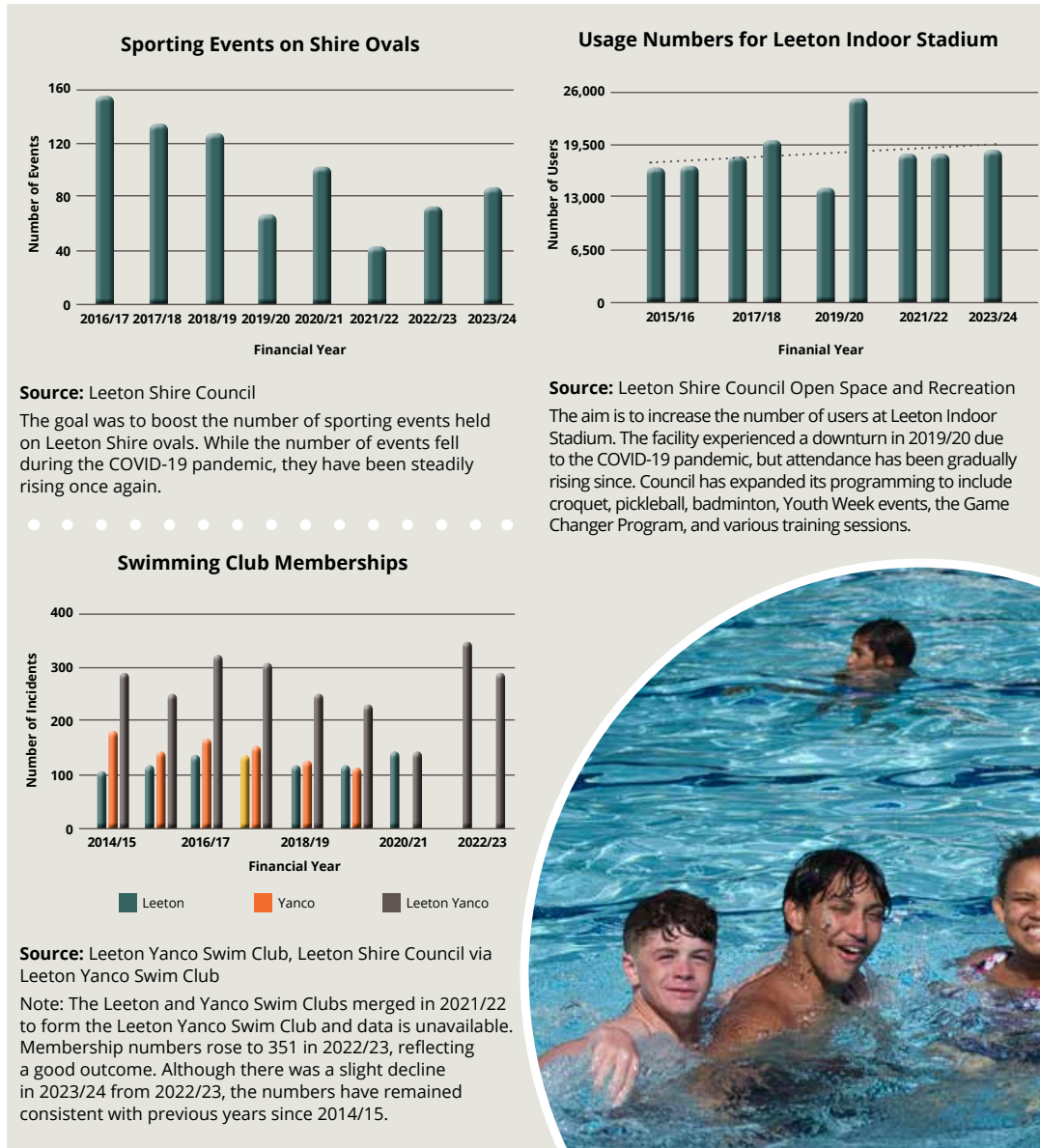
FOCUS AREA 2: A Safe, Active and Healthy Community cont.

Outcome Cc1: Our community is safe to live in and move about



FOCUS AREA 2: A Safe, Active and Healthy Community cont.

Outcome Cc2: We eat well, drink moderately and participate in active sports and leisure



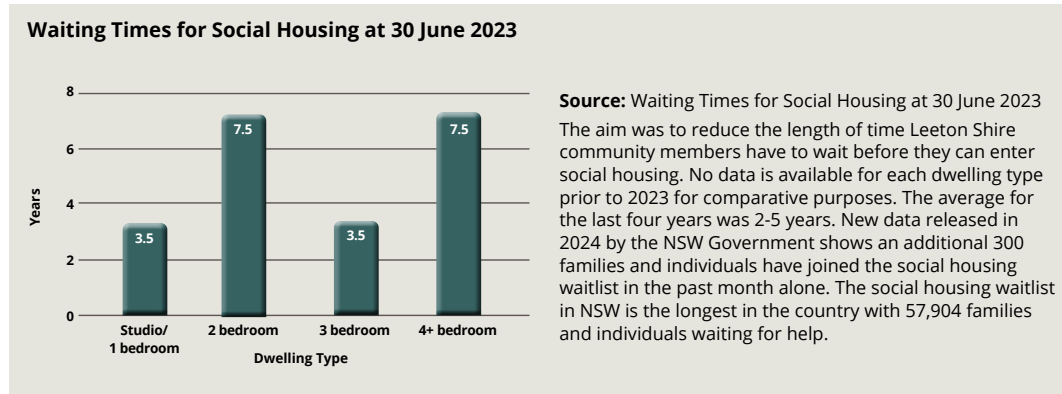
FOCUS AREA 2: A Safe, Active and Healthy Community cont.

Outcome Cc3: We have access to health and support services that cater for all our needs



FOCUS AREA 2: A Safe, Active and Healthy Community cont.

Outcome Cc4: We have supported accommodation that meets the needs of all community members







43



3

FOCUS AREA 3: A Thriving Regional Economy

What You Said:

We love living in Leeton because we have a wide range of employment choices available to us. We encourage school leavers to consider Leeton Shire businesses as exciting options to develop their careers. Shortage of workforce and a shortage of housing is a challenge. The community loves to celebrate together at festivals and events with fun and excitement with visitors to our town.

There were seven goals selected to move us towards our 10-year aspiration. Let's see how we are tracking.



Focus Area 3. A Thriving Regional Economy

Outcomes

Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders

Our local businesses are prospering



- Adopted Ambition 2030 – An Economic, Tourism and Events Strategy for Leeton Shire that aims to identify opportunities and potential projects that will support continued economic growth, foster local employment opportunities, and position Leeton as a leader in innovation
- Coordinated workshops and events as part of NSW Small Business Month (Leeton Business Chamber)
- Partnered with Leeton Business Chamber to host the Leeton NSW Small Business Month Networking event in Whitton
- Provided sponsorship towards the Leeton Business Chamber Awards and 'shop local business' campaign
- Participated in industry tours to local businesses and manufacturers
- Supported local businesses by promoting via a weekly Business Spotlight through social media
- Progressed plans and commenced expansion of Vance Industrial Estate to the north (Vance Estate Stage 3)

We attract and retain new businesses and residents, and our population is growing



- Met with businesses looking to expand to discuss options, council support and development requirements
- Supported Multicultural NSW in implementing its Regional Resettlement Program, NSW Growing Regions of Welcome (NSW GROW)
- Supported various labour hire companies and local industry to settle and recruit labourers and other staff to the Shire
- Hosted Leeton's Inaugural Recruitment Summit to support local businesses in their recruitment efforts and to enhance workforce development in the region (Leeton Business Chamber, NSW GROW Riverina, Workforce Australia and Council)
- Provided accommodation and support to University of Wollongong Student doctors undertaking placements in Leeton
- Sponsored medical students as part of the NSW Rural Doctors Network's Bush Bursary Country Women's Association (NSW Scholarship Program)
- Facilitated an International Qualified Nurses Scheme to support international nurses and carers to work and settle in Leeton
- Contributed to the update of the Western Riverina Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS)

FOCUS AREA 3: A Thriving Regional Economy cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
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We have the infrastructure we need to support our economy

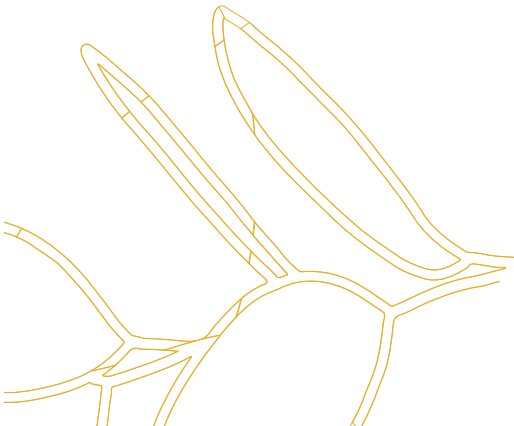


- In partnership with Narrandera Shire Council, operated the Leeton-Narrandera airport and undertook capital works such as remarking of the runway and security fencing
- Completed the WR Connect Masterplan and Business Case in consultation Griffith City Council staff, Department of Regional NSW, Ag Connex (owners), Linx Logistics (MEDLOG), Department of Planning and the Department of Transport
- Carried out shoulder widening works on Wattle Road, Wilkinson Road, and Darlington Point – Whitton Road
- Completed Canal Street Road rehabilitation /heavy vehicle upgrade
- Completed automation and plant upgrades at the Whitton and Murrumbidgee Water Treatment Plants, boosting operational efficiency
- Implemented advanced telemetry upgrades for the Leeton, Whitton and Yanco sewerage systems, improving monitoring and control capabilities
- Provided free Wifi services in the CBD

We have the skills and knowledge required to undertake the work available



- Sponsored and attended the Western Riverina Careers Expo at Leeton High School
- Participated in academic challenges and competitions such as the Da Vinci Decathlon across the Riverina. This event featured ten disciplines: engineering, mathematics and chess, code breaking, art and poetry, science, English, ideation, creative production, cartography and legacy (Leeton High School)
- Offered school-based apprenticeships/traineeships, for example in nursing (Leeton High School)
- Provided extensive transition support programs for students entering Year 7 and 11 and into the workforce (Leeton High School)
- Engaged students in a work experience program, emphasising the development of work skills, effective communication, budgeting, shopping and cooking (Gralea School)
- Partnered with Leeton Shire businesses to provide work experience opportunities for senior students, ensuring practical skills development aligned with real-world expectations (St Francis High School)
- Offered a range of courses to support Shire residents and businesses with their short course training needs (Western Riverina Community College)
- Provided student support officers to assist students with disabilities or learning disabilities engage in training (Western Riverina Community College)



FOCUS AREA 3: A Thriving Regional Economy cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
<p>We have the skills and knowledge required to undertake the work available cont.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hosted 19 work experience students from schools across the Shire, providing them with experience in fields such as engineering, horticulture, early childhood education, administration/customer service, visitor services and library services• Provided 15 traineeships in library, horticulture, early childhood education, customer service and events• Provided three apprenticeships in light vehicle mechanical technology and gardener/greenkeeper• Facilitated childcare work placements for 16 students from Charles Sturt University, TAFE NSW and ECTARC
<p>We have access to a range of housing options that suit the needs of short and long-term residents</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implemented a number of short- and medium-term actions from the Leeton Local Strategic Planning Statement• Updated the Leeton Housing Strategy to guide the development of Leeton Shire's residential future over the next twenty years. This included engagement with the community including developers and real estate agents who were invited to provide feedback into the strategy• Developed and implemented the new Development Control Plan (DCP) which aims to facilitate quality development, protect neighbourhood amenity and maintain environmental quality• Made an amendment to the Leeton Local Environment Plan to allow or more housing options in the RU5 village zone• Commenced a business case for the Brobenah Road housing development for affordable housing

FOCUS AREA 3: A Thriving Regional Economy cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
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We have diverse employment opportunities



- Actively participated in the Western Riverina 'Grow Our Own' initiative – an industry led alliance to encourage people to build a career locally
- Continued to partner with ROA, SSI and PALM. These organisations work with local businesses to assist in filling the large number of vacancies within the region
- Conducted WIN workplace-based learning program and Youth + Enterprise = Success Program for students in Year 10 to connect with community businesses to explore different career options (Leeton High School)
- Engaged with local schools on career opportunities in aged care (RFB Leeton Masonic Village)
- Assisted residents of a low socio-economic background access training opportunities (Western Riverina Community College)



We are a popular tourist destination



- Hosted the Australian Art Deco Festival Leeton, Leeton Chill and Grill, SunRice Festival, Fiesta La Leeton, Light Up Leeton and Australia Day celebrations
- Operated the Leeton Visitors Centre
- Supported the annual Leeton Town Band Spectacular, Early Ford V8 Car Club Rally, Armstrong-Siddeley National Car Club Rally, Australian Bittern Summit and Leeton Eisteddfod
- Completed the installation of temporary signage for Art Deco Way touring route with six strategically placed billboards on the Newell and Sturt Highways and on Kidman Way near Griffith and active social media promotion of Art Deco Way
- Promoted Leeton and the Riverina region at consumer shows such as Caravan and Camping Lifestyle Show in Canberra which included distribution of Visit Riverina marketing guides
- Promoted the Murrumbidgee Trails marketing collective of Leeton Shire, Lockhart Shire, Narrandera Shire and Murrumbidgee Council
- Participated in the RDA Country Change Program to promote the region as an attractive destination for new residents
- Coordinated annual Christmas promotion events (Leeton Business Chamber)

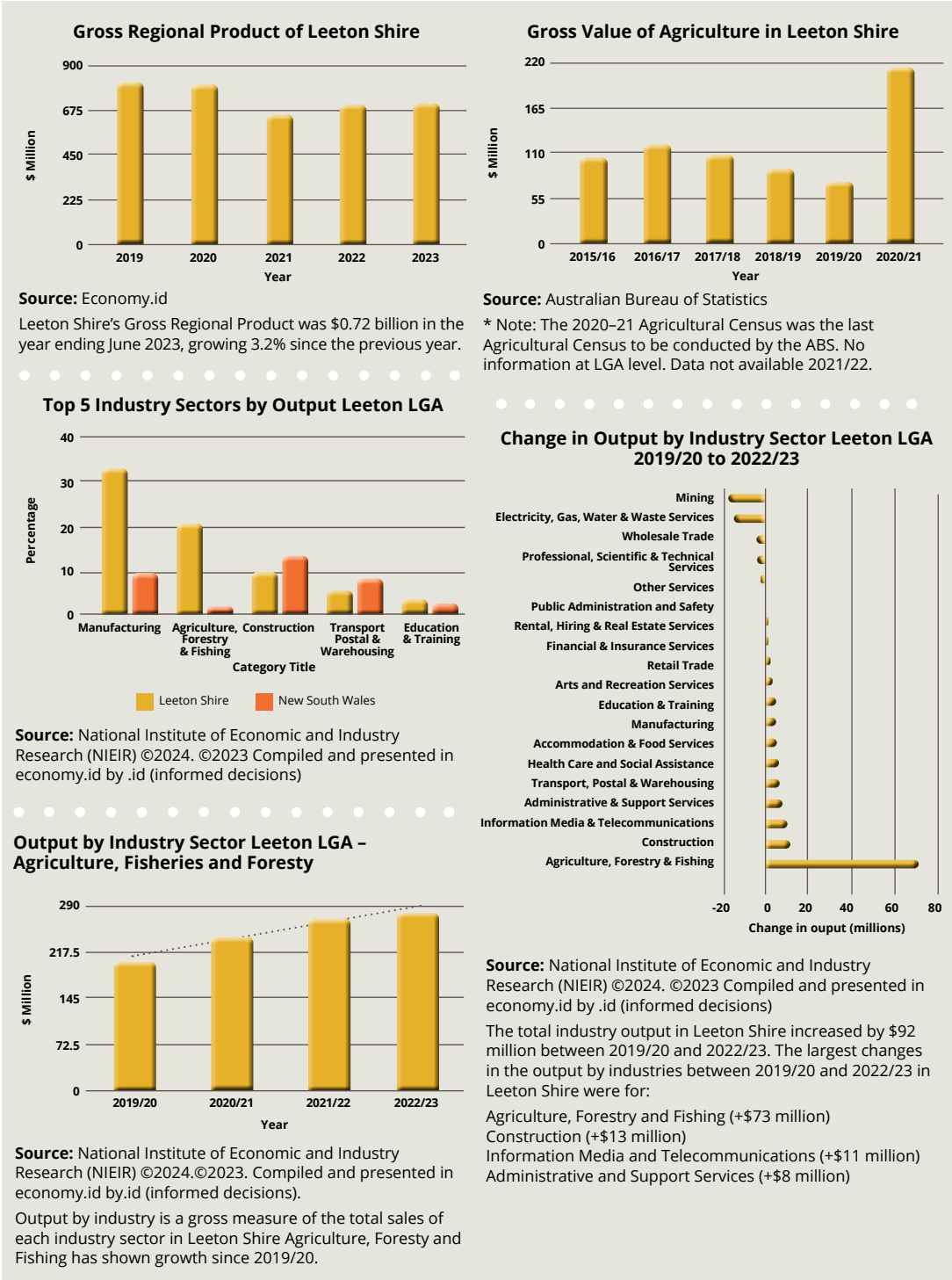


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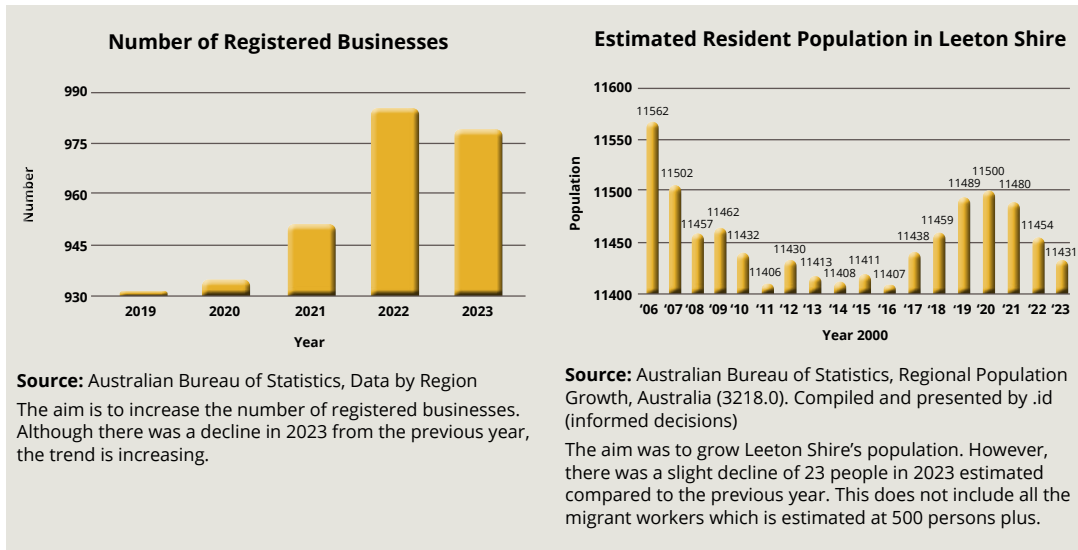
FOCUS AREA 3: A Thriving Regional Economy cont.

Outcome Ec1: Local businesses are prospering

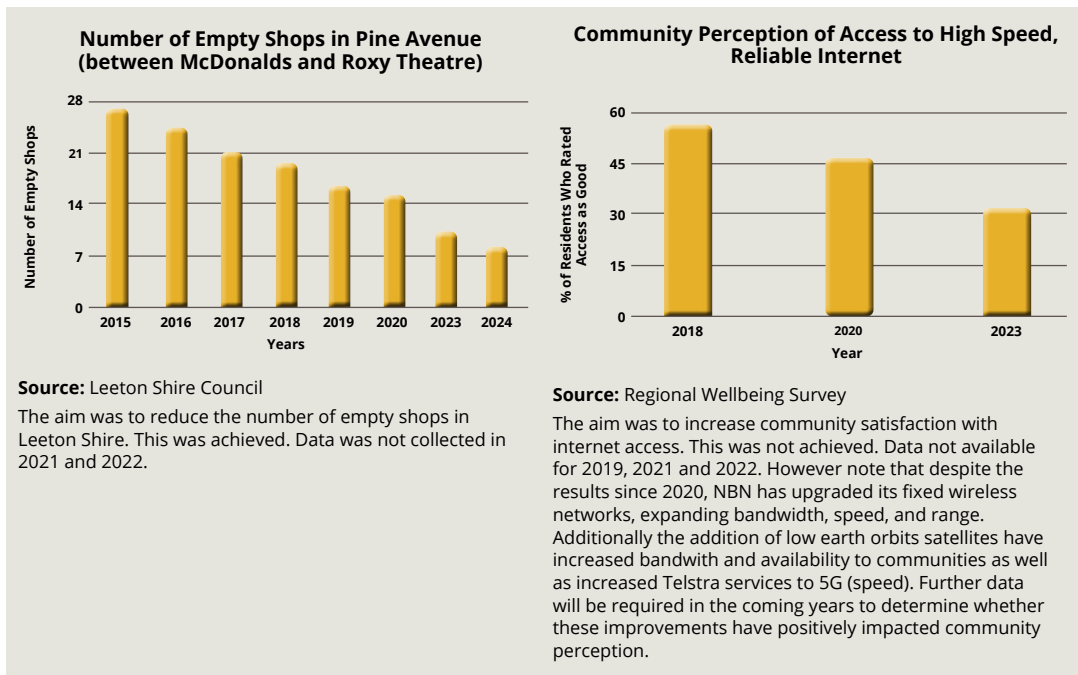


FOCUS AREA 3: A Thriving Regional Economy cont.

Outcome Ec2: We attract and retain new businesses and residents and our population is growing

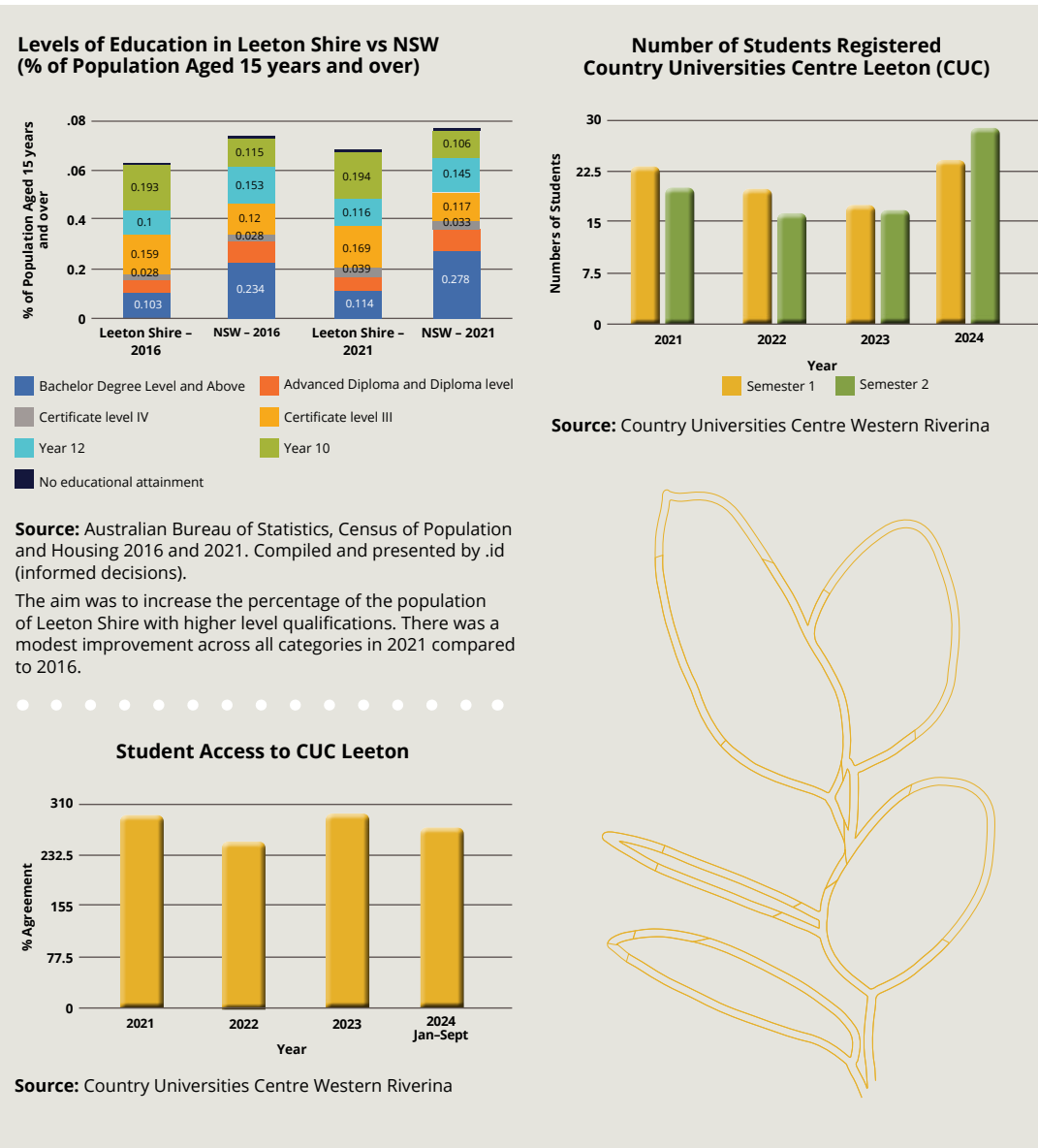


Outcome Ec3: We have the infrastructure we need to support our economy



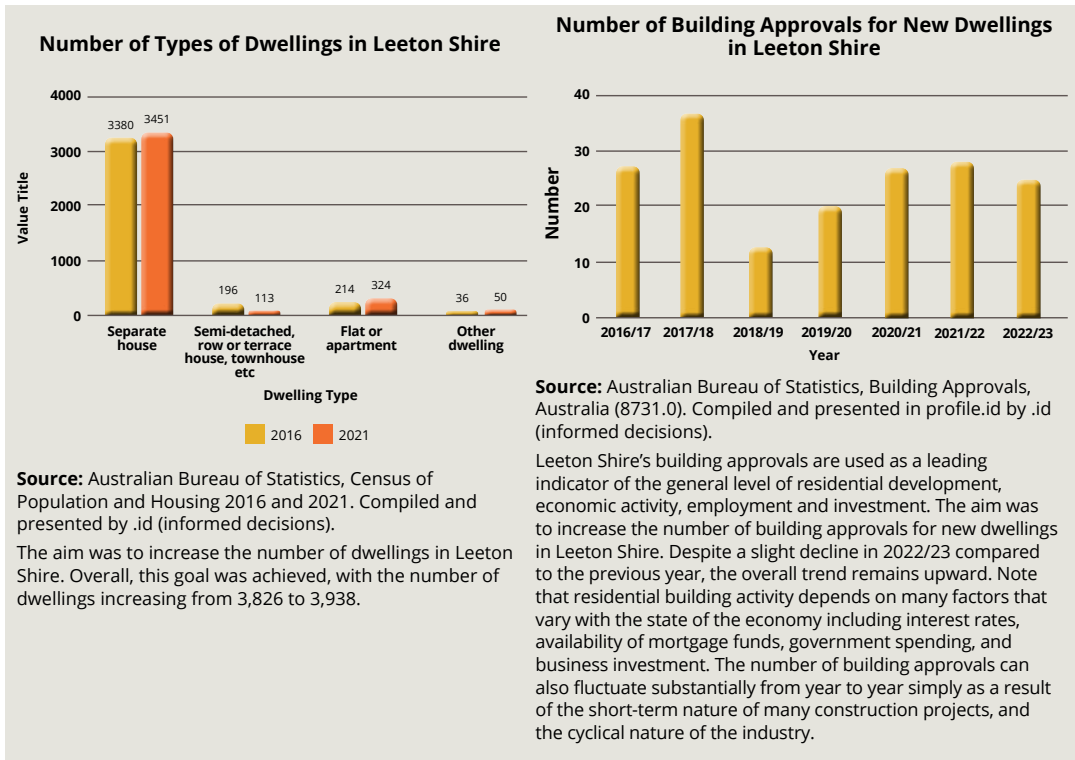
FOCUS AREA 3: A Thriving Regional Economy cont.

Outcome Ec4: We have the skills and knowledge required to undertake the work available

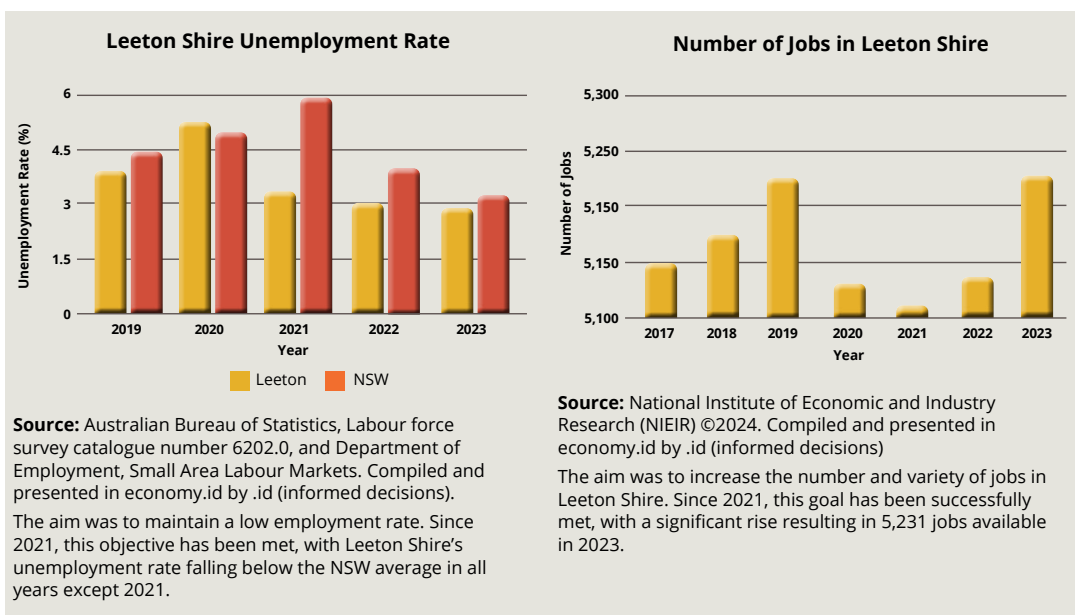


FOCUS AREA 3: A Thriving Regional Economy cont.

Outcome Ec5: We have access to a range of housing options that suit the needs of short- and long-term residents

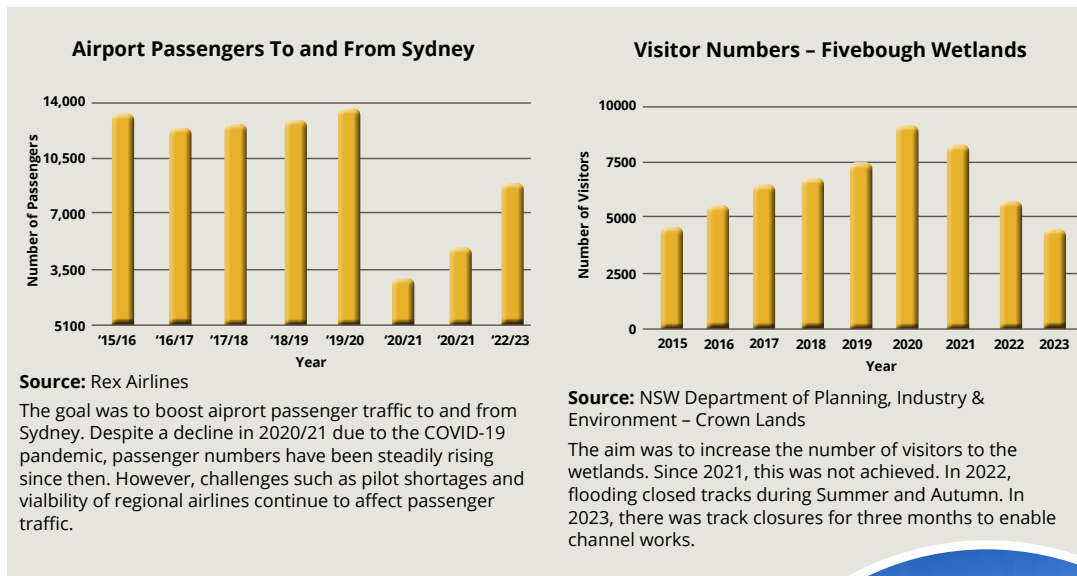


Outcome Ec6: We have diverse employment opportunities



FOCUS AREA 3: A Thriving Regional Economy cont.

Outcome Ec4: We are a popular tourist destination







56

4

FOCUS AREA 4: A Quality Environment

What You Said:

We love living in Leeton because we have reliable infrastructure such as water, sewer and roads. We take great pride in our lovely towns and villages and enjoy the abundance of open space and park areas around our Shire. As a community we stay constantly vigilant about the impacts of water reform such as the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. We want to be sure that environmental results are not being achieved at the expense of economic and social wellbeing.

There were four goals selected to move us towards our 10-year aspiration. Let's see how we are tracking.





Focus Area 4. A Quality Environment

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
<p>We enjoy a protected natural environment and quality agricultural land</p>   	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to work with Crown Lands and the Fivebough Committee on the management of the RAMSAR listed Fivebough Wetlands. This included the installation of new interpretive signage, channel repairs and northern track/fence repairs Supported landholders to improve agriculture productivity, control pest plants and animals and meet their legal obligations (Riverina LLS) Undertook works at Turkeys Flat Lagoon to ensure water is retained on the site for longer and at a higher depth (Riverina LLS) Supported Bringing Back the Bunyip Bird: Australasian Bittern Conservation Summit 2023 conference to learn about latest research and see Australasian Bitterns in the rice crops of the Riverina (Riverina LLS/Council) Encouraged local farmers to participate in the Growing Bittern Friendly Rice Program (Riverina LLS) Conducted a cultural burn at Tuckerbil Basin to refresh the wetland and improve habitat for Australian Bitterns (Riverina LLS and LDLALC) Graded MIA 2 Middle Beach entrance (Forest Drive) and installed a barrier gate; graded Cuba Drive and River Drive within the Cuba North precinct (National Parks and Wildlife Service) Maintained MIA 2 Ski Beach Entrance for Leeton Ski Club (Forest Drive) and the Turkey Flat and McCaughey's Lagoon day use areas (National Parks and Wildlife Service) Updated visitor information on National Parks and Wildlife Service website (National Parks and Wildlife Service) Kept updated on the Murrumbidgee Environmental Water Advisory Group which provides advice on the management of water for the environment within the catchment Commonwealth and State governments Worked with local communities and agencies to oversee the management of environmental water within the region in the most efficient way (Murray-Darling Basin Authority) Convened the Riverina Regional Community Forum (online) to discuss the work being undertaken for the Basin Plan Evaluation as well as the Basin Plan Review (Murray-Darling Basin Authority)

FOCUS AREA 4: A Quality Environment cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
<p>We enjoy a protected natural environment and quality agricultural land cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported water rallies in Leeton, Griffith, and Deniliquin to advocate for a balanced Murray-Darling Basin Plan and to protest water buybacks. Additionally, delivered a speech in Leeton emphasising the critical role of water and agriculture in our community and its significance to the nation Actively participated in the Murray-Darling Association (MDA) Region 9 to provide effective local government representation in the management of Basin resources
<p>We live sustainably, use our resources responsibly and have adapted to climate change</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed solar installation projects at the Leeton Shire Library, Council administration building, Whitton Sewer Pump Station No. 1, Whitton Water Treatment Plant, Murrumbidgee Water Treatment Plant, Depot, Yanco Sewer Treatment Plant and Leeton Landfill, resulting in significant energy savings Successfully completed an electrical upgrade at the Leeton Sewer Treatment Plant which included the installation of a Power Factor Correction Unit and Active Harmonic Filtering Redirected waste towards recycling and sustainable disposal methods, achieving increased waste diversion from landfill and completing a new landfill cell Maintained 100% compliance with EPA regulations for landfill operations, ensuring environmental and operational standards were met Promoted public awareness of responsible waste management practices, contributing to a more informed community Introduced green-lidded Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) bin, helping Leeton residents to keep all food and garden waste out of landfill Actively promoted chemical 'Drum Muster' initiatives, providing a reliable, cost-effective, and sustainable recycling option for empty chemical containers, benefiting users, the environment, industry, and the wider community Supported clients to actively engage in community recycling activities such as can collection (Kurrajong Leeton) Actively participated in a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for the supply of 100% renewable energy for Council's large market and street lighting contracts Engaged in environmental sustainability projects, such as tree planting and recycling campaigns, in collaboration with community organisations, promoting ecological awareness among students and residents (St Francis High School) Promoted sustainability by operating a store that specialises in high-quality second-hand goods sourced from diverted waste (Resource Recovery Australia (RRA) and Revive Leeton Reuse Shop)

FOCUS AREA 4: A Quality Environment cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
<p>Our built environment is attractive and serviceable</p>   	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced completion of the Chelmsford Square CBD Enhancement Project to achieve a more attractive, integrated, and vibrant setting that celebrates Leeton's history while providing increased social and economic benefits to the community • Carried out beautification works to the entrance of Golf Club Estate including the planting of shrubs and trees and installing irrigation • Completed improvement and landscaping works in Yanco. This includes planting of trees along Irrigation Way near Yanco Public School and along the new fence line at the Yanco Sports Ground and landscaping works next to the Yanco shop • Completed and maintained landscaping works at the traffic lights (Vance Road, Wamoon Avenue and Canal Road intersection) • Installed new playground equipment in Waring, McCaughey and Raponi Parks and new shade sails at Whitton Park • Completed extensive improvement works at Whitton Cemetery, including sealing the entrance, upgrading road access and a new post and rail fence at the frontage of the cemetery • Operated and maintained sewage treatment and effluent discharge plants along with reticulation services at Leeton, Yanco and Whitton • Constructed a sewage treatment plant low pressure sewerage scheme for the village of Wamoon which discharges into the existing Leeton Sewerage Scheme • Completed an overhaul/service of aerator number 1 at Leeton Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) Number One • Upgraded multiple pump stations across the Shire to enhance performance and reliability • Rehabilitated sewer mains in Cedar St and Railway St and begun an ongoing Shire wide sewer manhole inspection regime and renewal schedule • Implemented advanced telemetry upgrades for the Leeton, Whitton and Yanco sewerage systems, improving monitoring and control capabilities • Completed water main replacements and extensions including Park Avenue South, Willow St, Coonong Ave Yanco, Darling Rd Wamoon and Gogeldrie St Whitton • Reduced the number of dead-end water mains to improve water quality throughout the Shire • Completed small sewer main extensions at Grevillia St, Curtin Rd, Almond Rd and Letona Pl • Demolished the old clarifier at the Water Treatment Plant and constructed a new chemical storage and workshop shed

FOCUS AREA 4: A Quality Environment cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
Our built environment is attractive and serviceable cont.	<p>Continued the replacement of sedimentation tank launders at the Water Treatment Plant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed automation and plant upgrades at the Whitton and Murrami Water Treatment Plants, boosting operational efficiency• Undertook sealed road rehabilitation works including Almond Rd, Oak St roundabout, Palm Ave, Vance Rd, Boundary Rd, Cedar St, Stoney Pt Rd, Murrami Rd, Dooley Ln, Progress St, Sycamore St, Yarran St, Kirkup Rd/Houghton Rd intersection and many urban roads in Wamoon• Carried out the annual road resealing program on several roads in the Shire including Brobenah Rd, Contour Rd and Calorafield Rd• Resheeted parts of the gravel road network including George Rd, Kiln Rd, Millane Rd, Apostle Yrd, Harwood Rd, Brown Rd, Marston Rd, Bridge Rd and more• Completed significant kerb and gutter works including Teatree Ave, Myall St, Muntenpen St, Melaleuca Ave, Palm Ave, Myrtle St, Wilga St• Completed drainage works in/along Tecoma St, Ashton Ln, McKay Ave, Corbie Hill Rd, Daalbata Rd and Almond Rd• Upgraded toilet facilities at Whitton, Wamoon, Yanco and Gossamer Park, making the facilities fully accessible• Installed a new toilet block at Gogeldrie Riverside Park

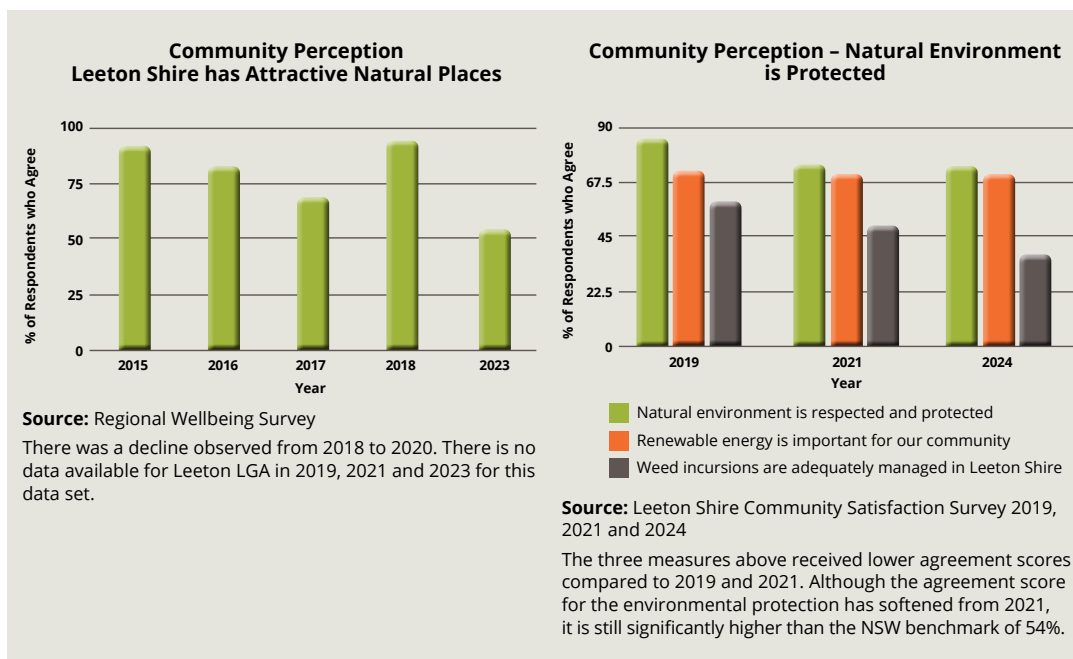
We balance the needs of our natural and built environments

- Commenced an infrastructure masterplan to identify infrastructure needs such as sewer, water supply, roads and stormwater drainage for future growth areas from the housing strategy
- Continued the implementation of the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) which provides the strategy for the community's economic, social and environmental land use needs over the next 20 years
- Progressed the development of an Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan with the assistance of Public Works to meet future growth needs

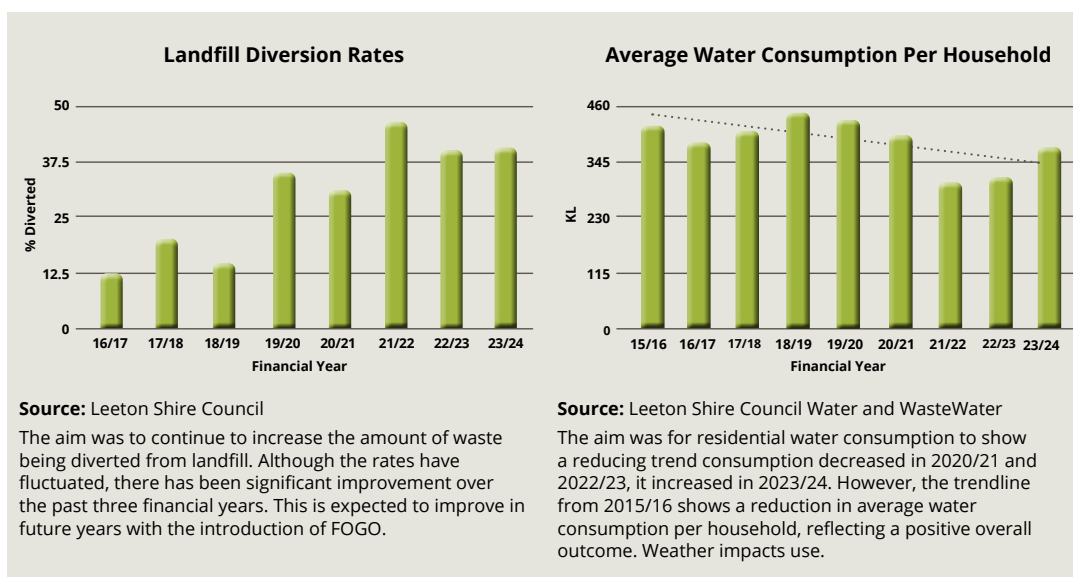
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FOCUS AREA 4: A Quality Environment cont.

Outcome En1: We enjoy a protected natural environment and quality agricultural land



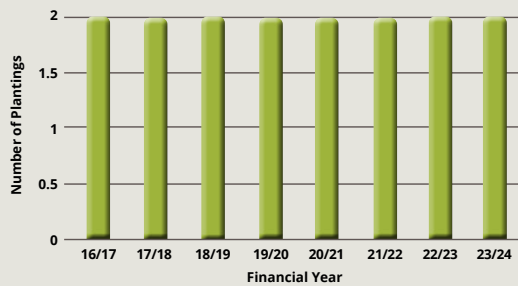
Outcome En2: We live sustainably, use our resources responsibly and have adapted to climate change



FOCUS AREA 4: A Quality Environment cont.

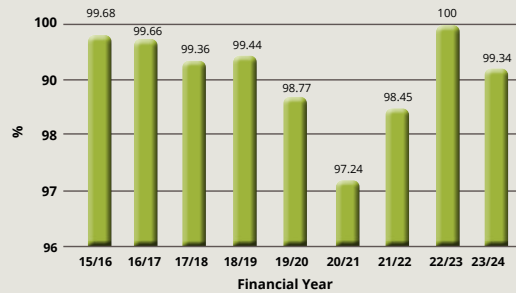
Outcome En3: Our built environment is attractive and serviceable

Annual Flower Plantings in the CBD District



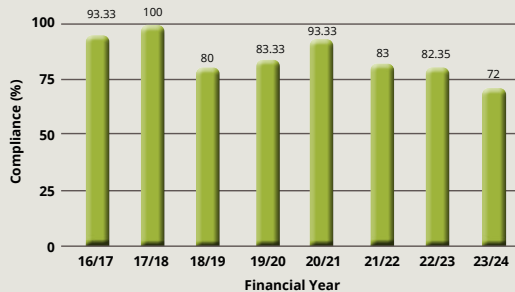
Source: Leeton Shire Council Open Space and Recreation
The aim was to maintain the annual flower plantings in the Leeton CBD. This was achieved.

Water Quality Compliance



Source: Leeton Shire Council Water and Wastewater
The aim was to achieve 100% compliance with water quality standards. This target was met in 2022/23, although it was not achieved in other years. Nonetheless, water quality has consistently remained excellent, maintaining levels above 97%.

Sewerage Effluent Discharge Compliance



Source: Leeton Shire Council
The aim is to maintain or improve levels of sewerage effluent discharge compliance. Maintenance or upgrades to the tertiary ponds temporarily affected pH levels, turbidity, and suspended solids in 2023/24. Additionally, increased bird activity and the presence of fish or carp introduced further challenges to discharge compliance.



FOCUS AREA 4: A Quality Environment cont.

Outcome En4: We balance the needs of our natural and built environments





65



5

FOCUS AREA 4: Strong Leadership and Civic Participation

What You Said:

We love living in Leeton because we are confident that our leaders will listen to what we have to say, make decisions that are good and will advocate with peak bodies for the betterment of our entire community. There are many opportunities available for our residents and visitors to speak and engage with each other and our leaders to make a difference towards our future. We are resilient as a community and we actively anticipate change, plan for it and deal with it well.

There were six goals selected to move us towards our 10-year aspiration. Let's see how we are tracking.



67

Focus Area 5. Strong Leadership and Civic Participation

Outcomes

Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders

We are well informed and engaged in decision-making



- Provided a range of options for community to provide input on projects and documents including via the Council's website, Have Your Say engagement platform, Facebook and public meetings
- Conducted two Community Satisfaction Surveys (2021 and 2024) to assess community priorities and levels of satisfaction with Council administration and services
- Developed a new website that will provide customers with better access to information and services
- Undertook community consultation on a range of key projects, including Rebalancing of the Rates and Proposed Special Variation
- Commenced a series of Councillor Catchups (Yanco and Whitton). This gave residents the opportunity to engage with their elected representatives and Council's senior management team in an informal setting to discuss important local matters, receive Council updates, provide input into the updated community strategic plan and share their thoughts and ideas

Our leaders speak out for the good of the community



- Advocated on a range of issues of importance to the Leeton Shire community including water security, health services and housing
- Collaborated with the other Councils and NSW Irrigators' Council Against Water Buybacks
- Submitted motions on issues of high importance to the Leeton Shire community at the ALGA National General Assembly and LGNSW Conferences
- Directed operations and resources towards furthering the goals expressed in the Community Strategic Plan
- Regularly reported to Council and the community on activities undertaken to further the goals of the Community Strategic Plan
- Engaged with various politicians and dignitaries to provide leadership and advocate for the Shire, for example, the NSW Governor The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, The Honourable Michael McCormack MP, The Honourable Sussan Ley MP and Helen Dalton MP


FOCUS AREA 5: Strong Leadership and Civic Participation cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
<p>We work together to achieve goals</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engaged with the Leeton Health Services Action Committee, Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD), Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network (MPHN), NSW Rural Doctors Network (RDN) and NSW Ambulance to commence collaborative efforts to develop an integrated health services plan for Leeton ShireParticipated in the Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) which brings together Councils from across the region to seek funding for major projects and to address regional challengesActively participated in the Murray-Darling Association (MDA) Region 9 and Riverina Environmental Water Advisory Group to advocate for sensible water policySupported and collaborated with Leeton Connect Inc., including by auspicing staff. Leeton Connect is a not-for-profit organisation set up to act as a central hub for not-for-profit groups in Leeton ShireLiaised with Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) including MI's winter works program, supply channel decommissioning, town drainage arrangements and the Vance Industrial Estate Expansion Project drainage into MI channels
<p>We are active community members who recognise we have a role to play</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Coordinated 196 registered volunteers at CouncilUpdated Council Volunteer Handbook, Manual and Onboarding Procedure, and Volunteer Policy to clarify roles, rights, and responsibilities for both volunteers and supervisors. Additionally, updated the volunteer contract registerCoordinated volunteer recognition activities including the promotion of National Volunteer WeekEncouraged students to participate in local volunteer initiatives, including environmental clean-ups, aged care visits, and charity drives, fostering a strong sense of civic responsibility (St Francis High School)Collaboratively engaged with a majority of the 210 local non-profit organisations, as well as numerous external partners, to enhance organisational capacity across the Leeton not-for-profit sector (Leeton Connect)Hosted free networking workshops for community groups and organisations (Leeton Connect)Hosted the "Stories of Resilience" breakfast series featuring a panel of representatives from four pillars of the community. They shared their stories and experiences of overcoming adversity and achieving success in their respective fields while highlighting the importance of well-being (Leeton Connect, Rotary Club of Leeton and Leeton Business Chamber)

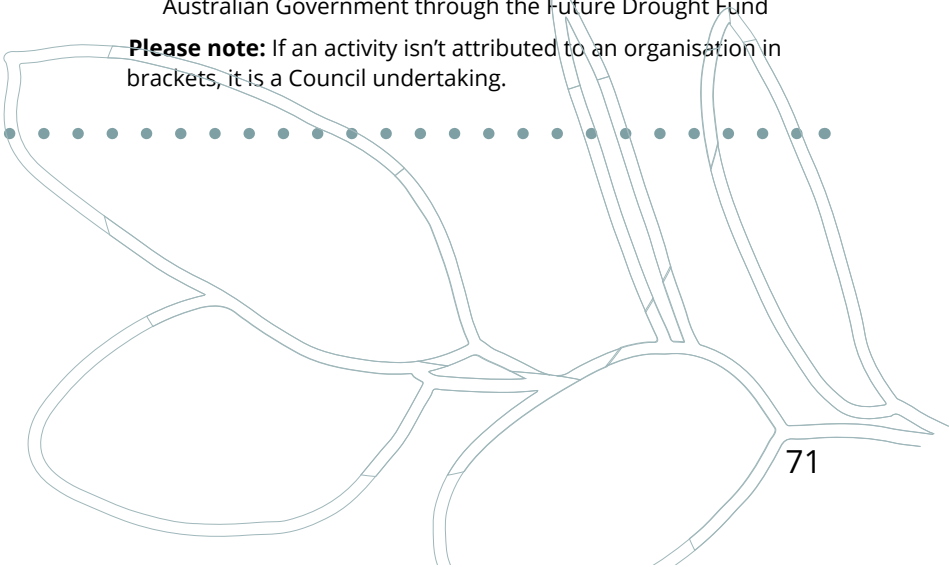
FOCUS AREA 5: Strong Leadership and Civic Participation cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
<p>We are active community members who recognise we have a role to play cont.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided support to local residents in need including accommodation, medical, food, travel and utilities (Leeton JumpStart)• Participated in the Homelessness Appeal and received a NSW Parliament Community Recognition Award for the Student Representative Council's work addressing homelessness at Leeton High School (Leeton High School)• Provided a catering team for emergency services when required (Salvation Army)• Served as a tour guide for a busload of visitors, showcasing Leeton's Art Deco shop buildings and residences (Leeton Family and Historical Society)• Volunteered for Art Deco events and SunRice Festival events such as open days at Henry Lawson Cottage (Leeton Family and Historical Society)• The Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation (VFFF) funded a pilot program in Leeton – Investing in Rural Community Futures (IRCF) (circa \$1M over 5 years) – using a place based approach to strengthen local community groups and not for profits to build their capacity and capability. This included collaborative fundraising and education and training opportunities (Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal FRRR) <p>.....</p>
<p>Our Council operates efficiently and effectively within a framework of good governance</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implemented a new customer relationship management (CRM) platform that will help Council improve the service it provides to customers• Contracted the services of an Australian Call Centre to provide residents with a single number after hours emergency contact point• Conducted monthly council meetings• Coordinated and supported six Section 355 Committees, 15 Advisory Committees/Working Groups, two action groups and ARIC. Council also participated in two shared Service Committees and seven external Committees <p>.....</p>

FOCUS AREA 5: Strong Leadership and Civic Participation cont.

Outcomes	Key activities undertaken by Council and other stakeholders
<p>We demonstrate leadership in the face of disaster</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engaged in strategic discussions and decision-making processes to enhance local emergency management protocols through active participation in the Local Emergency Management CommitteeCompleted a full and detailed review of the Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN). This included a detailed review of Council designated evacuation centres, potential transport blockage during flood or fire and contact information for the various locations identified within the planHeld safety storytime at Leeton Library to educate children and carers about fire safety (Leeton Library and Fire and Rescue NSW Station 360 Leeton)Approved the Flood Emergency SubPlan, which outlines multi-agency arrangements for managing flooding in the Leeton Shire, as part of the EMPLAN (Local Emergency Management Committee)Joined 'One Road' (also known as Live Traffic NSW), enabling Leeton Council to upload real-time traffic information, such as road closures, flooding, and roadwork updates, to a live platform. This advancement has enhanced Council's ability to provide accurate, timely information to both the community and emergency services about travel-related mattersEntered into a trial LEMC merger with Narrandera Shire Council to increase efficiencies and cross LGA collaboration with emergency services and disaster managementConvened a workshop with the NSW Reconstruction Authority to help our community with information on the four important apps (Bureau of Meteorology, Live Traffic NSW, Hazards Near Me and Emergency Plus) in case of an emergency (Leeton Connect)Participated in drought resilience planning workshops together with other local councils to develop a comprehensive Regional Drought Resilience Plan, following funding from the Australian Government through the Future Drought Fund

Please note: If an activity isn't attributed to an organisation in brackets, it is a Council undertaking.



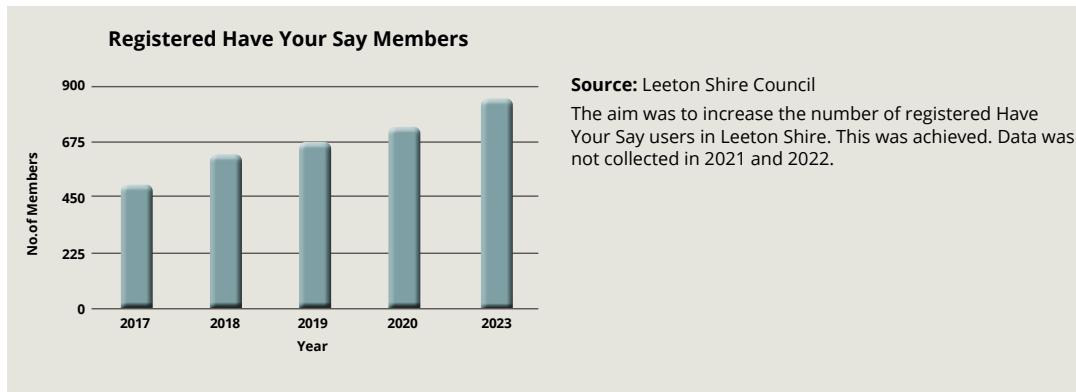


72

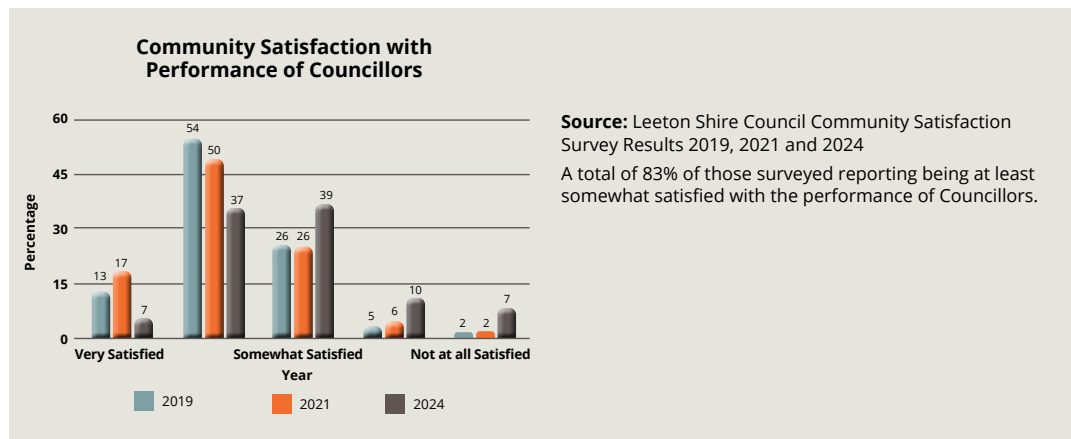


FOCUS AREA 5: Strong Leadership and Civic Participation cont.

Outcome L1: We are well informed and engaged in decision-making



Outcome L2: Our leaders speak out for the good of our community

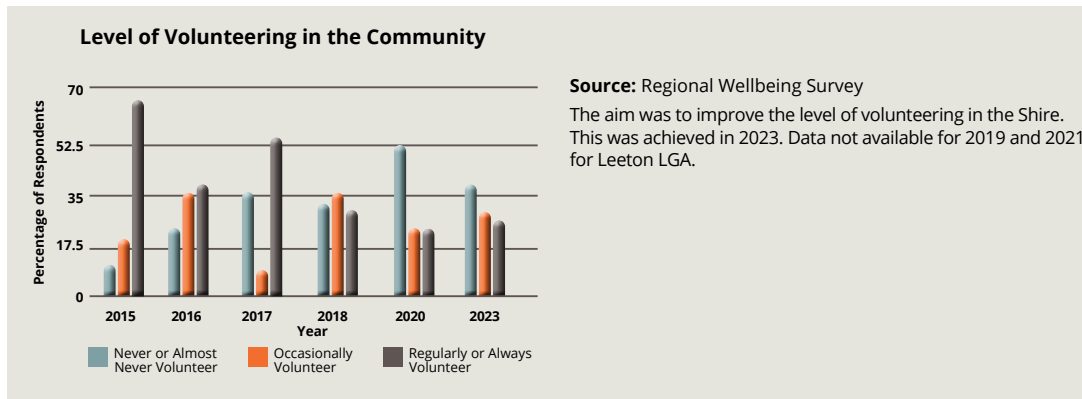


Outcome L3: We work together to achieve our goals



FOCUS AREA 5: Strong Leadership and Civic Participation cont.

Outcome L4: We are active community members who recognise we all have a role to play



Outcome L5: Our Council operates efficiently and effectively within a framework of good governance

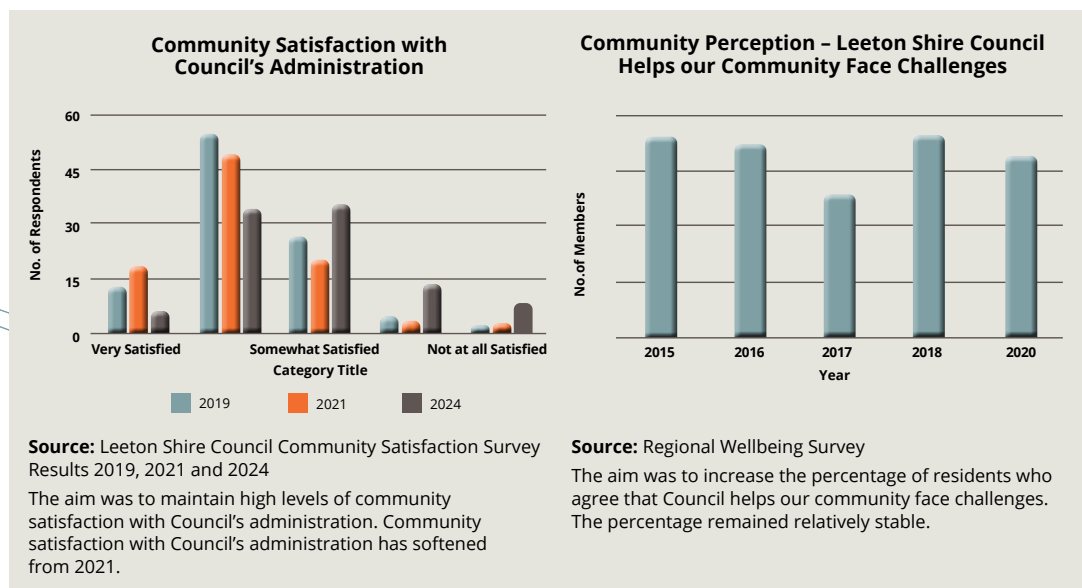


Photo Captions and Credits

Front cover: Chelmsford Place upgrade

Inside cover: Acknowledgement of Country

Page 4

Top: Ken Dachi receives Welcoming Australia Award

Bottom: Morris Chambers repainted external facade as part of CBD Enhancement Project

Page 8

Your Councillors and the General Manager for the 2021-2024 Council term.
L-R Cr Paul Smith, Cr George Weston, Cr Tracey Morris (seated), GM Jackie Kruger, Deputy Mayor Cr Michael Kidd, Mayor Cr Tony Reneker (seated), Cr Krystal Maytom, Cr Sandra Nardi, Cr Tony Ciccio
Absent: Cr Matt Holt

Page 10

Whitton mural painting

Page 12

Top: Leeton Sporting Walk of Fame recipient Matthew Dunn and family
Bottom: Chelmsford Place upgrade

Page 13

Top left: Outback Band Spectacular
Top right: Roxy Redevelopment Committee

Middle: Roxy redevelopment project works

Circle: Council rangers Glenn McVittie and Grant Smith perform free microchipping

Bottom: Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre opening of twin slides

Page 15

Leeton sunrise over corn crop in Whitton. Photo credit: Neil McAlicie

Page 16

Top: Leeton Multicultural Support Group President Susie Rowe and Leeton resident Bhanuka Viduranga
Circle: Kurrajong Thursday 'chinwags' with Police. Photo credit: Kurrajong
Bottom: Members of Leeton Parkrun Committee. Photo credit: Leeton Parkrun Committee

Page 18

Top: Leeton Farmers' Markets held at Mountford Park

Bottom: Performers at Fiesta La Leeton

Page 19

Trish and My Plan Connect staff.
Photo credit: My Plan Connect

Page 20

Top circle: Members of Leeton Youth Council at a meeting
Middle circle: Mayor Tony Reneker welcomes new citizens at a citizenship ceremony
Bottom circle: Curator of 'Still Here' exhibition at the Leeton Museum and

Art Gallery, Joanne Edwards. Photo credit: RFBI Masonic Village Leeton

Page 21

Top circle: Leeton Pride Collective Inc. parading at Leeton SunRice Festival. Photo credit: Leeton Rainbow Pride Collective Inc.

Second circle: Dachi family with Heather from ABC Backroads Program
Bottom circle: Gregory Longford with members of youth community. Photo credit: Nuranurra Support Service

Page 22

Top circle: Multicultural flag
Bottom circle: Performers at Gossamer Park Family Fun Day and Art Deco lanterns

Page 23

Top circle: Audience at the Miil Miil Productions Wiradjuri film and book showcase at Gossamer Park
Bottom circle: Roxy Theatre and Art Decon lanterns

Page 24

Top circle: Members of Leeton Library Book Club

Middle circle: Vita Vitelli Leeton Art Society. Photo credit: Leeton Art Society
Bottom circle: Storytime at Leeton Library

Page 25

Top circle: Country Universities Centre Western Riverina. Photo credit: Country Universities Centre Western Riverina

Middle circle: Children at Leeton Early Learning Centre

Bottom circle: Yanco Ag High School students at ram sale. Photo credit: Yanco Ag High School

Page 26

Fiesta La Leeton

Page 29

Top right: Anne Morshead and Jan Thompson at Two Points of View Exhibit opening

Middle left: Elijah Ingram and Will Ingram painting Survival Day Mural at Gossamer Park

Middle right: Making of the mosaic table at the Leeton library as part of Seniors Week

Bottom: Gralee School student at Leeton Museum and Art Gallery
Circle: Yanco Ag High School Students. Photo credit: Yanco Ag High School

Page 30

Top left: New pedestrian bridge Brobenah Rd Leeton

Top right: Leeton Galloping Greens in action. Photo credit: Leeton Galloping Greens

Middle: Participants in Boys to the Bush Program volunteering to help maintain No.1 ovals

Bottom: Skater participating in the Leeton Totem Skate Competition

Page 31

Aerial of Leeton twin slide and pool

Page 32

Top circle: Footpath renewal works
Middle circle: Student participants in RYDA Program

Bottom circle: Inspector OIC Leeton, Narrandera & Borellan Murrumbidgee PD Jason Clarke and Mayor Tony Reneker promoting 'Become a Cop Campaign' to local community

Page 33

Top circle: Joggers enjoying Leeton Parkrun. Photo credit: Leeton Parkrun Committee

Bottom circle: Leeton Running and Walking Group. L-R Gregory Longford, Nuranurra Support Service and Cheryl Whymark. Photo credit: Gregory Longford/IMF Raw Team

Page 34

Top circle: New Hospital emergency department at the Leeton Hospital.

Photo credit: MLHD

Middle circle: LHAC Forum held at Leeton Museum and Art Gallery.

Photo credit: LHAC

Bottom circle: Salvation Army Leeton

Page 35

Top circle: Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network's Clinical Programs and Emergency Response Manager Peta Anderson and COVID Support Officer Charlotte Johnson preparing for the Foodbank pop-up event in Leeton on 18 July 2024. Photo credit: MPHNS
Bottom circle: Narelle Mills and Corowa LHAC member Dave Harrison. Photo credit: MPHNS

Page 36

Top: Councillors visit residents at Eventide Homes Yanco



Photo Captions and Credits cont.

Page 37

Top: Foodbank event volunteers and attendees
Middle: LHAC Forum held at Leeton Museum and Art Gallery. Photo credit: LHAC
Bottom: Students participants in Leeton Gamechanger Program

Page 39

Circle: Swimmers enjoying Leeton Pool

Page 41

Aerial photo Leeton houses and streets

Page 42

Top: Kurrajong participants Thursday 'chinwags' with rural fire brigade services. Photo credit: Kurrajong
Bottom: Kurrajong participants Leeton Museum and Art Gallery. Photo credit: Kurrajong
Circle: Kurrajong participant plays pickleball. Photo credit: Kurrajong

Page 43

Top: Foodbank event in Leeton
Middle circle: Student participants in Leeton Gamechanger Program
Bottom: Gamechanger students at the Leeton Indoor Stadium

Page 44

Top: Leeton Business Chamber Award Recipients 2023. Photo credit: Leeton Business Chamber
Middle: Launch of Leeton Living website. L-R Michelle Evans, Bobbie Pannowitz, Cr Krystal Maytom, Emily Goodall
Bottom: Art Deco Festival guests enjoying High Rollers event at the Historic Hydro Leeton

Page 45

Leeton Sunrice Festival attendees enjoying hot air balloon ride

Page 46

Top circle: Business Connect workshop
Bottom circle: University of Wollongong student doctors, Anna and Allanah

Page 47

Top circle: Canal St road rehabilitation works
Bottom circle: Students at Western Riverina Careers Expo Leeton

Page 48

Top circle: Council customer service trainee Shante Smith
Bottom circle: House in Leeton

Page 49

Top circle: Kate O'Callaghan Southern Cotton and Tom Mannes Cotton Australia at Southern Cotton Gin
Middle circle: Art Deco Way signage
Bottom circle: Art Deco Festival event

Page 54

Fivebough Wetlands
Circle: Visitors enjoying Murrumbidgee River

Page 55

Chill & Grill event in Leeton

Page 56

Top: Fivebough Wetlands works
Middle: Playground upgrades McCaughey Park
Bottom: Irrigation channel near Wamoon. Photo credit: Neil McAliece

Page 57

Council staff member Ben Curley pictured with water meter

Page 58

Top circle: Australasian Bittern Conservation Summit
Middle circle: Cultural burn at Tuckerbil 2023. Photo credit: Elijah Ingram
Bottom circle: MDA Board with The Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP and Council GM Jackie Kruger

Page 59

Top circle: St Francis High School senior students in the Wiradjuri Garden. Photo credit: St Francis High School
Bottom: Reviva Recycling Shop opening

Page 60

Top circle: Landscaping works near traffic lights Leeton
Middle circle: New shade sails Whitton Park
Bottom circle: Wamoon Sewerage Scheme Official Opening Ceremony

Page 61

Top circle: Sycamore St roadworks
Bottom circle: Stormwater drainage replacement

Page 63

Circle: Jacaranda trees outside Library

Page 64

Circle: Brobenah Rd resealing works
Bottom: Flower beds in Mountford Park

Page 65

Top: Aerial photo Leeton Water Filtration Plant
Middle: Council staff member Luke Tedesco with new solar installation panels
Bottom: New FOGO bin introduction

Page 66

Top: Community rally against water buybacks Leeton
Circle: Members of RAMJO meet with the NSW Water Minister, The Hon. Rose Jackson MLC
Bottom: Visit by The Hon. Ryan Park and Helen Dalton with councillors and Leeton Health Services Action Committee members

Page 67

Governor General Her Excellency, The Hon. Margaret Beazley AC KC visits Council. L-R Cr Tracey Morris, GM Jackie Kruger, Mayor Tony Reneker, Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC and Governor

of NSW and husband Mr Wilson and Deputy Mayor Michael Kidd

Page 68

Top circle: Councillor Catchup session Yanco
Bottom circle: Advertisement with other Councils and NSW Irrigators' Council Against Water Buybacks

Page 69

Top circle: Leeton Hospital visit. L-R Susan Andrusiow, Karen Davy, Maryann Iannelli, Cr Krystal Maytom, Karen Absolom, Emeritus Mayor Paul Maytom, Jackie Kruger, Sekai Dachi, Tegan Reid
Bottom circle: Members of Rotary Club cooking a BBQ at an event

Page 70

Top circle: Leeton Connect breakfast
Bottom circle: Council staff members Melissa Seymour and Mervin Mathew viewing new CRM system

Page 71

Top circle: Members of NSW Rural Fire Service Leeton
Bottom circle: NSW Reconstruction Authority Workshop on emergency apps. Photo credit: Leeton Connect

Page 72

Top: Members of Leeton Youth Council with Cr Sandra Nardi (far right) and Council staff member Emma Di Muzio (far right)
Circle: Council staff member Ken Dachi with his Excellency General, The Hon. David John Hurley ACDSC (Ret'd)

Bottom: Leeton Health Services Action Committee Member Maryann Iannelli talks with The Hon. Ryan Park at forum

Page 73

Top: Luke Tedesco presents speech at community rally against water buybacks in Leeton
Middle: Royal Bhutanese Embassy delegates, including His Excellency Ambassador Sonam Tobgay (centre right), First Secretary Mrs. Metho Dama (front centre), and Minister Counsellor Mr. Jigme Tenzin (far left), pictured with Leeton Shire Mayor, Councillors, and General Manager, during discussions on employment opportunities and future collaboration
Bottom: Leeton Connect staff and volunteer Mary Errey and Sue Pearce at Leeton Show
Circle: Yanco Town Improvement Committee volunteers

Page 76

Memorial structures Chelmsford Place

Inside back cover

Yanco Public School artwork at Leeton Museum and Art Gallery

Back cover

Flower beds in Leeton main street

Stakeholders and Contributors

The following organisations were contacted for input towards the State of the Shire report. An asterisk indicates those that provided feedback. Council expresses gratitude to the organisations that contribute significantly to our wellbeing as a community and is especially thankful to those that made the time to give their insights and photos to this report. We welcome input from all community groups and we acknowledge that, given the many groups in our community, there may be more to add. If you would like to be included in our contact list for future reports and the development of future community strategic plans, please reach out to Council by emailing council@leeton.nsw.gov.au. Your input is valuable to us.

- Adapt Community Services
- Aboriginal Consultative Group
- Argyle Homes*
- Assumption Villa
- Boys to the Bush Leeton*
- Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder
- Country Universities Centre Western Riverina*
- CWA*
- Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Crown Lands*
- Fivebough Wetlands Committee*
- FRRR*
- Get Set Inc.
- Gralee School*
- Griffith Post School Options Leeton
- Jumpstart*
- Kurrajong*
- Leeton & District Local Aboriginal Land Council*
- Leeton Art Society Inc.*
- Leeton Business Chamber*
- Leeton Community Care Development Inc.
- Leeton Connect*
- Leeton Early Learning Centre*
- Leeton Eisteddfod Society*
- Leeton Golf Club*
- Leeton Health Advisory Committee*
- Leeton High School*
- Leeton Historical Society*
- Leeton Local Aboriginal Education Consultative
- Leeton Men's Shed Inc.
- Leeton Multicultural Support Group*
- Leeton preschools*
- Leeton Public School
- Leeton Rainbow Pride Collective Inc.*
- Leeton Sport and Recreation Precinct Parkrun (Leeton Parkrun)*
- Leeton VRA Rescue Squad
- Leeton/Yanco Swimming Club*
- LEMC*
- Lions Club*
- Local developers
- Multicultural NSW
- Murray-Darling Association*
- Murray-Darling Basin Authority*
- Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists
- Murrumbidgee Irrigation
- Murrumbidgee Local Health District*
- Murrumbidgee Police District*
- Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network*
- My Plan Connect*
- National Institute of Dramatic Arts*
- Nuranurra Support Service*
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service*
- OCTEC Leeton (TTW)
- OneSchool Global Leeton
- Parkview Public School
- RAMJO*
- Rapid Relief Team Leeton*
- Regional Development Association Riverina
- Reviva Recycling Shop Leeton*
- RFBI Leeton Masonic Village*
- Riverina Local Land Services*
- Riverina Writing House*
- Rotary Clubs*
- Roxy Institute of Performing Arts*
- Rural Fire Services*
- Safe Work NSW
- Salvation Army Leeton*
- Sporting organisations*
- St Francis High School*
- St Joseph's Primary School
- St Vincent's De Paul Leeton
- TAFE NSW*
- The Personnel Group
- U3A
- Valmar Support Services Ltd*
- Wamoon Public School
- Western Riverina Arts*
- Western Riverina Community College*
- Whitton-Murrumbidgee Primary School
- Whitton Museum
- Workforce Australia*
- WR Connect*
- Yanco Agricultural Institute
- Yanco Ag High School*
- Yanco and Whitton Town Improvement Committees*
- Yanco Powerhouse Museum*
- Yanco Public School





LEETON
SHIRE COUNCIL

Leeton Shire Council

ABN 59 217 957 665

23–25 Chelmsford Place, Leeton NSW 2705

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Item 8.1.2. LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2024

AUTHOR/S: IP&R and Children Services Compliance Coordinator

APPROVER/S: General Manager

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the Leeton Shire Council Annual Report 2024 to Council (**Attachment 1**).

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Adopts the Leeton Shire Council Annual Report 2023/24, noting the activities and progress made during the 2023/24 financial year, towards achieving Council's Delivery Program commitments.
 2. Authorises the General Manager to make minor corrections if required.
 3. Notes the Leeton Shire Council Annual Report 2024 as required by legislation will be uploaded to Leeton Shire Council's website prior to 30 November 2024 and a link to the document will be provided to the Minister for Local Government by way of an email to the Office of Local Government.
-

REPORT

(a) Background

Under Section 428 of the *Local Government Act 1993* ("the Act"), each year Council is required to prepare and publish an Annual Report within five (5) months after the end of each financial year.

The Annual Report must report on:

- Council's achievements in implementing its Delivery Program.
- The effectiveness of the principal activities undertaken in achieving the objectives at which those principal activities are directed.

(b) Discussion

Council's Annual Report is one of the key points of accountability between the council and its community. The requirement to report to the community is a key element in the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

The Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 and a range of other legislation also prescribes specific information about a Council's activities that must be included in the Annual Report.

The Annual Report is not a report to the Office of Local Government or the NSW Government. It is a report to the local community and other stakeholders of Council. Its purpose is to provide information about the progress Council has made towards achieving the commitments of Council's Delivery Program.

The Leeton Shire Council Annual Report 2024 has been prepared in accordance with Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Guidelines. It focuses on Council's progress in implementing its Delivery Program 2022–2025 and Operational Plan 2023/24 commitments. It provides details of what the organisation has and hasn't managed to achieve during the financial year ending 30 June 2024 and clearly demonstrates how Council is meeting its commitments and obligations on behalf of the Leeton Shire community. The report also includes a range of statutory information about which Council is required to report.

This Annual Report should be read in conjunction with the State of the Shire Report (presented separately to the Council Meeting on 26 November 2024) and the Leeton Shire Council Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2024 which were adopted at the Council Meeting held on 29 October 2024. These documents will be provided to the Office of Local Government (OLG) as an attachment to the Annual Report 2024.

(c) Options

THAT Council:

1. Adopts the Annual Report for 2023/24 as presented. ***This is the recommended option.***
2. Adopts the Annual Report for 2023/24, with amendments.

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

Nil

(b) Policy

Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines
Integrated Planning and Reporting Handbook
Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting
Office of Local Government Capital Expenditure Guidelines

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Disability Inclusion Act 2014
Disability Inclusion Regulation 2023
Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021
Government Information (Public Access) Act 2019
Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018
Local Government (General) Regulation 2021
Local Government Act 1993
Modern Slavery Act 2018

Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022
Public Interest Regulation 2022
Swimming Pools Act 1992
Swimming Pools Regulation 2018

(d) Risk

Failure to publish an Annual Report by 30 November 2023 would constitute non-compliance by Leeton Shire Council. It would also mean a lack of accountability to ratepayers and residents which would be reputationally damaging to the Council.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

The community will be notified of the Annual Report via social media platforms and The Irrigator.

The Minister for Local Government will be notified of the publication of the Leeton Shire Council Annual Report 2024 via an email to the Office of Local Government.

(b) Internal

Senior Management Team
Managers
Responsible Officers

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

9. Governance and Administration

9.7 Deploy reliable and efficient corporate management - financial, asset, property, records, information technology, buildings and plant/fleet in accordance with relevant legislation including Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

ATTACHMENTS

1. DRAFT - 2024 Annual Report **[8.1.2.1 - 104 pages]**

DRAFT
2024
Annual
Report



LEETON
SHIRE COUNCIL





Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Leeton Shire Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri People and their continued input on our Community.

We acknowledge their connection to the land, water and sky.

We acknowledge all Aboriginal people who have made the Leeton Shire their home.

As such we pay our respects to all Aboriginal Elders, past, present and emerging of our Shire.

Contents

About Leeton Shire	2
Snapshot of Leeton Shire	3
Welcome and Context	5
Message from Our Mayor and General Manager	6
Highlights for 2023/24 by Theme of the Community Strategic Plan	11
Finance Snapshot	12
Our Status as at 30 June 2024	12
Our 2023/24 Income	13
Our 2023/24 Expenditure	14
Our Council	18
How Council Operates	18
Our Councillors	19
Council Meetings	21
Council's Committees and Working Groups	21
Our Community	22
Our Community's Vision	22
Australia Day Awards	23
Citizenships	23
Community Grants Program	25
Celebrating Our Volunteers	28
Our Organisation	31
Our Staff Mission	31
Our Staff Values	31
Our Staff Structure	31
Our Senior Management Team	32
Our Staff	34
Organisational Development	34
Work Health and Safety	38
Employee Health and Wellbeing	39
Corporate Governance	40
Our Performance by Functional Area	45
1. Community Services and Community Development	47
2. Museum, Arts and Cultural Services	53
3. Parks, Streetscapes and Sporting Facilities	57
4. Economic Development	63
5. Planning, Building and Public Health	67
6. Roads and Drainage	71
7. Water and Sewer Services	75
8. Environmental Sustainability and Emergency Services	79
9. Governance and Administration	83
Our Performance by Status of Actions	85
Statutory Information	89



About Leeton Shire

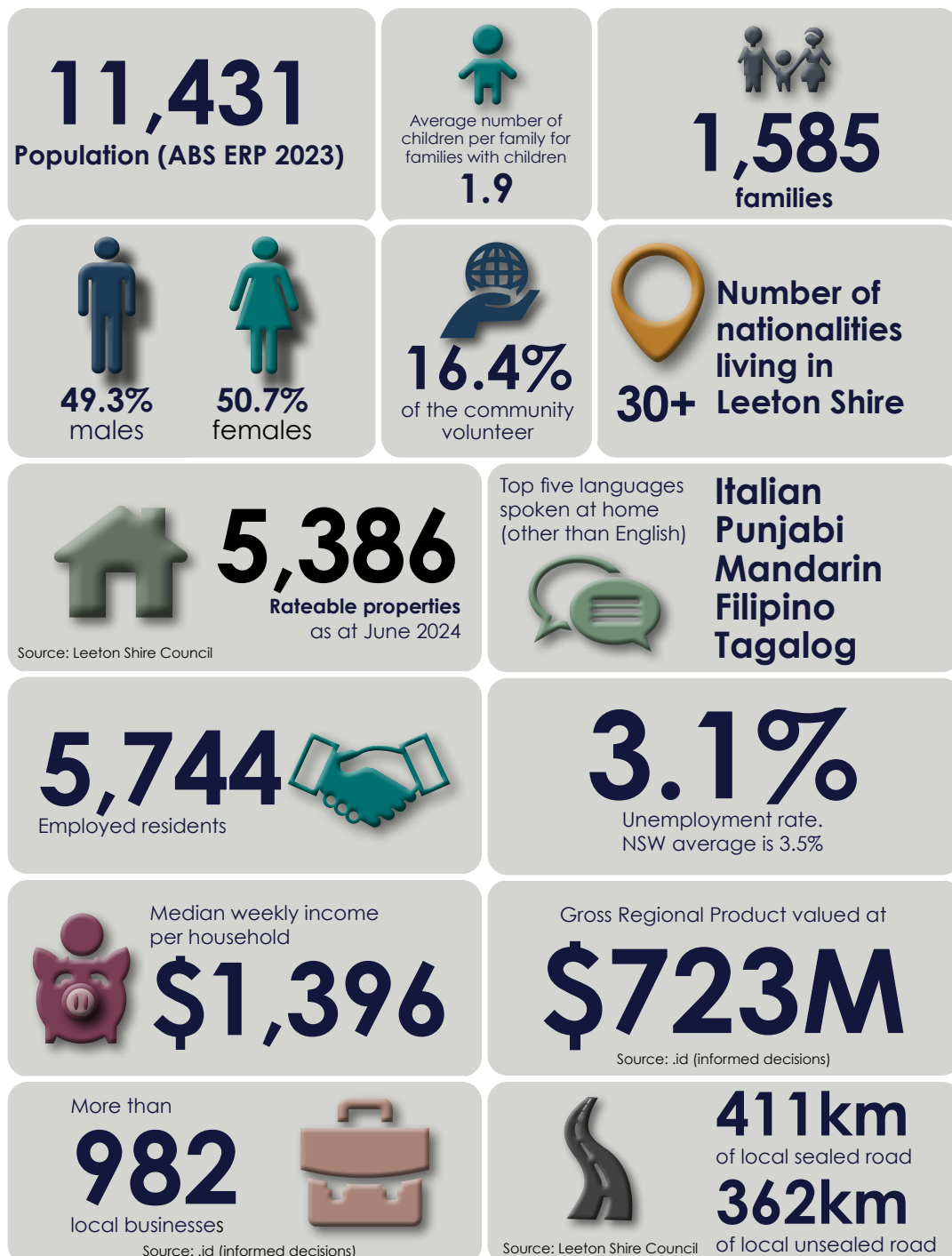


Leeton Shire is located in southwest New South Wales, 584km from Sydney, 470km from Melbourne and 371km from Canberra. It covers 1,167km² and includes the towns of Leeton, Yanco and Whitton and the villages of Murrumbidgee and Wamboona.

With a population of 11,452 (ABS 2021), Leeton is the second largest regional centre in the Western Riverina region and plays an integral role in value-added agricultural processing, agriculture, education and research, transport and logistics.

Leeton Shire has a proud history as the birthplace of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. It celebrates its multicultural diversity and welcomes new settlers, migrants and refugees. Leeton is also the Art Deco Capital of regional Australia.

Snapshot of Leeton Shire



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), unless otherwise indicated (correct as at 1 July 2024)





Leeton Sunrize Festival

Welcome and Context

Welcome to the Leeton Shire Council Annual Report 2024

The Annual Report is a key point of accountability between Leeton Shire Council and the Leeton Shire community. It provides the community with an update on Council's progress in implementing the Delivery Program 2022–2025 through the actions and activities set out in the Operational Plan 2023/24.

The Delivery Program and Operational Plan (DPOP) formalised Council's commitment to the community. It documented the actions and activities Council said it would undertake in order to progress the objectives set out in the Community Strategic Plan (CSP): *Liveable Leeton 2035*.

Liveable Leeton 2035 has steered the Leeton Shire community's journey towards the future. It documents the community's vision and lists 25 outcomes which are grouped into five key focus areas:

Focus Area 1. A connected, inclusive and enriched community – good health, lifelong learning, friendliness and inclusivity, safety, and access to a range of quality affordable housing

Focus Area 2. A safe, active and healthy community – participation in sports and leisure, enjoyment in arts and culture, and valuing heritage

Focus Area 3. A thriving regional economy – a thriving irrigated agricultural sector, strong business and employment, great attractions and events, and a vibrant town centre

Focus Area 4. A quality environment – reliable water and sewerage services, good transport infrastructure, sustainable natural environment, and attractive towns and parks

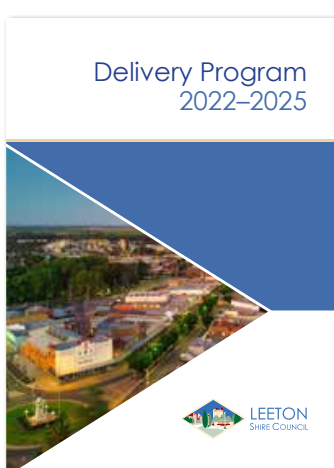
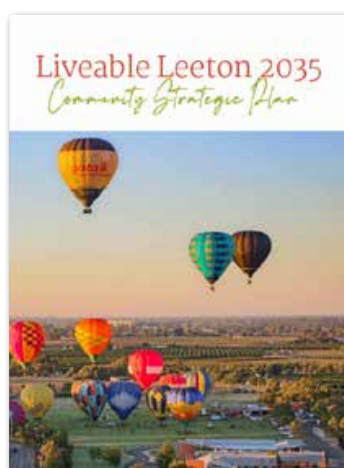
Focus Area 5. Strong leadership and civic participation – politicians who act and listen, a community that speaks up and gets involved, and a community that is always on the front foot.

To enable Council to more accurately track its progress, the activities detailed in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan were grouped by functional areas with the links to the Community Strategic Plan (CSP): *Liveable Leeton 2035* identified against each action.

In addition to information on Council's performance in delivering on its Delivery Program and Operational Plan commitments, the Annual Report includes information prescribed in the Local Government Regulation that councils must report on annually, as well as a snapshot of Council's finances. More detailed financial information can be found in the Leeton Shire Council Annual Financial Statements for the year ending 30 June 2024.

The Annual Report is also an opportunity to acknowledge the great things that have happened across the Shire and note the challenges that have marked the year.

We hope you enjoy reading about our activities during the 2023/24 financial year and we thank our community for the continued support and direction.



Message from Our Mayor and General Manager

It is our pleasure to present the 2023/24 Annual Report, which is the final annual report for the 2021 – 2024 term of Council.

It's been another big year for Leeton Shire, with the elected Councillors and various operational teams regularly going above and beyond to deliver for the community. We are pleased to report that Council has made some excellent progress, sometimes under very challenging circumstances. Please take the time to reflect on the wide variety of functions Council delivers, noting too the high levels of compliance obligations that must be reported each year.

Our sincere thanks to the outgoing Council and retiring Councillors, as well as the senior staff / managers and their amazing teams who have and continue to contribute to an abundantly livable Leeton Shire. We also appreciate greatly the many community members who are actively engaged with Council – including the youth of Leeton – and have helped shape our strategic direction. Your voices are important and we continue to make it our priority to listen and learn.

Some of our more significant results for this year include:

- **Rating Structure Review**

To increase fairness and rebalance the rates from 01 July 2024, a 2-year adjustment has been adopted that will see the rate peg from farmland temporarily distributed across business. Further, a new 'business industrial' rating category will be permanently introduced that will see larger businesses pay a higher portion of business rates than small business.

- **Fiduciary Responsibility**

Completed a review of five (5) Asset Management Plans and updated the Long Term Financial Plan accordingly. While the year ended with a strong cash position of \$51.4M, the General Fund continues to be unsustainable and will need to be addressed by the next term of Council.

- **Grant Funding and Developer Contributions**

Council benefited from \$17.14M in grants and contributions, with \$423K of that from various developer contributions.

- **Major Capital Works**

- Completed WaterSlide at Leeton Aquatic Centre
- Completed Wamoon Sewerage Scheme and Wamoon Park Public Toilets
- Completed Leeton Early Learning Centre Expansion, with 136 children now enrolled
- Completed Canal Street heavy vehicle by-pass upgrade

- Completed new Pound with capacity for 16 dogs and cats
- Progressed Chelmsford Town Square redevelopment
- Progressed development of new Landfill Cell
- Progressed Roxy Community Theatre Redevelopment
- Commenced Phase 1 of Vance Industrial Estate Stage 3

- **Development Planning**

Approved 141 development applications with a combined value of \$19.5M; held 27 pre-lodgement meetings; and issued 67 Construction Certificates, 3 Subdivision Certificates, 2 Complying Development Certificates and 401 Planning Certificates.

- **Strategic Planning**

Commenced development of an Integrated Land Use, Transport and Infrastructure Plan to complement Leeton Shire's newly adopted Housing Strategy. Adopted a new Active Transport Plan.

- **Library**

There were 20,371 visits made to the Library, with 18,328 books loaned to 3,004 active library members. An Enhancement Project was completed that has delivered upgraded technology and new furnishings for the benefit of the community.

- **Leeton Museum & Art Gallery**

Attracted 3,476 visitors to eleven exhibitions and hosted a variety of workshops and events, including the Acacia Quartet, renowned as one of Australia's most esteemed string ensembles. Sponsored the annual Penny Paniz Art Competition in association with the Leeton Art Society. Benefitted from \$192K of grant funding raised for Leeton Shire by Western Riverina Arts.

- **Open Space and Recreation**

There were 32,414 entries to the Leeton Aquatic Centre and 2,733 at the Whitton Pool. Over 18,564 rounds were played at the Leeton Golf Course. Planted 83 new street trees.

We are pleased to report that Council has made some excellent progress, sometimes under very challenging circumstances.

Message from Our Mayor and General Manager cont.

- **Regulatory Services**

Rehomed 153 dogs; responded to 21 dog attacks; micro-chipped 168 animals; conducted 120 inspections (food, skin penetration remises and private swimming pools) and continued with the annual mosquito surveillance program. Secured \$55K in noxious weeds grant funding from Riverina Local Lands Services and undertook 131 weed inspections.

- **Roads and Footpaths**

Surveyed 410km of sealed roads using advanced video imaging technology. Rehabilitated 6.1km of sealed roads; resealed 16.6km of roads; resheeted 9.7km of gravel roads; completed 13km of new line marking; and undertook various road safety / driver safety activities. Undertook \$180K worth of works for TfNSW on Irrigation Way.

- **Water and Sewer**

Supplied 2180ML of potable water across the Shire; upgraded all filtration plants including new launders and a chemical storage shed at the Leeton plant. Telemetry upgrades to pump stations and water main replacement in Whitton. Undertook 67 liquid trade waste inspections, with 91% of businesses now compliant.

- **Solid Waste Management**

Successfully diverted 41.36% of waste from landfill through recycling efforts. Reopened the Leeton Tip Shop which is now managed by Reviva. Collected 5,166 drums through a Drum Muster. Undertook detailed planning, preparation, education and procurement in anticipation of launching FOGO from 01 July 2024. Through a successful joint tender process with RAMJO, Council secured the (new) 3rd bin for only an extra \$15 per household per annum.

- **Energy Savings**

Generated 400 kWh of solar power through solar arrays (equivalent of powering 142 households), reducing Council's electricity costs. Completed solar inverter replacement and remote monitoring system on the main Council Administration building and a major Power Factor Correction (PFC) installation at the Leeton Sewer Treatment Plant. Commenced a Power Purchase Agreement procurement process in association with Joint Organisations (RAMJO and Hunter JO) for major electricity sites.

- **Events**

Our full suite of events (including Art Deco Festival, SunRice Festival, Outback Band Spectacular, Chill & Grill, Fiesta La Leeton, Light Up Leeton etc) continues to bring entertainment, life and soul

to the Shire and offers fabulous opportunities for community to come together to celebrate all that is good about Leeton. We are very fortunate to have so many partnerships with the community making the events so successful. Welcomed 28 new citizens.

- **Fivebough Wetlands**

Collaborated with Crown Lands as a member of the management advisory group. New visitor and interpretive signage has been installed and the walking paths upgraded.

- **Community Engagement**

Over 128 media releases, 829 social media posts, 10 Have Your Say surveys, two 'Chat with your Councillor' sessions and launched a Council newsletter for the community. Held two meetings of a very high calibre Youth Council made up of students from three schools. Council continues to enjoy a really respectful and constructive relationship with the Leeton and Districts Aboriginal Lands Council and has commenced the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan.

- **Growing Our Own**

Offered 11 traineeships across childcare, parks, water / waste water, events, library and customer service and 15 school based work experience opportunities. Council spends 1% of employee cost on staff training and professional development.

- **Advocacy**

Continued to advocate for water security, including helping to organise a rally against water buybacks. Began discussions with the Dept of Health about commencing a Collaborative Care Program for Leeton. Met with six (6) Federal and State Ministers covering mainly health, water security and funding for major projects. Submitted and had unanimous support for 6 motions across peak NSW and Australian Local Government Associations, covering housing, energy costs, Pacific Labour Scheme challenges, weeds management and cybersecurity. Active involvement with RAMJO, the MDA (Murray Darling Association) and Country Mayors where our combined voices are better heard by other tiers of government. Initiated the Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific with Welcoming Australia.



Message from Our Mayor and General Manager cont.

Closing Remarks from Mayor Tony Reneker

It has been my privilege to serve as Mayor of Leeton Shire Council and I strongly believe our Shire continues to punch well above its weight. I'd like to thank the Councillors for working together constructively, especially when we were faced with some very challenging financial decisions. I believe we have made a positive difference to the communities we represent over our term, and we've done our best to set aside our individual preferences in favour of focusing on what is important for the greater good. That said, it hasn't been easy making an 'unpopular decision' and we now leave it to the next Council to find a way forward with the General Fund. It would be fair to say that balancing needs, wants, expectations and jobs imposed on us by other tiers of government (usually without consultation) has been difficult to navigate. If there is one thing I know for sure, this is a challenge for councils across NSW and is not peculiar to Leeton.



Mayor Tony Reneker

Closing Remarks from General Manager Jackie Kruger

On behalf of the staff, we thank the elected Council for their direction and guidance. Of course, implementation is key to the work a Council does and we are fortunate to have the services of many highly experienced and motivated staff. Council remains committed to their safety and the development of their careers and I am delighted to report that several staff have participated in leadership programs, with 4 graduating from the LG Professionals Aspiring Leaders Program. We also celebrate milestone work anniversaries, with Justin Davidson celebrating 20 years, David Harrison and Dennis Irvine 25 years each, and William Ingram close to a whopping 43 years at his retirement. Leeton Shire teams were also finalists in five (5) categories in the 2024 LG Professionals Annual Awards night. Well done everyone!



General Manager
Jackie Kruger



Message from Our Mayor and General Manager cont.



Chelmsford Town Square progress in April 2024





Highlights for 2023/24 by Community Strategic Plan Theme

A Connected, Inclusive and Enriched Community

- Welcomed 28 new Australian Citizens
- Coordinated the Survival Day Mural at Gossamer Park
- Commenced development of a Leeton Shire Reconciliation Plan
- Completed works on the expansion of the Leeton Early Learning Centre
- Progressed the Roxy Community Theatre redevelopment
- Completed the Library's Technology and Community Hub Enhancement Project

A Safe, Active and Healthy Community

- Completed and held the official opening of the water slides at the Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre
- Hosted the 22nd Annual Riggz Cup Riverina Skate Championships
- Coordinated the new 'Gamechanger', an innovative sports and wellbeing program for school students
- Supported a successful Sunrice Festival and Fiesta La Leeton

A Thriving Regional Economy

- Approved 141 Development Applications valued at \$19.47M
- Held two free microchipping days with a total of 91 animals microchipped
- Hosted the Inaugural Leeton Recruitment Summit in partnership with Leeton Business Chamber, GROW Riverina and Workforce Australia
- Adopted the Leeton Housing Strategy 2024
- Completed the WRConnect Masterplan
- Coordinated the Australian Art Deco Festival Leeton 2023 program with approximately 3,606 participants across 40 events

A Quality Environment

- Completed the Wamoon Sewerage Scheme
- Advanced preparations for the rollout of FOGO and its three bin system across the community
- Progressed works on the Leeton CBD Enhancement Project Phase 3 - Chelmsford Place Town Square
- Completed the off leash dog park at McCaughey Bicentennial Park in Yanco
- Completed road rehabilitation works on Canal Street as part of the 'Heavy Vehicle Bypass' upgrade
- Completed a significant electrical upgrade at Leeton Sewerage Treatment Plant providing enhanced operational efficiency and reliability

Strong Leadership and Civic Participation

- Advocated for the local community on a range of issues including health, water security and additional funding
- Endorsed a 2-Year Rate Rebalancing Program to improve fairness
- Awarded 15 Community Strengthening Grants to a total value of \$22,496.90, four Quick Response Grants to a total value of \$6,269 and 17 Youth Development Grants to a total value of \$4,250
- Made 17 successful grant applications to the value of \$784,264 (excluding road grant funding).

Images left from top: Chelmsford Place Upgrade, Leeton Recruitment Summit, Survival Day Mural at Gossamer Park, Leeton Waterslides



Finance Snapshot

Our Status as at 30 June 2024

The net operating result, before capital grants and contributions, for the year ended 30 June 2024 is a surplus of \$119K compared to a surplus of \$1.55M for the year ended 30 June 2023.

The decrease of \$1.43M compared to last year is mainly due to decrease in the financial assistance grant revenue and increase in depreciation expenses caused by revaluations as well as increase in materials and services.

Cash and Investments

Council's total cash and investments as at 30 June 2024 were \$51.4 million. All of these funds are not available for discretionary use, as the amount includes items that are externally (by Statute) or internally (by Council policy) restricted in their use:

- Council is holding \$42.8 million of externally restricted funds. This amount includes developer contributions, deposits/bonds, unexpended grants, and water, sewerage, and domestic waste cash and investments.
- The \$9.88 million remaining cash is internally restricted. These are amounts set aside for purposes such as future asset replacement and accrued employee leave entitlements. Some of the key internal restrictions as at 30 June 2024 were as follows:
 - Plant and vehicle replacement – \$0.6 million
 - Leeton Museum & Art Gallery – \$0.3 million
 - Land development – \$0.255 million
 - Employee leave entitlements – \$1.391 million
 - FAGs in advance – \$5.188 million
 - Unfinished work – \$1.449 million
 - Other grants – \$0.697 million.

Assets and Liabilities	2023/24	2022/23 for comparison
Assets		
Total current assets	\$43,789,000	\$46,740,000
Total non-current assets	\$381,589,000	\$356,024,000
Total assets	\$425,378,000	\$402,764,000
Liabilities		
Total current liabilities	\$11,809,000	\$9,367,000
Total non-current liabilities	\$7,066,000	\$6,867,000
Total liabilities	\$18,875,000	\$16,234,000
TOTAL EQUITY	\$406,503,000	\$386,530,000

Finance Snapshot cont.

Our 2023/24 Income and Expenditure

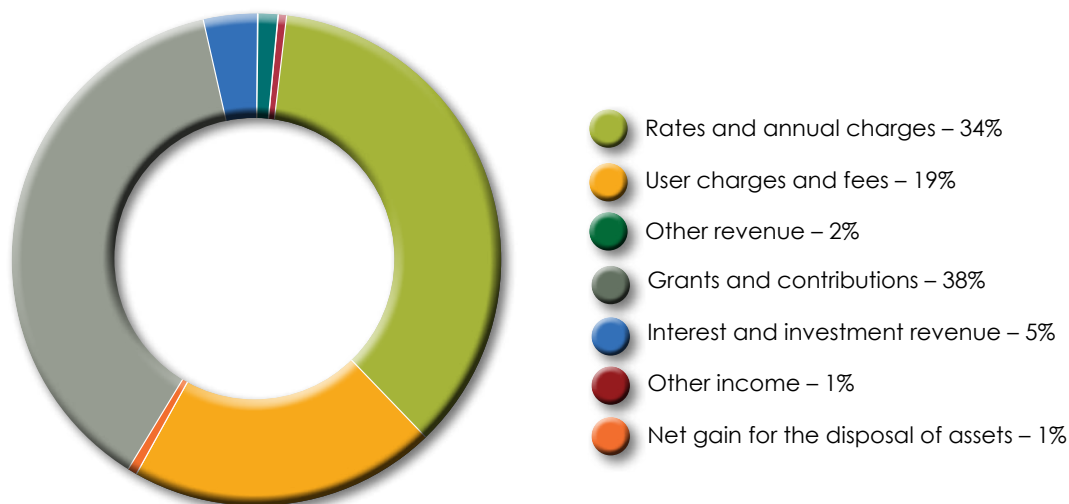
For the financial year ended 30 June 2024, Leeton Shire Council's total income from continuing operations, including grant income, was \$44.75 million. The expenditure was \$38.35 million.

Income and Expenditure	2023/24	2022/23 for comparison
Income		
Total income from continuing operations	\$44,748,000	\$41,389,000
Expenditure		
Total expenses from continuing operations	\$38,352,000	\$34,890,000
Operating Result		
Net operating result (counting grants and contributions)	\$6,396,000	\$6,499,000
Net operating result (not counting capital grants and contributions)	\$119,000	(\$1,551,000)

Our 2023/24 Income

Leeton Shire Council receives the bulk of its operating income from three main sources:

- Rates and annual charges – \$15.01 million
- User charges and fees – \$8.68 million
- Grants and non-developer contributions – \$17.135 million



For further information on Council's finances, please see the Annual Financial Statements for the year ending 30 June 2024, available on Council's website.



Finance Snapshot cont.



Gralee School – Recipients of a Community Development Grant

Finance Snapshot cont.

Grants and Contributions Income

In 2023/24 Leeton Shire Council received grants and contributions of \$17.14 million. The Federal Government provided \$2.37 million, the State Government provided \$12.06 million of this amount (\$5.5 million in Federal Assistance Grants). Developer contributions provided a further \$423,000.

2023/24 Grants and Contributions Income	Operating Grants	Capital Grants
General purpose grants (untied)		
Current year allocation		
Financial assistance – general component	\$307,000	0
Financial assistance – local roads component	\$55,000	0
Payments in advance – future year allocations		
Financial assistance – general component	\$4,024,000	0
Financial assistance – local roads component	\$1,164,000	0
Other		
Other grants	0	\$24,000
Total general purpose grants recognised as income in 2023/24	\$5,550,000	\$24,000
Special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (tied)		
Previously specific grants		
Sewerage services	\$0	\$679,000
Childcare	\$77,000	0
Community care	\$0	
Economic development	\$475,000	0
Employment and training programs	\$118,000	0
Environmental programs	\$4,000	0
Heritage and cultural	\$0	\$829,000
Library	\$3,000	0
Library per capita	\$79,000	0
Library – special projects	\$97,000	0
LIRS subsidy	\$7,000	0
Noxious weeds	\$50,000	0
NSW Rural Fire Services	\$78,000	0
Recreation and culture	\$25,000	\$1,757,000
Storm/Flood damage	\$398,000	0
Youth services	\$0	0
Street lighting	\$66,000	0
Transport (Roads to Recovery)	\$804,000	0
Transport (other roads and bridges funding)	\$2,387,000	\$18,000
Other specific grants	\$377,000	\$92,000
Previous contributions		
Roads and bridges	0	\$2,074,000
Transport for NSW contributions (regional roads, block grant)	\$263,000	\$93,000
Total special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (cash)	\$5,308,000	\$5,542,000
Non-cash contributions		
Child care	0	\$288,000
Total other contributions – non-cash	0	\$288,000
Total special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (tied)	\$5,308,000	\$5,830,000
Total grants and non-developer contributions - operating and capital	\$10,858,000	\$5,854,000
Comprising:		
– Commonwealth funding	\$935,000	\$1,439,000
– State funding	\$9,389,000	\$2,677,000
– Other funding	\$534,000	\$1,738,000

Some of that grant funding was received this year and is included in the table above. In other cases, Council has received notification that its application has been successful but the actual funding won't be received until a future financial year. Leeton Shire Council extends its thanks to all funding providers.

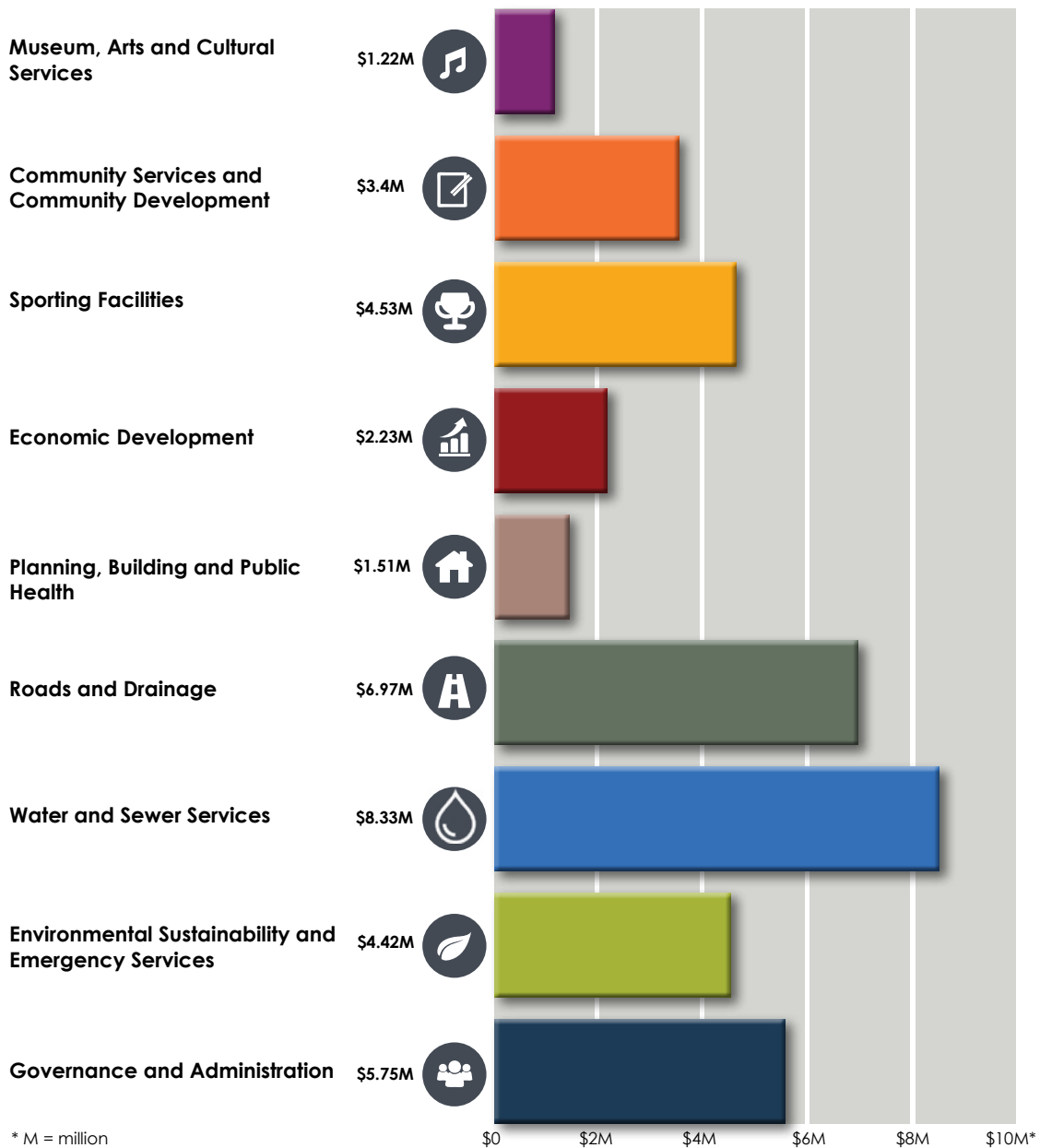


Finance Snapshot cont.

Our 2023/24 Expenditure

Council spends its funds on behalf of the community in a variety of ways. The following table provides a breakdown of our allocation of expenditure by function. The function categories used in the table are based on the categories defined by the NSW Office of Local Government's Code of Accounting Practice.

Expenditure by Council Function

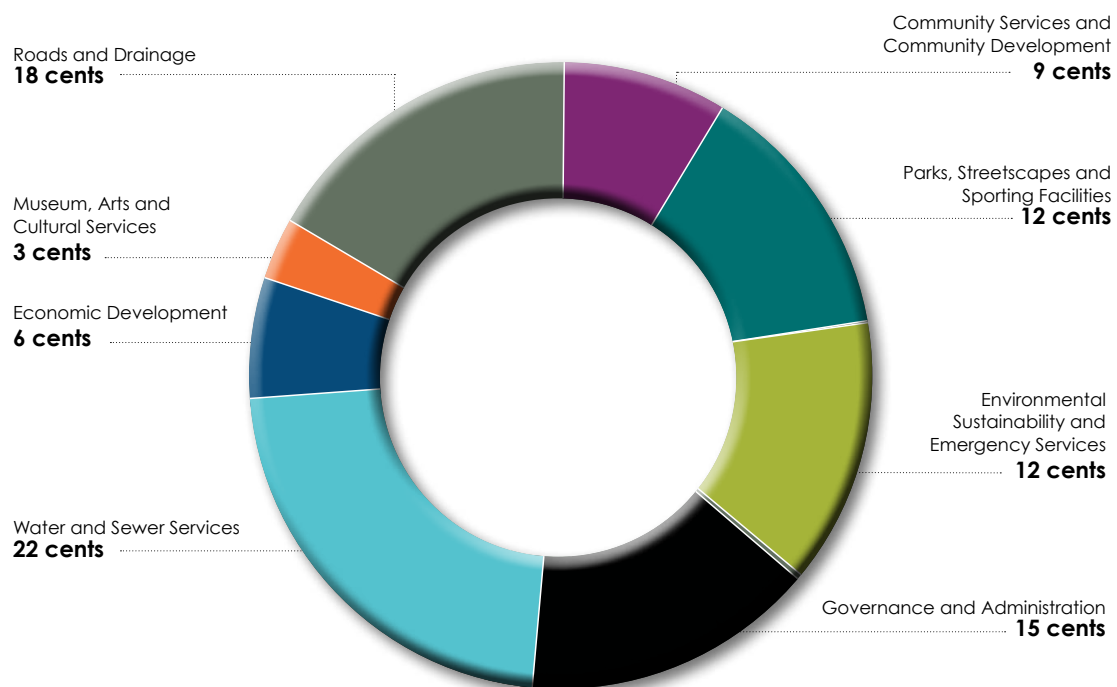


Finance Snapshot cont.

Where Does Every Dollar Go?

The graph below shows how each dollar (or every cent in each dollar) Council spends is allocated according to function. The function categories are based on those defined by the NSW Office of Local Government's Code of Accounting Practice.

Expenditure by Council function – expressed as cents in the dollar (rounded to the nearest cent)



Our Council



Left to right: Cr Paul Smith, Cr George Weston, Cr Tracey Morris, Deputy Mayor Michael Kidd, Mayor Tony Reneker, Cr Krystal Maytom, Cr Sandra Nardi, Cr Tony Ciccio (Absent – Cr Matt Holt)

How Council Operates

Local Government is the third level of government and is directly accountable to the local community. Council is the governing body at a local level and its powers and responsibilities are conferred upon it by the New South Wales Government. It generates its revenue from local rates, charges and fees along with grant funds from the State and Commonwealth

Governments. While the *Local Government Act 1993* provides Council with the framework and powers to provide community services and facilities, there are now in excess of 70 pieces of legislation which direct how Council carries out its functions within the community.

Our Council cont.

Our Councillors

Councillor Portfolios

As a lead voice for the community, this term of Council has allocated portfolios across the team of elected representatives. This spreads the workload across the team and enables nominated Councillors to become the elected Council's subject experts, champions and go-to people on the specific topic(s) in their portfolios.

Cr Tony Reneker

Mayor

Elected to Council 2016

Portfolios: Police Liaison,
Aboriginal Liaison, WRConnect
Intermodal

tonyr@leeton.nsw.gov.au
0448 535 004



Cr Michael Kidd

Deputy Mayor

Elected to Council 2004–2008
Elected to Council 2012

Portfolios: Housing,
Arts and Culture

michaelk@leeton.nsw.gov.au
0427 536 065



Cr Tony Ciccio

Elected to Council 2016

Portfolio: Health

tonyc@leeton.nsw.gov.au
0410 899 479



Cr Matt Holt

Elected to Council 2021

Portfolio: Education

matth@leeton.nsw.gov.au
0459 202 749



Cr Krystal Maytom

Elected to Council 2021

Portfolios: Business, Tourism

krystalm@leeton.nsw.gov.au
0476 118 079



Cr Tracey Morris

Elected to Council 2012

Portfolios: Financial Sustainability,
Yanco Agricultural Institute

traceym@leeton.nsw.gov.au
0428 5589 442



Cr Sandra Nardi

Elected to Council 2016

Portfolio: Youth

sandran@leeton.nsw.gov.au
0481 116 286



Cr Paul Smith

Elected to Council 2016

Portfolios: Water Security

pauls@leeton.nsw.gov.au
0428 276 486



Cr George Weston

Elected to Council 1995

Portfolios: Heritage, CBD
Enhancement Strategy,
Environment and Climate
Change

georgew@leeton.nsw.gov.au
0417 519 580



Our Council cont.

Councillor Representation on Committees

Councillors each take a role in representing Council on a number of committees, organisations and working groups and in liaising with external groups. The full list of Council's committees and working groups, as well as the shared and/or external committees with which it is involved is provided on page 19.

Cr Tony Reneker, Mayor

Section 355 Committees

- Murrumbidgee Community Hall Committee
- Whitton Community Hall Committee
- Yanco Community Hall and Markets Committee

Advisory Committees/Working Groups

- General Manager Review Committee
- Leeton Flood Plain Management Committee
- Leeton Weeds Committee
- Leeton Youth Council

Action Committees

- Leeton Australia Day Committee
- Sporting Walk of Fame Committee
- Whitton Town Improvement Committee
- Yanco Town Improvement Committee
- Health Advisory Committee (Internal)

External Committees/Organisations

- Country Mayors Association
- Bushfire Management Committee
- Fivebough and Tuckerbil Wetlands Advisory Committee
- Murray-Darling Association

Shared Services Committees/Organisations

- Narrandera-Leeton Airport Management Committee
- Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation

Liaisons

- Aboriginal Strategic Liaison
- Murrumbidgee Irrigation Strategic Liaison
- Police Strategic Liaison

Cr George Weston

Section 355 Committees

- Light Up Leeton Committee
- SunRice Festival Committee

Advisory Committees/

Working Groups

- CBD Enhancement Advisory Committee

- Gogeldrie Weir Recreational Facilities Committee
- Leeton Shire Heritage Committee

Action Committees

- Leeton Australia Day Committee
- Henry Lawson Cottage Committee

External Committees/Organisations

- Leeton Business Chamber

Cr Michael Kidd, Deputy Mayor

Section 355 Committees

- Whitton Court House and Historical Museum Committee
- Yanco Community Hall and Markets Committee

Advisory Committees/

Working Groups

- General Manager Review Committee
- Infrastructure Working Group
- Leeton Tree Advisory Committee
- Roxy Redevelopment Committee

Shared Services Committees/Organisations

- Riverina Regional Library Advisory Committee

Cr Tony Ciccio

Advisory Committees/ Working Groups

- Gogeldrie Weir Recreational Facilities Committee
- Infrastructure Working Group
- Leeton Local Traffic Committee
- Leeton Shire Heritage Committee
- Leeton Weeds Committee

Action Committees

- Henry Lawson Cottage Committee
- Health Advisory Committee (Internal)

Cr Matthew Holt

Advisory Committees/Working Groups

- Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) – Non-voting
- CBD Enhancement Advisory Committee
- Community Grant Funding Working Group
- General Manager Review Committee
- Leeton Local Traffic Committee
- Leeton Tree Advisory Committee

Cr Krystal Maytom

Section 355 Committees

- Light Up Leeton Committee
- Whitton Court House and Historical Museum Committee

Cr Tracey Morris

Advisory Committees/

Working Groups

- Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) – Voting
- CBD Enhancement Advisory Committee
- Roxy Redevelopment Committee

External Committees/Organisations

- Leeton Business Chamber

Cr Sandra Nardi

Section 355 Committees

- SunRice Festival Committee

Advisory Committees/

Working Groups

- Community Grant Funding Working Group
- Leeton Youth Council
- Roxy Redevelopment Committee

Cr Paul Smith

Section 355 Committees

- Whitton Community Hall Committee

Advisory Committees/Working Groups

- Community Grant Funding Working Group
- Infrastructure Working Group
- Leeton Flood Plain Management Committee

Action Committees

- Whitton Town Improvement Committee
- Yanco Town Improvement Committee

Shared Services Committees/Organisations

- Narrandera-Leeton Airport Management Committee

Our Council cont.

Council Meetings

Ordinary Council Meetings are generally held on the fourth Wednesday of every month. Meeting agendas are available on the Council website, as are minutes of meetings. Hard copies are available at the Council office reception in Chelmsford Place. Residents wishing to address the Councillors on an agenda item can do so by registering their request by midday on the working day before the scheduled meeting by contacting Council on (02) 6953 0911 or council@leeton.nsw.gov.au. Meetings can be viewed online the day after the meeting.

During 2023/24, eleven Ordinary Council Meetings and one Extraordinary Meetings were held.

Council Meetings attended

Councillors	Period of Office	Ordinary Meetings Attended	Extraordinary Meetings Attended
Cr Tony Ciccia	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024	11/11	1/1
Cr Matthew Holt	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024	11/11	1/1
Cr Michael Kidd, Deputy Mayor from December 2021	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024	10/11	1/1
Cr Krystal Maytom	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024	10/11	1/1
Cr Tracey Morris	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024	10/11	1/1
Cr Sandra Nardi	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024	9/11	1/1
Cr Tony Reneker, Mayor from December 2021	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024	11/11	1/1
Cr Paul Smith	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024	11/11	1/1
Cr George Weston	1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024	11/11	1/1

Council's Committees and Working Groups

Section 355 Committees	Advisory Committees and Working Groups	Action Committees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Light Up Leeton Committee SunRice Festival Committee Whitton Court House and Historical Museum Committee Whitton Community Hall Committee Yanco Community Hall and Markets Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBD Enhancement Advisory Committee Gogeldrie Weir Recreational Facilities Committee Infrastructure Working Group Leeton Flood Plain Management Committee Community Grant Funding Working Group Henry Lawson Cottage Committee Leeton Local Traffic Committee Leeton Shire Heritage Committee Leeton Tree Advisory Committee Leeton Weeds Committee Leeton Youth Council – in set-up phase Roxy Community Theatre Advisory Committee – in hiatus Roxy Redevelopment Committee Whitton Town Improvement Committee Yanco Town Improvement Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leeton Australia Day Committee Sporting Walk of Fame Committee
External Committees and Associations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country Mayors Association Leeton Business Chamber Leeton Local Emergency Management Committee Local Government New South Wales Local Government Professionals NSW – for staff MIA Zone Liaison Committee (Rural Fire Service) Murray Darling Association Western Riverina Arts 		Shared Service Committees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrandera-Leeton Airport Management Committee Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) Riverina Regional Library (RRL)
		Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, ARIC



Our Community

Our Community's Vision

To enjoy outstanding lifestyles and prosperous livelihoods within a caring and inclusive community and a healthy environment. To be inspirational leaders leaving a legacy in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area of which we are enormously proud.

The community's goals and the strategies to achieve them are documented in the Community Strategic Plan Liveable Leeton 2035.



Leeton Chill and Grill

Our Community cont.

Australia Day Awards

The 2024 Leeton Australia Day Awards recognised, celebrated and acknowledged the achievements and positive contribution community groups and individuals make to our community. Leeton's 2024 Australia Day Ambassador was Lindy Milan OAM.

Awards were presented at the Australia Day Ceremony on 26 January 2024 to:

Gregory (Joey) Longford – **Citizen of the Year**

University of the Third Age (U3A) –

Organisation of the Year

Jack Crowe – **Young Citizen of the Year**

Arnie Fazekas – **Sportsperson of the Year**

Shane Leighton – **Achiever of the Year**

Miah Weymouth – **Junior Sportsperson of the Year**

Ellena Halloran – **Young Achiever of the Year**

Sheree Wilesmith – **Lifelong Citizen of the Year**

Leeton Rainbow Pride Festival – **Event of the Year**

St Francis College Boarders – **Group of the Year**



Above and below: Australia Day Award recipients Below right: Australia Day Pool Party



Our Community cont.

Citizenships

Australian Citizenship Ceremonies are hosted by Council for Shire residents who have applied to become Australian citizens through the Department of Home Affairs. Ceremonies are held throughout the year with one major ceremony on Australia Day.

During 2023/24, Council hosted four citizenship ceremonies, one on Australian Citizenship Day (17 September 2023), one on Australia Day (26 January

2024), one on Harmony Day (21 March 2024) and one on 18 June 2024 to mark Refugee Week. Leeton Shire welcomed a total of 28 new citizens at these ceremonies (23 adults and 5 children). The new citizens originated from various countries including the Philippines, Sri Lanka, South Korea, New Zealand, India, Bangladesh, Argentina, Pakistan and Afghanistan.



Mayor Tony Reneker welcomes new citizens

Our Community cont.

Community Grants Program

Contributions and Donations

Local Government Act 1993 s 356

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a5)

Community Strengthening Grants

Council's Community Strengthening Grants Program is made available bi-annually for community projects. Community groups and organisations can apply for financial assistance, resources and/or covering the costs of hiring Council facilities under Council's Grants Policy. In 2023/24, funding was provided to the following groups.

Recipient	Purpose	Amount
Gogeldrie RFS Community Gym	Blower Vacuum for the gym	\$659.00
Leeton Aqua Exercise	Equipment for aerobics program	\$2,000.00
Leeton Connect	Purchase of two mobile phones	\$1,845.90
Leeton Show Society	Purchase of printer, cabinets and ladders	\$1,000.00
Jim Grahame Re-enactment Committee	Project development	\$1,500.00*
Leeton Jockey Club	Purchase of storage container	\$2,000.00
Yanco Wamoon Rugby League		
Football Club Ladies Auxiliary	Purchase of coffee machine	\$1,499.00
Leeton Lions Club	Purchase of a camera system	\$1,500.00
Leeton Town Band	Recruitment Day, workshop and concert	\$850.00
Leeton United Football Club	Foldable football	\$1,300.00
MIA Bootleggers	Purchase of top dressing for area	\$500.00
Murrumbidgee Carriage Driving Club	Purchase of tables and chairs	\$1,200.00
Yanco Powerhouse Museum	Shade for the miniature train station	\$2,000.00
Rapid Relief Team	Leeton Winter Comfort Project	\$1,000.00
Rotary Club of Leeton	Stage 3 - Upgrade of Showground Main Gates	\$1,500.00
TOTAL		\$22,496.90

*Jim Grahame Re-enactment Committee (auspiced by WRA) returned their grant funds (minus \$150 for a WRA auspicing fee).

Quick Response Grants

Council's Community Strengthening Grants includes a 'Quick Response' Grant Category which aims to support activities that arise unexpectedly, with limited notice, outside the window of the twice-yearly Community Grants Scheme. Applications within this category are capped at a maximum of \$2,000. Council provided funding in the form of Quick Response Grants to the following organisations in 2023/24.

Recipient	Purpose	Amount
Yanco Public School P and C	Year 4-6 attend Wakakirri performance	\$2,000
Leeton Rainbow Pride Inc	GlamUp Workshop	\$1,770
Leeton Show Society Inc	Purchase of a laptop	\$1,499
Gralee School	Send five students to the Ten Pin Bowling State Championship	\$1,000
TOTAL		\$6,269



Our Community cont.



Miah Weymouth – Recipients of a Youth Development Grant and Cr Nardi



Wesley Wate – Recipient of a Youth Development Grant

Youth Development Grants

The Community Strengthening Grants program includes a 'Youth Development' Grant Category which is offered at a set amount of \$250 per applicant and is available to support high achievement in a cultural, academic or sporting activity that requires attendance at a State, National or International level event. Council awarded the following Youth Development Grants during 2023/24.

Recipient	Event	Amount
Jaxon Steele	Under 15s Schoolboys National Championships (AFL)	\$250
Indie Dunn	Riverina PSSA Primary girls 7s Rugby Union State Championships	\$250
Miah Weymouth	National State Championships U12s in AFL representing NSW	\$250
Harriet Naylor	2023 NSW/QLD/ACT State Interschool Snowsports Championships	\$250
Phoebe Naylor	2023 NSW/QLD/ACT State Interschool Snowsports Championships	\$250
Jason Mulloy	2023 NSWCHS Athletics State Championships	\$250
Ellena Halloran	2023 NSWCHS Athletics State Championships	\$250
Jesse Watson	2023 NSWCHS Athletics State Championships	\$250
Ibraheem Alix	2023 NSWCHS Boys Cricket State Championships	\$250
Timoci Radovu	Pacifica Youth Rugby Cup NSW U14 Fijian juniors	\$250
Wesley Wate	Murrumbidgee U13 youth cricket	\$250
Kian Henman	2024 NSWCHS Swimming and Diving State Championships	\$250
Jack Miller	2024 NSWCHS Swimming and Diving State Championships	\$250
Tallis McMillan	2024 NSWCHS Touch Football and Basketball Championships	\$250
Ruby Miller	Deaf Football Australia International Event Colorado USA	\$250
Sophie Cross	Hart NSW State Netball Carnival 2024	\$250
Bridget Arel	NSW School Spectacular 2024 in Sydney	\$250
TOTAL:		\$4,250

Our Community cont.

Other Contributions, Donations and Sponsorship

Recipient	Purpose	Amount
Leeton Shire Men's Shed Inc	Members insurance and contents insurance	\$2051.40
Leeton High School, MET School (Leeton Campus), St Francis De Sales Regional College, Yanco Agricultural High School	Annual donation towards end-of-year awards – \$100 per school	\$400.00
Leeton Public School, Parkview Public School, St Joseph's Primary School, Wamoon Public School, Whitton Murrumbidgee Public School, Yanco Public School, Grange School	Annual donation towards end-of-year awards – \$75 per school	\$525.00
TAFE – Leeton Campus	Annual donation – towards end-of-year awards	\$100.00
Leeton Business Chamber	Sponsorship of the Business Awards	\$1,800.00
Leeton Town Band	Rent for practice space and insurance	\$5,967.00
Leeton Town Band	Outback Band Spectacular	\$3,647.00
Koori Kids	NAIDOC School Initiative	\$450.00
Annual Penny Paniz Memorial Art Competition	Art prize sponsorship	\$1,200.00
Yanco Town Improvement Committee	Jumping castle hire for Twilights Market	\$791.00
NSW Rural Doctors Network	Bush Bursary Scholarship	\$3,000.00
TOTAL:		\$19,931.40



Left: Ibraheem Ali – Recipient of a Youth Development Grant
Above: Timoci Radovu – Recipient of a Youth Development Grant
Above right: Indie Dunn – Recipient of a Youth Development Grant



Celebrating Our Volunteers

Council would like to thank the 193 people who volunteered their time, skills and expertise to assist at various Council facilities and on Council Committees such as the Leeton Golf Course, Whitton and Yanco Town Improvement Committees and various hall committees. Council would also like to thank those who assisted with Council programs, events and festivals in 2023/24.

The table below shows the number of volunteers who assist at each of the Council facilities listed.

Council Facility	Number of Volunteers
Leeton Golf Course	40
Leeton Museum and Art Gallery	12
Leeton Shire Major Dooley Library	6
Visitor Information Centre	4
Committee participation	131
TOTAL	193



Karen Barrett & LMAG Volunteer, Judy Sheather

Council also auspices payroll services to two valuable community groups including JumpStart and Leeton Connect. These roles are grant funded and make positive contributions to the community. Council is proud to support these community groups in their endeavours to building capacity across the community and we thank the volunteers who contribute to these groups for their hard work.



Art Deco Festival Parkrun Volunteers



Yanco Town Improvement Committee Volunteers



Roxy Development Committee Volunteers and Councillors

Our Community cont.

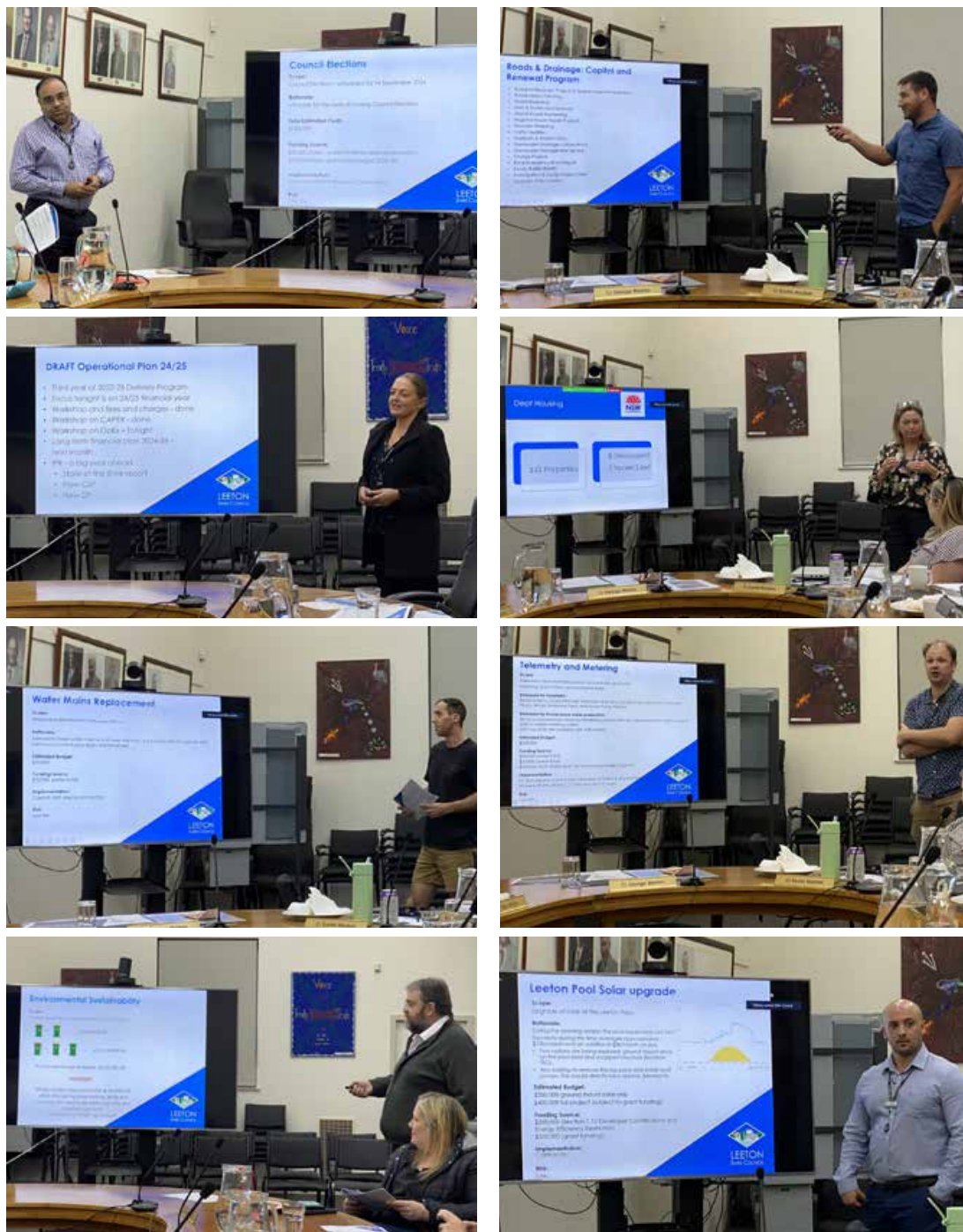


Leeton Lions Club volunteering their services at Leeton Chill and Grill



Rapid Relief Team volunteering at the Survival Day event





Staff presenting to Council at Councillor Workshop. From top left to right: Avi Singh, Chris Lashbrook, Monica Armanini, Michelle Evans, Ben Curley, Gerard Simms, Silas Darby, Luke Tedesco

Our Organisation

Our Staff Mission

To be proudly trusted by the Councillors and the Community to deliver for them the very best outcomes in the most effective manner while enjoying a harmonious workplace that values and rewards its workforce for service excellence.

Our Staff Values



Our Organisation cont.

Our Senior Management Team



General Manager **Jackie Kruger**

Jackie commenced as General Manager of Leeton Shire Council in August 2015. Jackie came to the Riverina from Tamworth, where she held the position of Director Planning and Community Services.

Her formal qualifications are in natural resource management (BSc Forestry/Conservation) and a Masters in Environmental Education.

Jackie was elected to the Boards of LG Professionals in 2018 and Statewide Mutual in 2022. She also serves on the Board of the Country Universities Centre, Western Riverina. Jackie is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a member of the Murray Riverina Regional Advisory Council for Business NSW, and a member of the Planning Institute of Australia (PIA).



Director Operations **Silas Darby**

Silas commenced with Council in March 2024 as Director Operations. He has a Degree in Quantity Surveying (QS) and a Masters of Business Administration. Silas worked as a Project Manager for Wagga Wagga City Council for 7 years before taking up the role at Leeton Shire Council. He is also a Member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

Prior to moving to Australia in 2010, Silas worked in Cape Town in QS and property development. He was the Design Delivery Manager for the Cape Town Stadium, constructed for the FIFA World Cup 2010.



Director Corporate/CFO **Avtar (Avi) Singh**

Avtar commenced at Council in February 2024 as Director Corporate/Chief Financial Officer.

He has over two decades of professional experience in financial management, corporate services and procurement. Avi has held senior management roles across various sectors including local government, not-for-profit, and commercial organisations in the Northern Territory, Victoria, New South Wales, and North America.

Avtar holds a Bachelor of Commerce, a Master of Business Administration, and is a proud member of CPA Australia.

Our Organisation cont.



Director Economic and Community Development

Michelle Evans

Michelle joined Council in May 2021 as Economic and Strategic Development Manager before being appointed to the role of Executive Manager Economic and Community Development in January 2023 and then as Director Economic and Community Development in December 2023.

Michelle holds a Diploma in Business Management. Prior to entering local government, Michelle held management positions in the banking sector with over 24 years' experience.



Executive Manager People and Culture

Tracy Pearce-Brambley

Tracy commenced at Council in July 2022 as Supervisor Library before being appointed to the role of Executive Manager People and Culture in January 2023.

Before entering local government, Tracy had over 23 years' experience in senior management roles in the customer service sector.

Caption for pic



Our Organisation cont.

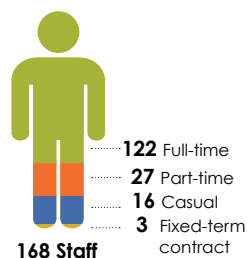
Our Staff

Leeton Shire Council provided employment to 168 people, equivalent to 157.7FTE (in various capacities across the organisation).

Of the 168 staff:

- 122 were employed on a full-time basis
- 27 were employed on a part-time basis
- 16 were employed on a casual basis
- 3 were employed on a fixed-term contract basis.

Total number of staff



Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Staff



Organisational Development

Staff Turnover

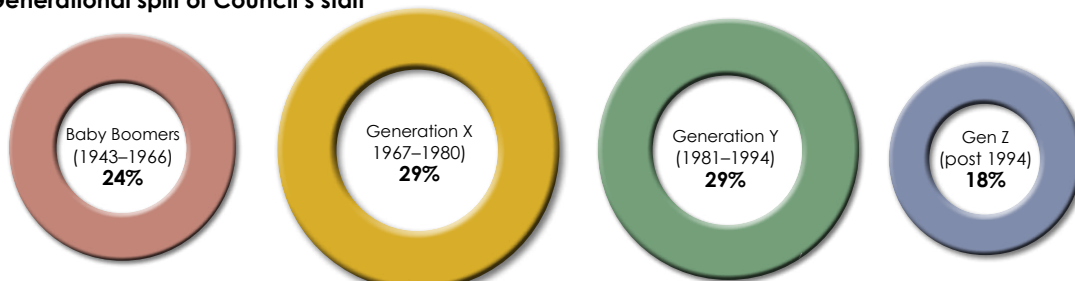
While staff turnover can be influenced by a number of factors, it is a common barometer of an employer's ability to attract and retain staff. At 12.68% for the past year, Council remains well below the average local government range of 18% (LGNSW HR Metrics survey of councils in 2022-23). This level of turnover provides growth opportunities for internal staff and the ability to bring in fresh ideas, while not being so high that new staff are always still trying to learn the job.

Ageing Workforce and Succession

The ageing workforce in local government is more acute than in other sectors, and more so in rural areas than cities. Council is aware that a number of skilled staff are approaching retirement and has embarked on a strategy to address the risk by ensuring that the next generation is trained and mentored with the skills to ensure continuity.

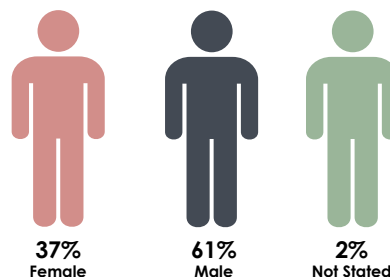
This strategy is helping to address the health and safety component of the ageing workforce, as 40% of our Workers Compensation claims were incurred by staff aged 55 and over, a significant decrease from the 62% incurred during the same period last year. There has been an increased focus on Council discharging its Duty of Care under the Act by ensuring that staff are fit for duties. Staff are provided the opportunity to transition-to-retirement as provided for in the LG Award.

Generational split of Council's staff

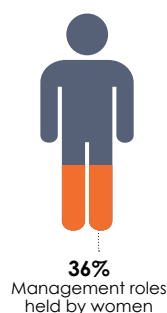


*this information was correct as at 30 June 2024

Gender split



Percentage of Management roles held by women



Staff turnover rate



Our Organisation cont.

Performance Management

Council further simplified its annual performance review process for 2024 and will continue to monitor results and feedback to ensure the best possible process and outcomes. The Pulse system provides the important opportunity for staff and their supervisors to agree what is expected over the year ahead, and then to review actual performance against expectations, and have a conversation about what is working well and what can be developed.

This helps to guard against 'staleness' in a role, and also provides a process for evaluating staff progress along the four salary steps within their grade. Just as the community evaluates the performance of Council, so Council cascades this process through the staff levels, to align delivery against expectations.

Training and Development

Leeton Shire Council is committed to ensuring each employee has the opportunity to reach his or her full potential through the development of skills and knowledge acquired in training.

All employees of Leeton Shire Council are required to participate in training and development activities that are deemed mandatory and in training and development activities that have been identified as being integral to their role.

Annual performance appraisals of Leeton Shire Council staff also result in identification of gaps in training requirements, with the People and Culture unit identifying the most cost-effective means of meeting those requirements.

The training requirements that are identified are directly linked to the objectives of the Leeton Shire Council Operational/Delivery Plan and reference Performance Reviews, Pay Bands and Position Descriptions.

Training is delivered through four main avenues:

- Internal training, with line managers and peers providing on-the-job training
- Accredited training, using registered training organisations
- Non-accredited training, using industry-appropriate providers
- Training delivered through tertiary institutions such as universities and TAFEs.

There are two distinct categories of training within Leeton Shire Council – essential/compulsory

training and professional development training. This training is divided into seven sub-categories. The sub-categories, along with examples of training undertaken in 2023/24, are as follows:

- Mandatory/Safe Work/Legislative
- Confined Spaces, Traffic Control and Working Safely at Heights
- Technical Skills
- Water Treatment Operations, Fluoridation of Water Supply and Authorised Officer Food Surveillance.
- Governance – Code of Conduct, Government Information (Public Access) Introduction and Advanced
- Office Support – Asset Management Fundamentals, Pulse Software Performance & Development
- Building, Health and Environment



Shante Smith – Customer Service Trainee



General Manager, Jackie Kruger (centre) celebrating with Bhanuka Viduranga, Ali Mehdi, Rachel Cody and Sarah Graham - Aspiring Leaders Program Graduation



Our Organisation cont.

- QGIS Essentials and Pursuit, Swimming Pool Regulations and Operational Playground Inspection
- Leadership – Aspiring Leaders Program, Australian Rural Leadership Program and Rural Management Challenge

- Community Services – Child Protection, My Time Our Place and Dealing with Difficult Customers.

A total amount of \$113,276.36 was spent on training across the organisation during the 2023/24 reporting year.

Training Category	No. of Participants	Cost
Mandatory/Safe Work/Legislative	275	\$73,096.25
Technical Skills	11	\$2,190.00
Governance	1	\$693.00
Office Support	5	\$2,338.18
Building, Health and Environment	12	\$11,745.13
Leadership	10	\$22,394.56
Community Services	6	\$819.20
TOTAL	318	\$113,276.36

Service Awards – Internal

Acknowledged the contribution of our employees through the presentation of service awards to seven employees who celebrated long service milestones in the organisation. The awards were presented in late 2023 by General Manager, Jackie Kruger.

10 year awards

- Kabe Stockton – Open Space and Recreation
- Lauren Nelson – Children's Services, Out of School Hours Care



15 year awards

- Shayne Roden – Water and WasteWater

20 year awards

- Justin Davidson – Open Space and Recreation

25 year awards

- David Harrison – Open Space and Recreation
- Dennis Irvine – Open Space and Recreation

Just as we honour and recognise our long-service employees, we are delighted to have a new generation of skilled and qualified staff to contribute their energies and talents to the emerging needs of our Shire.



Above: 10 Year award recipient – Lauren Nelson

Left: 10 Year award recipient – Kabe Stockton, Open Space and Recreation

Our Organisation cont.



10 year award recipient Shayne Roden – Water and WasteWater



20 year award recipient, Justin Davidson – Open Space and Recreation



25 year award recipient, David Harrison – Open Space and Recreation



25 year award recipient, Dennis Irvine – Open Space and Recreation



Mayor Tony Reneker congratulates retiring 'Parks and Garden's team member William Ingram – Almost 43 years



Retirement Acknowledgement

This year we farewelled a long serving and deeply respected member of our 'Parks and Gardens' team, William Ingram. We thank William for his incredible 42 years and 8 months service to Council and wish him all the best.

Awards – External

- Ken Dachi – Community Recognition Statement by Member for Murray, Helen Dalton MP
- Victoria Morgan-Smith – SQUAD Spotlight Award and Excellence in Training by her RTO



External Award recipients, Ken Dachi – Community Recognition Statement by Member for Murray, Helen Dalton MP Victoria Morgan-Smith – SQUAD Spotlight Award and Excellence in Training by her RTO

Finalist in five categories at the LG Professionals Annual Awards for population under 150,000 including:

- Community Development: Leeton Early Learning Centre Expansion Project
- Asset and Infrastructure: Wamoon Sewerage Scheme Project (Projects Over \$1.5 million)
- Community Partnerships: Leeton Living – A between Leeton Shire Council, the Leeton Business Chamber and Leeton Connect
- Environmental Leadership: Leeton Shire Council Actively Reduces Energy Costs and CO² Emissions
- People, Workplace, Wellbeing: Leeton Shire Council promotes staff engagement and wellbeing through the 'Council Connect' internal newsletter

Our Organisation cont.

Work Health and Safety

Leeton Shire Council views the Wellbeing, Health and Safety of Council's employees, community and contractors as more than a priority, it's a commitment embedded within our values.

Council continues to see consistent reporting of incidents, injuries, near misses, observations, inspections, risk assessment and closing out of corrective actions. This allows Council to identify, mitigate and improve health and safety risk across all levels of Council.

Key safety and risk initiatives undertaken during 2023/24 included:

- Back saver powered lifting units installed on four Council utes and one truck to eliminate and reduce hazardous manual task risk
- Chemical handling station design change for substances used for the Jet Patcher truck to reduce the risk of hazardous manual tasks
- Duress button installation at the Depot
- Implementation of a Plant risk assessment program utilising the Plant Assessor system
- Safer transporting and handling processes for the chlorine gas cylinders used in our Water and Wastewater area
- Gas tech unit bump test and charging station install
- Publishing regular health and safety communications in the 'Council Connect' staff newsletter and safety alerts
- Completion of the Continuous Pathway audit conducted by StateWide which focused on risk reduction for building assets, Playgrounds and Business Continuity
- Completion of the StateCover WHS audit which follows ISO 45001:2018 methodology – context of the organisation, leadership, planning, support, operation, performance evaluation and improvement
- LSC involvement in the SafeWork Hazardous Manual task program assessment and review to reduce risk associated with musculoskeletal injuries.



Lifting units for the utes to alleviate manual labour



Bitumen emulsion tank purchased to improve safety

Our Organisation cont.

Employee Health and Wellbeing

With a commitment to encourage mental health, physical health and overall wellbeing, Council has been regularly distributing 'Wellbeing Matters' newsletters to all our employees. These newsletters contain important information along with very useful tips.

The aim is to build, motivate, maintain and provide health and wellbeing awareness to our valuable employees.

All of Council's 'Health and Wellbeing' initiatives are funded through a rebate received from one of our insurers – StateCover. This figure is dependent on the completion of Council's annual WHS self-audit and our overall result.

Council once again engaged the services of R & R Corporate to deliver a Health and wellbeing day in July – Sessions covered physical wellbeing, activity and movement, psychological health and nutrition. Very positive feedback and well attended especially by outdoor staff.

Council also engaged the services of R & R Corporate in September - Recognise, Empathise, Assist, Connect, Hindsight (REACH program), on site wellbeing support and managing mental health for leaders sessions.

Council's Annual Health Program included:

- **Mental Health Programs** – Managing Mental Health for Leaders had a total of 15 Employees attend. REACH for mental health had a total of 41 employees attend
- **Skin checks** – predominantly aimed at Council's outdoor staff, skin checks are performed by a registered nurse (melanographer) with experience and specific training in skin cancer screening. This year skin checks were offered to all Council staff. A total of 83 employees received screening
- **Hearing tests** – Annual testing of employees engaged in noise related work and environments is conducted by a qualified audiometric specialist. A total of 7 employees participated
- **Flu vaccinations** – the annual vaccination protects staff against diseases caused by the highly variable influenza virus. The vaccinations are given on-site and offered to all of Council's employees. A total of 89 workers received the vaccination
- **Japanese Encephalitis Vaccine** – made available to all Council employees by Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) Vaccinations were held at Council chambers.



Staff Wellbeing Session



Our Organisation cont.

Corporate Governance

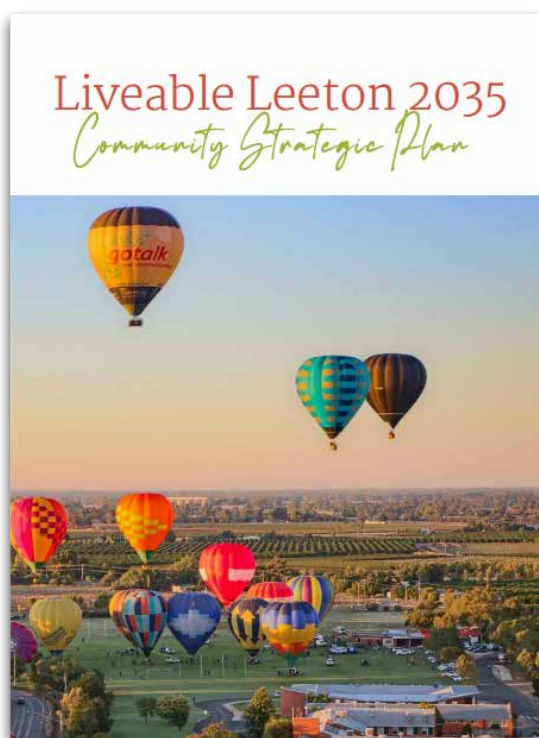
Good governance stems from accountability, close and accurate monitoring of performance and a framework that facilitates the achievement of strategic goals.

Leeton Shire Council is committed to ensuring that:

- its policies and practices reflect good governance
- the manner in which the Council conducts its daily operations complies with the broad principles contained in the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Our Community Strategic Plan

The Community Strategic Plan outlines the strategic directions set by and for the Leeton community. Council reports on the activities it undertakes in support of the Community Strategic Plan on a quarterly basis (Delivery Program reporting). It tracks progress towards achieving the overall outcomes of the Community Strategic Plan in a State of the Shire report which will be issued early in the new Council's term.



Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice

Council's Code of Conduct applies to Councillors, the General Manager, the Senior Management Team and all other employees of Leeton Shire Council. All are expected to act in accordance with the Code and to do everything possible to influence those with whom they are working to ensure that they also maintain similar standards of integrity and ethical behaviour.

No formal Code of Conduct complaints were made during the 2023/24 financial year.

Council's Code of Meeting Practice applies to all meetings of Council and Committees of Council of which all members are Councillors.

Both Codes were updated and adopted in 2022 and can be viewed on Council's website at www.leeton.nsw.gov.au.

Child Safe Organisation

Council is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. That commitment led Council to advance the process of becoming a Child Safe Organisation by implementing the Child Safe Policy adopted in June 2020.

In 2023/24, Council continued the process of entrenching Child Safe practices across the organisation by embedding Child Safety in all relevant policies, procurement processes, contracts and project management.

Procurement Activities

Each year Council spends millions of dollars on purchases (materials and services). To ensure our procurement activities are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993* and associated regulations, and in accordance with the principles of good governance during 2023/24, Council bolstered its procurement practices by:

- Creation and implementation of Procurement Guidelines Quick Reference
- New Supplier Contract Management Policy
- Using the VendorPanel and Tenderlink platforms to procure goods and services
- Ensuring Council's pool of potential local suppliers is maximised by encouraging and supporting those suppliers to register with VendorPanel

Our Organisation cont.

Risk Management

The Local Government Act 1993 requires all councils to appropriately manage its risks. The NSW Government's Internal Audit Guidelines encourage all councils in NSW to have a structured enterprise risk management (ERM) framework in place to identify any known and emerging risks they face and the controls needed to manage these risks. Office of Local Government guidelines include a risk management section which outlines the need for Council's risk management framework to be regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure it is relevant, effective, and complies with the current risk management standard. Internal controls are the actions taken by a council to manage both the positive and negative impact of risk on its community.

Council has an integrated risk management framework which includes ERM considerations in place and is continuing the risk management maturity journey. Risk management activities undertaken included:

- Actively participating in and contributing to risk management for Council's Project Management activities
- Completing the StateCover Mutual Limited self-assessment audit with regard to WHS. Which included the need to complete priority corrective actions identified
- Completing the Statewide Continuous Improvement Pathway audit which covered risk management compliance for building assets, playgrounds and business continuity
- Undertaking a hazardous manual task program to reduce manual tasking injuries which make up 43% of Council lost time injuries due to sprains and strains
- Strategic risks reviewed annually and operational risks reviewed quarterly through the ARIC committee
- Ongoing training in, reference to and exposure to the Pulse Enterprise Risk Management module to improve visibility of organisational risk, completion of mitigation actions and risk management support for projects
- Reviewing Council's policies relating to integrated risk and WHS
- Maintaining Health and Wellbeing Program initiatives, including psychological and physical health
- Conducting site inspections and observations
- Statewide Mutual insurance renewals.



Working from Heights Training



Our Organisation cont.

Audit Management

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

Leeton Shire Council's Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) was established in 2018.

It is charged with providing assurance, oversight and advice to Council and the General Manager in relation to the governance, risk and internal control functions of Council. Their charter covers risk management, control, governance and external accountability responsibilities.

The ARIC promotes good corporate governance by the provision of independent objective assurance and assistance to the Council on:

- Governance and Legislative compliance
- Cybersecurity
- Risk management
- Fraud control
- Financial and Payroll management
- Implementation of Council plans and strategies
- Internal Audit Function
- Collection of performance measurement data by the Council
- Integrated Planning and Reporting
- Any other matters prescribed by regulations..

The ARIC membership is currently comprised of:

- Two Councillors – one voting (Cr. Tracey Morris) and one non-voting (Cr. Matthew Holt)
- Three Independent external members (all Voting Members), one of whom is the independent chair. They are Graham Bradley (Chair), Emerson Doig and Bill Robertson

Meetings are also attended by members of the Senior Management Team and staff who are subject matter experts, as required, including the Manager Finance. Staff attendees are not eligible to vote.

The ARIC met five times in 2023/24. Under its guidance, Leeton Shire Council:

- Reviewed the 2023/24 external Annual Engagement Plan
- Reviewed its draft 2023/24 annual financial statements
- Reviewed the 2023/24 external audit management letters
- Reviewed its draft 2023/24 budget
- Reviewed the Integrated Planning and Reporting documents
- Oversaw the implementation of its 2023/24 internal audit program
- Developed the 2023/24 internal audit program



Councillor Morris, GM Jackie Kruger, Sarah Graham and Avtar Singh, with ARIC Committee Chair, Graham Bradley and retiring ARIC member Bill Robertson

Our Organisation cont.

Internal Audit Outcomes

In 2023/24, Council:

- Presented reports to ARIC on audit of Council's Cybersecurity functions and guidelines. Most of the actions have been completed or have been addressed and are ongoing.
- Continued to implement the Records Management Process Action Plan and provided a status update to ARIC.
- Continued to implement the Procurement and Contract Management Process Action Plan and provided a status update to ARIC.

External Financial Audits

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires each council to have their annual financial reports externally audited by the NSW Auditor-General so that the community and councillors have access to an independent opinion on its validity. The NSW Audit Office conducts these audits on behalf of the NSW Auditor-General.

Since 2017, the NSW Auditor-General has also reported to the NSW Parliament each year on Local Government sector-wide matters arising from the examination of financial statements of councils and any other issues that the Auditor-General has identified.

The external auditors primarily provide an assurance that Council's financial statements reflect the financial position of Council at the conclusion of the financial year. The work conducted by the external auditors to enable them to provide this assurance includes:

- Testing a sample of Council's internal controls
- Observation of processes or procedures being performed
- Enquiries of individuals within Council
- Examining financial and accounting records, other documents and tangible assets
- Obtaining written confirmations of certain items.

Public Interest Disclosures

The Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 (PID Act) applies to all NSW public sector agencies. The PID Act provides a framework for public officials (Councillors, staff, suppliers and contractors) to report serious wrongdoing within Council, and to be protected when they do so.

The PID Act removes barriers that prevent people who work in the public sector from speaking up about serious problems by:

- encouraging and facilitating the disclosure of information by public officials about suspected wrongdoing in the public sector
- making sure public interest disclosers are supported and protected from negative consequences
- making sure disclosures by public officials are properly investigated and dealt with.

As of 1 October 2023, the new Public Interest Disclosure (PID) Legislation came into effect and Councils were required to provide training on the PID framework to all staff, Councillors, volunteers, contractors, and subcontractors. The PID Framework provides multiple pathways for public officials (you) to report serious wrongdoing. We also need to inform all staff who have supervisory responsibilities of their mandatory obligations under this framework. Five training sessions were offered to staff across the entire organisation.

Further information on our annual reporting obligations to Parliament are in the Statutory Information section of this report on page 89.

Public Access to Government Information

In compliance with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act) Leeton Shire Council provides access to the information it holds in the following ways:

- Mandatory release via Council's website (open access)
- Authorised proactive release via Council's website
- Informal release via an informal access application
- Formal release via a formal access application.

A number of open access documents are available. These include Council plans and policies, Council's Code of Conduct, an Access to Information Policy and Guide, a Register of Government Contracts, the Integrated Planning and Reporting document suite and the Agendas and Minutes of Council meetings.

Where information is released to an applicant under a formal access application and Council considers that it will be of interest to other members of the public, Council may provide details of the information in its disclosure log on Council's website for inspection by the public.

Council is required to produce an Annual Report under section 125 of the GIPA Act. A summary of the information provided in this report has been included in the Statutory Information section of this report on page 89.



Our Organisation cont.

Conflicts of Interest and Pecuniary Interest

Councillors and senior staff are required to declare any conflict of interest in any matter, and the nature of that interest, before a matter is discussed in a Council or Committee meeting.

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*, all Councillors and senior staff are required to complete returns of Interest forms on election/appointment, and annually thereafter.

Completed Returns of Interest forms for the past two years can be viewed on Council's website. Returns for the years prior to this date are contained in the Pecuniary Interest Register, which is available for viewing at Leeton Shire Council's main office.

Community Engagement

Leeton Shire Council is committed to engaging with residents, businesses, stakeholders and Council officers as it develops strategies, and plans services and facilities.

Involvement in the development of strategies and in planning the delivery of services has a number of benefits for the community, stakeholders and Council because it:

- ensures that priorities are appropriate for current and future needs
- provides valuable information and increases understanding
- adds value to projects and the outcomes they seek to achieve.

Community consultation is an ongoing commitment. Our activities and achievements are promoted to the community through our website, media releases, Facebook, LinkedIn and the weekly half-page 'Leeton Shire Council Noticeboard' published in *The Irrigator*.

Extensive consultation also takes place in relation to Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan, annual budget and Council policies.

Residents are invited to attend, ask questions and make submissions to Council meetings. They are also invited to participate in forums on various issues.

Our Councillors and senior management hold positions on many associations, urban infrastructure groups, regional committees and other groups.

For more information on Council's 2023/24 Community Engagement Program, please see pages 47-51.

Leeton Shire Council is committed to engaging with residents, businesses, stakeholders and Council officers as it develops strategies, and plans services and facilities.

Our Performance by Functional Area

Details of the key actions Council has undertaken during the 2023/24 financial year to progress the goals set by the Leeton Shire community are outlined in the following pages.

The information is organised according to the functional areas as set out in the Delivery Program 2022-2025

Functional Area 1.

Community Services and Community Development

Functional Area 2.

Museum, Arts and Cultural Services

Functional Area 3.

Parks, Streetscapes and Sporting Facilities

Functional Area 4.

Economic Development

Functional Area 5.

Planning, Building and Public Health

Functional Area 6.

Roads and Drainage

Functional Area 7.

Water and Sewerage Services

Functional Area 8.

Environment Sustainability and Emergency Services

Functional Area 9.

Governance and Administration





Elijah Ingram and William Ingram - Gossamer Park Mural Painting

Functional Area 1: Community Services and Community Development

CSP Links: Cc1, Cc2, Cc3, Cc4, L3, L4, Ec1, Ec3, Ec4, Ec5, Ec6, Sc1, Sc3

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 1.1 Operate a library in Leeton
- 1.2 Operate Children's Services
- 1.3 Provide CCTV and free Wi-Fi services in the CBD of Leeton and in all major Council facilities
- 1.4 Promote and supporting volunteering, both in Council and in the community
- 1.5 Offer advice, active support and grants to community groups
- 1.6 Support a range of local community events
- 1.7 Promote community inclusion and wellbeing
- 1.8 Support and promote multiculturalism and social cohesion
- 1.9 Provide halls for communities to meet
- 1.10 Foster youth leadership and engagement through the Leeton Youth Council
- 1.11 Facilitate town improvement planning in Whitton, Yanco and Wattle Hill
- 1.12 Provide social and temporary housing
- 1.13 Advocate for improved health services and appropriate policing capability and capacity

In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Completed the Library's Technology and Community Hub Enhancement Project made possible with grant funding of \$76,374 from the State Library of NSW. The project enabled significant improvements and the acquisition of state-of-the-art technology and furniture
- Hosted 26 registered students through the Country Universities Centre (CUC) – Leeton Campus, which is located at the Leeton Shire Major Dooley Library. These students accessed the facility on more than 207 occasions
- Hosted a variety of activities and programs – including Baby Rhyme Time, Lego, Dungeons and Dragons, Brain Games and StoryTime – at the Leeton Shire Major Dooley Library. More than 20,371 visits were made to the library and 4,853 people participated in events, activities and programs throughout the year
- Loaned 18,328 books and other items to more than 3,004 library members
- Leeton Shire Library was one of seventy eight libraries to receive a National Backyard Cricket Grant. The library received \$1,200 to upgrade and extend their musical instruments
- Coordinated the Community Compass program at the Library to provide support to people who have English as their second language
- Offered quality, age-appropriate early childhood education for up to 79 children per day through the Leeton Early Learning Centre (LELC), with an average scheduled occupancy of 95%, 136 children enrolled to attend and a waiting list of 207 children
- Completed the expansion of the Leeton Early Learning Centre which will enable the service to operate with an additional 20 places. The expansion involved the construction of an additional classroom



Functional Area 1: Community Services and Community Development cont.



Australia Day Pool Party

- Through the Leeton Out of School Care (LOOSC) Program, provided a total of 40 weeks of After School Care (ASC) and 10 weeks of Vacation Care (VAC) for primary school aged children. The average scheduled attendance was 64% for ASC and 56% for VAC, which shows an increase since the impacts of COVID-19
- Provided free public WIFI to 903 community members. This initiative remains a crucial part of our commitment to enhancing connectivity and accessibility for residents, businesses, and visitors
- Utilised the much-appreciated services of 193 volunteers. Our volunteers contribute to activities undertaken by the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery, Leeton Major Dooley Library (Home Library Service), the Visitors Information Centre and the Golf Course. Additional volunteers serve on our Section 355, Action Groups and Advisory Committees
- Awarded 15 Community Strengthening Grants to a total value of \$22,497, four Quick Response Grants to a total value of \$6,269 and 17 Youth Development Grants to a total value of \$4,250
- Donated \$1,025 to the four high schools, seven primary schools and TAFE for end of year prizes
- Managed the Leeton Multipurpose Centre, leasing office space to seven tenants and hiring out rooms on a casual basis on 265 occasions
- Hosted a successful Light Up Leeton event on Sunday 3 December 2023. The event was well supported by the community with approximately 3500 people in attendance at Mountford Park. There were 26 groups/acts involved in the concert and 16 community stallholders selling food, drinks and festive wares
- Hosted a successful Australia Day celebration on 26 January 2024. The program of activities included an official ceremony – which incorporated a Smoking Ceremony, Welcome to Country, performance by Parkview Cultural Dance GroupC and an artefact display. The Ceremony was followed by a bush tucker lunch provided by Sandhills Artefacts. Following official proceedings, a Pool Party was held at the Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre with approximately 500 attendees
- As part of NSW Seniors Festival 2024, Leeton Shire Library hosted two free information sessions which involved local service providers including Tierney Dowd and Patrick Dawson Law Firm, Leeton Community Health, Service NSW, Open Mobility Aids and Leeton Physiotherapy
- Continued to work closely with the police to provide timely access to CCTV footage, contributing to community safety and crime prevention efforts

Functional Area 1: Community Services and Community Development cont.



Gossamer Park Family Fun Day



Susie Rowe from the Leeton Shire Library at Gossmaer Park Family Day

Functional Area 1: Community Services and Community Development cont.

- Updated the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022-2025
- Submitted the annual DIAP Implementation Report to the Disability Council NSW
- JBS Australia Fiesta La Leeton was held on Saturday 19 May 2024 with approximately 2,500 people in attendance. The event included performances by Western Sydney musicians Nadya & the Gypsy Firecrackers, the Fijian River of Life band, and members of the Cook Island (Pukapukan), Filipino and Solomon Islander communities. A total of 19 stallholders served cuisines from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Fiji, Italy, China, Afghanistan and Indigenous Australia
- Hosted four citizenship ceremonies, one on Australian Citizenship Day (17 September 2023), one on Australia Day (26 January 2024), one on Harmony Day (21 March 2024) and one on 18 June 2024 to mark Refugee Week. Leeton Shire welcomed a total of 28 new citizens at these ceremonies (23 adults and 5 children). The new citizens originated from various countries including Afghanistan, China, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, Zimbabwe and South Africa
- Supported the Yanco Town Improvement Committee in coordinating the Yanco Twilight Markets on Saturday 25 November 2023 which was attended by approximately 1,000 people with 28 stallholders
- Participated in the Welcoming Cities Program – an initiative that supports local councils to consider, commit to, communicate, plan for, build and sustain a welcoming community
- Monitored the provision of accommodation at the Leeton and District Eventide Homes with the aim of providing self-care units to eligible pensioners. At 30 June 2024, all 14 Eventide Homes units were occupied
- Provided accommodation and support to one University of Wollongong student doctor undertaking a ten-month placement in Leeton. This year is the thirteenth year Leeton Shire has supported the Wollongong University of Medicine Student Doctor Program
- Supported the inaugural Leeton Pride Festival through traffic management, event coordination and marketing
- Promoted initiatives including Volunteer Day, International Day of Person with Disability, LocaliseYou event, Leeton Carers morning tea, Legal Aid free advice sessions
- Sponsored three students (both medical students) as part of the NSW Rural Doctors Network's Bush Bursary Country Women's Association (NSW) Scholarship Program
- Supported Western Sydney University, the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP), and Multicultural NSW to deliver a Positive Peace Workshop in February 2024 for young people aged 18-25.



Children from the Leeton Early Learning Centre

Functional Area 1: Community Services and Community Development cont.



Leeton Show Society - Recipients of a Community Development Grant



Youth Week - Paint and Pizza



Leeton Rainbow Pride Collective - Recipients of a Community Development Grant

The unique event aimed to empower the youth in Leeton Shire by fostering conditions for social harmony, economic development, and mutual understanding

- Coordinated a Youth Week program for children and youth aged 8+ that included a yoga workshop, basketball shootout, zumba workshop and paint & pizza event, all hosted at the Leeton Indoor Stadium



Youth Week - Writing Seminar



Members of the Youth Council

- Held five Youth Council meetings with representation from all three local High Schools. The Committee is an advisory group of Council, providing valuable feedback on a range of projects, local challenges and plans
- Commenced development of a Leeton Shire Reconciliation Plan
- Supported Multicultural NSW in implementing its Regional Resettlement Pilot Program, NSW Growing Regions of Welcome (NSW GROW). NSW Grow has the dual aims of supporting regional communities and employers, and connecting the migrants and refugees in Western Sydney with employment and lifestyle opportunities in regional NSW. The program provided support to a family of four to move to Leeton
- Participated in quarterly Multicultural Interagency Network meetings. The Multicultural Interagency Network is a network of services, agencies and organisations which provide support and action for local culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities
- Continued to offer the Leeton Living website in partnership with the Leeton Business Chamber and Leeton Connect
- Continued to auspice staff (grant funded) for Leeton Connect, Jumpstart and Leeton Multicultural Support Group Inc.





Fiesta La Leeton

Functional Area 2: Museum, Arts and Cultural Services

CSP Links: Cc1, Cc2, Cc3, Cc4, L1, L3

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 2.1 Operate the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery
- 2.2 Support the Whitton and Yanco Museums and Committees
- 2.3 Maintain strong working relationships with Western Riverina Arts and Leeton Family and Local History Society
- 2.4 Deliver a Program of Public Art
- 2.5 Operate the Roxy Theatre

In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Attracted 3,476 visitors to a total of eleven exhibitions at the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery (LMAG) including:
 - Water by Design – the Leeton Water Story
 - Yanco Public School
 - Penny Paniz Acquisitive Exhibition
 - Adoring Art Deco
 - Homages to the Sun
 - Miniature Marvels
 - Curious Minds
 - It was a Riot
 - A Common Thread
 - The Curious Explorers
 - Evoking Art Deco
- Hosted a number of events and workshops at the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery including:
 - Australian Art Deco Festival VIP night
 - Vintage Viewing at the Little Roxy
 - Dressing Deco
 - Tutankhamun Roadshow
 - David Scheel Concert
- Continued the development of 'By Virtue of Water, the Leeton Wiradjuri Story' the permanent First Nations-led exhibition for display on LMAG's second floor. In its second year, this project is supported by the NSW Government with funding through Create NSW. This funding will inject another \$100,000 into the multi-year project currently in its development phase.
- Supported the 11th Annual Penny Paniz Memorial Art Competition by providing financial sponsorship of \$1,200, venue for the exhibition, exhibition support materials, and staff support over the Easter Holiday long weekend. The final count for entries was 156 entries from 60 artists, with artists either from Leeton Shire or current financial members of the Leeton Art Society. The competition, themed 'Dust and Rain,' attracted 156 entries from 60 artists, all of whom were either residents of Leeton Shire or active members of the Leeton Art Society



Functional Area 2: Museum, Arts and Cultural Services cont.



Homages to the Sun Exhibition at the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery

- Collaborated with Western Riverina Arts (WRA) on various initiatives aimed at local artists' professional development, workshops, event coordination, and grant programs. For the Leeton Local Government Area, a total of \$362,250 in arts and cultural grants were applied for, partnered with, and supported through WRA's office, resulting in \$192,000 of grant funding reinvested into the local economy
- Provided the Leeton Family and Local History Society with a space to operate from for \$1pa to successfully deliver heritage information, collection services and exhibitions
- Completed test mapping which was viewed by the community for the Leeton Water Tower large-scale public art project
- Coordinated the Leeton Shire Photography Competition – providing an opportunity for local community to showcase their talent and creativity. Entries close early July 2024
- Continued collaboration with Western Riverina Arts, Mill Mill and Illuminart to advance the Leeton Water Tower public digital art project. Proudly funded by the NSW Government through two grants: Stronger Country Communities (\$49,000) and Create NSW (\$30,000). The project forms part of the CBD Enhancement Project – Phase 3 and installation of the projection system has been completed, with test mapping by Illuminart showcased to the community in June 2024. The content design for the projection is now in its final stages of development
- The Henry Lawson Cottage hosted one open day and over 14 local events as part of the Australian Art Deco Festival in July 2023. Six performances were held over the 3 days, with 116 people attending in total
- Launched an exciting additional, new NIDA Connect course in Digital Storytelling, coming to Leeton in August 2023. Facilitated by Leeton's budding Roxy Institute of Performing Arts (RIPA) in partnership with the prestigious National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA), the NIDA Connect Digital Storytelling course will provide 15–18-year-old students with an introduction to the principles of visual storytelling through a digital lens

Functional Area 2: Museum, Arts and Cultural Services cont.

- Continued the redevelopment of the Roxy Community Theatre. The redevelopment, when complete, will result in a Roxy that complies with building, accessibility and theatre industry standards. The redeveloped Roxy Theatre will also possess improved dressing rooms, a larger stage, a new heating and cooling system, a second auditorium and an improved foyer/lounge/servery. Extensive works were completed with the overall build phase 1 and 2 being 95% complete. Council is excited to see the completion of this major project in the coming financial year
- Offered virtual tours of the Roxy providing an exclusive peek behind the curtain of the ongoing redevelopment at the historic theatre. As a cherished heritage-listed site, the Roxy holds a special place in the hearts of Leeton Shire residents
- Continued works on the Leeton Museum and Gallery (LMAG) Access Infrastructure project (\$197,244 of that a NSW Creative Capital grant). Heritage, structural, and architectural assessments have been completed, along with the submission of a development application (29/2024) in May 2024 for the installation of a lift to the second floor of LMAG. This project will deliver equitable access to the future exhibition spaces of the First Nations-led exhibition – The Leeton Wiradjuri Story



Roxy Redevelopment



Right: *The Curious Explorers* Book Launch at the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery

Below right: *The Acacia Quartet*, renowned as one of Australia's most esteemed string ensembles, graced the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery

Below left: Test mapping for Leeton Water Tower Project





Community attending the official opening of the waterslides at the Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre

Functional Area 3: Parks, Streetscapes and Sporting Facilities

CSP Links: En3, Sc2, Cc1

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 3.1 Provide attractive town entrances, streetscapes and town centres
- 3.2 Provide quality parks, ovals, sporting fields and public toilets
- 3.3 Provide safe, accessible, interesting and fun playgrounds and exercise spaces across the Shire
- 3.4 Provide safe, accessible and fun sports and outdoor entertainment facilities
- 3.5 Provide safe, accessible and fun swimming pools in Leeton and Whitton
- 3.6 Provide cemeteries and burial support services in Leeton and Whitton

In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Had a successful pool season with 32,414 entries at the Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre and 2,733 at the Whitton Pool
- Completed the installation of the water toys and waterslides at the Leeton Regional Aquatic Centre and held an opening on 21 October 2023
- Partnered with The Totem Collective and community groups to host the 21st Annual Riggz Cup Riverina Skate Championships at the Leeton Skate Park. The event was held as part of Youth Week and included free learn to skate and mentoring sessions
- Commenced works on developing a row of 160 new burial plots at the Leeton Cemetery which will last approximately 2-3 years. To date, 80 plinths were completed
- Ongoing maintenance of both Leeton and Whitton cemeteries continued
- Approved the request from the Leeton Greenies Rugby League Football Club (LGRFLFC) to name the existing unnamed stand at Leeton No 1 Oval the 'Bill Arnold Stand'
- Maintained the Leeton Town Ovals Complex. This includes No. 1 Oval (home of the Leeton Greenies Rugby League Football Club, Leeton United Football Club and the Leeton Phantoms Rugby Union Club), the Yanco Sports Ground and the Mark Taylor Oval – the main cricketing facility in Leeton Shire
- Awarded the Yanco Wamoon Rugby League Football Club Ladies Auxillary \$1,499 through Council's Community Strengthening Grant Program for the purchase of an automatic coffee machine for the canteen
- Completed over sowing works of No. 1 and 2 Ovals in preparation for the football season



Functional Area 3: Parks, Streetscapes and Sporting Facilities cont.



Leeton Pool

- Continued to manage and operate the Leeton Golf Course with the help of 40 active volunteers. A total of 18,564 rounds of golf were played. Golf Club membership numbers remained strong at 271 members
- Hosted various events at the Golf Course including:
 - Riverina Ladies Championship.
 - MS Charity Golf Day
 - Veterans Week of Golf
 - Twilight Golf Competition
 - MS Charity Golf Day
 - Veterans Week of Golf
 - Twilight Golf Competition
 - Sunrice Pro-Am
 - IronPlan charity golf day
 - Riverina Pennant Championships
 - Ladies Open Tournament
- Maintained and operated the Leeton Indoor Stadium. Participant numbers were 19,025 across a range of activities including pickleball, basketball, netball, croquet, futsal, volleyball and gymnastics
- Launched 'Gamechanger', an innovative new program aimed at fostering sports participation and enhancing wellbeing among students across seven schools in the Shire. The initiative, which commenced on 8 May 2024, will benefit over 180 children from diverse backgrounds by providing free access to sports and wellbeing activities



Leeton No 1 Oval Rehabilitation Works

- Hosted four events at the stadium to celebrate Youth Week; Yoga, Basketball shootout, Zumba and Paint & Pizza
- Granted consent for the development of a new Clubhouse at the Leeton Golf Course; a project that is being funded and managed by the Golf Course Benevolent Trust & Golf Club, with financial support from the NSW Regional Sports Facility Fund – Infrastructure (\$425K) and a private benefactor. Council will contribute to the construction of carparking facilities
- Installed shade sails at Whitton Memorial Park
- Completed the off leash dog park at McCaughey Park in Yanco

Functional Area 3: Parks, Streetscapes and Sporting Facilities cont.



Leeton Cemetery



Whitton Park Shade Sails



Pickleball at the Leeton Indoor Stadium



Yanco Dog Park



Gamechanger Program

- Continued works on the Chelmsford Town Square project with a completion date early in the next financial year. The project is currently under budget
- Provided support to over 29 non-council sporting events
- Planted 83 new street trees throughout the Shire

- Completed the construction of the fully accessible toilet facilities at Gossamer Park
- Completed the installation of toilet facilities at Wamoon park.





Art Deco Festival in Mountford Park

Functional Area 4: Economic Development

CSP Links: Ec1, Ec2, Ec3, Ec7, L2, L3, L5, Cc2, Cc3

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 4.1 Implement local and regional economic development strategies
- 4.2 Develop land at Vance Industrial Estate and WR Connect Freight Intermodal
- 4.3 Develop land for housing at Brobenah Road, Leeton (former caravan park) and in Whitton
- 4.4 Continue to enhance the CBD of Leeton
- 4.5 Continue to invest in the Narrandera – Leeton Airport Shared Service
- 4.6 Grow jobs in Leeton by supporting local businesses and attracting new businesses
- 4.7 Develop new business units for Council-owned quarry and Gogeldrie Weir Riverside Park
- 4.8 Support local economy
- 4.9 Promote and market Leeton as a visitor destination
- 4.10 Host major destination events

In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Actively participated in the Western Riverina 'Grow Our Own' initiative, a network coordinated by Regional Development Australia (RDA) Riverina to encourage people to build a career locally, and encourage local business to invest in local people through employment, training, mentoring and motivation. As part of this initiative, staff attended the Riverina Careers Day held at Leeton High School
- Commenced construction on Vance Estate Stage 3 in June 2024 with an expected completion date of February 2024. This project has been made possible through Government investment of \$2,230,000
- In collaboration with the Leeton Business Chamber, GROW (Growing Regions of Welcome) Riverina and Workforce Australia, hosted the Leeton Recruitment Summit. The event was designed to support local businesses in their recruitment efforts and to enhance workforce development in the region. The summit was held on 7 May 2024
- Commenced the process of matching 30 skilled workers with available jobs as part of the Bhutan-Australia Skill and Labour Exchange program. The program is part of a broader initiative to address skill shortages and provide employment opportunities for Bhutanese workers in Australia
- Provided \$1,800 in sponsorship towards the Leeton Business Chamber Awards
- Partnered with the Leeton Business Chamber to host the Leeton NSW Small Business Month Seminar at the Hydro Hotel. The event focussed on online branding
- Commenced the implementation of Ambition 2030, Councils Economic Development Strategy, with 70% of actions being completed for the financial year



Functional Area 4: Economic Development cont.

- Contracted a consultant to complete a business case for Brobenah Road Housing Development with options to be presented to Council in August 2024 for recommendation
- Planned, programmed, promoted the Australian Art Deco Festival 2023. The event had approximately 3,606 participants across 40 events with 57.4% coming from locations beyond the Leeton Shire area. The festival had an estimated economic return to the Shire of \$594,000
- Operated the Leeton Visitors Information Centre (VIC). The VIC, which is housed in one of the first buildings built in Leeton and staffed by Council officers and volunteers, provides visitors with detailed information regarding attractions and events, stocks a diverse range of local produce and artwork, and offers a 'Tastes of Leeton' presentation. There were 2,618 visitors to the centre
- Supported the Sunrice Festival Committee in coordinating the biannual SunRice Festival. The festival was very successful with over 10,000 participants across its five key events including the Parade which involved 70 floats, Festival on Mountford, Cruisers Show and Shine, Leetons Longest Lunch and Balloon Glow which involved 14 balloons and 30 stallholders. The festival was made possible with \$80,000 sponsorship from local businesses. \$54,694 was fundraised by the Sunrice Ambassador entrants which is divided between their chosen charity, committee and combined with other entrants to form the Ambassador Grant Fund
- Continued to promote the Art Deco Way Touring Route through Facebook (1,011 page likes) and Instagram (241 followers)
- Collaborated with the entire workforce of JBS Foods Riverina (approximately 450 staff) and Welcoming Australia for a morning tea to celebrate workforce diversity, and to demonstrate the value of workforce attraction and retention, which are key pillars for businesses in rural/regional Australia
- Provided \$5,967 in-kind and event coordination support towards the Leeton Outback Band Spectacular. There were approximately 1,250 people in attendance at the Mountford Park event and 140 people at the Massed Band Performance
- Commenced the redevelopment of the Murrumbidgee Trails guide in collaboration with Lockhart Shire, Narrandera Shire, and Murrumbidgee Shire Councils
- Operated Gogeldrie Weir Holiday Park with caretakers employed to operate the park. The Park welcomed 3,518 day visitors and 2,219 campers. This is a 20% increase on total visitation compared to the previous financial year



Outback Band Spectacular Event at Mountford Park



Gogeldrie Weir

Functional Area 4: Economic Development cont.



Leeton SunRice Festival Parade



Art Deco Festival Roller Disco



MEDLOG Visit to discuss their move to WRConnect

- In partnership with Narrandera Shire Council, operated the Narrandera-Leeton Airport. This year, a total of 7,394 passengers utilised the Regional Express Airlines (REX) daily airline service. This is a 23% decrease compared to the previous financial year which is a result a reduction on flights due to a pilot shortage
- Represented Leeton Shire Council on the Visit Riverina stand at the Canberra Caravan and Camping Lifestyle Show
- In partnership with Griffith City Council, worked with Currajong Planning to finalise the Masterplan for WR Connect. Council continued to work with AgConnex to ensure the project is moving forward
- Detail design for the rail siding at WR Connect was completed by Transport for NSW with the project expected to be completed in the next financial year
- Attended the International Rural Welcoming Exchange, bringing rural/regional Councils together alongside rural/regional Councils from the United States. Council presented on Leeton's upcoming Bhutan program and demonstrated its unique contribution to addressing skill shortages, and advancing positive settlement outcomes.





Mosquito Trapping.

Functional Area 5: Planning, Building and Public Health

CSP Links: Cc1, Cc2, Cc3, Cc4, Ec3, L3, L4

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 5.1 Undertake and implement strategic land use planning
- 5.2 Provide helpful, friendly and timely planning and building assessment services for development applications
- 5.3 Collect developer contributions and review developer contribution plans
- 5.4 Provide built heritage services including access to a heritage advisor and heritage grant funding for private heritage listed properties
- 5.5 Prepare and issue development engineering guidelines
- 5.6 Provide regulatory/ranger services
- 5.7 Provide public health services

In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Received 171 Development Applications and approved 141 with a total value of \$19.47M
- Approved 25 Development Applications for dwellings/residential development
- Placed the draft Housing Strategy on exhibition. The strategy aims to address current challenges facing the Shire and NSW in terms of affordable housing and to plan for the next 20 years
- Successfully made an application for \$220K through NSW Regional Strategic Planning Grants to develop an Integrated Land Use, Transport and Infrastructure plan. Currajong Pty Ltd was appointed as the successful consultancy and the project commenced in April 2024
- Held 27 pre-lodgement meetings with applicants and developers
- Issued:
 - 342 s10.7(2) Planning Certificates (a 18% increase compared to the previous year)
 - 59 s10.7(5) Planning Certificates (a 29% decrease compared to the previous year)
 - 67 Construction Certificates (a 3% increase compared to the previous year)
 - 3 Subdivision Certificate (compared to 4 in the previous year)
 - 51 Occupation Certificates (a 7% decrease compared to the previous year)
 - 2 Complying Development Certificates (compared to nil in the previous year)
- Commenced the construction of the new animal pound facility. The new facility will feature modern amenities, including spacious enclosures for up to 6 cats and 10 dogs, climate control systems, and an animal exercise yard. There will also be an attached carport for easier loading and unloading of the animals



Functional Area 5: Planning, Building and Public Health cont.



- Responded to 21 reports of dog attacks (on animals and/or humans) in the Leeton Shire, issuing warnings, infringement notices/fines, dangerous dog declarations and/or menacing dog orders as required
- Impounded 166 dogs throughout the year. Of this number, 92 were returned to their owners and 61 were transferred to rehoming organisations. This represents a 95% return to owner/rehoming rate
- Held two free microchipping days with a total of 91 animals microchipped. An additional 77 animals were microchipped as paid microchipping activities
- Carried out the annual Mosquito Trapping and Sentinel Chicken Surveillance Programs aimed at early detection of mosquito-borne viruses such as Ross River Fever.
- Undertook a public awareness campaign around mosquitos which included installing signage in parks and public spaces, providing free repellent to events and schools, applied laticide to all drains near schools and preschools
- In response to Japanese encephalitis being detected Hosted a visit from Dr Cameron Webb who provides advice on how to best manage mosquitoes and their health threats

Repainting of external façade to shop as part of the Local Heritage Grants program

- Promoted community awareness of the importance of disability parking spaces and the restrictions surrounding their use via Council's Facebook page, and followed up by conducting 38 patrols and issuing 14 infringement notices for misuse of disability parking spaces by people without a permit



Rangers hosting a free microchipping day

Functional Area 5: Planning, Building and Public Health cont.



Weed Information Session

- Made available a free online food safety course, "I'm Alert", an interactive online tool to help food shop owners fulfill their obligation to train food handlers in Food Safety. The webpage was visited 3,744 times
- Implemented the Scores on Doors Program. A NSW hygiene and food safety scoring program that displays the results of regular inspections of food premises
- Issued Food Safety Calendars and NSW Health Food Safety Awareness Information Packs to all food premises in the Shire
- Continued the implementation of the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS). The LSPS provides the strategy for the community's economic, social and environmental land use needs over the next 20 years. Eighteen of the 26 short term actions identified in the LSPS are completed with six underway, two not recommended to commence
- Conducted 92 food safety inspections of food premises, 9 inspections of skin penetration premises and 19 inspections of swimming pools
- Coordinated the annual Local Heritage Grants program in partnership with the Heritage Advisor and approved six applications to the value of \$18,000



Leeton Pound





Road Conditions Assessment Vehicle

Functional Area 6: Roads and Drainage

CSP Links: Ec3, En3, En4, L3, L5, L6, Sc1

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 6.1 Provide a network of safe (lit if urban) sealed roads
- 6.2 Provide a network of safe gravel roads
- 6.3 Provide bridges, culverts, kerb and guttering, bus stops, street furniture and carparking
- 6.4 Undertake active transport planning and provide a network of footpaths and cycleways
- 6.5 Provide road safety programs
- 6.6 Undertake "ordered works" from TfNSW
- 6.7 Provide safe, efficient drainage systems to cope with normal rainfall

In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Completed the renewal of the footpath along Madonna Place. These repairs also allowed us to remove a step along the boundary that was of some concern to users of this facility and general public
- Completed maintenance works on kerb and guttering on Mallee Street and Wade Avenue
- Completed 13km of new line marking and remarking along Corbie Hill Road, Stoney Pt Road, MR539, Vance Road, Canal Street and Wade Avenue
- Renewed a culvert as part of the Stony Point Rehabilitation Project
- Completed minor works along Belah Street to reduce water inundation into Home Improvement Centre
- Completed stormwater works on Coolamon Steet and Grigg Road
- Completed scheduled pipe cleaning and condition assessments, with a focus on Petersham Road area
- Inspected all bus shelters in the Shire as part of the annual inspection program. A new bus shelter was installed in Whitton. The upgrade was funded under the Country Passenger Terminal Infrastructure Grants Scheme (CPTIGS)
- Adopted a new Active Transport Plan to replace the existing Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP). The Active Transport Plan will guide the development of practical transport solutions that support the active transport needs of pedestrians and cyclists, including older people and pedestrians with mobility and vision impairments
- With the support of funding from Transport for NSW (TfNSW), organised a variety of road safety activities including a Free Child Restraint Checking Day, Mobility Scooter/Older Driver Workshop, Learner Driver Workshops and a Caravan Weighing Days



Functional Area 6: Roads and Drainage cont.



Rotary Youth Driver Awareness event



Camera Trailer on Irrigation Way



Road Safety Older Driver Workshop

- Completed the remarking of carparking spaces on Dooley Lane and Kurrajong Avenue
- Installed public seating in the vicinity of the Leeton Hospital
- Supported the coordination of the Rotary Youth Driver Awareness Day being held in February 2024 with over 355 students attending
- Coordinated five Leeton Local Traffic Committee meetings which assist in promoting road safety through design and regulation
- Rehabilitated 6.1km of the sealed road network. Rehabilitation works were carried out on:

– Bourke Road	– Naradhun Street
– Oxley Road	– Railway Avenue
– Brisbane Street	– Wade Avenue (North)
– Stoney Point Road	– Murrarni Road
– Euroley Road	– Melbergen Street
– Boundary Road	– Mahogany Road

Functional Area 6: Roads and Drainage cont.



Brobenah Road Resealing

- Carried out the annual resealing program by resealing 16.6km of sealed road. The sections of resealing works were carried out on:

- Brunell Street	- Commission Lane
- Jarrah Street	- Reservoir Lane
- Stephenson Street	- Belah Street
- Wandoo Street	- Contour Road
- Maple Street	- Calorafield Road
- Murrami Road (South)	- Kirkup Road
- Church Street	- Brobenah Road
- Ashton Lane	- Boree Street
- Resheeted 9.7km of the gravel road network. Resheeting was carried out on Marston Road, Bridge Road, Brown Road, Litchfield Road, Harwood Road
- Attended and presented on road safety at three workshops/meetings including the Auside Mini Caravan Rally, Stepping on Workshop, and the Leeton Senior Citizens Committee Meeting
- Adopted the Leeton Active Transport Plan and submitted the Road Safety Plan to Transport for NSW per the 2023/24 funding guidelines
- Under the Road Maintenance Council Contract (RMCC) for Transport for NSW, completed heavy patching works on MR80 covering 15 patches over 2200m² (value of \$180K)
- As part of the roads condition assessment, completed a survey of 410km of sealed roads utilising advanced video imaging technology. The assessment is conducted every 4-5 years and provides a detailed report of cracking, pavement and surface defects, stripping and flushing.



From the top: New bus shelter in Whitton
Completed maintenance works on Wade Avenue
Madonna Place footpath renewal
Rehabilitation Works on Euroley Road





Wamoon Sewerage Scheme Opening Ceremony

Functional Area 7: Water and Sewer Services

CSP Links: En3

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 7.1 Provide potable water services to the urban residents of Leeton Shire
- 7.2 Provide sewer services to the urban residents of Leeton Shire
- 7.3 Provide regulatory trade waste services to local business and industry
- 7.4 Develop strategic plans to support security of service and growth of the Shire

In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Supplied potable water of high quality, with minimal taste and odour issues and minimal disruption to service, to the towns and villages in Leeton Shire.

This year:
 - Leeton Water Treatment plant supplied 2083ML of water (10.44% increase on the previous year)
 - Murrarni Water Treatment plant supplied 21.5ML of water (65% increase on the previous year)
 - Whitton Water Treatment plant supplied 72ML of water (30.53% increase on the previous year)
- Installed a chemical storage shed at the Leeton Water Treatment Plant
- Replaced two sedimentation tank launders at the Leeton Water Treatment Plant due to corrosion. This forms part of an annual replacement program (over four years) with four more launders to be completed in the next two years
- Completed a valve audit and required repairs at the Leeton Water Treatment Plant
- Completed the designs for the upgrade of the reservoir access ladders at the Leeton Water Treatment Plant
- Completed automation and plant upgrades at both Murrarni and Whitton treatment plants
- Upgraded pump stations which included the installation of generator changeover switches
- Completed telemetry upgrades to sewer pump station no. 27 (Leeton Masonic Lodge)
- Completed water main replacement and installation in Gogeldrie Street in Whitton to assist with flow, demand on the supply and future expansion
- Completed the overhaul of the Leeton Sewer Treatment Plant Aerator No. 1, this included the reinstallation of the motor and gearbox



Functional Area 7: Water and Sewer Services cont.

- Complete manhole renewals on Railway Avenue which included robotic grinding and UV relining to defective sewer main
- Completed the Wamoon Sewerage Project in full, on time and under budget. 63 households and the public school in the village of Wamoon now have access to modern wastewater services for the first time after being connected to the Leeton Sewage Treatment Plant. The project involved the installation of over eight kilometres of pipe work as well as additional pipe work within the properties and the fitting of 61 pressure sewer units across the village
- Undertook 67 Liquid Trade Waste inspections – 91% of discharging businesses have approvals and Council is continuing to work with non-compliant businesses to become compliant
- Continued the development of an Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) Plan with the assistance of Public Works. This is a 30 year strategic plan for water and sewer services to meet future residential and industrial growth
- Operated sewage treatment and effluent discharge plants and reticulation services at Leeton, Yanco and Whitton.



Silas Darby, Jackie Kruger and Chris Dole reviewing the electrical upgrades at the Leeton Sewage Treatment Plant



Electrical Upgrades at the Leeton Sewage Treatment Plant



Launder replacement at the Leeton Water Treatment Plant

Functional Area 7: Water and Sewer Services cont.



Overhead Water Filtration Plant





Fivebough Wetlands

Functional Area 8: Environmental Sustainability and Emergency Services

CSP Links: En1, En2, En4, L6

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitments:

- 8.1 Deliver recycling and solid waste management services
- 8.2 Enhance Leeton Shire's climate resilience
- 8.3 Improve Leeton Shire's emergency preparedness
- 8.4 Deliver noxious weeds management via the NSW government endorsed Weeds Action Plan and advocate for an increase in funding for noxious weeds
- 8.5 Advocate for water security for primary production and biodiversity health and general tidiness at Fivebough Wetlands and Murrumbidgee National Park

In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Provided waste management services to the Shire. A total of 17,019.89 tonnes of waste entered the Leeton Landfill and Recycling Centre (a 2.5% decrease from 2022/23). Council's kerbside collection service (red bins) accounted for 2877.52 tonnes
- Successfully diverted 41.36% of waste from landfill, which is consistent with the previous year (41.41%)
- Maintained full compliance at the Leeton Landfill with environmental regulations and made substantial progress in completing the new landfill cell awareness of the importance of waste and responsible waste management practices
- Council's kerbside collection service (yellow bins) accounted for 280.22 tonnes of recyclable materials
- Actively communicated with residents who contaminate their kerbside recycling bins. A letter has been sent to these residents, providing detailed information on what items are suitable for the recycling bin. The letter aims to create awareness among residents about the recycling process and offers alternative solutions for disposing of problematic waste
- Reopening of the Leeton Tip Shop by Reviva, a not for profit social enterprise which works on under its innovative waste to wages model, diverting waste from landfill to create employment and training opportunities
- Implemented a diverse range of educational activities aimed at promoting recycling within the community. These initiatives encompassed workshops, presentations, school outreach programs, public awareness campaigns, and collaborations with local businesses
- Actively promoted two chemical 'Drum Muster' initiatives with a total of 5,166 drums being collected



Functional Area 8: Environmental Sustainability and Emergency Services cont.



- Completed the review of the Water, Wastewater, Transport, Drainage and Buildings Asset Management Plans
- Completed a full and detailed review of the Local Emergency Management Plan. This included a review of Leeton's designated evacuation centers, potential transport blockage during flood or fire and contact information for the various locations identified within the plan
- In response to the new NSW Government's Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041, which introduced a mandate for councils to provide Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) collections to all NSW households on the serviceable bin route, commenced the rollout of the new three bin system. This included significant community education focused on direct engagement with residents. Council's 'Green Team' engaged with over 500 community members at local events. The service starts on 1 July 2024.
- Generated approximately 399,089kWh of solar power through solar arrays, enough power to supply 142.5 households for a year. The generated solar equates to an estimated 377 tonnes reduction in carbon footprint
- In partnership with Griffith City Council, Murrumbidgee Council and Narrandera Shire Council, sought community input into the Regional Drought Resilience Plan via community workshops. The joint project is funded by the



Reviva Leeton Reuse Shop

Australian Government through the Future Drought Fund (\$560K) and aims to proactively explore opportunities to mitigate and alleviate the impacts of drought across the MIA

- Continued the implementation of the Energy Masterplan that guides Council in the delivery of energy efficiency projects. This included the completion of the solar inverter replacement at the Council Administration building which also included the addition of a remote monitoring system and electrical upgrade re-wire and PFC installation at the Leeton Sewer Treatment Plant (completed on time and under budget)
- Maintained compliance as per Council's obligations to the Weed Action Program. This included the completion of a total of 131 inspections

Functional Area 8: Environmental Sustainability and Emergency Services cont.



Sarah Lavilles at Leeton Plaza as part of the Halve Waste Program



Luke Tedesco presenting and at the Yanco Sewer Treatment Plant Solar Installation

- Secured \$55,000 in weeds grant funding from Riverina Local Lands Services
- Conducted a free Public Weeds Information Session at the Leeton Shire Library
- Slashed a total of 334.9 hectares of roadside vegetation and an additional 155.4 hectares of spraying
- In concert with RAMJO, Council agreed to accept a proposal from the Hunter Joint Organisation (HJO) to tender for the purchase of power for Council's 'large market reduce electricity costs across the RAMJO group and other participating JOs, benefitting each participating council
- Participated in the Biodiversity offset scheme support webinars hosted by the Department of Planning and Environment which were intended to support accredited assessors and local government who may be involved in the upcoming NSW Biodiversity Offsets Scheme
- Continued to work with Crown Lands and the Fivebough Committee on the management of the RAMSAR-listed Fivebough Wetlands.



Leeton's Multicultural Advisor, Ken Dachi with his Excellency General the Honourable David John Hurley AC DSC

Functional Area 9: Governance and Administration

CSP Links: L1, L2, L3, L4, L5

Leeton Shire Council has made the following Delivery Program commitment:

- 9.1 Provide enhanced customer service
- 9.2 Undertake authentic and timely community engagement where community input genuinely shapes Council decisions
- 9.3 Provide respected and effective representation, leadership and advocacy
- 9.4 Nurture strong partnerships with Murray Darling Association, RAMJO, MI Ltd, NSW Government, Commonwealth
- 9.5 Foster a valued and committed workforce that is suitably rewarded and goes home safe each day
- 9.6 Deploy reliable and efficient corporate and project governance including audit, risk and improvement
- 9.7 Deploy reliable and efficient corporate management – financial, asset, property, records, information technology, buildings and plant/fleet
- 9.8 Undertake service reviews (depreciation; staffing levels; water and sewer; open space and recreation) and benchmarking
- 9.9 Attract grant funding for capital works and operations

In 2023/24, Council took the following key actions to deliver on its commitments:

- Completed the review of five Asset Management Plans including Water, Wastewater, Transport, Drainage and Buildings
- Provided the following traineeships:
 - 3 x Cert III Early Childhood Education & Care (Leeton Early Learning Centre)
 - 2 x SBAT Cert III Early Childhood Education & Care (Leeton Early Learning Centre)
 - 1 x SBAT Cert II Horticulture (Open Space & Recreation team)
 - 1 x Cert III Water Industry Operations (Water and Waste Water team)
 - 1 x Cert III in Events (Events & Visitor Information Centre team)
 - 2 x Cert IV in Business (Customer Service team)
 - 1 x Cert IV Library & Information Services (Leeton Shire Library)
- Offered work experience and work placements to 15 school students across the organisation, including the Early Learning Centre, Library, Museum and Art Gallery and Visitor Information Centre
- Continued to participate in RAMJO, which brings together councils from across the region and provides an important forum for escalating local and regional issues for broader consideration. This year, RAMJO's strategic regional priorities included:
 - water security
 - energy security and affordability
 - transport connectivity
 - digital connectivity
 - better health services
 - industry, workforce and jobs
 - waste management
- Continued its engagement with the NSW Government, the Federal Government and industry agencies to seek funding for major projects and



Functional Area 9: Governance and Administration cont.



Water Rally – No More Buybacks

- to address challenges such as healthcare, water, housing, and workforce. Meetings took place with:
 - The Hon. Ryan Park MP Minister for Regional Health
 - Mrs Helen Dalton, MP – Member for Murray
 - The Hon. Rose Jackson, NSW Water Minister
 - Ministry of Health
 - The Hon. Sussan Ley MP
 - Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Member for Farrer
 - Senator Deborah O'Neill
 - The Hon. Tanya Plibersek, Minister for the Environment and Water
 - Senator Perin Davey, Shadow Minister for Water
- Submitted three motions on issues of high importance to the Leeton Shire community to the 2024 ALGA National General Assembly (all of which were adopted). The motions were:
 1. Greater Assistance with managing energy expenditure and funding to deliver projects in local communities;
 2. Increased Support for Housing Initiatives in rural Australia;
 3. Optimising the PALM Scheme
- Submitted three motions on issues of high importance to the Leeton Shire community to the 2023/24 LGNSW Conference. The motions were:
 - Improving Cyber Security in Regional and Rural NSW
 - Addressing the Housing Shortage
 - Increased Funding for Weed Management
 - Attended the LGNSW Conference, where all motions submitted by Leeton Shire were adopted
- Coordinated and supported six Section 355 Committees, 15 Advisory Committees/Working Groups, two action groups and ARIC. Council also participated in two shared Service Committees and seven External Committees
- Participated in the Country Mayors Association (CMA) which included:
 - quarterly meetings in Sydney and AGM
 - NSW Rural and Regional Health Forum in Wagga
 - virtual meeting with NSW Water Minister The Hon. Rose Jackson
 - Participated in quarterly meetings with the Local Police and Narrandera Shire Council
- Undertook health advocacy including:
 - Meeting with Alice Dunne & Brendon Cutmore from Health NSW re Collaborative Care Discussion
 - Meeting with Southern Cross Care addressing GP shortages in Leeton and impacts on aged care services
- Actively participated in the Murray Darling Association – Region 9 by attending meetings, the National Annual Conference in Murray Bridge and the Regional Community Forum
- Continued to advocate for sensible water policy that supports the needs of the region. In 2023/24 Advocacy efforts included participating in the Leeton Water Rally and submitting a motion via MDA Region 9 to strongly advocate against Minister Plibersek's Water Amendment Bill 2023, most especially water buybacks and the removal of socio-economic neutrality testing

Functional Area 9: Governance and Administration cont.



RAMJO met with Hon. Ryan Park MP, Minister for Regional Health, Luke Sloane, Deputy Secretary for Regional Health, and Member for Murray, Helen Dalton

- Participated in a webinar with Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water on Framework for Restoring Our Rivers Bill implementation – via MDA Region 9 to RAMJO
- Continued to liaise with Murrumbidgee Irrigation Ltd (MI) on areas such as road closures, channel and road crossing upgrades, traffic control, the Mayor and General Manager attended MI's Annual General Meeting
- Issued 128 media releases, posted 829 social media posts (up from 693 in 2023/24), undertook 10 'Have Your Say Surveys' and grew the number Council's registered 'Have Your Say' users to 826 (up from 803 in 2021/22)
- Sought community feedback on a number of Council initiatives through the 'Have Your Say' community engagement hub, social media channels and the local newspaper, *The Irrigator*.
 - DRAFT Related Party Disclosure Policy – Submissions
 - DRAFT Parks, Playgrounds and Recreational Facilities Maintenance Management Policy – Submissions
 - DRAFT Leeton Housing Strategy 2024 – Submissions
 - DRAFT 2024/25 Annual Operational Plan, Budget and Revenue Policy (including Fees & Charges) – Submissions
 - DRAFT Asset Management Plans – Building & Stormwater – Submissions
 - DRAFT Asset Management Plans – Submissions
 - DRAFT Kerbside Collection Policy – Submissions



RAMJO met with NSW Water Minister Hon. Rose Jackson, in Sydney

- Endorsed a 2-Year Rate Rebalancing Program to Improve Fairness. The new adopted ordinary rate structure will see the rate peg redistributed from Farmland onto Business for two years (only). Council will introduce two new rating sub-categories 'Business Industrial – Leeton' and 'Business Industrial – Whitton'. Residential ratepayers will see no change to the proportion of rates paid overall (beyond the annual rate peg)
- Successfully applied for 17 grants to the value of \$784,264 (excludes road funding)
- Purchased a CCTV Trailer to be used for three primary functions: mobile CCTV, people counting (e.g., at events like Chill & Grill), and traffic counting.





Participants in the Leeton Skate Championships

Our Performance by Status of Actions at 30 June 2023

This year staff across the organisation undertook 184 Operational Plan actions which aim to support the achievement of the Delivery Program. Each of the actions were allocated a status:




- Purple icon** **Completed** – the project has been completed
- Green icon** **On Track** – the activity or project is progressing as expected
- Amber icon** **Needs Attention** – the activity or project needs additional input or focus to get back on track
- Red icon** **Critical Concerns** – there are major issues associated with this activity or project
- Black icon** **Not Due to Commence**

The status of activities and projects at 30 June 2023 is shown in the following table:







Status of activity/project	Purple icon	Green icon	Amber icon	Red icon	Black icon	Total No. of Actions
Number of activities/projects	43	126	11	1	2	184

A total of 168 of the 184 actions/activities Council committed to undertaking are either **On Track**  or have been **Completed** .




One action was considered to be of **Critical Concern** . However, 12 actions were assigned the status of **Needs Attention**  and two were **Not Due to Commence** . The table below provides details on each of these actions and corrective actions being taken to address specific issues.

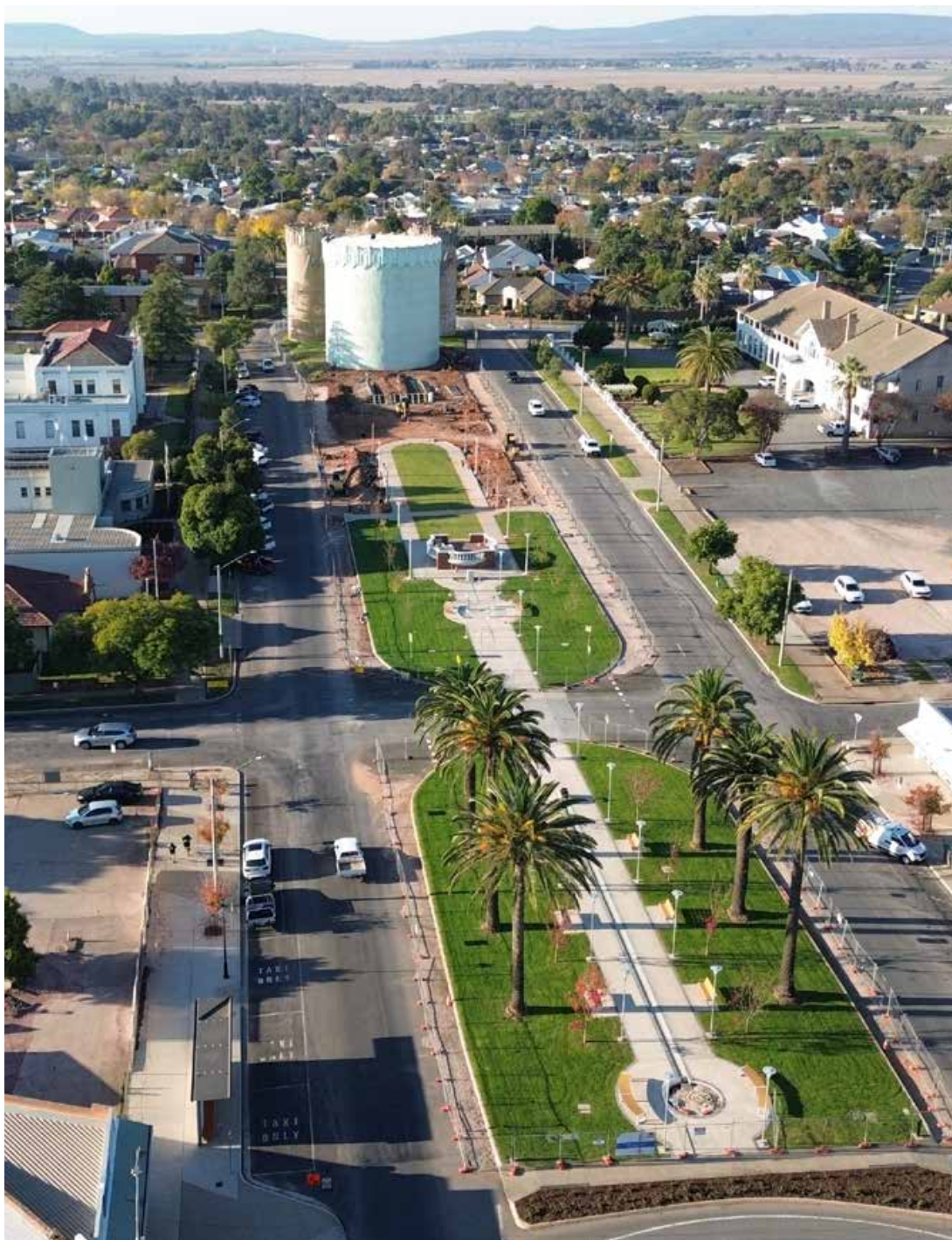
Operational Plan Activity	Status	Reason for Status	Corrective Actions
1.13.1 Advocate for accessible, quality and timely health services including mental health; drug and alcohol rehabilitation services, ambulance services and hospital services		Whilst a large amount of advocacy was undertaken, an Integrated Health Services Strategy for Leeton Shire is yet to be completed.	Leeton Shire has been selected to do 'Collaborative Care' planning and the Rural Doctors Network (RDN) has been funded to coordinate the program in 2024/25.
2.4.4 Explore public art opportunities on 'Cannery Corner' Wamoon Ave		SunRice has seen management changes and the project's priority has slowed.	To be revisited in 2024/25.
4.3.2 Council to consider housing development opportunities on Council-owned land commencing with Brobenah Road (current dog park) and in Whitton (Conapaira Street)		Council has not yet secured a development partner. Conversations have commenced with Landcom and continue with Argyle Housing.	Council is working with a consultant to complete a business case for Brobenah Road Housing development with options to be presented to the council in February 2024/25.

Our Performance by Status of Actions cont.

Operational Plan Activity	Status	Reason for Status	Corrective Actions
4.4.1 Develop – Chelmsford Place Town Square		While the project is progressing well, it was identified as being behind schedule by six weeks.	A new completion date of 19 July 2024 has been set.
4.4.2 Continue CBD Façade Painting in Leeton		Project was not prioritised in 2023/24 for reasons of workload.	Owner contributions in Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the project have been placed in a reserve fund to be utilised in a future financial year.
6.1.4 Heavy patching of sections of roads		This status was used due to some sections of the roads not being completed as per the program: – Bella Vista Drive – Carrington Drive – Stony Point Road.	Identified roads have been rolled over into the next financial year.
9.4.3 Undertake strategic engagement with Murrumbidgee Irrigation Ltd (MI Ltd)		Difficulty securing meeting dates.	Engagement with MI Ltd will recommence in 2024. Priorities are piping of channels and MOU.
9.6.8 Deliver Council's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) program, fostering continual improvement		Review is currently 80% complete and the aim was to be 100% complete by the end of the financial year.	Review will be 100% complete by the end of the first quarter in 2024/25.
9.7.13 Prepare and implement Plans of Management (PoM) for Crown Lands properties, and user agreements for sports ovals on Crown Land		Due to staff movements and workload pressures, the PoM's have not been completed.	PoM work plan has been created to assist with managing the requirements for progressing PoM's in 2024/25. This includes the possible use of contractors.

Our Performance by Status of Actions cont.

Operational Plan Activity	Status	Reason for Status	Corrective Actions
9.7.1 Implement the Long-Term Financial Plan – in consultation with ratepayers – to support Council's ongoing financial sustainability, including a Special Rate Variation (SRV) and/ or reductions in service levels		Council's general fund remains under strain and its financial position is unsustainable over the medium to long term. Council proposed an SRV in 2022. Following public consultation Council voted not to proceed.	New Council to consider options for achieving financial sustainability.
3.4.2 Maintain a Sporting Walk of Fame		Committee determined there would be no event for 2024 as there were insufficient nominees to be included.	Committee will go into recess for the next term of Council.
6.1.1 Shoulder widening		No projects approved for shoulder widening this financial year.	Potential projects will be presented as part of the planning for the next financial year.



Leeton

Statutory Information

The following section provides transparency, accountability and addresses statutory requirements under Chapter 13, Parts 2 and 4 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Part 9, Division 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* and any other legislation which requires information to be included in this report.

Councillor Professional Development

To comply with clause 217(a1)(iia) and clause 186 of *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*, Council provides the following report on the provision of induction training and professional development programs for the Mayor and Councillors.

During 2023/24, all 9 Councillors participated in ongoing professional development. Councillors took the opportunity to participate in over 20 different training, seminars, circulars and other professional development programs, including:

Councillor	Training
Mayor Cr Tony Reneker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023) Cultivating Connection with your Community – Locale Learning (August 2023) Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023) Local Government NSW Annual Conference (November 2023) National General Assembly of Local Government (ALGA) (June 2024)
Deputy Mayor Cr Michael Kidd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023) Cultivating Connection with your Community – Locale Learning (August 2023) Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Spea Up Team (September 2023) Local Government NSW Annual Conference (November 2023) National General Assembly of Local Government (ALGA) (June 2024)
Cr George Weston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023) Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023)
Cr Tony Ciccia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023) Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023)
Cr Matthew Holt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023) Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023)
Cr Tracey Morris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023) Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023)
Cr Krystal Maytom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training (1 Hour) – Halve Waste (August 2023) Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023)

Statutory Information cont.

Councillor	Training
Cr Paul Smith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting Things Done On Council – Institute of Local Governance (July 2023) Reviewing Council Financial Accounts – Institute of Local Governance (July 2023) Demographics for Councillors – Institute of Local Governance (July 2023) FOGO "3 Bin Service" Training – Halve Waste (August 2023) Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 Training – Council Speak Up Team (September 2023) Cyber Security Training (October 2023)
Cr Sandra Nardi	Did not attend any training or undertake professional development which was organised and or provided by Council within 2023/24

Councillors were also invited to participate in eleven Councillor Workshops, none of which related to business papers. Details of the attendances are listed below.

Councillor	Occasions of Attendance
Mayor Cr Tony Reneker	X 11
Deputy Mayor Cr Michael Kidd	X 9
Cr George Weston	X 11
Cr Tony Ciccio	X 10
Cr Matthew Holt	X 10
Cr Tracey Morris	X 8
Cr Krystal Maytom	X 9
Cr Paul Smith	X 9
Cr Sandra Nardi	X 5

Overseas visits

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a)

No overseas visits were undertaken by Leeton Shire Councillors as representatives of Council during 2023/24.

It is noted that General Manager, Jackie Kruger attended the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) Conference 2-5 June 2024. She represented the Australian Federation of LG Professionals and all expenses were covered by LG Professionals NSW.

Payment of Councillor Fees and Expenses, and Provision of Facilities to Councillors

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a1) (i), (ii), (iia), (iv), (vi), (vii), (viii)

Leeton Shire Council has a Councillors' Expenses and Facilities Policy that governs the expenses paid and facilities provided to the Mayor and other Councillors in their civic duties. Annual fees were paid to all Councillors as required by the Local Government Act 1993 and in line with the determination of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. The total fees paid to all Councillors for 2023/24 was \$104,272.

Annual fees were paid to all Councillors as required by the Local Government Act 1993 and in line with the determination of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. The total fees paid to all Councillors for 2023/24 was \$111,629.

Statutory Information cont.

Councillor Fees, Expenses and Facilities	Amount
Councillor fees	\$104,272.00
Mayoral allowance, excluding Councillor fee	\$25,549.15
Motor vehicle – Mayor (business use) – Current Mayor does not utilise a Mayoral vehicle	-
Councillor travel and accommodation	\$9,176.34
Council meeting and sundry expenses (includes external meetings/receptions)	\$7,153.67
Councillor training and skills development	\$4,520.00
Superannuation – Councillors	\$4,463.25
Telecommunications	\$3,251.78
Seminars and conferences	\$7,385.37
Memberships (Includes subscriptions and publications)	-
Material and consumable purchases	\$240.01
Printing and stationery	\$3,131.37
Florist expenses	\$1,208.13
Catering	\$786.82
Carer expenses	-
Interstate visits	-
Overseas visits	-
Office equipment	-
Spouse/partner expenses	-
TOTAL	\$171,137.89

Environmental Upgrade Agreements

Local Government Act 1993 – s 54P(1)

No environmental upgrade agreements have been entered into by Leeton Shire Council during this reporting period.

Special Rate Variations

Special Rate Variation Guidelines – 7.1

There was no special rate variation, and therefore Council only applied the increase of 3.7% in line with the rate peg.

Rates and Charges Written Off

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 132

Rates and charges (interest not included) written off in the 2023/24 period included:

Item	Amount
Total Pensioner Concession	\$312,521
Less: Subsidy Reimbursement	(\$170,975)
Amount Written off by Council	Nil
Postponed Rates and Charges	\$2,222.87
Sale of land for rates	Nil
Rates debts abandoned	Nil
Special Rate Rebates	\$16,457
TOTAL	\$160,226



Statutory Information cont.

Contracts Awarded

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a2)(i), (ii)

Details of contracts awarded by Leeton Shire Council in 2023/24 for amounts greater than \$150,000 are provided in the following table.

Contractor Name	Contract Description	Value	Date	Tender Type
Malcolm Goode Plumbing FOGO Contract	Plumbing Remediation Works – Gogeldrie Weir Transpiration Field	\$184,500	15 May 2024 to 26 June 2024	Open Market Request for Quotation
Boots Civil Pty Ltd	Construction of Landfill Trench	\$428,535.32	1 December 2023 to 1 April 2024	Open Market Tender
Excell Gray Bruni Pty Ltd	Construction Contract Vance Industrial Estate Project	\$7,157,972.36	4 June 2024 to 21 March 2025	Open Market Tender
Downer EDI	Extension of Works Spray Sealing Contract	Estimated \$900,000	June 2024 to June 2025	Open Market Tender
Currajong	Planning services for infrastructure master plan	\$220,000	5 April 2024 to 1 May 2025	Request for Quotation
Boots Civil Pty Ltd	Chelmsford Town Square Project	\$1,987,863.25	10 October 2023 to 31 May 2024	Open Market Tender
Armstrongs Plant Hire Matt Sheldrick Prolop Boots Civil HB Constructions Stabilfix Coates Conplant FM Rural Brooks MIA Crane Service Parter Excavations Rollers Australia The Stabilising	Pricing commitment by potential suppliers for the provision of wet and dry earthmoving and plant hire options	\$1,500,000 Estimated total value for a two-year period for all wet and dry plant hire	July 2023 to June 2025	Open Market Tender
Boots Civil Pty Ltd	New landfill trench construction	\$428,535.32	September 2023 to August 2024	Open Tender
I2R Electrical	Electrical upgrade – Leeton STP	\$420,000	28 November 2023 to 30 May 2024	Selective Tender

Statutory Information cont.

Legal Proceedings

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a3)

In 2023/24, there were no legal proceedings for debt recovery of rates and water charges. Council was involved in legal proceedings as follows:

Type of Proceedings	Cost	Amount/Activity	Status	Result
Public liability claim against Council – 1 claim, personal injury/public liability	\$3,475.70	Defence costs – Mills Oakley Lawyers	In progress	Unknown at this stage

Works Carried out on Private Land

Local Government Act 1993 – 67, 67(2)(b), 67(3)

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a4)

During the 2022/23 year, Leeton Shire Council made no resolutions under Section 67 of the *Local Government Act 1993* to carry out or subsidise work on private land.

External Bodies that exercise functions delegated by Council

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a6)

As per legislation, delegations fell to the following external bodies:

Name of External Body	Delegated Function
Rural Fire Service	Oversee the delivery of a Rural Fire Service within the local government area and discharge Council's obligations under the <i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i> and <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>
State Emergency Services	Oversee the delivery of the State Emergency Service within Leeton Shire and discharge Council's obligations under the <i>State Emergency Service Act 1989</i>

Companies controlled by Council

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a7)

Leeton Shire Council did not hold a controlling interest in any corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies.

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a8)

The table below describes Leeton Shire Council's participation in corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates and other bodies..

Name of Organisation	Function
Country Mayors Association	The Association represents rural and regional member councils in NSW. It is a forum to discuss shared issues and make representations to other levels of government.
Leeton Local Emergency Management Committee	This Committee is responsible for an all-agencies comprehensive approach to emergency planning in the Leeton Shire local government area. The membership of this Committee is made up of Emergency Services and other agencies with functional responsibilities.
Leeton–Narrandera Aerodrome Management Committee	This Committee is responsible for policy formulation and setting of guidelines for management matters at the Leeton–Narrandera Airport. Leeton Local Traffic



Statutory Information cont.

Name of Organisation	Function
Committee This Committee exists	primarily as a technical review committee which advises Council on some traffic-related matters. The Committee is made up of representatives from Council, NSW Police and Roads and Maritime Services.
Local Government New South Wales Local Government NSW is	the peak industry association that represents the interests of NSW general and special purpose councils. In being a member, Council is also represented at the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA).
MIA Zone Liaison Committee (Rural Fire Service)	This Committee advises the State Bushfire Coordination Committee on bushfire prevention in the Leeton Shire LGA; promotes the coordination of policies, practices and strategies relating to bushfire management; and prepares a Bushfire Management Area Plan and oversees its implementation.
Murray Darling Association Region 9	This group represents local government and community views on the major natural resource management issues of the Murray Darling Basin. It seeks to influence the policies of governments as they relate to conservation and sustainable development within the Basin.
Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation	The Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) is a voluntary regional organisation of 11 councils in the Riverina and Murray Region established under the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> , which takes a regional approach to addressing issues shared by local councils.
Riverina Regional Library	The Riverina Regional Library (RRL) is the largest regional library service in NSW. It provides library services to approximately 96,000 constituents of 11 local government areas, those being the shires of Berrigan, Bland, Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Federation, Greater Hume, Junee, Leeton, Lockhart, Snowy Valleys and Temora. The service consists of 21 stationary library branches and a mobile library spread over an area of 46,324 sq km.
Western Riverina Arts	Western Riverina Arts (WRA) is a not-for-profit organisation that works in partnership with our member councils: Narrandera Shire Council, Leeton Shire Council, Griffith City Council and Murrumbidgee Shire Council to support, develop and promote the Arts in the Western Riverina.

Equal Employment Opportunities Management Plan

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(a9)

Leeton Shire Council, through its policies and programs, aims to provide an environment where employees and others in the workplace are treated fairly and with respect, and are free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and bullying.

Council has endeavoured to translate intent into action in the following ways:

- Continuing to promote Council's employment opportunities to workplace diversity in our recruitment practices by targeting partners who can source quality candidates from diverse backgrounds
- Partnering with community organisations to provide development and engagement opportunities for First Nations peoples
- Enhanced support mechanisms for (particularly vulnerable) staff through the Employee Assistance Program, and assistance from the People and Culture team
- Continuing staff engagement through the Consultative and Safety Committees, including the planning and preparation of Wellbeing and Resilience Programs.

Statutory Information cont.

Remuneration – General Manager

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(b)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v)

As at 30 June 2023, Leeton Shire Council's General Manager's remuneration package consisted of:

Component	Value
Salary	\$265,357.53
Bonus or performance payments	Nil
Employer's contribution to superannuation	\$29,189.29
Non-cash benefits – Private use of motor vehicle (notional)	\$10,000
FBT on non-cash benefits	Nil
TOTAL	\$304,546.82

*General Manager also pays \$126.73 per week for private use of the car from her salary

Remuneration – Senior Staff

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(c)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v)

As at 30 June 2023, no other Leeton Shire Council staff fit the *Local Government Act 1993* definition of 'senior staff'.

Statement of total number of persons who performed paid work on Wednesday 14 February 2024

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(d)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv)

Categories of Staff	Number of staff
Persons employed by the council on a permanent full-time, permanent part-time or casual basis or under a fixed-term contract	160
Full-time Equivalent Persons (FTE)	140.42
Persons employed by the council as senior staff members	1
Persons engaged by the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, wholly or principally for the labour of the person	3
Persons supplied to the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, as an apprentice or trainee	0

Stormwater Management Services

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(e)

During 2023/24, Leeton Shire Council levied a Stormwater Management Service Charge (SMSC) on eligible residential properties and eligible properties in the business rating category. A total of \$91,618 was raised through these charges.

These funds were spent on a continued review and condition assessment of our current Stormwater network through physical inspections, and upgrade to Lansdowne Estate Pumpstation.

Coastal Protection Services

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(e1)

The requirement to report on coastal protection services does not apply to Leeton Shire.



Statutory Information cont.

Companion Animals Activities

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 – cl 217(1)(f)

Companion Animals Act 1998

Companion Animal Regulation 2018

Monies received from the Companion Animals Fund were expended on the provision of Companion Animal Management and Control services (details below). A total of \$340,500 was spent on Companion Animal Management and related activities.

Council's pound data collection returns and dog attack data for the 2023/24 financial year were lodged with the Office of Local Government (OLG) on 22 July 2024.

Community education programs carried out and strategies the council has in place to promote and assist the desexing of dogs and cats

Council's programs and strategies to promote and assist the registration, microchipping and desexing of dogs and cats included:

- Conducting community education programs by way of media releases, social media posts, participation in interviews with the media, reports to Council, Councillor briefing sessions, distribution of educational material and extension services provided to pet owners in person by Council's Rangers during daily operations
- Offering an ongoing subsidised microchipping program which allows members of the public to have their companion animals microchipped at a substantially reduced rate (\$35 for one animal or \$28 for more than one animal). This year, 168 animals were microchipped, down from 214 in the previous financial year
- Hosting free microchipping days (two were hosted in 2023/24 with 91 animals microchipped)
- Deferring the registration of cats and dogs for owners who wish to have their pets de-sexed until after the animals are de-sexed so the owners can benefit from the lower de-sexed animal registration rate.

Strategies in place for complying with the requirement under s 64 of the CA Act

In order to seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed impounded animals, Council:

- has entered into rehoming agreements with 'Hounds on the Rebound' and 'Pets Haven'
- microchips any animal going to a rescue organisation at no cost
- does not charge for animals adopted from the Pound by members of the public (apart from registration fees) and provides free microchipping
- has a dedicated Facebook Page for the Pound
- includes on its website pictures of impounded dogs and cats, regularly updated, in order that the owners may claim the dogs or that they may be rehomed.

In 2023/24, Council returned 89 of the 186 dogs impounded to their owners and transferred 91 to rehoming organisations. This represents a 97% return to owner/rehoming rate of impounded dogs, up from 95% in 2021/22.

Off-Leash Areas

Council provides an off-leash area at the former caravan park site on Brobenah Road, Leeton and at McCaughey Park, Yanco.

Statutory Information cont.

Capital Works Projects

Office of Local Government Capital Expenditure Guidelines

Council undertook major capital works with a value of \$20,234,715. These projects included:

Project	Amount
Land and Buildings	\$5,755,183
Parks and Recreation Assets	\$4,672,360
Plant and Equipment Purchases	\$1,859,691
Roads Bridges and Footpaths	\$4,894,722
Sewer Infrastructure	\$1,999,013
Waste Infrastructure	\$399,320
Water Supply System	\$654,426
TOTAL	\$20,234,715

Compliance with the Carers (Recognition) Act

Carers Recognition Act 2010 – s 8(2)

Leeton Shire benefits from Home and Community Care Services delivered through Temora Shire Council's Pinnacle program. Leeton Shire also benefits from Community Transport Services delivered through Narrandera Shire Council. Leeton Shire Council does not, itself, provide services directed at carers and/or people being cared for by carers.

Since January 2015, Council has had an agreement with Argyle Community Housing to manage the Council owned Eventide Yanco 14-unit affordable housing complex. Council provides an annual budget for capital works which has included but not limited works within each of the units such as the replacement of all kitchen, full internal repaints, bathroom renovations, carpet replacement and the installation of a new shared user gazebo common area.

In 2023/24 Council met its obligations under the Carers (Recognition) Act through a range of initiatives and programs. This included supporting workplace flexibility for employees with carer responsibilities.

Implementation of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Disability Inclusion Act 2014 – s 13(1)

Leeton Shire Council continued to progress the scheduled actions of its *Disability Inclusion Action Plan* (DIAP). Actions undertaken in 2023/24 included:

- Consulting with people with disabilities and their carers, disability service providers and members of the community in the development of a new DIAP
- Successful application for funding for an Adult Changing Facility in Sycamore St (\$114,962.50)
- Lodging the required information relating to implementation of the DIAP with the Minister for Disability Services
- Offering a free Home Library Service delivery to residents who are housebound, live in assisted living, are carers or who live with disability
- Installation of disability access to the bus shelter on Benembah Street, Whitton, funded through the Country passenger Terminal Infrastructure Grant Scheme
- Coordination of 'Stepping On', an education and exercise based program
- Repairing footpath defects identified via Council's inspection program and/or in response to notifications by members of the community



Statutory Information cont.

- Review and implementation of a new layout of Leeton Shire Library that allows for improved wheelchair access
- Advancing planning for a lift at LMAG
- Advancing installation of x2 lifts and hearing augmentation as part of the Roxy Community Theatre redevelopment
- As part of the Chelmsford Place Square redevelopment, considerations were made for disability access on footpaths to ensure inclusivity for all members of the community
- Leeton Indoor stadium coordinated/hosted pickleball for Kurrajong, Gralee School and MyPlan Connect
- Launch of LeetonLiving website which details a list disability service providers
- Implemented the Hidden Disability program which aims to help support and raise awareness of hidden disabilities that may not be obvious

Planning Agreements in Force

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 – s 7.5(5)

Leeton Shire Council did not enter into any planning agreements during 2023/24

Recovery and Threat Abatement Plans

Fisheries Management Act 1994 – s 220ZT(2)

Leeton Shire Council is not identified as having responsibility under any Recovery and Threat Abatement Plan.

Inspections of Private Swimming Pools

Swimming Pools Act 1992 – s 22F (2)

Swimming Pools Regulation 2018 – cl 23

Leeton Shire Council implemented its swimming pools inspection program as per the following table.

Project	No. of inspections
Tourist and visitor accommodation	0
Premises with more than two dwellings	0
Inspections at single dwelling premises that resulted in a Certificate of Compliance being issued under s 22D of the <i>Swimming Pools Act 1992</i>	16
Inspections at single dwelling premises that resulted in a Certificate of Non-Compliance being issued under cl 21 of the <i>Swimming Pools Regulation 2018</i>)	3
Number of swimming pools inspected	19
Number of reinspections conducted	3
Total number of pool inspections conducted	22

Section 7.11 Fixed Levies and Section 64 Contributions

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Environment Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 cl 218A(1)

During 2023/24, Leeton Shire Council collected \$159,545.09 towards its Section 7.12 Fixed Levy Plan. The balance at 30 June 2024 was \$1,146,686.38. No funds were expended in this financial year.

Under Section 64 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council may also levy some development for the construction of works related to water supply and sewerage and facilities. In 2023/24, \$260,719.80 was collected and \$260,719.80 spent as detailed below. The balance in the restriction at 30 June 2024 was \$31,325.48.

Statutory Information cont.

Detailed Project Description	\$ value of contributions or levies used or expended on project	Percentage of project cost funded by contributions of levies	Percentage of project completion
Whitton Water Filtration (WFT) Plant Access Ramp & Pit Platform/ Pump Monorail, Leeton Water Filtration Plant Chemical Storage Shed and Sedimentation Tank Launder Replacement and Telemetry Upgrades	\$130,580.64	45%	45%
Leeton Raw Water Plant Variable Speed Drive (VSD) and Switchboard Upgrade	\$2,827.20	3%	28%
Pump Stations Electrical upgrade at the Sewer Treatment Plant	\$127,311.96	24%	78%

On-site Sewage Management

Local Government Act 1993 – s 68

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021

During 2023/24, Leeton Shire Council levied an on-site sewage management fee for 1,697 properties which consists of 795 rural and 902 urban. A total of \$25,391 was raised through the charges and is used by Council to offset the cost of an education and inspection program.

19 on-site sewage management inspections were conducted in 2023/24.

Government Information Public Access Activity

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009, s 125(1) (GIPA Act)/

Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018, cl 8, Schedule 2

Under section 7 of the GIPA Act, agencies must review their programs for the release of government information at least once every 12 months to identify the kinds of information that can be made publicly available. During the reporting period we reviewed this program by examining the information currently provided on Council's website, in public areas at Council offices, in local newspapers and provided in response to requests from the public. Council's website continues to be a primary source for providing information to the public and provides timely and detailed reporting on current matters relating to Council. The most common requests for information received by Council continue to relate to development or building records, with increasing interest in developments by private certifiers, with additional information now included on Council's website.

Number of access applications received – Clause 7(b) of the GIPA Act. During the reporting period, Council received a total of one (1) subpoenaed and six (6) formal access applications (including withdrawn applications but not invalid applications). In addition, Council processed seven (7) 'Access to Information Requests' (informal GIPA applications) during the reporting period. Number of refused applications for Schedule 1 information – Clause 7(c) of the GIPA Act: was zero (0).



Statutory Information cont.

Public Interest Disclosures

Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 – s 31
Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011 – cl 4

Under Clause 4(1) of the Public Disclosures Regulation, Council must include the following information in its Annual Report:

Public Interest Disclosures (PIDs) in 2023/24	Number
Number of public officials who made PIDs	2
Number of PIDs received	2
Number of PIDs finalised	2

Procurement Procedures – Anti Slavery

Local Government Act 1993 - s 428(4)(c) and (d)

No concerns were raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner during the year concerning the operations of Council.
Council is working towards taking reasonable steps to ensure that:

- a) Modern Slavery is not occurring in the operations and supply chains of Council and any entity that it owns or controls
- b) it does not use or procure any goods, plant, equipment or other materials and work or services that are the product of Modern Slavery, and
- c) it develops and implements appropriate procedures including appropriate prevention plans and other policies in order to demonstrate that it has exercised due diligence to prevent Modern Slavery in Council's operations and supply chains, and to identify and respond to an actual or suspected case of Modern Slavery.

If Council becomes aware of any actual or suspected occurrence of Modern Slavery in its operations or supply chains (or in those of any entity that it owns or controls), Council commits to taking reasonable steps to respond to and address the occurrence in accordance with the relevant code of practice/conduct or other guidance issued by the Anti-slavery Commissioner.





LEETON
SHIRE COUNCIL

Leeton Shire Council

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Item 8.1.3. MINUTES OF COUNTRY MAYORS ASSOCIATION MEETING – 9 AUGUST 2024

AUTHOR/S: Executive Assistant to General Manager and Mayor

APPROVER/S: General Manager

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the minutes (Attachment 1) of the Country Mayors Association meeting held on Friday 9 August 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes for information the minutes of the Country Mayors Association meeting held on 9 August 2024.

REPORT

(a) Background

The Country Mayors Association (CMA) allows Local Government (LG) from rural and regional NSW to come together to discuss issues of specific interest to areas outside the major metropolitan centres as well as looking at the bigger picture of the whole LG sector within the State. The CMA represents about three (3) quarters of the state in land mass.

(b) Discussion

The CMA held an Ordinary Meeting on 9 August 2024. Presenters included:

- Deputy Commissioner Paul Pisanos, NSW Police Force,
- Linda Scott, President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA),
- Shadow Minister for Regional Health, Trade and Seniors,
- The Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC,
- Cr Phyllis Miller OAM, Director LGNSW Regional/Rural,
- Michelle Maxwell, Director Strategy, Governance and Delivery – Regional Health Division NSW Health,
- Greg Page, Founder of 'Heart of the Nation'.

There was an open Panel Discussion with Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Health, Dr. Michael Holland and members of the Rural Doctors Network:

- CEO Dr Richard Colbran,
- Manager Service Delivery Operations Kath Hetherington,
- Recruitment Portfolio Lead Jessica Yuen, and
- Program Manager Outreach Services Amanda Massett.

CMA members also discussed several other matters on:

- No-cost Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific (update by previous Mayor, Cr Tony Reneker)
- NRMA Membership,
- Acknowledgement of service of retiring Mayors.

(c) Options

Nil – this report is for information purposes only.

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

Cost of membership of the CMA and attendance at CMA meetings are budgeted annually.

(b) Policy

Nil

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Nil

(d) Risk

Attending CMA ensures that Leeton Shire Council can present key community issues in and to a forum and network whose collective voice is held in high regard and that has ready access to NSW Government Ministers and industry leaders.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

Members of the Country Mayors Association

(b) Internal

The CMA Annual General Meeting and General Meeting was attended by the Mayor and General Manager.

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

9. Governance and Administration

9.3 Provide respected and effective representation, leadership and advocacy

This is in accordance with the Councilor Induction and Professional Development Guidelines and Committee Terms of Reference

9. Governance and Corporate Services

9.3 Provide respected and effective representation, leadership and advocacy

9.3.2 Participate in State and national Local Government Associations (LGNSW, ALGA and Country Mayors, Local Government Professionals)

ATTACHMENTS

1. CMA Minutes 2024 August 9 [**8.1.3.1** - 12 pages]



Country Mayors Association of NEW SOUTH WALES Inc

Acting Chairman: Cr Rick Firman OAM
PO Box 262 Temora NSW 2666
(02) 6980 1100
e-mail admin@nswcountrymayors.com.au
ABN 92 803 490 533

MINUTES

GENERAL MEETING – THEME “HEALTH”

FRIDAY, 9 AUGUST 2024 THEATRETTE, NSW PARLIAMENT, SYDNEY

The meeting opened at 8:20 a.m.

ATTENDANCE:

Cr. Gil Kelly	Mayor	Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
Gareth Curtis	GM	Dungog Shire Council
Cr. David McCann	Mayor	Coolamon Shire Council
Tony Donoghue	GM	Coolamon Shire Council
Rob Williams	GM	Narrabri Shire Council
Cr. Mark Johnson	Mayor	Moree Plains Shire Council
Cr. Paul Harmon	Mayor	Inverell Shire Council
Brett McInnes	GM	Inverell Shire Council
Cr. Jarrod Marsden	Mayor	Cobar Shire Council
Peter Vlatko	GM	Cobar Shire Council
Cr. Pam Kensit	Mayor	Upper Lachlan Shire Council
Alex Waldron	CEO	Upper Lachlan Shire Council
Cr. Barry Hollman	Mayor	Bourke Shire Council
Cr. Leonie Brown	GM	Bourke Shire Council
Cr. Neville Kschenka	Mayor	Narrandera Shire Council
Cr. Carol Oataway	Mayor	Hay Shire Council
David Webb	GM	Hay Shire Council
Cr. Rick Firman OAM	Mayor	Temora Shire Council
Melissa Boxall	GM	Temora Shire Council
Cr. Milton Quigley	Mayor	Warren Shire Council
Gary Woodman	GM	Warren Shire Council
Cr. Jamie Chaffey	Mayor	Gunnedah Shire Council
Gary Fry	Secretariat	Country Mayors Association
Viv May PSM	Administrator	Wingecarribee Shire
Cr. Ambrose Doolan	Mayor	Warrumbungle Shire Council

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Ordinary Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Roger Bailey	GM	Warrumbungle Shire Council
Cr. Bob Callow	Mayor	Junee Shire Council
Cr. Margaret Roles	Mayor	Hilltops Council
Anthony O'Reilly	GM	Hilltops Council
Cr. Amanda Findley	Mayor	Shoalhaven
Cr. Jason Hamling	Mayor	Orange City Council
Cr. Ruth McRae	Mayor	Murrumbidgee Council
John Scarce	GM	Murrumbidgee Council
Cr. Greg Verdon	Mayor	Lockhart Shire Council
Cr. Peter Sharp	Deputy Mayor	Lockhart Shire Council
Eric Groth	GM	Gunnedah Shire Council
Cr. Rob Banham	Mayor	Glen Innes Severn Council
Bernard Smith	GM	Glen Innes Severn Council
Cr. Eric Noakes	Mayor	Walcha Council
Phillip Hood	GM	Walcha Council
Cr. Scott Ferguson	Mayor	Blayney Shire Council
Mark Dicker	GM	Blayney Shire Council
Cr. Doug Hawkins	Mayor	Liverpool Plains Shire Council
Gary Murphy	GM	Liverpool Plains Shire Council
Cr. Kevin Beatty	Mayor	Cabonne Council
Brad Byrnes	GM	Cabonne Council
Heather Nicholls	Deputy GM	Cabonne Council
Cr. Steve Allan	Mayor	Bellingen Shire Council
Mark Griffioen	GM	Bellingen Shire Council
Cr. Sharon Cadwallader	Mayor	Ballina Shire Council
Cr. Frank Crawley	Mayor	Murray River Council
Terry Dodds	GM	Murray River Council
Cr. Bronwyn Petrie	Mayor	Tenterfield Shire Council
Aaron Johansson	CEO	Goulburn Mulwaree Council
Cr. Jim Hickey	Deputy Mayor	Broken Hill City Council
Jay Nankivell	GM	Broken Hill City Council
Cr. Daniel Linklater	Mayor	Wentworth Shire Council
Ken Ross	GM	Wentworth Shire Council
Cr. John Coulton	Mayor	Gwydir Shire Council
Max Eastcott	GM	Gwydir Shire Council
Cr. Neil Westcott	Mayor	Parkes Shire Council
Cr. Ken Keith OAM	Councillor	Parkes Shire Council
Cr. Ruth Fagan	Mayor	Cowra Council
Adrian Butler	GM	Federation Council
Cr. Tony Reneker	Mayor	Leeton Shire Council
Jackie Kruger	GM	Leeton Shire Council
Cr. Tony Quinn	Mayor	Greater Hume Council
Evelyn Arnold	GM	Greater Hume Council
Cr. Brian Monaghan	Mayor	Bland Shire Council
Grant Baker	GM	Bland Shire Council
Jane Stroud	CEO	Kiama Shire Council
Cr. Neil Reilly	Mayor	Kiama Shire Council

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Ordinary Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Cr. Russell Fitzpatrick	Mayor	Bega Valley Shire Council
Anthony McMahon	CEO	Bega Valley Shire Council
Cr. Sam Coupland	Mayor	Armidale Regional Council
James Roncon	GM	Armidale Regional Council
Cr. Kylie King	Mayor	Albury City Council
Sharne Colefax	Manager, Council Engagement A/Council Engagement Manager – Riverina, Murray and Far South- West	OLG
Cameron Templeton	West	OLG
Cr. Mark Kellam	Mayor	Oberon Council
Gary Wallace	GM	Oberon Council
Cr. Ian Chaffey	Mayor	Snowy Valleys Council
Mark Arnold	GM	Byron Shire Council
Cr. Paul Phillips	Mayor	Lachlan Shire Council
Greg Tory	GM	Lachlan Shire Council
Cr. John Medcalf OAM	Deputy Mayor	Lachlan Shire Council
Paul Bennett	GM	Tamworth Regional Council
Cr. Russell Webb	Mayor	Tamworth Regional Council
Bob Stewart	Administrator	Central Darling Shire Council
Greg Hill	GM	Central Darling Shire Council
Robyn Stevens	CEO	Shoalhaven City Council
Cr. Craig Davies	Mayor	Narromine Shire Council
Cr. Mathew Dickerson	Mayor	Dubbo Regional Council
Cr. Claire Pontin	Mayor	Midcoast Council
Sharon Houlihan		Canberra Region Joint Organisation
Hayley Chapman		Canberra Region Joint Organisation
Jonathan Malota	Policy Advisor – Transport & Data	NRMA
Cr. Glen Neill	Mayor	Bogan Shire Council
Cr. Phyllis Miller OAM	Mayor	Forbes Shire Council

Parliamentarians in attendance (in addition to speakers):

- The Hon. Dougal Saunders, NSW Nationals Leader
- The Hon. Gurmesh Singh, Incoming Shadow Minister for Regional Health
- Brendan Moylan, Member for Northern Tablelands
- Michael Kemp, Member for Oxley
- The Hon. Steph Cooke, Member for Cootamundra, NSW Shadow Minister for Water and NSW Shadow Minister for Crown Lands
- The Hon. Tanya Thompson, Shadow Assistant Minister for Regional Health. Member for Myall Lakes
- The Hon. Aileen MacDonald, Shadow Minister for Youth Justice and Member of the Legislative Council
- The Hon. Bronnie Taylor, Retiring Shadow Minister of Regional Health
- The Hon. Wendy Tuckerman, Member for Goulburn and Shadow Minister for Local Government
- The Hon. Richie Williamson, Member for Clarence
The Nationals Whip, and Shadow Assistant Minister for Regional NSW
- The Hon. Justin Clancy, Member for Albury
Shadow Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education

APOLOGIES:

Cr. Doug Curran	Mayor	Griffith City Council
Brett Stonestreet	GM	Griffith City Council
Cr. Nuatali Nelmes	Lord Mayor	Newcastle City Council
Cr. Sue Moore	Mayor	Singleton Council
Cr. Darrell Tiemens	Mayor	Narrabri Shire Council
Cr. Jay Suvaal	Mayor	Cessnock City Council
Cr. Kenrick Winchester	Mayor	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
Rebecca Ryan	GM	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
Cr. Ryan Palmer	Mayor	Port Stephens Council
George Cowan	GM	Narrandera Shire Council
Cr. Dallas Tout	Mayor	City of Wagga Wagga
Cr. Mathew Hatcher	Mayor	Eurobodalla Shire Council
Cr. Chris Homer	Mayor	Shellharbour City Council
Cr. Vivian Slack-Smith	Mayor	Brewarrina Shire Council
Cr. David Kirby	GM	Brewarrina Shire Council
Cr. Gordon Bradbery AM	Lord Mayor	Wollongong City Council
Cr. Maree Statham	Mayor	Lithgow City Council
Ross Gurney	GM	Lithgow City Council
Murray Wood	CEO	Dubbo Regional Council
Cr. Peter Walker	Mayor	Goulburn Mulwaree Council
	Deputy Secretary, Local	
Brett Whitworth	Government	OLG
Greg McDonald	GM	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Cr. Maurice Collison	Mayor	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Cr. Peta Betts	Mayor	Edward River Council
Gary Arnold	Interim CEO	Edward River Council
Cr. Craig Bembrick	Mayor	Weddin Shire Council
Noreen Vu	GM	Weddin Shire Council
Cr. Patrick Bourke	Mayor	Federation Council
Cr. Doug Batten	Mayor	Gilgandra Shire Council
Neil Alchin	GM	Gilgandra Shire Council
Paul Devery	GM	Cowra Council
Cr. Steve Krieg	Mayor	Lismore City Council
Jon Gibbons	GM	Lismore City Council
Gary Murphy	GM	Liverpool Plains Shire Council
Cr. Doug Hawkins OAM	Mayor	Liverpool Plains Shire Council
Cr. Michael Lyon	Mayor	Byron Shire Council
Cr. Kylie Webster	Mayor	Kyogle Council

CMA Chairman Cr Jamie Chaffey Welcomes attendees, opened the meeting and conducted the Acknowledgement to Country

...We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters, and we show our respect for Elders past and present and emerging. We are committed to providing communities in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are included socially, culturally and economically.

Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 22 March 2024 be accepted as a true and accurate record (unanimous).

Matters Arising from the Minutes – Nil

PRESENTATIONS

Deputy Commissioner Paul Pisanos, NSW Police Force

I wanted to come back and raise six issues. We spoke about youth crime (serious and violent). Operation Mongoose has not stopped and the Bail Act has been enacted. We are aware of the impact on communities. Western, Northern and Southern regions have seen hundreds of arrests and 50% were on bail. 22C has been used for those over the age of 14. This is reducing recidivism (repeat offending).

Community work is important to us but other agencies need to come together for optimal outcomes.

Tobacco and vape products are being seized in significant quantities coming across our State borders.

Domestic violence is an ongoing focus. Identifying the serious offenders is a challenge we are working on.

Impaired driving operations are a focus across the State, with 80% of fatalities occurring on regional roads.

Driving behaviours like speeding require constant media and awareness efforts.

Cop in Your Town is our recruitment campaign that has been rolled out across NSW regions, with 12 launches that attracted good media. It is designed to capture the attention of locals, tradies, farmers, whoever might be looking for a change. Retention is also a focus, with better pay possibly on the horizon and real support mechanisms.

Jamie: How are you going with numbers?

Deputy Police Commissioner Pisanos: 1,500 is the shortfall. Paying people to go to the academy is a great step forward and we looking at increasing graduate numbers.

Dougal Saunders: The Regional Crime Inquiry is a real positive and congratulations to the CMA for that. Tobacco issues, can you tell us more about that?

Deputy Police Commissioner Pisanos: It is a complex space and our approaches are evolving.

Organised crime is playing a big part, so NSW Police are focusing on the behaviours of the people involved. The organised crime involvement adds to the potential concerns with tobacco and vape product smuggling.

Parkes Mayor Cr. Neil Westcott: Trundle's Police residence has been condemned....

Deputy Police Commissioner Pisanos: The Officer in Charge never really reported the condition because she stayed at her mother's place. It is going to be fixed up. Most of it (Police properties, including residences) is run through Properties NSW but it is a big challenge. There will be no closing Police Stations and residences.

Kempsey Shire Council Mayor Cr Leo Hauville: What proportion of the 80% of fatalities is speed related?

Deputy Police Commissioner Pisanos: More than half but you cannot always tell for certain. Speed is a contributing factor to most fatalities even if a distraction or impairment occurs.

Deputy Police Commissioner Pisanos: We are the only State that does not use point to point speed monitoring cameras for cars, will there be Government support to change that?

Deputy Police Commissioner Pisanos could not answer the political question but there was consensus in the chuckles that indicated it would be unlikely from either side of politics.

Deputy Police Commissioner Pisanos: Final comment, we are working on Crime Prevention Agreements and Moree is coming along. If your community does not have a Crime Prevention Agreement, I suggest you work with us to establish one.

President of ALGA, Cr. Linda Scott

If Councils are owed money by Rex Airlines, pleased get that information to ALGA. Normally we would not encourage the use of one service over another but we want to see the airline continue – for the sake of regional Australia and competition, so support it where practical.

Thank you for coming to our ALGA conference and my farewell.

The headline issue right now is housing. So, we are staging a summit to highlight the innovation in Local Government on the issue.

We are working on an MoU with the Federal Government and we are getting involved with more and more advisory bodies in Federal Parliament.

Linda acknowledged the contributions of retiring mayors.

We are so proud of you Jamie Chaffey and we look forward to seeing you take your Local Government experience to Federal Parliament.

Shadow Minister for Regional Health, Trade and Seniors, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor MLC

In her final appearance before retiring, the passionate Shadow Minister reflected on her time in the role and politics, generally.

Great politicians come out of Local Government.

It concerns me that we talk about the issues affecting young people but nowhere are we hearing the voices of young people. We need to engage youth and give them a voice. We need advice from the youth about youth issues. We need the Regional Youth Taskforce reinstated and I ask you as an Association to push for that.

She endorsed the new Shadow Minister for Regional Health, the Hon. Gurmesh Singh.

It is important that you try to meet the Regional Health Minister with your Local Members. It is not OK that you travelled all this way and the Regional Health Minister did not turn up.

The Minutes of Previous Meeting 10 May 2024 were adopted unanimously, with nil matters arising.

Motions:

A) General Manager of Murrumbidgee Council John Scarce:

That the Country Mayors Association calls upon the State Government of NSW to reverse its decision not to provide a budget for interagency emergency management training and exercises.

Further, without this interagency training and exercises, Country Mayors of NSW advocate that they are fearful that our Emergency Operations Centers and response to emergencies will be compromised with a potential for lives to be lost.

B) That the Membership support the Deputy Chairman Rick Firman OAM acting as interim Chairman, with the current Chairman Jamie Chaffey stepping down in the September 2024 Local Government elections.

C) That the Membership endorse the Executive Committee nomination of current Executive Member Russell Webb for the role of Deputy Chairman, in an interim capacity until the AGM.

All were unanimously supported.

Membership

The NRMA approached the CMA executive to establish a formal relationship.

It was recommended that the NRMA be accepted as an Associate Member of the CMA.

Parkes Shire Councillor Cr Ken Keith OAM moved the motion and Forbes Shire Mayor Cr Phyllis Miller OAM seconded. The Membership endorsed this recommendation unanimously. The NRMA is the first private sector Associate Member of the Country Mayors Association of NSW.

Leeton Shire Mayor Cr Tony Reneker spoke about the no-cost Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific. He encouraged mayors who support the PALM scheme and the much-needed workers it brings to join the Alliance. **[invitation letter attached]**

Panel session with the Rural Doctors Network's CEO Dr. Richard Colbran, Manager Service Delivery Operations Kath Hetherington, Recruitment Portfolio Lead Jessica Yuen and Program Manager Outreach Services Amanda Massett

[presentation attached]

Dr. Richard Colbran: We are a charity that has been around for 35 years. Continuity is important for our organisation and health. We are in all LGAs outside of Sydney. We are the bridge between rural communities and the city (Government). Most Councils would be aware of our bush bursaries and their support of doctors from our regions.

Doctors for communities has been the focus for years but we are now looking at health access. You may not need a doctor and you certainly need the right doctor.

Kath Hetherington: We understand that open communication is critical. We understand that you are engaged and we want to work with you and your communities. Our Collaborative Care Project includes a focus on retention and broad health care access.

Dr. Richard Colbran: We do not have a solution, we have a method, in our \$3mil. Funded Collaborative Care Project.

Jessica Yuen: Free recruitment is provided to all medical practices, with free CV assessment. We help practices and Doctors to ask the right questions to ensure they are the right fit for the location.

152 new GPs were recruited in the past financial year, 79 positions directly by RDN.

Dr. Richard Colbran: We support locums as a respite service but it has become a business. The trend is not ideal for regional communities and it is very costly.

RDN takes no administration fee. We are allowed to allocate 15% to outreach and we give 50% of that to communities.

We are compiling a report for Councils with data trends for doctor numbers.

Cr. Jamie Chaffey: We care about retaining people in our communities. You are now required to support metropolitan areas now. Is your funding contingent on that?

Dr. Colbran: Money is tight in Governments. We do work in the city, in all the AMS's. The 10,000 GPs in Sydney are our target audience, so we have to work with them. The Government wants the whole system working together.

Tenterfield Mayor Cr Bronwyn Petie: What satisfaction levels do you get from doctors and practices.

Dr. Colbran: We have a 95% satisfaction rate from doctors we support. Practices are small businesses and we need to remember that. Some of them need to be better, to adapt to contemporary work expectations and to make the GP role more appealing.

Cr. Steve Allen, Mayor of Bellingen Shire (and a pharmacist): It is difficult to attract people to GP roles instead of specialising. Are you looking at better utilising the allied professionalism including pharmacies?

Dr. Colbran: Scope of practice is something we are focusing on. Colleges are actually removing rural placements and we need to watch that. Optimising scope of practice to support health outcomes would include pharmacists.

Mayor of Bland Shire Cr. Brian Monaghan: Overseas Doctors can now go to the cities....?

Dr. Colbran: 1500 of our doctors are overseas trained. Those incentives to send people to rural locations have been taken away. Continuity is important to regional communities and we have seen doctors relocate to the city as soon as possible.

Mayor Monaghan: Is an increased rural Medicare rebate possible?

Dr. Colbran: The Doctors Associations do this lobbying. One of the problems is we just move people from practices to hospitals. The health care providers have not increased.

**Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Health,
Dr. Michael Holland**
[full speech attached]

Dr. Holland talked about how safe working staffing levels are being rolled out. Ratios in nursing have long been a contention in nursing, as they have attracted nurses to other states. For what the NSW Government considers safe working levels in our hospitals, use this link:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/workforce/Pages/safe-staffing-levels.aspx>

Dr. Holland said Ambulance services are important and we have seen increased funding. \$274mil to upgrade staffing at selected locations.

HECS fee incentives do exist, with \$20,000 for the 1st year and following years, \$10,000.

New hospital in Eurobodalla and accommodation is a concern. \$200mil. is being invested across NSW for essential worker accommodation.

Workforce recruitment of up to 80 generalists has been successful.

Cowra Council Mayor Cr. Ruth Fagan: I'm concerned about health councils not being supported or retained. Community committees are important.

Dr. Holland: I was not aware that this was a problem and I will report it to the Minister.

Mayor Fagan: Cowra is getting a new hospital. Is there any possibility we could employ a resident doctor with the hospital?

Dr. Holland: The small business model needs to change, as Dr. McGirr said. We do need new approaches.

Q: What about the international doctors who are driving Ubers?

A: We value our international doctors and need to work with our Federal Government to improve the pathways and remove the barriers.

LGNSW Update

Forbes Shire Mayor Cr. Phyllis Miller OAM is on the CMA Executive and is a Director of LGNSW (Regional/Rural). She provided a brief update on behalf of LGNSW and the organisation's President Cr. Darriea Turley AM (a Councillor in Broken Hill).

Mayor Miller emphasized that 20 Oct. is the deadline for LGNSW conference motions. She also reiterated that Cr. Jamie Chaffey and Cr. Scott Ferguson will be missed and applauded their contributions.

Michelle Maxwell, Director, Strategy, Governance and Delivery, Regional Health Division – NSW Health

Michelle provided an update of the implementation of recommendations from the Regional Health Inquiry, stating that as at 30 June, 2024 a total of 25 of 34 recommendations had been implemented / followed up on.

Michael also detailed the current Regional Health MPS strategy framework process. She reiterated that consultation is ongoing and they are keen to receive further input from Councils.

[Presentation attached]

Coolamon Shire Council Mayor Cr. David McCann voiced his community's appreciation that their MPS is to be upgraded but asked for an update on the work.
Michelle: We will look into that for you.

Founder of 'Heart of the Nation' Greg Page (also founding member of The Wiggles)

Greg Page is best known as the original lead singer and a founding member of the children's band The Wiggles from 1991 to 2006 and then again in 2012. He has also recorded a number of solo albums and published his autobiography.

Since suffering a sudden cardiac arrest in 2020 during a Wiggles reunion concert, Greg has become an advocate for community capacity building for immediate response to a sudden cardiac arrest. He founded the charity "Heart of the Nation", which promotes more widespread access to automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and aims to increase public awareness of defibrillator locations across Australia, as well as encouraging businesses to keep a defibrillator on-site.

Greg gave the examples of Orange and Parkes, where publicly accessible AEDs have been rolled out. He said that the solution to improving the survival rate of sudden cardiac arrest (a shocking 5%) lies with community capacity to respond.

Forbes Shire Mayor Cr. Phyllis Miller OAM: We've got them but need more.

Tenterfield Shire Mayor Cr. Bronwyn Petrie: I'm concerned they could be abused or stolen. Do they have GPS trackers?

Greg: Yes, ours also have a sim card.

Upper Lachlan Shire Mayor Cr. Pam Kensit: Do those sim cards tell you when they need maintenance?

Greg: If a Council purchases them, it is really their responsibility to maintain them.

Greg explained that Heart of the Nation is a charity with a singular cause and he makes no money from it.

Greg's presentation is attached. Here is the link to the Heart of the Nation website:

<https://www.heartofthenation.com.au/>

Acting CMA Chairman and Mayor of Temora Shire Cr. Rick Firman OAM took to the lectern to acknowledge the service of retiring mayors present at the meeting, paying special tribute to outgoing Chairman Cr. Jamie Chaffey of Gunnedah Shire and presenting him with a framed caricature of himself.

Mayor Chaffey has really lifted the professionalism of the Country Mayors Association of NSW. He has been passionate and dedicated in his role. He admitted to feeling emotional as he addressed the meeting for the final time and held the portrait that will ensure he does not take himself too seriously, as he vowed to hang it in his office when he takes the seat of Parkes.

There being no further business, the meeting was formally closed at 1:10 pm.

Postscript Note:

The Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia CEO Greg Sam sent a letter to the CMA expressing his regret for not being able to make it to the meeting.

"We would appreciate an opportunity to address a future CMA meeting about the recent and ongoing evolution of the services we provide to rural Australians, and we are always receptive to input and perspectives that may help to shape our service delivery models going forward."

Mr. Sam invited the CMA Acting Chairman to tour the RFDS base at Broken Hill.

Cr Rick Firman OAM
Acting Chairman of the Country Mayor's Association of NSW

The next meeting (AGM) is scheduled for 15 November 2024 in the Theatrette, NSW Parliament, Sydney. It will have a Skills and Education theme. Please RSVP by 6 November to assist with morning tea catering.

DRAFT

Item 8.1.4. MINUTES RAMJO MEETING - 16 AUGUST 2024

AUTHOR/S: Executive Assistant to General Manager and Mayor

APPROVER/S: General Manager

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the minutes of the RAMJO meeting held on Friday 16 August 2024 (**Attachment 1**), for Council's information.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council notes for information the minutes of the RAMJO meeting held on Friday 16 August 2024

REPORT

(a) Background

The Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) comprises thirteen (13) Member Councils. The governing board comprises the Mayors and the General Managers of those member Councils and is supported by an Executive Officer. RAMJO comes together to consider common concerns of our communities and to find solutions to address these matters.

RAMJO's current strategic regional priorities include:

- Water Security,
- Energy Security and Affordability,
- Transport Connectivity,
- Digital Connectivity,
- Better Health Services,
- Housing,
- Transport.

RAMJO also collaborates on:

- Waste Management,
- Contaminated Lands Management,
- Shared Services,
- Disaster/Risk Management.

(b) Discussion

RAMJO held a Board Meeting on Friday 16 August 2024 in Griffith.

Presentations included:

- Mr Bola Oyetunji, NSW Auditor General - Update on key focus areas,
- Mr Steve Tinkler, GM Telstra Country Wider & Mr Chris Taylor Regional GM ACT and Southern NSW – Update on connectivity project within the RAMJO footprint,
- Mr Cameron Templeton, Council Engagement Manager – Riverina and Far South West – Office of Local Government Update,
- Mr Giles Butler, Director, Regional Coordination – South/Delivery and Engagement Group – NSW Premier's Department Update.

Discussions also took place on:

- RAMJO Governance, Finance and Operations – A written Executive Officer's report and 23/24 Q4 Budget Review and Contract Liabilities as at 30 June 2024 report were tabled and noted.
- Strategic Priorities – Water sub-committee and Housing sub-committee updates provided.
- Project Updates – Best practice in Aggregated Procurement Program, Housing Support Program (stream1), Disaster Ready Fund (round 2), Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration (JONZA), Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF) Project and Regional Resource Recovery Projects.
- Advocacy updates – Submissions to EPA on FOGO Mandates and Waste Levy, Disaster Adaption Plans and Water Security.
- Policies and Plans – Three policies/plans were endorsed by the Board – Budget and Statement of Review Policy, Cyber Security Policy and Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy.

(c) Options

Nil – this report is for information purposes only

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

Costs of membership of RAMJO and attendance at RAMJO meetings are budgeted annually.

(b) Policy

Nil

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Local Government Act 1993, s400(O-Z, ZA-ZH)

(d) Risk

Attending RAMJO ensures that Leeton Shire Council can present key community issues in and to a forum and network whose collective voice is held in high regard and that has ready access to NSW Government Ministers and industry leaders. Participating in the Joint Organisation also provides joint procurement opportunities, with the roll out of FOGO and the cost of electricity at major sites delivering beneficial results that Council could not have achieved alone.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

Members of RAMJO Councils

(b) Internal

The RAMJO meeting on Friday 16 August 2024 was attended (in person) by the Mayor and the General Manager.

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

9. Governance and Administration

9.4 Nurture strong partnerships with Murray Darling Association, RAMJO, MI Ltd, NSW Government Commonwealth

9. Governance and Corporate Services

9.4 Nurture strong, strategic partnerships across the region, NSW and the Commonwealth

9.4.1 Membership of Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO)

ATTACHMENTS

1. RAMJO Board Meeting 16 August 2024 [**8.1.4.1** - 9 pages]

BOARD MEETING AGENDA

16 August 2024 – Griffith



MEETING	RAMJO Board Meeting		
DATE	Friday 16 August 2024		
TIME	9:30am – 1:00pm		
LOCATION	Griffith Regional Theatre, Burley Griffin Room - 1 Neville Place. Griffith NSW		
CHAIR	Cr. Kylie King (Deputy Chair)		
MICROSOFT TEAMS LINK	Microsoft Teams Join the meeting now Meeting ID: 485 235 964 822 Passcode: 2YQMPE		
ATTENDEES	Council / Agency	Voting Member (Mayor)	Non-Voting Member (GM)
	Albury City Council	Cr. Kylie King	Mr. Frank Zaknich
	Berrigan Shire Council	Cr. Julia Cornwell-McKean	Mrs. Karina Ewer
	Carrathool Shire Council	Cr. Darryl Jardine	Mr. Rick Warren
	Edward River Council	Cr. Peta Betts	Mr. Gary Arnold
	Federation Council	Cr. Pat Bourke (apology)	Mr. Adrian Butler
	Griffith City Council	Cr. Doug Curran	Mr. Brett Stonestreet
	Hay Shire Council	Cr. Carol Oataway	Ms. Kirstyn Thronder
	Leeton Shire Council	Cr. Tony Reneker	Mrs. Jackie Kruger
	Murray River Council	Cr. Frank Crawley	Mr. Terry Dodds
	Murrumbidgee Council	Cr. Ruth McRae	Mr. John Scarce
	Narrandera Shire Council	Cr. Neville Kschenka	Mr. George Cowan
	Associate Members		
	Balranald Shire Council	Mr. Glen Carroll (Acting General Manager) (apology)	
	Wagga Wagga City Council	Cr. Dallas Tout Mr. Peter Thompson	
	Wentworth Shire Council	Cr. Daniel Linklater (apology) Mr. Ken Ross (apology)	
	State Agency Representatives		
	Office of Local Government	Mr. Cameron Templeton	
	Dept. of Primary Industries & Regional Development	Mr. Giles Butler	
RAMJO STAFF	Ms. Yvonne Lingua - Executive Officer		
	Mrs. Susan Escott – Administration Officer		
OTHER ATTENDEES	Name	Role	
	Mr. Bola Oyetunji	NSW Auditor-General – NSW Audit Office	



BOARD MEETING AGENDA

16 August 2024 – Griffith



MEETING MINUTES		
Item	Topic	Time
	OPENING	9:30
1	WELCOME Acknowledgement on Country	9:30
2	Apologies and Leave of Absence	9:31
3	Declaration of Items of Pecuniary or Other Interest – Board Members / Designated Persons	9:32
4	MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: 17 May 2024 Board meeting – <i>Attachment A</i>	9:33
5	Matters and action items arising from previous Board meeting	9:34
6	GUEST SPEAKERS 6.1 Mr. Bola Oyetunji – NSW Auditor-General 6.2 Mr. Steve Tinkler and Mr. Chris Taylor – Telstra	9:35
7	GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND OPERATIONS 7.1 Executive Officer's Report – <i>Attachment B</i> 7.2 2023/2024 Q4 Budget Review and Contract Liabilities as at 30 June 2024 – <i>Attachment C</i> 7.3 Tabling of Draft RAMJO Policies - Round Three – <i>Attachment D</i> 7.4 Audit Risk and Improvement Committee – <i>Attachment E</i> 7.5 Draft Minutes - General Managers Advisory Committee 19 July - <i>Attachment F</i> 7.6 Service Level Agreement for Regional Resource Recovery Services - <i>Attachment G</i>	10:45
BREAK		11:30
8	UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ADVOCACY 8.1 Progress and status of Sub-Committee's and working groups - <i>Attachment H</i> 8.2 Advocacy Activities – <i>Attachment I</i> 8.3 Regional Express in Voluntary Administration 8.4 Advocacy on NSW GST Distribution – <i>Attachment J</i>	11:45
9	DEPT. OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT 9.1 Mr. Giles Butler – General Update	12:10
10	OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT 10.1 Mr. Cameron Templeton – General Update	12:20
11	PROJECT UPDATES 11.1 Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement Program – <i>Attachment K</i> 11.2 Housing Support Program – Stream 1 11.3 Disaster Ready Fund – Round 2 11.4 Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration – <i>Attachment L</i> 11.5 Regional Resource Recovery – <i>Attachment M</i>	12:30
12	GENERAL BUSINESS 12.1 Call for general business by the Chair. 12.2 MRT Board – Murray River	12:45
Meeting Close		1:00pm



BOARD MEETING AGENDA

16 August 2024 – Griffith



AGENDA ITEM 1 –WELCOME, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Chair to welcome attendees and acknowledgement of country.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mr. Patrick Bourke, Mr. David Webb, represented by Mrs. Krystyn Thronder, Mr. Glen Carroll, Cr. Daniel Linklater and Mr. Ken Ross.

Wagga Wagga City Council welcomed as Associates. Incoming RAMJO Administration Officer, Susan Escott welcomed.

Recommendation:

- That apologies be accepted and that leave of absence be granted.
-

Moved: Narrandera / Seconded: Murrumbidgee

Carried

A warm welcome also to our Associate Members from Balranald Shire, Wentworth Shire and Wagga Wagga City Councils.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – DECLARATION OF ITEMS OF PECUNIARY OR OTHER INTEREST

- None noted.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Tabling of Draft minutes of 17 May Board Meeting – *Attachment A*

Recommendation:

- That the minutes of the RAMJO Board Meeting held 17 May be received and the recommendations therein adopted.

Moved: Leeton / Seconded: Griffith

Carried

AGENDA ITEM 5 – MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS RAMJO BOARD MEETINGS

ACTION ITEMS FROM 17 MAY BOARD MEETING		
AGENDA ITEM	ACTION	STATUS
7.2 2024/2025 Operational budget	Continue with a focus on improving RAMJO's long-term Financial Sustainability- workshop summary to be tabled later.	ONGOING
7.4 Tabling of Draft Policies – Round Two	Credit Card Use Policy – Amendments	COMPLETE

ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS BOARD MEETINGS	
ITEM	STATUS
Invite Water NSW Director to RAMJO Water Security Sub Committee meeting to seek clarity on planned infrastructure changes. Update: Two meetings have been had to date between Jane Sheppard (NSW Water Director) and RAMJO i.e. the LWU Working Group.	COMPLETE



BOARD MEETING AGENDA

16 August 2024 – Griffith



Board to consider coordinating a regional list of events so councils are not competing with each other for attendances. Update: Events will be noted in the RAMJO E-Bulletin. Councils Events and Communications teams are being liaised with here.	IN PROGRESS
Circulate for the boards review, the final draft of the updated Water Position Paper Update: This Action was discussed at the last Water sub-committee meeting held in December 2023, with required tweaks discussed and drafted.	COMPLETE
Item 10.1 - Invite Wentworth, Balranald and Wagga Councils to join RAMJO as Associate Members Update: Balranald are tabling the invite at their May council meeting. Wagga have been invited to join as Associate members.	COMPLETE

Recommendation:

- That the RAMJO Board **note** the status of matters arising from previous Board meetings.

Moved: Leeton / **Seconded:** Griffith
Carried

AGENDA ITEM 6 – PRESENTATIONS

6.1 NSW Auditor General Mr. Bola Oyetunji addressed the RAMJO board.

The Auditor General noted key areas for focus for himself and his team under his leadership and fielded questions from member councils.

6.2 Telstra: Mr Steve Tinkler – General Manager Telstra Country Wider and Mr Chris Taylor Regional General Manager ACT and Southern NSW addressed the RAMJO Board.

Senior Telstra representatives addressed the board. Discussion had around preliminary plans for pursual of a major digital connectivity project within the RAMJO footprint and spanning south into the Murray Region Group of Councils. Telstra noted currently known coverage black spot areas within the RAMJO region, but advised additional work would be conducted and member councils engaged to verify known black-spot areas.

Candour Solutions: Ms Margie Wiseman addressed the RAMJO Board.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the presentation by the NSW Auditor General, Telstra & Candour Solutions.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

7.1 Executive Officers Report

Attachment B notes the Executive Officers report, providing a written update on operations and focus areas.

7.2 2023/2024 Q4 Budget Review and Contract Liabilities as at 30 June 2024

Attachment C contains two (2) attachments as follows:



BOARD MEETING AGENDA

16 August 2024 – Griffith



- The 2023/2024 FY Q4 budget review with YTD Actuals; and
- Contract Liabilities Review i.e. RAMJO run programs and projects as at 30 June 2024, in preparation for the Annual Audit.

End of year figures for the 2023/2024 Financial Year ended better than the projected \$80,000 deficit forecast, due to:

- Sale of RAMJO owned vehicle not originally included in the 2023/2024FY Budget
- Ensuring that Project/Program Administration and Management fees were charged where possible, and that rental assistance and other costs were claimed where a straight Administration Fee of Management fee was not allowed i.e. DRRF
- The adjustment of an aged creditor figure from previous years that had been carried forward in the financials.
- Generous EO and then Officer Manager forecast on-costs.

This improved outcome is welcome, however is not an indication of longer-term financial sustainability, as the sale of asset and aged creditor adjustment were one off income streams.

Senior Partner Ms. Margaret Wiseman also addressed the RAMJO board and provided detail in support of *Attachment C, part 2* on work undertaken in preparation for the 23/24FY audit, pertaining to RAMJO's contract liabilities or grants received, including detail on the need for some prior year adjustments.

7.3 Tabling of Draft Policies - Round Three

Attachment D notes three (3) policies for the Boards endorsement and adoption, which have been reviewed by the General Managers Advisory Committee (**GMAC**). All policies that will help ensure RAMJO's overall compliance and improved operations will be developed and shared with the GMAC for their review and input, prior to a request for adoption by the RAMJO board.

Round three of required policies are as follows:

1. **Budget and Statement of Review Policy:** Provides structure on how Membership Fee's are to be calculated and used for operational budgeting.
2. **Cyber Security Policy:** Defines how Cyber Security is managed and is to be prevented, alongside RAMJO's current IT service provider AlburyCity.
3. **Fraud and Corruption Prevention:** Outlines the high standards of ethical behaviour expected by RAMJO and introduces a Fraud and Corruption Control Framework to ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place to prevent, deter, detect and respond to fraud and corruption.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **endorse** and **adopt** the third round of RAMJO policies.

Moved: Narrandera / Seconded Edward River

Carried

7.4 Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC)

Attachment E provides a copy of the Minutes from the last ARIC meeting held in May and notes the agenda for the August ARIC meeting held on Wednesday 14 August. A verbal update will also be provided by the Executive Officer.

7.5 Draft Minutes – General Managers Advisory Committee Meeting – 19 July 2024

Attachment F notes the meeting minutes from the GMAC meeting held 19 July 2024.



BOARD MEETING AGENDA

16 August 2024 – Griffith



7.6 Service Level Agreement for Regional Resource Recovery Services

Attachment G notes a draft version of the Service Level Agreement currently being finalised for the delivery of Regional Resource Recovery Services per recommendations adopted at the February 2024 board meeting, intended to provide structure and clarity on the roles and responsibilities of both parties.

As at 12 August, the final legal reviewed version with final costs for service delivery have not yet been received by RAMJO, thus the draft version tabled for the GMAC is shared here.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note**
 - the Executive Officers report
 - the Q4 budget review with YTD actuals and Contract Liabilities for the 2023/2024 FY
 - the update provided on ARIC operations
 - the draft minutes from General Managers Advisory Committee Meeting held 19 July
- That the Board **endorse** the draft tabled Service Level Agreement for Regional Resource Recovery Services

Moved: Murrumbidgee / Seconded: Narrandera
Carried

AGENDA ITEM 8 – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

8.1 Progress and status of sub-committee's and working groups

Attachment H notes progress made and the current position of RAMJO's sub-committee's, which directly link to RAMJO's *Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities*. Verbal updates were also provided by the following sub-committee chairpersons:

Water sub-committee

Cr. Tony Reneker and Mrs. Jackie Kruger provided a verbal overview of the Water Sub-Committee meeting held the day prior on 15 August 2024. Key points noted were:

- Opposition and adaptability to water buy-backs continues to dominate the committee's focus
- The committee have adopted a three-pronged approach to advocacy and adaptability to buy-backs, as follows:
 1. Continue to oppose and advocate against buy-backs, at the Federal level
 2. Work to ensure the Region and those LGA's most impacted by buy-backs can be ready for structural adjustments, by actively seeking support from the NSW State Government (Dept. of Primary Industries and Regional Development) to assist in benchmarking of current economies and planning for replacement industries
 3. Provide a counter narrative to the Federal Government campaign currently in circulation, that highlights our regions willingness and desire to protect natural waterways, whilst also protecting the economic livelihood of our communities and by extension, consumers of our regions food-bowl.
- Water sub-committee sought the boards approval for Mrs. Jackie Kruger to step-in as interim chair following the departure of current sub-committee chair Cr. Reneker, per the September 2024 elections – this is a temporary arrangement until a new chair for the sub-committee can be elected
- Discussion had surrounding securing of funds for development of an impact statement to measure the impacts of buy-backs on each RAMJO LGA, to be developed by an external consultant
- Idea is to capture data, conduct baseline benchmarking and modelling, and develop the impact statement, which can then be used to make a stronger case against buy-backs, call for continued investment for structural adjustments and help direct (part of) the \$300m Sustainable Communities funds (and others) in the right direction and where most needed



BOARD MEETING AGENDA

16 August 2024 – Griffith



- Initial costing for development of such a statement is marked at \$10,000 to \$15,000
- Following discussion, Murrumbidgee Shire noted they would be willing to provide the funds up-front for development of the statement and re-coup costs from interested and participating councils at a later date
- Carrathool noted they would be willing to participate, to prevent water re-direction attempts
- Noted that key industries would also likely be willing to contribute and participate

Housing sub-committee

Mr. Brett Stonestreet provided an overview of the most recent Housing Sub-Committee meeting, held on 30 April 2024. Key points raised included:

- Current priority is for the development of a RAMJO Regional Housing Strategy
- Continue to understand the State Governments plan for securing and funding Regional Housing

Recommendation:

- Funded by participating member councils but through RAMJO, that the Board seek to engage Aither (or other suitable consultant) to produce an impact statement to understand the economic impacts of water buy-backs on individual RAMJO LGA's.

**Moved: Leeton / Seconded: Murrumbidgee
Carried**

8.2 Advocacy Activities

Attachment I provides an update on recent Advocacy Activities pursued by RAMJO.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the update provided on Advocacy Activities.

8.3 Regional Express in Voluntary Administration

Mr. George Cowan provided a verbal update regarding Regional Express Airlines going into voluntary administration. Member Councils were encouraged members to use Regional Express Airlines where possible, to ensure tickets continue to be sold.

8.4 Advocacy on NSW GST Distribution

Attachment J notes a letter prepared by the Canberra Region Joint Organisation calling for a fairer distribution of GST for NSW. Cr. Kylie King to speak further to this point and sought endorsement from the board for RAMJO to write its own letter on this matter.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **endorse** RAMJO writing a letter to the NSW Premier on this matter.

**Moved: Albury / Seconded: Murray
Carried**



BOARD MEETING AGENDA

16 August 2024 – Griffith



AGENDA ITEM 9 – REGIONAL COORDINATION – SOUTH / DELIVERY AND ENGAGEMENT GROUP, NSW PREMIER'S DEPARTMENT UPDATE

9.1 Mr Giles Butler Director – Director, Regional Coordination - South | Delivery and Engagement Group, NSW Premier's Department

Mr. Giles Butler addressed the RAMJO board, noting the following key points:

- As of 1 July 2024, the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development has re-structured and rebranded
- As a result, Mr. Giles Butler has returned to the NSW Premiers Department and now covers 33 LGA's via three Joint Organisations and one ROC, including RAMJO LGA's
- Economic development, grants and funding remains with Debbie Lane of the Department of Primary Industries & Regional Development, however Giles notes his ability to triage requests as the transition unfolds
- Discussion surrounding Water Security and buy-backs – Federal Government is going ahead with recovery of 450GL's of water, despite the State Government proposing and calling for alternatives to buy backs
- Noted that the Federal Government has now announced the \$300m allocated for delivery of the *Sustainable Communities Program* will be managed by the NSW Dept. of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD)
- No formal agreement yet in place between the Commonwealth and State to deliver sustainable Community program – progressing – when done communications about next step including NSW State Government engagement re developing program
- Minister Jackson - Advocacy around water recovery program
- Minister Moriarty – sustainability program
- Will know where most water recovery is to occur once the funding design is announced but must assume that majority of water recovery will be coming from Murray and Murrumbidgee region
- Noted engagement opportunities and reiterated he is keen to continue as JO representative to Department of Premier

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the briefing by the Dept. of Primary Industries and Regional Development.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE

10.1 Mr Cameron Templeton, Council Engagement Manager - Riverina and Far South-West

An update was provided by the Office of Local Government on current matters.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the briefing from the Office of Local Government.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – PROJECT UPDATES

11.1 Best practice in Aggregated Procurement Program

Attachment K noted a proposal for the pursuit of a *Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement (BPAP)* Program for RAMJO member councils, intended to provide cost savings for participants and allow the Joint Organisation to further build its capacity. A verbal run-down was provided by the Executive Officer in support of a written proposal, and the board endorsement sought for pursuit of the BPAP program.

It was queried by a member council that given the organisations financial position, if the JO had capacity to run such a program. Noted that the funds are available and being held by RAMJO, and that the funds need to be expended as soon as possible.



BOARD MEETING AGENDA

16 August 2024 – Griffith



Recommendations:

- **Note** the proposal provided by the EO;
- **Endorse** the recruitment a RAMJO employed *Regional Procurement Project Manager*, paid for by utilising the remainder of the afore mentioned OLG's capacity building funds i.e. \$150,000 to cover wages and oncosts once contracts have been identified; and
- **Endorse** that the EO and RAMJO Shared Services Working Group pursue a RAMJO led BPAP program, for pursual ASAP.

Moved Leeton / Seconded Griffith

Carried

11.2 Housing Support Program – Stream 1

The Executive Officer provided a verbal update on the status of an application made to this Commonwealth funded program by the Joint Organisation (JO) network. Noted that the broader JO network was unsuccessful in seeking said funds, due to the JO's allegedly not meeting the criteria of a Local Government entity, which is being challenged by the broader JO network.

11.3 Disaster Ready Fund – Round 2

RAMJO awaits a response to its formal application to Round Two of the *Disaster Ready Fund*, which has progressed to the final stages of assessment. Applicants have been advised they can expect to know the outcome of their applications by August. RAMJO's application sought funds to conduct for all full-member councils:

- Critical infrastructure assessments with supporting action plans; and
- Land use planning maturity assessments and supporting action plans for use in strategic land-use planning updates and forthcoming Disaster Adaption Plans.

11.4 Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration Program

Attachment L provides an update on the Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration Program (**JONZA**) which is the vehicle for pursuing RAMJO's broader Energy Security and Affordability objectives per the Regional Energy Strategy.

11.5 Regional Resource Recovery Projects

Attachment M provides an update on activities pursued by the Regional Resource Recovery team.

Recommendations:

- That the Board **note** the updates provided on current RAMJO projects.

AGENDA ITEM 12 – GENERAL BUSINESS

12.1 Murray Regional Tourism – Board Vacancy

Item not discussed.

12.2 Call from chair for any General Business.

All mayors were thanked for their participation in and commitment to RAMJO.

MEETING CLOSE

The meeting was declared closed at 1.45pm



8.2. CORPORATE MATTERS

Item 8.2.1. INVESTMENT REPORT – OCTOBER 2024

AUTHOR/S: Accountant

APPROVER/S: Manager Finance
Director Corporate/CFO

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

This report provides details of the performance of Council's investment portfolio for the period ending 31 October 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council notes the information contained in the Investments Report for October 2024.

REPORT

(a) Background

This report is required to be prepared monthly and presented at the next available Ordinary Council meeting in accordance with Clause 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

(b) Discussion

Council's cash and investment holdings total \$53,721,746.

As at 31 October 2024, Leeton Shire Council has \$53,496,064 invested in Approved Deposit Institutions (ADIs) of which \$4,075,763 (7.62%) is invested with local bank branches.

Attached to this report is a Statement of Bank Reconciliation (**Attachment 1**) and a Summary of Investments (**Attachment 2**) as at 31 October 2024.

The Statement of Bank Reconciliation reconciles the Bank Statement balances to the General Ledger at 31 October 2024 by taking into account unrepresented cheques, unrepresented deposits, and unrepresented debits.

The Summary of Investments details all the investments held by Leeton Shire Council as at 31 October 2024. The following table details the total Cash, Cash Equivalents and Investment holdings:

Cash in Transaction Account	\$ 225,682
Deposits At Call Accounts	\$ 19,596,064
Investments	\$ 33,900,000
TOTAL	\$ 53,721,746

The table below details the monthly movements of investments for October 2024:

Opening Investments Balance	\$ 54,909,223
Less:	
Maturities (1)	\$ 500,000
Transfer to CBA Current Account	\$ 2,000,000
Subtotal	\$ 52,409,223
Plus:	
Roll-overs (1)	\$ 500,000
New Investments	\$ 500,000
CBA Business Online Saver (BOS) movements	\$ 19,781
AMP Business Saver Account	\$ 26
AMP 31 Day Notice Account	\$ 58,324
Macquarie Cash Management Accelerator Account	\$ 8,710
Closing Investments Balance	\$ 53,496,064
Add back Cash in Transaction accounts	225,682
Total Cash and Investments	\$ 53,721,746

The following table details the break-up of investments according to the restrictions which are placed on them based on the Notes to the Financial Statements 30 June 2024:

Total Cash and Investments	\$ 53,721,746
Less restrictions	
Water Supply (Excl. Unfinished Works)	\$ 19,755,510
Sewerage Services (Excl. Unfinished Works)	\$ 9,788,670
Domestic Waste Management	\$ 5,404,715
*Other external restrictions	\$ 7,841,529
External Restrictions (Excl. Unfinished Works) - Sub Total	\$ 42,790,424
Internal restrictions (Excl. FAG Prepayment)	\$ 9,879,836
Total restrictions	\$ 52,670,260
Operating Capital	\$ 1,051,486

*Includes - Unspent Grants Restrictions, Stormwater Levy Restriction, Deposits, Retentions and Bonds

Externally restricted funds can only be used for the purposes for which they were raised. These include water, sewer, domestic waste operations and unexpended specific purpose grants.

Internally restricted funds are set aside through Council resolution for specific purposes such as plant replacement, infrastructure renewal or funded provisions. Internal restrictions are considered as part of the Budget adoption or the Quarterly Budget Review process.

Operating Capital is used to provide working capital for Council to fund short-term operations, current Capital works program, and fluctuations in payables and receivables.

Water Investments Summary

In accordance with Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) records, the total Water Licences held are 5,584 ML. As of the 9 September 2024 Water Allocation update, Murrumbidgee General Security has a 34% allocation and High Security has a 95% allocation:

Water Entitlements	Entitlement	Allocation (%)	Total Allocation (ML)	Usage to date	Sales this month	Total Volume Sold (ML)	Estimated Remaining Usage + 10% Safety Margin*	Allocation Available For Sale (ML)
Town Water High Security	4,097	100%	4,097	551	-	-	1,846	500
Investment Water								
High Security	971	95%	922		5	835		87
General Security	516	34%	175			-		170
Total	5,584		5,194		5	835		757

* In accordance with the Temporary Sale of Water Allocation Policy, Council can sell up to 500ML of Town Water up until 31 October. From 1 November, the available allocation for sale is the balance of usage to date less the remaining expected water demand after a 10% safety margin applied.

Council has undertaken temporary trade of 835 ML for \$103,119 (net of sale brokerage fees) as at 31 October 2024:

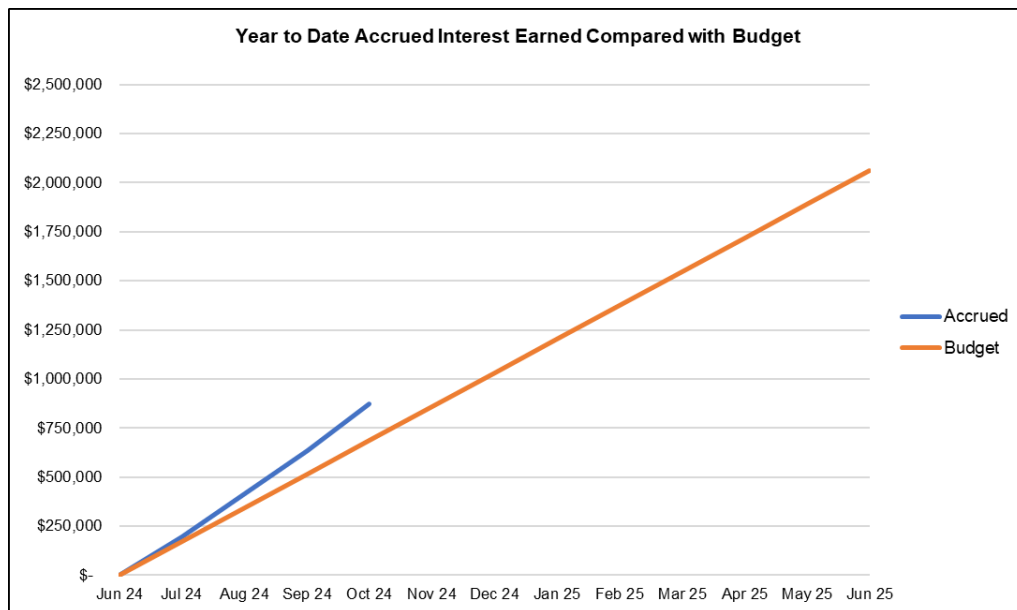
Date	Qty	Price/ML	Water Sales Gross Income	Brokerage	Water Sales Net Income
26/08/2024	70	\$132	\$9,240	-\$277	\$8,963
27/08/2024	200	\$125	\$25,000	-\$1,160	\$23,840
27/08/2024	60	\$120	\$7,200	-\$516	\$6,684
28/08/2024	30	\$130	\$3,900	-\$117	\$3,783
29/08/2024	300	\$130	\$39,000	-\$1,580	\$37,420
29/08/2024	150	\$130	\$19,500	-\$585	\$18,915
16/09/2024	20	\$145	\$2,900	-\$87	\$2,813
31/10/2024	5	\$140	\$701	\$0	\$701
Total Water Sales (all funds)	835		\$107,441	-\$4,322	\$103,119

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

The annualised rate of return across the portfolio is 5% for October 2024.

Budgeted Interest for FY24/25 is \$2,061,682. The actual \$238,512 in interest earned for October 2024 is higher than the budgeted amount of \$171,807 by \$66,705.



The consolidated actual investment income from 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024 compared to the budgeted investment interest is detailed below:

Actual versus budgeted interest and earnings	Oct-24	Year To Date
Investments - Interest earned	\$ 142,404	\$ 585,466
Deposits at call	\$ 95,023	\$ 280,841
Rebates and Other earnings	\$ 1,084	\$ 5,636
Total Earnings	\$ 238,512	\$ 871,943
Budgeted Interest	\$ 171,807	\$ 687,227
Variance – Positive	\$ 66,705	\$184,716

Total investment income allocation by fund is detailed below:

Interest Apportionment	Oct-24	Year to Date
General Fund	\$ 110,379	\$ 372,421
Water Fund	\$ 85,751	\$ 335,422
Sewer Fund	\$ 42,382	\$ 164,100
Total Interest Earned	\$ 238,512	\$ 871,943

The following tables provide information on investment rates this year compared to last year, as well as a comparison of investment balances from this year to last year:

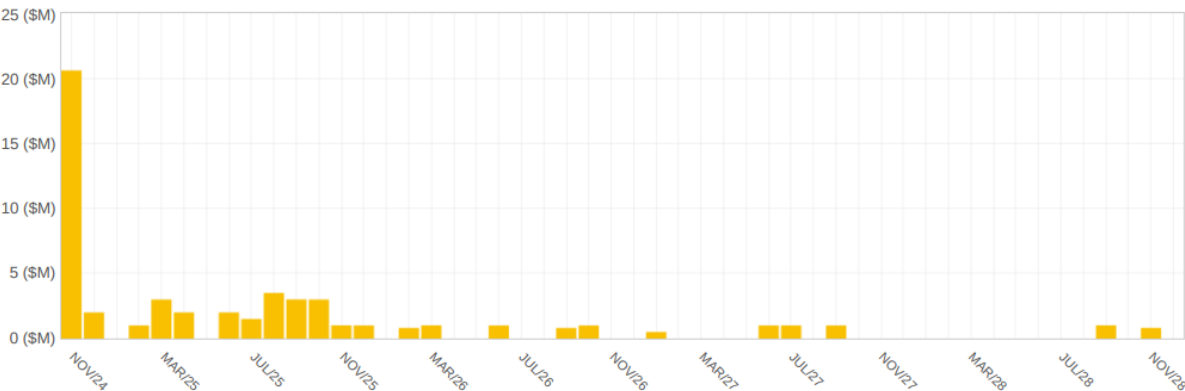
Performance Measures	Year to Date	Last Year (Oct)
Portfolio Average Interest Rate (YTD inc. Cash)	4.98%	4.27%
Investment Balances	Year to Date	Last Year
Opening Balance as at 1 Oct	\$54,909,223	\$50,976,386
Current Balance as at 31 Oct	\$53,496,064	\$48,034,786

Council Portfolio Compliance

Investment Maturing Profile

The portfolio remains lightly diversified from a maturity perspective with deposits maturing out to five (5) years. The graph below shows when Council's current investments mature and the related values:

Maturity Cash Flow Distribution



Financial Asset Allocation

Council's financial assets are invested as per the table below:

Investment Type	Risk Assessment		Investment Face Value	% of Portfolio
	Capital	Interest		
Term Deposits	Low	Low	24,000,000	44.86%
Cash/At Call Deposits	Low	Low	19,596,064	36.63%
Floating Rate Notes	Low	Low	6,400,000	11.96%
Bonds	Low	Low	3,500,000	6.54%
TOTAL			53,496,064	100%

Counterparty

As at the end of October 2024, Council did not have an overweight position to any single Authorised Deposit Taking Institution. However, Council's aggregate exposure to AMP (BBB+) is just under the Policy Limit of 30% or around 24% of the portfolio is allocated to AMP Notice Account. Overall, the portfolio is well-diversified across the investment grade spectrum (all are rated BBB or higher).

All aggregate ratings categories are within the Investment Policy limits:

Compliant	Issuer	Rating	Invested (\$) ^	Invested (%)	Max. Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✓	ANZ (Suncorp) Covered	AAA	\$502,079	0.94%	45%	\$23,584,126
✓	RBC Covered	AAA	\$1,002,037	1.87%	45%	\$23,084,168
✓	ANZ Bank	AA-	\$1,007,066	1.88%	45%	\$23,079,139
✓	Commonwealth Bank	AA-	\$4,576,945	8.55%	45%	\$19,509,260
✓	National Australia Bank	AA-	\$10,307,992	19.26%	45%	\$13,778,213
✓	Westpac	AA-	\$9,000,000	16.81%	45%	\$15,086,205
✓	Macquarie	A+	\$3,048,761	5.70%	35%	\$15,684,953
✓	ING Bank	A	\$1,000,000	1.87%	35%	\$17,733,715
✓	Bendigo and Adelaide	A-	\$992,829	1.85%	35%	\$17,740,886
✓	BoQ	A-	\$2,990,258	5.59%	35%	\$15,743,457
✓	AMP Bank	BBB+	\$15,774,601	29.47%	30%	\$282,869
✓	Bank Australia	BBB+	\$1,007,465	1.88%	30%	\$15,050,005
✓	RACQ Bank (Qbank)	BBB+	\$804,980	1.50%	30%	\$15,252,490
✓	Auswide Bank	BBB	\$1,007,764	1.88%	30%	\$15,049,706
✓	MyState Bank	BBB	\$502,122	0.94%	30%	\$15,555,348
			\$53,524,899	100.00%		

[^]Note valuations of Council's senior FRNs on the Imperium Markets platform are marked-to-market and priced on a daily basis from an independent third party provider. Council has recorded its FRNs internally at the purchase price or face value. As such, the total portfolio's balance is likely to differ as at the reporting date.

Credit Quality

The following table details the credit rating of each of the categories in which Council has money invested. The portfolio remains well diversified from a credit ratings perspective with the portfolio spread across the entire credit spectrum. All investments are compliant with Council's Investment Policy.

Compliant	Credit Rating	Invested (\$) ^	Invested (%)	Max. Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✓	AAA Category	\$1,504,116	2.81%	100%	\$52,020,783
✓	AA Category	\$24,892,003	46.51%	100%	\$28,632,896
✓	A Category	\$8,031,848	15.01%	80%	\$34,788,071
✓	BBB Category	\$19,096,932	35.68%	70%	\$18,370,497
✓	Unrated ADIs	\$0	0.00%	30%	\$16,057,470
		\$53,524,899	100.00%		

[^]Note valuations of Council's senior FRNs on the Imperium Markets platform are marked-to-market and priced on a daily basis from an independent third party provider. Council has recorded its FRNs internally at the purchase price or face value. As such, the total portfolio's balance is likely to differ as at the reporting date.

(b) Policy

Investment Policy

(c) Legislative / Statutory

All funds are invested in accordance with section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993* and the Ministerial Investment Order.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

Council's investment advisor is Arlo Advisory for financial investment advice during the month of October 2024.

(b) Internal

General Manager
Director Operations

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

9. Governance and Administration

9.7 Deploy reliable and efficient corporate management - financial, asset, property, records, information technology, buildings and plant/fleet in accordance with relevant legislation including *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*

9. Governance and Corporate Services

9.7 Deploy reliable and efficient financial management and administration

9.7.3 Practice sound financial management

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Bank Reconciliation October 2024 [**8.2.1.1** - 2 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Investments October 2024 [**8.2.1.2** - 4 pages]

MONTH END BANK RECONCILIATION REPORT

Prepared by the Accountant

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of its position in respect of bank balances.

BACKGROUND

This report is prepared monthly and presents movements in the Council's bank account.

BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENT


as at 31 October 2024

BALANCE AS PER GENERAL LEDGER

Opening Balance:	1/10/2024	\$	1,432,874.41
October Movements:		-\$	1,119,789.06
Closing Balance:	31/10/2024	\$	313,085.35
Less Unprocessed Bank Statement Transactions:		-\$	87,403.80
Total:		\$	225,681.55

BALANCE AS PER BANK STATEMENTS

	\$	289,794.72
Less Unpresented Cheques	\$	-
Less Unpresented Debits	-\$	64,113.17
Plus Unpresented Deposits	\$	-
Total	\$	225,681.55


Responsible Accounting Officer
18 November 2024

MONTH END BANK RECONCILIATION REPORT

Deposit At Call Accounts
(Commonwealth Bank, AMP Bank and Macquarie Bank)
Prepared by the Accountant

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of its position in respect of bank balances.

BACKGROUND

This report is prepared monthly and presents movements in the Council's bank account.

BANK RECONCILIATION STATEMENT


as at 31 October 2024

BALANCE AS PER GENERAL LEDGER

Opening Balance:	1/10/2024	\$ 21,509,222.68
June Movements:		
Transfer to CBA Working Account		-\$ 2,000,000.00
Interest Earned		\$ 86,841.00
Closing Balance:	31/10/2024	\$ 19,596,063.68
Less Unprocessed Bank Statement Transactions:		
Total:		\$ 19,596,063.68

BALANCE AS PER BANK STATEMENTS

	\$ 19,596,063.68
Less Unpresented Cheques	
Add Unpresented Credit	
Plus Unpresented Deposits	
Total	\$ 19,596,063.68


Responsible Accounting Officer
18 November 2024

Leeton Shire Council

Summary of Term Investments as at: 31/10/2024										BBSW 90: 4.42%	Average Yield: 5.00%
Inv No	Financial Institution/Broker	Investment	Note Ref No	Investment Date	Investment Term (months)	Remaining Term (months)	Principal	Yield %	Maturity	Type	
10-00	Commonwealth Bank Ltd	CBA Business Online Saver - AMP Business Saver Account	10206481	12/10/09	181	0	4,075,763.36	4.05%	18/11/24	DAC	
20-00	AMP Bank	AMP 31 Day Notice Account	437864762	10/07/20	52	0	10,088.33	3.10%	18/11/24	DAC	
21-00	AMP Bank	Macquarie Cash Management	971165956	17/07/20	53	1	13,264,538.21	5.30%	19/12/24	DAC	
22-00	Macquarie Bank	Accelerator Account	940367790	07/11/20	48	0	2,245,674.02	4.65%	18/11/24	DAC	
23-15	Curve Securities Pty Ltd	Members Banking Group Ltd	AU3FN0075453	24/02/23	36	15	800,000.00	5.85%	24/02/26	FRN	
23-16	Laminar Capital	Auswide Bank	AU3FN0076352	17/03/23	36	16	1,000,000.00	5.82%	17/03/26	FRN	
22-21	Commonwealth Bank Ltd	Commonwealth Bank	AU3FN0065579	14/01/22	60	26	500,000.00	5.12%	14/01/27	FRN	
23-01	Commonwealth Bank Ltd	Royal Bank of Canada	AU3FN0070025	13/07/22	60	32	500,000.00	5.45%	13/07/27	FRN	
23-10	Laminar Capital	MyState Bank Ltd	AU3FN0072369	13/10/22	36	11	500,000.00	5.45%	13/10/25	FRN	
23-11	Commonwealth Bank Ltd	Suncorp-Metway Ltd	AU3FN0072617	17/10/22	36	11	500,000.00	5.32%	17/10/25	FRN	
23-13	Curve Securities Pty Ltd	Bank Australia	AU3FN0073797	24/11/22	36	12	1,000,000.00	5.95%	24/11/25	FRN	
24-05	Commonwealth Bank Ltd	Macquarie Bank	AU3FN0081170	14/09/23	36	35	800,000.00	5.19%	14/09/26	FRN	
24-11	Commonwealth Bank Ltd	National Aust Bank	AU3FN0082996	16/11/23	36	35	800,000.00	5.40%	16/11/28	FRN	
22-23	Commonwealth Bank Ltd	Bendigo and Adelaide Bank	8156149	17/03/22	36	4	1,000,000.00	3.00%	17/03/25	Bond	
22-27	Commonwealth Bank Ltd	Bank of Queensland	AU3CB0288843	29/04/22	42	11	1,000,000.00	4.00%	29/10/25	Bond	
23-02	Commonwealth Bank Ltd	Royal Bank of Canada	AU3CB0290682	13/07/22	60	32	500,000.00	4.50%	13/07/27	Bond	
24-07	Laminar Capital	ANZ Bank	AU3CB0302404	22/09/23	59	46	1,000,000.00	4.95%	11/09/28	Bond	
22-17	Westpac Bank	Westpac Bank	9563400	11/11/21	36	0	1,000,000.00	1.60%	11/11/24	LTD	
23-21	National Aust Bank	National Aust Bank	36-359-9876	08/06/23	24	7	1,000,000.00	5.17%	08/06/25	LTD	
23-22	Bank of Queensland	Bank of Queensland	772448	21/06/23	48	31	1,000,000.00	5.40%	21/06/27	LTD	
24-06	Westpac Bank	Westpac Bank	11067864	14/09/23	48	34	1,000,000.00	4.94%	14/09/27	LTD	
24-08	Bank of Queensland	Bank of Queensland	833891	29/09/23	24	10	1,000,000.00	5.23%	29/09/25	LTD	
24-10	Westpac Bank	Westpac Bank	11154604	26/10/23	36	23	1,000,000.00	5.38%	26/10/26	LTD	
24-12	Westpac Bank	Westpac Bank	11256899	11/12/23	12	1	1,000,000.00	5.27%	11/12/24	LTD	
24-13	AMP Bank	AMP Bank	TD869330126	15/12/23	24	13	1,000,000.00	5.45%	15/12/25	LTD	
24-14	AMP Bank	AMP Bank	TD518603931	21/12/23	11	1	1,000,000.00	5.40%	19/12/24	LTD	
24-15	Westpac Bank	Westpac Bank	11408864	27/02/24	12	3	1,000,000.00	5.14%	27/02/25	LTD	
24-16	Westpac Bank	Westpac Bank	11469068	22/03/24	11	3	1,000,000.00	5.06%	24/02/25	LTD	
24-17	National Aust Bank	National Aust Bank	36-309-4165	22/03/24	12	4	1,000,000.00	5.02%	24/03/25	LTD	
24-18	Westpac Bank	Westpac Bank	11505860	11/04/24	12	5	1,000,000.00	5.13%	11/04/25	LTD	
24-19	Westpac Bank	Westpac Bank	11511980	15/04/24	12	5	1,000,000.00	5.12%	15/04/25	LTD	
24-20	National Aust Bank	National Aust Bank	92-841-9765	24/06/24	12	7	1,000,000.00	5.24%	24/06/25	LTD	
24-21	ING Bank	ING Bank	1243285	24/06/24	23	19	1,000,000.00	5.12%	24/06/26	LTD	
25-01	National Aust Bank	National Aust Bank	98-095-1687	11/07/24	12	8	1,500,000.00	5.40%	11/07/25	LTD	
25-02	AMP Bank	AMP Bank	TD528016306	08/08/24	12	9	500,000.00	5.20%	08/08/25	LTD	
25-03	National Aust Bank	National Aust Bank	89-019-7190	15/08/24	12	9	2,000,000.00	5.10%	15/08/25	LTD	

Leeton Shire Council

Summary of Term Investments as at: 31/10/2024									
			BBSW 90:	4.42%	Average Yield:	5.00%			
25-04	National Aust Bank	73-650-5693	29/08/24	12	9	1,000,000.00	5.00%	29/08/25	LTD
25-05	National Aust Bank	47-016-9900	11/09/24	12	10	1,000,000.00	4.95%	11/09/25	LTD
25-06	National Aust Bank	37-177-7994	27/09/24	12	10	1,000,000.00	4.90%	29/09/25	LTD
25-07	Westpac Bank	11960600	18/10/24	12	11	1,000,000.00	5.03%	20/10/25	LTD
Total Investments:					\$ 53,496,063.92				

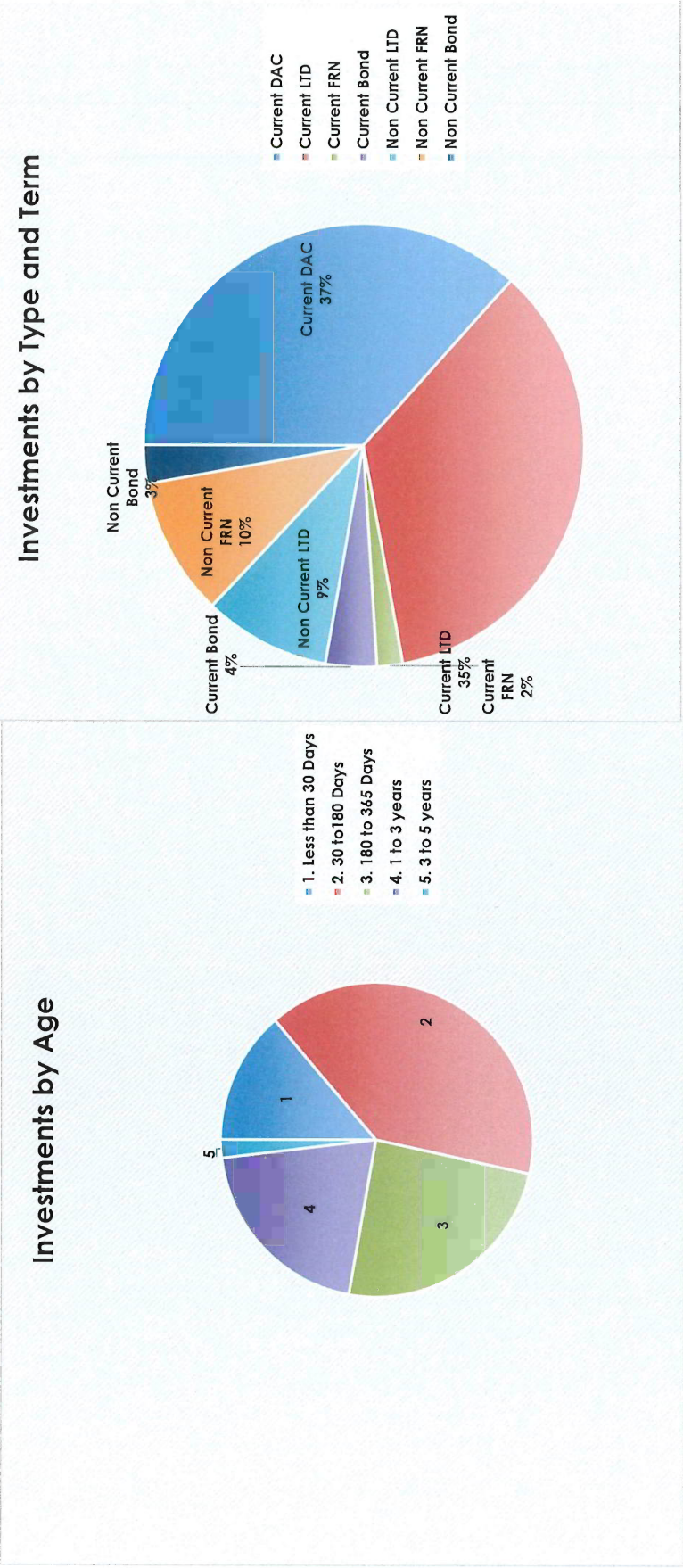
Leeton Shire Council

Summary of Term Investments as at: 31/10/2024			BBSW 90: 4.42%	Average Yield: 5.00%
Investment by Type			Investments by Age	
Investment	Amount	%	Age	%
AMP Bank	2,500,000	4.7%	1. Less than 30 Days	1.4%
Auswide Bank	1,000,000	1.9%	2. 30 to 180 Days	40%
National Aust Bank	10,300,000	19.3%	3. 180 to 365 Days	24%
ANZ Bank	1,000,000	1.9%	4. 1 to 3 years	20%
CBA Business Online Saver - Cash at	4,075,763	7.6%	5. 3 to 5 years	2%
AMP 31 Day Notice Account	13,264,538	24.8%		
Macquarie Cash Management Account	2,245,674	4.2%		
Commonwealth Bank	500,000	0.9%		
Westpac Bank	9,000,000	16.8%		
Bendigo and Adelaide Bank	1,000,000	1.9%		
Bank of Queensland	3,000,000	5.6%		
Macquarie Bank	800,000	1.5%		
AMP Business Saver Account	10,088	0.0%		
Royal Bank of Canada	1,000,000	1.9%		
MyState Bank Ltd	500,000	0.9%		
Suncorp-Metway Ltd	500,000	0.9%		
Bank Australia	1,000,000	1.9%		
Members Banking Group Ltd	800,000	1.5%		
ING Bank	1,000,000	1.9%		
TOTAL	53,496,064	100.0%	TOTAL	100%
Local	4,075,763	7.62%		
Non Local	49,420,301	92.38%		

Investments by Age and Type		
Sum of Principal		Total
Current	DAC	19,596,064
	LTD	19,000,000
	FRN	1,000,000
	Bond	2,000,000
Current Total		41,596,064
Non Current	LTD	5,000,000
	FRN	5,400,000
	Bond	1,500,000
Non Current Total		11,900,000
Grand Total		53,496,064
DAC	Deposit At Call	
LTD	Long Term Deposit	
FRN	Floating Rate Notes	
Bond	Long Term Bond	

Leeton Shire Council

Summary of Term Investments as at:	31/10/2024	BBSW 90: 4.42%	Average Yield: 5.00%
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Explanatory notes:
All investments noted above were made in accordance with the Act, the regulations and Council's Investment Policy

[Signature]
Responsible Accounting Officer
18 November, 2024

Item 8.2.2. 2024/25 BUDGET REVIEW FOR THE QUARTER ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

AUTHOR/S: Manager Finance

APPROVER/S: Director Corporate/CFO

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of the Quarterly Budget Review (QBR) is to provide a summary of Council's financial position as at the end of the third quarter (30 September 2024) for the Year Ending 30 June 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council reviews and considers the Quarterly Budget Review (QBR) as at 30 September 2024, and:

- a. notes the 2023/24 Capital and Operating Carry Overs works (works in progress) transferred into the 2024/25 financial year.
- b. approves the changes as recommended by Management.

REPORT

(a) Background

The Quarterly Budget Review (QBR) is required to be prepared quarterly in a prescribed format to inform Council of progress against the original budget along with recommended changes and reasons for the variances.

The September Budget Review also incorporates the 2023/24 capital and operating Carry Over works that were not completed into the 2024/25 financial year. A Carry Over is a budget that is left over (not spent) for works commenced but not completed in the previous financial year. This budget is "carried over" to the following financial year, allowing the remaining work to be completed.

Attached to this report is a full listing of projects that were partially completed in 2023/24. Carry Overs do not require a Council resolution for their inclusion in the 2024/25 budget as per Clause 211 (3) (a-d) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

The total amount of all 'Carry Forward' items as indicated in (**Attachment 1**) is \$7,148,395. Grant funded programs underway at 30 June 2024 account for \$1,434,374 of the total. A summary for each entity is shown below:

Fund or Entity	Carry Over	Grants in Reserve	Other Reserves	Future Grants or Loans	Unfinished Works Reserve
General Fund	5,795,471	1,434,374	1,163,695	4,998,815	1,449,111
Waste Fund	200,680	0	200,680	0	0
Water Fund	742,915	0	742,915	0	0
Sewer Fund	409,329	0	409,329	0	0
Total	7,148,395	1,434,374	2,516,619	4,998,815	1,449,111

The Carry Overs are transferred into the unfinished works reserve as at 30 June 2024. Any project that is grant funded and are not yet completed have the funds placed into the externally restricted Unspent Grants Restriction and the projects are carried over to enable Council to complete the works in accordance with the conditions which were agreed upon when the funding was obtained.

(b) Discussion

A copy of the QBR document is provided at (**Attachment 2**). The updated format continues to better highlight the impacts of current activity on not only Council's Operating result but also Council's unrestricted cash position that is used for everyday cash flow purposes.

The impact of the Carry Overs is also shown in the approved changes column called 'Carry Over' in all of the financial tables shown in (**Attachment 2**).

Council has seen a significant improvement in the unrestricted cash position, moving from an original budget surplus of \$1.49M to a forecast revised budget surplus of \$4.75M including the addition of new works.

The **recommended budget changes** and detailed explanations and schedules are provided within (**Attachment 2**) (contained within the Income Statement) along with associated commentary and supporting schedules.

Quarterly Budget Review Summary – Consolidated Income Statement

The Operating Result [pre capital] provides an indication of the long-term viability of Council. In broad terms, a deficit from operations indicates that Council is not earning sufficient revenue to fund its ongoing operations (services) and to adequately renew existing assets over the longer term.

While this measure is important, it does include timing issues and impacts from specific transactions and operations which make it less accurate in demonstrating current performance. The unrestricted cash balance is another indicator of current financial performance.

The proposed September budget adjustments result in a net increase to the consolidated budgeted operating deficit before capital items of \$922K. Council's forecast results for 30 June 2025 are:

- *Net operating result for the year* – surplus of \$3.8M compared to \$2.9M as at the original budget.
- *Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes* – deficit of \$3.36M compared to \$2.44M as per Original budget forecasts.

Quarterly Budget Review Summary – Capital Budget

The September Quarterly Review has been adjusted for budget changes to capital projects resulting in an overall increase from \$16.88M as per the original budget to \$23.65M. This is primarily as a result of incorporating the Carry Over works from 2023/24 that were not completed of \$6.68M.

The detailed **recommended budget changes** and any explanations are provided within (**Attachment 2**).

Management will continue to monitor the capital program to ensure its delivery in full or to ensure prioritization of projects, if required.

Quarterly Budget Review Summary – Cash and Investments

The **recommended budget changes** and any explanations are provided within (**Attachment 2**).

The cash and reserves summary reports Council's current total reserve funds, and the forecast balance of unrestricted cash that is used for everyday cash flow purposes as at 30 June 2025. Unrestricted cash can move significantly up and down throughout the year based on large cashflow movements for quarterly rates instalments, grant payments and spending on large capital projects. The majority of Council's projected year end cash is externally restricted, totaling \$39.01M and limited in its use to specific purposes by contracts or legislation.

The projected Internal Reserves balance of \$7.92M, is used as a method to restrict portions of surplus cash to make them unavailable for general purposes. It is a decision of Council to set aside surpluses for future expenditure - for example, employee leave entitlements, plant purchases, and infrastructure replacement. It is recognised that Internal Reserves balances are subject to change, via a Council resolution, based on the need of Council and may not guarantee that the cash is available for its original intended purpose.

As at 30 September 2024 there is a projected year end unrestricted cash balance of a surplus of \$3.46M which is a significant improvement on the Original budget forecast. This was primarily related to drawing down the Roxy and LELC loans for works completed in prior years.

Conclusion

The QBR recommendations have a significant impact on the forecast financial position, capital budget and cash position of Council as at 30 June 2025.

(c) Options

THAT Council:

1. Considers the Quarterly Budget Review as at 30 September 2024, and approves the changes as recommended by Management. **This is the recommended option.**
2. Considers the Quarterly Budget Review as at 30 September 2024, and approves the changes as recommended by Management, with amendments.

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

Overall Position

The Responsible Accounting Officer Statement (**Page 3 of Attachment 2**) indicates that Council's position at 30 September 2024 is considered satisfactory. This is due to Council's forecast unrestricted cash position moving to a \$3.46M cash surplus position.

The longer-term position held by Council is deteriorating with ongoing operating deficits (before capital). This is supported by the LTFP and reaffirms that doing nothing (particularly General Fund) is unviable due to insufficient revenue compounded by rate pegging, placing Council at high risk of being unable to respond to unforeseen events, and which could lead to unplanned service reductions.

(b) Policy

Council's risk appetite statement indicates Council's strong desire to remain statutorily compliant.

(c) Legislative/Statutory

The Quarterly Budget Review is required in accordance with clause 203 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021. Specifically, clause 203 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 states the following:

1. Not later than 2 months after the end of each quarter (except the June quarter), the responsible accounting officer of a council must prepare and submit to the council a budget review statement that shows, by reference to the estimate of income and expenditure set out in the statement of the council's revenue policy included in the operational plan for the relevant year, a revised estimate of the income and expenditure for that year.
2. A budget review statement must include or be accompanied by:
 - a. A report as to whether or not the responsible accounting officer believes that the statement indicates that the financial position of the council is satisfactory, having regard to the original estimate of income and expenditure, and
 - b. If that position is unsatisfactory, recommendations for remedial action.
3. A budget review statement must also include any information required by the Code to be included in such a statement.

Council has met the Statutory deadline for presenting the September Review.

(d) Risk

Cashflow will need to be monitored to ensure funds are readily available for Council to pay its debts on time, especially given the extensive capital works program.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

Nil

(b) Internal

All Officers Responsible for Budget Management, including Contractors
Senior Management Team (SMT)

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

9. Governance and Administration

9.7 Deploy reliable and efficient corporate management - financial, asset, property, records, information technology, buildings and plant/fleet in accordance with relevant legislation including Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

9. Governance and Corporate Services

9.7 Deploy reliable and efficient financial management and administration

9.7.2 Foster Council's financial sustainability through maximising investment returns, including water sales

9.7.3 Practice sound financial management

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Detailed Carry Over Works [**8.2.2.1** - 5 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Quarterly Budget Review Statement ending 30 September 2024 [**8.2.2.2** - 18 pages]

Attachment 1 – Detailed Carry Over Works

Capital Works Program

Asset Class	Description	23/24 March Budget	Actual to 30/6/24	Carry Over Amount	Grant Contract Liability	Other reserve funds available	Future Grants or Loan funds expected	Unfinished Works Reserve
Office Equipment	Corporate Information Systems Annual allocation	112,000	57,300.00	54,700	-	-	-	54,700
Office Equipment	Asset Management	21,474	7,191.65	14,282	-	-	-	14,282
Office Equipment	Procure2pay	71,134	-	71,134	-	-	-	71,134
Office Equipment	DPIE Phase 2	71,125	17,944.11	53,181	53,181	-	-	-
Office Equipment	Network Infrastructure	190,000	95,236.67	94,763	-	-	-	94,763
Land & Buildings	Eventide Homes Renewal	100,000	34,286.20	55,600	-	-	-	55,600
Land & Buildings	Pound	117,200	66,835.43	50,365	-	-	-	50,365
Land & Buildings	Impound Lot	20,000	-	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
Parks, Gardens & Recreation	Art Deco Touring Route Signage (Permanent)	116,882	-	116,882	-	-	-	116,882
Waste	Leeton Landfill	600,000	399,320.19	200,680	-	200,680	-	-
Parks, Gardens & Recreation	Plinths & Cemetery Capital Works	59,865	43,004.83	16,860	-	-	-	16,860
Parks, Gardens & Recreation	Golf Course Maintenance Shed Modifications	40,000	22,626.91	17,373	-	-	-	17,373

Asset Class	Description	23/24 March Budget	Actual to 30/6/24	Carry Over Amount	Grant Contract Liability	Other reserve funds available	Future Grants or Loan funds expected	Unfinished Works Reserve
Plant & Equipment	Plant & Vehicle Replacement	1,606,261	1,362,565.97	243,695	-	243,695	-	-
Roads, Bridges & Footpaths	CBD Enhancement Stage 3 - Chelmsford Place	2,714,124	2,391,421.35	322,703	-	-	-	322,703
Roads, Bridges & Footpaths	Roxy Lane – in conjunction with Roxy redevelopment	80,000	3,700.00	76,300	-	-	-	76,300
Roads, Bridges & Footpaths	LSC Road Rehabilitation - Wamoon Service Lane - \$90K	90,000	55,009.21	34,991	-	-	-	34,991
Roads, Bridges & Footpaths	LSC Road Rehabilitation Chelmsford Road	300,000	780.00	299,220	-	-	-	299,220
Roads, Bridges & Footpaths	LSC Road Rehabilitation	150,000	-	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
Sewerage Services	Sewerage - Pump Stations Electrical upgrade at the STP	537,000	420,514.12	116,486	-	116,486	-	-
Sewerage Services	Leeton Sewerage Tertiary Ponds Cleaning & Bank Repairs \$ 200K	200,000	25,148.98	174,851	-	174,851	-	-
Sewerage Services	Telemetry Upgrades - 2024	35,000	3,337.26	31,663	-	31,663	-	-
Sewerage Services	Manhole Renewals	175,000	135,192.06	39,808	-	39,808	-	-

Asset Class	Description	23/24 March Budget	Actual to 30/6/24	Carry Over Amount	Grant Contract Liability	Other reserve funds available	Future Grants or Loan funds expected	Unfinished Works Reserve
Sewerage Services	Servicing Strategy - IWCM (Part funded)	125,000	78,479.03	46,521	-	46,521	-	-
Water Supply	Chelmsford Place Water Tower Ladder Access	130,000	-	130,000	-	130,000	-	-
Water Supply	Whitton WFP Access Ramp & Pit Platform/Pump Monorail	40,000	8,780.80	31,219	-	31,219	-	-
Water Supply	Darling Road Wamoon Water Main Replacement - \$120K	120,000	86,081.18	33,919	-	33,919	-	-
Water Supply	Open Cut Dam Inlet Upgrade/Dam Cleaning	100,000	27,598.50	72,402	-	72,402	-	-
Water Supply	Water Reservoir OHS Upgrades	50,000	4,325.00	45,675	-	45,675	-	-
Water Supply	WTP-Chemical storage shed	70,000	52,125.00	17,875	-	17,875	-	-
Water Supply	WTP-Sedimentation Tank Launder Replacement	130,000	41,622.71	88,377	-	88,377	-	-
Water Supply	CBD Water Services Compliance (Roxy)	308,000	64,616.41	243,383	-	243,383	-	-
Water Supply	Telemetry Upgrades - 2024	50,000	39,249.96	10,750	-	10,750	-	-
Water Supply	Leeton RWP - VSD and Switch Board Upgrade 2022_23 \$200K	96,000	26,685.00	69,315	-	69,315	-	-
Roads, Bridges & Footpaths	Bus Shelter - Location TBC (Was Kathryn Drive)	10,000	-	10,000	8,250	-	1,750	-

Asset Class	Description	23/24 March Budget	Actual to 30/6/24	Carry Over Amount	Grant Contract Liability	Other reserve funds available	Future Grants or Loan funds expected	Unfinished Works Reserve
Land & Buildings	LMAG Uptairs Development - Room Repairs & Refurb	120,000	-	120,000	-	120,000	-	-
Land & Buildings	LMAG Uptairs Development - Lift	195,950	3,734.97	187,459	69,113		118,346	-
Land & Buildings	Roxy Theatre Redevelopment 21/22 (excludes Water & Roads)	8,467,101	5,346,385.76	3,318,518	1,000,000	800,000	4,769,103	-

Total Capital Program	17,419,115	10,921,099	6,681,009	1,130,544	2,516,619	4,889,199	1,395,172
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Operational Projects

Description	23/24 Current Budget March	WO Actual to 30/6/24	Carryover Amount	Unspent Grant	Grant Contract Liability	Other reserve funds available	Future Grants or Loan funds expected	Unfinished Works Reserve
Leeton Integrated Land Use, Infrastructure and Transport Strategy	220,000	-	220,000	220,000	-	-	-	-
Preparing Australian Communities - Feasibility Study	66,100	18,250.00	47,850	28,850	-	-	-	19,000
Flood Study Review & Update	160,000	19,520.00	140,480	-	-	-	109,616	30,864
Library Priority Grants	124,352	92,216.57	26,981	-	26,981	-	-	-
Demolition of Jockey Club Grandstand	28,000	-	28,000	-	28,000	-	-	-
Roxy Operational - Legal Fees			4,075	-	-	-	-	4,075

598,452	129,987	467,386	248,850	54,981	-	109,616	53,939
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Quarterly Budget Review Statement

For the Quarter Ended 30th September 2024



LEETON
SHIRE COUNCIL

CONTENTS

1.	Responsible Accounting Officer's Statement	3
2.	Introduction	4
3.	Consolidated Budget Summary	5
4.	Recommended Budget Changes	7
5.	Budget Operating Result by Entity	9
6.	Capital Budget Review Statement	13
7.	Cash and Investments Budget Review Statement	14
8.	Consolidated Balance Sheet Budget Review Statement	15
9.	Key Performance Indicators	16
10.	Borrowings	18

1. Responsible Accounting Officer's Statement

The following statement is made in accordance with Clause 203(2) of the Local Government (General) Regulations 2005:

- It is my opinion that the quarterly budget review statement for the September 2024 quarter indicates that Council's projected short term financial position as at 30 June 2024 will be satisfactory, taking into account the original and revised estimates for income and expenditure presented.
- Current levels of unrestricted cash have improved significantly over the last 12 months with a revised forecast improvement of \$4.75M, leaving a forecast balance of \$3.46M as at 30 June 2025.
- The longer term position held by Council supported by the LTFP reaffirms that doing nothing (particularly General Fund) is unviable due to insufficient revenue compounded by rate pegging, placing Council at high risk of being unable to respond to unforeseen events, and which could lead to unplanned service reductions.

My opinion has been based on the following factors:

1. A projected surplus unrestricted cash position of \$4.75M in the general fund
2. Council's consolidated operating result is forecast to be a deficit before Capital of (\$3,360,239). Noting that there are a number of non-cash items in the operating result and hence an increase in cash even though there is an operating deficit (e.g. depreciation, loss on disposal).

It is recommended that Council continue to improve the cash position by:

1. Ensuring future cash budgets need to be in surplus to restore to an adequate level of working capital.
2. Opportunities to increase other revenue must be considered including reviewing rates and charges revenue.
3. Expenditure reductions including opportunities for efficiencies and reprioritisation of services to a financially sustainable level is to be a focus of each budget review.

Signed: 
Responsible Accounting Officer

Date: 20/11/24

2. Introduction

Quarterly Budget Review Statements (QBRs) provide an overview of Council's progress against the annual budget and subsequent revisions at the end of each quarter. It includes explanations for major budget variations that are collated by Council's Managers across the organisation and that result in recommendations for budget changes.

The following financial reports are included in the September QBRs:

- The consolidated budget summary includes the General Fund, Water and Sewer Fund financial information. This is a budget summary statement showing actual income, expenditure, and capital expenditure for the year to 30 September 2024, against the original annual budget. It shows the proposed budget adjustments and an updated annual budget forecast for the financial year.
- The Recommended Budget Changes table explaining the reasons budget items are changing.
- Income & Expense Budget Review Statement by Fund. This is a budget operating summary statement showing actual income, expenditure for the year to 30 September 2024, against the original annual budget for each Fund or Entity.
- Capital Budget Review Statement. This report provides actual expenditure on each capital project up to 30 September 2024, reported against the original annual budget, with proposed budget adjustments and an updated annual budget forecast.
- Cash and Reserves Statement: This report shows the Council's total cash and reserves, including the working fund balance as at 30 September 2024.
- Consolidated Balance Sheet
- Budget Review Key Performance Indicators Statement
- Loan Borrowings – identifies new loans and loan repayment budgets

3. Consolidated Budget Summary

The consolidated Budget Review Statement presents the forecast performance for the Total Council. The financial data includes the following information:

- Original budget (as per the adopted operational plan)
- Carry Overs from 2023-24
- Current (Updated) Budget
- Recommended changes for council resolution (proposed variations for the September quarterly review)
- Revised Budget (if proposed variations are adopted by Council)
- Actual year to date (YTD) data
- Note explanations for material variations (between the revised budget and projected year end result). The material variations threshold has been determined to be >10% of the original budget for either income or expenses.
- Total income (original, current and forecast year end result)
- Total expenses (original, current and forecast year end result)
- Operating result (original, current and projected year end result)
- Capital expenditure and Capital funding movements (reserves etc)
- Budget result which shows whether or not Council is forecasting a cash surplus or (deficit)

The format shows how Council's consolidated operating result is reconciled to Council's unrestricted cash position.

Consolidated Operating Result

Description	Original Budget		Current Budget	Recommended changes for Sep QBR	Revised Budget Sep QBR	Actual YTD	Ref Notes
		Carry Overs					
Income from continuing operations							
Rates and Annual Charges	15,917,583	0	15,917,583	0	15,917,583	15,258,128	
User Charges and Fees	8,958,086	0	8,958,086	0	8,958,086	1,331,790	
Other Revenues	779,409	0	779,409	0	779,409	197,166	
Grants and Contributions - Operating	8,495,961	164,596	8,660,557	164,593	8,825,150	901,008	B
Grants and Contributions - Capital	5,350,815	1,794,140	7,144,955	25,956	7,170,911	202,870	C
Interest and Investment income	2,237,544	0	2,237,544	0	2,237,544	669,828	
Rental Income	311,173	0	311,173	0	311,173	75,652	
Net Gain from Disposal of Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Income from continuing operations	42,050,571	1,958,736	44,009,307	190,549	44,199,856	18,636,442	
Expenses from continuing operations							
Employee Benefits and oncosts	14,643,829	0	14,643,829	-85,000	14,558,829	3,572,395	D
Materials and Services	13,828,655	467,385	14,296,040	244,519	14,540,559	2,917,058	E
Borrowing Costs	424,430	0	424,430	-26,223	398,207	2,606	F
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment of Assets	9,609,573	0	9,609,573	649,943	10,259,516	0	G
Other Expenses	552,073	0	552,073	0	552,073	85,865	
Net Loss from the Disposal of Assets	80,000	0	80,000	0	80,000	0	
Total Expenses from continuing operations	39,138,560	467,385	39,605,945	783,239	40,389,184	6,577,924	
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	2,912,011	1,491,351	4,403,362	-592,690	3,810,672	12,058,518	
Operating Surplus/(Deficit) before Capital Grants & Contributions	-2,438,804	-302,789	-2,741,593	-618,646	-3,360,239	11,855,648	

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Ordinary Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Consolidated Cash Result

Description	Original Budget		Current Budget	Recommended changes for Sep QBR	Revised Budget Sep QBR	Actual YTD	Ref Notes
		Carry Overs					
Add Back Non Cash							
Depreciation	9,609,573	0	9,609,573	649,943	10,259,516	0	G
Net Gains / Losses from Disposal of Assets	80,000	0	80,000	0	80,000	0	
Provision Expenses	200,000	0	200,000	0	200,000	0	
Contract Liability Movements	-463,116	-1,185,525	-1,648,641	-76,191	-1,724,832	0	H
Contract Receivable Movements	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Net Cash Provided (or used) in Operating Activities	12,338,468	305,826	12,644,294	-18,938	12,625,356	12,058,518	
Cash Flow from Investing Activities							
Receipts:							
Sale Real Estate Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Sale Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	545,000	0	545,000	0	545,000	0	
Deferred Debtor Receipts	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Payments:							
Purchase of Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	-16,881,204	-6,681,009	-23,562,213	-87,076	-23,649,289	-3,373,884	K
Purchase of Real Estate Assets							
Deferred Debtor Advances Made	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Net Cash Provided (or used) in Investing Activities	-16,336,204	-6,681,009	-23,017,213	-87,076	-23,104,289	-3,373,884	
Cash Flow from Financing Activities							
Receipts:							
New Loans Drawn	5,552,993	4,225,603	9,778,596	565,571	10,344,167	10,118,564	I
Payments:							
Loan Principal Repayment	-403,324	0	-403,324	-421,027	-824,351	-59,567	L
Net Cash Provided (or used) in Financing Activities	5,149,669	4,225,603	9,375,272	144,544	9,519,816	10,058,997	
Net Increase / (Decrease) in Cash	1,151,933	-2,149,580	-997,647	38,530	-959,117	18,743,631	
Transfers to Reserves							M
Transfers to DWM Reserve	-968,508	0	-968,508	0	-968,508	0	
Transfer to Dev Contributions Reserve	-738,000	0	-738,000	0	-738,000	0	
Transfer to Unspent Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Transfer to Stormwater	-95,000	0	-95,000	0	-95,000	0	
Transfers to Water External	-1,746,180	0	-1,746,180	0	-1,746,180	0	
Transfers to Sewer External	-426,593	0	-426,593	0	-426,593	0	
Transfers to Internal Reserves	-7,516,976	0	-7,516,976	871,834	-6,645,142	0	
Transfers to Carryovers Reserves	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Transfers from Reserves							J
Transfers from DWM Reserve	0	200,680	200,680	-132,363	68,317	0	
Transfer from Dev Contributions Reserve	545,000	800,000	1,345,000	85,037	1,430,037	0	
Transfer from Unspent Grants	1,977,120	1,434,375	3,411,494	141,314	3,552,808	0	
Transfer from Stormwater	70,000	0	70,000	0	70,000	0	
Transfers from Water External	730,000	0	730,000	7,285	737,285	0	
Transfers from Sewer External	640,000	0	640,000	75,500	715,500	0	
Transfers from Internal Reserves	7,866,654	363,695	8,230,349	-1,074,427	7,155,922	0	
Transfers from Carryovers Reserves	0	2,601,354	2,601,354	0	2,601,354	0	
Net Reserve Movements	337,517	5,400,104	5,737,620	-25,820	5,711,800	0	
Net Increase / (Decrease) in Unrestricted Cash	1,489,450	3,250,524	4,739,974	12,710	4,752,683	18,743,631	

4. Recommended Budget Changes

Note Identifier:		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	
Fund Ref	Material Budget Variations being recommended	Income			Expenses				Cash Result						Net Impact on Unrestricted Cash
		User Charges & Fees	Operating Grants & Contributions	Capital Grants & Contributions	Employee Costs	Materials & Services	Borrowing Costs	Depreciation	Contract Liability	Loan Borrowing	Transfer from Reserve	Capital Works	Loan Principal	Transfer to Reserve	
Consolidated Totals		0	129,859	60,690	-85,000	244,519	-26,223	649,943	-76,191	565,571	-897,654	-87,076	-421,027	871,834	12,710
General Fund		0	118,932	60,690	0	159,519	-26,223	676,597	-25,727	565,571	-898,540	-125,727	-421,027	871,834	12,710
1	Financial Assistance Grant funding confirmed for 2024/25 as \$6.12M - 85% paid in 23/24 in advance but the original forecast was for 100% as per 23/24 advance payment. Council has reforecast 25/26 advance payment and had to adjust reserve movements	0	97,286		0	0	0		0	0	-1,074,427			871,834	-105,307
2	Internal Audit Expenses for 2 audits for the year	0		0	0	7,750	0	0	0	0					-7,750
3	Integrated Planning and Reporting costs missed from original Budget - State of the Shire Report \$7K, Community Strategic Plan \$13K, Community Consultation Sessions \$3K	0		0	0	25,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-25,000
4	Chill and Grill - Open Streets Grant funding recognition - some funds held in reserve from prior year	0	16,380	0	0	81,503	0	0	0	0	65,123	0	0	0	0
5	Saluting our Soldiers Banners - grant funding recognition	0	5,266	0	0	5,266	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Wiradjuri story Project - funds held in contract liability for final payments during 24/25	0		40,000	0	40,000	0	0	-40,000	0	40,000	0	0	0	0
7	New Public Library Infrastructure grant 23/24 for Library Transformation - Flooring - grant funds held in contract liability	0	0	57,780	0	0	0	0	-57,780	0	57,780	-57,780	0	0	0
8	Public Convenience - Sycamore Street - Updated budget has 10% contingency for unforeseen variations. Soil type has come in unfavourable increasing slab design requirements. Footpaths will need modification in addition to ensure we have compliant footpaths to and from the toilet doors. Additional costs to be sourced from Section 7.12 developer contributions	0	0	34,963	0	0	0	0	0	0	85,037	-120,000	0	0	0
9	Animal Pound capital increase to cover additional unforeseen costs	0	0	-72,053	0	0	0	0	72,053	0	-72,053	72,053	0	0	-20,000
10	Disaster Recovery Financial Assistance (DRA) Program - More works completed in 23/24 than anticipated - less Grant funds available for 24/25, capital program reduced to match funding	0			0	0	0	0	0	0					0
11	Vance \$5M loan drawn in August - loan repayments amended to reflect loan approved schedule - original budget forecasting drawing loan towards EOFY - negative impact on cash budget \$171K	0	0	0	0	0	184,260	0	0	0	0	0	-401,436	0	-585,696
12	Roxy \$4M loan drawn in August - loan repayments amended to reflect loan approved schedule - savings on cash budget \$171K	0	0	0	0	0	-192,295	0	0	0	0	0	-20,357	0	171,938
13	LEEC loan Draw down in August for works completed in 22/23 - loan repayments amended to reflect loan approved schedule, loan drawdown was included in 23/24 operational plan - improves cash position \$585K	0	0	0	0	0	-18,188	0	0	565,571	0	0	766	0	584,525
14	General Fund Assets Depreciation increased to reflect current forecasts	0	0	0	0	0	0	676,597	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Fund Ref		Note Identifier:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	
			Income			Expenses					Cash Result					
			User Charges & Fees	Operating Grants & Contributions	Capital Grants & Contributions	Employee Costs	Materials & Services	Borrowing Costs	Depreciation	Contract Liability	Loan Borrowing	Transfer from Reserve	Capital Works	Loan Principal	Transfer to Reserve	Net Impact on Unrestricted Cash
Waste Fund			0	0	0	0	0	0	-218,136	0	0	-132,363	132,363	0	0	0
20		Material Budget Variations being recommended	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25,000	-25,000	0	0	0
21		Leeton Landfill - works completed remainder of carryover amount no longer required - savings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-157,363	157,363	0	0	0
22		DWM Assets Depreciation reduced to reflect current forecasts based on Prior year actual	0	0	0	0	0	0	-218,136	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Water Fund			0	10,927	0	0	0	0	102,572	-50,464	0	57,749	-18,212	0	0	0
23		Leak Reduction Program - Original Budget forecast \$90K subsidy from Dept Climate Change, grant approved at \$101K and difference recognised this review - first payment of \$50K received end of 23/24 and held in contract liability	0	10,927	0	0	0	0	0	-50,464	0	57,749	-18,212	0	0	0
24		Water Assets Depreciation increased to reflect current forecasts based on Prior year actual	0	0	0	0	0	0	102,572	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sewerage Fund			0	0	0	-85,000	85,000	0	88,910	0	0	75,500	-75,500	0	0	0
25		Outsource operator for Sewer Treatment Plant due to staff vacancies - wages savings offset by increase to contracts	0	0	0	-85,000	85,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
26		Sewer Assets Depreciation increased to reflect current forecasts based on Prior year actual	0	0	0	0	0	0	88,910	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
27		Screw press for sewer treatment inlet rag screening - funded from Sewer reserves	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75,500	-75,500	0	0	0

5. Budget Operating Result by Entity

The Budget Operating Result by Fund presents the Council forecast performance for each of the different funds being General Fund, Waste Fund, Water Fund and Sewerage Fund. The financial data includes the following information:

- Original budget (as per the adopted operational plan)
- Carry Overs from 2023-24
- Current (Updated) Budget
- Recommended changes for council resolution (proposed variations for the September quarterly review)
- Revised Budget (if proposed variations are adopted by Council)
- Actual year to date (YTD) data
- Note explanations for material variations (between the revised budget and projected year end result). The material variations threshold has been determined to be >10% of the original budget for either income or expenses.
- Total income (original, current and forecast year end result)
- Total expenses (original, current and forecast year end result)
- Operating result (original, current and projected year end result)

General Fund - Operating Result

Description	Original Budget		Current Budget	Recommended changes for Sep QBR	Revised Budget Sep QBR	Actual YTD	Ref Notes
		Carry Overs					
Income from continuing operations							
Rates and Annual Charges	8,496,412	0	8,496,412	0	8,496,412	8,429,993	
User Charges and Fees	4,770,854	0	4,770,854	0	4,770,854	476,128	
Other Revenues	608,556	0	608,556	0	608,556	188,701	
Grants and Contributions - Operating	8,405,961	164,596	8,570,557	153,666	8,724,223	901,008	B1, B4, B5
Grants and Contributions - Capital	4,292,815	1,794,140	6,086,955	25,956	6,112,911	202,870	C6-C8, C10
Interest and Investment income	1,061,826	0	1,061,826	0	1,061,826	525,082	
Rental Income	311,173	0	311,173	0	311,173	75,652	
Net Gain from Disposal of Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Income from continuing operations	27,947,597	1,958,736	29,906,333	179,622	30,085,955	10,799,434	
Expenses from continuing operations							
Employee Benefits and oncosts	12,046,081	0	12,046,081	0	12,046,081	2,945,127	
Materials and Services	6,612,710	467,385	7,080,095	159,519	7,239,614	2,319,703	E2-E6
Borrowing Costs	424,430	0	424,430	-26,223	398,207	2,606	F11-F13
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment of Assets	6,549,641	0	6,549,641	676,597	7,226,238	0	G14
Other Expenses	352,073	0	352,073	0	352,073	85,865	
Net Loss from the Disposal of Assets	80,000	0	80,000	0	80,000	0	
Total Expenses from continuing operations	26,064,935	467,385	26,532,320	809,893	27,342,213	5,353,301	
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	1,882,662	1,491,351	3,374,013	-630,271	2,743,742	5,446,133	
Operating Surplus/(Deficit) before Capital Grants & Contributions	-2,410,153	-302,789	-2,712,942	-656,227	-3,369,169	5,243,263	

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Ordinary Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Domestic Waste Fund - Operating Result

Description	Original Budget		Current Budget	Recommended changes for Sep QBR	Revised Budget Sep QBR	Actual YTD	Ref
		Carry Overs					
Income from continuing operations							
Rates and Annual Charges	2,462,072	0	2,462,072	0	2,462,072	2,412,309	
User Charges and Fees	1,192,000	0	1,192,000	0	1,192,000	262,188	
Other Revenues	106,267	0	106,267	0	106,267	5,962	
Grants and Contributions - Operating	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Grants and Contributions - Capital	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Interest and Investment income	97,825	0	97,825	0	97,825	4,694	
Rental Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Net Gain from Disposal of Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Income from continuing operations	3,858,164	0	3,858,164	0	3,858,164	2,685,153	
Expenses from continuing operations							
Employee Benefits and oncosts	682,272	0	682,272	0	682,272	187,795	
Materials and Services	2,207,384	0	2,207,384	0	2,207,384	151,959	
Borrowing Costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment of Assets	530,040	0	530,040	-218,136	311,904	0	G22
Other Expenses	200,000	0	200,000	0	200,000	0	
Net Loss from the Disposal of Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Expenses from continuing operations	3,619,696	0	3,619,696	-218,136	3,401,560	339,754	
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	238,468	0	238,468	218,136	456,604	2,345,399	
Operating Surplus/(Deficit) before Capital Grants & Contributions	238,468	0	238,468	218,136	456,604	2,345,399	

Water Fund - Operating Result

Description	Original Budget		Current Budget	Recommended changes for Sep QBR	Revised Budget Sep QBR	Actual YTD	Ref
		Carry Overs					
Income from continuing operations							
Rates and Annual Charges	1,830,134	0	1,830,134	0	1,830,134	1,786,453	B23
User Charges and Fees	2,910,493	0	2,910,493	0	2,910,493	578,406	
Other Revenues	58,046	0	58,046	0	58,046	2,503	
Grants and Contributions - Operating	90,000	0	90,000	10,927	100,927	0	
Grants and Contributions - Capital	531,000	0	531,000	0	531,000	0	
Interest and Investment income	766,211	0	766,211	0	766,211	91,753	
Rental Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Net Gain from Disposal of Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Income from continuing operations	6,185,884	0	6,185,884	10,927	6,196,811	2,459,115	
Expenses from continuing operations							
Employee Benefits and oncosts	1,023,751	0	1,023,751	0	1,023,751	292,841	G24
Materials and Services	2,794,953	0	2,794,953	0	2,794,953	266,237	
Borrowing Costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment of Assets	1,525,087	0	1,525,087	102,572	1,627,659	0	
Other Expenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Net Loss from the Disposal of Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Expenses from continuing operations	5,343,791	0	5,343,791	102,572	5,446,363	559,078	
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	842,093	0	842,093	-91,645	750,448	1,900,037	
Operating Surplus/(Deficit) before Capital Grants & Contributions	311,093	0	311,093	-91,645	219,448	1,900,037	

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Ordinary Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Sewerage Fund - Operating Result

Description	Original Budget		Current Budget	Recommended changes for Sep QBR	Revised Budget Sep QBR	Actual YTD	Ref
		Carry Overs					
Income from continuing operations							
Rates and Annual Charges	3,128,965	0	3,128,965	0	3,128,965	2,629,373	
User Charges and Fees	84,739	0	84,739	0	84,739	15,068	
Other Revenues	6,540	0	6,540	0	6,540	0	
Grants and Contributions - Operating	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Grants and Contributions - Capital	527,000	0	527,000	0	527,000	0	
Interest and Investment income	311,682	0	311,682	0	311,682	48,299	
Rental Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Net Gain from Disposal of Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Income from continuing operations	4,058,926	0	4,058,926	0	4,058,926	2,692,740	
Expenses from continuing operations							
Employee Benefits and oncosts	891,725	0	891,725	-85,000	806,725	146,632	D25
Materials and Services	2,213,608	0	2,213,608	85,000	2,298,608	179,159	D26
Borrowing Costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment of Assets	1,004,805	0	1,004,805	88,910	1,093,715	0	G26
Other Expenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Net Loss from the Disposal of Assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Expenses from continuing operations	4,110,138	0	4,110,138	88,910	4,199,048	325,791	
Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	-51,212	0	-51,212	-88,910	-140,122	2,366,949	
Operating Surplus/(Deficit) before Capital Grants & Contributions	-578,212	0	-578,212	-88,910	-667,122	2,366,949	

6. Capital Budget Review Statement

The Consolidated Capital Statement focuses on Councils Capital Works Program and summarises financial information by asset category and identifies how the capital program is funded. The capital budget will be reviewed during the remainder of this financial year on an ongoing basis with capital works managers. Cash flow forecasts of major projects will be monitored to ensure that expenditure is in line with budget.

Description	Original Budget	Carry Over	Current Budget	Recommended changes for Sep QBR	Revised Budget Sep QBR	Actual YTD	Ref Notes
New Assets							
Office Equipment	155,000	233,360	388,360	80,000	468,360	70,267	K8, K9
Plant & Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Land & Buildings	320,000	313,424	633,424	140,000	773,424	142,340	
Parks, Gardens & Recreation	755,000	116,882	871,882	0	871,882	0	
Roads, Bridges & Footpaths	50,000	10,000	60,000	0	60,000	9,750	
Drainage	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Library Books	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Waste	0	200,680	200,680	-132,363	68,317	0	
Water Supply	600,000	0	600,000	18,212	618,212	12,863	
Sewerage Services	670,000	46,521	716,521	75,500	792,021	0	
Total New Assets	2,550,000	920,867	3,470,867	181,349	3,652,216	235,220	
Renewal (Replacements)							
Office Equipment	200,000	54,700	254,700	-80,000	174,700	0	K7 K10
Plant & Equipment	1,494,500	243,695	1,738,195	0	1,738,195	193,313	
Land & Buildings	6,321,646	3,438,578	9,760,224	57,780	9,818,004	1,778,133	
Parks, Gardens & Recreation	215,000	34,233	249,233	0	249,233	10,682	
Roads, Bridges & Footpaths	5,210,058	883,214	6,093,272	-72,053	6,021,219	878,682	
Drainage	200,000	0	200,000	0	200,000	52,474	
Library Books	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Waste	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Water Supply	220,000	742,914	962,914	0	962,914	193,347	
Sewerage Services	470,000	362,808	832,808	0	832,808	249	
Total Renewal (Replacements)	14,331,204	5,760,142	20,091,346	-94,273	19,997,073	3,106,881	
Total Capital Works Program	16,881,204	6,681,009	23,562,213	87,076	23,649,289	3,342,101	
Total General Fund Only	14,921,204	5,328,086	20,249,290	5,328,086	25,577,376	3,135,641	
Funding Sources							
Rates and Other untied funding	2,886,646	-4,650,525	-1,763,879	-89,616	-1,853,495	0	
Grants & Contributions - Capital	4,662,815	1,794,140	6,456,955	20,690	6,477,645	0	
Grants & Contributions - Operating	1,345,247	0	1,345,247	120,543	1,465,790	0	
Internal Restrictions	1,918,503	1,758,867	3,677,370	0	3,677,370	0	
External Restrictions							
- Unexpended Grants & Contributions	0	0	0	0	0	0	
- Stormwater Levy	0	0	0	0	0	0	
- S.712 Developer Contributions	545,000	800,000	1,345,000	85,037	1,430,037	0	
- Domestic Waste Management	0	200,680	200,680	-132,363	68,317	0	
- Water Supply	730,000	742,915	1,472,915	7,285	1,480,200	0	
- Sewerage Services	640,000	409,329	1,049,329	75,500	1,124,829	0	
Loans	5,552,993	4,225,603	9,778,596	0	9,778,596	0	
Total Capital Funding Sources	18,281,204	5,281,009	23,562,213	87,076	23,649,289	0	

7. Cash and Investments Budget Review Statement

The cash and budget reserves summary presents the Council forecast movements for each key reserve categories. Most of Council's cash is restricted in its use to specific purposes by external bodies, legislation and Council resolution. The cash position is further broken down as part of this report to reflect the split of cash and investments across the internal restrictions, external restrictions and the unrestricted cash position.

Description	Opening Balance Actual 1/7/24	Original Budget Movements	Carry Over	Current Budget	Recommended changes for Sep QBR	Revised Budget Sep QBR	Closing Balance Forecast 30/6/25	Actual YTD	Ref Notes
Internal Restrictions									
Aerodrome	200,000	0	0	0	0	0	200,000	200,000	
Buildings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Infrastructure Replacement	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Plant & Vehicle Replacement	594,839	-189,678	-243,695	-433,373	0	-433,373	161,466	594,839	
Roads General	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Swimming Pool	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Childcare Centre	200,000	-60,000	0	-60,000	0	-60,000	140,000	200,000	
Land Development	255,093	0	0	0	0	0	255,093	255,093	
Leeton Museum & Art Gallery (WCIC)	300,000	0	-120,000	-120,000	0	-120,000	180,000	300,000	
Renewable Energy Efficiencies	120,000	0	0	0	0	0	120,000	120,000	
Sportsgrounds Improvements	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Employee Leave Entitlements (50%)	1,391,005	0	0	0	0	0	1,391,005	1,391,005	
Workers Compensation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Façade Painting Reserve	102,061	-20,000	0	-20,000	0	-20,000	82,061	102,061	
Fire and Emergency Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Unfinished Works (General) Restriction	1,449,112	0	-1,449,111	-1,449,111	0	-1,449,111	1	1,449,112	
Election Reserve	80,000	-80,000	0	-80,000	0	-80,000	0	80,000	
Financial Assistance Grant Prepayment	5,187,727	0	0	0	202,593	202,593	5,390,320	5,187,727	J1, M1
Total Internal Restrictions	9,879,836	-349,678	-1,812,806	-2,162,484	202,593	-1,959,891	7,919,945	9,879,836	
External Restrictions									
Unexpended Loans - General	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Developer Contributions - General	1,167,617	-365,000	-800,000	-1,165,000	-85,037	-1,250,037	-82,420	1,167,617	J8
Developer Contributions - Water	31,325	531,000	0	531,000	0	531,000	562,325	31,325	
Developer Contributions - Sewer	0	27,000	0	27,000	0	27,000	27,000	0	
Unexpended Grants - Contract Liability	1,674,368	-463,117	-1,185,524	-1,648,641	-25,727	-1,674,368	0	1,674,368	J6, J7, J10
Unexpended Grants - Other	2,992,307	-1,514,003	-248,850	-1,762,853	-65,123	-1,827,976	1,164,331	2,992,307	J4
Unexpended Grants - WF Contract Liability	50,464	0	0	0	-50,464	-50,464	-0	50,464	J23
Stormwater Management	259,083	25,000	0	25,000	0	25,000	284,083	259,083	
Deposits, Bonds & Retentions - General	921,440	0	0	0	0	0	921,440	921,440	
Deposits, Bonds & Retentions - Water	2,010	0	0	0	0	0	2,010	2,010	
Carry Over Works - Water	742,915	0	-742,915	-742,915	0	-742,915	0	742,915	
Water Supply	19,755,510	1,016,180	0	1,016,180	-7,285	1,008,895	20,764,405	19,755,510	J23
Carry Over Works - Sewerage	409,329	0	-409,329	-409,329	0	-409,329	-0	409,329	
Sewerage Services	9,379,341	-213,407	0	-213,407	-75,500	-288,907	9,090,434	9,379,341	J27
Domestic Waste Management	818,236	768,509	-200,680	567,829	132,363	700,192	1,518,428	818,236	J20, J21
Landfill Remediation	4,586,480	200,000	0	200,000	0	200,000	4,786,480	4,586,480	
Total External Restrictions	42,790,424	12,162	-3,587,298	-3,575,136	-176,773	-3,751,909	39,038,515	42,790,424	
Total Restricted Cash and Investments	52,670,261	-337,516	-5,400,104	-5,737,620	25,820	-5,711,800	46,958,461	52,670,261	
Total Cash & Investments	51,373,442	1,151,933	-2,149,580	-997,647	38,530	-959,117	50,414,325	51,748,585	
Unrestricted Cash	-1,296,819	1,489,449	3,250,524	4,739,973	12,710	4,752,683	3,455,864	-921,676	

Note: Opening Unrestricted cash as per the advertised Operational Plan represented forecasted opening balances based on the March Budget Review for 2023/24. For the September Review 2024/25 these have been updated to reflect the actual audited closing balances as per Council 2023/24 Financial Statements

8. Consolidated Balance Sheet Budget Review Statement

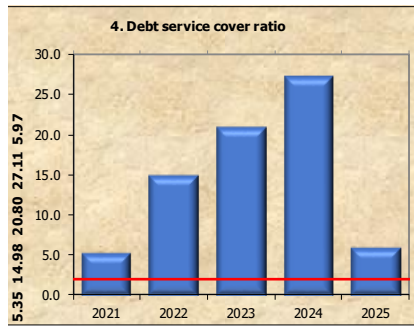
Description	Opening Balance	Original Budget Movements					Current Budget	Recommended changes for Sep QBR	End of Year Adjustments	Revised Budget Sep QBR	Closing Balance Forecast 30/6/25
			Carry Overs	QBRs - Sept	QBRs - Dec	QBRs - Mar					
Current Assets											
Cash and Cash Equivalents	17,973,442	1,151,933	-2,149,580	0	0	0	-997,647	38,530	10,000,000	9,040,883	27,014,325
Investments	18,500,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18,500,000
Receivables	6,131,592	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,131,592
Inventories	1,121,694	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,121,694
Other	62,003	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	62,003
Total Current Assets	43,788,730	1,151,933	-2,149,580	0	0	0	-997,647	38,530	10,000,000	9,040,883	52,829,613
Non-Current Assets											
Investments	14,900,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-10,000,000	-10,000,000	4,900,000
Receivables	14,674	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14,674
Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	357,025,767	6,646,631	6,681,009	0	0	0	13,327,640	-562,867	0	12,764,773	369,790,540
Intangible Assets	9,648,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,648,500
Total Non-Current Assets	381,588,942	6,646,631	6,681,009	0	0	0	13,327,640	-562,867	-10,000,000	2,764,773	384,353,715
Total Assets	425,377,671	7,798,564	4,531,429	0	0	0	12,329,993	-524,337	0	11,805,656	437,183,327
Current Liabilities											
Payables	6,921,497	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,921,497
Contract Liabilities	1,815,849	-463,116	-1,185,525	0	0	0	-1,648,641	-76,191	0	-1,724,832	91,017
Borrowings	235,368	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	700,019	700,019	935,387
Employee Benefit Provisions	2,837,259	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,837,259
Total Current Liabilities	11,809,974	-463,116	-1,185,525	0	0	0	-1,648,641	-76,191	700,019	-1,024,813	10,785,161
Non-Current Liabilities											
Payables	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Borrowings	1,903,904	5,149,669	4,225,603	0	0	0	9,375,272	144,544	-700,019	8,819,797	10,723,700
Employee Benefit Provisions	252,782	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	252,782
Provisions	4,909,339	200,000	0	0	0	0	200,000	0	0	200,000	5,109,339
Total Non-Current Liabilities	7,066,025	5,349,669	4,225,603	0	0	0	9,575,272	144,544	-700,019	9,019,797	16,085,821
Total Liabilities	18,875,999	4,886,553	3,040,078	0	0	0	7,926,631	68,353	0	7,994,984	26,870,983
Net Assets	406,501,673	2,912,011	1,491,351	0	0	0	4,403,362	-592,690	0	3,810,672	410,312,345
Equity											
Retained Earnings	149,332,910	2,912,011	1,491,351	0	0	0	4,403,362	-592,690	0	3,810,672	153,143,582
Revaluation Reserves	257,168,763	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	257,168,763
Total Equity	406,501,673	2,912,011	1,491,351	0	0	0	4,403,362	-592,690	0	3,810,672	410,312,345

9. Key Performance Indicators

The financial indicators have been selected to address operational liquidity, fiscal responsibility and financial sustainability goals across short, medium and long-term time frames. The indicators will highlight historical and forecast performance.

Calculation of Ratio

<p>1. Operating performance ratio</p> <p>Benchmark: --- Minimum $\geq 0.00\%$ Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #26</p>	<p>Purpose of operating performance ratio</p> <p>This ratio measures Council's achievement of containing operating expenditure within operating revenue.</p>	<p>Operating performance ratio $\frac{\text{Continuing operating revenue excluding capital grants and contributions less operating expenses}}{\text{Total continuing operating revenue excluding capital grants and contributions}}$</p>
<p>2. Own source operating revenue ratio</p> <p>Benchmark: --- Minimum $\geq 60.00\%$ Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #26</p>	<p>Purpose of own source operating revenue ratio</p> <p>This ratio measures fiscal flexibility. It is the degree of reliance on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions.</p>	<p>Own source operating revenue ratio $\frac{\text{Total continuing operating revenue excluding capital grants and contributions}}{\text{Total continuing operating revenue}}$</p>
<p>3. Unrestricted current ratio</p> <p>Benchmark: --- Minimum ≥ 1.50 Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #26</p>	<p>Purpose of unrestricted current ratio</p> <p>To assess the adequacy of working capital and its ability to satisfy obligations in the short term for the unrestricted activities of Council.</p>	<p>Unrestricted current ratio $\frac{\text{Current assets less all external restrictions}}{\text{Current liabilities less specific purpose liabilities}}$</p>



Benchmark: --- Minimum ≥ 2.00
Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #26

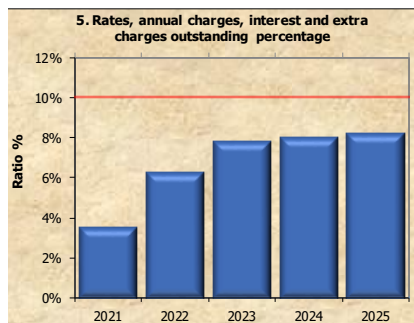
Purpose of debt service cover ratio

This ratio measures the availability of operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments

Debt service cover ratio

Operating result before capital excluding interest and depreciation/impairment/amortisation

Principal repayments (Statement of Cash Flows) plus borrowing costs (Income Statement)



Benchmark: --- Maximum $< 10.00\%$
Source for Benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #26

Purpose of rates and annual charges outstanding ratio

To assess the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on Council's liquidity and the adequacy of recovery efforts.

Rates, annual charges, interest and outstanding %

Rates, annual and extra charges outstanding

Rates, annual and extra charges collectible



Benchmark: --- Minimum ≥ 3.00
Source for benchmark: Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting #26

Purpose of cash expense cover ratio

This liquidity ratio indicates the number of months a Council can continue paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflow.

Cash expense cover ratio

Current year's cash and cash equivalents plus all term deposits

Payments from cash flow of operating and financing activities

10. Borrowings

The Statement below shows a summary of the current loan borrowings included in the Annual Budget as well as the repayment budgets

Description	Purpose	Loan % Rate	Final Payment Date	Opening Balance	New Loan	Annual Repayment	Principal Repayments	Interest Repayments	Principal Outstanding
URS 3 - Leeton Ovals - Dressing Shed	Sporting Grounds and Facilities	4.34%	22/07/2024	120,408	0	124,345	120,408	3,937	0
Leeton Pool Refurbishment	Sporting Grounds and Facilities	4.34%	30/04/2040	1,893,324	0	147,625	95,274	52,351	1,798,051
Showground Grandstand	Sporting Grounds and Facilities	4.85%	30/04/2030	125,956	0	22,752	19,701	3,051	106,255
LELC	Community Services	4.59%	31/08/2026	0	565,571	60,228	41,280	18,948	524,291
Roxy Theatre	Community Services	4.59%	31/08/2026	0	4,225,603	281,914	146,252	135,661	4,079,351
Vance Estate	Economic Development	4.59%	31/08/2026	0	5,552,993	585,696	401,436	184,260	5,151,557
Total Loans				2,139,689	10,344,167	636,863	824,351	398,207	11,659,505

Note 1- new loans drawn down on 30 August 2024. Additional funds to be drawn for Roxy during the year. This was previously presented as part of the 2023/24 Operational Plan. Assumption at this stage is loan will be drawn towards end of 2024/25 and no new loan repayments to be recognised for 2024/25. Loans are for 2 years to be refinanced to ensure best interest rate is achieved

Item 8.2.3. AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING – FRIDAY 25 OCTOBER 2024 – MINUTES AND CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

AUTHOR/S: Manager Governance, Corporate & Customer Service

APPROVER/S: Director Corporate/CFO

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide to Council for information the minutes (**Attachment 1**) and the Chairman's Report (**Attachment 2**) of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) meeting held on Friday 25 October 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Notes the Minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting held on Friday 25 October 2024.
 2. Notes the Chairman's Report to the Mayor and Councillors from the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting held on Friday 25 October 2024.
-

REPORT

(a) Background

Leeton Shire Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) met on Friday 25 October 2024. The minutes of the meeting (**Attachment 1**) are now presented for Council's information.

The ARIC is charged with providing independent assurance and assistance to Council on risk management, control, governance and external accountability responsibilities, as well as for the purposes of quality assurance and quality improvement.

(b) Discussion

At the meeting on Friday 25 October 2024, the ARIC reviewed the following:

- Annual Financial Statements Report 2024 (Audited),
- Strategic, Operational and Project Risk Report,
- Cyber Security Maturity Progress Report,
- Draft revised Council's Corporate Credit Card Policy and Procedure,
- Internal Audit Progress Update Report – October 2024,
- Proposed Internal Audit Program 2024/2025.

(c) Options

Nil – this report is for information purposes only.

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

This report has no financial implications, Internal Audits and Improvement Plans are funded through the approved 2024/2025 budget.

(b) Policy

ARIC - Terms of Reference

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Local Government (General) Regulation 2021
Local Government Act 1993

(d) Risk

The Strategic Operational and Project Risk Report is presented to ARIC at each of their meetings.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

The NSW Auditor General's Office and contracted auditor RSD, were in attendance at the meeting.

(b) Internal

General Manager
Manager WHS, QA & Risk
Manager ICT

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

9. Governance and Administration

9.6 Deploy reliable and efficient corporate and project governance including audit, risk and improvement.

This is in accordance with the Local Government act and Council's Procurement Policy, the Guidelines for Risk management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW and new legislative and governance requirements.

9. Governance and Corporate Services

9.6 Deploy reliable and efficient governance, audit, risk and improvement services

9.6.7 Run an Audit, Risk and Improvement program in accordance with the Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - ARIC Minutes - Meeting - Friday 25 October 2024 [**8.2.3.1** - 4 pages]

2. Attachment 2 - ARIC Chair Report to Council - Meeting - Friday 25 October 2024 [**8.2.3.2** - 5 pages]



LEETON
SHIRE COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE
AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT
COMMITTEE
FRIDAY 25 OCTOBER 2024
COMMENCING AT 3:30 PM
AT THE LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

PRESENT (Voting Members):

Graham Bradley (Chair), Kerry Phillips via videoconference, David Kortum via videoconference and Max Shanahan via videoconference.

PRESENT (Non-Voting Attendees):

Jackie Kruger (General Manager), Avtar Singh (Director Corporate / CFO), Sarah Graham (Manager Governance, Corporate and Customer Service), Sibongubuhle Tshuma (Manager Finance), Gerard Simms (Manager ICT), Andrew Valenta (Manager WHS, QA & Risk) and Cr. Stephen Tynan.

PRESENT (Others via videoconference):

Mark Johnson (Finance Consultant), Quentin Wong (Audit Office of New South Wales), Josh Porker (RSD Audit) and Cranos Moyo (RSD Audit).

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL

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23-25 Chelmsford Place Leeton NSW 2705
www.leeton.nsw.gov.au 

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee (ARIC) Friday 25 October 2024

1. WELCOME BY CHAIR

Mr. Graham Bradley

2. APOLOGIES

Apology from Mayor Cr. George Weston

3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

ARIC 24/0

Resolved

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting held on Thursday 18 July 2024, as circulated, be taken as read and CONFIRMED.

(Moved Kerry Phillips, seconded Max Shanahan)

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Nil

5. OFFICER'S REPORTS

ITEM 5.1. ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS REPORT 2024

Mark Johnson (Finance Consultant) entered the meeting via video conference at the time being 3:35pm

Quentin Wong (Audit Office of New South Wales) entered the meeting via video conference at the time being 4:10pm

Josh Porker (RSD Audit) entered the meeting via video conference at the time being 4:10pm

Cranos Moyo (RSD Audit) entered the meeting via video conference at the time being 4:10pm

ARIC 24/7

Resolved

THAT the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

1. Notes the Annual Financial Statements for the 2023/24 Financial Year as presented, and
2. Notes that the ARIC Chair will prepare and issue a report to Council.

(Moved Max Shanahan, seconded David Kortum)

2 of 4

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee (ARIC) Friday 25 October 2024

Mark Johnson (Finance Consultant) left the meeting via video conference at the time being 4:37pm

Quentin Wong (Audit Office of New South Wales) left the meeting via video conference at the time being 4:37pm

Josh Porker (RSD Audit) left the meeting via video conference at the time being 4:37pm

Cranos Moyo (RSD Audit) left the meeting via video conference at the time being 4:37pm

ITEM 5.2. STRATEGIC, OPERATIONAL AND PROJECT RISK REPORT

ARIC 24/2

Resolved

THAT the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee notes the October 2024 Risk Report.

(Moved David Kortum, seconded Max Shanahan)

ITEM 5.3. CYBER SECURITY MATURITY PROGRESS REPORT

ARIC 24/3

Resolved

THAT the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee notes the progress made in the implementation of the Beyond Trust Project and Veeam Immutable storage, achieving compliance with Level 1 and Level 3 of the Essential 8 framework, respectively.

(Moved Kerry Phillips, seconded Max Shanahan)

ITEM 5.4. DRAFT REVISED COUNCIL'S CORPORATE CREDIT CARD POLICY & PROCEDURE

ARIC 24/4

Resolved

THAT the Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committee notes the draft revised Corporate Credit Card Policy and Procedure.

(Moved Kerry Phillips, seconded David Kortum)

ITEM 5.5. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT - OCTOBER 2024

ARIC 24/5

Resolved

THAT the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee notes for information the progress on the remaining actions from Council's Internal Audits, including proposed amendments to actions identified in the report.

(Moved Kerry Phillips, seconded David Kortum)

3 of 4

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee (ARIC) Friday 25 October 2024

ITEM 5.6. PROPOSED INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAM FOR 2024/2025

ARIC 24/6

Resolved

THAT the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee confirms two (2) Internal Audits for inclusion in Leeton Shire Council's Internal Audit Program 2024/2025, being Payroll and Plant and Fleet Management.

(Moved Max Shanahan, seconded Kerry Phillips)

6. CONCLUSION OF MEETING

Mr. Graham Bradley confirmed his resignation as Chair of ARIC and Mrs. Kerry Phillips has been appointed as the new Chair.

There was no further business, the meeting closed at 5:57pm.

..... signed by
the Chairman of the meeting held on
Thursday 14 November 2024 at which meeting the
signature hereon was subscribed.

That AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

October, 2024

Attention Cr George Weston - Mayor

I advise that the Leeton Shire Council Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee met on Friday 25th October, 2024. All Committee members were present with Kerry Phillips, David Kortum and Max Shanahan via video conference. Council representatives present included Jackie Kruger, Sarah Graham, Avi Singh, Gerard Simms, Andrew Valenta, Sibongubuhle Tshuma, and Cr Stephen Tynan.

Other Attendees via videoconference included Mark Johnson, Josh Porker (RSD Audit), Cranos Moyo (RSD Audit) and Quentin Wong (NSW Audit Office)

Our principal items of business were to receive and review the:

1. The audited Financial Statements for y/e 30th June 2024
2. The Audit Engagement Closing Report for y/e 30th June 2024
3. The Draft Report on the Conduct of the Audit for y/e 30th June 2024
4. Strategic, Operational and Project Risk Report
5. Cyber Security Maturity Progress Report
6. Revised draft of Council's Corporate Credit Card Policy & Procedure
7. Internal Audit Progress Update Report – October 2024
8. Proposed Internal Audit Program for 2024/2025

The Committee resolved to note Items 4 to 8 without further action of note whilst the following matters were resolved as follows:

Item 1 Review of Council's Audited Financial Statements

As Chairman of the ARIC I make the following comments:

My principal observation is that Council has been advised that both the General Purpose Financial Statements and the Special Purpose Financial Statements will be subject to an Unqualified Audit Opinion. This is in stark contrast to the qualified audit opinions that Leeton Shire Council has received over the past few years in relation to Council's accounting treatment of Rural Fire Service (RFS) assets. Leeton Shire Council (along with the vast majority of NSW Councils) sought and adopted the professional advice on the correct accounting treatment for RFS assets and has based its accounting policy on this advice. The Audit Office has for years taken an unsubstantiated contrary view on the accounting for RFS assets which has resulted in qualified audit opinions being issued. In a major backdown the NSW Audit Office now concedes that Council accounting treatment for RFS assets does not warrant a qualified audit opinion.

Council has reported an operating surplus **before** capital grants and contributions of \$119,000 for the year ended 30 June, 2024 (2023 – surplus \$1,551,000).

Excluding capital grants and contributions, operating revenues (\$38.47 million) have increased approx.5.57% (2023 \$36.44 million) whilst during the same period operating expenses have increased approx.9.92% to \$38.35 million.

In addition to operating revenues, Council received capital grants and contributions of \$6.28 million (2023 \$4.95 million).

Although the reported net operating result (before capital movements) for the current year (\$119,000) is considerably lower than that reported in 2022/2023 (\$1.55 million) I am of the view that Council has actually improved its operating financial position. I note in particular the movements and impacts of the Financial Assistance Grants (FAG) and depreciation.

- Council's Financial Assistance Grants in the current year (\$5.55 million) were substantially below those of the previous year (\$7.13 million). This situation has resulted from advance payments of the FAG in 2022/23 which were not replicated in the current year. I note that over the past few years the advance payments of the FAG have amounted to \$5.19 million which have been identified and held as an internally restricted assets.

I again wish to emphasise the significance of the FAG's received in advance.

These grant advance payments have been brought to account as operating income over the past few years and have therefore "artificially" inflated the reported operating results. It is my expectation that the government may seek to reduce future FAG's instalments to offset these advance payments. Consequently, LSC must be cognisant of this situation and develop budgets accordingly.

- Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non financial assets increased by \$1.25 million in 2023/2024 due to upward movement in asset values caused by revaluations and additions.

Depreciation expenses amounted to \$10.26 million in the current year and now account for approx. 27% of Councils total operating expenses.

The impact of these two items alone has adversely impacted on the 2023/2024 operating result by \$2.83 million over the twelve months period.

Other items materially impacting on Council financial results in 2023/2024 include:

- Council has received significant funding through the Regional and Local Roads Repair Program (\$2.39 million) which is considerably higher than most previous years.
- In the current year Council has reported a net gain from the disposal of assets amounting to \$264,000 (2023 \$168,000).
- Council has also achieved a significant increase in investment income in 2023/24. Interest on investments has amounted to \$2.42 million in the current year compared with \$1.52 million in 2022/23.
- Significant increases in the water, sewerage and DWM charges have impacted favourably on user charges revenues in the current year.

Further, I note that there appears to be a misallocation of expenses between raw materials and contractor costs. I strongly suggest that this area of Council's operations be reviewed with a particular emphasis on identifying works as operating or capital in nature. The allocation of expenditure between operating and capital can have a material impact on Council's operating result and consequently this exercise should also be conducted on employee costs to ensure accuracy.

The operating results are reflected in the performance measure ratios as detailed in Note G4. These ratios benchmark Councils and are generally considered an important indicator of a Council's financial health. Although not of great concern I note that the performance ratios in the current year have generally deteriorated in comparison with those reported in 2022/2023.

Of particular interest are the operating results before capital grants and contributions of the individual funds (Refer Note D1):

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
General Fund	(905,000)	989,000
Water Fund	985,000	138,000
Sewerage Fund	<u>39,000</u>	<u>424,000</u>
	119,000	1,551,000

As illustrated the operating results of the General Fund continue to be of concern and unfortunately in my opinion this situation has not been adequately addressed in 2023/2024. I strongly recommend that the new Council focuses on the financial position of the General Fund and prioritises remedial action.

Although the operating deficit in 2023/2024 is principally due to depreciation expenses increasing \$975,000 in the current year I nevertheless stress that the General Fund remains heavily dependent on income from non-core activities such as interest income, sales of assets, temporary trade of water etc. These activities are subject to major variations which are beyond Council's control and any diminution in income from these activities will certainly hinder Council's ability to achieve sustainable operating surpluses.

To illustrate:

- Interest on Investments has increased from \$655,000 in 2023 to \$1,080,000 in 2024. Such increase is of course inextricably linked to increased interest rates and was achieved despite declining funds available for investment and could decrease further as restricted funds are expended.
- Gains/Losses from the sale of assets went from a gain of \$168,000 in 2023 to a gain of \$264,000 in 2024.
- Temporary trade of water has amounted to \$183,000 in the current year compared to \$62,000 2022/23.
- User Charges & Fees income decreased by 9.69% and amounted to \$5.22 million (2023 \$5.78 million). This decrease was principally in response to reduced works undertaken for Transport for NSW which declined from \$1.66 million in 2022/23 to \$498,000 in the current year. This income can vary substantially from year to year.

I make the further **General Fund** observations:

- Cash and investments now amount to \$21.00 million (2023 \$26.60 million) of which approx. \$12.42 million is externally restricted.
- During 2023/24 Council did not raise any new borrowings and repaid borrowings amounting to \$295,000. At year end Council's outstanding borrowings had reduced to \$2.14 million.

I understand however that borrowings have been raised since year end to finance the Roxy Theatre renovations and the Vance Estate development.

Note: All Council's borrowings are held in the **General Fund**

Water and Sewerage Funds

I note the increased rates and charges income in these funds and understand this may in part be due to the introduction of smart meters that now correctly measure water use by residents. I consider that these funds have reported satisfactory financial results in 2023/24 and remain in a relatively sound financial position.

Item 2 Draft Audit Engagement Closing Report

Action Received and Noted

ARIC fully supports Council's decision to **not recognise** Rural Fire Fighting equipment in the financial statements. Such action is strongly supported by the industry generally and is currently subject to review by the NSW Public Accounts Committee.

Item 3 Draft Report on the Conduct of the Audit

Action Received and Noted

Chairman's Resignation

I advised the meeting that I have now resigned as Chairman of ARIC and that Kerrie Phillips has been appointed by Council to this position. I take this opportunity to thank Council for allowing me the opportunity to serve as Chairman of the Leeton Shire Council ARIC for the past six years – a position that I have valued and been proud to have held.

Yours faithfully



Graham Bradley
Chairman

28/10/2024

8.3. ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

Item 8.3.1. REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN

AUTHOR/S: Director Economic & Community Development

APPROVER/S: General Manager

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP) is a collaboration between Griffith City, Leeton Shire, Murrumbidgee, and Narrandera Shire Councils, and their communities, working together to advance the region's resilience to the impacts of drought. Stage one is development of the plan and stage two is implementation of the plan, with funding allocated to each stage.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan as presented for submission to the NSW Government.

REPORT

(a) Background

The RDRP program is being delivered across Australia and is one (1) of five (5) focus areas of the Federal Government's Future Drought Fund. The NSW Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP) program is also jointly funded by the NSW Government, supporting local governments to work together regionally to plan for drought resilience proactively and pragmatically. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Increase understanding of the region's current and future drought resilience, considering the region's unique economic, environmental, and social characteristics.
- Recognise the interdependent nature of the local economy, community health and wellbeing and environmental sustainability through the drought cycle and across business types.
- Understand local signals and drought priorities in the community's voice.
- Combine local knowledge with resilience and risk data and information to make informed decisions.
- Identify actions, pathways and opportunities to improve regional drought resilience, mitigate risks and adapt to change.
- Help the Western Riverina Consortium of Councils and regional organisations be in a stronger position to implement strategic actions and support partnerships that drive enhanced drought resilience.
- Develop concrete actions to address and mitigate short-term and long-term drought impacts.

(b) Discussion

In November 2023 the consortium of Councils being Leeton Shire, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera Shire and Griffith City were successful in receiving \$560K in funding under the Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program – Round 2, with Narrandera Shire Council being the lead Council.

The funding is in two stages with stage 1 being the development of the plan (\$210,000) and stage 2 being plan implementation (\$350K). Stage 2 is conditional on the NSW Government approving the plan.

Tenders were called as per the Narrandera Shire Council procurement process and Meridian Urban Pty Ltd was selected by the consortium as the successful contractor.

Community consultation was conducted in two (2) rounds. The first round, held in July 2024, included nine in-person sessions across the four (4) Council areas, along with an online survey to gather local input for the plan. The second round, held in September 2024 featured four (4) in-person sessions — one (1) in each Council area—to refine the plan and its associated actions.

The Regional Drought Resilience Plan is to be submitted to the NSW Government by 30 November 2024 for approval.

Implementation of the regional drought resilience plan will be driven by a collaborative and multi-disciplined drought resilience Project Control Group (PCG).

The drought action plan incorporates a large suite of projects and actions, some offer immediate opportunity, some are medium-term items and others are longer-term transformational opportunities.

Funding rounds are available through the Federal Drought Fund and the plan is also designed to support other organisations access broader funding streams that support a shared role in enhancing our drought resilience.

(c) Options

THAT Council:

1. Endorses the Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan as presented for submission to the NSW Government. ***This is the recommended option.***
2. Endorses as above, with amendments.
3. Resolves to decline the Regional Drought Resilience Plan, which will result in a lapse of contractual agreement as per the NSW Government Grant Deed Executed by Narrandera Shire Council on behalf of the consortium.

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

The preparation of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan for the Western Riverina was funded jointly by the Federal and NSW Governments, via Narrandera Shire Council.

(b) Policy

Adverse Events Plan

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Nil

(d) Risk

The consortium's ability to deliver on identified projects by November 2025 will be challenged by:

- competing priorities,
- staff resourcing,
- effectiveness of Project Control Group (PCG),
- Council cofounding.

Fortunately, there is \$350K available to get started, funded by the Federal and NSW Governments.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

Meridian Urban Pty Ltd
Narrandera Shire Council
Murrumbidgee Council
Griffith City Council
Various members of the Community

(b) Internal

General Manager
Marketing and Promotions Coordinator

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

- 8. Environmental Sustainability and Emergency Services
 - 8.3 Improve Leeton Shire's emergency preparedness
 - a) Undertake strategic planning for potential outages as a result of extreme weather
 - b) Undertake flood planning
 - c) Ensure adequate bushfire protection
 - d) Participate as Local Emergency Management Centre
- 4. Economic Development
 - 4.1 Strategic local and regional economic development
 - 4.1.1 Implement 'Ambition 2030', the Leeton Shire Council Economic Development Strategy

4. Economic Development

4.3 Land development - housing

4.3.1 Promote housing development opportunities across Leeton Shire - including affordable housing and lifestyle village housing

4. Economic Development

4.6 Business attraction, retention and growth

4.6.1 Support and facilitate the retention and expansion of existing local business, industry or government services in Leeton Shire, including Yanco Agricultural Institute

4.6.2 Support and facilitate potential new business, industry or government services in Leeton Shire

ATTACHMENTS

1. Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan [**8.3.1.1** - 56 pages]

Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan



Acknowledgement of Country

Griffith City Council, Leeton Shire Council, Murrumbidgee Council, and Narrandera Shire Council acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the region's lands and waters, and pay our respect to Elders past and present.

We value the vital involvement of members of the primary production and broader communities of each council area to the formulation of this plan and extend our thanks to those who contributed.



This document was prepared for Griffith City, Leeton Shire, Murrumbidgee, and Narrandera Shire Councils by Meridian Urban.



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Contents

Introduction	2
Purpose	4
How does the plan help	4
Vision and principles	6
Region snapshot	7
About the Western Riverina Region	8
People and community	9
Wiradjuri Nation	9
Economy	10
Environment	10
How this plan was prepared	11
Strategic alignment – state, regional and local	12
A stakeholder-driven approach	12
Engagement observations and insights	14
Regional enablers	15
How our region is impacted by drought	16
Natural river systems	16
Irrigation areas	17
The region's different types of 'drought'	18
Drought impacts	19
Cascading impacts of drought	20
Drought history	21
A focus on the 2017-2019 drought	22
Future drought	23
Future climate scenarios	23
Trends, stressors and shocks	29
Western Riverina in Australia's future drought context	30
Our drought resilience	31
Drought action plan	33
Pathway 1 – Anticipate water availability	35
Pathway 2 – Proactively manage business interests	36
Pathway 3 – Support off-farm diversification	37
Pathway 4 – Grow local co-operative service provision	38
Pathway 5 – Support community cohesion	39
Pathway 6 – Embed environmental stewardship and sustainable agricultural practices	40
Implementation	41
Pathways implementation	41
Governance structure	42
Monitoring, evaluation and learning framework	42
Tracking progress and reporting	43
Appendix A – Drought history	47
Appendix B – Concepts to guide adaptive learning	54

Glossary

Key terms used throughout this plan are defined below.

ADAPTATION	Adjustment or modification in natural and/or human systems in response to actual or expected shocks and stresses to moderate harm, reduce vulnerability and/or exploit beneficial opportunities.
ADAPTIVE CAPACITY	The ability of individuals and groups to adjust and respond to environmental and socio-economic changes.
ADAPTIVE GOVERNANCE	Coordinating iterative, flexible, and responsive interactions between systems when designing interventions and for their implementation and evaluation.
COPING CAPACITY	Communities that may be constrained in their capacity to use available resources to cope with adverse events and to prepare for, absorb and recover.
DROUGHT	Drought means acute water shortage. Drought is a prolonged, abnormally dry period when the amount of available water is insufficient to meet our normal use.
ECONOMIC RESILIENCE	The ability of the economy to absorb the economic impact of shocks and stressors without changing the economic status or outcomes.
ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE	The ability of the natural environment to cope with a diverse range of shocks and stressors while maintaining natural processes and ecosystem services.
GOVERNANCE	Governance is the structures and processes by which individuals, groups and agencies in a society share power and make decisions. It can be formally institutionalised, or informal.
INTERVENTION OPTIONS	Alternative or complementary actions, projects, programs, policies, initiatives, and investments that are planned to bring about change in the system.
LOCAL KNOWLEDGE	Local knowledge and First Nations knowledge incorporates elements of lived experience within a landscape, bearing witness to the operation of systems. It includes aspects of people, landscape, culture – how people interact with surroundings and as part of communities and processes.
RESILIENCE	The ability of a system to absorb a disturbance and reorganise to maintain the existing functions, structure, and feedback. Also see general resilience, specified resilience, economic resilience, environmental resilience, and social resilience.
RISK	The potential for adverse consequences for human or ecological systems, recognising the diversity of values and objectives associated with such systems.
SHOCK	Sudden, short-term events that threaten a city (or region). Examples include major storms, floods, bush fires, heatwaves, disease outbreaks, terrorism, and cyber-attacks.
SOCIAL RESILIENCE	The ability of the human society to cope with a diverse range of shocks and stressors while maintaining existing social and community functions.
STRESSOR	An event that occurs gradually over a timeframe that causes an adverse effect, e.g. drought.
SYSTEMS	The interaction of processes, networks, and inter-dependencies across a complex 'whole'.
THEORY OF CHANGE	Refers to theories, causal mechanisms and assumptions that explain how and why outcomes and impacts will be achieved through use, implementation and production of proposed inputs, activities, and outputs.
TRENDS	Major global or regional influences that have driven change in the past and are expected to shape change into the future.
THRESHOLD	The point at which a change in a level or amount a controlling variable causes a system to shift to a qualitatively different regime. Also referred to as a tipping point.
TRANSFORM	The process of radically changing or building a new system with different structure, functions, feedback, and identity.
TRIGGER POINT	A pre-agreed situation or event, that when met, activates a management intervention. Trigger points are usually defined in the planning phase.

Introduction

This Regional Drought Resilience Plan is a collaboration between Griffith City, Leeton Shire, Murrumbidgee, and Narrandera Shire Councils, and their communities, working together to advance the region's resilience to the impacts of drought.

Drought is a recurring feature of the Australian landscape. While common experiences exist, the impacts and major pressures through drought varies across geographies, and across communities.

The Western Riverina region is dependent on the land, water and climatic conditions for prosperity. This highlights a need enhance drought resilience opportunities to position the region to respond to and recover from dry times. Sustainable and diverse economies, and connected communities that are responsive to drought signals, are the foundation to reduce vulnerability and mitigate potential impacts.

The Western Riverina is unique in its drought context. Whilst susceptible to periods of drought, the irrigation schemes of the region and regulation of the Murrumbidgee River set it apart from other parts of NSW. Water uncertainty in the region, as opposed to climatic events leading to drought, is a consequence of an interplay of factors. These factors, broadly grouped by climate, policy and operational infrastructure requirements, each have their own challenges but interact in combination across the drought cycle.

Within the region, vulnerabilities from drought are indicated by downward trends in rainfall and soil moisture. Changes in the Snowy Mountains catchment area would also have effect given the flows received from the Alpine region. Across the community, challenges are voiced in the evolution of the complex water policy landscape which places its own pressures on the community. Under this broader context, the region retains a self-driven focus on harnessing co-operative community and economic opportunities. This plans seeks to build on the collective strengths and regional identity of the Western Riverina as a premier food bowl for Australia to take steps now to stem the impacts of future drought on our region.

The Regional Drought Resilience Plan program is one of five focus areas¹ of the Commonwealth Government's Future Drought Fund. The NSW Regional Drought Resilience Plan program is jointly funded through the Commonwealth Government's Future Drought Fund and the NSW Government, supporting local governments to work together regionally to plan for drought resilience proactively and pragmatically.

¹ Other focus areas under the Future Drought Fund include farm business resilience, roll-out of the Drought Resilience Self-Assessment Tool, and better land management practices that support landscape resilience.

Drought resilience

'will ensure regional Australia can endure deeper, longer droughts, and recover from them sooner. This will help Australia's agricultural industries maintain national farm income, increase food security, and protect the regional jobs that rely on agriculture during the toughest years. Importantly, it will also increase the resilience of rural and regional communities and improve environmental outcomes'.

(CSIRO, 2022)

Image: Fivebough Wetlands

Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan Framework

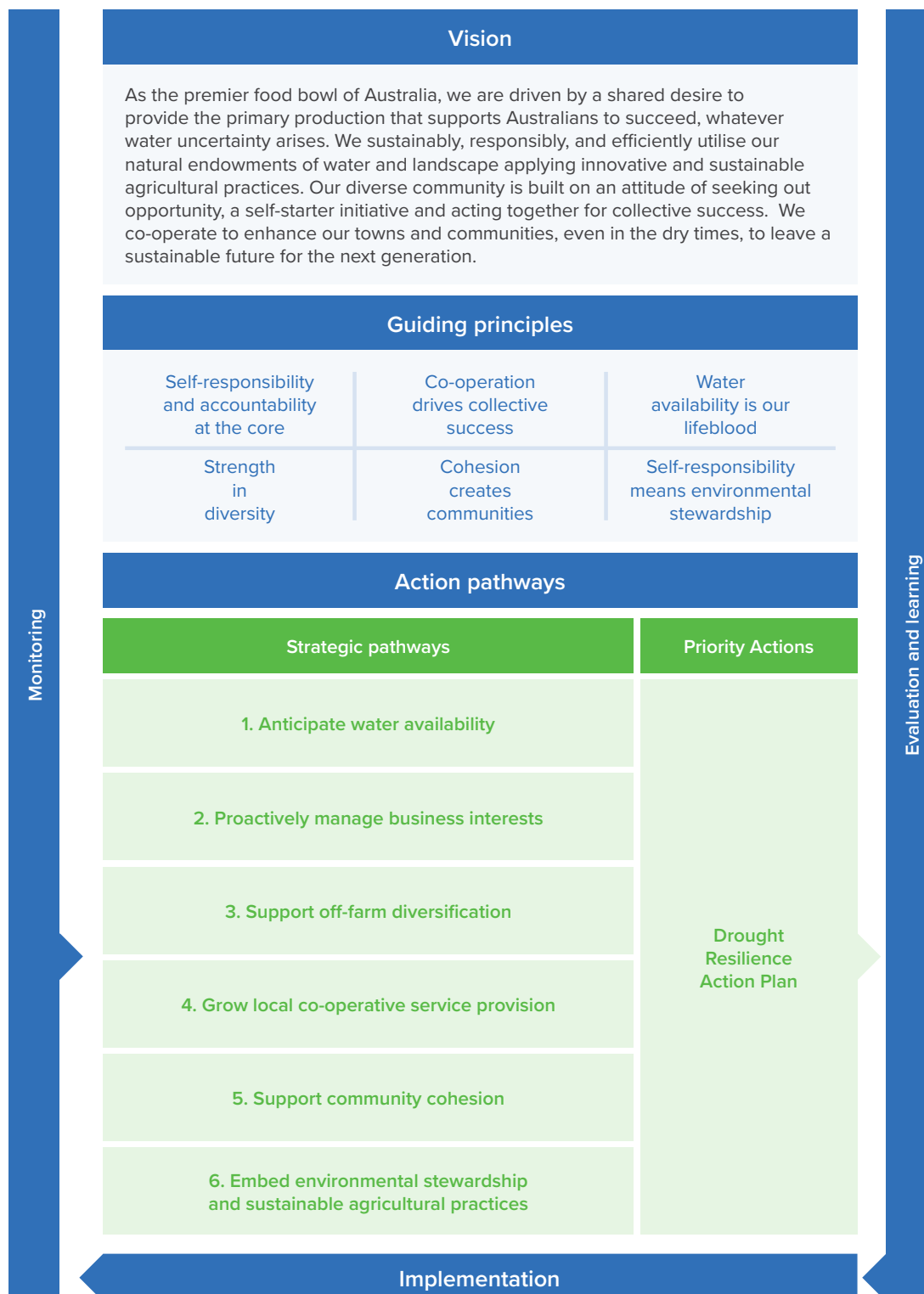


Figure 1 — Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan Framework

Purpose

The Western Riverina RDRP provides direction and options for how the community, business, industry networks, and local governments can adapt to strengthen drought resilience and transform for new opportunities.

The purpose of this plan is to:

- Increase understanding of the region's current and future drought resilience, considering the region's unique economic, environmental and social characteristics
- Recognise the interdependent nature of the local economy, community wellbeing, and environmental sustainability through the drought cycle and across business types
- Understand local signals and drought priorities in the community's voice and create stronger connectedness and greater social capital within communities
- Inform decisions based on a combination of local knowledge, and risk and resilience information
- Identify pathways and opportunities to improve regional drought resilience, mitigate risks and adapt to change
- Help Councils and regional organisations be in a stronger position to implement strategic actions and support partnerships that drive enhanced drought resilience
- Develop concrete actions to address and mitigate short-term and long-term drought impacts.

For the purposes of this plan, references to regional businesses include farms and agricultural business, contractors, suppliers, industry, retail and commercial services and references to community includes all townships, irrespective of size.

How does the plan help

The Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan combines drought history, climate analysis and local input to form a comprehensive understanding of the impacts of drought and to anticipate and prepare for the next drought cycle.

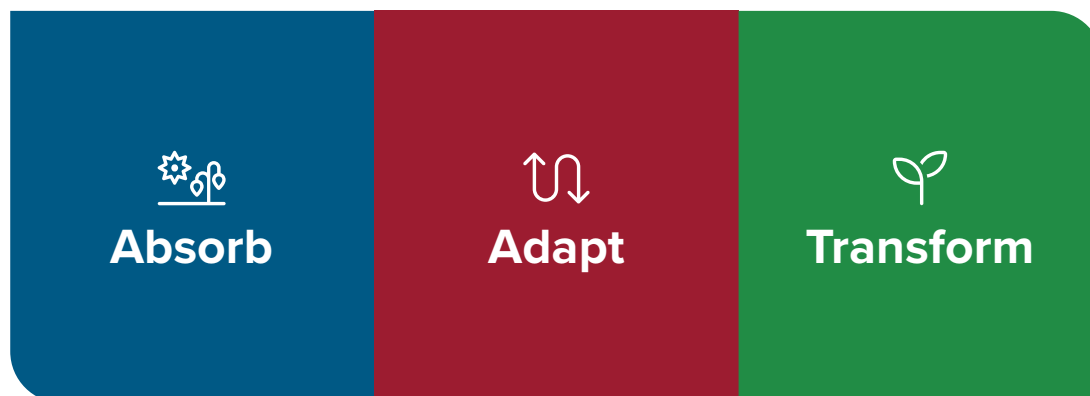
Whilst the future cannot necessarily be predicted, this plan addresses drought resilience by building in actions across the system where impacts are felt and across the drought cycles where interventions can be most effective. The plan consolidates on the range of existing programs and initiatives. It supports the ongoing collaboration between key actors who support the community through drought cycles.

The impacts of drought can be insidious with a slow onset but prolonged effects that reach across the community. It is important we understand the warning signals of drought and retain a focus on continuous preparedness.

How previous impacts of drought have manifested across community networks, local business and the natural environment provides a guidepost for where actions are needed. This plan supports a focus on outcomes through:

- Prevention of potential impacts
- Increased preparedness and resilience through recognition of signals
- What is needed in response
- What is needed for recovery.

This Regional Drought Resilience Plan supports collective and cooperative measures to prepare for drought in the face of changing and uncertain futures. This is done through several intervention approaches:



These areas of absorptive capacity, adaptive capacity and transformational capacity provide a view of the priorities identified by this plan relative to different components of the drought cycle, effort and/or costs associated. Some opportunities are short-term and more immediate, whilst others are more transformative in nature and require long-term effort to generate change.

This concept forms part of a resilience 'theory of change' model² which helps us to break down and consider the complex elements of drought resilience and the links across issues. This makes clear both how and why its impacts run so deep. This approach also helps to inform decision-making for enhanced resilience and adaptation as conditions and circumstances change over time.

This plan supports drought resilience in the Western Riverina through approach that will:

-  **Understand and recognise the triggers and impacts**
-  **Build capacity to meet challenges**
-  **Unite in community**
-  **Use regional voices to advance strengths and opportunities**

This Regional Drought Resilience Plan provides the framework for implementation and identifies practical ways the community and businesses of the region can prepare for and respond to drought impacts. Implementation funding is available from longer-term investment under the Commonwealth Government's Future Drought Fund, as well as other funding and grant assistance opportunities.

Implementation of actions contained in this plan is dependent on funding availability.

² The drought resilience plan integrates the 'Resilience, Adaptation Pathways and Transformation Approach' (RAPTA) developed by CSIRO which provides a framework to map resilience interventions. For more information on RAPTA, visit <https://research.csiro.au/eap/rapta/>



Image: Visit Griffith

Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan

Vision and principles

Vision

As the premier food bowl of Australia, we are driven by a shared desire to provide the primary production that supports Australians to succeed, whatever water uncertainty arises. We sustainably, responsibly, and efficiently utilise our natural endowments of water and landscape applying innovative and sustainable agricultural practices. Our diverse community is built on an attitude of seeking out opportunity, a self-starter initiative and acting together for collective success. We co-operate to enhance our towns and communities, even in the dry times, to leave a sustainable future for the next generation.

Guiding principles



Self-responsibility and accountability at the core

People in this region are frank and honest. We are very good at what we do – whether running the local café or managing a multi-million dollar diversified agri-business portfolio. The sense of responsibility and personal accountability is strong – people need practical and realistic support to keep doing what they do well.



Co-operation drives collective success

Not many parts of Australia work under such successful co-operative approaches like this region. From the irrigation schemes to the mills and even local pubs, the co-operative business structure provides a trust-based way to transform communities by growing services and prosperity in other critical sectors – like aged care, housing, and even retail – so that local services can be retained in-community, owned by community.



Strength in diversity

Farmers in this region know how to build, manage and grow diversified on-farm operations – they have been doing it efficiently for generations. Transferring this culture of diversification into off-farm economic growth that supports manufacturing and value-added employment and prosperity is a clear opportunity.



Water availability is our lifeblood

The region is unique in the way it receives its natural endowment of water – receiving both in-region rainfall and irrigation waters from Australia's snow country via the Snowy Hydro scheme. This combination of water sources supports arguably Australia's most critical and diversified irrigated and dryland country. However, uncertainty exists for both sources of water, which create similar drought-like conditions through different causes.



Cohesion creates communities

The region embodies the Australian ideals of mateship. There are tight-knit communities in towns and districts across the region that band together in a crisis to help each other through. It's a clear and common foundation of what it takes to live successfully and sustainably.






Self-responsibility means environmental stewardship














There is an awareness of the precious nature of resources with which the community is entrusted. There is increasing recognition and practice in environmental restoration, regenerative agriculture, and care for Country that will pay great dividends as efforts increase.








Region snapshot

Information sourced from: ABS 2021 Census data, Regional Development Australia, and AgTrack - Agricultural and Land Use Dashboard

 Population 47,589	 Population aged 65+ 20.6% (17.7% NSW average)	 First Nations population 8.5% (3.4% NSW average)
REGIONAL ECONOMY* 23,752 jobs (2021) Economy \$3.5b (2020) Local businesses 5,608 (2022)	UNEMPLOYMENT Griffith: 3.0% Leeton: 3.8% Murrumbidgee: 2.9% Narrandera: 5.2%	VOLUNTARY WORK (organisations) 13.2% — 23.2% (13.0% NSW Average)

Largest industries (by employment)

GRIFFITH  Poultry Processing  Wine / Alcoholic Beverage Manufacturing  Hospitals	LEETON  Secondary Education  Meat Processing  Grain Mill Product Manufacturing
MURRUMBIDGEE  Other Grain Growing  Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle Faming  Local Government Administration	NARRANDERA  Grain growing, and Grain-Sheep or Grain-Beef Cattle farming  Local Government Administration  Meat Processing  Aged Care Residential Services

LARGEST INDUSTRIES (gross value add)  Agriculture  Manufacturing  Health and education  Electricity and water supply	PRINCIPAL AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES  Broadacre cropping  Fruit and nuts  Livestock
--	---

ASSETS ✓ Western Riverina Intermodal Freight Terminal ✓ Griffith Medical Health Precinct ✓ Griffith Regional Airport ✓ Country Universities Centre ✓ Yanco Agricultural institute ✓ TAFE NSW campuses ✓ Narrandera Fisheries Centres	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE ✓ Murrumbidgee River and tributaries ✓ Billabong Creek ✓ Murrumbidgee Valley and Oolambeyan National Parks ✓ Fivebough and Tuckerbil Wetlands ✓ Recreational lakes
--	---

*Values include Carrathool Shire LGA

About the Western Riverina Region

The Western Riverina, as part of the broader Riverina Murray region, is known as Australia's 'food bowl'. It is built around premium agricultural areas, and long-standing agricultural industry strengths linked to secure water and complemented by beneficial climate conditions and versatile soils. The Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan covers the local government areas (LGA) of Griffith City, Murrumbidgee, Leeton Shire and Narrandera Shire.

Griffith is the largest regional city in the Western Riverina and is one of the three regional cities in the broader Riverina Murray region alongside Wagga Wagga and Albury. A number of smaller centres support Griffith in surrounding rural communities. Leeton is the second largest centre in the Western Riverina and Leeton Shire includes the towns of Whitton and Yanco. The shire is a strong driver of the broader regional strengths, in particular through the role it plays in value-add agriculture, including agricultural education and research.

Murrumbidgee Council contains the three townships of Coleambally, Darlington Point and Jerilderie. These centres account for over 90 percent of the LGA's population, and reflect strengths through food and fibre production, benefiting from the Murrumbidgee River, Billabong Creek and water supplied from the Murray River.

Narrandera Shire is located at the juncture of the Newell and Sturt Highways, representing a transition from the broad acre agricultural areas to the east to the highly productive Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. Narrandera forms the main town and provides a concentration of services, supported by smaller communities in Barellan, Binya, Grong Grong, and a number of rural localities.

Across each LGA the strength in agriculture is linked through connection to water, a highly evolved local industry with value-add processing, and connection

to major markets and major transport infrastructure. Key assets include the Murrumbidgee River, and flows received from the Alpine Region. The Western Riverina is home to the major irrigation schemes of the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area, Coleambally Irrigation Area, and Murray Irrigation area, alongside other private irrigators. This irrigation network supports many farms and provides some of the nation's most important irrigation areas.

Building on agricultural strengths, educational and research institutes form key assets in the region. This includes the Country Universities Centre, Yanco Agricultural Institute, and TAFE campuses across LGAs, with the largest TAFE campus in the Riverina located at Griffith. These educational facilities and major health facilities anchor services in the region and provide for a mixture of employment options.

The position of the region has influenced its economic development and agricultural strengths, capturing major freight corridors between capital cities, and evolving its own manufacturing and transport hubs. These form the basis of future growth ambitions, with further links to emerging activation precincts across the state.

The northern part of the region (north of Jerilderie) is within the Wiradjuri Nation, the largest territory at the time of European settlement. The Nation encompasses the Central West slopes and plains and extends from Coonabarabran to the north, hugging the Great Dividing Range south towards the Murray River in the south and out to western NSW. The Nation encompasses approximately one fifth of NSW. Wiradjuri people are known as 'people of three rivers', acknowledging the three rivers that are associated with their Country: the Wambuul (Macquarie River), Kalari (Lachlan River) and Murrumbidjeri (Murrumbidgee River).

Figure 2 — Map of the Western Riverina Region and local centres

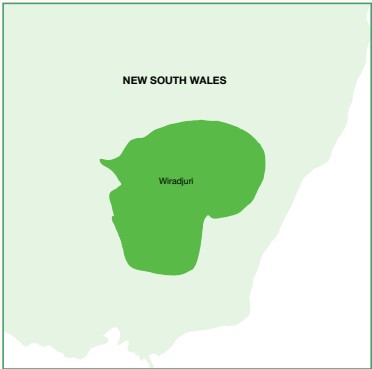


Figure 3 — Approximate extent of the Wiradjuri Nation³

³ Griffith City Council, 2019, Griffith City Council Reconciliation Action Plan December 2019/December 2021, Available at <https://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au/page.asp?f=RES-GWK-21-15-76>.

Wiradjuri Nation

The Wiradjuri Nation is the largest traditional owner group in NSW known to have cared for the lands in the regions for at least 60,000 years. Colonisation drastically changed their way of life, leading to dispossession and cultural suppression.

The culture of the Wiradjuri people is closely linked to the land and waterways, and retains a strong belief that if we care for Country, it will care for us. There are several sites of significance to the Wiradjuri people in the area, including the Koonadan Aboriginal Place and the Fivebough and Tuckerbil Wetlands. Conservation practices are key to ensuring these sites continue to maintain an ecological balance.

Water has played a critical role in the lives of Aboriginal people, for survival in arid environments and for culture, spiritual connection to land and waters and identity. Water helped in defining language boundaries and ceremonial places, and also underpins many land management practices. Traditional Aboriginal water collection and storage practices have evolved for many centuries and continue into the present.

In collaboration with First Nations/ Aboriginal people, a state-wide Aboriginal Water Strategy is currently under development, building upon consultation over recent year. The plan will identify ways of increasing water rights and ensuring that First Nations people are empowered to contribute to water management and planning decisions.

People and community

The Western Riverina is attracting new agricultural ventures and business operators who are keen to trial innovative approaches. Across the region, the vibrancy of agricultural industry is shining.

At heart of this is a strong community co-operative style of approach to not only business, but community development. A drive to work together, and to share knowledge and benefits, is a key attribute behind some of the region's most successful economic and community ventures. Strong community identity and a sense of civic duty is foundational in this regard. It also informs the community's dedication to volunteering activities and organisations. Whilst volunteerism rates are in decline nationally, community dedication at the local-scale across the Western Riverina remains relatively strong.

Sport and recreation plays a major role in the wellbeing of people and communities in the region, displayed through the diverse range of sporting teams and sporting calendar. This goes beyond those that play, but to the broader community as avid spectators and volunteers who contribute to the local teams and the running, maintenance and administration of local venues and facilities. Other social interest groups also add to the vibrant tapestry of community spirit and provide important creative and social connections.

Green spaces, recreational and natural assets are therefore critical to community wellbeing. While maintaining water to these spaces during drought is challenging, it is also essential to underpin community cohesion and mental wellness at a broader scale. There are also significant visitor economy dividends associated with these assets, as well as the region's colonial heritage and lively arts and culture scene.

Image: Jerilderie Plains

Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan

Environment

The Western Riverina is part of the wider Riverina Bioregion which has high soil fertility and a generally abundant water supply. These aspects underly its primacy as a premier food-growing region.

The climate of the Riverina Bioregion is dry and semi-arid with hot summers and cool winters, and most rainfall occurring in winter months. Vegetation ranges from river red gums along river channels, to saltbush on the plains. National parks in the region include Murrumbidgee Valley and Oolambeyan National Parks. The region's natural assets include significant wetlands and swamps such as the Fivebough and Tuckerbil Wetlands. These areas provide important habitat for native fish, amphibians, birds, mammals and many other water dependent fauna. These areas are also of cultural heritage significance to the region's First Nations people.

Since European colonisation there has been substantial modification of the vegetation and landscape through pastoral activities, the use of ground and surface water resources, and the introduction of feral animals to the region including Carp in the river systems.

One of the most profound changes at a landscape scale was the construction and commencement of the Snowy Mountain Scheme (Snowy Scheme). The Snowy Scheme was designed to produce electrical energy. However, one of the key objectives of the Scheme was to mitigate the effects of drought on irrigated agriculture in NSW and Victoria by improving the security of water supply to farmers along the fertile Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers.

Economy

Collectively, the Western Riverina economy supports approximately 23,752 jobs and its economic value is an estimated \$3.5 billion⁴ per year. The four key strengths of the region are in agriculture, manufacturing, utilities, and health and education

The high-quality agricultural lands support a long-held sector strength with significant value-add opportunities. The sector retains strong links to manufacturing, which also benefits from the linkages to large cities, distribution points of ports and airports, and links to freight and logistics hubs.

Economic assets exist through the major freight routes, freight railway lines, and links to the neighbouring regional city precincts in Albury and Wagga Wagga. The region's Western Riverina Intermodal Freight Terminal and urban industrial areas also provide economic enablers.

Investment in the region continues with major projects planned and underway. Strengths which support the key industries are its access to water and irrigation systems, proximity to metropolitan markets, extensive road and rail infrastructure and emerging population-serving employment clusters.

Industry	Employment (2021)	Gross Value Add (2020)
Agriculture	3,926 jobs (16.5% share)	\$583m
Manufacturing	3,827 jobs (16.3% share)	\$526m
Health and education	4,405 jobs (18.5% share)	\$390m
Electricity and water supply (including renewables)	382 jobs (1.6% share)	\$144m

⁴ This includes Carrathool Shire in addition to Griffith City, Leeton Shire, Murrumbidgee, and Narrandera Shire

How this plan was prepared

The Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan was prepared through the valued contribution of a broad cross section of community members, stakeholders, local government, government services, community organisations, businesses and local producers. This engagement was supported by an evidence-based resilience assessment for the region.



Resilience Assessment

- > research and literature
- > strategy and policy reviews
- > regional characteristics
- > trends and projections for drought impacts; and
- > drought resilience indicators assessment.



Stakeholder engagement

- > online community and business surveys
- > community, industry and government workshops
- > community drop-in sessions
- > targeted consultations, interviews and discussions with community, industry and services representatives.

The narrative, theme and actions within the plan are directed by the conversations across community engagement. The plan builds on existing strategies through the lens of drought resilience which supports development on the identified strategic pathways.



Strategic alignment – state, regional and local

Looking upwards, the regional drought resilience program provides strategic alignment with international scale goals including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, alongside national-scale strategies and frameworks and state-level strategic instruments. This alignment demonstrates how working locally contributes to broader sustainability and resilience outcomes for NSW and Australia.

Key plans and strategies contributing to this alignment and the preparation of the Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan has included (but is not limited to):

- Murray-Darling Basin Plan
- Riverina Murray Regional Plan 2041
- Western Riverina Regional Economic Development Strategy (2023 update)
- Draft Murrumbidgee Regional Water Strategy
- Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) strategies, plans and papers
- NSW Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- NSW Government Department of Primary Industries Drought Hub
- Department of Regional NSW Drought Signals Dashboard
- Commonwealth Government's Drought Resilience Self-Assessment tool
- Council Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework documents.

A stakeholder-driven approach

The resilience assessment which underpins the RDRP built an understanding of local context and drought impacts around the economic, natural environment and social characteristics of the region. However, impacts are not felt in isolation but rather can compound and cascade. Community consultation was key to understanding how these interactions occur and build.

The engagement process centred on community workshops, drop-in sessions, targeted meetings and discussions, and an online survey to collate experiences, insights and views from a broad cross section of community members. We spoke with growers, livestock graziers, industry and community group representatives, business operators, First

Nations organisations, subject matter specialists, service providers, local and state government agencies, elected representatives and more.

Discussion was had on what was needed into the future to better position the region collectively when the next time a dry period is upon us. This discussion focussed on actions and initiatives that were required in preparation for drought, the needs during drought and then into recovery.

Figure 4 — Engagement workshops held in-region



**9 workshops across weeks in
July and September 2024**

Coleambally / Narrandera
Barellan / Leeton / Griffith

4 drop in sessions

Darlington Point / Jerilderie
Whitton / Griffith

Online survey

Community / Business owners
and operators

72 survey responses

45+ workshop attendees

Engagement observations and insights

Key insights communicated through the stakeholder consultation process and informing the preparation of this plan include:

-  Co-operative community approaches are strong and working well. This sets the region apart from other areas. There is a strong desire to work together for mutual benefit.
-  Irrigation has stabilised the local economy over the past 50 years which has limited the impacts of drought on the region to an extent, though it is still felt.
-  Mental health and wellbeing ahead of the next drought should be a key area of focus. Mental health support once drought has set in is welcomed, but it can be too late. Tools to support producers ahead of drought is a clear opportunity, as well as building broader community mental health literacy.
-  Primary producers in the region benefit from opportunities to showcase their property management and production processes. People come from around the world to learn from Western Riverina producers.
-  The Western Riverina plays a key role in broader food security matters, and as a key exporter for the nation. As key players in this system we want to see what is being planned at higher policy levels.
-  State and Commonwealth Government services that support drought preparedness should be more actively promoted and marketed.
-  An improved and shared understanding of how the water market operates is needed.
-  To deal with reduced water availability, economic development needs to focus on non-water dependent jobs / industries. Government assistance is needed in diversifying the economy to reduce reliance on contribution from agricultural.
-  The key is to act early when making decisions in the face of drought, which applies to on and off-farm businesses.
-  The efficiency of government processes and systems places unnecessary stress on people. For example, registration of trucks (of which properties / businesses usually have many) which must be done in-person. Issues were also present with previous grant application process and timelines of such availability.
-  Townships have good water allocations that provide opportunities for new businesses.
-  Resilience is driven by efficiencies and strong self-accountability based upon business acumen, efficient management, innovation and sustainability.
-  Business and property succession planning is critical.

Messages from the Community

Community views are strong on how the region builds its own resilience and how it contributes to the resilience of Australians more broadly. Key messages from the community, which are central to this plan include:



Regional enablers

To bolster the resilience to the effects of drought, the region's ability to capitalise on its community and economic development opportunities is reliant upon key enabling attributes. Beyond water, these include access to reliable energy networks, digital connectivity and transport infrastructure.

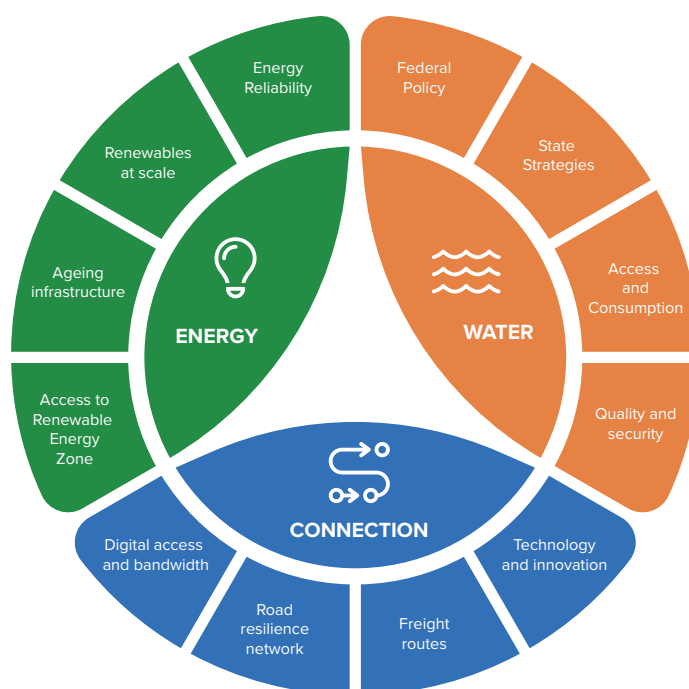


Figure 5 — Regional enabling priorities of the Western Riverina

How our region is impacted by drought

How the Western Riverina region is impacted by drought is closely aligned to its connection with water, which is the ‘lifeblood’ of the region.

Natural river systems

This is a unique part of Australia. The region derives the benefit of relatively modest in-region rainfall, but also the bounty of surface water from rain and snow precipitation from far away. The Murrumbidgee is sourced from high in the Australian Alps, winding its way across the south-west slopes of NSW and across the riverine plains to where it meets the Murray River. The Snowy Scheme was originally conceived as an irrigation scheme to draw the snowmelt from the Snowy Mountains west into the Murrumbidgee and Murray Rivers, before it also diversified into hydro-electric power generation.

The Murrumbidgee River connects centres and communities across the region and is the basis for productive agricultural lands, nationally important wetlands, and hydroelectricity further beyond the Western Riverina.

The Murrumbidgee catchment is part of the southern Basin of the Murray-Darling Basin, with this basin flowing into the Murray River. The Murray River system also influences the region, supplying water to south of Billabong Creek. This supports production in and around Jerilderie and the broader Murrumbidgee Council area.

Land uses are diverse across the Murrumbidgee Valley. A high proportion of land is used for dryland grazing and cereal-based cropping. The region supports the production of over 40 percent of NSW grapes and 50 percent of Australia’s rice. Given the diversity of users, and the context to which it sits as part of the broader Murray-Darling Basin system, there are competing interests which provide the backdrop for a range of issues related to regional water planning and policy in the region.

The Snowy Scheme water makes its way through the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (MIA) via Blowering Dam and Burrinjuck Dam on the Murrumbidgee River. Blowering Dam stores water that has been released from storages further upstream in the Snowy-Tumut Development Section of the Snowy Scheme. Water releases from Blowering and Burrinjuck Dams are managed by NSW State Water, to provide for town water supply, irrigation and environmental use requirements. On the Murrumbidgee River, as at Gundagai, the Snowy Scheme contributes inflows of around 25 percent during average inflow years, but 60 percent during drought years. Water from the two storage dams flows down to Berembded Weir, a journey taking five days and a further two days to Gogeldrie Weir. From Berembded Weir, water moves into Bundidgerry storage and onto the Narrandera Regulator, which is the start of the system owned and maintained by Murrumbidgee Irrigation.



Image: Griffith Main Canal

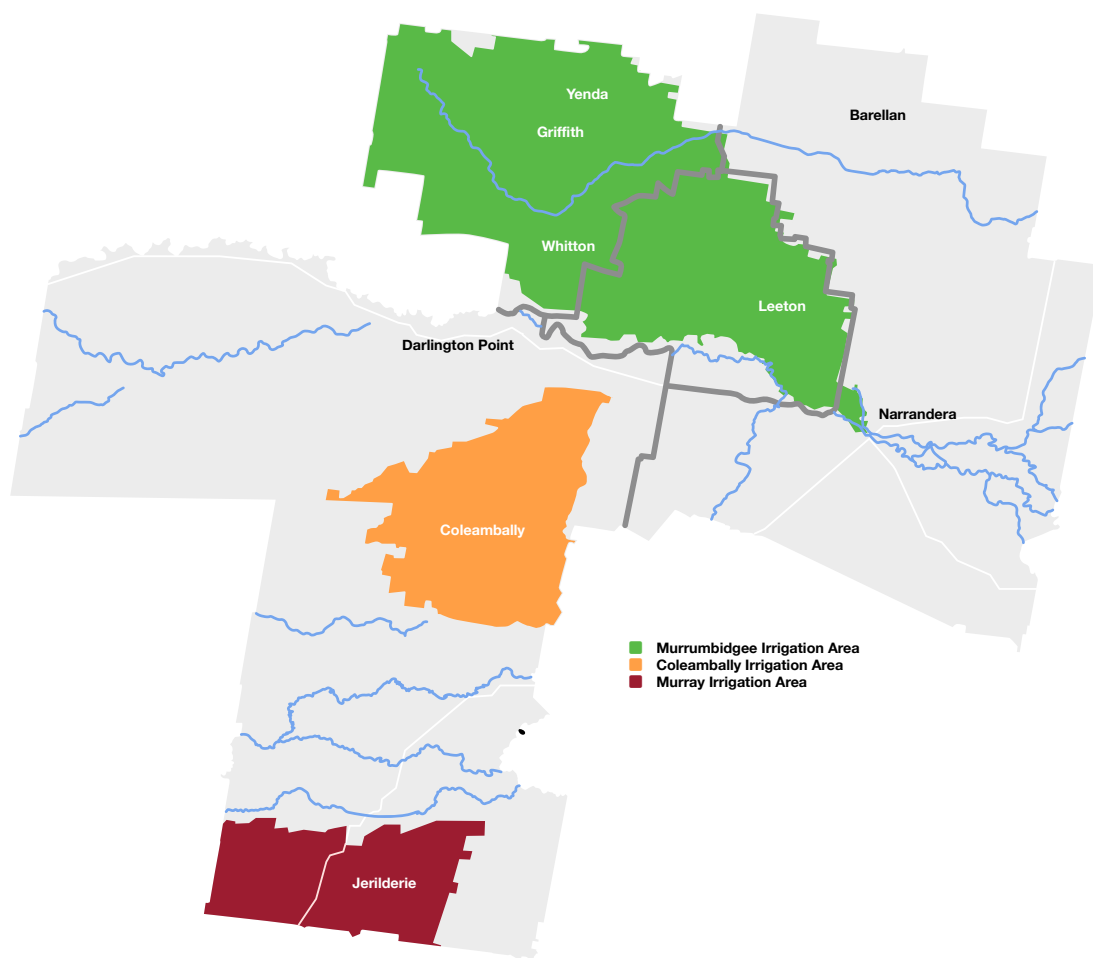
Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan

Irrigation areas

The Murrumbidgee River acts as the natural delivery course for the major food producing areas of the MIA and the Coleambally Irrigation Area (CIA) via Blowering Dam (on the Tumut River, a tributary to the Murrumbidgee) and Burrinjuck Dams. These irrigation areas provide over one-quarter of all the fruit and vegetable production in NSW and are also one of Australia's largest exporters of bulk wine. The southern part of the region, south of Jerilderie and Billabong Creek, is serviced by Murray Irrigation which supplies to more than 740,000 hectares of farmland.

This access to water through the establishment of irrigation schemes, and other water sources, has supported the growth and scale of operations in the region both in agribusiness and associated manufacturing. Economic activity in the region, both historically and at present is strongly linked to the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Scheme, and the water infrastructure investment that support the modern-day irrigation network.

Figure 6 — Major irrigation areas in the Western Riverina



The region's different types of 'drought'

The Bureau of Meteorology notes that drought is a prolonged, abnormally dry period when the amount of available water is insufficient to meet our normal use. We typically think of drought as the absence of rainfall in a region given most other regions in Australia are predominantly dryland in nature.

'Water uncertainty' is a preferred term in the region rather than this traditional rainfall and climate-led view of drought. This uncertainty can come from a range of different mechanisms in this region which may occur singularly or in combination. Engagement highlighted three kinds of 'water uncertainty' for the region:

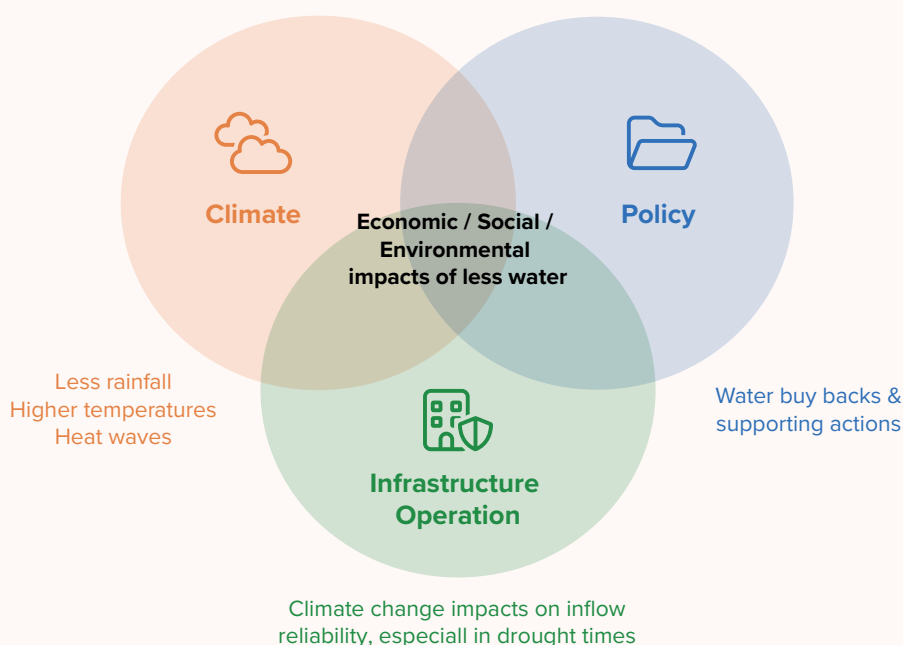
- > 'Natural' drought – which is the climate-related drought experienced across Australia, and involves a deficit in the level of rainfall occurring in region.
- > 'Human-made' drought – which is the lack of irrigation water due to government policy or out-of-region water availability.

- > Operational constraints influences – which involves the asset-based constraints of scheme maintenance and operation, an more significantly, reliability of supply.

The effects of drought and any resilience initiative need to be aligned with responses to the broader context, including policy drivers and operational implications of changing rainfall patterns in the Snowy Mountains. These may result in less water availability or a reduction in the reliability of water supplies in the region. The interplay of these factors creates uncertainty in the water landscape for this region.

Whilst the irrigation schemes have stabilised local and regional economic activity, water shortage and drought impacts can still be felt across the community. Into the future, the impact of climate change on the Snowy Mountain region is also important to the Western Riverina given the reliance on elevated inflows in drier periods from the Snowy Scheme. This emphasises a need to plan ahead to alleviate potential future impacts.

Reduced Water Availability



Policies / Programs / Actions in response to the various drivers need to be aligned to avoid unintended consequences and implementation gaps.

Figure 7 — Drivers of loss of water availability in the Western Riverina

Drought impacts

Regardless of how drought manifests, whether it is climatic, policy or operationally-related, the impacts are largely still the same. The impacts below were identified through consultation to inform the plan.



Environmental Impacts

- Loss of topsoil through groundcover loss and wind erosion
- Increased demand on alluvial ground water
- Reduced root zone soil moisture
- Water turbidity
- Pressure on the wetlands to support a wider variety and quantity of wildlife
- Low inflows into the water courses and higher evaporation rates impacting the health of flora and fauna
- Biosecurity and pest and weed outbreaks
- Vegetation dieback
- Increased potential for bushfire and grassfire, and dust storms
- Water and food availability for wildlife



People and Social Impacts

- Social isolation
- Increased mental and physical health issues
- Increased demand on community services
- Challenges in attracting and retaining workers
- Youth retention
- Maintenance of sports and recreational facilities
- Reduced ability to partake in sporting and recreation activities
- Household financial distress, and capacity to access local services
- Population decline and loss of skills
- Increased need for community group activity with less volunteers available
- Increased potential for conflict and reduced community cohesion
- Impacts on culture and cultural practices
- Infections and illness from water quality



Economic Impacts

- Reduction in water allocations
- Limited fodder and water availability for livestock
- Reduced discretionary spending in townships
- Water uncertainty creates loss of confidence in both commercial & residential property market
- Reduction in agricultural production, reduced yields
- Loss of or reduced farm income, balance sheet impacts and reduced borrowing capacity
- Maintaining cash flow and debt servicing
- Loss or reduction in on and off farm employment
- Increased fodder and water prices
- Changes in farm ownership models
- Halting of investment and capital projects on farms and directly associated businesses
- Research and innovation can stall
- Compounding effects of other natural events such as frosts

Impacts from external trends

-  Changing water policy environments including water buy backs and allocation changes
-  Housing pressure and availability of land in and around towns impacting housing supply for workers
-  Costs of living and rising costs of farming inputs
-  Demand from overseas markets is driving the need for sustainability and accreditation
-  Changes to government service delivery models which centralise employment to larger centres and results in consequences for awareness of programs and support, and access to services
-  Changes to farm structures, with an increase of corporate farm and the resultant impacts to local community service provision, population and local spend
-  Limited telecommunications and electricity network reliability and coverage.

Cascading impacts of drought

The effects of drought are not isolated, they are interconnected across the social and economic systems in the region and broader pressures on the landscape. Given the significance of agriculture within the regional economy, impacts to the sector have broader flow on effects to downstream industries, supply chains, and the local businesses in town that rely on discretionary spending.

Many existing challenges within a regional area are made harder. Workforce attraction and retention can be an issue through drought. Where workers leave during drought, it can be difficult attracting these workers back which can be both timely and costly to business operations and can impede productivity in the recovery cycle.

As part of the development of this plan, it is essential to consider the relationship between drought impacts and their underlying causes, with a focus on addressing the root causes rather than merely responding to the resulting chain of symptoms. In this regard, the design and implementation of actions can address multiple challenges across the system.



Drought history

The impacts of drought can vary based on community, weather conditions, and the prevailing macro influences and trends of the time. Additionally, personal circumstances can vary significantly. Major droughts in Australian history have affected the Western Riverina region, characterised by periods of low rainfall.

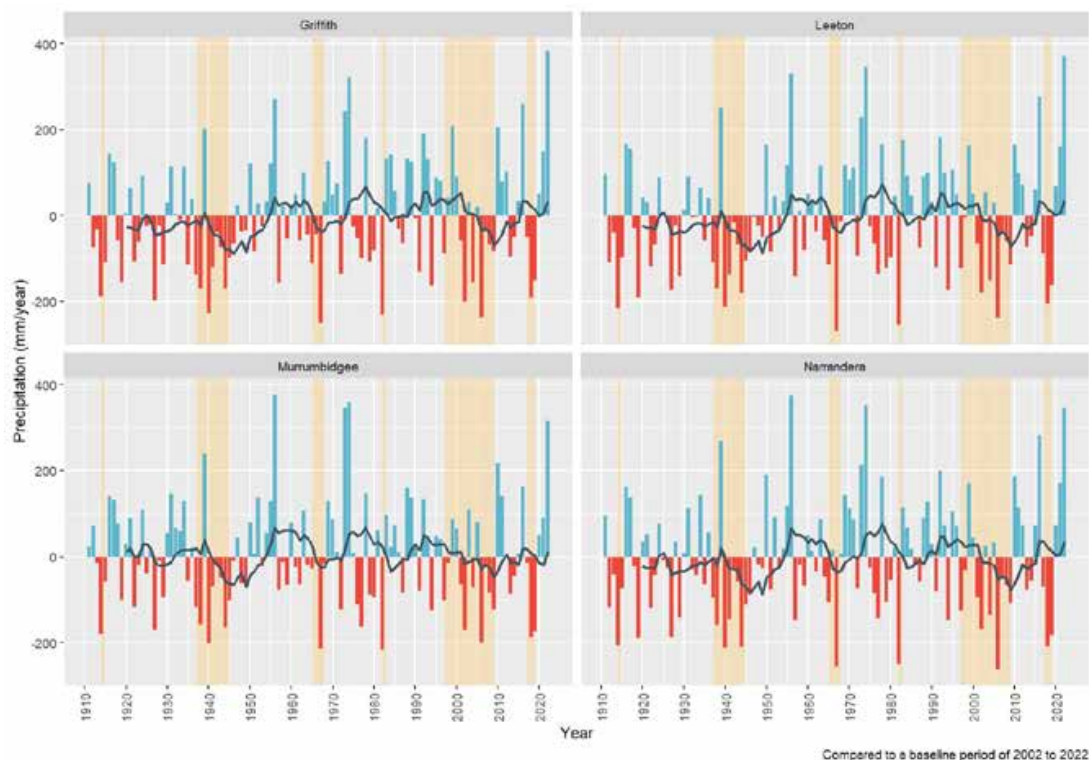
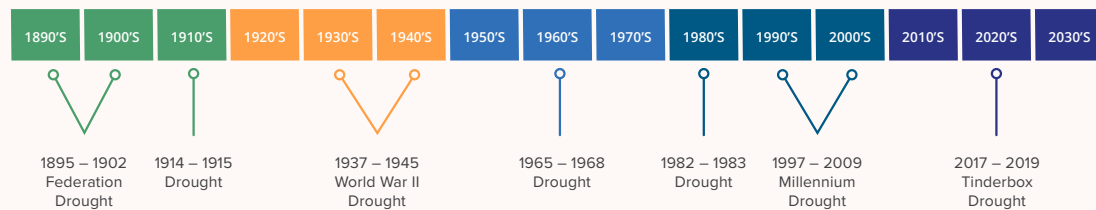


Figure 8 — Yearly mean precipitation anomaly by LGA

*Note that the data does not extend back to the Federation drought of 1890-1902

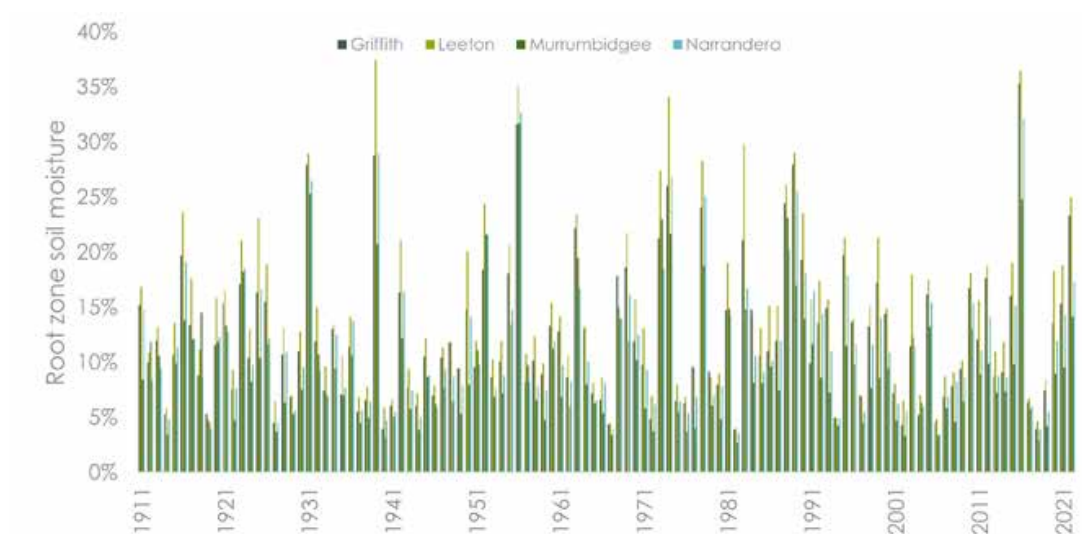


Figure 9 — Soil moisture across LGAs. Major historical droughts align with lower soil moisture levels

The region experiences some years of consistent rainfall, scattered with year-to-year fluctuations. The WWII Drought and Millennium Drought display some of the more protracted periods with notable impacts to soil moisture levels.

A comprehensive synthesis of historic drought climate data specific to the region is included at Appendix A. An analysis of this was undertaken as part of the Resilience Assessment reporting that informs this plan.

A focus on the 2017-2019 drought

During the 2017-2019 period, rainfall for much of Australia, in particular most of the Murray–Darling Basin, was substantially below average. The three years from January 2017 to December 2019 was the driest on record for any 36-month period starting January, when averaged across the Murray-Darling Basin and NSW. Average rainfall for the basin was over 100 millimetres lower than the second driest period (January 1965 to December 1967), and NSW received around 170 millimetres less rainfall than the next driest period, the Federation Drought (1900-1902).

A notable feature of the rainfall deficiencies of these three years is that they were concentrated in the cooler seasons. Both 2018 and 2019 were especially dry. The period was the driest and hottest on record for the basin as a whole. These record warm temperatures exacerbated dry conditions, at times rapidly drying soils in a matter of months. This led to periods in 2017 and 2019 that researchers have termed ‘flash drought’.



Image: Grain storage, Jerilderie

Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan

Future drought

The agricultural industry is a significant economic driver for the region. The high-quality agricultural lands support a long-held sector strength with significant value-add in industries of education and manufacturing. Because of this, it is important to consider the projected impact of future climate changes to better plan for potential increased rainfall uncertainty and its impacts of associated water policy.

The further in advance we plan, build awareness and put in place redundancy measures, the more options we will likely have available to address issues down the track.

Future climate scenarios





According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reporting, under all emissions scenarios considered global surface temperature will continue to increase until at least the mid-century. Increasing temperatures and energy within the climate system are projected to result in widespread changes to weather and climate patterns, including drought and all elements of the water cycle.

The below section presents projections of drought and associated climate conditions which are assessed over two possible future climate scenarios using regional climate model ensembles. Projections are shown across the region using the reference period (1976-2005) and then two timescales 2050 (2036-2065) and 2070 (2056-2085). The IPCC's Representative Concentration Pathways (RCP) 4.5 and 8.5 are used. RCP 4.5 models mean global warming of between two to three degrees Celsius and is the most likely future scenario based on current climate commitments. RCP 8.5 is a mean global warming of four degrees Celsius or more. This is considered a worst-case scenario.

Current climate models do not account for global climate tipping points. This means that the effects of tipping points are typically not included in climate projections and impact assessments. Breaching global climate tipping points represents significant risks on top of the changes typically described in climate assessments. The effects of breaching certain tipping points may include abrupt changes to the El Niño Southern Oscillation, rainfall patterns, and rainfall variability that are not represented in climate model projections, on top of the main consequences of more rapid warming and sea-level rise.

While days above 35°C and Forest Fire Danger Index (FFDI) are not direct indicators of drought, they describe weather conditions that often occur alongside drought or are exacerbated by drought.

Regional drought climate indicators:

-  Generally decreasing trends in annual precipitation across the region, worsening into the far term
-  Reduction in soil moisture levels across all scenarios modelled
-  Increasing temperatures are likely to be the primary driver of increased frequency and severity of evapotranspiration and drought conditions
-  Other climate and weather-driven events like heatwaves and bushfires / grass fire may compound broader impacts from drought events.

Below projections of these indices use an ensemble of CSIRO's Electricity Sector Climate Information (ESCI) datasets (days above 35°C and days above an FFDI of 25).⁵

Griffith City		2050		2070	
Variable	Climate model reference period	RCP4.5	RCP8.5	RCP4.5	RCP8.5
Root soil moisture	15% [#]	↓ 0.019 mm [^]	↓ 0.019 mm [^]	↓ 0.013 mm [^]	↓ 0.026 mm [^]
Annual total precipitation	414 mm	↑ 1 mm	↓ 7 mm	0 mm	↓ 15 mm
Days above 35°C	31	49 ↑ ¹⁸	55 ↑ ²⁴	Data unavailable	
Days with FFDI above 25	53	67 ↑ ¹⁴	74 ↑ ²¹		

Leeton		2050		2070	
Variable	Climate model reference period	RCP4.5	RCP8.5	RCP4.5	RCP8.5
Root soil moisture	16% [#]	↓ 0.023 mm [^]	↓ 0.025 mm [^]	↓ 0.015 mm [^]	↓ 0.031 mm [^]
Annual total precipitation	422 mm	↓ 3 mm	↓ 10 mm	↓ 9 mm	↓ 19 mm
Days above 35°C	30	47 ↑ ¹⁷	53 ↑ ²³	Data unavailable	
Days with FFDI above 25	51	64 ↑ ¹³	71 ↑ ²⁰		

Murrumbidgee		2050		2070	
Variable	Climate model reference period	RCP4.5	RCP8.5	RCP4.5	RCP8.5
Root soil moisture	12% [#]	↓ 0.015 mm [^]	↓ 0.013 mm [^]	↓ 0.007 mm [^]	↓ 0.021 mm [^]
Annual total precipitation	385 mm	↓ 6 mm	↓ 3 mm	↓ 4 mm	↓ 17 mm
Days above 35°C	30	47 ↑ ¹⁷	53 ↑ ²³	Data unavailable	
Days with FFDI above 25	54	68 ↑ ¹⁴	74 ↑ ²⁰		

Narrandera		2050		2070	
Variable	Climate model reference period	RCP4.5	RCP8.5	RCP4.5	RCP8.5
Root soil moisture	14% [#]	↓ 0.019 mm [^]	↓ 0.018 mm [^]	↓ 0.009 mm [^]	↓ 0.023 mm [^]
Annual total precipitation	436 mm	↓ 3 mm	↓ 9 mm	↓ 7 mm	↓ 18 mm
Days above 35°C	30	47 ↑ ¹⁷	53 ↑ ²³	Data unavailable	
Days with FFDI above 25	48	62 ↑ ¹⁴	68 ↑ ²⁰		

[#] Mean water content as a percentage of capacity.

[^] Change (mm/yr) in relative soil water content of the 1976-2005 reference period's relative soil water holding capacity.

5 CSIRO n.d., ESCI Climate Data, Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources. Available at: <https://www.climatechangeinaustralia.gov.au/en/projects/esci/esci-climate-data/>

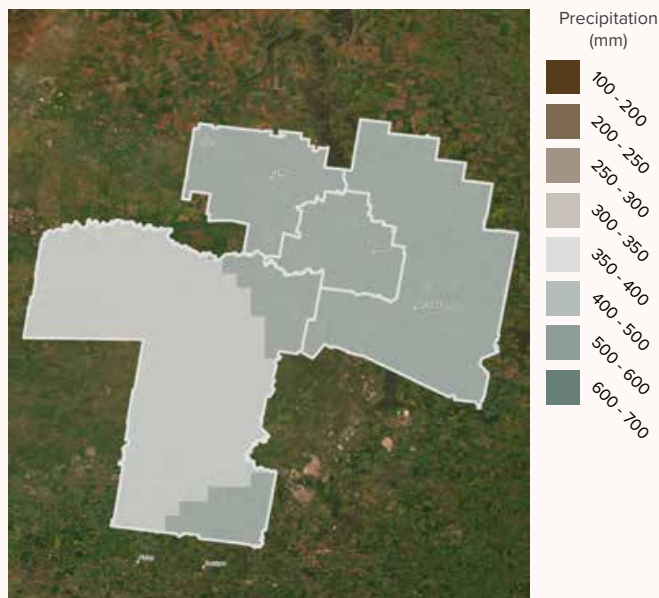
Annual precipitation

Considering the modelled scenarios for precipitation, all see either a minimal change or a reduction in annual total rainfall by 2050. Under the RCP4.5 scenario, this annual reduction lessens in severity in Murrumbidgee and Narrandera by 2070; but, grows in Griffith and Leeton.

Under the RCP8.5 scenario by 2070, the reduction in annual rainfall grows significantly across each LGA over the course of the two decades. This is notable for Murrumbidgee, as it has the lowest rainfall rate in the climate reference period and the most significant reduction from 2050 (-3mm) to 2070 (-17mm) under this scenario (Figure 12).

Figure 12 — Annual precipitation changes across the region.

Climate model reference period



2050 (RCP4.5)



2070 (RCP4.5)



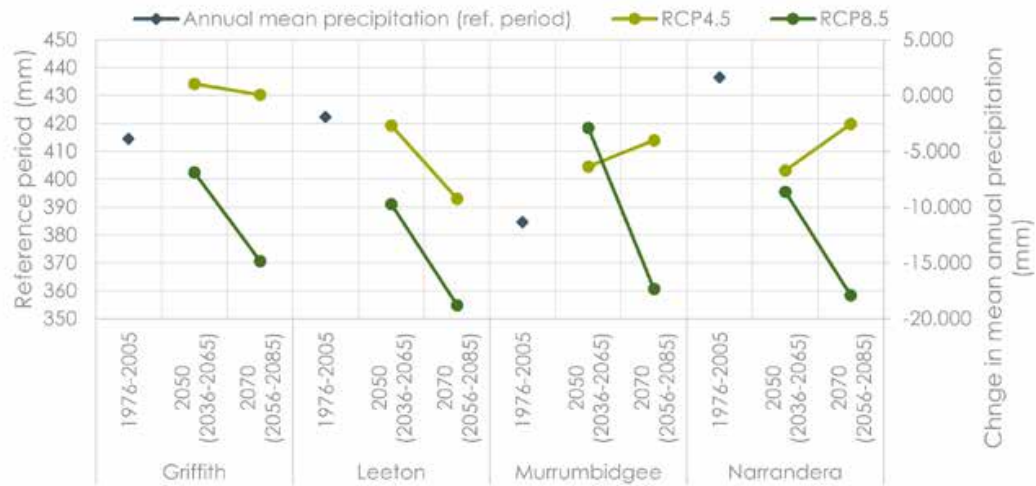
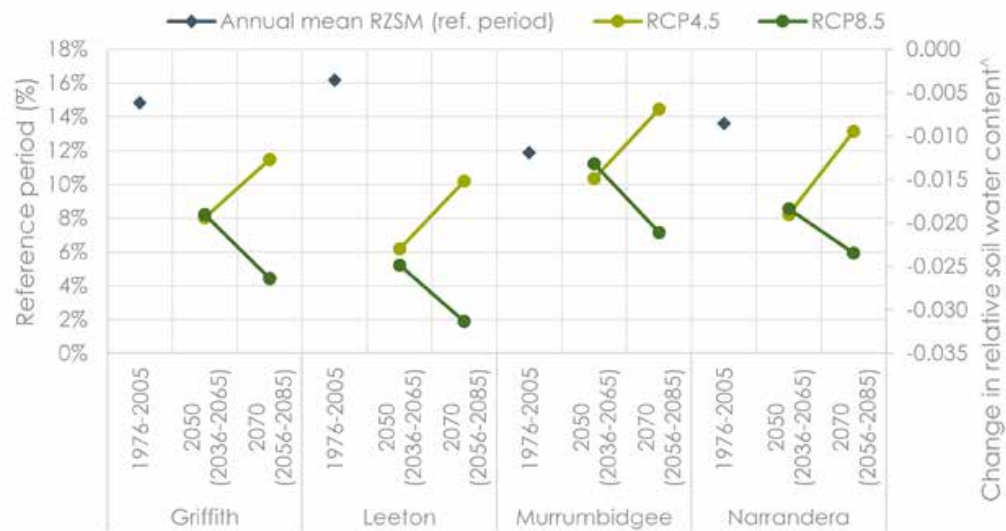


Figure 13 — Annual mean precipitation future climate projections, by LGA

Root zone soil moisture

Root zone soil moisture (RZSM) is presented as a percentage of total capacity during the baseline reference period and as a change of millimetres per year of the climate adjusted scenarios.

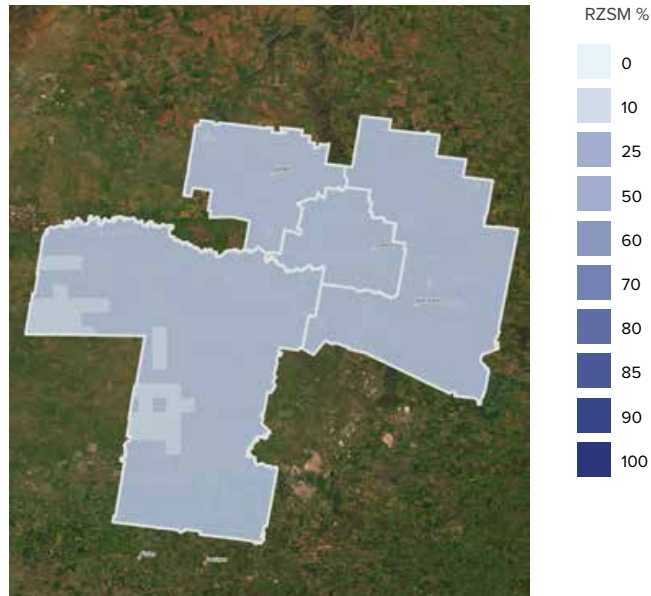


Root zone soil moisture

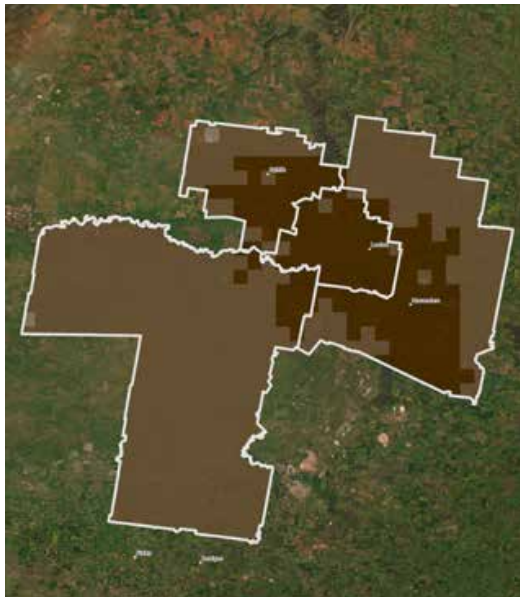
Under all four future scenarios modelled, each is set to see an annual reduction in root zone soil moisture. However, under the RCP4.5 scenarios, the reduction does lessen from 2050 to 2070. Under the RCP8.5 scenarios, the annual reduction increases to 2070 (Figure 14 — Root zone soil moisture future climate projections, by LGA). The reduction, both in 2050 and 2070, is most intense in Griffith and Leeton.

Figure 14 — Root zone soil moisture future climate projections, by LGA

Climate model reference period



2050 (RCP4.5)



2070 (RCP4.5)

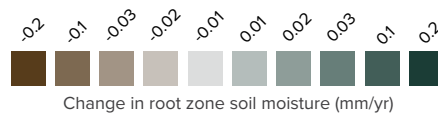
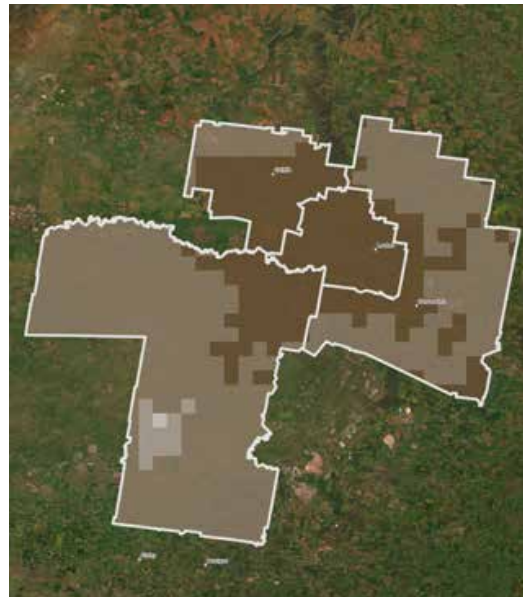


Figure 15 — Annual change in root zone soil moisture

What does the climate data tell us?

The region will continue to be susceptible to the impact of drought which can be protracted events, such as the Millennial drought, or relatively shorter time periods of high intensity.

Climate projections indicate an increase in drought risk, which worsens in the far-term under a higher emissions scenario.

Potential increases in frequency and severity of drought conditions will be largely driven by temperature, evapotranspiration and reduced soil moisture in the Western Riverina region.

Relevance of climate change in the neighbouring Alpine region

In addition to the climate projections for the Western Riverina region, climate change impacts in the Snowy Mountains (Alpine region) must also be considered given the reliance of inflows directed from the Snowy Scheme into the Murrumbidgee catchment. Over time, reduced snowpack, rainfall, changes to landform, erosion and runoff, and increased temperatures in the Snowy Mountains region is likely to have an impact on the Western Riverina.

The water from the Alps which flows through to the Basin and the irrigation schemes is of high significance, supporting ecosystem services of national economic, social and environmental importance. With the water held in high regard now, every gigalitre flowing from the Alps catchment to the Basin is likely to be more important in the future.

Climate projections for the NSW Alpine region indicate continued warming and drying – with winter temperatures increasing by more than 2°C in the far future and spring rainfall projected to decrease by 20 percent in the far future.

Through an increase in temperatures and changes to rainfall patterns, there are subsequent impacts to the quantity of both surface water and groundwater, with some projections showing that, across the Alpine region, there is likely to be a reduction in surface-water run-off in the future.

Climate change threats to the natural condition of the catchments may also impact high quality water delivery from the Alps. This includes water yield, water flow regimes and water quality.

Further investigation is needed to understand how the projected reduction in surface water run-off in the Alpine region, and other influencing processes on water yield and delivery within the Alps, interacts with the run-off generally received through the Murrumbidgee catchment. With the Murrumbidgee and Murray water catchments receiving inflows from the Snowy Scheme under the Snowy Water Licence, future reviews based on building a climate-based understanding will need to be considered.

Clear reliance is evident on the water quantity and quality from the Alpine region to other catchments, importantly the Murrumbidgee catchment, and broader considerations to the contribution it makes to agricultural production and other industries in the Basin.



Image: 'A Country Life' (Brett Collins)

Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan

Trends, stressors and shocks

To support preparedness and planning for drought we must also consider other trends, stressors and acute shocks, beyond the climate, that may amplify drought impacts into the future. These can influence our resilience to different conditions, circumstances and scenarios. It is also important in terms of governance arrangements and strategic priorities to ensure broader actions are cognisant of interaction with drought in our communities.



Economic

- › Water policy and water allocation changes
- › Cost of farming with rising inputs
- › The state of the national economy, commodity prices, market volatility and interest rates
- › Fuel prices and transport costs
- › Positive impacts of strategic road connectivity on market access
- › Major project investment decisions, both private and public
- › Changing farm enterprise ownership models and their scale
- › Energy access
- › Transition to renewable energy sources



People and community

- › Service availability, particularly health and community services
- › Workforce shortages, and worker attraction and retention to regions
- › Demographic shifts in population (ageing population and youth retention)
- › Housing availability and new dwelling supply
- › Costs of living pressures and local discretionary spending
- › Urbanisation and population mobility trends



Environmental

- › Widespread invasive species
- › Feral animal numbers
- › Land use conflicts, particularly on primary production areas
- › Loss of riparian habitat
- › Water management within the Murray-Darling Basin
- › Water infrastructure projects and funding decisions
- › Soil erosion
- › Water licensing arrangements to improve environmental flows
- › Climate change

Western Riverina in Australia's future drought context

At the national level, a consequence of the most recent drought (2017-2019) was increased pressure on Australia's food security. Grain was imported to feed stock and the nation. Similar imports in 2006-7, 2003-4, and 1994-5 correlate to the worst drought related cropping years in recent decades. Since this event in 2019, Australia's population has grown from 25.5 million to 27.2 million, with continued growth projected. This growth adds to the demand on available water and increases the pressures on food insecurity into the future. Any response to drought, particularly within the productive area of the Western Riverina, fits within the context of a strategic view of national food and water security. This would consider the potential scenarios of water availability, as well as the related potential biosecurity risks. Subsequent revisions of the Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan will monitor the development of a national policy response to this trend, and reflect community views to advocate more on this significant issue.

Our drought resilience

Drought resilience can be considered against three macro indicators, each with their own influencing factors. Considering how this plan can address all these factors ensures we can address all aspects of the system.



Economic resilience

Continuity
Employment
Diversity



Environmental resilience

Infrastructure and built assets
Natural processes
Land management



Social resilience

Personal wellbeing
Decision making capacity
Community wellbeing

A snapshot of vulnerability and resilience to drought

The Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences' (ABARES) has developed an index that ranks remote, rural or regional agriculturally dependent communities (at the LGA level) according to their potential to be adversely affected by drought.

The result is a snapshot based on drought exposure and drought sensitivity at the farm level (farm sensitivity), the reliance on employment in agricultural production industries (community sensitivity), the adaptive capacity of a LGA to drought based on economic diversity, and a final combination of the potential drought impact.

The data comprises data variables and indicators which have been combined and ranked. Scores are not necessarily representative of the magnitude of impact, rather it positions the sensitivity with respect to other LGAs assessed. There is a strong link to employment in agricultural production, particularly for community sensitivity which may not be representative of broader community sensitivity detailed throughout this plan.

Community Vulnerability and Resilience to Drought Index (measured from 0 [lowest] to 1 [highest])				
LGA	Farm sensitivity	Community sensitivity	Economic diversity	Potential drought impact
Griffith City	N/A*	0.30	0.53	0.20
Leeton Shire	N/A*	0.27	0.59	0.18
Murrumbidgee	0.76	0.58	0.16	0.90
Narrandera Shire	N/A*	0.32	0.47	0.22

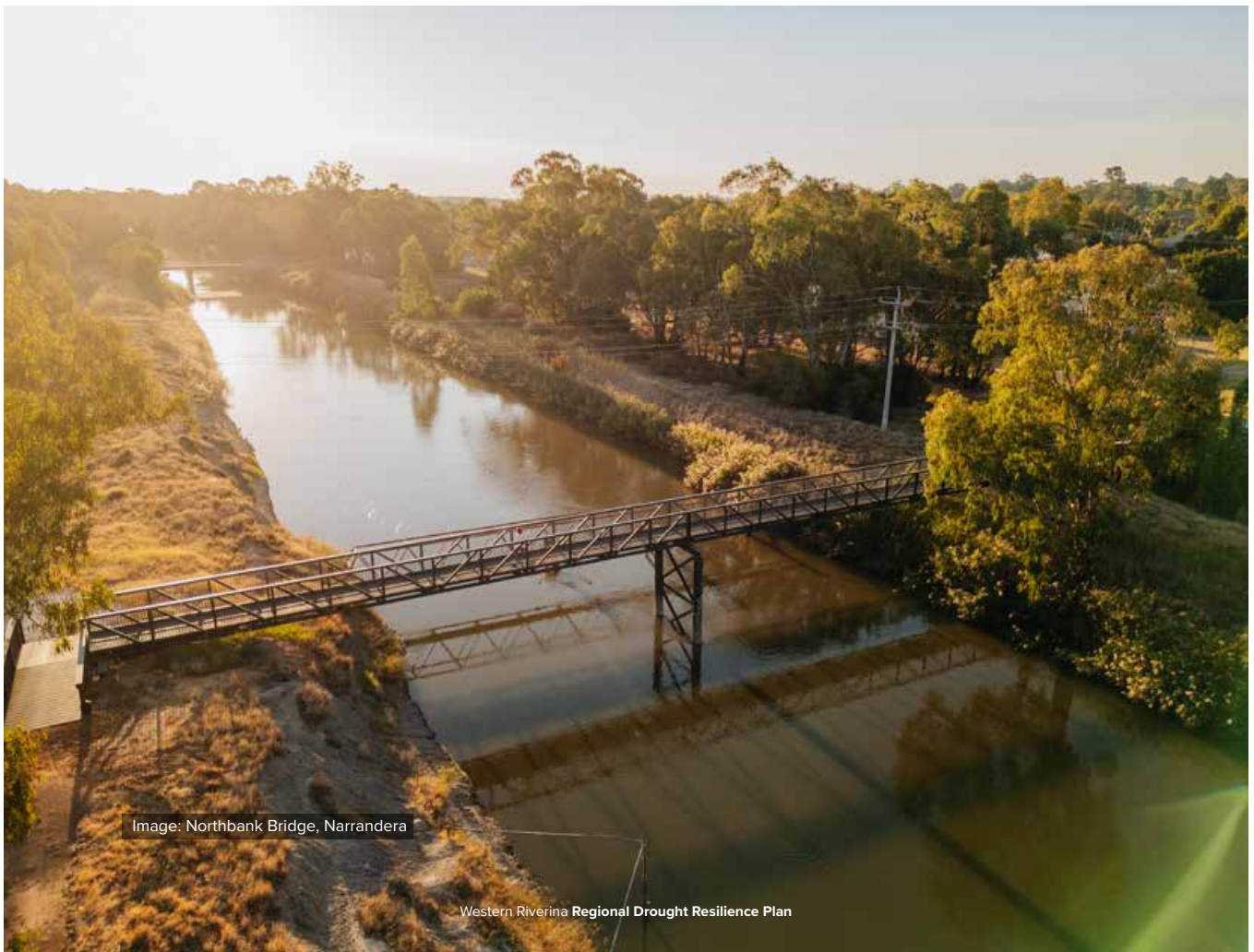
* Insufficient data for broadacre farm samples in the region

The ABARES CVRDI scores indicate for the region:

- Some evidence of farm-based exposure, which is linked to both exposure to climate variability, and the effects that has on farm outcomes
- A low to moderate level of community dependence on agricultural activity in terms of employment
- Some demonstrated economic diversity highlighted by a strong regional centre offer, service industry and economic output
- A low to higher level of overall potential drought impact, particularly in Murrumbidgee noting it has a particularly strong agriculture sector with high value agriculture commodity output (while potential drought impact measures farm sensitivity and community sensitivity, whether there is lasting loss or harm depends on a community's adaptive capacity).

While the region is susceptible to future drought impacts, and this is more apparent for Murrumbidgee compared with other LGAs, its economic diversity supports a level of adaptive capacity in some areas of the region. Levels of community connection and social capital, along with diversified economic development opportunities, offer key opportunities to aid immediate as well as long-term drought resilience. Murrumbidgee's proximity to the regional centres of both Griffith and Albury potentially moderate drought vulnerability scoring through access to employment and services in relative proximity.

The above provides a snapshot of community vulnerability to drought, though a number of limitations are noted. As this plan details, impacts in the Western Riverina extend to broader pressures on water availability, and subsequent impacts to community and economic outputs.



Drought action plan

The drought action plan for Western Riverina incorporates priorities for drought resilience across strategic pathways for action. The action plan provides:

- Details of specific actions against each pathway
- The alignment of the action to an implementation pathway
- Anticipated stakeholders

Timeframes are indicative and are dependent upon opportunities and timing for funding and other variables.

While Council is listed next to a number of actions, this is generally in anticipation of advocating and leading next steps of the action rather than sole responsibility in delivery. Many of these actions are of a scale or fall outside council operations and require funding and resourcing from other levels of government or input from industry.

A program logic approach was used to match the drought resilience needs illuminated by the engagement feedback with pragmatic actions. The degree to which the actions contribute to our movement along the resilience 'theory of change' journey is also detailed. This is about whether the actions 'absorb, adapt or transform' how we collectively prepare for and grow our resilience to drought effects. This scale also helps us to understand the level of effort and the timeframes associated with each action.

Pathways for change

This drought action plan establishes a framework to guide focus and efforts in response to community needs and community strengths highlighted through engagement. The action plan spans six strategic pathways, reflecting the three systems of drought resilience of community, economic, and environmental characteristics. These strategic pathways are:

-  Anticipate water availability
-  Proactively manage business interests
-  Support off-farm diversification
-  Grow local co-operative service provision
-  Support community cohesion
-  Embed environmental stewardship and sustainable agricultural practices

These pathways can be approached at different scales. This can be by different actors and through a range of mechanisms over time from transformative resilience actions at a large scale to proactive resilience actions by individuals and the more formal or common pathways.

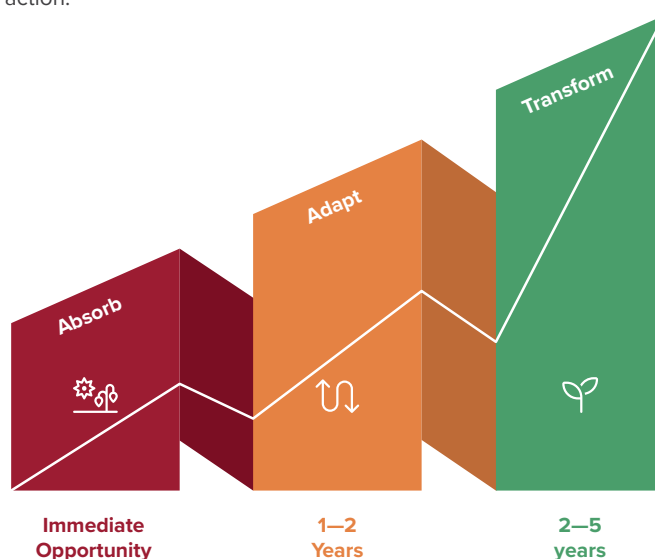


Figure 16 — Resilience theory of change



**Pathway 1 –
Anticipate water availability**

The region's social and economic resilience is inextricably linked to water availability. Reducing the inherent uncertainties of water availability is critical to the ongoing sustainability of the region.

This is particularly the case with the evolution of the water market in NSW, whereby water allocations have been decoupled from land ownership. The ability to trade water unlocks an additional revenue stream for those farmers who hold those allocations, but it also creates challenges for those farmers who have to purchase both land and water allocations. In times of drought, they could be left with a farm (and its associated debt obligation) and having to purchase water temporarily at a high price due to reduced availability.

Key actions under this pathway to build resilience include:

- Increasing collective understanding of water market dynamics – including communicating the risks of temporary allocation purchases
- Improving water allocation forecasting
- Improving access to and awareness of climate forecasts for dryland farmers
- Considered and well-informed planning for water infrastructure programs and management

ID	SPECIFIC ACTION	IMPLEMENTATION PATHWAY	STAKEHOLDER(S)
1.1	Develop an agreed approach for drought fodder management/distribution with improved governance arrangements overseen by a local independent authority (e.g. using Stock Saleyard operations as a model)	Adapt to strengthen preparedness and ensure coordination of processes	Council
1.2	Councils to review town water supply restrictions policies and approaches to providing emergency water supplies, recognising the wellbeing benefits of towns being "green" even during dry times, and include water use efficiency approaches.	Adapt to strengthen preparedness and support common good outcomes	Council
1.3	Undertake an independent assessment of the Lake Coolah development proposal with consideration to multiple objectives including flood mitigation, wetland enhancement and water delivery system efficiency	Transform the long-term economic stability through catalyst projects	Council
1.4	Councils to review stormwater management and town sewerage discharge strategies and approaches to maximise opportunities for reuse of water resources	Adapt to strengthen preparedness through continuous improvements	Council
1.5	Work with International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage Australia and Irrigation Australia to promote the bench marking of irrigation scheme delivery efficiencies, and explore a "5 Star" approach – that will support regional marketing of agricultural products	Adapt to leverage existing strengths	Industry groups
1.6	Deliver continuing education / training program on the operation of water markets, with irrigators as the target audience	Adapt through increased local understanding of the system	Industry groups Irrigators
1.7	Work with the NSW Government to introduce training and programs for primary producers to further develop rainfall and weather intelligence using drought signals / indicators for use in conjunction with soil moisture and other weather data.	Adapt through improved processes to complement planning	Council State Government
1.8	Promote engagement with the One Basin CRC projects delivered through the Griffith Hub, and explore the possibility of a Centre of Irrigation Excellence building upon the existing Irrigation Research and Extension Committee model.	Transform through increased capacity and recognition of local strengths	Council



**Pathway 2 –
Proactively manage
business interests**

Strength of small business is a feature of the region whether it's fuel, cafes, hairdressers, mechanical or the local accountant. While drought generally impacts farmers first, the flow-on effects are felt across towns and communities through business impacts and in-turn, employment and expenditure.

Resilient, diverse and prepared businesses are better positioned to ride the peaks and troughs when they are planned for and anticipated. A range of pressures exist outside of drought times which requires strategic long term planning to address, while more agile initiatives provide interventions during drought, and are effective where planned for in advance. Priority action areas include:

- Support for businesses to adapt and prepare
- Ensuring the region has the right skills, and attracts new skills for confident business growth
- Ensure business has the information they need to operate effectively.

ID	SPECIFIC ACTION	IMPLEMENTATION PATHWAY	STAKEHOLDER(S)
2.1	Investigate the reintroduction of previous Services Australia farm exit program	Adapt to facilitate business transition	Council Services Australia (Federal Government)
2.2	Investigate potential to fund local application (using a co-operative approach) of the NSW Farmers' Federation "Ag Career Start" program	Adapt to strengthen preparedness and build local capacity	Council
2.3	Undertake a more detailed analysis of economic flows / benefits done by ABARES prior to the next drought (taking milling and downstream activities into account)	Adapt to strengthen preparedness through understanding of the system	Council
2.4	Undertake a review across all the local education service provider course and curriculum offerings to meet local agricultural industry and supply chain needs including opportunities for rural cadetships, apprenticeship advisors, and how to increase housing with a link to trade apprenticeships	Transform the long-term economic stability through catalyst projects	Council TAFE NSW Local education providers
2.5	Support small businesses with computer and internet training	Absorb immediate action to support community capacity	Council State Government
2.6	Promote the benefits of "lifestyle" driving the purpose of business / financial / succession planning, and promote the benefits and delivery of business plans e.g. for improved access to capital	Adapt to strengthen preparedness	Council
2.7	Promote drought assistance programs or financial subsidy programs to "supply chain" businesses when they are impacted by agricultural clients who are impacted by drought	Adapt to support endurance during drought	Council Business owners and operators
2.8	Engage a project officer to help local businesses (small to large) develop their own drought resilience plan - and facilitate access to grant funding from various agencies	Adapt to strengthen preparedness	Business owners and operators Council
2.9	Provide training to local providers on responding to tenders	Absorb immediate action to support local capacity	Council
2.10	Provide local support to Services NSW / Concierge service to provide opportunities for workers displaced by drought to get other local short-term work	Adapt to strengthen preparedness and mobilise workforce supply	Council State Government
2.11	Promote the need to broaden the rules for "backpacker" workers to attract more workers for agricultural related industries	Transform the long-term economic stability through catalyst projects and ensure workforce supply	Federal Government
2.12	Promote opportunities in alternate industries that suit available soils, water and climatic conditions.	Transform the long-term economic stability through catalyst projects	Council State Government
2.13	Review / update regional economic development strategies to include promotion of non-water based industries, agricultural industries that align with available soils and water, and others that take advantage of available products	Transform the long-term economic stability through catalyst projects and diversification of economy	Council State Government
2.14	Undertake regional internet/phone service audit for digital access, along with an energy access audit and advocate for improved connectivity	Absorb immediate action to inform advocacy of key barriers	Council
2.15	Advocate for improved consistency in funding for the Rural Financial Counselling Service to support local business operators to take proactive steps toward enhanced drought resilience	Absorb immediate action to provide continuity of services	Council
2.16	Develop a "Generation Ag Link" program modelled on the CSIRO program "Generation STEM Link"	Adapt to strengthen preparedness by building capacity and local industry understanding	Industry groups



**Pathway 3 –
Support off-farm
diversification**

The region boasts many economic development opportunities which over time will offer varied income and productivity opportunities. Some of these opportunities are truly transformative and offer long term prospects for change, growth and stability. As an agriculturally based economy, there is benefit in:

- › Leveraging existing tourism assets as a major economic pillar
- › Building the financial strength of all businesses regardless of sector or scale
- › Diversifying the regional economy through manufacturing and value adding agriculture
- › Keeping our towns active and attractive.

ID	SPECIFIC ACTION	IMPLEMENTATION PATHWAY	STAKEHOLDER(S)
3.1	Councils to have a strategy for future land release and development, potentially adopting a "cooperative model" approach	Absorb immediate action to identify site potential	Council
3.2	Build on the Regional Arts Development Program - Regional Cultural Tourism report	Absorb immediate action to build existing work foundations	Regional Arts Network Council
3.3	Advocate for public service remote area benefits to attract and retain critical services and workforce	Transform the long-term economic stability through continuity of services	Council
3.4	Develop an Ag Industry focussed "Job Keeper" type program (taking principles from the Farm Household Allowance program delivered by Services Australia) for application during drought.	Transform the long-term economic stability through continuity of operations	Industry groups State Government
3.5	Promote agritourism and a viable diversification strategy	Adapt to strengthen preparedness through economic diversification	Council Tourism organisations
3.6	Promote value added manufacturing for existing and emerging agricultural commodities, such as almonds, grapes, citrus, sugar plum etc	Adapt to strengthen preparedness through economic diversification	Industry groups
3.7	Investigate a Geographic Indicator designation that would support sustainability accreditation for the Western Riverina agricultural industries	Adapt to leverage existing strengths	Industry groups
3.8	Develop public works / maintenance program of works e.g. town revitalisation, roadside clean-up / maintenance, farm clean outs to be done during drought	Adapt to inform preparedness through ready made actions with impact	Council
3.9	Schedule training during "down time" to upskill people in the agricultural industry	Adapt to strengthen preparedness	Farm business owners and operators
3.10	Outside of drought, promote availability of water in towns as an opportunity for new businesses – include in Economic Development strategies	Adapt to strengthen preparedness through economic diversification	Council
3.11	Promote National and State support for regionalisation strategies such as the Regional Development Australia "Country Change Riverina and Murray" strategy (to encourage movement from cities to regional areas)	Transform the long-term economic stability through continuity of services	Federal Government State Government
3.12	Facilitate affordable housing, fast track land development, explore community cooperative approach and private / public partnerships with Council	Transform the long-term economic stability through catalyst projects	Council State Government
3.13	Upskill and build capability of local providers in diverse business areas to allow them to compete in the tender and procurement process during drought that support broader business offers.	Adapt to strengthen preparedness through economic diversification	Council



**Pathway 4 –
Grow local co-operative
service provision**

The co-operative model of business and service provision in this region is truly unique. It is not found in many other parts of Australia at such a significant scale and could support the region's long-term resilience and prosperity. It is borne from a generational legacy of the collaboration needed to operate and maintain the complex irrigation schemes that thread through the landscape. Without co-operation, in this landscape, water availability would not exist.

Expanding this co-operative model beyond its irrigation roots is already evident, with pubs and rice mills already emerging to trade using this model of ownership and operation. Extending this model further into retail, grocery, aged care, and possibly even housing is arguably not too much of a stretch to achieve.

This pathway seeks to focus on this demonstrated strength of collaboration and cooperation in Western Riverina communities. This builds on these existing tangibles and non-tangible cultural assets to maintain baseline service provision for key sectors, and support social and community fabric and morale during drought times through enabling mechanisms that drive locally cooperative outcomes.

ID	SPECIFIC ACTION	IMPLEMENTATION PATHWAY	STAKEHOLDER(S)
4.1	Establish ongoing "Wellbeing Hubs" connecting community organisations to landholders, business and the community and develop action plans for priorities of each hub	Transform into the long term supporting continuity of services and community network capacity	Community organisations Council
4.2	Develop cooperative structure models for a range of situations along with guidelines to encourage people and corporations to co-invest in community services	Transform into the long-term supporting continuity of services and community network capacity	Community organisations
4.3	Promote programs, financial planning advice and funding available from providers including Services Australia	Adapt to broaden clarity and uptake of programs	Services Australia Council
4.4	Councils to consider the provision of more 'drop in' style community services to support locals especially in drought when costs can prohibit travel	Absorb to strengthen local access to support	Council
4.5	Link community-based investment in local infrastructure (e.g. ongoing social activities) with LGA programs including for social connectivity and for places of refuge linked to floods / bushfires etc.	Adapt immediate actions to support ongoing preparedness	Council
4.6	Undertake an audit of Council roads to identify priorities for an "Infrastructure Betterment" program to make access to farms more resilient to droughts, floods and other events	Adapt to direct future funding and support movement networks	Council Landowners



Pathway 5 – Support community cohesion

Cohesive and connected communities are a key ingredient to support drought resilience. Drought, as opposed to other hazards, can divide communities through isolation. Strong community connections are therefore critical in ensuring community care and wellbeing, looking out for mates and providing mutual relief.

This was a clear priority identified by the community through the plan engagement process. Community connection, participation and identity are already strengths of the Western Riverina and need to be maintained and bolstered.

This pathway seeks to build on the existing community strength of the Western Riverina region to support cohesiveness of the social fabric and morale during drought times by:

- › Supporting strong social cohesion
- › Attracting and retaining social and cultural events
- › Maintaining an inclusive community.

ID	SPECIFIC ACTION	IMPLEMENTATION PATHWAY	STAKEHOLDER(S)
5.1	Include delivery of hard copy documents to households in communications strategies (where requested)	Absorb immediate action support accessibility	Council State Government
5.2	Advocate for additional subsidies during drought for youth sport and support similar initiatives such as "Active Farmers"	Adapt to utilise existing initiatives and programs	Council
5.3	Councils and community groups to drive / facilitate / promote volunteerism and develop a steering committee (or similar) to direct volunteer deployment in times of drought	Adapt to strengthen preparedness and capability to respond	Council Community groups
5.4	Develop written and visual history of the region (providing a way for intergenerational involvement and connection)	Transform into the long term through retaining regional identity	Council
5.5	Develop a list of groups and associations seeking volunteers, based on examples such as SES community actions teams – link to "Community Hub" Actions	Adapt to strengthen preparedness and capability to respond	Community groups
5.6	Council to promote and deliver free "Big Social" events	Adapt to strengthen preparedness and support role of community networks	Council Community organisation
5.7	Support existing and promote new "Food Festival" programs to show case locally grown products – invite celebrity chefs	Adapt the long-term economic stability through catalyst projects	Council Destination groups
5.8	Develop a local "Drought Self Help" kit (similar to Red Cross kit)	Adapt to strengthen preparedness	Council
5.9	Build on and expand the "Teach the Teachers" program relating to agricultural production and experiences of living in rural communities	Adapt to strengthen preparedness and connection to the region	Council Industry groups Schools
5.10	Support excursions from city schools to the region and continue to support "Boys to the Bush" program	Adapt to strengthen preparedness build understanding across region to urban areas	Council Community organisations Department of Education
5.11	Explore opportunities for mentor programs for both men and women, and promote existing programs focused on rural leadership and change makers	Adapt through capacity building of locals	Council Community organisations
5.12	Support delivery of drought resilience programs within schools	Absorb immediate action to strengthen preparedness	Schools
5.13	Continue to invest in the maintenance and enhancement of community facilities to support community cohesion during times of drought	Absorb immediate action to strengthen preparedness	Council
5.14	Work with Indigenous groups to "co-solve" water issues	Transform the long-term economic stability through catalyst projects	Council First Nations groups



**Pathway 6 –
Embed environmental
stewardship and
sustainable agricultural
practices**

The health of the landscape is integral to our economic and community wellbeing. Retaining soil moisture in the landscape and topsoil retention are clear drought impact reduction pursuits. Pest and weed management offer further opportunities to stem landscape degradation.

Areas for action include supporting land management and maintaining and enhancing biosecurity.

ID	SPECIFIC ACTION	IMPLEMENTATION PATHWAY	STAKEHOLDER(S)
6.1	Promote and support Landcare in providing opportunities for landholders to demonstrate the benefits derived from their business and land practices (including use of photo diaries)	Adapt to support resilient landscapes	Landcare
6.2	Support Landcare and associated programs and advocate for continuity of funding on programs that focus on climate ready revegetation and improving native seed supply	Adapt to support resilient landscapes	Landcare
6.3	Promote a policy for fixed riparian zone / corridors for reconstruction and restoration	Adapt the long-term economic stability through catalyst projects	Council
6.4	Support actions for on-going carp management within the region's waterways	Absorb immediate actions to support ongoing efforts	State government agencies
6.5	Advocate for and ensure understanding of the impacts of future reviews of the Snowy Water Licence	Adapt into long-term to maintain economic stability	Council Industry groups
6.6	Link Landcare with Regional Services Australia to identify funding opportunities for involvement in farm management professional development opportunities	Adapt the long-term economic stability through catalyst projects	Landcare
6.7	Promote the landscape and production benefits of sustainable and restorative agricultural practices and focus on driving buy-in through initiatives such as mapping of land use capability.	Adapt to support resilient landscapes	Industry groups Landcare
6.8	Work with First Nations peoples to bring First Nations ecological practice back to Country	Transform through actions building partnerships and resilient landscapes	First Nations groups
6.9	Support the establishment of Landcare groups across each of the council areas	Adapt to support resilient landscapes	Council Landcare
6.10	Develop a program to focus on improvements to road side revegetation for connected corridors	Adapt to support resilient landscapes	Council

Implementation


The Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan relies on collaborative implementation approaches involving a range of stakeholders.


The action plan for drought resilience spans the drought cycle and its interaction with the community, that is before, during and recovery from drought. The actions to implement cover levels of government, community and industry groups, service providers, not-for-profits, landowners, and local communities with actions that have effect at different points of the drought cycle. This includes short, medium and long term opportunities, and interventions that are strategic by strengthening preparedness or are agile and ready to be implemented when enduring drought.


Pathways implementation


The purpose of the action plan is to inform future drought funding and ongoing preparedness across the region. Stakeholders work together regionally to build drought resilience in the economy, environment and our communities, proactively and pragmatically.


The action plan has been drawn together through community expression, existing initiatives and background data. In developing this action plan, it is noted that:

 actions are purposefully listed with multiple stakeholders, and unspecified timeframes or funding to acknowledge that delivery is dependent on a range of variables

 implementation will occur through participation of all stakeholders over time as priorities, resources and funding arise

 as a regional plan, the actions are collective and collaborative

 roles and responsibilities are flexible, including for local governments. The plan is owned by the region. Any stakeholder can start an action that is within their capacity

 some actions are indeed underway by various stakeholders, the purpose of maintaining them in the action plan, is that the community has advised that the action is integral to drought resilience.

Stakeholder roles in implementation

DESCRIPTION
An advocate actively supports a position, action or policy. The task is outside the advocate's jurisdiction, capacity or resourcing and advocacy is required to engage with those parties with capacity to deliver. For example, telecommunications advocacy.
A partner joins others in a common cause or action where roles and responsibilities are shared across areas of expertise. Each partner brings an element to the action for joint delivery. For example, region-wide strategic initiatives.
A lead is in control of an action. The action may still involve partners or other roles, but the action is reliant upon a lead party due to their technical or other expertise. E.g. Health or counselling matters
An owner is the only party that can undertake or permit the action. E.g. local government as public asset owners
A supporter is united with others in the need or benefits of the action but potentially does not have a major role. The action is led or owned by others. E.g. A supporter may provide assistance in kind, technical advice or donations to action leaders
A stakeholder is anyone who has an interest in the project, program or action. Stakeholders will have varying degrees of involvement from owner to advocate and all points between.
A deliverer is responsible for implementation and outcomes of an action or funded program. e.g. Community agency delivering social aid programs.
A funder provides the funding arrangements. The party is not involved with scoping, executing or delivering the program but may require some outcome reporting or evidence. e.g. the government grant funding for a pest control program delivered by others.

Governance structure

Implementation of the regional drought resilience plan is to be driven by a collaborative and multi-disciplined drought resilience project control group (PCG). Membership will be broadened to provide an integrated and coordinated approach to drought resilience efforts.

This will enable the PCG to adopt agile approaches and shift priorities as needed depending on changing circumstances, and as opportunities arise. Despite this, all actions remain relevant in terms of maximising funding opportunities. This also allows expertise across the strategic pathways, and for partnerships to evolve as funding and priorities arise

A Chair of the PCG will be selected.

A PCG Terms of Reference is to be prepared for its membership to guide its function. The Terms of Reference could include:

- Role and purpose and connection to the RDRP
- Stakeholder and membership lists
- Meeting arrangements, (potentially quarterly) and responsibilities of attendees
- The circumstances of a quorum and decision making protocols
- The election or rotation of a chair person
- An action plan for the first 60 days or 12 months including delivery of the priority actions with the implementation funding; and
- A process for reflection and nominating next priority actions.

A Memorandum of Understanding may also be required.

PCG meetings should be held in different localities across the region over time.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning framework

The drought action plan incorporates a large suite of projects and actions, some offer immediate opportunity, some are medium-term items and others are longer-term transformational opportunities. Not all actions can be focused on or delivered at once. The 'absorb, adapt, transform' framework will guide the PCG in terms of its implementation and coordination of activities and funding pursuits, and will enable a flexible and agile approach as drought conditions change, guiding the focus.

Other stakeholders are able to use the plan to support funding and grant applications at any time, as desired. Opportunities for collaborative delivery partnerships, where two stakeholders may wish to provide similar projects, should be explored

This system will:

- Provide regular opportunities to define when conditions are changing locally; and
- Catalyse a change in focus to respond to the needs of the changing conditions.

This ensures a level of agility is adopted with regard to the implementation approach. Local governments may wish to apply more objective targets for immediate actions or further incorporate the outcomes of this plan into the local government reporting framework to ensure delivery.

As immediate efforts in response to the action plan are delivered, broader efforts across collaborators is guided in its approach, underpinned by this plan which enables stakeholders to work towards and contribute to regional drought resilience outcomes, including those at the local and property level.

The drought resilience action plan also requires that a 'lessons learned' posture is adopted, ensuring new information, knowledge, approaches and science is rolled into implementation delivery as a guiding principle. This will mean that over time, the drought resilience action plan may be adapted to reflect new learnings and the adjustment of intervention pathways as required. The PCG is responsible to conduct an annual lessons learned review, with changes to inform action moving forward.

The drought resilience action plan has been thoughtfully designed to not only guide collective effort and action but to enable adaptation through ongoing monitoring, evaluation and learning.

The Regional Drought Resilience Plan is a 10-year plan, to be reviewed after five years.

An annual monitoring program to inform adaptive learning is outlined below. Addendums to this plan can be made, to reflect these learnings over time and ensure the document maintains pace with changing circumstances and maturation of drought preparedness activities.

Tracking progress and reporting

Action-based project tracking against the drought resilience action plan, the principles and objectives of the plan should be undertaken on an annual basis. This tracking and reporting shall be the responsibility of the implementation PCG chair, unless otherwise delegated. Likewise, an annual evaluation process will be conducted by the PCG, guided by the evaluation questions that follow.



Key evaluation questions

These key evaluation questions are high level questions designed to frame the analysis of progress and performance of the Western Riverina Regional Drought Resilience Plan against the above framework. These key evaluation questions may help to structure annual tracking and reporting.

PROPERTY	EVALUATION
Effectiveness and Outcomes	What have been the outcomes (intended, unintended, positive and negative) of the plan implementation process and progress?
	To what extent has progress contributed to or furthered the principles and objectives of the regional drought resilience plan?
	Has the plan been used for or otherwise supported successful funding and grant applications?
	To what extent have stakeholders outside the PCG responded to the plan's content?
	Have any barriers or challenges been identified throughout the implementation of plan, and what solutions to address these have been identified?
Drought resilience maturation	<p>To what extent has efforts in implementing the plan contributed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Creating stronger connectedness and greater social capital within communities, contributing to well-being and security? > Empowering communities and businesses to implement activities that improve their resilience to drought? > Supporting more primary producers and land managers to adopt whole-of-system approaches to natural resource management to improve the natural resource base, for long-term productivity and landscape health?
Stakeholder engagement	In what ways are the PCG and other stakeholders collaborating and collectively contributing to efforts outlined by the action plan?
	In what ways has the plan provided inclusive involvement across sectors, disciplines and communities?
	In what ways has the plan been able to support individual stakeholder goals, objectives and aspirations with regard to drought resilience?

The reporting may be undertaken using a range of tools to capture experiences and perspectives from across the PCG, allied stakeholders as well as the communities of Griffith City, Leeton Shire, Murrumbidgee and Narrandera Shire more broadly. These tools may include:

- > Meetings and event data capture
- > Targeted meeting / interviews with stakeholders
- > Survey data
- > Case studies and data from the PCG
- > Media, including social media; and
- > Funding and grant applications.

Achieving the plan's outcomes

A further opportunity for the PCG to measure the contribution to or achievement of the plan's outcomes is by using local data to assess specific outcomes. The data sources or indicators will need to be selected by the PCG and can provide insights as to how the plan is tracking against the resilience theory of change. Outcomes include (but are not limited to):

STRATEGIC PATHWAYS	OUTCOMES
Anticipate water availability	1 Community infrastructure is resilient and helps to reduce disruptions
	2 Capacity to make informed decisions through local knowledge, access to data, intelligence and innovate tools is increased
Proactively manage business interests	3 Agricultural productivity in the region is sustained
	4 Increased capacity to meet local procurement demands and local employment
Support off-farm diversification	5 Employment loss is avoided or minimised, ensuring livelihood are maintained
	6 Reduced decline of gross regional product relative to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Non-drought periods > Previous drought periods > Other regions in NSW, Victoria and South Australia
Grow local co-operative service provision	7 Community partnerships are strengthened through program delivery
	8 Services are retained in the region, and offered in local centres
Support community cohesion	9 Capacity and capability of community groups is strengthened
	10 Mental health services are available and are accessible
Embed environmental stewardship and sustainable agricultural practices	11 Environmental degradation of landscapes and waterways is reduced throughout and emerging from drought
	12 Increase in activities relating to environmental restoration

Learning

Regular (annual) monitoring provides the ability for reflection and learning. The progress tracking and reporting methodology, using key evaluation questions, will present specific insights in terms of those opportunities to build in 'lessons learned' through engagement across stakeholders with a role in drought resilience. These lessons should, on an annual basis, be contemplated with regard to the drought action plan to determine any relevant updates, new insights, intelligence and technologies that can be integrated to ensure the action plan keeps pace with a growing drought resilience maturation across systems and sectors.

This process will ensure the action plan remains a 'live document' that appropriately supports and services the needs of all stakeholders and importantly, those of the Western Riverina communities in preparation for, endurance of, and recovery from drought.

Concepts to guide adaptive learning as part of plan implementation are included at Appendix B. These items will help navigate maturation of this plan over time.

Appendix A — Drought history

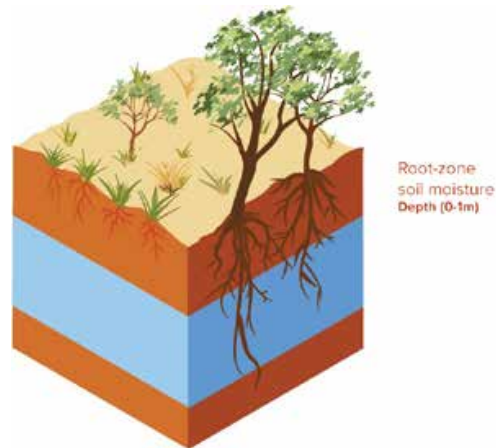
Precipitation and root zone soil moisture are considered as indicators of drought according to the Bureau of Meteorology's Australian Water Resources Assessment Landscape (AWRA-L) service. Root zone soil moisture is a calculation of the upper and lower soil layers in the AWRA-L, which represents the water-holding capacity of the top one metre of soil. Root zone soil moisture and precipitation rates are each useful indicators of future drought potential.

Locally, some of the most impactful periods of drought include the late 1910s, the World War II drought, 1967, 1982 to 1983, 2006 and the 2017-2019 drought.

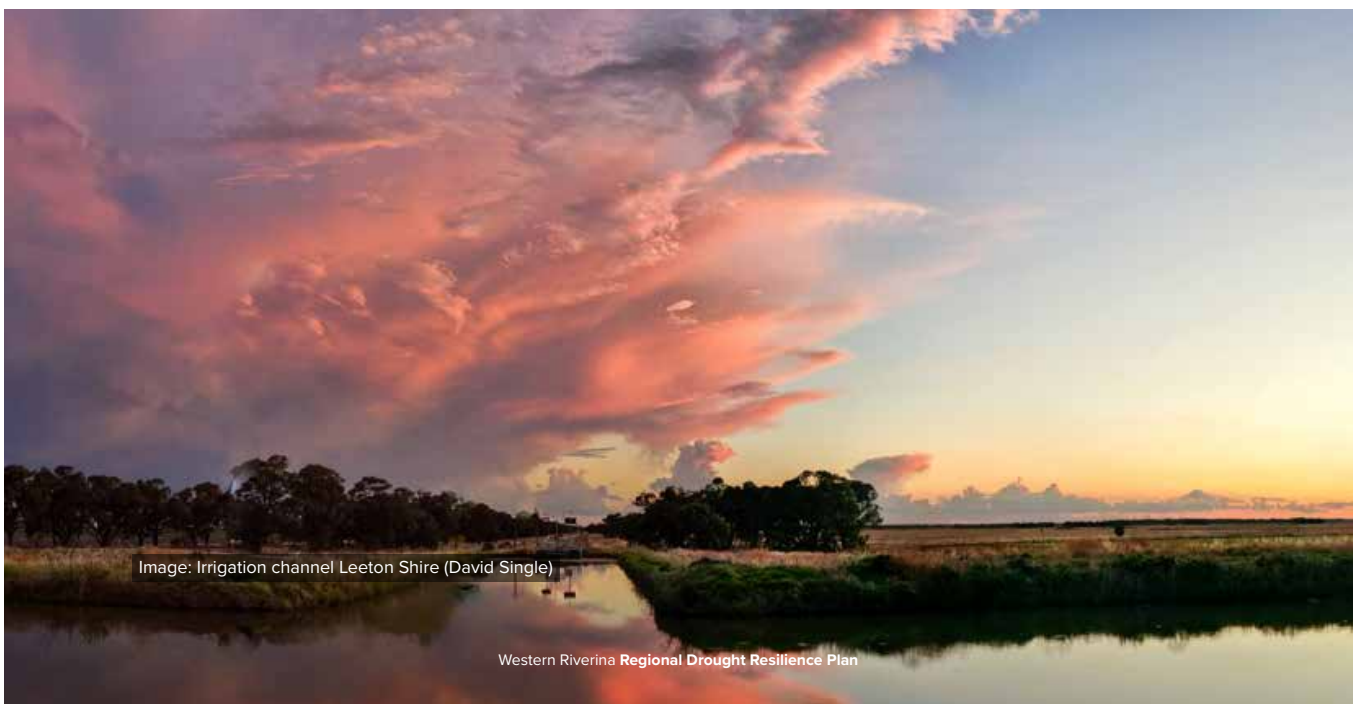
Some of the continent's most impactful droughts in recent recorded history have affected the region. Here, we consider the significant drought periods identified by the Bureau of Meteorology:

- > 1914 to 1915
- > 1937 to 1945 (World War II drought)
- > 1965 to 1968
- > 1982 to 1983
- > 1997 to 2009 (Millennium drought)
- > 2017 to 2019

Below, we consider these droughts and the changes in conditions against a present-day baseline of 2002 to 2022*.



(Source BoM, 2024)



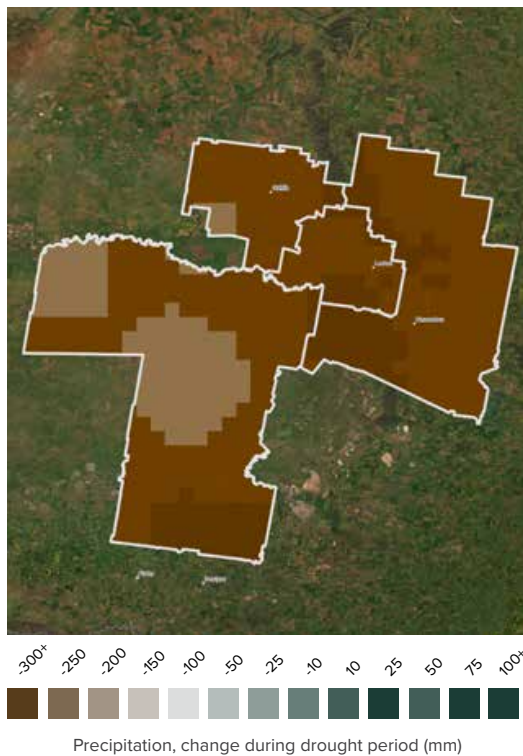
1914-1915

Nationally, this drought was short but notable, primarily due to the failure of national wheat crop. This drought was driven by a strong El Nino, with drought conditions first becoming evident in 1914. Rains improved in 1916 but began to decrease again over the subsequent years (1918 and 1919).



Figure 17 — Yearly precipitation (absolute), by LGA (1910 to 1918)

Precipitation (mm)



Soil moisture (mm/yr)



Figure 18 — Changes in conditions during drought against a present-day baseline of 2002 to 2022

1937 to 1945 (World War II drought)

This drought period was characterised by several breaks (1939 and 1942-1943), but significant periods of dryness. Rainfall rates were lower in 1937-1938 and 1940-1941. For the Western Riverina, 1940 was the most notable year, with extremely low rainfall totals across the entire region.

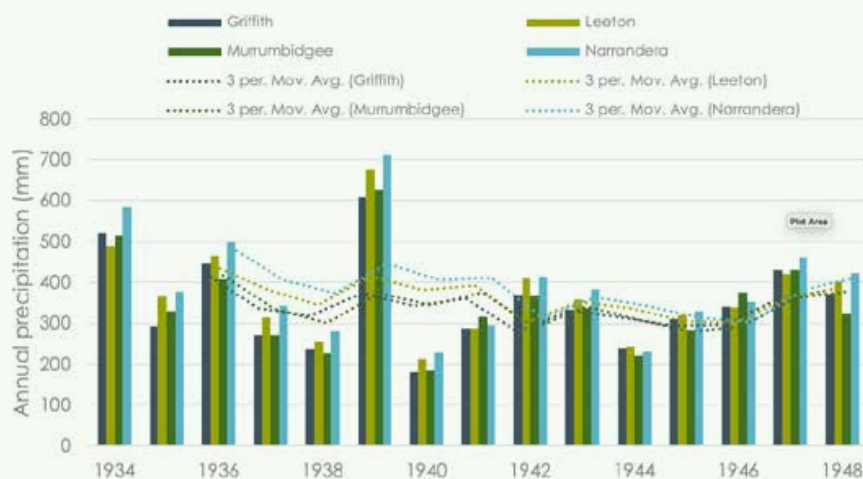
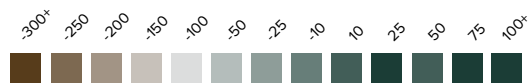


Figure 19 — Yearly precipitation (absolute), by LGA (1934 to 1948)

Precipitation (mm)



Precipitation, change during drought period (mm)

Soil moisture (mm/yr)



Historical change, root zone soil moisture (mm/year)

Figure 20 — Changes in conditions during drought against a present-day baseline of 2002 to 2022

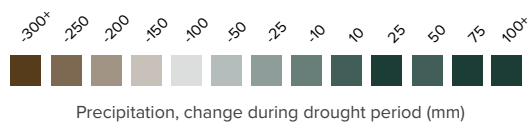
1965 to 1968

The 1960s was generally dry across the continent. Drought developed in 1964 in northern New South Wales and had extended across most of the country by the following year. This was evident across the region, with lower rates of rainfall and soil moisture across much of the region. 1967 was the most severe year, with annual rainfall rates across each LGA below 200 mm.



Figure 21: Yearly precipitation (absolute), by LGA (1962 to 1971)

Precipitation (mm)



Soil moisture (mm/yr)

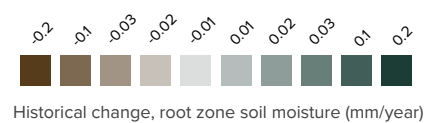
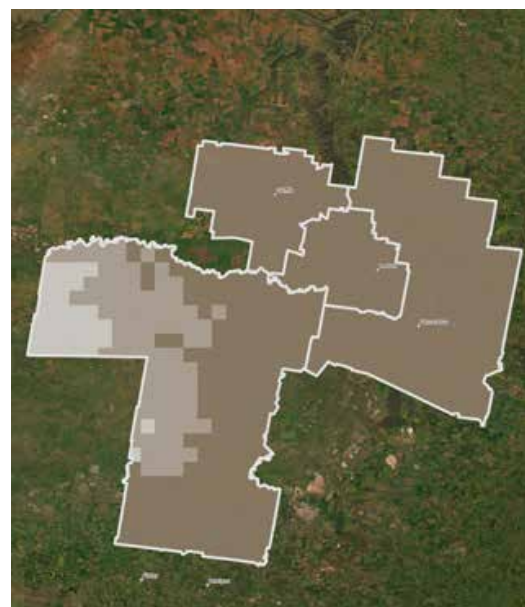


Figure 22: Changes in conditions during drought against a present-day baseline of 2002 to 2022

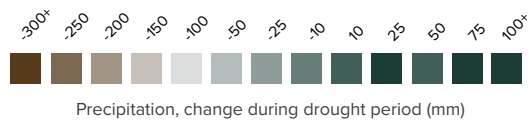
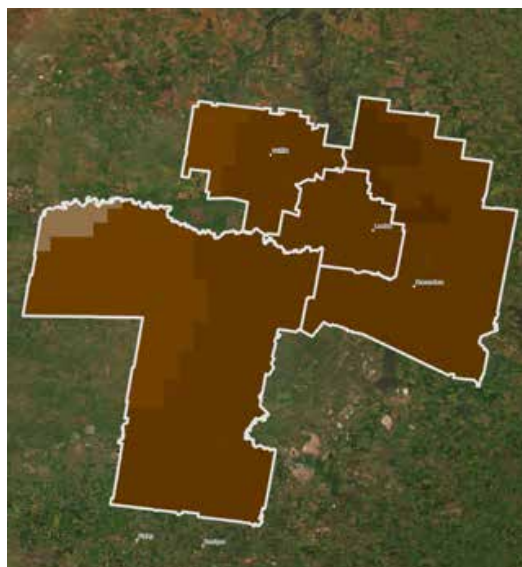
1982-1983

Despite being only one year long this was one of Australia's most severe droughts in the 20th century. A very strong El Nino led to these drought conditions. The region experienced widespread dryness.



Figure 23: Yearly precipitation (absolute), by LGA (1979 to 1986)

Precipitation (mm)



Soil moisture (mm/yr)

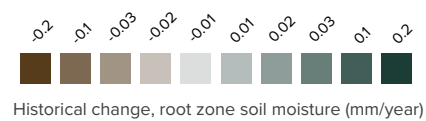


Figure 24 — Changes in conditions during drought against a present-day baseline of 2002 to 2022

1997 – 2009 (Millennium drought)

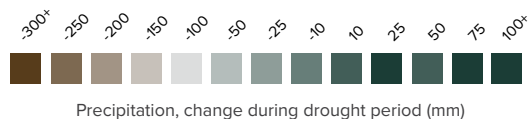
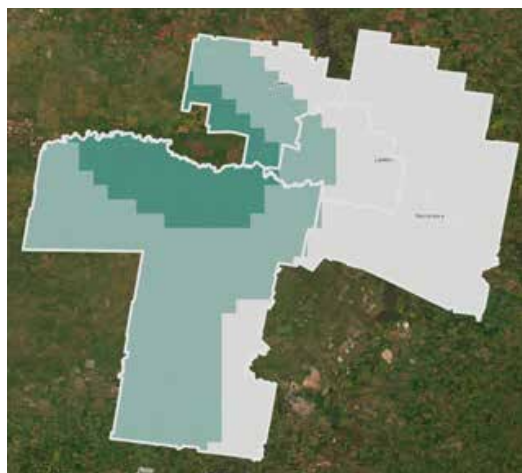
The Millennium drought was a long-lasting period of dryness, most severe in densely populated areas of the south-east and south-west of the country. For the Western Riverina region, the beginning of this period was relatively unimpactful, as from lower levels in 1997, based on rainfall and soil moisture figures. It is not until 2001 when there is a dry spell into 2005, and then a severe dry year in 2006.

Editor's note: The maps below show significant rainfall and higher soil moisture over this period, despite it being identified as a drought. This discrepancy is likely due to the reference period used to produce these maps (2002 – 2022) and that there was significant dryness in the latter half of that period. This result is then compounded by the short-lasting periods of rainfall decline during this long drought period (1997 – 2009). Therefore, leading to the appearance of increased rainfall and soil moisture compared to the reference period.



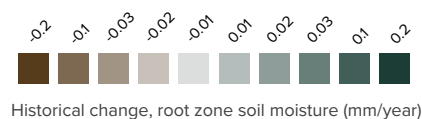
Figure 25: Yearly precipitation (absolute), by LGA (1994 to 2012)

Precipitation (mm)



Precipitation, change during drought period (mm)

Soil moisture (mm/yr)



Historical change, root zone soil moisture (mm/year)

Figure 26: Changes in conditions during drought against a present-day baseline of 2002 to 2022

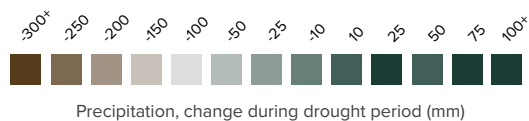
2017-2019

Following a wet 2016, dry conditions returned in 2017 across south and eastern Australia. This was a sustained multi-year period of dryness, unprecedented in recorded history. A strong Indian Ocean Dipole was a significant contributor to dry conditions the second half of 2019, leading into significant 2019/2020 bushfire season. The region was similar affected during this period, with widespread low rainfall and low soil moisture.



Figure 27 — Yearly precipitation (absolute), by LGA (2014 to 2022)

Precipitation (mm)



Soil moisture (mm/yr)

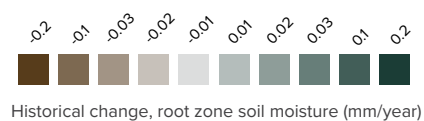
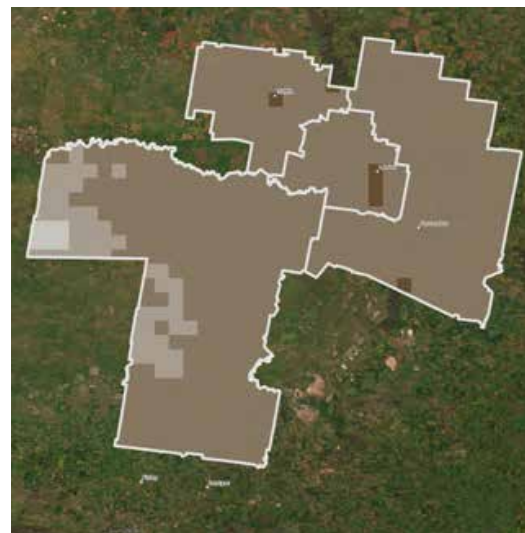


Figure 28 — Changes in conditions during drought against a present-day baseline of 2002 to 2022

Appendix B – Concepts to guide adaptive learning

As part of learning processes through the implementation, this appendix provides key considerations to guide further iterations and amendments to this RDRP. As drought resilience processes mature, the ability for further robust adaptation pathways to be implemented will emerge.

The table below captures specific items identified for integration as part of future plan iterations.

NO.	ASPECT OF CONSIDERATION
Expansion of drought resilience relative to diverse stakeholder groups	
1	<p>Expand on what drought means to different segments of the region's community and industries, and adaptation pathways to 'maintain, modify or transform' to grow drought resilience.</p> <p>As implementation of this foundational RDRP occurs, and monitoring, evaluation and learning processes are undertaken, opportunity will arise to advance the concepts of resilience theory, and make more clear how the adaptation pathways are continuously improving and escalating to underpin drought resilience maturation.</p>
2	<p>Continue to engage with diverse community and industry groups to advance implementation of the plan.</p> <p>Future plan updates could capitalise on the community's desire to be engaged and involved in the plan's delivery by acknowledging the role that key knowledge holders could play. Stakeholder engagement could be expanded to include direct participation of different drought vulnerable groups including gauging their capacity to participate and how best to engage with them moving forward. This information could be used to better target vulnerable residents and ensure adequate supports are in place to involve different community segments.</p>
Expansion of resilience adaptation pathways	
3	<p>Use diverse quantitative and empirical evidence on the potential impact of the interaction of historical and projected drought with key economic and social variables over time, such as demographic changes, shifts in the diversity of businesses, and livelihoods and employment opportunities for different community segments, in emergent versus declining types of industries, and in labour mobility among different industry and sectors.</p>
4	<p>Further develop the theory of change to aligns the plan's objectives and actions towards reaching its intended outcomes, including the degree to which the proposed actions contribute to adaptation and transformation.</p>
5	<p>Expand on the interrelationships between economic, social and environmental factors across existing and updated documents, plans and strategies, and describe how these relationships influence potential cascading impacts of drought.</p>

NO.	ASPECT OF CONSIDERATION
Expansion of resilience adaptation pathways (cont)	
6	Future plan updates could profile drought impacts for those non-agricultural sectors identified as key sectors in the community, such as mining, renewable energy, health care and social assistance and tourism sectors. Such a profile could include an exploration of how these sectors can build resilience or drive transformation through learning, preparedness and planning.
7	Future plan updates could develop a suite of plausible future scenarios through a participatory process and based on climate, drought and other drivers of change. The development of future scenarios could consider how trends, shocks or stresses (including drought) will interact with and likely affect the region's economic, social and environmental characteristics, and the implications for diverse stakeholder groups. This exercise will also assist these stakeholders to explore and identify actions and pathways that assist with building resilience under different plausible future scenarios.
Resilience action planning	
8	Establish resilience indicators for each of the plan's 'priority areas', using baseline observations drawn from the MEL process within the initial years of plan implementation.
9	Future updates could provide more information to substantiate the assumed mechanisms by which its actions can be achieved, and to what extent they align with the broader objectives and outcomes of the plan.
Implementation	
10	As implementation advances, expand the implementation content of the plan with respect to its governance arrangements and the function / operation of the PCG.
11	<p>As partnership arrangements and relationships are built through this foundational plan, more information could be built on the main purpose of each collaboration setting clear intent and requirements, alongside specific measures. This can provide greater structure to partnerships, which may be a focus under each pathway.</p> <p>The types of partnerships and activities sought may influence these reporting arrangements. Review of partnership may be ongoing to ensure appropriate representation of groups, including First Nations communities and non-farming populations.</p>
12	Future plan updates could provide more explicit descriptions of what external support is required for successful implementation.
13	Future updates to the plan may provide further detail on the sequencing of actions, as these are prioritised and refined and as funding becomes clearer.

NO.	ASPECT OF CONSIDERATION
Monitoring, evaluation and learning framework	
14	<p>Further develop structured approaches to capturing lessons from performance measures, linked with monitoring in addition to lessons from annual evaluations currently identified in the MEL. Integrate lessons learned from the plan's existing evaluation questions back into the plan's actions.</p> <p>Continue to enhance and mature the plan's MEL processes over time as the plan transitions from foundational into a performance posture.</p>
15	<p>Further develop performance indicators tied to actions in the plan's MEL plan. This will improve accountability by showing the degree to which proposed priorities and actions contribute to the plan's articulated vision and outcomes. This could include using quantitative and empirical evidence for key economic and social variables over time. This could include evidence that helps to track demographic shifts, changes in the diversity of businesses, livelihoods and employment opportunities for different community segments in emergent versus declining types of industries. It could further include evidence of labour mobility among different industry and sectors in order to assess actions focused on economic diversification.</p>
Resilience assessment	
16	<p>Ensure future iterations of the plan are qualified by a review of the Resilience Assessment components to identify key circumstantial changes which have occurred.</p>
17	<p>Continue to build upon and refine the program logic approach embedded within the Resilience Assessment that supported the development of the current plan, into a well-developed theory of change that provides a detailed and explicit causal mechanisms and valid assumptions by which the plan, through its implementation, will deliver the desired outcomes and impact.</p>



Item 8.3.2. HERITAGE GRANTS 2024/25

AUTHOR/S: Manager Planning, Building & Health

APPROVER/S: Director Economic and Community Development

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The Local Heritage Places grant scheme was advertised between 26 July 2024 – 15 October 2024. As a result, six (6) applications for funding assistance were received and were assessed by Council's Heritage Advisor Noel Thomson. A report from the Heritage Advisor was presented to the Leeton Shire Council Heritage Committee for consideration on 12 November 2024.

These applications are now submitted to Council for review and approval.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approves the following Local Heritage Places Grant offers for 2024/25:

Applicant	Work to be done	Total Project Cost	Funding Requested	Funding Recommended	Applicant's Contribution
Jack Punch	Awning soffit replacement to match earlier part replacement at shop	\$11,531	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$6,531
Fiona De Wit	External timber repair works and painting to farm residence	\$24,750	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$22,250
Evonne Newton	Repainting to weatherboards at front of house and repainting to later added rear structure	\$5,720	\$3,000	\$1,500	\$4,220
Bill Alendi (Leeton Showground Land Manager)	Placement of water tank for water catchment at the "Arts & crafts" pavilion at Leeton Show Grounds to address the building base deterioration.	\$6,718	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$4,218
Sue Ciavarella	Restoration & installation of historic lighting at front of the residence	\$2,975	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,475
Rose Gordon	External timber repair works at gable end and repainting of the south façade to the Historic "Hotel Hydro"	\$28,740	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$23,740
(incl GST)					

REPORT

(a) Background

Funding is available for 'Listed' heritage items in the Leeton Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2014 or for buildings supported by Council's Heritage Advisor as being of heritage significance. The Local Heritage Places Grants for 2024/25 were advertised and open for application from July to mid-October 2024. Noel Thomson reviewed the six (6) applications received whereupon the applications were presented to the Leeton Shire Council Heritage Committee on 12 November 2024 for consideration. The Heritage Grant assessment report is attached.

The Leeton Heritage Committee unanimously accepted the recommendation of the Heritage Advisor and recommended that six (6) applications be approved. Minutes of the Heritage Committee meeting held on 12 November 2024 is attached to this report.

(b) Discussion

The following six (6) applications were received for heritage funding:

2024-25/1 Awning soffit replacement at Shop, 40A Pine Avenue, Leeton

Submission from Owner (Jack Punch) for the proposed replacement of the deteriorated 'fibro' awning soffit to Church Street, to match earlier part replaced soffit at the front of the Shop. The property at 40A Pine Avenue, Leeton is located within the Leeton Heritage Conservation Area and on review of the works proposed suits the criteria of the local heritage fund.

Recommendation is for the awning soffit replacement to match earlier part replaced at Shop is that funding of \$5K is acceptable for this important project that will improve the streetscape. Works to be undertaken to Heritage Advisor recommendations and approval required from Council as per LEP Clause 5.10 (3) prior to works commencing on site.

2024-25/2 External timber repairs and repainting at farm residence 410 Kooba Road, Whitton

Submission from Owner (Fiona de Wit) notes the project is for the restoration and repainting of the exterior timber areas of the farm residence at Farm 1307- 410 Kooba Road, Whitton. The works proposed suit the criteria of the local heritage fund for this building which has heritage significance. It is noted in the application that the work received funding last year, however due to the delay in getting the builder to the site, the works had commenced but were not completed in time to claim the monies. The costings therefore include some work now completed.

Recommendation is for the restoration and painting works at the farm residence at 410 Kooba Road, Whitton be undertaken as per Heritage Advisor recommendations with funding support of \$2,500.

2024-25/3 Repairs, restoration of wall & windows to residence at 102 Kurrajong Avenue, Leeton

Submission from Owner (Evonne Newton) notes the project is for the restoration of weatherboards/timber + repainting to exterior of the residence at 102 Kurrajong Avenue, Leeton. The works proposed suit the criteria of the local heritage fund for this

Listed Heritage Item (I21) "House", however funding two (2) years ago was for replacement windows, repairs and repainting of house and the quotes and photographs include later added structures to the rear of the building.

Recommendation is for the external repairs and repainting to the front of house to proceed with funding support of \$1,500. Works to be undertaken to Heritage Advisor recommendations and approval required from Council as per LEP clause 5.10 (3) prior to works commencing.

2024-25/4 Replacement of water tank at Showground, 66 Acacia Avenue, Leeton

Submission from representative of the Leeton Showground Land Managaree (Bill Alendi) is for the proposed placement of water tank for water catchment at the "Arts & Crafts" pavilion at Leeton Showground to address the building base deterioration. It is noted that the site is a listed Heritage Item (I52) "Showground buildings" at 66 Acacia Avenue, Leeton. The provision of a water tank at the building for water catchment although not a restoration project for the important "Arts and Crafts" pavilion will ensure that the building does not further deteriorate and therefore does meet the criteria of the local heritage fund.

Recommendation is for the type, location and placement of the proposed water tank at the "Arts and Crafts" pavilion be undertaken as per Heritage Advisor recommendations with funding support of \$2,500. Approval required from Council as per LEP Clause 5.10 (3) prior to works commencing on site.

2024-25/5 Historic lighting to be installed at Residence at 7 Wade Avenue, Leeton

Submission from Owner (Sue Ciavarella) notes the project is for the restoration of the salvaged 'original' Chelmsford Place historic lighting and installation in the front yard of this important residence at 7 Wade Ave, Leeton. The works proposed suit the criteria of the local heritage fund for this listed Heritage Item (I46) "Residence".

Recommendation is for the historic lighting restoration and installation to the Residence be undertaken to Heritage Advisor recommendations with funding support of \$1,500. Approval for the works required from Council as per LEP Clause 5.10 (3) prior to commencing on site.

2024-25/6 External timber repairs & painting to "Hydro Hotel" 58-66 Chelmsford Place, Leeton

Submission from Rose Gordon (on behalf of Hydro Hotel) is for the proposed external timber repair works at gable end and repainting of the south façade to the historic "Hotel Hydro" of the locally listed Heritage Item (I84) "Hydro Hotel" and importantly a State Listed Heritage item. As a State Listed Heritage site, funding from the State Government / Heritage NSW is available for restoration and maintenance projects. It is noted that the historic "Hydro Hotel" front façade was painted a few years ago and the proposal is the continuation of this project. The works will complete the south facade restoration / painting. These proposed works suit the criteria of the local heritage fund.

This an important project for the completion of the south facade restoration and painting to match the early works to the front of the building and recommendation is for funding of \$5K for this project. For the repairs and repainting of the external south facade of the historic "Hydro Hotel", the works to be undertaken to Heritage Advisor

recommendations and approval is required from Council as per LEP Clause 5.10 (3) prior to works commencing on site. Importantly due to its State Heritage Listing, Heritage NSW approval or exemption is also required prior to works commencing on the site.

(c) Options

THAT Council:

1. Approves the Local Heritage Places Grants as recommended. ***This is the recommended option***
2. Approves the Local Heritage Places grant with amendments.
3. Another resolution as determined by Council.

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

The adopted 2024/25 Operational Plan and budget allocates \$18K for the Local Heritage Places Grants. This funding includes a grant of \$5,500 from the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage.

(b) Policy

Heritage Strategy 2018 - 2021

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Heritage Act 1977

Heritage Regulation 2012

Leeton Local Environmental Plan 2014

(d) Risk

Applicants must complete projects by the due date (30 April 2025) or grant funds will not be paid. This will allow unspent grant funds to be reallocated, before the end of the financial year.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

The Local Heritage Places Grants were advertised in the local paper as well as Council's website and via social media.

(b) Internal

Director Economic and Community Development
Heritage Committee
Heritage Advisor

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

5. Planning, Building and Public Health

5.4 Provide built heritage services, including access to a Heritage Advisor and heritage grant funding for private heritage listed properties

5. Planning Building and Health

5.4 Provide built heritage advisory service and funding

5.4.1 Offer an annual Heritage Grants Program with a focus on Leeton's CBD to promote Leeton's position as a regional Art Deco capital of Australia

ATTACHMENTS

1. Local Heritage Fund Assessments 2024-25 [**8.3.2.1** - 12 pages]
2. Local Heritage Fund Report 2024-25 Summary [**8.3.2.2** - 1 page]
3. Report - Local Heritage Fund Applications 2024-25 [**8.3.2.3** - 2 pages]
4. Heritage Minutes 12 Nov 2024 [**8.3.2.4** - 4 pages]



Planning and
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LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
LOCAL HERITAGE FUND
ASSESSMENT FORM 2024-2025

Project Name AWNING SOFFIT REPLACEMENT TO SHOP 40A PINE AVE, LEETON			Project No. 2024-25/01		
		Score 100	Assessor	Specialist	Comments
My Project is for	Assess the heritage listing for the proposed project application	40			
	SHR Heritage listed item/s	15		-	
	LEP Heritage listed item/ Conservation Area	12		12	
	Main Street / Heritage Study Area	8		8	
	Other significant item	5		-	
Sub Total				20	
Priorities	Assess the project against your Council's local heritage fund priorities for this funding round	23			
Priority 1	Commercial properties within the Main Street Conservation Areas and/or Heritage Item identified as having significant Art Deco features:- a) Repair of original features; b) Painting in period colour and styles - Art Deco Colours; c) Replacement of advertising signage with Art Deco Style advertising signage d) Works to meet BCA requirements for new uses eg. Disabled access.	15		15	
Priority 2	Buildings outside the Main Street or Heritage Study areas that are identified by Council's Heritage Advisor as having heritage significance:- a) Painting in period colours; b) Repair/restoration of heritage features; c) Restoration of period front fences; d) Works to meet BCA requirements for new uses	8		-	
Sub Total				15	

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Ordinary Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Project Name		Score	Assessor	Specialist	Comments			
Common Selection Criteria	Assess the project against ALL of these criteria	17						
Sustainable long term benefits	Long term plan in place to manage heritage item/s	6		5				
Public benefit & enjoyment	Increase opportunities for learning about & access	4		4				
Capacity & Commitment	Time, financial & management skills	3		3				
	Complete within funding timeframe	4		4				
Sub Total				16				
Project	Assess the quality and completeness of the project application	20						
	Project scope	5		5				
	Project costings	5		5				
	Photos	5		5				
	Greater than \$ for \$ contribution	5		5				
Sub Total				20				
TOTAL				71	ADJUSTED TOTAL			
Funding	Assess the funding requested							
	Total Project Cost		\$	\$ 11,531				
	Requested amount		\$	\$ 5,000				
	Applicant Contribution		\$	\$ 6,531				
	Recommended amount		\$					
Assessors summary comments <p>THE SOFFIT TO THE AWNING AT THIS CORNER MAINSTREET SHOP IS IN DETERIORATED STATE AND REQUIRES REPLACEMENT WHICH CRITERIA FOR HERITAGE FUNDING</p>								
Name NOEL THOMSON LSC HERITAGE ADVISOR			Date 17 OCT 2024					
If approved, any special project funding conditions (to be added to the Funding Agreement) eg Heritage Specialist required for this project eg To confirm paint colour scheme before proceeding eg Approvals required: Local Government / Heritage Act								
THE AWNING REPLACEMENT TO BUILDING IN HERITAGE CONSERVATION AREA REQUIRES COUNCIL APPROVAL AS PER LEP CLAUSE 5.10 (3) PRIOR TO WORKS COMMENCING ON SITE								



Planning and
Environment



LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
LOCAL HERITAGE FUND
ASSESSMENT FORM 2024-2025

Project Name EXTERNAL TIMBER REPAIRS + PAINTING TO FARM HOUSE 410 KOORBA RD, WHITTON		Score 100	Project No. 2024-25/02		
		Assessor	Specialist	Comments	
My Project is for	Assess the heritage listing for the proposed project application	40			
	SHR Heritage listed item/s	15		-	
	LEP Heritage listed item/ Conservation Area	12		-	
	Main Street / Heritage Study Area	8		-	
	Other significant item	5		5	
Sub Total			5		
Priorities	Assess the project against your Council's local heritage fund priorities for this funding round	23			
Priority 1	Commercial properties within the Main Street Conservation Areas and/or Heritage Item identified as having significant Art Deco features:- a) Repair of original features; b) Painting in period colour and styles - Art Deco Colours; c) Replacement of advertising signage with Art Deco Style advertising signage d) Works to meet BCA requirements for new uses eg. Disabled access.	15		-	
Priority 2	Buildings outside the Main Street or Heritage Study areas that are identified by Council's Heritage Advisor as having heritage significance:- a) Painting in period colours; b) Repair/restoration of heritage features; c) Restoration of period front fences; d) Works to meet BCA requirements for new uses	8		8	
Sub Total			8		

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Ordinary Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Project Name		Score	Assessor	Specialist	Comments
Common Selection Criteria	Assess the project against ALL of these criteria	17			
Sustainable long term benefits	Long term plan in place to manage heritage item/s	6		5	
Public benefit & enjoyment	Increase opportunities for learning about & access	4		4	
Capacity & Commitment	Time, financial & management skills	3		3	
	Complete within funding timeframe	4		4	
Sub Total				16	
Project	Assess the quality and completeness of the project application	20			
	Project scope	5		5	
	Project costings	5		5	
	Photos	5		5	
	Greater than \$ for \$ contribution	5		5	
Sub Total				20	
TOTAL				49	ADJUSTED TOTAL
Funding	Assess the funding requested				
	Total Project Cost		\$	\$ 24,750	
	Requested amount		\$	\$ 5,000	
	Applicant Contribution		\$	\$ 19,750	
	Recommended amount		\$		
Assessors summary comments <p>THIS FARM HOUSE DOES HAVE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE AND IS IN NEED OF TIMBER REPAIRS TO FASCIAS/BARGES, WINDOWS AND REPAINTING WHICH MEETS THE CRITERIA FOR HERITAGE FUNDING</p>					
Name NOEL THOMSON LSC HERITAGE ADVISOR			Date 17 OCT 2024		
If approved, any special project funding conditions (to be added to the Funding Agreement) eg Heritage Specialist required for this project eg To confirm paint colour scheme before proceeding eg Approvals required: Local Government / Heritage Act					



Planning and
Environment



LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
LOCAL HERITAGE FUND
ASSESSMENT FORM 2024-2025

Project Name EXTERNAL PAINTING TO HOUSE AT 102 KURRAJONG AVE, LEEETON			Project No. 2024-25/03		
			Score 100	Assessor	Specialist
My Project is for	Assess the heritage listing for the proposed project application	40			
	SHR Heritage listed item/s	15		-	
	LEP Heritage listed item/ Conservation Area	12		12	HERITAGE ITEM #21 "HOUSE"
	Main Street / Heritage Study Area	8		-	
	Other significant item	5		-	
Sub Total				12	
Priorities	Assess the project against your Council's local heritage fund priorities for this funding round	23			
Priority 1	Commercial properties within the Main Street Conservation Areas and/or Heritage Item identified as having significant Art Deco features:- a) Repair of original features; b) Painting in period colour and styles - Art Deco Colours; c) Replacement of advertising signage with Art Deco Style advertising signage d) Works to meet BCA requirements for new uses eg. Disabled access.	15		15	
Priority 2	Buildings outside the Main Street or Heritage Study areas that are identified by Council's Heritage Advisor as having heritage significance:- a) Painting in period colours; b) Repair/restoration of heritage features; c) Restoration of period front fences; d) Works to meet BCA requirements for new uses	8		-	
Sub Total				15	

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Ordinary Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Project Name		Score	Assessor	Specialist	Comments			
Common Selection Criteria	Assess the project against ALL of these criteria	17						
Sustainable long term benefits	Long term plan in place to manage heritage item/s	6		4				
Public benefit & enjoyment	Increase opportunities for learning about & access	4		3				
Capacity & Commitment	Time, financial & management skills	3		3				
	Complete within funding timeframe	4		4				
Sub Total				14				
Project	Assess the quality and completeness of the project application	20						
	Project scope	5		5				
	Project costings	5		5				
	Photos	5		5				
	Greater than \$ for \$ contribution	5		2				
Sub Total				17				
TOTAL				58	ADJUSTED TOTAL			
Funding	Assess the funding requested							
	Total Project Cost		\$	\$ 5720				
	Requested amount		\$	\$ 3000				
	Applicant Contribution		\$	\$ 2720				
	Recommended amount		\$					
Assessors summary comments <p>THIS RESIDENCE AT 102 KURRAJONG HAS RECEIVED PREVIOUS FUNDING FROM COUNCIL FOR VARIOUS PROJECTS FOR MAINTENANCE, ON AT THIS HERITAGE LISTED PROPERTY, WITH PAINTING TO EXTERNAL AREAS (EXCEPT FOR REAR LATER ADDITIONS) BEING SUPPORTED AND MEETS CRITERIA FOR HERITAGE FUNDING</p>								
Name NOEL THOMSON LSC HERITAGE ADVISOR			Date 17 OCT 2024					
If approved, any special project funding conditions (to be added to the Funding Agreement) eg Heritage Specialist required for this project eg To confirm paint colour scheme before proceeding eg Approvals required: Local Government / Heritage Act								
THE EXTERNAL PAINTING TO THIS HERITAGE LISTED HOUSE REQUIRES COUNCIL APPROVAL AS PER CLAUSE 5.10(3) PRIOR TO THE PAINTING COMMENCING ON SITE								



Planning and
Environment



LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
LOCAL HERITAGE FUND
ASSESSMENT FORM 2024-2025

Project Name WATER TANK FOR ARTS + CRAFTS BUILDING AT LEETON SHOWGROUNDS			Project No. 2024-25/04		
		Score 100	Assessor	Specialist	Comments
My Project is for	Assess the heritage listing for the proposed project application	40			
	SHR Heritage listed item/s	15		-	
	LEP Heritage listed item/ Conservation Area	12		12	HERITAGE ITEM I 52
	Main Street / Heritage Study Area	8		-	SHOWGROUND BUILDINGS
	Other significant item	5		-	
Sub Total				12	
Priorities	Assess the project against your Council's local heritage fund priorities for this funding round	23			
Priority 1	Commercial properties within the Main Street Conservation Areas and/or Heritage Item identified as having significant Art Deco features:- a) Repair of original features; b) Painting in period colour and styles - Art Deco Colours; c) Replacement of advertising signage with Art Deco Style advertising signage d) Works to meet BCA requirements for new uses eg. Disabled access.	15		15	
	Priority 2	Buildings outside the Main Street or Heritage Study areas that are identified by Council's Heritage Advisor as having heritage significance:- a) Painting in period colours; b) Repair/restoration of heritage features; c) Restoration of period front fences; d) Works to meet BCA requirements for new uses	8		-
Sub Total				15	

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Ordinary Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Project Name		Score	Assessor	Specialist	Comments			
Common Selection Criteria	Assess the project against ALL of these criteria	17						
Sustainable long term benefits	Long term plan in place to manage heritage item/s	6		3				
Public benefit & enjoyment	Increase opportunities for learning about & access	4		2				
Capacity & Commitment	Time, financial & management skills	3		3				
	Complete within funding timeframe	4		4				
Sub Total				12				
Project	Assess the quality and completeness of the project application	20						
	Project scope	5		3				
	Project costings	5		5				
	Photos	5		5				
	Greater than \$ for \$ contribution	5		2				
Sub Total				15				
TOTAL				54	ADJUSTED TOTAL			
Funding	Assess the funding requested							
	Total Project Cost		\$	\$6718	EXTRAPOLATED FROM QUOTES			
	Requested amount		\$	\$5000				
	Applicant Contribution		\$	\$1718				
	Recommended amount		\$					
Assessors summary comments <p>THE 'ART + CRAFTS' PAVILION AT THE LEETON SHOWGROUND IS AN IMPORTANT LISTED BUILDING AND THE BASE OF THE BUILDING IS SHOWING DETERIORATION FROM WATER (INGRESS + NO CATCHMENT) AS THERE IS NO CATCHMENT. PROPOSAL IS TO PROVIDE WATER TANK ADJACENT TO THE BUILDING WHICH IS IMPORTANT FOR THE STRUCTURE BUT NOT STRICTLY A HERITAGE PROJECT.</p>								
Name NOEL THOMSON LSC HERITAGE ADVISOR			Date 17 OCTOBER 2024					
If approved, any special project funding conditions (to be added to the Funding Agreement) eg Heritage Specialist required for this project eg To confirm paint colour scheme before proceeding eg Approvals required: Local Government / Heritage Act								
THE LOCATION + TYPE OF WATER TANK TO THIS HERITAGE LISTED PAVILION REQUIRES COUNCIL APPROVAL AS PER LEP CLAUSE 5.10(3) PRIOR TO THE INSTALLATION OCCURRING ON SITE								



Planning and
Environment



LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
LOCAL HERITAGE FUND
ASSESSMENT FORM 2024-2025

Project Name INSTALLATION OF HISTORIC LIGHTING TO 7 WADE AVE, LEETON		Score 100	Project No. 2024-25/05	
		Assessor	Specialist	Comments
My Project is for	Assess the heritage listing for the proposed project application	40		
	SHR Heritage listed item/s	15		
	LEP Heritage listed item/ Conservation Area	12	12	HERITAGE ITEM 146 "HOUSE"
	Main Street / Heritage Study Area	8	8	
	Other significant item	5	-	
Sub Total			20	
Priorities	Assess the project against your Council's local heritage fund priorities for this funding round	23		
Priority 1	Commercial properties within the Main Street Conservation Areas and/or Heritage Item identified as having significant Art Deco features:- a) Repair of original features; b) Painting in period colour and styles - Art Deco Colours; c) Replacement of advertising signage with Art Deco Style advertising signage d) Works to meet BCA requirements for new uses eg. Disabled access.	15	15	
	Priority 2	Buildings outside the Main Street or Heritage Study areas that are identified by Council's Heritage Advisor as having heritage significance:- a) Painting in period colours; b) Repair/restoration of heritage features; c) Restoration of period front fences; d) Works to meet BCA requirements for new uses	8	-
Sub Total			15	

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Ordinary Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Project Name		Score	Assessor	Specialist	Comments			
Common Selection Criteria	Assess the project against ALL of these criteria	17						
Sustainable long term benefits	Long term plan in place to manage heritage item/s	6		5				
Public benefit & enjoyment	Increase opportunities for learning about & access	4		4				
Capacity & Commitment	Time, financial & management skills	3		3				
	Complete within funding timeframe	4		4				
Sub Total				16				
Project	Assess the quality and completeness of the project application	20						
	Project scope	5		5				
	Project costings	5		5				
	Photos	5		-				
	Greater than \$ for \$ contribution	5		3				
Sub Total				13				
TOTAL				64	ADJUSTED TOTAL			
Funding	Assess the funding requested							
	Total Project Cost		\$	\$ 2975				
	Requested amount		\$	\$ 1500				
	Applicant Contribution		\$	\$ 1475				
	Recommended amount		\$					
Assessors summary comments <p>THIS PROJECT INVOLVES THE RESTORATION AND PLACEMENT OF ORIGINAL LIGHTS SALVAGED FROM CHENNSFORD PLACE AND IS A WORTHY PROJECT FOR FUNDING FROM THE LOCAL HERITAGE GRANTS PROGRAM.</p>								
Name NOEL THOMSON LSC HERITAGE ADVISOR			Date 17 OCT 2024					
If approved, any special project funding conditions (to be added to the Funding Agreement) eg Heritage Specialist required for this project eg To confirm paint colour scheme before proceeding eg Approvals required: Local Government / Heritage Act								
THE INSTALLATION OF HISTORIC LIGHT AT THE HERITAGE PROPERTY REQUIRES COUNCIL APPROVAL AS PER LEP CLAUSE 5.10 (3) PRIOR TO WORKS COMMENCING ON SITE								



Planning and
Environment



LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
LOCAL HERITAGE FUND
ASSESSMENT FORM 2024-2025

Project Name EXTERNAL REPAIRS+ PAINTING TO SOUTH WALL HISTORIC HYDRO HOTEL, LEETON		Score 100	Project No. 2024-25/06	
		Assessor	Specialist	Comments
My Project is for	Assess the heritage listing for the proposed project application	40		'STATE'
	SHR Heritage listed item/s	15	15	HERITAGE ITEM 184
	LEP Heritage listed item/ Conservation Area	12	12	"HYDRO HOTEL"
	Main Street / Heritage Study Area	8	-	
	Other significant item	5	-	
Sub Total			27	
Priorities	Assess the project against your Council's local heritage fund priorities for this funding round	23		
Priority 1	Commercial properties within the Main Street Conservation Areas and/or Heritage Item identified as having significant Art Deco features:-	15	15	
	a) Repair of original features;			
	b) Painting in period colour and styles - Art Deco Colours;			
	c) Replacement of advertising signage with Art Deco Style advertising signage			
	d) Works to meet BCA requirements for new uses eg. Disabled access.			
Priority 2	Buildings outside the Main Street or Heritage Study areas that are identified by Council's Heritage Advisor as having heritage significance:-	8	-	
	a) Painting in period colours;			
	b) Repair/restoration of heritage features;			
	c) Restoration of period front fences;			
	d) Works to meet BCA requirements for new uses			
Sub Total			15	

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Ordinary Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Project Name		Score	Assessor	Specialist	Comments			
Common Selection Criteria	Assess the project against ALL of these criteria	17						
Sustainable long term benefits	Long term plan in place to manage heritage item/s	6		4				
Public benefit & enjoyment	Increase opportunities for learning about & access	4		4				
Capacity & Commitment	Time, financial & management skills	3		3				
	Complete within funding timeframe	4		4				
Sub Total				15				
Project	Assess the quality and completeness of the project application	20						
	Project scope	5		5				
	Project costings	5		5				
	Photos	5		3				
	Greater than \$ for \$ contribution	5		5				
Sub Total				18				
TOTAL				75	ADJUSTED TOTAL			
Funding	Assess the funding requested							
	Total Project Cost		\$	\$28,740				
	Requested amount		\$	\$5,000				
	Applicant Contribution		\$	\$23,740				
	Recommended amount		\$					
Assessors summary comments <p>THE WORKS AT THE STATE LISTED "HYDRO HOTEL" WHERE EXTERNAL REPAIRS + PAINTING ARE TO BE UNDERTAKEN MEET THE FUNDING CRITERIA FOR LOCAL HERITAGE GRANTS PROGRAM - IT ALSO WOULD SATISFY THE CRITERIA FOR STATE GOVERNMENT FUNDING</p>								
Name NOEL THOMSON LSC HERITAGE ADVISOR			Date 25 OCTOBER 2024					
If approved, any special project funding conditions (to be added to the Funding Agreement) eg Heritage Specialist required for this project eg To confirm paint colour scheme before proceeding eg Approvals required: Local Government / Heritage Act								
THE HISTORIC 'HYDRO HOTEL' REQUIRES HERITAGE NSW (EXEMPTION) AND COUNCIL APPROVAL AS PER LEP CLAUSE 5.10 (3) PRIOR TO THE WORKS/ PAINTING COMMENCING ON SITE								



Local Heritage Fund Summary 2024/2025

Number	Applicant	Address / Property	Property / Heritage Listing	Work to be done	Total Project Cost	Funding Requested	Funding Recommended	Applicant's Contribution	Rating	Ranking
2024-25/1	Jack Punch	40A Pine Ave, Leeton	No - in Leeton HCA	Awning soffit replacement to match earlier part replaced at Shop	\$11,531	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$6,531	71	2
2024-25/2	Fiona de Wit	Farm 1307 - 410 Kooba Rd, Whitton	No	External timber repair works and painting to farm residence	\$24,750 <i>Includes some work undertaken</i>	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$22,250	49	6
2024-25/3	Evonne Newton	102 Kurrajong Ave, Leeton	Yes – LEP Item I21	Repainting to weatherboards at front of the house and repainting to later added rear structure	\$5,720	\$3,000	\$1,500	\$4,220	58	4
2024-25/4	Bill Alendi (Leeton Showground Land Managaree)	66 Acacia Ave, Leeton	Yes, for the pavilion – LEP Item I52	Placement of water tank for water catchment at the “Arts & Crafts” pavilion at Leeton Showground to address the building base deterioration	\$6,718 <i>Extrapolated from quotes</i>	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$4,218	54	5
2024-25/5	Sue Ciavarella	7 Wade Ave, Leeton	Yes - LEP Item I46	Restoration & installation of historic lighting at front of the Residence	\$2,975	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,475	64	3
2024-25/6	Rose Gordon	58-66 Chemsford Place, Leeton	Yes - LEP Item I84 and State Listed Heritage item	External timber repair works at gable end and repainting of the south façade to the historic “Hotel Hydro”	\$28,740	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$23,740	75	1
TOTAL	(incl GST)				\$80,434	\$24,500	\$18,000	\$62,434		

Note: Leeton Shire Council budget for heritage funding 2024/25 - \$18,000

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL REPORT

To: Leeton Shire Council

NOV 2024

By: Noel Thomson – Heritage Advisor

Subject: Local Heritage Fund Applications 2024-254
for Leeton Shire

Leeton Shire Local Heritage Fund Applications 2024-25

Funding is available for 'Listed' heritage items or buildings in the Heritage Conservation Areas in the Leeton Local Environmental Plan, or a building supported by Council's heritage advisor as being of heritage significance. Further to receipt of Applications to Leeton Shire Local Heritage Fund, Noel Thomson as Leeton Shire Council's Heritage Advisor has reviewed the six (6) applications received and provides the following advice;

2024-25/1 Awning soffit replacement at Shop, 40A Pine Ave, Leeton

Submission from Owner (Jack Punch) for the proposed replacement of the deteriorated 'fibro' awning soffit to Church St, to match earlier part replaced soffit at the front of the Shop. The property at 40A Pine Ave, Leeton is located within the Leeton Heritage Conservation Area and on review of the works proposed suits the criteria of the local heritage fund.

Recommendation for the awning soffit replacement to match earlier part replaced at Shop is that funding of \$5,000 is acceptable for this important project that will improve the streetscape. Works to be undertaken to Heritage Advisor recommendations and approval required from Council as per LEP Clause 5.10 (3) prior to works commencing on site.

2024-25/2 External timber repairs & repainting at farm residence 410 Kooba Rd, Whitton

Submission from Owner (Fiona de Wit) notes the project is for the restoration and repainting of the exterior timber areas of the farm residence at Farm 1307- 410 Kooba Rd, Whitton. On review of the works proposed suits the criteria of the local heritage fund for this building which has heritage significance. It is noted that in the application that the work received funding last year, however due to the delay in getting the builder to the site that the works had commenced but were not completed in time to claim the monies, therefore the costings include some work now completed, with NT noting that due this building not being a heritage item, therefore its rating is very low, although due to its heritage significance then funding for this can be justified.

Recommendation is for the restoration and painting works at the farm residence at 410 Kooba Rd, Whitton be undertaken as per heritage advisor recommendations with funding of \$2,500 is acceptable for this project

2024-25/3 Repairs, restoration of wall & windows to residence at 102 Kurrajong Ave, Leeton

Submission from Owner (Evonne Newton) notes the project is for the restoration of weatherboards/timber + repainting to exterior of the residence at 102 Kurrajong Ave, Leeton. On review, the works proposed suits the criteria of the local heritage fund for this Listed Heritage Item (I21) "House", however funding 2 years ago was for replacement windows, repairs and repainting of house and the quotes and photographs include later added structures to the rear of the building.

Recommendation for the external repairs and repainting to the front of House and therefore funding of \$1,500 is acceptable for this project. Works to be undertaken to Heritage Advisor recommendations and approval required from Council as per LEP Clause 5.10 (3) prior to works commencing on site.

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL REPORT

2024-25/4 Replacement of trees / landscaping at Showground, 66 Acacia Ave, Leeton

Submission from representative of the Leeton Showground Land Managaree (Bill Alendi) is for the proposed placement of water tank for water catchment at the "Arts & Crafts" pavilion at Leeton Showground to address the building base deterioration. It is noted that the site is a listed Heritage Item (I52) "Showground buildings" at 66 Acacia Ave, Leeton. The provision of a water tank at the building for water catchment although not a restoration project for the important "Arts & Crafts" pavilion, the project will ensure that the building does not further deteriorate and therefore does meet the criteria of the local heritage fund.

Recommendation is for the type, location and placement of the proposed water tank at the "Arts & Crafts" pavilion be undertaken as per heritage advisor recommendations with funding of \$2,500 acceptable for this project. Approval required from Council as per LEP Clause 5.10 (3) prior to works commencing on site.

2024-25/5 Historic lighting to be installed at Residence at 7 Wade Ave, Leeton

Submission from Owner (Sue Ciavarella) notes the project is for the restoration of the salvaged 'original' Chelmsford Place historic lighting and installation in the front yard of this important residence at 7 Wade Ave, Leeton. On review, the works proposed suits the criteria of the local heritage fund for this listed Heritage Item (I46) "Residence".

Recommendation for the historic lighting restoration and installation to the Residence be undertaken to Heritage Advisor recommendations with funding of \$1,500 is acceptable for this project. Approval for the works required from Council as per LEP Clause 5.10 (3) prior to commencing on site.

2024-25/6 External timber repairs & painting to "Hydro Hotel" 58-66 Chelmsford Pl, Leeton

Submission from Rose Gordon (on behalf of Hydro Hotel) is for the proposed external timber repair works at gable end and repainting of the south façade to the historic "Hotel Hydro" of the locally listed Heritage Item (I84) "Hydro Hotel" and importantly a State Listed Heritage item. As a State Listed Heritage site, funding from the State Government / Heritage NSW is available for restoration & maintenance projects. It is noted that the historic "Hydro Hotel" front façade was painted a few years ago and the proposal is the continuation of this project and therefore undertake the works to complete the south facade restoration / painting. These proposed works suit the criteria of the local heritage fund.

This an important project for the completion of the south facade restoration and painting to match the early works to the front of the building and recommendation is for funding of \$5,000 for this project. For the repairs and repainting of the external south facade of the historic "Hydro Hotel", the Works to be undertaken to Heritage Advisor recommendations and approval required from Council as per LEP Clause 5.10 (3) prior to works commencing on site. Importantly die to its State Heritage Listing then Heritage NSW approval or exemption is also required prior to works commencing on the site.

Note: Refer attached Summary and Assessment Forms for further information

Trusting the foregoing advice is of assistance at this time.



NOEL THOMSON FRAIA
LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL HERITAGE ADVISOR

**MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12
NOVEMBER 2024 AT 10.00AM AT BOARDROOM OF LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL**

Present: Cr Michael Kidd, Francois Van Der Berg, Ali Mehdi, Wendy Senti, Margaret Strong (via Teams), Noel Thomson (via Teams)

Apologies: Cr Nicholas Wright, Karen Barrett

1. **Welcome to everyone and New Committee Members.**
2. **Confirmation of previous Minutes** **Moved/M Strong, Seconded/W Senti**

BUSINESS ARISING

3. **Local Heritage Fund Summary 2024/2025 (attached)**

Noel Thomson – Heritage Advisor has recommended that the following six (6) applications proceed:

- **2024-25/1** Awning soffit replacement at shop, 40A Pine Avenue, Leeton
- **2024-25/2** External timber repairs & repainting of farm resident 410 Kooba Road, Whitton
- **2024-25/3** Repairs, restoration of wall & windows to residence at 102 Kurrajong Avenue, Leeton
- **2024-25/4** Replacement of trees/landscaping at Showground, 66 Acacia Avenue, Leeton
- **2024-25/5** Historic light to be installed a Residence at 7 Wade Avenue, Leeton
- **2024-25/6** External timber repairs & painting to Hydro Hotel 58-66 Chelmsford Place, Leeton

Heritage Advisor gave an overview of the following:

- Brief summary of contents of the six (6) applications.
- Reference made to assessment form and explanation given on how the score is achieved for each applicant – which follows guidelines from Heritage Council of New South Wales.
- Six (6) projects total \$24,500 – Heritage funding budget for 2024/2025 is \$18,000.
- Following my recommendations open discussion is welcomed in relation to the above six (6) applications.

**MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12
NOVEMBER 2024 AT 10.00AM AT BOARDROOM OF LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL**

**3.1 Open discussion in relation to Local Heritage Fund Applications
2024-25**

3.1.1 Margaret Strong

Stated that she was comfortable with all applications presented.

3.1.2 Francois Van Der Berg

- Referenced - **Project No. 2024-25/02 External timber repairs & painting to farm house**

Mentioned that this application is well outside the Heritage area and is not a Heritage Item.

Response: Noel Thomson

Works are ongoing at this address with significant external and structural deterioration to farmhouse hence why they have applied again this year. They were successful in securing funding in 2023-24 through the Local Heritage Fund, however it was not paid out due to delays in securing a builder.

You will note that this application ranked the lowest at 49 and therefore I have only recommended half the funding amount requested ie \$2500

- 3.1.3** Mentioned that once everyone is okay with the Heritage Advisor's recommendations the next step is a Council Report is tabled at November Council Meeting.

Response: Noel Thomson

Once adopted by Council – offer goes out to applicants – they are required to fulfill requirements conditioned by Heritage Funding. If all requirements are not completed within time frame they will not receive funding.

Wendy Senti

If requirements are not completed can funding be diverted to Council Heritage Projects.

Response: Noel Thomson

Follow up of requirements from applicants is carried out in February ensuring that receipts and all relevant paperwork/requirements have been received within timeframe of April 2025.

**MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12
NOVEMBER 2024 AT 10.00AM AT BOARDROOM OF LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL**

If they do not complete within timeframe an option is that Francois Van Der Berg as Manager/Convenor can divert unclaimed funds to projects applied for in Local Heritage Fund Applications 2024-25.

- 3.1.4** Francois Van Der Berg asked Committee if they were happy to proceed with the Heritage Advisor's recommendations.

Response: Committee advised to proceed with the Heritage Advisor's recommendations

4. GENERAL DISCUSSION

4.1 Future Meetings

Francois Van Dr Berg suggested that all future meetings be held every 2nd month on the 3rd Thursday (which coincides with the Heritage Advisor's visit to Council) at 12.00noon to 1.00pm.

Committee agreed with next meeting being scheduled for 16 January 2025

Michael Kidd confirmed that he had received notice from Sarah Graham Manager of Governance in relation to this meeting)

4.2 Roxy Theatre Display

Wendy Senti mentioned the required Roxy Theatre Displays in the Supper Room and Windows depicting the history of the Roxy Theatre were progressing well.

Noel Thomson replied that these displays were a Condition requirement to enable the Private Certifier to complete his final Occupation Certificate.

4.3 Review of Heritage Items listed in Leeton Shire Council's Local Environmental Plan (LEP 2014)

Francois Van Der Berg advised Noel Thomson our Heritage Advisor has been asked to review these items listed in our LEP.

This review will also include other buildings that are not listed and need to be added to our LEP.

Timeframe will be two (2) months for completion and will be presented to our next Heritage Meeting on 16 January 2025. The next step following this review will be implementing changes to our LEP.

**MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12
NOVEMBER 2024 AT 10.00AM AT BOARDROOM OF LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL**

4.4 Heritage Strategy

Francois Van Der Berg will review the Heritage Strategy which includes what Council is proposing over the next three (3) years and present the review at the next Heritage Committee Meeting on 16 January 2025.

4.5 Existing Heritage Plaques produced around 2021/2022 – missing

Wendy Senti enquired if anyone knows the whereabouts of plaques which were produced around 2021/2022 and were under the control of Suz Voss. A Plaque was moved from near the taxi stand which was supposed to be reinstalled. As well various plaques were produced for areas along Wade Avenue and as yet have not been installed.

Wendy believes that they have been stored at Leeton Shire Council Depot.

Francois Van Der Berg will investigate and hopefully locate the missing plaques. He will advise the outcome at next Heritage Committee meeting.

4.6 Heritage Plan distribution – strategies to inform wider range of residents

Michael Kidd would like to see the implementation of distributing information by way of a pamphlet in relation to Local Heritage Fund and our Heritage Plan to a wider range of residents. This would hopefully address the benefits available to those who are living within the heritage area as an advantage not a disadvantage.

Francois Van Der Berg stated that at present it is advertised on Council's website, facebook and the local newspaper.

Noel Thomson advised that he has an old pamphlet which could be improved and developed for distributing information.

Francois Van Der Berg thanked everyone for attendance and input.

Meeting closed 10.42am

Item 8.3.3. COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING GRANTS ROUND 1 2024/2025

AUTHOR/S: Community Development Coordinator

APPROVER/S: Director Economic and Community Development

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the applications received for Round One of the 2024/25 Community Strengthening Grants program, and to seek Council's approval to allocate the funds as recommended by the Community Grant Funding Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Approves the following applications for funding under Round One of the 2024/25 Community Strengthening Grants program:

Leeton Yanco Swimming Club Inc	\$2,000
Leeton Golf Club Pty Ltd	\$2,000
Creative Connection Riverina Association	\$2,000
Nuranurra Support Services Inc	\$1,500
Leeton Rainbow Pride Collective Inc	\$2,000
Rotary Club of Leeton Inc	\$2,000
Kurrajong	\$1,000

2. Authorises the General Manager to adjust the Community Grants Program Guidelines such that all manner of constituted not-for-profit groups can make application in future.
-

REPORT

(a) Background

Community groups and organisations can apply for financial assistance, resources and/or covering the costs of hiring Council facilities under Council's Grants Policy.

Council adopted the amended Community Grants Program Guidelines in August 2024. The guidelines clearly articulate the community grant funding criteria and the acquittals process.

Round One of the Community Strengthening Grants program was advertised throughout September and October 2024 with a closing date of 31 October 2024.

(b) Discussion

There were nine (9) applications in total.

Six (6) eligible applications were received in this round, with a total value of \$10,500.

One (1) application was unable to provide all documentation and formally withdrew their application.

One (1) application received was incomplete and was declined but has been encouraged to reapply with a more thorough application in Round 2 2024/25.

One (1) application is in question as, under the current Guidelines, applications are accepted from incorporated associations only. Leeton Golf Club Pty Ltd submitted an application but is no longer an incorporated association as of May 2024. Instead they are now a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee.

While the Golf Club is no longer incorporated, the significance of their Golf Club house project for the community in the future cannot be overlooked. Council may wish to consider the positive impact of the proposed initiative on the community and the potential benefits that grant funding could bring, reinforcing the overall objectives of the Community Strengthening Grants. The Community Strengthening Grants Working Group recommends that Council, as a collective, discusses the eligibility and approval for this application.

Further, the General Manager is also recommending that the Community Grants Program Guidelines (**Attachment 2**) be amended to include all not-for-profit entities (including but not limited to incorporated associations, trusts and companies). When updating the Guidelines in 2024, it was never intended to limit applications to one kind of not-for-profit entity only (incorporated associations) but to any legally constituted groups whose objects are not-for-profit.

As per the policy, the applications were first assessed by Council staff to determine their eligibility. The Community Grant Funding Committee met on 13 November 2024 to review the applications according to the assessment criteria.

The following recommendations have been made:

Name	Purpose	Alignment with Community Strategic Plan	Amount Requested (\$)	Amount Recommended for Approval (\$)
Leeton Yanco Swimming Club Inc.	Purchase 10 stackable benches for marshalling area at pool to be used for all race meets held at the leeton regional aquatic centre	Section 5- Focus Area 1, 2 and 4	\$2,000	\$2,000
Leeton Golf Club Pty Ltd	Purchase a computer & software for Leeton Golf Club office for administration purposes for taking function bookings	Section 5- All focus areas	\$2,000	To be decided by the Council
Nuranurra Support Services Inc.	Purchase laptop & sporting equipment to utilise at the "Planting	Section 5- Focus Area 1, 2, 4 & 5 were selected	\$1,500	\$1,500

	the Seed" youth planning and events			
Rotary Club of Leeton Inc.	Purchase new replacement materials for Rotunda in Rotary Park for landscaping and seats	Section 5- All focus areas	\$2,000	\$2,000
Leeton Rainbow Pride Collective Inc.	Cover costs for Zana Aerial to perform trapeze and roving entertainment at the Leeton Pride Fairday	Focus Area 1 - A connected, inclusive and enriched community	\$2,000	\$2,000
Creative Connection Riverina Association Inc	Purchase items and hire rehearsal space for the Ties that Bind project at Roxy Theatre	Section 5- All focus areas	\$2,000	\$2,000
Kurrajong	Roxy Theatre hire expenses for inclusive performance in the Roxy Theatre Leeton Relaunch.	Section 5- Focus Area 1	\$1,000	\$1,000
TOTALS			\$12,500	

(c) Options

THAT Council:

1. Endorses the recommendations of the Community Grant Funding Committee.
This is the recommended option.
2. Amends all or some of the recommendations of the Community Grant Funding Committee.

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

There is \$30K allocated to the Community Strengthening Grants Program for the 2024/25 financial year. The total request for Round 1 is \$12,500 leaving \$17,500 in available funds for Round 2 if all Round 1 applications in the above table are approved.

(b) Policy

Grants Policy
Community Grants Program Guidelines

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) states the following:

1. Council may, in accordance with a resolution of the Council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions.
2. Proposed recipient who acts for private gain is not ineligible to be granted financial assistance but must not receive any benefit under this section until at least 28 days' public notice of the Council proposal to pass the necessary resolution has been given.

(d) Risk

There is a low risk that successful applicants may utilise the funds in a way that is not agreed upon. A funding agreement and acquittal process aims to mitigate this risk.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

Staff have consulted with each organisation that has requested financial assistance.

(b) Internal

Councillors on the Community Grant Funding Working Group
General Manager

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

1. Community Services and Community Development
 - 1.5 Offer advice, active support and grants to community groups including:
 - a) a community grants program
 - b) annual donation to the Town Band, Men's Shed and Eisteddfod Society.
 - c) annual school prizes
 - d) low or subsidised leases/licenses for community groups
 - e) payroll services for grant funded staff at Leeton Connect, Leeton Multi-Cultural Support Group and Jumpstart.
1. Community Development and Community Services
 - 1.5 Support local community groups with support, advice and financial assistance
 - 1.5.1 Offer a Community Grants Program

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Previous Community Strengthening Grants Funding Allocations
[8.3.3.1 - 2 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Proposed Community Grants Program Guidelines Change
[8.3.3.2 - 12 pages]

Council Community Grant funding Previously Received

From 2019/2020 onwards

Leeton Yanco Swimming Club Inc

Council grant	Project	Value Given
CSG 2022-23 R1	Free learn to swim program for disadvantaged and migrant children	\$1,060
CSG 2021-22 R2	To provide a learn to swim program for 24 vulnerable children	\$2,000

Rotary Club of Leeton Inc

Council grant	Project	Value Given
CSG R1 2022/2023	Landscaping of showground entrance	\$1,500
CSG R2 2023/2024	Showground Main Gates upgrade - Stage 3	\$1,500

Leeton CRC

Council grant	Project	Value Given
N/A	Never received funds before	\$0

Leeton Scouts

Council grant	Project	Value Given
CSG R1 2019/2020	Purchase an electric free standing stove and oven	\$1,300
CSG R2 2020/2021	Have had new kitchen recently installed and would like to add some new kitchen equipment as well as update the bushwalking compasses.	\$620
CSG 2021/2022	Purchase records books as part of updated Youth Australia Programme	\$500

Nuranurra Support Services

Council grant	Project	Value Given
CSG R2 2023/2024	"Plant the Seed" program - Yarning Circle	\$1,500

Kurrajong

Council grant	Project	Value Given
CSG R1 2019/2020	International Day of People with Disability celebrations at the Leeton Roxy Community Theatre in conjunction with Gralee School's end of year concert. The event will include a free BBQ to be held at Mountford Park.	\$1,000
CSG R2 2020/2021	Kurrajong's Drama group creates opportunities for local people with a disability to perform to the Leeton Community.	\$2,000

Leeton Rainbow Pride Collective Inc

Council grant	Project	Value Given
CSG R2 2020/2021	Assistance in purchasing a DeLonghi Cappuccino Machine to use during fundraisers within the Yanco Town Hall kitchen.	\$749
QG 2020/2021	To purchase a banner for NAIDOC	\$185
QG 2021/2022	World AIDS Day Event Promotion and HIV Education	\$176
QG 2021/2022	Teardrop banner First nations LGBTQIA NAIDOC event	\$253
QG 2023/2024	GlamUp! Workshop	\$1,770
QG 2024/2025	Mooncake Festival	\$2,000

Creative Connection Riverina Association Inc

Council grant	Project	Value Given
CSG 2021/2022	Write, produce, direct, cast, design, costumes, prop hire and fees for Bloodshed at the Banquet (Art Deco Festival) performance.	\$1,600
CSG R2 2022/2023	Contribution towards Blood at the Banquet	\$2,000

Leeton Golf Club

Council grant	Project	Value Given
	Haven't received any funding since 2017/2018	



LEETON
SHIRE COUNCIL

Community Grants Program Guidelines

Contents

1.	Purpose	2
2.	Objective	2
3.	Community Strengthening Grants	3
	3.1 Eligibility.....	3
	3.2 Exclusions	3
	3.3 Timeline.....	3
	3.4 How to Apply	3
	3.5 Required Support Material	4
	3.6 Conditions	4
4.	Quick Response Grants	5
	4.1 Eligibility.....	5
	4.2 Exclusions	5
	4.3 Timeline.....	5
	4.4 How to Apply	5
	4.5 Required Support Material	6
	4.6 Conditions	6
5.	Youth Development Grants	7
	5.1 Eligibility.....	7
	5.2 Exclusions	7
	5.3 Timeline.....	7
	5.4 How to Apply	7
	5.5 Required Support Material	7
	5.6 Conditions	8
6.	Contacting Council.....	8
7.	Appendices	9
	7.1 Assessment Matrix for Community Grants and Quick Response Grants	9
	7.2 Assessment Matrix for Youth Development Grants	9
	7.3 Acquittal Form	10

1. Purpose

Leeton Shire Council recognises the importance of assisting non-profit community groups and organisations interested in, and working towards, the enhancement and wellbeing of their community. A number of grant opportunities are offered to groups and organisations as a means of facilitating support from Council in an equitable and transparent process.

Council's Community Grants Program aims to:

- provide a "hand up", not a handout, to support the achievement of community outcomes in line with the Leeton Shire Council Community Strategic Plan
- provide an accessible and equitable process for non-profit organisations and individuals to seek financial support from Council.

There are three streams of funding available to community, including:

- Community Strengthening Grants
- Quick Response Grants
- Youth Development Grants.

2. Objective

The Guidelines aim to:

- provide a framework within which requests to Council for assistance are assessed
- ensure transparency and accountability to the community around Council's grant funding
- comply with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*
- account for the dollar value of all forms of assistance provided.

3. Community Strengthening Grants

Community Strengthening Grants support local groups and organisations by funding projects that meet an identified community need as expressed in Leeton Shire Community Strategic Plan.

There are two rounds of funding available through the year, with individual applications limited to a maximum of \$2,000.

3.1 Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for this Grant you must:

- be an incorporated association, a constituted organisation that is not-for-profit or be auspiced by an incorporated body, a constituted organisation that is not-for-profit
- be based in Leeton Shire
- demonstrate clear benefits for the community and align with the Community Strategic Plan
- demonstrate that there are other financial and/or in-kind contributions being made toward the project
- not have any outstanding grant acquittals from a previous Leeton Shire Council grant
- hold a minimum \$20 million public liability insurance and a Certificate of Currency.

3.2 Exclusions

Grants will not be provided:

- for late applications
- to groups that have outstanding acquittals with Council
- to fund core operating costs of an organisation
- for repeat projects or events if previously funded through this grant program
- for projects fully funded by another source
- to individuals
- to fund attendance at conferences or seminars
- to fund surveys or other research
- for fundraisers and general donations to registered charities
- to support political parties or activities.

3.3 Timeline

- **Round 1 Grants Open** – 1 September
- **Round 1 Grants Close** – 31 October
- **Announcements** – November
- **Acquittals Due** – 30 June
- **Round 2 Grants Open** – 1 March
- **Round 2 Grants Close** – 30 April
- **Announcements** – May
- **Acquittals Due** – 31 December

3.4 How to Apply

1. Read the guidelines and assessment criteria.
2. Check your project against the eligibility and exclusion criteria.
3. Discuss your project with a Council officer to ensure it meets the criteria.
4. Complete and submit the Community Strengthening Grants application form, which can be accessed online at leeton.nsw.gov.au or collected in person from Council.

3.5 Required Support Material

You must submit the following with your application:

- a Certificate of Currency for your public liability insurance
- quote/s for any services or products required for the project
- letter/s of support from partner organisations.

3.6 Conditions

Applicants for these grants should understand that the grant funds will be supplied under the following conditions:

- a funding agreement must be completed and signed in order for funds to be released
- Council is to be acknowledged as providing support for the project (Council's logo is to be used on all printed material, for instance)
- the funds provided are to be expended only on the projects/activities outlined in the funding application
- projects/activities are to commence within 6 months of the receipt of funds
- projects/activities are to be completed within 12 months of commencement, otherwise funds must be returned in full
- a fully completed acquittal report, including evidence of project completion, is to be submitted by the date specified in the funding agreement
- Successful applicants may be requested to attend a Council meeting or workshop to speak regarding their achievement.

4. Quick Response Grants

Quick Response Grants support local groups and organisations by funding small projects that meet an identified community need as expressed in Leeton Shire Community Strategic Plan, arise unexpectedly with little notice and fall outside the normal application openings for Council's other grants programs.

This funding is available all year round until it is exhausted, with individual applications limited to a maximum of \$2,000.

4.1 Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for a grant you must:

- be an incorporated association, a constituted organisation that is not-for-profit or be auspiced by an incorporated body, a constituted organisation that is not-for-profit
- be based in Leeton Shire
- demonstrate that the need for the project/activity has arisen unexpectedly
- demonstrate clear benefits for the community and align with the Community Strategic Plan
- demonstrate that there are other financial and/or in-kind contributions being made toward the project
- not have any outstanding grant acquittals from previous Leeton Shire Council grants
- hold a minimum \$20 million public liability insurance and a Certificate of Currency.

4.2 Exclusions

Grants will not be provided for:

- activities that have already occurred
- groups that have outstanding acquittals with Council
- core operating costs of an organisation
- repeat projects
- individuals
- attendance at a conference or seminar
- research and surveys
- fundraisers and general donations to registered charities
- political parties or activities.

4.3 Timeline

Applications open annually on 1 July. Council strives to process applications as quickly as possible, allowing for presentation to the next Council meeting. Once the budget for each financial year has been expended, notification will be posted on Council's website and no further applications will be considered until the next financial year.

4.4 How to Apply

1. Read the guidelines and assessment criteria.
2. Check you are eligible to apply and check the funding exclusions.
3. Discuss your project with a Council officer to ensure it meets the criteria.
4. Complete and submit the Quick Response Grants application form which can be accessed online at leeton.nsw.gov.au or collected in person from Council.

4.5 Required Support Material

You must submit the following with your application:

- a Certificate of Currency for your public liability insurance
- quotes for any services or products required for the project
- letters of support from partner organisations.

4.6 Conditions

Applicants for these grants should understand that the grant funds will be supplied under the following conditions:

- a funding agreement must be completed and signed in order for funds to be released
- Council is to be acknowledged as providing support for the project (Council's logo is to be used on all printed material, for instance)
- the funds provided are to be expended only on the projects/activities outlined in the funding application
- projects/activities are to commence within 6 months of the receipt of funds
- projects/activities are to be completed within 12 months of commencement, otherwise funds must be returned in full
- a fully completed acquittal report, including evidence of project completion, is to be submitted by the date specified in the funding agreement
- Successful applicants may be requested to attend a Council meeting or workshop to speak regarding their achievement.

5. Youth Development Grants

Youth Development Grants are available to support the young people of Leeton Shire who demonstrate high achievement in a cultural, academic or sporting activity, and who have been selected to participate at a State, National or International level event.

This funding is available all year round until it is exhausted, with the grant amount set at \$250.

5.1 Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for a grant you must:

- be a resident of Leeton Shire
- aged 18 years and under
- have not already received a Youth Development Grant in the current financial year.

5.2 Exclusions

Grants will not be provided:

- for applications received after the event takes place
- to individuals who have received a Youth Development Grant within the current financial year.

5.3 Timeline

Applications open on 1 July each year and close on 30 June of the following year, unless the funding allocation is exhausted prior to that date. Council strives to process applications as quickly as possible, allowing for presentation to the next Council meeting.

Once the budget for each financial year has been expended, notification will be posted on Council's website and no further applications will be considered until the next financial year.

5.4 How to Apply

1. Read the guidelines and assessment criteria.
2. Check that you are eligible to apply and check the funding exclusions.
3. Discuss your event/activity with a Council officer to ensure it meets the criteria.
4. Complete the Youth Development Grant application form, which can be accessed online at leeton.nsw.gov.au or collected in person from Council.
5. Have a parent/guardian sign the application form and submit it to Council.

5.5 Required Support Material

You must submit the following with your application:

- evidence that you are required to attend
- evidence of previous achievements
- preference from relevant coach, teacher or tutor.

5.6 Conditions

Applicants for these grants should understand that the grant funds will be supplied under the following conditions:

- a funding agreement must be completed and signed before funds will be released
- that funds provided are to be expended only on the event/activity outlined in the grant application
- that a fully completed acquittal report, with all invoices attached, is to be submitted within one month of the completion of the event/activity
- if the event/activity does not occur, funds are to be returned in full to Council.
- Successful applicants may be requested to attend a Council meeting or workshop to speak regarding their achievement.

6. Contacting Council

Applicants must contact the relevant Council staff member to discuss their project idea before proceeding with an application.

Please note that staff are not able to assist with the completion of applications but are happy to discuss your idea and provide advice and guidance on the actual project.

Area	Contact	Phone	Email
Community projects	Corporate and Community Planning Officer	6953 0911	council@leeton.nsw.gov.au
Art, Culture and Museum Projects	Manager Cultural Services		
Recreation and Leisure	Manager Open Space and Recreation		
Events and Tourism	Manager Visitor Services and Local Activation		
Built Heritage	Town Planner		
Economic Projects	Economic and Strategic Development Manager		

7. Appendices

7.1 Assessment Matrix for Community Grants and Quick Response Grants

Assessment will be guided by scoring against the Eligibility and Assessment Criteria set out in the tables below.

Eligibility

Yes	No	
		The application was received prior to the closing date
		The applicant/s is an incorporated association a constituted organisation that is not-for-profit or is auspiced by an incorporated body a constituted organisation that
		The project will directly benefit residents of Leeton Shire
		The project aligns with the strategic priorities of the Community Strategic Plan
		The applicant has not already received grant funding within the financial year
		Insurance paperwork was included with the application
		The applicant addressed all questions in the application
		The applicant acquitted previous project(s) to a satisfactory standard (including all invoices)
		The application was signed by authorised person
		The project outlined in the application is a new project or program (ie doesn't replicate another activity previously funded by Council's grants program)
		The applicant demonstrates a clear understanding of a target group and their need
		If the application is for a Quick Response Grant, does the application substantiate that the project arose unexpectedly and is not the result of poor planning?

7.2 Assessment Matrix for Youth Development Grants

Assessment will be guided by scoring against the Eligibility Criteria set out in the table below and will be undertaken by the Community Services Team.

Eligibility

Yes	No	
		The applicant is a resident of Leeton Shire
		The applicant is 18 years old or younger
		The application was received prior to the event/activity
		The applicant addressed all questions in the application
		The applicant has not previously received a Leeton Shire Council Youth Development Grant within the current financial year
		The application was signed by a parent or guardian

7.3 Acquittal Form



GRANT PROGRAM ACQUITTAL REPORT

Submission of an incomplete acquittal report or submission of the report after the due date will jeopardise the possibility of future financial assistance from Leeton Shire Council.

Organisation/Individuals Name	
Project Name	
Grant funding amount provided	\$
Contact Person	
Title	
Is this project completed? If not, please explain the situation	
How did the community benefit from this project?	
If funds were used to purchase equipment, what has been the use of this equipment	
If funds were for an event or activity – when was it held and how many attended	
Any other comments you wish to provide	
Signature	

*Please attach **ALL** invoices and at least one item of further evidence which shows how you have acknowledged Council's support – a poster, for example.*

**For Further Information
Please Contact**

Leeton Shire Council
Community Grants Program Guidelines Change
23-25 Chelmsford Place
LEETON NSW 2705
Telephone: 02 6953 0911

Item 8.3.4. MINUTES OF THE WHITTON COURTHOUSE AND HISTORICAL MUSEUM COMMITTEE

AUTHOR/S: Museum, Gallery & Heritage Coordinator

APPROVER/S: Director Economic and Community Development

SUMMARY/PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the minutes of the Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum Committee Annual General Meeting (**Attachment 1**) and General Meeting (**Attachment 2**) held on Thursday 29 August 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council notes for information the minutes from the Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum Committee Annual General Meeting (**Attachment 1**) and General Meeting (**Attachment 2**) held on Thursday 29 August 2024.

REPORT

(a) Background

The purpose of the Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum Committee is to:

- Oversee the day-to-day operations of the Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum as per the delegation issued by Council.
- Overview the strategic direction of the Whitton Court House and Historical Museum and provide reports and recommendations to the Council as considered appropriate.
- Promote optimum usage of the Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum.
- To care for and maintain the Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum through responsible day-to-day management.
- To ensure the safety of the patrons of the Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum.

(b) Discussion

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) confirmed the following officers:

- Chairperson: Tracy Catlin
- Secretary: Margaret Strong
- Treasurer: Lexi Hone

The following key items were discussed at the general meeting:

- Structural Assessments and Maintenance: Discussion focused on the need for structural assessments of the courthouse and other museum buildings, alongside the importance of documenting historical maintenance records.

- Custodianship and Collection Management: The committee addressed the unclear ownership of the museum's collection, agreeing to clarify whether the collection is owned by Council or the former Historical Society, with follow-ups planned with key individuals.
- Terms of Reference: The committee discussed updating the outdated terms of reference.

(c) Options

Nil – this report is for information purposes only.

IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

(a) Financial

The Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum Committee is a Section 355 Committee which manages its own finances. Any identified minor maintenance issues are met through Council's annual maintenance program.

(b) Policy

Code of Conduct

Terms of Reference – Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum Committee

(c) Legislative/Statutory

Local Government Act 1993 (LG Act)

(d) Risk

1. The legislative non-compliance of a Section 355 Committee could have legal, reputational, political and financial impacts to Council. The *Local Government Act 1993* does not make provision for Section 355 Committees to keep separate bank accounts.
2. Management has deemed some of the buildings unsafe and put in place limits. Currently visitation is by appointment only.

CONSULTATION

(a) External

Section 355 Committee members

(b) Internal

Director Operations
Manager Environmental Sustainability
Manager WHS, QA & Risk
Building Maintenance Officer

LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)

2. Museum, Arts and Cultural Services

2.2 Support the Whitton and Yanco Museums and Committees, including with collection management.

2. Museums, Arts and Cultural Services

2.2 Support the Whitton and Yanco Museum Committee

2.2.1 Support Whitton and Yanco Museums

9. Governance and Corporate Services

9.3 Provide respected and effective representation, leadership and advocacy

9.3.4 Support and report on Council's Section 355, Advisory and Action Committees ensuring they are operating in accordance with Committee Terms of Reference

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum - AGM [**8.3.4.1** - 3 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum [**8.3.4.2** - 11 pages]

Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum 355

AGM Meeting Minutes

Meeting No:	AGM	Date:	August 29, 2024
Time:	Open: 10 am Close: 10:20 am	Venue:	LMAG Boardroom

Attendance:

			Present	Apology
Karen Barrett (Chair)	Museum, Gallery & Heritage Coordinator	Karen	Y	
Tracy Catlin	Chairperson, Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum 355	Tracy	Y	
Margaret Strong	Secretary , Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum 355	Margaret	Y	
Lexi Hone	Treasurer, Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum 355	Lexi		Y
Cr Michael Kidd	LSC Councillor representative	Michael		Y
Cr Krystal Maytom	LSC Councillor representative	Krystal		Y

Item	Description	Who	Due
1. Meeting open			
1.1	Confirmation of all attendees present. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (LSC): Karen Barrett (chair), (Whitton Museum): Margaret Strong, Tracy Catlin Apologies: Lexi Hone, Michael Kidd, Barb Smith 		
1.2	Chair opens meeting. Welcomes those attending:		
2. Matters arising/ Action List updates			
2.1	Confirmation of the Minutes from the previous AGM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepted by Tracy Catlin Apologies: Lexi Hone, Michael Kidd, Barb Smith 		
3.0 Election of Officers			
3.1	The Chairperson declared all positions vacant. Nominations received before and during the meeting were sufficient for direct appointment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairperson: Tracy Catlin Secretary: Margaret Strong Treasurer: Lexi Hone <p>While not able to attend, Lexi noted she happy to take on the position for the interim however she would like to release her position to someone else as soon as they become known.</p>		
4.0 Close of AGM			
4.1	The Chairperson welcomed the Incoming Committee and unanimously decided to close the AGM and immediately begin a General Meeting. The Chairperson declared the AGM closed.		
8.0 Any other business			
8.1	NA		
Date of next meeting			

Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum 355

General Meeting Minutes

Meeting No:	General	Date:	August 29, 2024
Time:	Open: 10:20 am Close: 1:20 pm	Venue:	LMAG Boardroom

Attendance:

			Present	Apology
Karen Barrett	Museum, Gallery & Heritage Coordinator	Karen	Y	
Tracy Catlin (Chair)	Chairperson, Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum 355	Tracy	Y	
Margaret Strong	Secretary , Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum 355	Margaret	Y	
Lexi Hone	Treasurer, Whitton Courthouse and Historical Museum 355	Lexi		Y
Cr Michael Kidd	LSC Councillor representative	Michael		Y
Cr Krystal Maytom	LSC Councillor representative	Krystal		Y

Actions:

Date Issued	Action	Who	Target Date	Status	Complete
29/8/24	Follow Up on Historical Society Collection Ownership: Contact Barb Smith to clarify her memory on the collection ownership when the Historical Society was dissolved.	Margaret / Tracy			
29/8/24	Follow Up on Historical Society Collection Ownership: Margaret to continue searching for historical documents related to building ownership and maintenance.	Margaret			
29/8/24	Follow Up on Historical Society Collection Ownership: Karen to consult with Governance to locate any documentation related to the transfer of the Historical Society's collection to the council.	Karen			
29/8/24	Research and Update Terms of Reference: Karen to take ideas from meeting to begin updating ToR terms of reference. The draft to be circulated to committee members for feedback before the next meeting.	Karen			
	Financials: The committee discussed the need for digital payment options, such as Square. A key issue is that the museum does not have an ABN, which is required for most digital payment platforms. The committee agreed to research alternatives and explore whether the council could assist in obtaining one or offer other solutions.	Tracy			
	Financials Karen to ask Governance/Finance about digital payment options.	Karen			
	Maintenance Karen to ask Maintenance to check the reverse-cycle air conditioner in the Waiting Room, which is currently not working.	Karen	asap	Completed	Request made 30/09/2024

Date Issued	Action	Who	Target Date	Status	Complete
	Incident Form Karen noted she would seek a paper version from Andrew Valenta (WHS for LSC)	Karen	Asap	Completed	10/10/2024

Minutes

Item	Description	Who
1. Minutes arising and		
1.1	Confirmation of all attendees present.	
1.2	Confirmation of minutes arising from the previous general meeting 27/10/2022	
2. Matters arising/ Action List updates		
2.1	<p>Custodianship and Ownership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed discussion about the custodianship of the museum's collection, particularly focusing on the ambiguity surrounding the ownership of various items. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karen stated that the Department of Primary Industry currently owns the land; however, they are in the final stages of transferring ownership to LSC for community use. Margaret remembered seeing a letter from State Rail as the Historical Society was mentioned. Margaret mentioned that one of the reasons behind considering incorporation was to provide a more formal structure for the museum's operations and decision-making, particularly around the management of the collection and fundraising activities. However, the discovery of the Terms of Reference (ToR), and the fact that it requires updating offers a clear path forward. The ToR can be developed to provide more policy, more process to support both strategic and operations at Whitton. The lack of clear documentation from when the Historical Society was dissolved and its assets transferred to LSC was discussed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracy noted she believed that the Historical Society offered all assets to the Council for safekeeping. However, she wasn't 100% sure about her recollection. Karen proposed that the committee follow up with Barb Smith, who might have insight into the decisions made at that time. The committee decided to defer any decision until further clarification could be obtained on the ownership of the collection and the responsibilities of the committee under the updated Terms of Reference. The committee discussed the process of accessioning and deaccessioning items from the collection, stressing the importance of having a documented and transparent process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both Margaret and Karen emphasised the need to document all decisions related to the collection to avoid any misunderstandings or disputes in the future. Margaret suggested that this process be outlined in the updated Terms of Reference to guide future committee members. Karen proposed that decisions, especially those involving the deaccessioning of items, should be brought to 355 meetings 	<p>Margaret to try and locate</p> <p>Margaret / Tracy to discuss with Barb Smith</p>

Item	Description	Who
	<p>for discussion with clear reasoning and documented in the minutes of meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Further conversation was also held about the Collection Policy developed with the committee by Petra Player. It was agreed that no matter what is determined about ownership, the Policy is still useful. However, if collection is wholly owned by Council, then the Collection Policy along with the new ToR would need to be presented to a Council meeting for ratifying, unless Council's Governance team determine differently. 	
2.2	<p>2022 Malthouse Proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Malt House proposal, which had been discussed in previous meetings, was noted as defunct due to a lack of follow-up from the Malt House representatives. • The committee discussed the historical importance of keeping the Whitton railway station building within the community. Margaret expressed strong opinions against moving the building, stating that it was a critical part of the town's heritage. • It was agreed that the Malt House proposal should be officially recorded as closed, with no further action required unless new developments arise. 	
3.0 Correspondence		
3.1	None noted	
4.0 Financials		
4.1	Tracy Catlin presented a Treasurer's Report, which included a summary of recent transactions and the committee's current financial standing (see end of minutes for Financial spreadsheets covering September 2022 to the present). The report detailed ongoing expenses, such as weed spray and lawn mower maintenance, which are crucial for the upkeep of the museum grounds. Tracy also noted a donation received from the Tidy Towns group, which had been used to purchase materials for building maintenance.	
4.2	<p>Margaret recalled previous discussions at Town Improvement 355 meetings in which it was stated that the rental income from the police residence (after covering any costs) was intended to support the museum's maintenance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen suggested checking previous town committee meeting minutes to see if this agreement had been documented. There was some indication that the Town Improvement Committee had verbally discussed this topic, but there were no clear written records confirming the arrangement. 	
4.3	The committee discussed the need for digital payment options, such as Square. A key issue is that the museum does not have an ABN, which is	

Item	Description	Who
	<p>required for most digital payment platforms. The committee agreed to research alternatives and explore whether the council could assist in obtaining one or offer other solutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen to ask Governance about digital payment options. 	
5.0 Specific items of business		
5.1	<p>Use of Collection</p> <p>Margaret requested that photographs from the museum's collection be used in a book she is writing about Whitton's history.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As any monies from the sale of the book would, after costs, be provided to the Museum, the committee didn't see a problem with using the photos provided. It was requested that Margaret fully acknowledge the source of the photographs, including the collection number. • Karen suggested that Margaret submit a list (once developed) on which specific images she wanted to use so that it was fully documented. 	
5.2	<p>Maintenance and repairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion surrounding the onsite visit by Andrew Valenta (WHS), Tracy Pearce-Brambley, Margaret and Karen) in May 2023 and the observations made by Andy and Gideon (separate visit) that were communicated to LSC Senior management. This resulted in the kitchen being cordoned off and access prevented until further investigation could be organised. Queries as to any updates • Margaret noted that she didn't believe the observations (comprising additional movement noted by Gideon and Andy) were accurate based on photos and her observations. • Karen noted she'd had no further information since Andy had advised her of this request or any repairs made. She queried Andy in the leadup to this meeting and was advised by Tracy Pearce-Brambley that Andy planned to attend the site, along with the Director of Operations, Silas Darby. No date was given as to when that might happen. 	
6.0 General Business		

Item	Description	Who
6.1	Changes to the ToR outlined in the Agenda and meeting are to be added to the review of the ToR.	Karen
6.2	The committee asked that Maintenance check the reverse-cycle air conditioner in the Waiting Room, which is currently not working.	Karen to raise with Maintenance.
6.4	<p>Volunteer Form. The committee discussed the importance of maintaining a volunteer form and sign-in book to document the activities of museum volunteers properly. Also discussed is how the process differs from the form the 355 committees complete.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karen provided a copy of the LSC Volunteer form, which all volunteers must complete before beginning their first work session for the Museum. A sign-in book should be used to supplement volunteers' days and hours on the premises. It was agreed that clearer guidelines are needed to ensure all volunteers sign in and complete the necessary forms for accountability and insurance purposes with a copy being provided to Karen for lodgement with Council. 	
6.5	<p>Public Liability Insurance. The TOR focus' on volunteers as witnesses to a visitor incident /accident but it could be another visitor or a passerby.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karen noted that the importance of taking down detailed information for any incidents, ie time, date, individuals involved, and a description of the incident. Having a formal record of incidents involving visitors or volunteers is essential for maintaining safety standards and ensuring proper follow-up. The committee addressed the need to document on-site injuries, emphasising the importance of maintaining proper records for safety and insurance purposes. It was agreed that any injuries, even minor ones, should be reported and logged with the Council as soon as possible. This process would ensure that the committee meets its workplace health and safety obligations and provides a clear record in case of future liability issues. <p>Karen noted she would seek a paper version from Andrew Valenta (WHS for LSC) of the incident form.</p>	
7.0	Any other business	

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL
Ordinary Council Meeting - Tuesday 26 November 2024

Item	Description	Who	
7.1	<p>Karen to coordinate with committee members once Councillors and calls for 355 Committee are finalised to schedule the next meeting in November or December, ensuring dates work for all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the first Ordinary Council meeting of the new Council (Tuesday 28 October), the new Council will decide on what committees they will take forward into the new term and which Councillors will represent each Committee. The EOI for Section 355 Committee members will not be advertised until early November 2024 (for 30 days); the Council needs to approve the Committees first. All 355 Committee members (current or new) will be required to complete the relevant paperwork and submit an EOI as the Council endorses each member of the Section 355 Committees. This paperwork will not be presented to Council until the December 2024 or February 2025 Ordinary Council Meeting. 		
Date of next meeting			

Whitton Historical Society Financial Report September 2022- March 2023																
CBA Account 062564 10269028			Income					Expenditure								Balance
Date	Description	No.	Amt	Fundraise	Grant	Int	Other	No.	Amt	Fundraise	Maintenance	Fees	Assets	Grants	Other	
	Opening Balance															6,628.53
7-Sep-22	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.05						54.05	
13-Sep-22	Telstra Internet							DD	41.00						41.00	
21-Sep-22	100 visitors EFV8 Club Rally (Tanya)	DD	500.00	500.00												
28-Sep-22	Yenda Producers (weed spray)							41	223.90		223.90					
5-Oct-22	Souvenir Sales at PO		39.00	39.00												
7-Oct-22	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.05						54.05	
13-Oct-22	Telstra Internet							DD	41.00						41.00	
7-Nov-22	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.05						54.05	
14-Nov-22	Telstra Internet							DD	41.00						41.00	
7-Dec-22	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.05						54.05	
8-Dec-22	Starter motor & Blades for rideon mower							42	152.00		152.00					
13-Dec-22	Telstra Internet							DD	41.00						41.00	
9-Jan-23	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.05						54.05	
13-Jan-23	Telstra Internet							DD	41.00						41.00	
7-Feb-23	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.05						54.05	
13-Feb-23	Telstra Internet							DD	41.00						41.00	
7-Mar-23	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.04						54.04	
13-Mar-23	Telstra Internet							DD	41.00						41.00	
27-Mar-23	Australia Post PO Box renewal							43	47.00						47.00	
27-Mar-23	Griffith Mowers clutch cable ride on							44	65.00		65.00					
	End of Month		539.00	539.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		1,153.24	0.00	440.90	0.00	0.00	665.34	47.00	0.00
	Opening Balance		6,628.53	DD = Direct Deposit/Debit												
	Plus Income for Month		539.00	Notes												
	Less Expenditure for Month		1,153.24													
	Closing Balance		6,014.29													
Bank Reconciliation																
	Closing Balance Bank Account. Statemnt		6,014.29													
	Plus O/S Deposits -															
	Less U/P Cheques -															
	Balance as per Income & Expenditure		6,014.29													

Whitton Historical Society Financial Report March 2023 - November 2023																	
CBA Account 062564 10269028			Income					Expenditure							Balance		
Date	Description	No.	Amt	Fundraise	Grant	Int	Other	No.	Amt	Fundraise	Maintenance	Fees	Assets	Grants	Other		
	Opening Balance															6,014.29	
11-Apr-23	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.04						54.04		
13-Apr-23	Telstra Internet							DD	25.00						25.00		
10-May-23	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.04						54.04		
15-May-23	Telstra Internet							DD	25.00						25.00		
8-Jun-23	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.04						54.04		
13-Jun-23	Telstra Internet							DD	25.00						25.00		
7-Jul-23	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.04						54.04		
13-Jul-23	Telstra Internet							DD	25.00						25.00		
7-Aug-23	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.04						54.04		
14-Aug-23	Telstra Internet							DD	25.00						25.00		
7-Sep-23	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	54.04						54.04		
13-Sep-23	Telstra Internet							DD	25.00						25.00		
9-Oct-23	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	60.05						60.05		
13-Oct-23	Telstra Internet							DD	25.00						25.00		
13-Oct-23	Tour Group (245) Car Tour	DD	1,225.00	1,225.00													
20-Oct-23	Entry Fees/Gift shop		129.00	129.00													
7-Nov-23	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	60.05						60.05		
13-Nov-23	Telstra Internet							DD	25.00						25.00		
16-Nov-23	Big Lift Catering share							45	107.93						107.93		
	End of Month		1,354.00	1,354.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		752.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	644.34	107.93	0.00
	Opening Balance		6,014.29					DD = Direct Deposit/Debit					Notes				
	Plus Income for Month		1,354.00														
	Less Expenditure for Month		752.27														
	Closing Balance		6,616.02														

Bank Reconciliation			
Closing Balance Bank Account. Statemnt			6,616.02
Plus O/S Deposits -			
Less U/P Cheques -			
Balance as per Income & Expenditure			6,616.02

Whitton Historical Society Financial Report December 2023 - August 2024

CBA Account 062564 10269028		Income						Expenditure								Balance
Date	Description	No.	Amt	Fundraise	Grant	Int	Other	No.	Amt	Fundraise	Maintenance	Fees	Assets	Grants	Other	
	Opening Balance															6,616.02
7-Dec-23	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	60.05							60.05
13-Dec-23	Telstra Internet							DD	25.00							25.00
8-Jan-24	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	60.05							60.05
15-Jan-24	Telstra Internet							DD	25.00							25.00
7-Feb-24	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	60.05							60.05
22-Feb-24	Australia Post PO Box renewal							46	49.00							49.00
7-Mar-24	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	60.05							60.05
8-Apr-24	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	61.05							61.05
7-May-24	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	61.05							61.05
7-Jun-24	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	61.05							61.05
8-Jul-24	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	61.05							61.05
8-Aug-24	Total Mail,3C Protect,Office365 Monthly							DD	61.05							61.05
	End of Month		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		644.45		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	644.45
																0.00

Opening Balance	6,616.02	DD = Direct Deposit/Debit
Plus Income for Month	0.00	
Less Expenditure for Month	644.45	
Closing Balance	5,971.57	

Notes

Bank Reconciliation

Closing Balance Bank Account. Statement		5,971.57
Plus O/S Deposits -		
Less U/P Cheques -		
Balance as per Income & Expenditure		5,971.57

9. NOTICES OF MOTION

10. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

11. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS

AUTHOR/S: Executive Assistant to the General Manager & Mayor
APPROVER/S: General Manager

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council notes the Councillor activity reports submitted for the period between 15 October 2024 to 26 November 2024.

Cr George Weston	
20 October 2024	Councillors Tour of Leeton Shire Council Operational Facilities
30 October 2024	Council Meeting Wrap Up Video with GM
2 & 3 November 2024	Formal Councillor Induction Training with Locale Learning over two days
6 November 2024	Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific – Pre-Roundtable Meeting, and MLHD Meeting with Chief Executive Jill Ludford and Acting Board Chair Mr Adrian Linder
7 November 2024	Meeting with TfNSW, Griffith City Council and Leeton Shire Council for Wumbulgal Siding Project, RAMJO Water Sub-Committee Meeting and RAMJO Board Dinner
8 November 2024	RAMJO Board Meeting in Hay
9 November 2024	Outback Band Spectacular – Massed Band Concert
13 November 2024	Community Strengthening Grants Meeting
14 November 2024	ARIC Meeting and Country Mayors Association Pre AGM Dinner with Minister for Local Government
15 November 2024	Country Mayors Association AGM & Ordinary Meeting
16 November 2024	Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific – Pre-Roundtable Meeting
17-19 November 2024	LGNSW Annual Conference
19 November 2024	Mayoral Alliance for the Pacific Round Table – with Minister Pat Conroy
21 November 2024	2024 MLHD Annual Public Meeting

Cr Sandra Nardi	
20 October 2024	Councillors Tour of Leeton Shire Council Operational Facilities
2 November 2024	Formal Councillor Induction Training with Locale Learning (Day 1 only)
13 November 2024	Community Strengthening Grants Meeting

Cr Nicholas Wright	
2 November 2024	Chelmsford Place Night Markets
2 & 3 November 2024	Formal Councillor Induction Training with Locale Learning over two days
14 November 2024	Light Up Leeton Committee Meeting
18 November 2024	Whitton Town Improvement Committee Meeting
20 November 2024	Community Strategic Plan Focus Groups - Recreation, Parks & Gardens, Volunteers and Supporting Accommodation Housing
21 November 2024	Country Universities Centre Multicultural Outreach Event
22 November 2024	Yanco Twilight Markets

Cr Michael Kidd	
29 October 2024	Sturt and Newell Highway Taskforce Meeting with Director of Operations Silas Darby and Minister Jenny Aitchison and inaugural meeting of the Leeton Collaborative (Health) Care Committee
31 October 2024	Leeton Hospital tour with Health Minister Ryan Park, NSW Director of Rural Health Luke Sloan and MLHD Executive (discussed local health issues with both)
2 & 3 November 2024	Formal Councillor Induction Training with Locale Learning over two days
6 November 2024	Riverina Regional Libraries AGM (zoom meeting)
11 November 2024	Leeton Shire Remembrance Day Service (representing Mayor Weston)
12 November 2024	Heritage Committee Meeting
17 November 2024	Induction and Orientation event for Roxy volunteers

12. CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING