



MIDCOAST
council

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-21



A yellow and grey bird is perched on a tree branch on the left side of the page. The background is a blurred forest scene. A large white circle is overlaid on the right side of the page, containing the text. There are also some decorative orange and green lines on the page.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live, the Gathang-speaking people and pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside in the MidCoast Council area.

We extend our respect to elders past and present, and to all future cultural-knowledge holders.



MIDCOAST
COUNCIL

PART ONE

OUR COUNCIL

OUR MIDCOAST STATISTICS



POPULATION
93,836

(ABS ERP 2019)



192km
of coastline

10,052 km²



3,607km
ROADS
657
BRIDGES

7,309
BUSINESSES
(REMPAN)



58
NATIONAL
PARKS



195
towns
villages
& localities

INTEGRATED PLANNING & REPORTING

All NSW councils are required by legislation to develop long-term, medium-term and short-term plans as part of the NSW Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

The framework ensures that plans are transparent and easy to understand for the community.

Council's integrated planning documents include the following:

- Community Strategic Plan – MidCoast 2030: Shared Vision, Shared Responsibility
- Delivery Program
- Operational Plan
- Resourcing Strategy (including Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Strategy and Plans, and a Workforce Strategy)

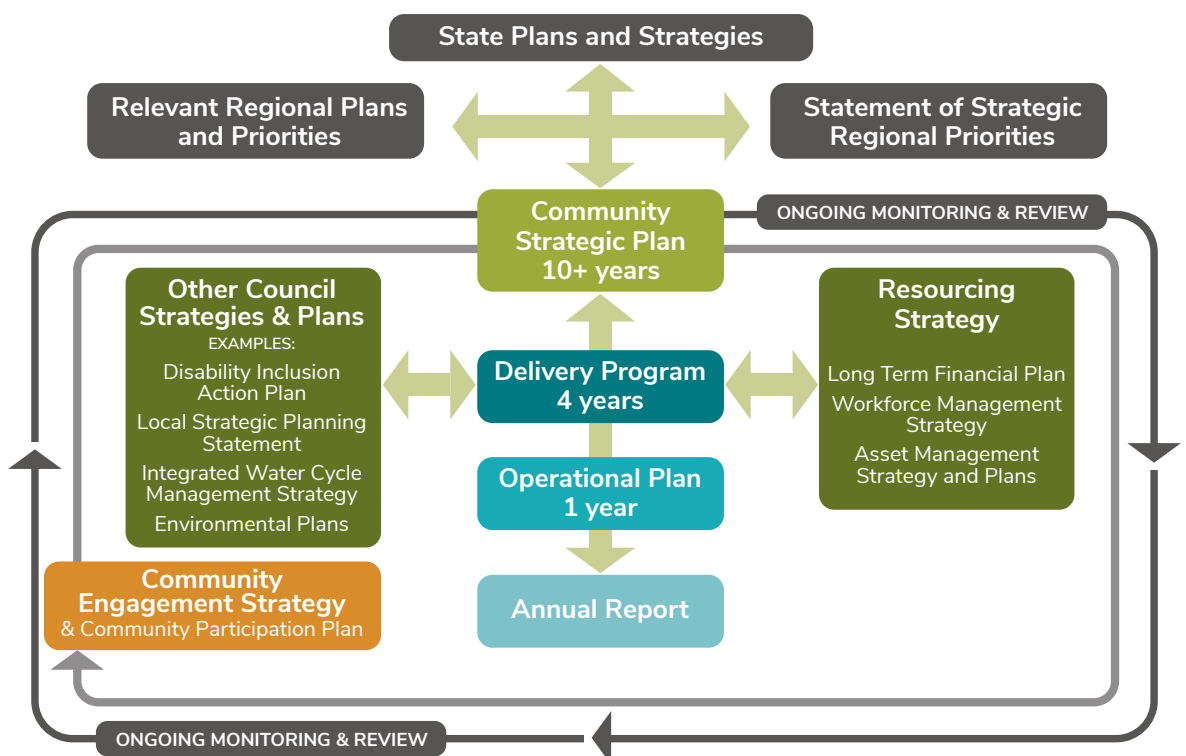
Progress reports on Delivery Program (six-monthly)

The six-monthly progress reports provide Council with an update of our progress against the activities detailed in the Delivery Program.

Annual Report

The Annual Report provides the community, Councillors and staff with a report of work completed by Council during the year, providing a transparent insight into our operations and decision-making processes.

- Focuses on Council's implementation of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan
- Includes information required by legislation



MAYOR'S MESSAGE

In reflecting on the last 12 months in the MidCoast, I have nothing but pride and gratitude for our community. While parts of our community have continued to recover from the devastation of bushfires, other parts have had to endure record flooding.

Our daily lives have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, navigating challenging and uncertain times for our region.

As a community we continue to rise to the challenges that come our way and work together to be stronger than ever.

Once again, I would like to thank our volunteers who really are the heart of our community. Over 1,700 volunteers help and support the delivery of Council services, and there are thousands across our community who make a difference in peoples' lives every day. The MidCoast region would not be what it is without their commitment, dedication and passion.

This year has been particularly difficult for our volunteers, who haven't been able to give to their community in the way they would like to due to COVID restrictions.

Last year I paid particular mention of the Rural Fire Service for their efforts during the bushfires, and this year it is the efforts of the SES and other emergency services who assisted our community during the March 2021 floods.

This flooding event was one of the most significant our region has experienced for many years, and had a large impact on our community. At the peak of the flood over 100 roads across the region were closed, illustrating how isolated many of our communities were during this event.

It also presented us with a significant clean up, and our team coordinated the collection of more than 50,000 tonnes of flood waste from the community. This was a massive effort and at one point saw a fleet of 50 trucks collecting and transporting waste from flood damaged areas.

More than 2,000 people attended a recovery centre we established in Taree to gain advice and support, and we continue to support our community through the recovery.

Over the past year as a Council we have also adopted several significant documents, including the first MidCoast Cultural Plan, a Biodiversity Framework for the region and an important Climate Change Policy and Strategy.

Throughout all this, I am proud of the Council staff who continue to deliver services to our community. They have made adjustments to how services are delivered and how we connect with, and continue to focus on, our community.

I am very proud to be part of this community and to be part of MidCoast Council.



Cr David West
Mayor

GENERAL MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Delivering services to help and support our community has been the focus of the past 12 months, despite the number of challenges that have come our way.

Record flooding and a global pandemic have had a physical and emotional impact across our region.

We continue to support our community to recover from the natural disasters experienced over the last two years. Recovering and rebuilding from bushfires and floods are still very real experiences for many.

Through COVID-19 our priority has been and remains the safety and well-being of our community, staff and volunteers. We have continued to follow the advice of the Australian Government and NSW Health in implementing measures to help minimise any possible infections.

This has meant various services have had to adjust their delivery methods at times, but despite the changing situation, we have been here, every day for our community. I am proud of our team and the effort they have invested into implementing new ways of doing things to support our community during this time.

Despite these challenges we have continued to deliver on infrastructure needs, with over \$20 million of road work finalised during the reporting year. We have also delivered a range of community projects and started work on some significant community projects including our new studio space at the Manning Entertainment Centre. Our support for local businesses included the launch of the shopmidcoast gift card program, providing the community with a way to shop local.

In January we consolidated our administration staff in our new Administration and Customer Service Centre at Yalawanyi Ganya in Taree, providing opportunities for our staff to collaborate more effectively and delivering cost savings in areas such as electricity and printing.

Working with local language holders to name the building Yalawanyi Ganya was a significant and rewarding experience, and signifies our commitment to the re-emergence of the Gathang language.

Yalawanyi Ganya has also provided the community with a tremendous resource during the adversity we have faced over the last 12 months. The Local Emergency Management Committee has established an Emergency Operations Centre in the building on two occasions.



Along with thanking staff for their ongoing contributions, I would also like to thank the elected body for their continued commitment to the community and I look forward to working with our newly elected Council in the year ahead.

Adrian Panuccio
General Manager



OUR MISSION

We deliver benefits for our community in a way that adds value and builds trust.

VISION

We strive to be recognised as a place of unique environmental and cultural significance. Our strong community connection, coupled with our innovative development and growing economy builds the quality of life we value.

OUR VALUES

We value... our unique, diverse and culturally rich communities

Our diverse communities offer active and social opportunities and are safe places where we work together with a creative focus, acknowledging our rich history and culture.

We value... a connected community

We are socially and physically connected with each other, by ensuring we have activities, facilities, roads, footpaths and technology that are upgraded and well maintained.

We value... our environment

Our natural environment is protected and enhanced, while we maintain our growing urban centres and manage our resources wisely.

We value... our thriving and growing economy

We are a place where people want to live, work and play and where business is resilient and adaptable to change by utilising knowledge and expertise that supports innovation.

We value... strong leadership and shared vision

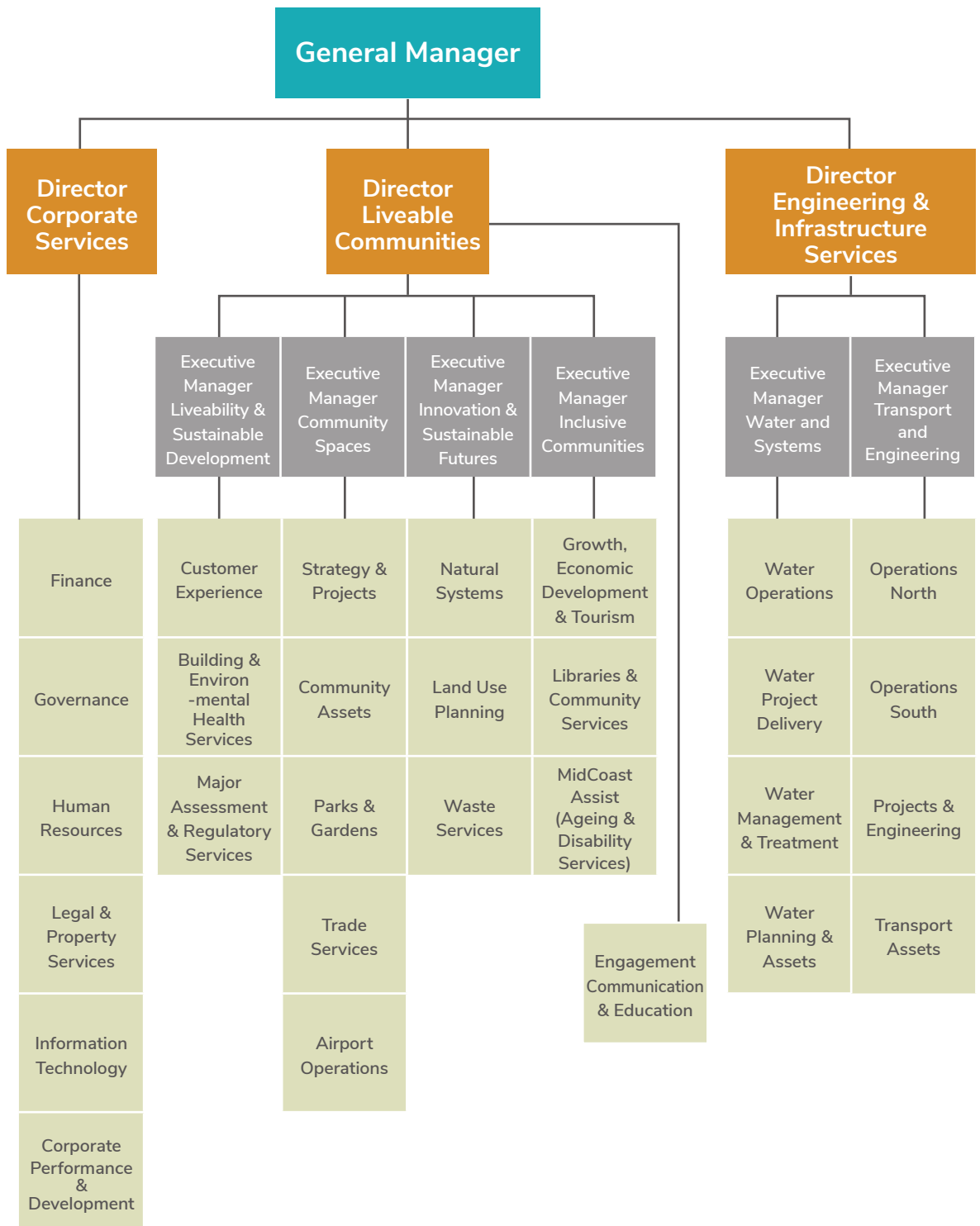
We work in partnerships towards a shared vision that provides value for money and is community focused.



OUR STRUCTURE

Our organisation is structured to effectively deliver infrastructure and services for the community.

The chart provides an overview of how our service areas are represented.



HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY

Council is committed to undertaking ongoing and meaningful engagement with its community and stakeholders.

We engage with community in an effective, timely and transparent manner to foster collaboration, cooperation and increased understanding on issues that affect you, and to ensure that your views are considered in the decision-making of Council.

There are many ways to have your say and contribute to the decisions made in the MidCoast Council area (subject to any health orders).



Vote

for Councillors every four years through the local government election for MidCoast Council



Arrange to speak

at a public or open forum held on Council meeting days



Write to or phone

elected members of Council



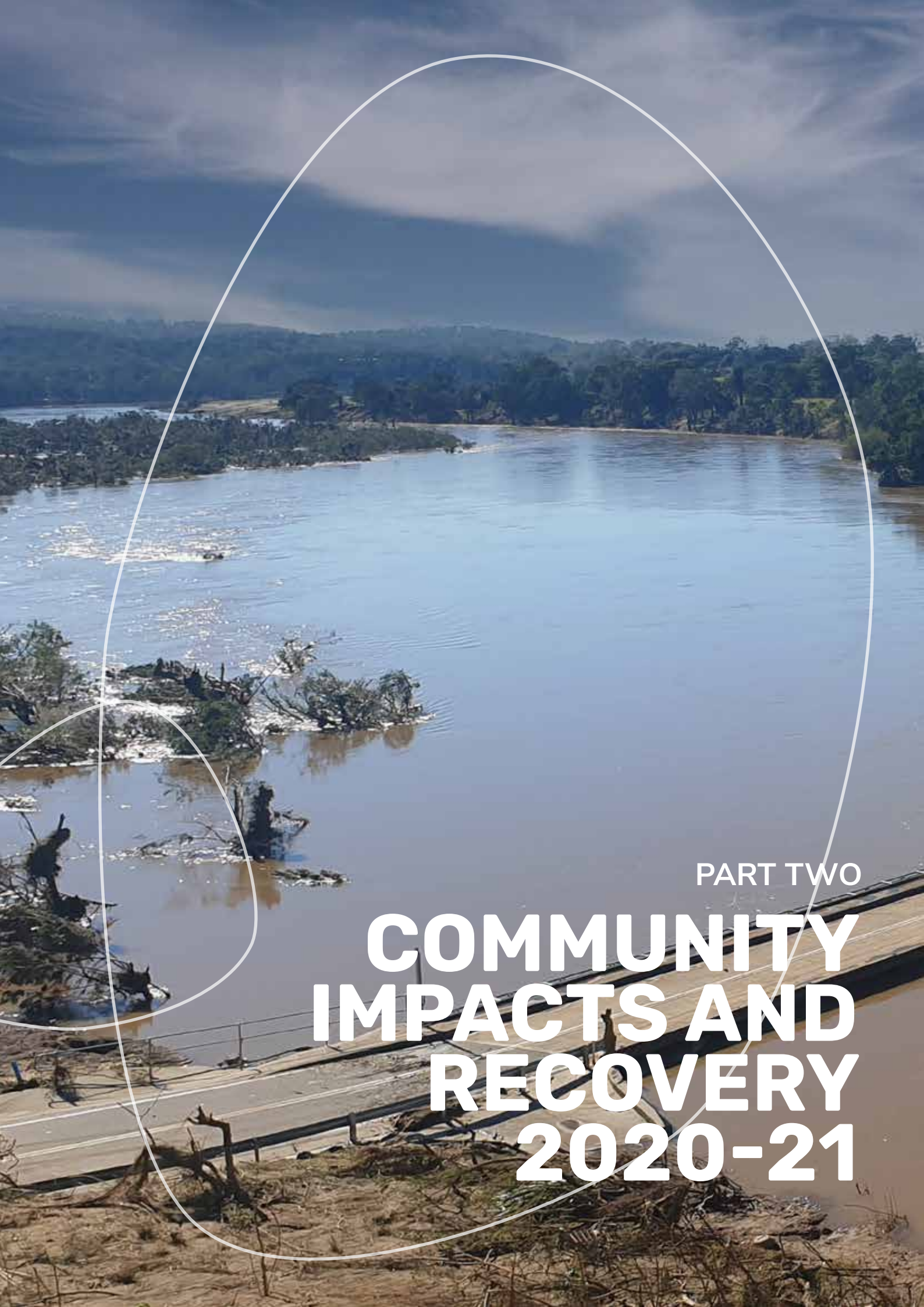
Get social

and connect with us through Facebook and Instagram



Make a submission

on a diverse range of projects when they're on exhibition, including our Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Visit our Have Your Say page: haveyoursay.midcoast.nsw.gov.au



PART TWO

**COMMUNITY
IMPACTS AND
RECOVERY
2020-21**

OUR RESILIENT COMMUNITY

This year has demanded a level of resilience among the MidCoast community like no other.

Together we have continued on our recovery journey from the devastating 2019/20 bushfires, and adapted the way we interact with each other personally and in business, with COVID-19 playing an on-going role in our day-to-day lives.

Our tight-knit communities and ability to support each other through tough times was put to good use again in March 2021, with a flood event delivering extensive damage across the region, with many of our valued community-members displaced from their homes and businesses.

March 2021 flood

Classified as one of the biggest floods in living memory, the MidCoast region was declared a natural disaster area after extreme weather hit the region from 18 – 23 March 2021. Major flooding inundated our towns, landslides and extensive damage to roads and bridges saw communities isolated, while beaches, parks and reserves, sports fields, campgrounds and other community facilities were rendered unusable.

Houses were lost or damaged, properties were devastated, inundated businesses suffered extensive damage and loss of stock, and infrastructure was destroyed. Structures including houses, fencing, water tanks and silage were swept away. Livestock, pets and other fauna were lost, trees and plants across the area were washed away or damaged, waterways became contaminated and beaches were stripped of sand.

- During the event a number of communities were isolated
- At the height of the flood over 100 roads were closed
- An Emergency Operations Centre operated out of Yalawanyi Ganya, Council's Administration and Customer Service Centre
- As part of our response, strike teams were established with staff from Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Rural Fire Service and the Australian Defence Force, supporting impacted communities and assessing over 1500 damaged premises
- A fleet of over 50 trucks removed flood waste from kerbsides
- A Flood Recovery Centre was set-up in partnership with Resilience NSW, operating from the former Taree Council building – between March and June, over 2,000 people visited the centre to seek recovery assistance





While damaged infrastructure was addressed and access restored for isolated communities, many people were displaced from their homes and businesses, they lost possessions and pets, business-owners lost fixtures, stock and the ability to trade.

As we support our community over the months and potentially years towards recovery, issues of preparedness, resilience and warning systems have been raised.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to impact the MidCoast region, as it has across Australia and the rest of the world.

During this challenging time our priority has been and remains the safety and well-being of our community, staff and volunteers. In operating our services to the community, we have continued to follow the advice of NSW Health and the Office of Local Government.

The pandemic has had an impact on the local economy, with businesses having to adapt their service models depending on the requirements of the State at any given point in time. Employment rates in accommodation and food services remain below pre-COVID-19 rates.

At various points throughout the reporting period Council's services have been impacted, particularly community facing services such as the Manning Entertainment Centre, Manning Regional Art Gallery, public swimming pools, libraries and halls.

Customer service has continued throughout the period, with phone lines, email and online facilities in operation when customer service centres have closed to meet the requirements of the Public Health Order.

Live streaming of Council meetings began during COVID-19 to allow the community to watch proceedings via Council's website.

Bushfire recovery

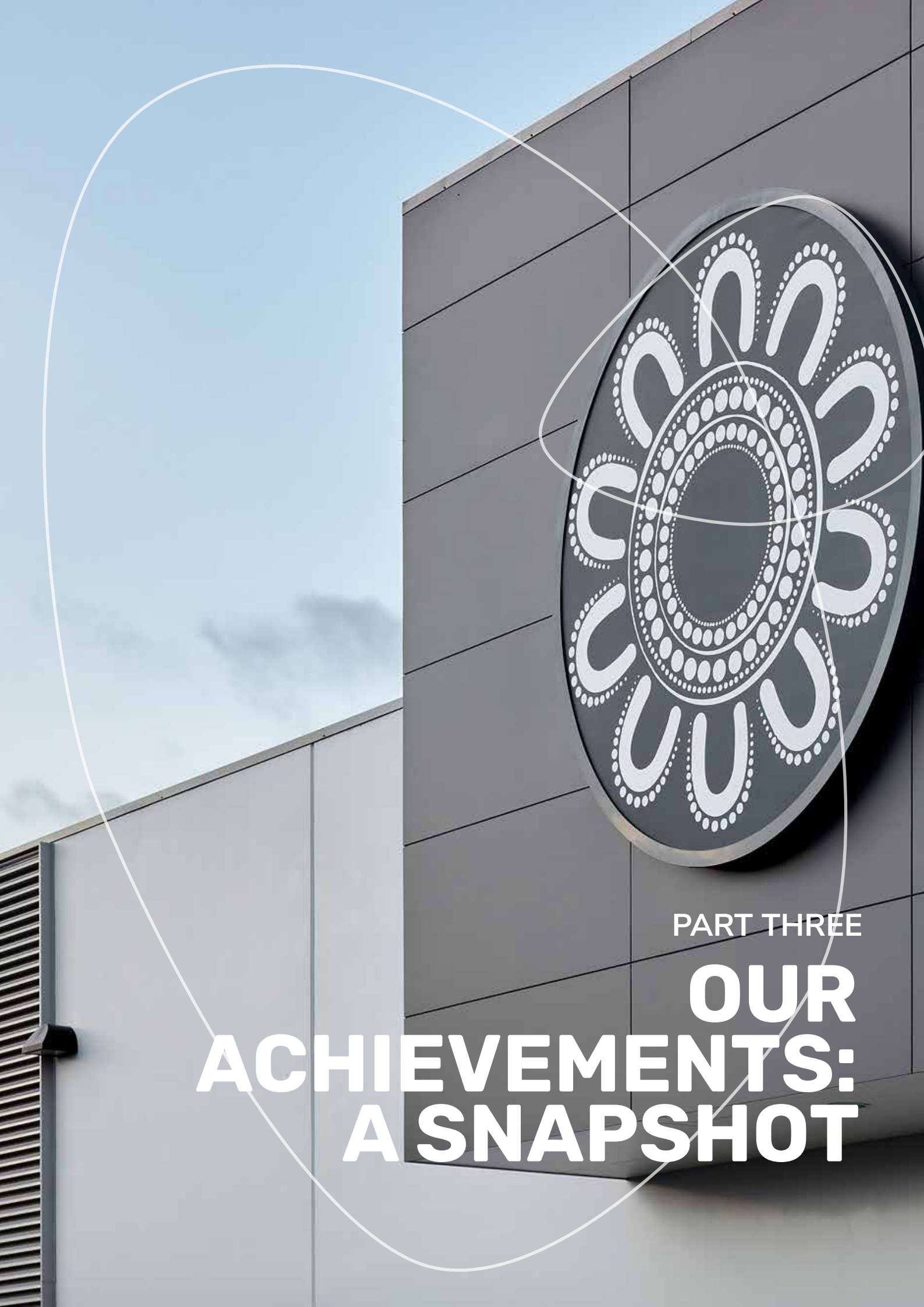
Recovery from the 2019/20 bushfires continues to progress in rural areas surrounding Taree, Gloucester and Forster.

Our Community Recovery team has hosted 67 events with recovery service providers and communities, attracting a total of 2,077 attendees. They have continued working with 13 bushfire affected communities to develop community-led recovery action plans, resulting in a range of community projects and Council support for ongoing recovery events and preparedness initiatives.

The MidCoast Bushfire Recovery Reference Group, led by Mayor David West and Deputy Mayor Claire Pontin, brings together representatives from 13 local communities, community development expertise, and representatives from the MidCoast Renewal Committee. Meeting monthly, this group provides strategic advice and feedback to assist Council in supporting recovery. Along with identifying the importance of clear communication in any emergency declaration, actions have included:

- Clarifying emergency management processes, including operation of evacuation centres in regards to both people and animals
- Establishing givit.org as the preferred pathway for donations after a disaster
- Community Resilience Teams set up at Old Bar and Harrington
- Identifying community halls as information points / shelters for rural communities, with discussions underway with Emergency Services to formalise this network for communication purposes in an emergency



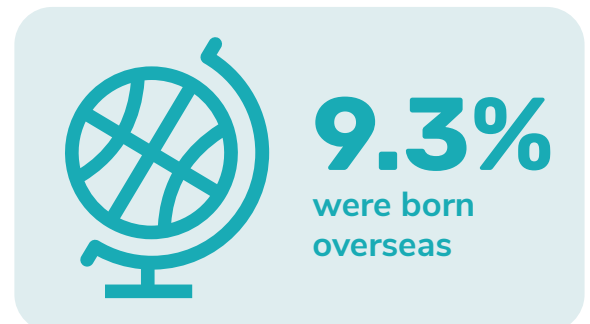
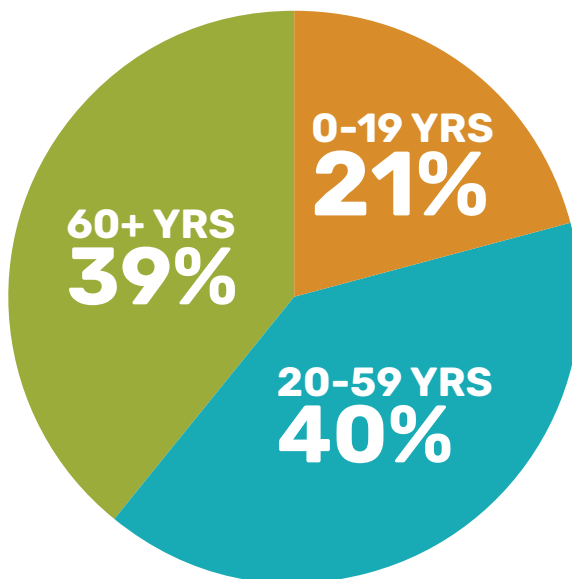
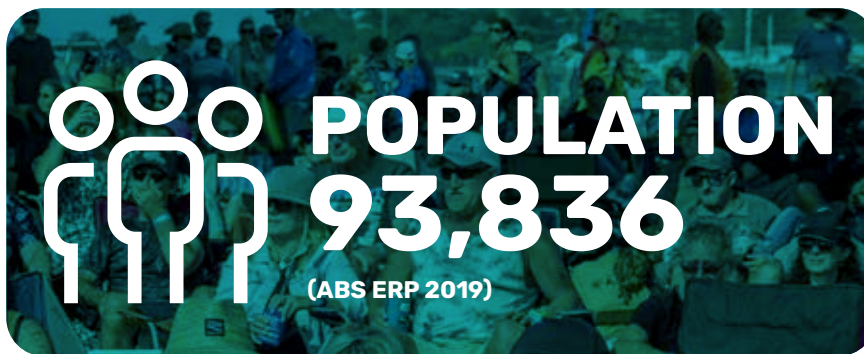


PART THREE

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS: A SNAPSHOT

1 OUR UNIQUE, DIVERSE & CULTURALLY RICH COMMUNITIES

We are 93,836 people, living in 195 unique towns and villages, spread across 10,052km². Our needs, backgrounds, interests, skills, ambitions and aspirations are diverse, and this is reflected in the broad range of services and facilities available across the MidCoast.



MIDCOAST ASSIST

Referrals from existing clients, along with the addition of new services, saw client numbers continue to grow across the board.

Ageing services

- Active and Older client numbers increased by 44%
- A new Domestic Assistance service was launched to fill a gap in the local market - it offers general house cleaning to older people and people with a disability
- Personal alarms and technology equipment were distributed to Active and Older clients under the Commonwealth Home Support Program, supported by a “Technology in Homes” initiative to help clients use their new devices
- Technology helped meet the demand from older people to stay safe and connected during the uncertainty around COVID-19
- Home Care Packages client numbers increased by 7%
- Over 33,000 hours of services were provided through Home Care Packages, helping clients stay in their own homes



Disability services

- NDIS participants accessing Support Coordination services increased by 11%
- NDIS participants using Financial Intermediary services increased by 10%, supported by a new system that gives clients access to real-time information and greater control over their NDIS plan funds
- A new Supported Independent Living house was opened during the year allowing an older NDIS participant to live more independently in a house rather than an aged care facility
- *'MCA Crew'* won a number of awards at the Taree Eisteddfod for their very powerful performances - they trained for many hours and were coached and costumed by their talented support workers

LIBRARIES

Innovation in the way services were delivered due to COVID saw a 14.7% increase in total number of loans versus last year.

- 747,291 items were borrowed over the 12 months
- A focus on expanding eResources through frontlisted titles saw our eBooks collection grow by 20%, and eAudio by 40%
- As a result, eBook loans grew by 8% to 32,663, and eAudio loans were up by 22%, to 25,432

Refurbishing Tea Gardens library

In April we were successful in securing \$379,280 in grant funding for Tea Gardens library. The upgrade will provide additional floor space of 97m², an events/meeting space with after-hours access, and expansion of the existing entry ramp.

Click and collect your library items

A new Click and Collect Service was launched in October 2020, providing library members with a more convenient way to access our collection by pre-ordering online. While it was offered as a minimum contact service in response to COVID, takeup has been positive and the service will continue.

First to market with “community access library”

In May we claimed a NSW first with the introduction of Harrington’s “community access library”. Under the new model, our staff are present until 1pm each weekday, with members using their swipe card to gain entry and “self serve” after hours.

The flexible approach was developed with the help of the Harrington community and is a great opportunity to transform the library into an active community hub.



VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers continued to play a vital role in delivering services across the MidCoast community during the year.

From beautifying parks and reserves and providing valuable support in our libraries, to supporting tourism, heritage and graffiti removal, the generosity of spirit and willingness of MidCoast locals to donate their time and effort sets us apart from other communities.

Despite the pandemic reducing the number of volunteer opportunities at times throughout the year, our volunteer numbers dropped by just 6% to around 1,600.

National Volunteers Week 17 – 23 May 2021

Council staff and Councillors thanked volunteers with a number of events across the region including morning tea at Gloucester Soldiers Club, Club Forster, Club Taree and Hawks Nest Golf Club.

“We wanted to thank them in person for their tireless work for the benefit of their community, and we also enjoy the chance to spoil them – just a little”, explained Mayor, David West.



MANNING ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE

While the pandemic has resulted in unprecedented times for the entertainment industry, adjustments were made to allow continued delivery of services at the Manning Entertainment Centre.

Between March and September 2020, the centre was closed temporarily due to COVID restrictions. During this time, staff produced a series of videos – “Behind the Curtains” – which they showcased, along with past performances via a newly established YouTube Channel.

Reopening to the public on 22 September 2020 under strict COVID-19 safe conditions, patrons enjoyed a screening of the National Theatre Live film “One Man Two Guvnors”, with the next few months focused on promoting local talent including Taree Arts Council, The Jay Davis Band and Goodfellas with Matt Zarb.

An impressive achievement of 22 shows in 21 days during December 2020 saw a busy-as-ever festive season, featuring end of year dance recitals, presentations and concerts.

Construction begins for new studio space

Starting in April 2021 with the appointment of contractor, Reeman Construction Pty Ltd, delivery of the highly anticipated multi-purpose studio space got underway. Once completed in mid-2022, the state-of-the-art space will include:

- An auditorium with a minimum floor space of 400m² to accommodate roughly 200 people.
- Retractable seating for up to 150 people
- Portable stage
- Front of house facilities including commercial kitchen, toilets and portico between existing MEC foyer and new auditorium
- Back of house facilities including toilets and dressing rooms
- Audio and cinema projection equipment
- Covered loading dock
- Suitable control room for theatrical equipment operation
- Versatile rigging system to cater for a range of different shows
- Landscaping, footpaths and other external works



The design, construction and fit-out of the new studio space is funded jointly by Council, the community and both the State and Federal Governments. A very generous bequest from the estate of June Neruda Flett in 2007, specifically earmarked for the maintenance or improvement of the Manning Entertainment Centre makes up the remaining funds. At the Council meeting on 28 April 2021, MidCoast councillors unanimously agreed to name the new facility the ‘Beryl Jane Flett Studio’ in honour of June’s mother Beryl.

MANNING REGIONAL ART GALLERY

Agility was a key focus for staff at the Manning Regional Art Gallery this year, who continued to present a diverse range of cultural experiences to the community.

PACKED LOST FOUND

The 2020 exhibition PACKED LOST FOUND was published into a book in early 2021, collating 21 personal stories of the November 2019 bushfires in the MidCoast region. The visual and oral stories, documented by Tess Kerbel and photographed by Julie Slavin, explore people's experiences through objects that they packed, lost or found during and after the fires.

This collaborative publication supports our community, and helps to make sense of those harrowing times, with over 2,000 books distributed throughout the region to those deeply impacted by the crisis.



Manning River Turtle project - small turtles with a big message

3,000 turtle weavings, made by hands large and small from across the MidCoast, formed a special art installation along the Manning River, as part of the global initiative 'withNature2020'.

It was a collaborative effort, coordinated by MidCoast Council, artist Shona Wilson, Manning Regional Art Gallery, Aussie Ark and the Manning River Turtle Group, along with local teachers and students, disability groups and aged care facilities – all designed to bring awareness to the endangered Manning River Helmeted Turtle.

The project received widespread interest, with drone footage captured during the installation featured on the 'withNature2020' YouTube channel, reaching an international audience.

MANNING REGIONAL ART GALLERY

Public Gallery space at Yalawanyi Ganya

As part of Council's move into the new Administration and Customer Service Centre in Taree, Manning Regional Art Gallery staff were quick to fill gallery space in the foyer with its first exhibition during January 2021. Titled Barray marrung duumu, meaning 'Keep Country well', the exhibition included Biripi and Worimi weavings created at the Gallery during the devastating fires of 2019. Community members used the safe and cool space of the gallery to share stories, have a cuppa, debrief and weave stories of the area with Aboriginal weavers and Elders as part of the Saltwater Freshwater Aboriginal Art Award and Cultural Object Touring exhibition.

Also featured were original works by local artists Brittany Cochrane and Raechel Saunders that were selected to have elements incorporated in the design of the new administration and customer service centre.



YOUTH

Youth-friendly spaces

The need for youth-friendly spaces is identified as a high priority in the Youth Strategic Plan. To help us understand what makes a space, service or business safe, welcoming and inclusive for young people, we asked young people! The online survey was undertaken in April 2021 during youth week and included a prize draw to encourage participation. Feedback received from 31 respondents will help us plan for a range of actions relating to youth-friendly spaces, with further consultation to be undertaken.

NSW Youth Week

COVID impacted our regular Youth Week celebrations for the second year running. While we did squeeze two Youth Weeks into the last 12-months, one in September 2020 and the other running in its traditional April 2021 timeslot, restrictions meant a lot of our activity was delivered virtually or on a smaller scale. Here's some of what we achieved:

- 48 hour Youth Week Challenge, including short story writing, photography, skateboarding, acting, cooking and more
- Youth Week Schools Challenge, in partnership with the Manning Regional Art Gallery and Museums & Galleries of NSW to highlight the Material Sound exhibition
- Youth Week Photo Exhibition
- On a Side Note radio promo
- Skate workshops
- Live n Loud events live streamed through Pluto Entertainment on Facebook and YouTube. The first Live n Loud (September 2020) had an online reach of around 1,700 people, with the second (April 2021) reaching around 1,000 people.



Left: Youth Week Right: Live n Loud

MIDCOAST CULTURAL PLAN

This year saw the introduction of the first Cultural Plan for our region – a foundational document that will help us build on our strengths and better support local arts and culture.

The process began early in 2020, with the establishment of a reference group to guide an extensive range of community consultation initiatives. Throughout its development, challenges brought about by bushfires, floods and the continuing pandemic demonstrated that cultural identity and community ties are more important than ever. With further opportunities for community feedback during October 2020 and April 2021, the inaugural MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 was adopted by Council in June 2021. You can review the plan here: www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/plans



HERITAGE

Throughout the MidCoast we are surrounded with reminders of our proud indigenous, pioneering, agricultural and maritime history.

Along with a group of passionate volunteers, local historical societies, and Heritage NSW, we continue to celebrate our heritage and preserve the past for our future generations. And this year, in a partnership between the Manning Regional Art Gallery and MidCoast Stories, we scored a National Trust Heritage Award.

The “Conservation of Objects” award was presented for our exhibition of the Manning Hospital Collection of paintings by Pixie O’Harris and Olaf Harris.

Working in partnership with the MidCoast Stories team, Janine Roberts and Penny Teerman, the Gallery hosted the fabulous exhibition The Forgotten Works of Pixie O’Harris and Olaf Harris, curated by Sue Mitchell, in early 2020.

The project was made possible with the support of over 60 volunteers including a special conservation team under the expert guidance of Tracey Golds.



'Goodnight in Nurseryland' Pixie O'Harris 1957, photo by Julie Slavin.

NATIONAL SORRY DAY

A day to share and reflect on the stolen generations.

MidCoast Council worked with local Aboriginal Elders to develop a short video clip about Sorry Day, aimed at starting the conversation among our community about the meaning of Sorry Day. The video “What does Sorry Day mean?” was a meaningful way to share the true history of our local Biripi Elders and how the stolen generation continues to affect them. It also features selected MidCoast Council staff explaining what Sorry Day means to them, and highlights the importance of reconciliation and acknowledging the true history around dispossession and forced removal of children.

Watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0BRsnAPe1M>

ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY WORKING PARTIES

Our ongoing commitment to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initiatives saw the reestablishment of the Manning Aboriginal Community Working Party over the past two years.

Recent strategic planning assisted with the revision of existing plans, and implementing a strategic plan that encompasses actions to achieve aspirational needs for the Manning Aboriginal Community. The Manning Aboriginal Community Working Party has supported different initiatives, such as funding opportunities, capacity building, and promoting a well-connected community. It has become a peak body for all other services to engage with and ensure they are culturally and ethically sound.

Two strategic planning workshops were held in May and June 2021 to establish a working group in Gloucester. Aspirational needs and barriers of the Gloucester Aboriginal community were identified with the help of key Aboriginal community stakeholders providing a wealth of knowledge. Regular meetings continue as they implement steps towards achieving set outcomes.

Planning is in progress to provide similar support to establish more community-led working parties in other areas across the region with consultation already initiated in the Great Lakes area (Forster/Tuncurry and Tea Gardens).



Gloucester workshops

ABORIGINAL SERVICES EXPO

MidCoast Council, with the support of Taree High School, Lions Club and the Manning Aboriginal Community Working Party held an Aboriginal Services Expo in Taree in April 2021.

The event provided an opportunity for over 15 service providers to promote available services and referral pathways to around 100 community members. One of the services offered was free birth certificate registration. The Taree Lions Club cooked up a free sausage sizzle for the community and Taree High School provided the venue for a very successful event. The Aboriginal Services Expo was the inaugural event with plans to hold the expo annually across the MidCoast region.



2 A CONNECTED COMMUNITY

Our physical and social connections are key to our strong sense of community. It's our infrastructure and facilities, and services delivered by people who work with and alongside council, that connect us. Among others, it's our roads and bridges, water and sewer connections, recreational facilities and our rangers.



166 KM OF
FOOTPATH/CYCLEWAY



FOCUS ON OUR ROADS AND BRIDGES

When it comes to improving the roads that connect local communities, we're making significant progress through the continuation of our \$100 million roads program.

In 2020-21 over \$10 million was invested as part of the \$100 million roads program to upgrade:

- Avalon Road (Krambach)
- Old Bar Road (Pampoolah)
- The Lakes Way (Mayers Flat)
- Isabella Street (Wingham)
- The Bucketts Way (Tinonee)
- Gloucester Road (Burrell Creek)

In addition, over \$8 million was spent on rehabilitating the following roads:

- Hannam Vale Road (Hannam Vale)
- Queen Street (Gloucester)
- Victor Avenue (Forster)
- McCullagh Carpark (Wingham)
- Cavill Avenue (Forster)
- Primrose Street (Wingham)
- Ogden Street (Tea Gardens)
- Lansdowne Road (Cundletown)
- Blackhead Road (Hallidays Point)



Queen Street during works and after completion



FOCUS ON OUR ROADS AND BRIDGES

\$3.6 million was allocated to urban and rural improvement projects that saw 159,000m² of urban roads and 213,000m² of rural roads resurfaced.

As well as the bigger projects on the roads that connect our towns and villages, you'll also see maintenance crews out across the region every day, slashing along roadsides, pothole patching, and resheeting gravel roads. Maintenance crews were diverted after the March 2021 floods to repair extensive damage across the region and restore access for isolated communities.

We also continued to focus on replacing ageing timber bridges during 2020-21 with five bridges completed and another 17 bridges in the design or construction phase. Bridges completed include:

- Wards Bridge
- Reltons Bridge
- McQueens Bridge
- Deep Creek Bridge
- Browns Creek Bridge



Above: Gravel resheeting



Anti-clockwise from top: McQueens Bridge, Browns Creek Bridge before works and after works

WATER AND SEWER

Water security improvements at Nabiac

Federal funding was announced in June 2020 for the completion of works to increase capacity at the Nabiac Inland Aquifer System – an important element in our response to drought conditions. Extending the project means an additional six million litres per day will be added to the plant’s overall capacity, taking it up to 18 million litres and reducing pressure on the Manning and northern Great Lakes areas in times of drought.

COVID-19 testing of Council’s sewerage treatment plants

In September 2020 Council began participating in NSW Health’s research program to test sewerage for COVID-19. Samples continue to be collected from sewerage treatment plants nominated by NSW Health and sent to their laboratory for testing.

No positive results were recorded for the period September 2020 to June 2021.

Tea Gardens sewer network upgrade

Concept planning for a significant upgrade to the Tea Gardens sewer network was given the green light when a successful consultant was appointed to the project in May 2021.

The new rising main will direct sewage from Tea Gardens directly to the Hawks Nest Treatment Plant, relieving pressure on the existing network and significantly reducing the risk of sewer overflows occurring during wet weather. A new transfer pump station will also be constructed at the existing vacuum sewer station off Spinifex Way.

The concept design is expected to be completed by early December 2021, with detailed design due to start in February 2022.

Find out more at www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/teagardensrisingmain .



Tea Gardens

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Sport and recreation is an important part of our lifestyle, and with over 3,000ha of parks and open space being managed across the MidCoast our team is busy year-round.

Fitness stations at Forster Keys

While Forster Keys Progress Association provided funding for two fitness stations along Elizabeth Reserve Forster Keys, council staff were quick to step in and complete the installation. Station one includes a royal chest press, royal lat pulldown and fit rider, while station two offers a rowing machine, pendulum swing, leg press and royal ski runner.



Skatepark upgrade for Bulahdelah

Set in Mountain Park at Bulahdelah, this unique facility is designed around the cultural heritage of the area. The upgrade provided an exciting new skatepark, a learn-to-ride pathway, and car park, all designed to complement existing facilities which include exercise stations, playground and equipment, and barbecues and picnic facilities.

Contributions towards bringing this project to life were made by Bulahdelah Lions Club, Mountain Park users and local community stakeholders, with grant funding of \$310,000.



Surf club refurbishment for Hawks Nest

Hawks Nest Surf Lifesaving Club in conjunction with Council teams undertook a total refurbishment of the surf club. The building was gutted and refurbished with a new roof and exterior finishes, including all-ability access, a training room, accessible amenities, a function centre and an internal lift.



PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Old Bar storage shed and netball courts

Funded through the Stronger Country Communities Fund, a seven-bay storage shed and two all-weather netball / basketball courts were constructed at Old Bar Park sports ground.

The shed allows storage for many sports groups including Old Bar Pirates RLFC (Junior and Senior), Old Bar Little Athletics Centre Inc, Old Bar Cricket Club, Old Bar Netball Club, Old Bar Beach Festival Inc and Saltwater Boardriders Inc.

Gloucester District Park lighting upgrade

The lighting at #1 Oval in Gloucester District Park was upgraded to LED to improve the lux levels, which in turn enables better use of the ground by sporting bodies such as Gloucester Cricket Club, Gloucester Rugby Union and Gloucester Soccer Club.

New amenities for Pebbly Beach Forster

The new Pebbly Beach amenities block provides a much needed upgrade at this popular Forster location. It includes three unisex toilets, a baby change facility and an accessible toilet, with the design matching the recently upgraded amenities at Forster's Main Beach and Little Street.

Stroud Showground amenities

Existing amenities were refurbished internally to meet hygiene standards and modernise fixtures and fittings. Ceiling lining, and wall and floor tiles were replaced, along with all fittings, doors and jambs. Showers were reconfigured to provide two individual stalls in each toilet block. Light fittings were replaced with more energy efficient LEDs.



Top row: Old Bar sheds and netball courts.

Bottom row: Pebbly Beach, Forster amenities before and after works

3 OUR ENVIRONMENT

Our region spans 10,052 km² and boasts the world heritage listed Barrington Tops mountain range at its highest point.

We're famous for our forests, waterways and beaches. Our lands are watered by 38 rivers including the only double delta in the southern hemisphere. We boast the state's tallest single drop waterfall, and enjoy an incredible triple lakes system. We are committed to protecting our stunning natural environment.

58
NATIONAL
PARKS



192km
of coastline



ONE
WORLD
HERITAGE
LISTED
AREA



13 MAJOR
WATER
CATCHMENTS



5 COASTAL
LAKES &
LAGOONS



5 WETLANDS
OF NATIONAL
SIGNIFICANCE



17 LISTED
THREATENED
ECOLOGICAL
COMMUNITIES



50,387
GENERAL
WASTE
SERVICES



YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL LEVY AT WORK

Protecting and enhancing our natural environment was nominated as one of the community's highest priorities in our Community Strategic Plan, MidCoast 2030.

During the past 12 months, the environmental rate contributed \$4.221 million to use as a platform to attract additional investment from a range of partners including the NSW Environmental Trust, NSW Marine Estate Management Strategy, Landcare Australia, NSW Coast and Estuary Program and Rescuing our Waterways.

Projects made possible include:

- Waterway health assessment reporting
- Water Sensitive Urban Design projects and priorities
- Biodiversity Framework development
- Manning River Estuary and Catchment Management Program development
- Implementation of Karuah Catchment Management Plan
- Strategic land purchase for biodiversity, water quality and bushfire management
- Smiths Lake estuary opening
- Flying-fox Camp Management Plan preparation
- Dunns Creek (south Forster) Catchment water quality improvement project
- Water Sensitive Urban Design proprietary device (GPT) maintenance and refurbishment
- Lower Myall River dredging
- Farquhar Inlet dredging
- Maintenance (bush regeneration) of natural area reserves
- Bushfire recovery
- Development of Climate Change Policy and Strategy
- Big Swamp / Cattai Wetlands works
- Acid sulfate soil management priority sites Manning River floodplain
- Old Bar – Manning Point Coastal Management Program



PLANNING FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT

This year saw a number of important environmental plans and programs reach the final stages of development.

Public exhibition was undertaken in May and June 2021 for the region’s first Biodiversity Framework, a roadmap that outlines a consolidated approach to conserving our natural heritage. The community was also invited to provide feedback around the same time on plans that included:

- Manning River Estuary and Catchment Management Program
- MidCoast Greening Strategy
- Vegetation Management Policy
- Flying-fox Camp Management Plan

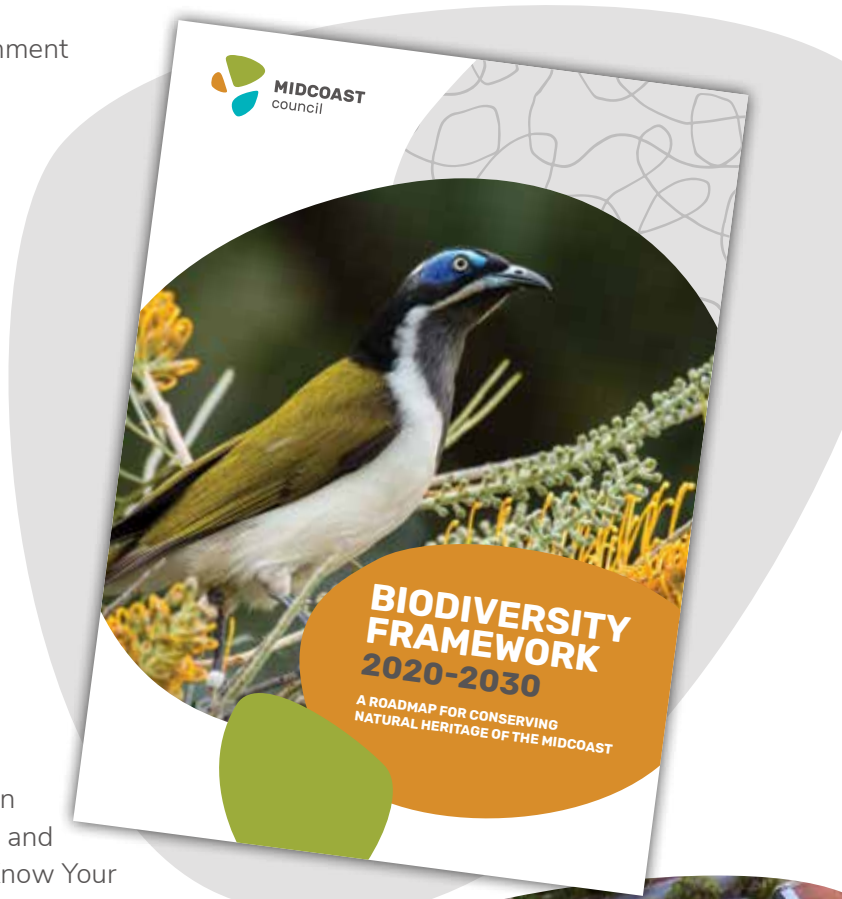
MidCoast Council’s Climate Change Policy was adopted earlier in 2021. All programs have drawn on the input of a diverse range of stakeholders and community members from across the region.

URBAN ZONING

An extensive consultation was undertaken early in 2020 focusing on the urban zones that apply to towns and villages across the MidCoast. The “Know Your Zone” campaign invited feedback on our Housing Strategy, Urban Land Monitor, Large Lot Residential supply and demand analysis, Recreation Zones Review, Infrastructure Zones Review, Employment Zones Review and Manning Health/Taree CBD Precinct Plan. After addressing submissions received, the documents were adopted by Council in December 2020.

This body of work is part of developing new MidCoast planning frameworks – a Local Environment Plan and a Development Control Plan – to provide a clear, consistent controls across the region.

Work is continuing on developing a rural strategy, another key element in guiding the way we manage land use across the MidCoast, catering for the needs of our current communities and helping to shape our future.



LOCAL STRATEGIC PLANNING STATEMENT

A 20-year land use vision for the MidCoast is set out in our Local Strategic Planning Statement, an important framework that outlines how growth and change will be managed to maintain the high levels of liveability, environmental amenity and rural character that the MidCoast is renowned for.

The statement identifies ten planning priorities to achieve our vision, along with actions to ensure progress is monitored and reported. Based on the key values set out in MidCoast 2030: Shared Vision, Shared Responsibility, the statement aligns with the aspirations of our community. The MidCoast Local Strategic Planning Statement was placed on exhibition in August 2020 and later adopted on 23 September 2020.



CELEBRATING OUR WATERWAYS

Healthy catchments and waterways are vital systems that keep our communities thriving.

Monitoring the health of our waterways is an ongoing focus, with results presented each year through our Waterways and Catchment Report Card. Under this year's theme, "Sharing the Science", an online launch event featured presenters from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment discussing how monitoring and ecosystem modelling are used to manage local waterways. They also covered the impacts of drought, fires and flooding on waterway health.

The results showcased in the 2020 report indicate that our waterways fared well considering the region experienced three of the most extreme climatic conditions in recent times – drought, fires and flooding – all of which can have a significant impact on water quality.

For more information visit www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/reportcard



WEED MANAGEMENT

Weed management remains a key focus for our region, with a variety of high priority weed infestations threatening local biodiversity.

A range of weeds are being monitored and managed under integrated weed management programs on public and private land. These include:

- Alligator weed and Senegal tea in the Karuah and Manning catchments
- Parrot's feather management on the Myall River for the protection of the Ramsar listed Myall Lakes
- Amazon frogbit and Tropical soda apple eradication projects to control these new and emerging species
- Tree Poppy (*Bocconia* spp) eradication project managing this newly detected species (first recorded occurrence for the State)
- Groundsel bush eradication project managing this weed of limited distribution
- African olive and Long-leaf willow primrose eradication / containment projects managing these weeds of limited distribution
- Ground asparagus management project for asset protection at priority sites
- Bitou bush (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera*) along the coastal strip of the MidCoast LGA

A trial was undertaken using agricultural drones in the application of herbicide to control Bitou bush. The drone has offered some advantages over conventional helicopter aerial spraying including being better able to target affected areas leading to a reduction in herbicide usage across the coastal landscape.



A drone Bitou Bush weed-spraying



FOCUS ON OUR WILDLIFE

Boost for our koalas

With our koala population still recovering from the 2019 bushfires, a Bushfire Recovery for Wildlife and Habitat Community Grant of \$130,000 from the Federal Government is a welcome boost.

A range of local groups and agencies are working together to help local koalas, including: MidCoast Council; Koalas in Care; MidCoast2Tops Landcare; Taree Indigenous Development and Employment (TIDE); and Tinonee Public School.

The funding will support the work they have been doing and allow them to implement programs in the future, with each partner committing additional funds and resources to the project, including Council through the environmental rate.

The fires burnt 237,100 hectares (24%) of the MidCoast region, which had a devastating impact on local koalas. This project will establish koala refuges, assist landholders to strengthen their own koala populations, and understand and help facilitate safe koala movement by identifying important corridors and community road safety programs. Together these actions will help rebuild and strengthen local communities and koala populations.

The funds will be distributed across five focus areas including:

- the implementation of a koala and community road safety program at Tinonee
- working with TIDE to plant koala food trees at Cattai Wetlands
- koala connectivity modelling and evaluating revegetation scenarios in the Kiwarrak Area of Regional Koala Significance
- strengthening koala refuges and corridors, and assisting bushfire affected landowners to re-establish vegetation on their properties.



FOCUS ON OUR WILDLIFE



Flying-fox Camp Management Plan

In 2021, with funding assistance provided by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and in consultation with the community, we prepared a Flying-fox Camp Management Plan to guide the future management of flying-fox camps within the MidCoast region.

There are 18 known flying-fox camps across the region and while the plan considers the issue around all camps, the following five camps were the focus of the plan as they are all located on Council-owned land and adjacent to residential areas:

- Karloo Street Reserve, Forster
- Cocos Crescent Reserve, Forster
- Pacific Palms
- Smiths Lake
- Hawks Nest

The plan will guide flying-fox management at each camp, aiming to alleviate their impact on neighbouring residents in a way that does not detract from the ecological needs and welfare of the flying-fox, which is a State and Federal listed threatened species. The plan will also help us obtain approvals for on-ground works and apply for future funding.

Ultimately, we want to reduce the impacts the camps have on the local community by providing support programs for neighbouring residents. We understand that living near a camp can be difficult at times, but we're committed to helping everyone co-exist and ensure these protected species are safeguarded into the future.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Promotion of recycling opportunities takes to the road

Bus signage is helping to promote ways of correctly disposing of difficult items such as household and car batteries, smoke detectors, fluoro globes, motor oil, paint and gas bottles. The message, which features on various bus routes in the Great Lakes area, encourages the community to visit their community recycling centres in Gloucester, Taree and Tuncurry to drop of these items free of charge.

The promotion is part of a partnership between MidCoast Council, MidWaste and the NSW Government.

Right: Bus signage promoting recycling

Below: 2021 MRHT project



School Activities - plastic pollution reduction project

One of our biggest and most profound environmental impacts is plastic pollution. For the past few years we have partnered with Take3 for the Sea, Hunter Local Land Services and Taree Indigenous Employment and Development (TIDE) to engage with schools and address the impact of plastic waste on marine environments.

The program builds school relationships, supports students to be proactive and resilient and helps bring their ideas on source reduction to fruition. This year's focus was on the Manning River Helmeted Turtle Project.

All MidCoast schools were encouraged to send representatives to participate in a one-day workshop to design student-led projects. Participating students became advocates for our aquatic hero species, the endangered Manning River Helmeted Turtle which is unique to our region. The program aims to increase students' knowledge of litter, threats to marine and river environments, and to promote activities that will help protect local species.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Targeting waste diversion into the future

Our waste services team has implemented multiple operational improvements to increase waste diversion into the future. A new waste facilities and operations contract was awarded to JR Richards & Sons in partnership with Resource Recovery Australia in March 2021. It was designed to deliver positive sustainable outcomes by increasing focus on waste avoidance and resource recovery activities such as increased investment in tip shops, implementing new processes and procedures at transfer stations and installing innovative equipment to better manage waste streams.

The waste services team is undertaking a review of the MidCoast Waste Strategy 2030 to ensure it aligns with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041.

Future projects include a program to process food organic and garden organic waste, which aims to divert an estimated 40% of material from landfill starting in 2025.

The Tuncurry Waste Management Centre Tip Shop recently completed an awning extension. This project was funded by the EPA NSW Better Waste and Recycling Program. As well as an access point for bulky item intake, the facility now has a 22m x 15m awning providing 330m² of undercover storage for recovered items intended for sale. The new awning allows storage of items previously exposed to the elements, as well as a comfortable and safe environment for customers to browse the extensive collection. The project also included an additional awning span to allow sheltered access to the adjacent amenities block as well as installation of a 20,000L water tank to capture rainwater to be used on site for purposes such as garden maintenance.

This project is another step forward in Council's approach to resource recovery and the diversion of waste to landfill. It will provide the community with a new opportunity to engage in MidCoast Council's Waste Management Strategy 2030 to "Re-imagine Waste".



WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste disposal vouchers

A decision to cancel the 2020 bulky waste kerbside collection was made at the height of COVID-19 restrictions, to comply with the Federal Government directive not to undertake non-essential services. The bulky waste clean-up was considered non-essential given it does not include waste that could rot or decay.

Instead, two waste disposal vouchers were provided to every MidCoast Council ratepayer who receives a domestic waste service, valid until June 2021.

The vouchers allowed customers to dispose of bulky items at any time throughout the extended period, and the list of accepted items was expanded to include green waste, tyres, batteries, mattresses and other materials that can't usually be included in the kerbside collection.

Of the 93,176 vouchers issued, almost 24,000 (or 25%) were redeemed, generating 4,840 tonnes of bulky waste – almost double the volume collected annually through the traditional Bulky waste collection.

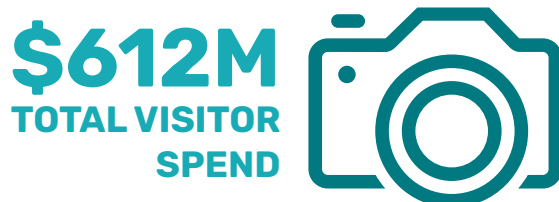


4 OUR THRIVING & GROWING ECONOMY

We are a place where people want to live, work and play; where business is resilient and adaptable to change by using knowledge and expertise that supports innovation. We work with business and community representatives to promote the region, maximising the value of current and emerging opportunities.



MAIN INDUSTRIES



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Over the last 12 months, local businesses have endured a series of events that have put pressure on their sustainability. While many were still recovering from the bushfires of 2019, COVID-19 sent Australia into lockdown and many businesses were forced to temporarily close their doors.

New social distancing policies meant local businesses had to change the way they operate to remain sustainable and meet legal obligations. Online sales, contact-free pick up, booking ahead and limiting customer numbers are some of the changes. Trends in visitor behaviour showed holiday-makers are staying longer, but with a shorter lead time due to the uncertainty.

The floods of March 2021 impacted businesses in the Manning region with parts of the central business district of Taree and Wingham under large amounts of water during the height of the flood. Several businesses in Taree are reported to have closed their doors and others had to relocate to continue to trade.

Aside from the flooding impact on businesses and homes, the agricultural sector lost stock, supplies and crops as they were washed away, or water damaged.

While our business community has shown resilience and agility, a key focus for future economic development is to ensure local businesses have the skills and resources to meet challenges, strengthen resilience and manage risks through workshops, local initiatives, grants and events.

EVENT SPONSORSHIP

During the 2020-2021 financial year, two rounds of event sponsorship were offered to the community. In total 49 applications for sponsorship were received. 40 of the applications were successful with a total value of \$134,950 sponsorship being allocated.

SOCIAL MEDIA WORKSHOPS

The Barrington Coast team developed and delivered a range of digital and social media workshops to assist local businesses grow their knowledge and confidence. This was particularly important in building resilience and capacity following the series of recent disasters and COVID.

14 businesses attended in person (20 people). 62 business signed-up for video and training manual. 100% of attendees said they would recommend the workshop to others and rated the workshop as excellent or very good.



GRANT WRITING WORKSHOPS

Recognising the importance of grant funding to local businesses and community groups, eight workshops were held during March and April 2021 at locations including Wingham, Gloucester, Tea Gardens, Elands, Forster and Taree. Approximately 120 attendees participated from a range of community organisations and businesses.



BUSINESS PLANNING WORKSHOP

A two-day workshop for people working in creative industries was held in Taree during March 2021 with 30 attendees. Participants were taken through a process to develop a one page business plan as well as individual sessions on budget development, pricing tips, time management and marketing ideas.

FESTIVAL OF PLACE

MidCoast residents had the chance to show they love where they live when the Festival of Place came to the region in March / April 2021, an initiative of the NSW Government Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. Some of our best local musicians performed on main streets, continuing to support revitalisation of the heart of our communities after a challenging year. Performances popped up in Harrington, Nabic, Wingham, Hawks Nest, Tea Gardens and Stroud, with performers such as Heath Lancaster, Matty Zarb, Maddy Andrews, Jake Davey, Chelsea Berman, Harrison Hoven and The Grasscutters. The Festival also invited locals to contribute to a collaborative public art mural by creating a 10cm canvas that was colour mapped to produce a large artwork.



COVID SUPPORT

The economic development team was active in supporting businesses during the COVID crisis via the advertising of a comprehensive support directory located on Council's website. This assisted local businesses to navigate the restrictions and support that was available. A business liaison support service was created offering phone and email access for businesses needing assistance including understanding how the restrictions affected individual businesses and where to access assistance in relation to finances, leasing agreements and legal services. This support service also offered a friendly ear for businesses who were under pressure. As new information came to hand our networks and distribution lists were used to direct information to the affected businesses.

#SHOPMIDCOAST

The #shopmidcoast giftcard program was launched 1 September 2020 with more than 100 businesses across the region participating as a loading or redeeming store or in some instances both. Participation levels have continued to grow with more than 300 businesses now active. Over \$100,000 has been loaded onto almost 1,800 individual gift cards since the launch all of which will be spent at participating businesses, keeping it local and directly impacting the MidCoast economy by over \$200,000. The program was promoted across a range of channels including TV, print and online.



LOCAL HAPPINESS HAMPERS

Small Business Month was celebrated across the MidCoast region in October 2020 through a joint venture between MidCoast Council and the Taree, Harrington, Wingham and Forster Tuncurry Business Chambers, supported by grant funding from the NSW Government. In the wake of bushfires and the pandemic, this has been one of the toughest years many small businesses have faced. Many have suffered immeasurable losses. Some have pivoted more

than once to retain customers and others have worked to capture new markets and radically change their offerings. To

ensure these efforts were acknowledged, we asked our community to nominate businesses they felt deserved recognition and a little pampering. From over 160 nominations, we delivered 100 happiness hampers to the deserving "winners". The hampers were filled with products sourced from our local area – just another way to recognise and celebrate our businesses. We have a fabulous business community and they all deserve to be celebrated.



TOURISM

Every minute of every day, tourism delivers \$1,164 of visitor spend into the Barrington Coast. That's an average of over \$1.67million per day.

BARRINGTON COAST WEBSITE

The new Barrington Coast destination website went live at the end of October 2020, designed to make the process of researching a potential visit to our region engaging and fun. The site is experience-led, showcasing what's on offer tailored to a range of audiences. It includes influencer recommendations, local insight within Explore Field Guides, and a range of useful resources to enhance a visitor's stay while they're here.

Website statistics from October 2020 to June 2021 were:

- Pageviews: 327,882 (286,293 unique views)
- Most popular landing pages were "What's On" (events) 12,279 views and "Explore" with 10,625 views
- Top Local Guide/Blog: "Finding the top 10 waterfalls in the Barrington Coast", 10,377 pageviews
- 581 local businesses listed on the website



SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS

Barrington Coast has had huge success with its social media marketing with 36% growth in total social media audience (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) equating to 118,452 views. Destination marketing posted 1,147 pieces of content across social media reaching 15.7m people, resulting in 459,215 likes, 31,815 comments and 600,000 video views



NORTHERN GATEWAY

The Northern Gateway project is a priority project for the MidCoast, providing opportunities for employment in transport industries given its proximity to the Pacific Highway.

The 74-hectare Northern Gateway project is located between the Taree Regional Airport and the northern Taree interchange with the Pacific Highway (at Cundletown). Over time, this hub could connect to other transport forms including air and rail. Expected uses include freight transport facilities, truck depots, transport depots, warehouses and distribution centres.

While Stage 1 of the project was rezoned in 2016 and is being developed by Jim Pearson Transport, Stage 2 was rezoned in early 2021 ready for consideration by transport related industries as a future transport site.

With State Government funding, we're also working with Transport for NSW to improve transport infrastructure in the area surrounding the hub, including a new roundabout and improvements to the Pacific Highway interchange. Work on the roundabout commenced in early 2021 with an expected completion date of October 2021.



5 STRONG LEADERSHIP AND SHARED VISION

We deliver benefits for our community in a way that adds value and builds trust.



1.83 MILLION WEB PAGE VIEWS
▲ UP 13% ▲



34 NEW CITIZENS



13,200 FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS
▲ UP 36%



OVER 10,000 HAVE YOUR SAY VISITS



7 INDUSTRY AWARDS



352 MEDIA RELEASES SENT

67 COMMUNITY RECOVERY EVENTS



COUNCIL MEETINGS

Councillor attendance at meetings for the period 1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021

	Ordinary Meeting	Extra Ordinary Meeting	Strategic Committee Meetings
Total Number of Meetings	13	1	3
Cr Bell	13	1	2
Cr Christensen	11	1	-
Cr Epov	12	1	3
Cr Fowler	13	1	1
Cr Hutchinson	12	1	3
Cr Keegan	4	-	-
Cr McWilliams	8	-	-
Cr Pontin	13	1	3
Cr Roberts	12	1	2
Cr Smith	13	1	3
Cr West	12	1	3

*Councillor K Bell and Councillor T Fowler requested to attend via Audio Visual Link, and this was resolved by Council. However due to technical failure, Councillor Bell and Councillor Fowler were unable to participate in the 12 May Strategic Committee Meeting reflected in the above results.

Councillor J McWilliams resigned as at 5 March 2021 and Councillor D Keegan resigned as at 9 April 2021.

Left to right:

Cr Christensen,
Cr Roberts,
Cr Hutchinson,
Cr Keegan,
Cr Pontin
(Deputy Mayor),
Cr Epov, Cr Bell,
Cr Smith,
Cr West (Mayor),
Cr Fowler and
Cr McWilliams



YALAWANYI GANYA

Council's new administration and customer service centre at Yalawanyi Ganya opened to the public on 7 January 2021 as planned.

The project was completed on time, under budget and was officially opened at a ceremony on Friday 5 February 2021. The opening ceremony brought together contractors, Gathang language-holders, Biripi artists, Councillors, local Aboriginal Elders and staff who were involved in the design and construction journey.

The name Yalawanyi Ganya was developed in close consultation with Gathang language-holders, the language of the Birrbay, Warrimay and Guringay people of the MidCoast region. The first exhibition proudly shown in the public art space was the *Barray marrung duumu* exhibit, meaning 'keep country well', a reflection of and ode to Aboriginal culture in our area. Among the works were the original pieces by local artists Brittany Cochrane and Raechel Saunders that were selected to have elements incorporated in the design of Yalawanyi Ganya. 'Living as One on Biripi Country' and 'Connected' feature prominently throughout the building.

Moving administrative staff into a centralised office was the culmination of a body of work following the merger of four former entities. The move aims to contribute operational efficiencies through improved collaboration and streamlined processes. The Biripi Way Taree Administration and Customer Service Centre is supported by customer service points that have been retained in Forster, Gloucester, Tea Gardens and Stroud.

Other Council buildings that remain operational and staffed include works depots, libraries, Visitor Information Centres, Manning Entertainment Centre, Manning Regional Art Gallery, and Taree Regional Airport.

Upgrades to technology and equipment have been implemented to ensure continued communication is maintained.



EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRE

In response to the flooding event in March 2021 an Emergency Operations Centre was established in the training rooms of the new Council Administration and Customer Service Centre, Yalawanyi Ganya.

Participating services including NSW Police, SES, Ambulance, Health, Roads and Maritime Services, Local Land Services, and Disaster Welfare joined Council staff in monitoring and managing the situation as it unfolded and throughout clean-up operations.

The training rooms, designed with these types of emergencies in mind, provided the technology and facilities required to ensure operations were implemented effectively.

Supporting the Emergency Operations Centre, a flood recovery hub was established on Council's website, providing updated information and resources to assist the community during and following the flood event. The site continues to be updated and can be viewed at www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/floodrecovery



Risk management roadmap

With the aim of developing a consolidated, Council-wide risk management vision and solution, our risk management roadmap provides organisational arrangements for the 'MidCoast Council approach' to risk management, incorporating strategies and practical activities that we will undertake to embed risk management across the organisation. It also outlines how success will be measured and identifies opportunities for improvement.

Our roadmap focuses on integrating risk management into our business practices in a manner that is positive, proactive and, most importantly, adds value for our staff and operations at all levels of the organisation.

EMPLOYMENT BASED TRAINING STRATEGY

We have developed and implemented an Employment Based Training Strategy in support of one of the key objectives in our Workforce Strategy - to attract and retain apprentices, trainees and graduates into our organisation.

Since its inception, apprentices, trainees, cadets and graduates have increased from 1.3% of our workforce to 5.5% (14 to 55), exceeding our original target of 3% by 2022.

- Graduates and cadets – currently eight graduates
 - o four graduates and one cadet move into permanent positions with Council
 - o All positions have been retained
- Apprentices and trainees – currently 47 registrations
 - o 21 successful completions
 - o seven acquiring permanent positions with Council
 - o ten progress to higher level positions with Council
 - o four choose to move into external positions upon successful completion

Find out more about our Employment Based Training Strategy here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhfrSvwcCyQ>



COUNCIL AWARDS

NSW Local Government Excellence Awards

Council's Yalawanyi Ganya Office Centralisation Project won at the 2021 NSW Local Government Excellence Awards in the Special Project Initiative category. The award recognised the huge body of work which has delivered a space that is an important asset that will serve our local community for years to come.

Also announced at the NSW Local Government Excellence Awards, our response to the 2019/20 drought was "highly commended". As one of 12 finalists, the award acknowledged the hard work and prolonged effort from all parts of Council in what was an extremely challenging period.

The award coincides with the publication of 'A Drought Like No Other', a comprehensive review of the drought response strategy. Read it here: <https://www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/Water-Services/Water-Resilience/A-Drought-Like-No-Other>

National Trust Heritage Award

'Conservation of Objects' award was won by the Art Gallery and the MidCoast Stories team for a selection of paintings by Pixie O'Harris and Olaf Harris. Working in partnership with the MidCoast Stories team, Janine Roberts and Penny Teerman, the Manning Regional Art Gallery hosted the fabulous exhibition *The Forgotten Works of Pixie O'Harris and Olaf Harris*, curated by Sue Mitchell, in early 2020.



Claire Shultz and Stuart Small

NSW Training Awards

MidCoast Council has been selected as a finalist for the 2021 NSW Large Employer of the Year award. This is a fantastic achievement that showcases Council's commitment to the Vocational Education and Training sector. The winner will be announced at the NSW Training Awards presentation event on 9 October 2021. The winner will progress to the shortlisting process for the Australian Training Awards.

Water Industry Operators Association

Council's Matthew Agnew was named 'Operator of the Year' at an online event in August 2020. An amazing accolade for one of our treatment plant operators.

NSW IPWEA Engineering Excellence Awards

We received a "highly commended" in the 'New or improved Techniques' category at this year's prestigious IPWEA awards, for works completed on the construction of the Jimmys Beach Sand Transfer System.

At the same awards, our talented Claire Shultz, Works Engineer in Gloucester, was recognised for her significant contribution to Council, the local community and the broader engineering profession. Claire was also awarded a "highly commended".

The Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA) is the peak association for the professionals who deliver public works and engineering services to communities in Australia and New Zealand.

AUSTRALIA DAY 2021

This year's event was again a wonderful celebration of culture and diversity.

MidCoast Council marked Australia Day by hosting an Australian Citizenship Ceremony at Club Taree, welcoming 34 new citizens to the region. New citizens have an incredible impact on our country, and we wouldn't be as rich in diversity and culture as we are today without all the people who have come from all over the world and made the decision to call Australia home. Due to the challenging year of lockdown and restrictions, the decision was regrettably made to suspend the region-wide Australia Day awards for the year.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engagement in 2020-21 saw us continuing to work with our community to involve them in decision making.

While the way in which we can work with our community has had to adjust and be flexible based on changing circumstances around the pandemic, we have continued to involve our community through a variety of methods.

During the 2020-21 year we have consulted with our community on a range of significant strategic projects, including our Biodiversity Framework, Climate Change Policy, Greening Strategy and Vegetation Management Policy.

Our community was also heavily involved in the development of our inaugural Cultural Plan, and in a range of community facility projects such as the Tuncurry water playground, Gloucester's community garden and Tea Gardens jetty. We engaged extensively with the Wingham community on concept ideas for a central business district beautification project. Working with individual communities we have progressed local community plans for Gloucester, Wingham and North Arm Cove areas, with the Gloucester plan nearing completion.

Due to the impacts of the COVID pandemic our Community Conversations program has not taken place this year as planned, and we are currently looking at how this can be delivered moving forward.

CLIMATE CHANGE

In recent times, the MidCoast region has experienced first-hand the disastrous impacts of climate change.

In the worst bushfire season on record, the December 2019 fires burnt almost one quarter of the local government area and resulted in a significant loss of biodiversity, life and property. Our region also experienced an increase in the number of intense storm events resulting in coastal erosion and localised flooding; and a substantial reduction in annual rainfall led to a crippling drought and the introduction of Level 4 (severe) water restrictions for the very first time. Since 2009, the MidCoast LGA has had 23 natural disaster declarations; the second worst affected council area in NSW (NSW Office of Emergency Management, 2020). In declaring a state of climate emergency, Council has affirmed that urgent action is required by all levels of government, including local councils, to avert a climate crisis. To help us do this, Council has prepared a Climate Change Policy and Strategy, to both manage and reduce our greenhouse emissions, and adapt our practices and infrastructure to become more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

By adopting these documents, we have committed to achieving net zero greenhouse emissions from our operations (including facilities, fleet and waste) and 100% renewable electricity by 2040.

As part of raising community awareness about the actions proposed a video was produced and is available to view at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6T5UF5LkTE>



MIDCOAST COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND RESILIENCE SCHOLARSHIPS

Never has there been a better time to plan ahead in building resilient communities that can survive, recover and thrive in times of disruption.

MidCoast Council funded 25 scholarships in two micro-subjects with Charles Sturt University, “Building Community Resilience” and “Leading Change”.

Our involvement aimed to provide support, ideas and opportunities to build leadership capacity and develop collaborative strategies for the region’s recovery, empowering local community leaders to develop strong connections and drive positive change.

The scholarships were open to anyone living in the MidCoast region, including Councillors and Council staff, and were funded alongside other resilience and recovery initiatives under the Federal Government’s “Bushfire Recovery – Exception Assistance Immediate Support Package”.



6 GRANT FUNDING

Each year we proactively apply for funding and support to enhance and improve the infrastructure and services we deliver for our community.

Through opportunities provided by a range of funding bodies including the Federal and State Government, we focus on delivering in areas that include liveability, culture, our economy, infrastructure, development and our environment. The list below shows some of the funding we secured this year and the projects they will help us achieve.

Infrastructure

AMOUNT	FUNDING BODY	DESCRIPTION
\$25m	Federal and State	The Bucketts Way Stage 2 (Corridor Strategy) – three year program which is underway
\$3.9m	Federal and State	The Lakes Way and Blackhead Road roundabout – preliminary works underway Due for completion in June 2022
\$5.6m	Federal and State	Fixing Local Roads (Waitui Road, Muldoon Street, Cowper Street, Diamond Beach Road) All projects are due for completion in September 2022
\$9.375M	Federal and State	Ongoing \$100m roads program - \$9.375m this year
\$6.4m	State	Fixing Country Bridges (12 bridges in total) – three bridges in construction and remainder in design Due for completion in April 2023
\$6.8m	State	Safe and Secure Water Program – Nabic Water Treatment Plant Stage 2 upgrade
\$15m	State	Northern Gateway – Roundabout to facilitate access for heavy vehicles in construction Due for completion at end of 2021
\$15m	Federal	Bridges Renewal Program – Killabakh Creek Bridge, Cox Bridge and Little Tiri Bridge – all in construction Due for completion in December 2022
\$800k	Federal	Blackspot Program – Pulteney Street and York Street roundabout + Vehicle Activated Signs at four locations Project complete

Natural Systems

AMOUNT	FUNDING BODY	DESCRIPTION
\$150,000	Federal - Bushfire Recovery for Wildlife and Habitat Community Grants Program	Restoration of Fire affected and Refuge Rainforest in the NSW MidCoast LGA
\$80,800	State - Hunter Local Land Services	Marine Estate Management Strategy Initiative 1 Stage 2 Maintenance
\$143,500	Federal - Bushfire Recovery for Wildlife and Habitat Community Grants Program	Securing priority refuges for the Manning River Helmeted Turtle
\$130,000	Federal - Bushfire Recovery for Wildlife and Habitat Community Grants Program	Bushfire recovery for koalas and the community on the MidCoast
\$29,600	State - Crown Reserves Improvement Fund	Crowdy, Harrington and Manning Point Weed Control
\$17,580	State - Crown Reserves Improvement Fund	Aerial Bitou Control: Crowdy to Harrington lagoon
\$191,000	State - Hunter Local Land Services	MidCoast Council Partnership: Deer and Pest Project
\$108,150	State - Coast & Estuary Management Program	Manning River ECMP Stages 3-4
\$290,000	State - Hunter Local Land Services & Upper Hunter Weeds Authority	Weed Action Plan
\$425,000	State - Hunter Local Land Services	Post-fire Weed Management Project
\$20,000	State - Hunter Local Land Services	Tropical Soda Apple Program
\$15,000	State - Department of Primary Industries	Tropical Soda Apple Program
\$94,000	State - Hunter Local Land Services	Tropical Soda Apple Program

Libraries and Community Services

AMOUNT	FUNDING BODY	DESCRIPTION
\$500,000	State	Space-making: evolving Wingham Library Expand and renovate Wingham Library to enable it to hold a wider range of community activities. Expansion will add a further 200 m ² to facility
\$379,280	State	Transformed and connected: Evolving Tea Gardens Library Expand and renovate Tea Gardens Library. The facility will be expanded by 100 m ² . This will create a community meeting/events area, with after hours access
\$250,000	State	Recovering MidCoast To deliver a community grant program aimed at building resilience in bushfire affected communities
\$7,272	State	Tech Savvy Seniors To run a series of programs for older members of the community to build their technology skill set

Heritage

AMOUNT	FUNDING BODY	DESCRIPTION
\$7,000.00	Heritage NSW	For the Heritage Advisor
\$6,250.00	Heritage NSW	For the Local Heritage Fund*
\$2,000.00	NSW State Government	Contributing to Stage 5 restoration works for the Nabic War Memorial, which involved providing a sealed path to and around the Memorial
\$6,840.00	NSW State Government	To undertake restoration of the Coopernook War Memorial. Due to COVID-19 the works are not complete (to be finalised by the end 2021)

* Local Heritage Fund

MidCoast Council jointly supports improvements / restoration to heritage listed properties with Heritage NSW through the Local Heritage Fund. In 2020-2021 \$28,250 was allocated across 16 projects throughout the region with a total project value of \$130,670.

Community Spaces

AMOUNT	FUNDING BODY	DESCRIPTION
\$121,061	State	Bulahdelah Showground fencing and cattle shed
\$1,500,000	Federal	Fazio/Tuncurry Park Water Playground
\$250,000	Federal	Old Bar Park amenities upgrade
\$300,000	Federal	Tea Gardens Pool - Stage 1 all abilities access to site
\$400,000	Federal	Pelican Boardwalk - low level water sports landing
\$30,000	Federal	Stroud Showground MPC - furniture and kitchen equipment
\$330,000	Federal	Hawks Nest Providence Park amenities
\$700,000	Federal	Omaru Park Amenities and field upgrades
\$400,000	Federal	Tea Gardens Pool - Stage 2 disability access to pool
\$250,000	Federal	Gloucester Rec #1 - canteen and storage
\$300,000	Federal	Gloucester Netball - court reconstruction and amenities
\$400,000	Federal	Wingham Sporting Complex - grandstand roof
\$50,000	Federal	Allworth - boat ramp and fishing table
\$400,000	Federal	John Wright Park - amenities
\$250,000	Federal	Tuncurry Rockpool - playground
\$300,000	Federal	Bulahdelah Lions Park - amenities
\$68,293	Federal	Pacific Palms - rec ground upgrade
\$10,000	Federal	Harrington Mens Shed - dust extraction fans
\$75,000	Federal	Harrington Little Athletics - storage shed
\$124,498	State	Burrell Creek Hall restumping
\$53,000	State	Coomba Park foreshore carpark
\$110,521	State	Pebbly Beach amenities

Waste Services

AMOUNT	FUNDING BODY	DESCRIPTION
\$119,807	State - EPA Better Waste Recycling Fun	Tuncurry Waste Management Centre Tip Shop awning
\$900,000	State - Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund	Sustainability Centre

Stronger Country Communities Fund

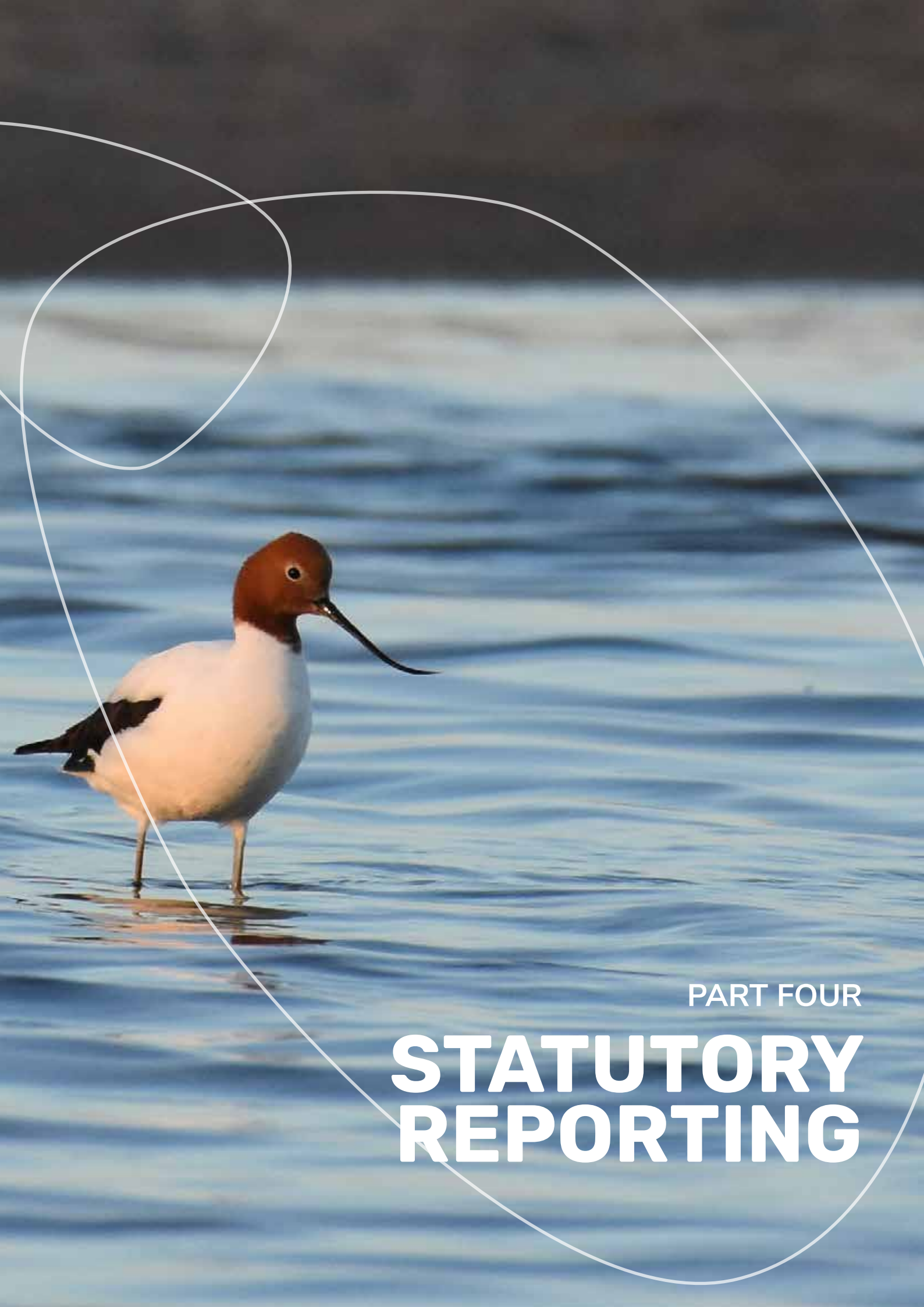
The Stronger Country Communities Fund (SCCF) was developed by the NSW Government to help deliver local projects to regional communities.

The objectives of the fund are:

- to boost the liveability of communities in regional areas by providing new or upgraded social and sporting infrastructure or community programs that have strong local support
- to provide programs and infrastructure that enhance opportunities for young people to be work-ready and thrive in regional NSW

Across the MidCoast the following projects were completed during 2020-21:

PROJECT NAME & DESCRIPTION	FUNDING STREAMS	COMPLETED
Gloucester Recreation Park Lighting Upgrade Lighting upgraded to LED to improve the lux levels which will in turn enable better use of the ground by sporting bodies	SCCF \$110,000	July 2020
Old Bar Sports Storage & Netball Courts Seven-bay storage shed and two all-weather netball/basketball courts	SCCF \$445,162	Oct 2020
Taree Showgrounds Shed Extension Manning River Agricultural & Horticultural Society erection of shed including landscaping	SCCF \$151,130	Apr 2021
Construction of Old Bar Mens Shed Erection of Colourbond steel shed including concrete slab, drainage and guttering, wiring and fit out. Gravel carpark and landscaping	SCCF \$118,370	May 2021
Cooperook Hall Toilets Toilet install and extension of sewerage Improved access with concrete paths and painting	SCCF \$33,450	Jun 2021



PART FOUR

STATUTORY REPORTING

2020-21 Statutory Reporting

The following Statutory reports are required under the Local Government Act 1993, Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, REG 2017 and other NSW Government Acts. The relevant clause is highlighted with each report.

Within 5 months after the end of (financial) year, prepare a report as to Council's achievements in implementing its delivery program and the effectiveness of the principal activities undertaken in achieving the objectives at which those principal activities are directed.

Section 428(1) Local Government Act

An overview of some of the achievements from 1 July 2020 through to 30 June 2021 is included in Part 3 of this report. A detailed report '12 Month review DPOP 20.21' was presented to Council at the 25 August 2021 Ordinary Meeting, outlining the achievements against each item in the Operational Plan.

The annual report of the year in which an ordinary election of councillors is held, must contain council's achievements in implementing the community strategic plan over the previous four years.

Section 428(2) Local Government Act

Council endorsed the first Community Strategic Plan (CSP) for MidCoast in April 2018 and has subsequently adopted associated Delivery Programs and Operational Plans. Achievements will be reported in this and future annual reports as per the Act. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the next Council election is scheduled for December 2021.

The annual report must be prepared in accordance with Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines (IP&R).

Section 428(3) Local Government Act

The annual report has been prepared in accordance with IP&R Guidelines

Must contain a copy of the Council's audited financial reports prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting* (may be an attachment)

Section 428(4)(a) Local Government Act

Audited financial statements are referenced in Part 5 of this report with a link to the website location

Must contain other information as the IP&R Guidelines or the regulations may require

Section 428(4)(b) Local Government Act

All required information has been included in this annual report

Copy of council's annual report must be posted on the council's website and be provided to the Minister for Local Government (via OLG). This can be done by notifying OLG of a URL link.

Section 428(5) Local Government Act

A copy of the MidCoast Council Annual Report is available under 'plans and reports' on Council's website www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/AnnualReport

Include particulars of any environmental upgrade agreement entered into by the council.

Section 54P(1) Local Government Act

MidCoast Council did not enter into any environmental upgrade agreements

Report on activities funded via a special rate variation in general income including:

- **Reporting requirements sent out in the Instrument of Approval**
- **Projects or activities funded from the variation**
- **Outcomes achieved as a result of the projects or activities**

Special Rate Variation Guidelines (SRV Guidelines) 7.1

Special Rate Variation

\$7.338 million was levied in 2020-21 for the allocation to existing road work programs and for the payment of existing and future borrowings undertaken to fund Council's \$50 million contribution to the Road Upgrade program outlined below

At 30 June 2021 \$11.048 million of funds remain restricted for these purposes. During the year Council allocated \$1.783 million to renewal works on the road network for:

- Urban Rehabilitation
- Rural Rehabilitation
- Regional Resurfacing
- Bridge Renewal

There were new borrowings of \$3 million taken out during the 2020/2021 financial year under the Road Upgrade Program

Environmental levy

\$4.221 million levied in 2020-2021 through the Environmental Levy component of Ordinary rates

During 2020/21 \$3,707,845 million of the Environmental levy funds were spent. Projects included were:

- Waterway Health Assessment Reporting
- Water Sensitive Urban Design Projects and Priorities
- Biodiversity Framework development
- Manning River Estuary and Catchment Management Program development
- Implementation of Karuah Catchment Management Plan
- Strategic land purchase for biodiversity, water quality and bushfire management
- Smiths Lake estuary opening
- Flying Fox camp Management Plan preparation
- Dunns Creek (south Forster) Catchment water quality improvement project
- WSUD Proprietary Device (GPT) Maintenance and refurbishment
- Lower Myall River Dredging
- Farquhar Inlet Dredging
- Maintenance (bush regeneration) of natural area reserves
- Bushfire recovery
- Development of Climate Change Policy and Strategy
- Big Swamp / Cattai Wetlands Works
- Acid sulfate soil management priority sites manning river floodplain
- Old Bar – Manning Point Coastal Management Program

At 30 June 2021 \$5,404,597 million of funds remain restricted for the purposes for which the levy was approved. Many of the programs listed above are multi-year delivery projects for which the funds on hand are allocated

Amount of rates and charges written off during the year. Clause 132 Local Government (General) Regulation

Postponed Rates and Charges <i>Local Government Act 1993, Section 595</i>	\$27,542.08
Authority of General Manager <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Clause 131 (6)</i>	\$449.55
Ratable properties now exempt from Rates <i>Local Government Act 1993 Section 555 - 558</i>	\$38,821.05
Pensioner Rate Reductions <i>Local Government Act 1993 Section 575(2)</i>	\$4,770,981.61
Concealed Leak Applications <i>Clause 132 Local Government (General) Regulation 2005</i>	\$118,950.70

Details, including purpose, of overseas visits by councillors, council staff or other persons representing council (including visits sponsored by other organisations). Section 428(4)(b) Local Government Act, and Clause 217(1)(a1) Local Government (General) Regulation

In 2020-21 no overseas travel was undertaken by the Mayor, Councillors or staff

Total cost during the year of the payment of expenses of, and the provision of facilities to, Councillors in relation to their civic functions.

Clause 217(1)(a1) Local Government (General) Regulation

Mayoral and Councillors' fees and provision of facilities

Council policy identifies the expenses that will be paid and the provision of facilities to the Mayor and Councillors in relation to discharging the duties of civic office. The policy was adopted on 10 February 2021

Our policy recognises that the Mayor and Councillors, in performing their civic functions, are entitled to be provided with certain facilities and be reimbursed for expenses noted in the policy. The Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy can be read and downloaded from Council's website

Council is required under Clause 217(1)(a1) of the Local Government Act 1993 to pay an annual allowance to the Mayor and Councillors. The following is a summary of the expenses incurred in performing the functions of the Mayor and Councillors and associated allowances.

Total costs \$ 441,741

Allowances

Mayoral allowance	\$60,080.00
Elected member allowance	\$254,279
Expenses (as per below)	\$127,382

Expenses

Dedicated office equipment	\$0	Interstate travel & accommodation	\$0
Telephone & internet expenses	\$5,744	Overseas travel & accommodation	\$0
Printing & stationery	\$993	Mayoral vehicle	\$13,500
Conferences & seminars	\$1,155	Insurance	\$0
Training	\$4,930	Sustenance	\$8,857
Travel	\$8,669	Partner's expenses	\$0
Out of pocket expenses	\$532	Child Care expenses	\$0
Security	\$878	LGNSW Membership	\$61,955
Subscriptions	\$19,303	Sundries	\$769
Accommodation	\$97	Civic Expenses	\$0

Details of each contract awarded for amounts greater than \$150,000.

Clause 217(1)(a2) Local Government (General) Regulation

Contractor	Supply Type	Details	Value (incl. GST)
A J Grant Building Pty Ltd	Services	Wingham Library Upgrade	526,216.71
A J Grant Building Pty Ltd	Services	Undercover Arena Wingham Showground	564,112.24

AECOM Australia Pty Ltd	Services	Detail Design - Gloucester Reservoirs	329,494.00
AECOM Australia Pty Ltd	Services	Detailed Design – Gloucester Reservoirs	330,436.48
All Pavement Solutions Pty Limited	Materials	Final Seal - Thunderbolts Way	188,264.00
All Pavement Solutions Pty Limited	Services	Waukivory Road Sealing	156,786.91
All Pavement Solutions Pty Limited	Services	Final Seal – Bucketts Way Gloucester	193,600.00
All Pavement Solutions Pty Limited	Services	Primer and Final Seal Lansdown Road	200,000.00
Alluvium Consulting Australia Pty Ltd	Services	Dunns Creek Flood Study	191,442.90
ASV Sales & Service Pty Ltd	Equipment	Skid Steer Loader - Gloucester	185,807.00
ASV Sales & Service Pty Ltd	Equipment	Skid Steer Loader - Taree	193,582.00
Audit Office of NSW	Services	Audit Engagement Fees 2020/2021	188,870.00
AW Edwards Pty Limited	Equipment	Audio Virtual Fit out Biripi Way	1,208,019.07
AW Edwards Pty Limited	Services	Bootawa Water Pump Station Upgrade	497,601.00
BARRC - Bushland & Rainforest Restoration & Consulting	Services	Bush Regeneration	187,000.00
Boral Construction Material Groups Ltd	Materials	Pavement Sub Base – Bucketts Way Stroud	229,799.12
C. J. Hogan and Co Pty Ltd	Services	Wingham Sporting Complex - Grandstand	308,561.00
Change in Practice Pty Ltd	Services	Culture Survey 2020-21	200,000.00
Community Resources Limited T/A Resource Recovery	Services	Contract Management – Waste Management Centres	1,269,757.68
Daniel Stallworthy	Services	Boronia Park Clubhouse Extension	332,772.00
David J Thompson	Services	Ageing Services Building Refurbishment	200,000.00
Department of Planning, Industry & Environment - 203420	Services	Weed Management Contract Labour	165,000.00
Ditchfield Contracting Pty Ltd	Services	Road Rehab on Failford Road	1,349,181.45
Ditchfield Contracting Pty Ltd	Services	Avalon Road Dyers Crossing Reconstruction	4,566,047.50
DuPont Memcor (Australia) Pty Ltd	Materials	Supply 200 L10N Membrane Modules	197,307.00
Durack Civil Pty Ltd	Services	The Buckets Way	2,870,707.64
Eire Construction Pty Ltd	Services	Craven Close Gloucester Culvert Replacement	205,432.35
FB Contracting	Services	Gloucester Water Treatment Plant	19,298,701.51

Fenworx Pty Ltd	Services	Asphalt Works Thunderbolts Way	342,323.73
Fenworx Pty Ltd	Services	Asphalt Works Failford Road	1,212,817.11
Goldsprings Group Pty Ltd	Services	Emergency Works Flood Repairs	223,928.31
Goldsprings Group Pty Ltd	Services	Road Construction Manning River Drive	892,475.42
Goldsprings Group Pty Ltd	Services	Bucketts Way Reconstruction Seg 75 - 86	2,847,925.43
Gongues Constructions Pty Ltd	Services	Pacific Palms Sewerage Treatment Plant - Stage 1	450,756.59
Gongues Constructions Pty Ltd	Services	Pacific Palms STP Storage Ponds	1,812,100.00
Guardrail Systems Pty Ltd	Services	Guardrail Installation - Fire Damage	153,040.60
Guardrail Systems Pty Ltd	Services	Guardrail Thunderbolts & Bucketts Ways	256,095.04
Hi Vis Signs & Safety	Services	Supply and Install Road Signs	196,924.99
INFOR GLOBAL SOLUTIONS (ANZ) PTY LIMITED	Services	Forster Pathway Review	151,893.76
Interflow Pty Ltd	Materials	Sewer Pipes	331,720.48
Jacobs Building & Carpentry	Services	Hawks Nest Amenities Upgrade	214,960.87
Jacobs Building & Carpentry	Services	Bulahdelah Showground Amenities	245,359.40
Jim Anderson Earthmoving Pty Ltd	Services	Reseal Preparation Hannam Vale Road	175,000.00
Jim Anderson Earthmoving Pty Ltd	Services	Wrights Lane Dyers Crossing Culvert Replacement	226,156.53
JJ Ryan Consulting Pty Ltd	Services	Project Management Services – Various	225,000.00
JR Richards and Sons	Services	Domestic Waste Collection	327,222.00
JR Richards and Sons	Services	Waste Collection / Recycling	348,000.00
Kellogg Brown & Root Pty Ltd	Services	Tea Gardens Rising Main and Pump Station	202,234.96
Lenovo Pty Ltd	Services	36 Months Agreement for Desktop as a Service (DaaS)	958,717.98
Leonards Advertising	Services	Destination Marketing Campaign	220,000.00
Local Land Services	Services	Karuah Catchment Management Grants Program	351,838.94
Mavin Truck Centre Pty Ltd	Equipment	Hino 500 Series	160,367.93
Mavin Truck Centre Pty Ltd	Equipment	Hino 500 Series	160,367.93
Mavin Truck Centre Pty Ltd	Equipment	Hino 500 Series	160,525.64
Mavin Truck Centre Pty Ltd	Equipment	Hino 700 Series	176,996.03

Office.Pace	Equipment	Office Pace / Own World	554,209.71
Olympus Technology Services Pty Ltd	Equipment	Monitors - Biripi Way	279,873.55
Pacific Blue Metal Pty Ltd	Materials	Waukivory Road - Seg 30-50 Flexbase	193,790.73
Pacific Blue Metal Pty Ltd	Materials	Pavement Base Layer – Thunderbolts Way	252,000.00
Pacific Blue Metal Pty Ltd	Materials	Pavement Sub Base Layer – Thunderbolts Way	270,000.00
Paul Dent Electrical Pty Ltd	Services	Water Pump Station Switchboards	217,276.40
PTS Consulting (Australia) Pty Ltd	Services	Workstream – Office IT fit out and relocation support	178,200.00
Public Works Advisory (Department of Regional NSW)	Services	2019 Bootawa Dam Surveillance Report	168,168.00
RDO Equipment Pty Ltd	Equipment	John Deere 6110M	232,534.00
Reeman Constructions Pty Ltd	Services	MEC New Studio Space	533,940.09
Reeman Constructions Pty Ltd	Services	MEC New Studio Space	3,481,070.99
RJ and CL Thomas	Services	Nabiac Showground Kiosk	263,569.09
S5 Technology Group Pty Ltd	Equipment	Cisco Equipment & PureStorage SAN	2,339,990.27
S5 Technology Group Pty Ltd	Services	CheckPoint Infinity 600 Users - Year 1	330,583.00
Sewer Equipment Company Aust	Services	Agilios Push Cameras & Equipment	154,528.00
SG Fleet Australia Pty Ltd	Equipment	Leasing 3 Buses for 3 years	180,000.00
Stabilised Pavements of Australia Pty Ltd	Services	Taree Urban Reseal Program 20-21	347,780.22
Stowe Australia Pty Ltd	Services	The Lakes Way Forster Power Reticulation	177,540.00
Stowe Australia Pty Ltd	Services	Lantana WPS Transformer Relocation	183,111.59
Stowe Australia Pty Ltd	Services	Forster 18 Emergency Generator Install	322,887.40
Telstra Corporation Limited	Services	Emerton Close Cundletown Telstra Relocation	160,377.45
Telstra Corporation Limited	Services	Service Relocations	162,885.15
Valuation Services	Services	Land Valuation Services	342,882.90
Waeger Constructions Pty Ltd	Services	Fairbairns Bridge Reconstruction	1,280,895.00
WesTrac Pty Ltd	Equipment	Caterpillar 140M Grader	865,712.50

Notes:

- 1) Extract from Council Contracts Register available on the MidCoast Council website
- 2) Contracts > \$150k total value (incl. GST) that were initiated in FY2020-21
- 3) Listed in alphabetical order
- 4) Panels are excluded – appointment to a panel does not involve or imply awarding of a contract

Summary of the amounts incurred by the council in relation to legal proceedings.

Clause 217(1)(a3) Local Government (General) Regulation

Matter	Court	Cost	Status
Cordell	Local Court	\$2,803	Completed
Carter	Local Court	\$688	Completed
Tea Gardens Farm Pty Ltd	L & E Court	\$85,370	Ongoing
Ingenia Communities P/L	L & E Court	\$128,548	Completed
Mark Roche & Agiliti	L & E Court	\$34,363	Ongoing
CJHA Pty Ltd	L & E Court	\$29,659	Ongoing
Join Venture Pty Ltd	L & E Court	\$127,502	Completed
PTHT Pty Ltd	L & E Court	\$5,048	Ongoing
Stewart	NCAT	\$12,223	Completed
Roche Group Pty Ltd	L & E Court	\$13,483	Ongoing
LI0067280	Supreme Court	\$12,500	Ongoing

Include resolutions made concerning work carried out on private land.

Section 67(3) Local Government Act, and Clause 217(1)(a4) Local Government (General) Regulation

There were no resolutions of Council for private works.

Total amount contributed or otherwise granted to financially assist others.

Clause 217(1)(a5) Local Government (General) Regulation

Grant type	Amount
Event Support granted	\$134,950*
Community Grants (annual fixed donations under the community donations policy)	\$59,300
Rates Donations	\$38,621
Annual Funding round donations	\$23,122
Heritage Grants	\$28,250
Total	\$284,243

* Some events did not proceed due to fires, floods and Public Health orders. Council Event Sponsorship is not paid to events that did not proceed. Amount granted will be more than the amount paid.

Statement of all external bodies that exercised functions delegated by Council.

Clause 217(1)(a6) Local Government (General) Regulation

There are various Section 355 Committees and Hall Committees operating across the MidCoast region. These Committees are exercising functions delegated by Council in accordance with Section 377 of the Local Government Act 1993.

Statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which Council held a controlling interest.

Clause 217(1)(a7) Local Government (General) Regulation

The Hunter Joint Organisation, and its group entities, are the hub for local government collaboration, strengthening our communities by being the local voice on regional strategic issues in the Hunter and delivering tailored local government solutions. For over sixty years, local government in the Hunter has found significant benefit in working together through positive cooperation and resource sharing. Participating councils include; Cessnock City Council, Dungog Shire Council, Lake Macquarie City Council, Maitland City Council, MidCoast Council, Muswellbrook Shire Council, City of Newcastle, Port Stephens Council, Singleton Council, Upper Hunter Shire Council.

There are four key entities that operate as part of the current enterprise offering:-

- **Hunter Joint Organisation** – a statutory body under the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*, established in 2018 to identify, advocate for and collaborate on regional strategic priorities for the Hunter. The Hunter Joint Organisation’s statutory mandate includes identifying key regional strategic priorities, advocating for these priorities, and building collaborations around these priorities with other levels of government, industry and community.
- **Arrow Collaborative Services Limited** and its wholly owned subsidiary
- **Hunter Councils Legal Services Limited** are companies limited by guarantee under the *Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)* and established to improve the quality and efficiency of local government services throughout the Hunter Region. These organisations offer tailored local government services through its five divisions; Local Government Training Institute, Local Government Legal, Regional Procurement, Screen Hunter (which, under delegation from member councils, licences film production on council owned and control land), and the Regional Policy & Programs Division (which delivers on the strategic priorities of the Hunter Joint Organisation, including the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environment Program (HCCREMS), on behalf of both Hunter JO member councils and Central Coast Council).
- **Hunter Councils Incorporated** - an incorporated association under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW)* that holds property assets for the Hunter Joint Organisation group.

MidCoast Council has representation on each entity’s Board, and shares ownership and governance of the entities with the other nine councils of the Hunter Region.”

Statement of all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies in which Council participated during the year.

Clause 217(1)(a8) Local Government (General) Regulation

Council committees

Committee	Membership	Representatives
Strategic Committee	Chair – Mayor West 11 Councillors	All Councillors

Delegated committees

Committee	Membership	Representatives
Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee	Two Councillor representatives Three independent representatives	Chair: Independent Cr Pontin Cr Fowler

Reference Group

Committee	Membership	Representatives
Barrington Coast Destination Management Reference Group	Two Councillors Nine tourism representatives Three specific industry representatives	Cr Hutchinson (Chair) Cr Fowler
Bulahdelah Highway Service Centre Planning Agreement Reference Group	Two Councillors Two representatives from the Bulahdelah Chamber of Commerce Up to seven representatives from the Bulahdelah community	Cr Hutchinson Cr Smith
Community Inclusion & Wellbeing Reference Group	Two Councillor representatives plus alternate Eight community representatives Four representatives from relevant government and non-government agencies	Cr Smith (Chair)
Community Recovery Bushfire Reference Group	Mayor and Deputy Mayor Up to 13 community leaders from key communities One representative from Mid Coast Renewal Committee Professional with demonstrated Community Development experience	Mayor – Cr West Deputy Mayor – Cr Pontin
Floodplain Management Advisory Committee (Formed & Councillors nominated 20/12/17)	Up to two Councillors Local SES Rep from OEH Up to eight community reps Manager Transport Assets Manager Strategic Planning Coastal & Flooding Engineer	Cr Epov (Chair) Cr Hutchinson Cr Smith (alternate)
Heritage Reference Group	Two Councillor representatives plus alternate Heritage Advisor 16 community representatives from Historical Societies	Cr Bell (Co-Chair) Cr Roberts (Co-Chair)
MidCoast Council Sport & Recreation Reference Group	Two Councillor representatives plus alternate Up to 14 community representatives from different areas with interest in sport	Cr Christensen Cr Fowler
MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 Reference Group	Two Councillors Up to nine representatives from arts and culture sector One from Arts Mid North Coast One from Destination North Coast	Cr Pontin Cr Hutchinson Cr Smith (alternate)
Manning River Estuary Coastal Management Program Reference Group	2 Councillors 5 public authority representatives 1 traditional owner 1 oyster industry rep 3 rural reps 1 boating / fishing rep 1 community member 1 Landcare	Cr Smith Cr Roberts
Old Bar – Manning Point Coastal Management Program Reference Group	2 Councillors 5 public authority representatives 1 traditional owner 1 Old Bar Sand Replenishment Group 1 Manning Point Concerned Citizens Group 1 Old Bar – Manning Point CoC 1 boating / fishing 1 bird watchers 1 community member 1 Manning Coastcare	Cr Smith Cr Roberts

Working Groups

Committee	Membership	Representatives
Economic Development Working Group	Three Councillors Nine Commerce & Industry members	Cr Pontin (Chair) Cr Epov Cr Hutchinson
Annual Donations Assessment Panel	Three Councillors	Cr Pontin Cr Bell

External Committees

Committee	Membership	Representatives
Arts Mid North Coast		Cr Pontin Cr Smith (alternate)
Bushfire Management Committee		Cr Roberts
Duralie Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee	State endorsed Committee	Cr Hutchinson Cr Smith
Gloucester Exploration Project Community Consultative Committee – Gloucester Resources Limited (GRL)	State endorsed Committee	Cr Pontin Cr Epov (alternate)
Hunter JO	Mayor & General Managers from Hunter JO Councils	Mayor General Manager
Hunter Regional Weeds Committee		Mayor – Cr West
Joint Regional Planning Panels		Cr Epov
Local Traffic Committee		Cr Christensen
Manning Liquor Consultative Committee		Cr Christensen
Mid North Coast Weight of Loads Group		Cr Smith
Mine and Energy Related Councils		Cr Smith
NSW Public Libraries Association		
NSW RFS District Liaison Committee		Cr Roberts
Pacific Blue Metal Quarry at Possum Brush		Mayor – Cr West
Port Stephens Great Lakes Marine Advisory Committee	State endorsed Committee	Cr Hutchinson
Port Stephens Myall Lakes Estuary Management Committee	State endorsed Committee	Cr Pontin
Stratford Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee		Cr Hutchinson Cr Smith (alternate)
Stroud Heritage Conservation Inc		

Other

Committee	Membership	Representatives
General Manager's Performance Review Panel	Mayor Deputy Mayor One Councillor	Mayor Deputy Mayor Cr Hutchinson
Hunter – SSA/GMAC	General Manager's from Hunter JO	General Manager

Statement of activities to implement its EEO management plan.

Clause 217(1)(a9) Local Government (General) Regulation

Development and implementation of a Flexible Working Framework (FWF) - The FWF enables employees and supervisors to agree on working arrangements that support staff and the effective and efficient delivery of services to the community.

Domestic Violence Support – Development and implementation of a Domestic Violence Support Policy and training of domestic violence contact officers.

Aboriginal Cultural Awareness – Training was delivered to Council's leadership team and around 100 other staff.

Mental Health Awareness – Training for groups of staff in mental health awareness.

EBTS – Implementation of Council's Employment-Based Training Strategy to provide employment and training opportunities for our youth and disadvantaged.

New Employee Induction – Provision of information on employee responsibilities regarding EEO.

Work Experience – Provision of work experience opportunities for people with a disability.

ATSI identified roles – Creation and filling of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identified positions.

Staff Census - Conducted a Census of staff to collect EEO statistics on our workforce. This will enable Council to plan for a more diverse workforce and inclusive workplace, by understanding how we can help make our workplace more accessible for everyone.

Gender Equity – Conducted a Women in Leadership Survey and developed a Women in Leadership Strategy; nominated staff for the Rotary Inspirational Women's Awards and Women in Local Government Awards.

Yalawanyi Ganya – The building that houses our new Administration and Customer Service Centre has been named in Gathang, the language that binds all Aboriginal people across the MidCoast local government area. The building name is *Yalawanyi Ganya*. **Yalawanyi** means 'sitting/meeting place'. **Ganya** means 'house'. So *Yalawanyi Ganya* is effectively the house of the meeting place. The name was developed in close consultation with Gathang language holders. The decision to use Gathang for the building name both honours the fact Council's new administration and customer service centre is on Biripi Country, and is a tangible, visible commitment to reconciliation. In addition, the building design has elements of local Aboriginal design woven into it.

Acknowledgement of Country – In close consultation with the Aboriginal community of the MidCoast, development and implementation of an Acknowledgement of Country statement (printed and verbal) and staff education in when and how to use the Acknowledgement of Country.

Statement of the total remuneration comprised in the remuneration package of the General Manager.

Clause 217(1)(b) Local Government (General) Regulation

Total value of the salary component of the package	\$359,218.04
<i>Clause 217(1)(b)(i) Local Government (General) Regulation</i>	
Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of the salary component	Nil
<i>Clause 217(1)(b)(ii) Local Government (General) Regulation</i>	
Total amount payable by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the general manager may be a contributor	\$34,125.71
<i>Clause 217(1)(b)(iii) Local Government (General) Regulation</i>	
Total value of any non-cash benefits for which the general manager may elect under the package	Nil
<i>Clause 217(1)(b)(iv) Local Government (General) Regulation</i>	
Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits	Nil
<i>Clause 217(1)(b)(v) Local Government (General) Regulation</i>	

Statement of the total remuneration comprised in the remuneration packages of all senior staff members, expressed as the total (not of individual members).
Clause 217(1)(c) Local Government (General) Regulation

Total value of the salary components of the packages	\$800,262.50
<i>Clause 217(1)(c)(i) Local Government (General) Regulation</i>	
Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of the salary components of their packages	Nil
<i>Clause 217(1)(c)(ii) Local Government (General) Regulation</i>	
Total amount payable by the Council by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which any of them may be a contributor	\$76,024.94
<i>Clause 217(1)(c)(iii) Local Government (General) Regulation</i>	
Total value of any non-cash benefits for which any of them may elect under the package	Nil
<i>Clause 217(1)(c)(iv) Local Government (General) Regulation</i>	
Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits	Nil
<i>Clause 217(1)(c)(v) Local Government (General) Regulation</i>	

A statement detailing the stormwater management services provided (if levied).
Clause 217(1)(e) Local Government (General) Regulation

Stormwater Levy

\$873,000 was levied in 2020-21 through the Stormwater Management Charge. During 2020-2021 \$486,000 was spent on projects.

Stormwater projects delivered during 2020-21 included:

- Refurbishment of Townsend Street constructed wetland in Forster
- Detailed design of the Dunns Creek water quality improvement wetland in South Forster
- Repair of 90% and full clean out of 100% of all Gross pollutant traps within the MCC LGA.

- Yallambee Street drainage upgrade works
- Elizabeth Avenue drainage upgrade works
- Cove Boulevard drainage upgrade works

At 30 June 2021 \$2.841 million of funds remain restricted for these purposes.

A statement detailing the coastal protection services provided (if levied). *Clause 217(1)(e1) Local Government (General) Regulation*

A coastal services charge is not levied within the MidCoast Local Government Area.

Statement on activities relating to enforcing and ensuring compliance with the Companion Animals Act and Regulation

Clause 217(1)(f) Local Government (General) Regulation, and Guidelines on the Exercise of Functions under the Companion Animals Act

Lodgement of pound data collection returns with the Division <i>16.2(a) Guidelines</i>	Completed
Lodgement of data relating to dog attacks with the Division <i>16.2(b) Guidelines</i>	Completed
Amount of funding spent on companion animal management and activities <i>16.2(c) Guidelines</i>	Approximately \$50,000 for the management of pound facilities and animal control equipment (not including wages)
Companion animal community education programs carried out <i>16.2(d) Guidelines</i>	Nil
Strategies council has in place to promote and assist the de-sexing of dogs and cats <i>16.2(d) Guidelines</i>	Nil
Strategies in place to comply with the requirement under section 64 of the Act to seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals <i>16.2(e) Guidelines</i>	Animals are released to Animal Welfare Groups for no fee. Minimal animals are euthanised. Animals which are euthanised are classified under the Companion Animals Act as unsuitable for rehoming.
Off leash areas provided in the council area <i>16.2(f) Guidelines</i>	Total of three leash free areas – Taree, Tuncurry and Gloucester

We have seen a significant reduction (27%) in the number of animals visiting our pounds.

- 204 dogs and cats processed through the pounds
- 47% (95) rehomed in partnership with animal welfare agencies
- 33% (67) collected by their owners
- 13% (25) classified under the Companion Animals Act as unsuitable for rehoming and euthanised
- 3% (5) sold to new owners

Report on certain proposed capital works projects where a capital expenditure review had been submitted

Capital Expenditure Guidelines

Biripi Way

MidCoast Council completed the project to consolidate our administration functions into a central location at 2 Biripi Way, Taree. The building was named Yalawanyi Ganya and was completed under budget. It was opened on time in January 2021

Forster Civic Precinct

The Forster Civic Precinct development is continuing with an anticipated completion date of September 2022. The project will ultimately deliver a number of MidCoast Council facilities to the community including a new public library, visitor information centre and customer service point. The building is being undertaken by developer Enyoc, who entered an agreement with Council for the design and construction of these community facilities. The \$18 million project cost is a joint project between Council, the Federal Government and Enyoc, with each party contributing \$6 million

Councils considered to be 'human services agencies' under the Carers Recognition (CR) Act (provide services directed at Carers and/or people being cared for by carers) must report on compliance with the CR Act for the reporting period.

Section 8(2) Carers Recognition Act 2010

MidCoast Council delivers services for older people, people with disability and their carers through MidCoast Assist and, as such, is considered a human services agency for the purposes of the Carers (Recognition) Act 2010.

During the reporting period Council has worked to ensure that service delivery activities and policies and procedures reflect the principles of the NSW Carers Charter.

Actions Taken include:

- Both MidCoast Assist Ageing and Disability Services routinely and regularly consult with individual carers at intake stage and throughout the program for clients. This is reflected in the forms, processes and file notes maintained by MidCoast Assist
- MidCoast Assist refers carers to available supports within the community and online as appropriate.
- In response to carers of older people with dementia, MidCoast Assist has extended some centre-based activities to enable more free time for carers.
- In response to COVID 19, MidCoast Assist suspended some group activities. Recognising the additional stress this might have placed on carers, MidCoast Assist organised online/virtual experiences for clients and conducted regular welfare checks with clients and carers, especially those who had become more isolated during COVID 19 pandemic until it was safe to resume face to face services.
- Through individual client reviews, MidCoast Assist discusses needs of carers (as well as clients) in our CHSP programme. In response to carers identified needs we have linked carers with other organisations and services.

Information on the implementation of Council's Disability Inclusion Plan.

Section 13(1) Disability Inclusion Act 2014

Disability Inclusion Action Plan Progress Report 2021-2021

A new iteration of the DIAP was due in June 2021, however the Pandemic caused delays in consultation with key stakeholders. The Department of Communities and Justice announced a year's extension to the deadline for all Councils, and MidCoast Council formally extended its DIAP to June 2022 by a Council Resolution in March 2021. Consultation is underway with people with disabilities, their families and carers in order to deliver a new plan by June 2022. In the meantime, this year's focus is continuing to raise awareness of the needs of people with disability, which is a key strategy in the current DIAP.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan Progress Report 2020/21

Strategy 1: Positive community attitudes and behaviours




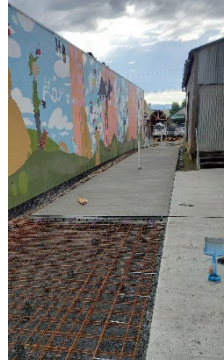
Area for Action	Status update
<p>Council staff awareness of the needs of people with disability</p>	<p>Council partnered with Guide Dogs NSW to host the 'Walk My Way' events to mark White Cane Day (Thursday 15 October).</p> <p>Council staff were invited to events in Gloucester, Forster and Taree, to raise awareness of different vision impairments, understand what life can be like for people with vision impairment, and increase employees' confidence in assisting and talking to people with low vision or blindness. These aims were achieved through a hands-on</p>  <p>experience in which staff were invited to wear simulation goggles, each simulating a different vision condition, and then use a cane or a guide dog to walk a short route. The route was designed so that participants had to cross a road, use tactile markers and experience navigating a busy pathway.</p>  <p>The activities were well received by participants and were a wonderful way to raise awareness. As part of implementation of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan, staff are continually being asked to 'look at what they do through a disability lens'.</p>  <p>This activity helped to understand the needs of people with vision impairment. Guide Dogs NSW has expressed their eagerness to run similar events and training in the future with Council staff.</p>

Council’s Community Inclusion & Wellbeing Reference Group took a walk around Taree (CBD) in April, to identify barriers for people with disability. The group comprised a person in a wheelchair accompanied by two carers, a white cane user, a Guide Dogs Australia representative and a parent with a stroller. Notes and photos were taken, which were subsequently discussed with businesses, and changes made to remove the barriers. Similar activities are planned for other areas of the LGA.







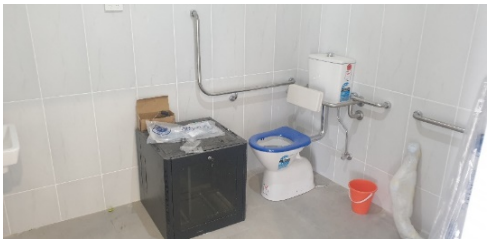
Strategy 2: Creating liveable communities




Area for Action	Status update
Beaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community consultation regarding public access to north Diamond beach provided input to a draft strategy to plan for a continuous and inclusive footpath for public access is provided. The strategy includes all-abilities access considerations and measure to ensure protection of sensitive dune vegetation. A footpath has been constructed in some areas, with planning for further work in progress. Forster’s Ocean Baths were closed for two weeks while substantial improvements to the accessibility ramp were undertaken. Works included removing uneven and cracked joints, resurfacing and treatment with an anti-slip paint. The handrail was replaced to ensure compliance with updated Australian Standards. Access to one of the area’s most popular waterside locations was improved when Phase 1 of works were completed at Tuncurry Rock Pool. Works included wider promenades, stepped and ramp access to the sand and new handrails. <div data-bbox="1107 1048 1382 1503" data-label="Image"> A close-up photograph of a blue-painted concrete ramp with a silver metal handrail, leading towards a sandy beach area. </div> <div data-bbox="1016 1565 1377 1832" data-label="Image"> A wide-angle photograph of a newly paved promenade area next to a beach, showing a wide path and a ramp leading down to the sand. </div>

Beaches cont.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wallabi Coastcare Group worked with Council to complete a project to improve the beach access at North Wallabi Beach. Council constructed a 65m concrete pathway, replacing the dirt track. The new path provides a more formal access to North Wallabi Beach allowing regeneration works to occur on either side and improves access to the sand. 
Footpaths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MidCoast-wide Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan and Bike Plan has been adopted unanimously by Councillors and will now form the basis of future funding opportunities from within Council, as well as the State and Federal Governments. The plan provides a series of strategies to improve facilities for walking and cycling across the MidCoast Council region, and thanks to consultation with community members it has been tailored specifically for individual towns and villages. • Improved pedestrian access was provided along David Street, Old Bar connecting the School to the commercial area of Old Bar • Works to construct a concrete path, bus bay and crossing points on Blackhead Road connecting the beach / shopping area of Black Head to Diamond Beach Road were completed • Construction of a footpath in TG opposite the shopping area was delayed due to bushfires and the Pandemic but planned to commence in 2021/22 • Improved pathways on Barrington Bridge. Funds continue to be sought to complete the pedestrian link on either side of the bridge • Pedestrian/cycle bridge over Browns Creek, linking the Taree CBD through the Bicentennial gardens to the Taree Recreation Grounds/Manning Aquatic Leisure Centre/MEC • A new concrete path connecting Isabella Street (CBD) Wingham to McCullagh Carpark was completed, which provides all day parking and under-cover parking.   

Accessible housing	<p>The MidCoast Housing Strategy was adopted by Council in December 2020, after consideration of submissions. The Strategy was informed by consultation with housing service providers to ensure opportunities for the provision of different types of housing to suite the community's needs and incorporates the need for accessible design principles to be included in medium-density developments.</p>
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	<p>The Housing Strategy will provide guidance for the development of the new MidCoast Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan which will occur in 2021-2023.</p>
<p>Accessible buildings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manning Aquatic & Leisure Centre amenities were upgraded. Works included the refurbishment of the accessible toilets in the centre. • Plans for improvements to Hawks Nest Community Hall to improve access and amenities were finalised and the tender process for the works is currently under way. The Plans were developed after extensive community and stakeholder consultation to get the project right. • Council is currently undertaking asset inspections of Council-owned or managed halls to create a priority list for future improvements. While none of our halls are designated evacuation centres, the natural disasters (bushfires and floods) over the last few years have shown that communities will naturally congregate at community halls. This program aims to increase capacity for those halls during those times, with improved access, generators, etc. • MidCoast Council's Yalawanyi Ganya Office Centralisation Project won at the 2021 NSW Local Government Excellence Awards in the Special Project Initiative category. The project won out of nine other city and regional based Councils in the Population under 100,000 category and the leaders behind the project attended the evening on June 3 to accept the award. The new building is fully accessible • Planning progressed for the installation of an elevator at the Wingham library. In the meantime, the second floor has been temporarily closed due to its inaccessibility for people unable to climb stairs and will become a study/event/meeting space once the lift is in place. The ground floor is being extended to allow for more accessible shelving and wider aisles. The installation of an accessible toilet is being planned. • Harrington Library implemented an innovative new community access model, where community members can register for a card and access the building outside of staffed hours. New trial arrangement is – staffed hours 9-1 (earlier opening, two staff on duty at all times for safety) – community access 1-5 weekdays, 8-5 on weekends. This is a first for NSW and has generated great interest by other library services. • Wingham – the library is spread across two floors, but the upstairs wasn't fully accessible (a stairway only) so it has been closed off. The grant funding will the installation of a lift, which will open the second floor to study/event/meeting space. • Planning is in progress to extend Tea Gardens Library by 100 m². The extension will be accessible after-hours for meetings and events. It will have its own kitchenette and accessible toilet. The area will be recarpeted and repainted. • The Manning Entertainment Centre (MEC) installed a second handrail on the ramp to the main auditorium to improve access and safety. Theatre tours have been conducted for disadvantaged and behaviourally challenged students from Taree High School. Similar tours for Dundaloo participants were also conducted. The MEC is currently planning for more accessible print material including programs. The new studio build reported in 2019/20 includes provision for a lift in a future upgrade that will allow access to the rear of the new auditorium for wheelchairs and funding is being sought to complete this project. There will be additional accessible toilets in both front and back of house of the new studio, plus hearing loop in the new auditorium. The Eisteddfod event this year highlighted the lack of regular wheelchair access to the stage and planning is in place to rectify that.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning on the MC1 Project (council software upgrades) progressed. The project will include a building inspection results section which will allow for needs-based priority list to be created • Extensions and refurbishment of the clubhouse at Boronia Park Soccer fields was completed, providing modern and accessible facilities to support sporting groups and activities at the location. The new building includes full accessible amenities and a parents' baby change room.   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hawks Nest Surf Club clubhouse was almost completely gutted and new state-of-the-art facilities rebuilt, including accessible entry access, ramps into the building, a lift in the building, and new toilet facilities, including accessible toilets.   
<p>Accessible recreational facilities</p> <p>Accessible green space</p> <p>Public toilet and shower facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning was completed for new public amenities to be constructed at Providence Bay Park in Hawks Nest. The new facility includes 7 unisex toilets an accessible facility, 2 change room cubicles and outdoor showers and improved pathway access to the facility. • Funding was secured to upgrade the Tea Gardens Pool. Works will include an upgrade to the entrance to the site, and provide accessible paths and buildings, and an accessibility ramp into the pool, with an entrance and exit pod as an extension to the existing pool. Work with commence in 2021/22. • Wingham master plan includes planning for improved parking, as consultation identified that people want to be able to park close to the shops, which will improve options for older people and people with disability. The Wingham CBD streetscape will also include seating and new footpaths that will meet standards for crossfall and will eliminate as many doorway steps as possible.

<p>Accessible recreational facilities</p> <p>Accessible green space</p> <p>Public toilet and shower facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work was completed at Nabiac Showground entrance to make the facility more accessible.  The amenities block at Pebbly Beach in Forster was replaced. The new facilities include three unisex toilets, a baby-change facility and an accessible toilet, with the design matching earlier new Forster amenities at Main Beach and Little Street. Existing underground infrastructure meant the toilet block had to be rebuilt on the same site, but landscaping around the facility was upgraded to improve visibility of the toilets from the playground and barbecue facilities.  Works were completed to upgrade the amenities at Bulahdelah Showground, providing improved access inside and outside 
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Strategy 3: Supporting access to meaningful employment

Area for Action	Status update
<p>Employer awareness of the value that people with disability can offer</p>	<p>Council conducted a staff census during 2020/21. The voluntary survey asked staff to disclose whether they had a disability and the nature of the disability (vision, mobility, hearing, etc). The census also sought information on whether staff had caring responsibilities for a person with disability. The Community Development team plans to consult staff who disclosed information in this way to inform the development of the new Disability Inclusion Action Plan, and will invite those staff to form a support group, in order for the organisation to better understand their needs and provide appropriate support.</p>

Strategy 4: Improving access to services through better systems and processes

Area for Action	Status update
<p>Access to information on available services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council meetings are now live streamed for the community by video and audio, with a full recording available after the meeting, making the meetings more accessible for everyone in the community. • Readspeaker is fully functional on Council's website, enabling customers to listen to a page in audio, or highlight any section of text on any page to listen to the selected text. • Council’s website continues to be improved in terms of quality and streamlining of forms on our website. Information on road projects has been greatly improved. • A wheel in/out service is offered for a fee, for customers who don’t have ability to wheel their bins out for weekly collection. • Residents can report illegal dumping online, eliminating the need to visit a council office, or make a phone call; • The mobile Community Recycling Centre continued to visit remote communities to assist them with disposal of problematic waste such as paint, gas bottles, oil and batteries. • Library Services continues to invest in and enhance its other services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a significant collection of large-print and audio books; - home library lending service, delivering books to people who have difficulty leaving their homes; - substantial dyslexic and literacy collections; - a significantly expanding collection of eBooks and eAudio - online content was improved by 11% during the Covid-19 period; - delivery of virtual story-time for children; - Author and workshop events being held by Zoom – open to all residents; - a wide variety of online databases and other resources; - availability of 24/7 online services, including access to the catalogue and membership details.

Particulars of compliance with and effect of planning agreements (VPA) in force during the year.

Section 93G(5) Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

VPA	Overview	Status
661 The Lakes Way Darawank (2018)	Agreement between Council and Raymond John Hill & Susan Eve Hill regarding dedication of a Biodiversity Lot in exchange for 2 residential lots	Current – no activity during reporting period.
Carmona Dr, South Forster (2012)	Agreement between Council and Acornlane P/L and Homeborn P/L and the Minister for Environment in connection with rezoning of land. Relates to environmental restoration works and dedication of land to the Minister	Current – half of the environmental lands (eastern portion – ‘The Saddle’) previously dedicated to the State. No further activity during reporting period.
Seven Mile Beach, The Lakes Way, South Forster (2007)	Agreement between Council and Seven Mile Beach Holdings Pty Ltd in connection with rezoning of land	Current- no activity during reporting period.
5-9 Wallis Street, Forster (2007)	Agreement between Council and Sabace No. 2 Pty Ltd regarding the payment of contributions to Council for traffic and carparking facilities.	Current- no activity during reporting period.
Gloucester River Run (2019)	Agreement between Council and Gloucester River Run Pty Ltd and Brian and Heather Beesley regarding the rezoning of land. Requires land dedication to Council, bio-diversity off-sets via a vegetation management plan and requires any development over the site to meet a set of water quality objectives.	Current – \$20,000 bank guarantee previously lodged with Council. No activity during reporting period.
210 Diamond Beach Road, Diamond Beach (2013)	Agreement between Council and SAF Properties P/L regarding the provision of environmental corridors and community infrastructure such as access, facilities and landscaping.	Current – DA (317/2012/DA) for subdivision approved 01/05/13. Subdivision construction occurred during reporting period but no activity on completing actions.
363 Diamond Beach Road, Diamond Beach (2017)	Agreement between Council and Seashells Ltd regarding preparation of a Public Access Strategy by Council and adoption by 11/10/20 and subsequent dedication of land and a footpath providing public access along the eastern boundary by the developer.	Current – Council adopted strategy during reporting period.
391 Diamond Beach Road, Diamond Beach (2019)	Agreement between Council and Sybury Pty Limited regarding preparation of a Public Access Strategy by Council and adoption by 11/10/20 and subsequent dedication of land and a footpath providing public access along the eastern boundary by the developer.	Current – Council adopted strategy during reporting period and \$88,000 paid to Council by developer.
90 High Street, Black Head (2014)	Agreement between Council and Halliday Shores Retirement Living P/L regarding the provision of landscaping.	Current – vegetation establishment yet to be completed.
303 Blackhead Road, Hallidays Point (2010)	Agreement between Council, John Earnings P/L, Island Point Plantations P/L, and Brichris P/L regarding the dedication of lands and associated works at Tallwoods Village, Hallidays Point.	Current – no action during reporting period.
323 Blackhead Road, Hallidays Point (2010)	Agreement between Council and Benvenutos regarding dedication of lands and associated works at Tallwoods Village, Hallidays Point.	Current – DA for subdivision (567/2019/DA) approved 27/09/11 but no activity.
Harrington Waters Estate (2007)	Agreement between Council and Roche Group P/L regarding provision of a Library and Community Centre at Harrington.	Current – no activity during reporting period.

Precinct 1 Old Bar (2010)	Agreement between Council, Riverside Canal Developments P/L, R and N Lauder, R and U Scadden and R Peet regarding dedication of land and construction of a pedestrian/cycle path and associated lighting.	Current – no activity during reporting period.
Precinct 2B Old Bar (2008)	Agreement between Council and Mr Walsh regarding dedication of land and a dwelling entitlement.	Current – no activity during reporting period.
Palms Oasis Caravan Park (2020)	Agreement between Council and Ina Operations Pty Ltd regarding dedication of a Biodiversity Lot to Council and payment of a monetary contribution towards ongoing management.	Current – developer paid \$129,425 to Council during reporting period.
Tropic Gardens Drive, Smiths Lake (2013)	Agreement between Council and Overpa P/L regarding the rezoning of land at Tropic Gardens Dr. Relates to environmental restoration works and protection of land.	Current – no activity during reporting period.
Tallwoods Eastern Lands (2010)	Agreement between Council and Tallwoods P/L regarding the rehabilitation, embellishment and maintenance of vegetation and bushfire asset protection zones.	Current – no activity during reporting period.
Brimbin (2014)	Agreement between Council and Roche Group P/L regarding the requirement to undertake further master planning of the new town prior to subdivision occurring, to commit the developer to fund the regional road network upgrades required due to this development, to dedicate land required for community and open space purposes and to fund a Community Development Worker for 20 years.	Current – landowner lodged Development Control Plan application with Council on 12/04/19. Landowner working on traffic study for Council consideration during reporting period.
FIGTREES on the Manning (2010)	Agreement between Council, Chase Taree Developments P/L, Hocana P/L and Spychala regarding the provision of public infrastructure associated with redevelopment of the former Lower Manning Dairy Cooperative at Chatham.	Current – the infrastructure on public land is being funded from a Commonwealth grant. The VPA will need to be revised following completion of these works.
Kolodong Estate, Kolodong Road, Taree (2019)	Agreement between Council, Wayne Peter Green & Nancy Jean Green and Benwaydan Pty Ltd regarding the landowner contributing to the cost of an intersection upgrade at Kolodong/Wingham Rd's if Council undertakes the works prior to the development proceeding.	Current – Development Control Plan application over urban release area and Development Application for subdivision covering land in Planning Agreement lodged during reporting period.
North Shearwater at Tea Gardens (2012)	Agreement between Council and Wolin Investments P/L in connection with the rezoning of the land. Relates to environmental restoration and dedication of significant land to Council	Current - partly implemented by commencement of restoration works.
Chapmans Rd, Tuncurry (2008)	Robert Leo Wilson and Claude Stanley Wilson regarding the rezoning of land. Requires land dedication to a conservation authority or Council and the preparation of a DCP.	Current - partly implemented by preparation of a DCP.
Murray Road, Wingham (2018)	Agreement between Council and Duncan's Holdings Limited regarding creation of a central drainage corridor and vegetation reserve and subsequent dedication to Council.	Current – no action during reporting period.
Sanderling Avenue, Hawks Nest (2021)	Agreement between Council and Core Property Development Pty Ltd & Leric Group Pty Ltd to pay a monetary contribution to Council to fund environmental research & restoration, open space improvements and a contribution to the Hawks Nest Surf Club.	Current – signed during reporting period.

Recovery and threat abatement plans – Councils identified in a plan as responsible for implementation of measures included in the plan, to report on actions taken to implement measures as to the state of the environment in its area. *Section 220ZT Fisheries Management Act 1994*

Not applicable to MidCoast Council

Details of inspections of private swimming pools. Include:

- number of inspections of tourist and visitor accommodation
- number of inspections of premises with more than 2 dwellings
- number of inspections that resulted in issuance of certificate of compliance under section 22D of the Act
- number of inspections that resulted in issuance of a certificate of non-compliance under clause 18BA of the Regulation

Section 22F(2) Swimming Pools Act 1992, and Clause 18BC Swimming Pools Regulation 2008 (SP Reg)

- 38 inspections of tourist and visitor pools.
- 22 inspections of properties with more than two dwellings.
- 220 Inspections resulted in the issuance of compliance certificate.
- 165 Inspections resulted in the issuance of a non-compliance certificate.

Information included on Government Information Public Access activity.

Section 125(1) Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009, and Clause 8 Schedule 2 Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018

Annual reporting requirements under section 125 of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act) require agencies to prepare and submit an annual report on their obligations under the GIPA Act within four months of the end of the reporting period. For NSW Local Government Councils, being agencies under the GIPA Act, this date is 31 October and the reports are to be made to the Minister for Local Government.

Clause 8 of the Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2009 sets out the information that agencies must include in their GIPA Act Annual Reports. Those requirements are set out below and are followed by Council’s response.

Clause 8(a) - Details of the review carried out by the agency (MidCoast Council) under Section 7(3) of the Act during the reporting year and the details of any information made publicly available by the agency as a result of the review.

Reviews carried out by the agency	Information made publicly available by the agency
No	No

Clause 8(b) - The total number of access applications received by the agency (MidCoast Council) during the reporting year (including withdrawn applications but not including invalid applications).

Total number of applications received 40

Clause 8(c) - The total number of access applications received by the agency (MidCoast Council) during the reporting year that the agency refused, either wholly or partly, because the application was for the disclosure of information referred to in Schedule 1 to the Act (information for which there is conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure).

Number of Applications Refused	Wholly	Partly	Total
	0	4	4
% total	0%	100%	

Table A: Number of applications by type of applicant and outcome*

	Access Granted in Full	Access Granted in Part	Access Refused in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/Deny whether information is held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Private sector business	4	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	9	21%
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2%
Members of the public (by legal representative)	4	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	8	19%
Members of the public (other)	12	6	1	2	1	0	0	2	24	57%
Total	20	14	2	2	1	1	0	2	42	
% of Total	48%	33%	5%	5%	2%	2%	0%	5%		

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

Table B: Number of applications by type of application and outcome*

	Access Granted in Full	Access Granted in Part	Access Refused in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/Deny whether information is held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Personal information applications*	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	7%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	15	13	1	2	0	1	0	1	33	79%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	6	14%
Total	20	14	2	2	1	1	0	2	42	
% of Total	48%	33%	5%	5%	2%	2%	0%	5%		

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

Table C: Invalid applications

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

Table D: Conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure: matters listed in Schedule 1 of Act

	Number of times consideration used*	% of Total
Overriding secrecy laws	0	0%
Cabinet information	0	0%
Executive Council information	0	0%
Contempt	0	0%
Legal professional privilege	4	100%
Excluded information	0	0%
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0	0%
Transport safety	0	0%
Adoption	0	0%
Care and protection of children	0	0%
Ministerial code of conduct	0	0%
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0	0%
Privilege generally - Sch 1(5A)	0	0%
Information provided to High Risk Offenders Assessment Committee	0	0%
Total	4	

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

Table E: Other public interest considerations against disclosure: matters listed in table to section 14 of Act

	Number of times consideration used*	% of Total
Responsible and effective government	1	6%
Law enforcement and security	0	0%
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	13	76%
Business interests of agencies and other persons	3	18%
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0	0%
Secrecy provisions	0	0%
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0	0%
Total	17	

Table F: Timeliness

	Number of applications*	% of Total
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	36	97%
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	1	3%
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0	0%
Total	37	

MID-COAST COUNCIL PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES ACT 1994

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

Annual reporting requirements under section 31 of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994* (PID Act) require agencies to prepare and submit an annual report on their obligations under the PID Act within 4 months of the end of the reporting period. For NSW Local Government Councils, being agencies under the PID Act, this date is 31 October and the reports are to be made to the Minister for Local Government.

The *Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011* sets out the information that agencies must include in their PID Act Annual Reports. Those requirements are set out below.

1. Statistical Information on PIDs

	July 2020 - June 2021
Number of public officials who made PIDs	1
Number of PIDs received	1
Of PIDs received, number primarily about:	
Corrupt Conduct	1
Maladministration	0
Serious and substantial waste	0
Government information contravention	0
Local government pecuniary interest contravention	0
Number of PIDs finalised	2

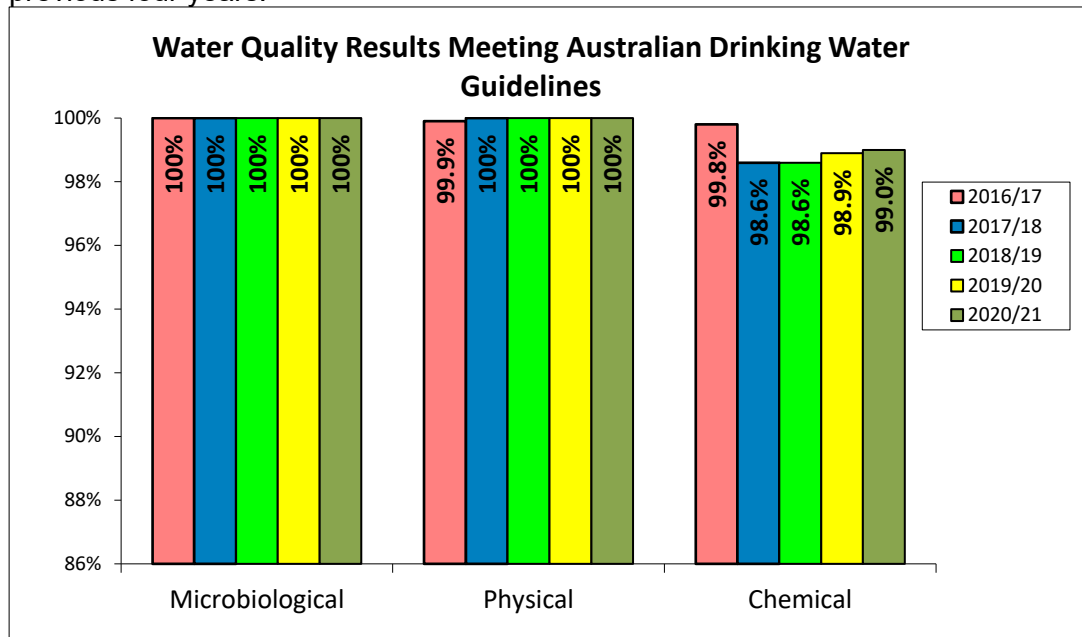
2. Commentary on PID Obligations

2.1 MidCoast Council has established an internal reporting policy. The current version of this policy was adopted by Council on 11 March 2020.

2.2 The General Manager of MidCoast Council (as head of the public authority) has taken action to ensure that staff have been made aware of their obligations under the PID Act. Training has been conducted for staff, both indoor and outdoor, by the Governance team as well as inclusion within Council's Induction Program for new staff. A suite of reporting tools has been developed and is available for staff to access on the Intranet. Fifteen PID Officers from various positions within the organisation have been recruited after calling for expressions of interest. They have been trained in the role and information with their contact details is located on the intranet.

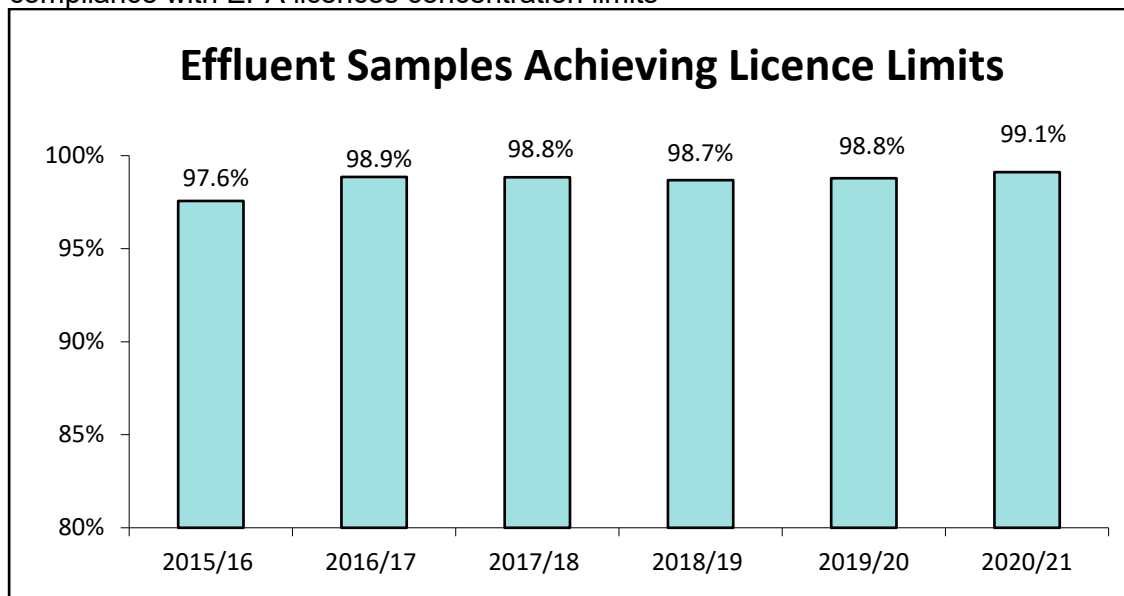
Compliance with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG)

During the 2020-21 year, water quality results of samples collected in the reticulation system within Australian Drinking Water Guidelines are presented below, compared with the previous four years.



Compliance with environmental protection licences

The compliance trend for 2020/21 year compared to the last five years is shown in the graph below representing effluent samples collected from all sewage treatment plants to confirm compliance with EPA licences concentration limits



Compliance with the NSW Government's Best Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage Framework

As a Council responsible for water supply and sewerage services, MidCoast Council must comply with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993* as well as the NSW Government's Best-Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage Framework.

The six elements of the framework are:

1. Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy and Financial Plan

The Best Practice Framework requires the review of our integrated water cycle management strategy every eight years. The development of our integrated water cycle management strategy 'Our Water Our Future' has identified long term solutions for MidCoast Council's water and sewerage services in accordance with the requirements of the framework. Our current integrated water cycle management strategy was adopted in March 2016 and review of the strategy is underway. The integrated water cycle management strategy review will involve community consultation on strategic water and sewer issues, and the new strategy should be adopted early in 2023

2. Water conservation measures

MidCoast Council has made significant progress with regards to water conservation through ongoing community education, engagement, and pricing. In 2019-20 benchmarking the average domestic usage for our region was the 14th lowest in the state and 9th lowest of the large (>10,000 connections) water utilities. Average use has increased compared to previous years and is likely due to bushfires during the period

3. Strategic business plan

MidCoast Council's strategic business plan for water and sewer 'Future Directions 2018-2048' adopted in 2018 complies with the timeframes and requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993* and the Best-Practice Framework. MidCoast Council has developed and adopted a drinking water quality management system in accordance with NSW Health regulations. The water and sewer strategic business plan is currently under review

4. Drought management plan

In 2018, MidCoast Council Water Services updated its Drought Management Plan as part of the review of the Strategic Business Plan. The plan is currently under review in response to the 2019-20 drought

5. Pricing and regulation of water supply, sewerage and trade waste

MidCoast Council complies with these requirements through the development of its long-term financial plan, development of servicing plans and ongoing implementation of its liquid trade waste policy

6. Performance monitoring

MidCoast Council submitted its Triple Bottom Line Performance Report for 2019-20 according to NSW Water Utility Performance Monitoring System requirements, addressing economic, financial and social performance indicators, which are benchmarked against regional NSW and other Australian utilities.

As a Council responsible for water supply and sewerage services, MidCoast Council must comply with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993* as well as the NSW Government's Best-Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage Framework