

# ANNUAL REPORT

2023-24





### **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.

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01

INTRODUCTION

# About the Annual Report

## How to Read this Document

MidCoast Council's Annual Report provides a summary of our performance over the 2023-24 financial year. It outlines our achievements in implementing the Delivery Program 2022-2026 through the 2023-24 Operational Plan.

The report is separated into six main parts:

**Part one** sets the scene for the MidCoast area and provides information about Council and the legislative requirements of the Integrated Planning & Reporting framework, which governs the content of this report.

**Part two** provides a summary of our annual highlights and achievements for the 2023-24 financial year. It shows how Council has worked towards meeting our community's vision, through implementation of our Delivery Program and Operational Plan as set in the Community Strategic Plan, MidCoast 2032. This part starts with a summary of our investments through the Capital Works Program. This is followed by a summary of the highlights and achievements each service of Council delivered over the 2023-24 financial year. The services are arranged in alphabetical order.

**Part three** provides statutory information Council is required to publish in the Annual Report.

**Part four** sets out Council's audited financial statements for the 2023-24 year.

**Part five** is a report on our annual carbon emissions and summarises the key initiatives currently being implemented by Council to lower its emissions.

**Part six** is the State of the MidCoast report, reporting on our progress against the strategic outcomes and strategies identified in the Community Strategic Plan, MidCoast 2032.

## Intended Audience

This report provides information to our residents and ratepayers, government and non-government agencies, our partners, and local businesses. It also provides staff with information on how Council has performed over the year and how their efforts are contributing to achieve our community's vision.



# Integrated Planning & Reporting

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

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

The Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework includes a suite of integrated plans that set out a vision and goals with strategic actions to achieve them. It also includes a reporting structure to communicate progress to Council and the community as well as a structured timeline for review to ensure the goals and actions are still relevant to the community.

The Framework begins with the community's aspirations and the outcomes they seek for their Local Government Area over a 10-year period. These are described in the Community Strategic Plan.

Along with the Community Strategic Plan Council prepares the following Integrated Planning and Reporting documents:

**Delivery Program** - identifies the commitments Council is making to the community about what will be delivered over the next four years, prioritising what is possible to deliver with the resources available.

**Operational Plan** - a one-year plan detailing the projects, programs and activities that Council will deliver to achieve the commitments in the Delivery Program. It also includes Council's Statement of Revenue Policy including the annual fees and charges and a detailed budget for the actions to be undertaken that year.

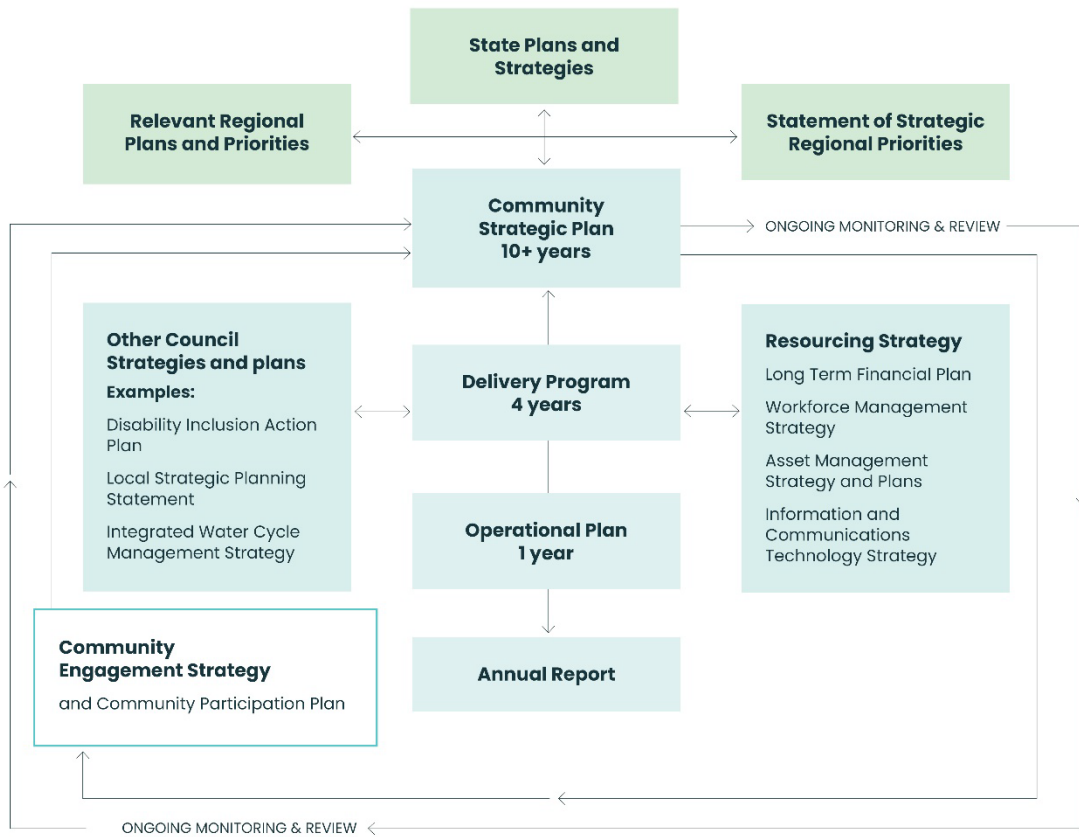
**Resourcing Strategy** - shows how Council will resource its strategic priorities, identified through Integrated Planning & Reporting. At MidCoast Council the Resourcing Strategy comprises the following documents: Long-Term Financial Plan; Asset Management Strategy, Policy and Plans; Workforce Management Strategy; and Information & Communications Technology Strategy.

**Annual Report** - provides the community, Councillors and staff with a summary of Council's performance over the previous financial year highlighting Council's achievements in implementing the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. It also includes statutory information required to be published by legislation

**Delivery Program Progress Report** - prepared every six months and provides Council with an update of Council's progress towards achieving the goals in the Delivery Program.

The diagram on the next page shows how these plans all fit together.

# Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework



# Message from the Mayor

As we present our Annual Report for 2023-2024, I am proud of the progress we have made together. This report is not just a summary of our achievements but a testament to the resilience, innovation, and community spirit that define MidCoast.



Over the past year, we have demonstrated a remarkable ability to evolve and grow together. It has been fantastic to see Council work to deliver so many projects, events, plans, and new initiatives that enhance our community. The Annual Report serves as our yearbook, providing an overview of the activities, projects, events, and initiatives undertaken in the past financial year. We have supported a range of innovative plans and strategies that lay the groundwork for MidCoast's future.

These include - Consolidating three local environmental plans into one cohesive plan to improve planning outcomes; a Swimming Pool Operations Review; the MidCoast Koala Conservation Strategy; the MidCoast Destination Management Plan 2030 and the Old Bar Park Master Plan. Also, in this year we adopted a significant planning document in our long-term water strategy which outlines how we will provide sustainable and affordable water and sewerage services to our community over the next 30 years. Significantly, we endorsed a Roads Strategy that provides us with the information we need to address our asset backlog. Previously, we knew our roads needed significant resourcing, but we did not have a clear view of the actual costs of remediation. Now we know our target funding levels. With more than \$5 billion worth of community assets, maintaining and improving these for our community continues to be a high priority. Putting more money into our roads network was a key priority.

We resurfaced 252,334 square metres of sealed roads and resheeted 94.5 kilometres of unsealed roads; spent \$15 million on local road renewals; replaced six bridges to improve connectivity; invested \$25 million in our water assets and \$9.7 million in our sewer assets; allocated \$11.1 million to enhance our open spaces; and we built the Tuncurry Fazio Park Water Playground and Amenities.

Importantly, we have expedited planning approvals, facilitating significant development in our region where development is appropriate. We continue to work with the industry to ensure our processes improve and facilitate development where appropriate. MidCoast Council processed more development applications in 2023-24 financial year than other regional council in NSW.

Ensuring our ongoing financial sustainability has been an important focus for Council in the past year. In May we adopted a Financial Sustainability Review Action Plan to see us through the next few years. This plan focuses on improving our financial position in the outyears whilst seeking to address the declining position of our assets, notably our roads network. To sure up our finances and reduce our risk exposure, we divested ourselves of MidCoast Assist and ensured an orderly transition for staff and clients into the private sector.

These are just a taste of the significant works and services provided by Council to the community in 2023-24 to enhance our community and make it a wonderful place to live and work. I want to thank our dedicated Council staff, who work tirelessly, often without fanfare, to make MidCoast what it is today and to steer it towards a brighter future. I also want to acknowledge the hard work of the previous Council, whose focused efforts have turned many ideas and proposals into the reality that we report today.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to transparency, inclusivity, and continuous improvement. We will continue to listen to your voices and work collaboratively to address the needs and aspirations of our community across the entire 10,000 square kilometres.

Thank you for your trust and partnership. Let us continue to work together to make MidCoast an even better place to live, work, and thrive.

Cr Claire Pontin  
**MAYOR**



## Message from the General Manager

During the past year we have continued to focus on delivering for the community and working hard to do what we can with the resources we have.

While continuous maintenance of our road network is a focus area, we have also delivered for our community in a range of other areas during 2023-24.

Our customer service team took over 103,000 phone enquiries during the 2023-24 reporting period, and significantly, introduced a new customer request system to streamline the response process. The new system delivers key benefits such as enabling customers to self-lodge and track requests with accessibility to automatic updates via customers preferred communication method.



Another key benefit of the new system is the automated workflow processes and the ability to direct customer requests directly to the relevant internal department and team member. This supports our goal to speed up our response rates as staff receive requests in a more efficient and timely manner.

We approved more than \$440 million worth of development with our average determination time for large scale applications sitting at an average of 88 days. Our average processing time across all categories is 88 days, which is less than the 101 day average of comparable councils.

We attracted grant funding to undertake a review into the barriers that unnecessarily complicate the development assessment process and impede the delivery of good housing outcomes.

The final Housing Barriers Review Findings Report was presented to Council in October 2023 and has set a path forward to improve our internal processes and work with the industry to best meet the challenges of the current housing market.

Following significant community engagement, an Open Space and Recreation Strategy was adopted to guide our future planning and prioritisation for the sustainable management of the MidCoast public open space as well as for future development on these spaces, including sport and recreation facilities and programs in the MidCoast local government area until 2035.

We are continuing to deliver on improvements to community infrastructure with programs for our community halls, playgrounds and amenities with a total of \$13.6 million spent on improving these areas for our community. This includes a \$1.4 million investment into community halls through a bushfire recovery funding opportunity and the delivery of 40 projects across our public spaces.

An important aspect of community support and preparing for the future is our employee-based training program which offers employment-based training positions including traineeships, apprenticeships, cadetships and graduate programs. During 2023-24 we employed 54 members of the community as part of this program.

Once again I want to acknowledge and thank our volunteers, who are key to the delivery of many of our services and we thank them for their devotion to their community.

Finally, along with thanking staff for their ongoing contributions, I would also like to thank our Councillors for their continued commitment to the community.

Adrian Panuccio

**GENERAL MANAGER**

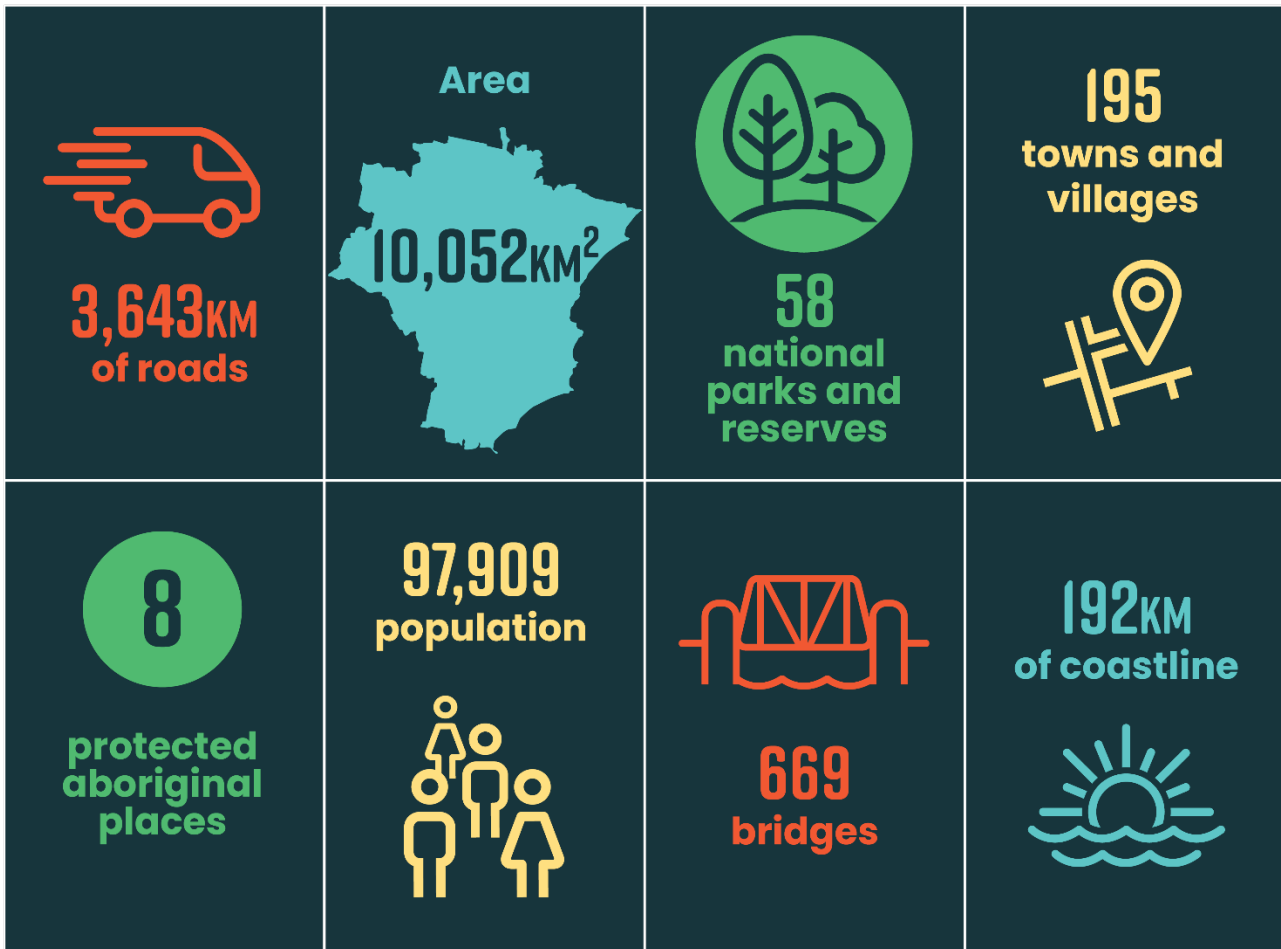
# Our Region

Home to an estimated resident population of 97,909 (ABS ERP 2023), the MidCoast region offers our diverse community a wide range of lifestyle opportunities.

Located on the mid north coast of NSW, the geographical area of the MidCoast local government area covers more than 10,000 km<sup>2</sup> and extends from the coastline, west to the escarpment of the Great Dividing Range. The Gathang-speaking people are the traditional owners of the land.

The region is well known for its natural beauty and is a key holiday destination that attracts over two million tourists and visitors each year. The area spans from sparkling beaches on the coast to mountains in the hinterland, with expansive national parks and green spaces in between. It includes the Manning River valley, the Wallis, Smiths and Myall Lakes systems, the northern foreshore of Port Stephens, the agricultural hinterland and rugged, forested ranges of the Woko and Tapin Tops National Parks, and the World Heritage-listed Barrington Tops National Park.

These natural features contribute to our lifestyles, livelihoods and wellbeing, and protecting and celebrating them is an important focus for our future.



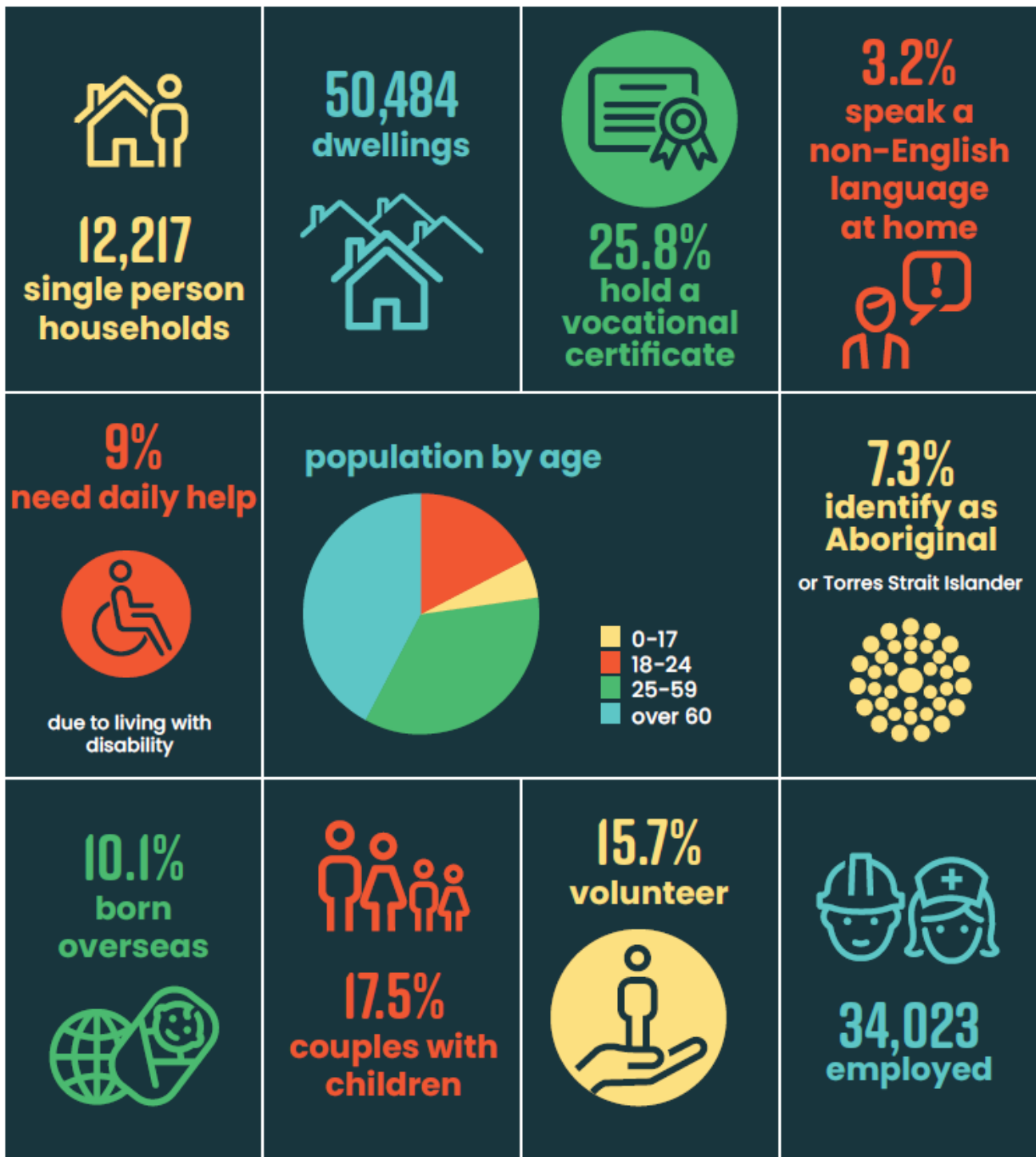
# Our Community

The MidCoast region is home to a diverse community that is expected to grow by 16.33% to 116,744 people by 2036. Our current population is spread across 195 towns and villages, all of which have their own character.

The region is a popular location for retirees. Our ageing community enriches us with its diversity and experience, along with supporting our strong volunteer sector. This segment of our community is also responsible for our large and growing aged care sector, providing a specialised service industry in our region.

The region is also a popular place for raising young children, and families are an important and valued part of our community. While educational opportunities are increasing, there is often a need for young people to leave the area to pursue higher education or employment opportunities.

With 7.3% of our community identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, the MidCoast has significant opportunity to embrace Indigenous cultures and enhance the inclusiveness of our community.



# Community Vision, Values and Outcomes

In developing the Community Strategic Plan (MidCoast 2032) our community described their vision for the future of the region.

## Our Vision

MidCoast is 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 Community Values

Our values describe what is important to us and how we would like to live as a community. What we value is important to the way we plan for our future.

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

Our diverse communities offer active and social opportunities, are safe and are 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, 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 Community Outcomes

The community outcomes are the big picture results that we will keep in sight and focus on achieving. They align with the four themes of the quadruple bottom line: social, environment, economic and civic leadership. The purpose of using these themes is to make sure that everything is considered in a balanced and sustainable way. The community values were used to shape the community outcomes.

### Community Outcome 1: A resilient and socially connected community

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

### Community Outcome 2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments

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

### Community Outcome 3: A thriving and strong economy

A strong regional economy that supports business and jobs growth.

### Community Outcome 4: Strong leadership and good governance

Council is focused on being sustainable, well-governed, and delivering the best outcomes for the community.



*Children at the Tuncurry Water Playground*

## Our Councillors during the reporting period

MidCoast Council has 11 elected Councillors whose role is to oversee the strategic direction and governance of the organisation.

The Councillors' role is to represent the views of the community and make decisions in their interest, demonstrate conduct that the community expects and deserves, and plan and oversee the running of a significant and complex business.

During the reporting period 1 July 2023 - 30 June 2024 the below Councillors were elected.



**Mayor Claire Pontin**



**Deputy Mayor Alan Tickle**



**Councillor Kathryn Bell**



**Councillor Peter Epov**



**Councillor Troy Fowler**



**Councillor Peter Howard**



**Councillor Jeremy Miller**



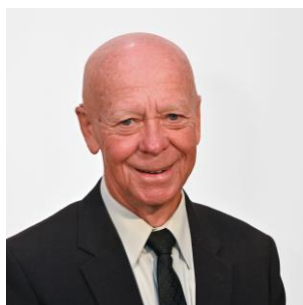
**Councillor Paul Sandilands**



**Councillor Dheera Smith**



**Councillor Katheryn Stinson**



**Councillor David West**

# Our Executive Team

The role of our executive team is to provide organisational direction to achieve Council's vision and mission and establish governance systems that support organisational effectiveness and evidence-based decision making.



**Adrian Panuccio**  
General Manager

The General Manager is responsible for guiding the preparation of the Community Strategic Plan and the Council's response to it through the Delivery Program and the Resourcing Strategy.

The General Manager is also responsible for implementing the Delivery Program and reporting to Council on the progress of delivery to ensure that it is a 'living' document, which is regularly reviewed and updated as necessary.



**Paul De Szell**  
Director Liveable Communities

- Aged Care Support
- Arts & Culture
- Building Services
- Business
- Community Assets
- Community Development
- Customer Service
- Development Assessment
- Disability Services
- Engagement, Communication & Education
- Environmental Health
- Land Use Planning
- Libraries
- Natural Systems
- Open Spaces & Recreation
- Regulatory Services
- Resilience & Recovery Services
- Waste Services



**Steve Embry**  
Director Corporate Services

- Business Transformation
- Corporate Performance & Development
- Finance
- Governance
- Human Resources
- Information & Communications Technology
- Legal & Property
- Procurement, Fleet & Stores



**Robert Scott**  
Director Infrastructure & Engineering Services

- Emergency Management
- Sewer Services
- Stormwater, Drainage, Flooding & Coastal Engineering
- Transport Network
- Water Supply & Treatment

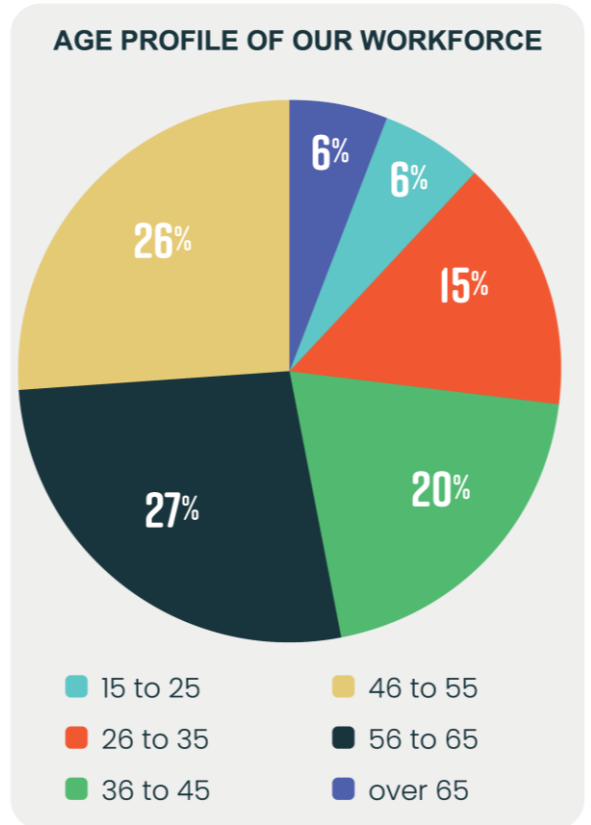
# Workforce Profile

Our vision is to be a high performing organisation where we are always striving to be better. One where we work collaboratively and are trusted.

Council employs around 919 full time equivalent staff (excluding casuals). Our staff deliver a range of services, programs and projects to the community.

<b>Headcount at 30 June 2024</b>	<b>1,058</b>
Corporate Services	151
Infrastructure & Engineering	414
Liveable Communities	493

Gender diversity	Male	Female	Non-binary
Overall staff	59.9%	40%	0.1%
General Manager	100%	0%	0%
Directors	100%	0%	0%
Managers	71%	29%	0%
Supervisors	63%	37%	0%



<p><b>28</b> trainees</p>	<p><b>10</b> graduates</p>	<p><b>16</b> apprentices</p>	<p><b>13</b> work experience students</p>
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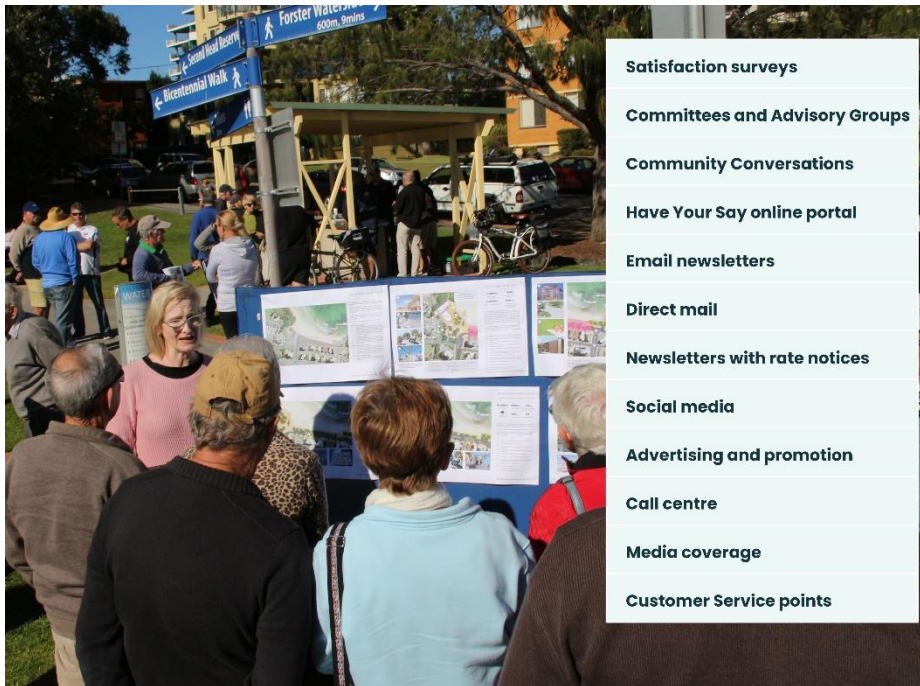
# Engaging with our Community

We are committed to engaging with our community to ensure we reflect the aspirations and views of our residents in our decision making.

Our Community Engagement Strategy recognises that community information sharing, education, consultation and engagement are important ways we can make sure we are planning for the future to meet the aspirations of our community.

There are a range of ways our community can have their say on our plans, policies and services. Community members can have their say on the governance of their Council by voting in local government elections. Other avenues to provide feedback are when plans, policies and strategies are on exhibition or when we are actively seeking input to help us understand your views.

We are continuously working to keep our community informed and gain their feedback through a range of ongoing activities, including:



During 2023-24 our major community engagement projects included:

**Draft MidCoast Local Environmental Plan** - The consolidation of the three existing Local Environmental Plans into one plan will provide a consistent direction on how development in the MidCoast will occur and improve planning outcomes.

**Old Bar Park Master Plan** - The plan aims to improve the safety, visual amenity and usability of the space for the community.

**Swimming Pool Operations Review** - This review looked at the regions nine swimming pools to ensure they operate according to safety guidelines and they are managed in a financially responsible manner so we can continue to meet community needs into the future.

**MidCoast Koala Conservation Strategy** - This strategy guides the conservation and management of koalas and their habitat across the MidCoast region for the next five years.

**MidCoast Community Strategic Plan** - This engagement was a check-in with our community to see if the community's vision, aspirations and priorities have changed since the development of the current CSP. These changes will then be used to inform the review of the current Community Strategic Plan.

**MidCoast Destination Management Plan 2030** - Updating our Destination Management Plan to guide the development of the Barrington Coast tourist region into the future. The plan aims to set the direction and priorities to sustainably grow our visitor economy to 2030 and beyond.



02

2023-24  
HIGHLIGHTS

# Capital Works Highlights

During 2023-24 we invested over \$131.6 million in our capital works program.

Council looks after \$5.8 billion in community assets across seven infrastructure asset classes.

## Improvements

252,334m <sup>2</sup>	sealed roads resurfaced
94.5km	unsealed roads resheeted
6	bridges replaced



## Project investments

\$25M	Water assets
\$15M	Local road renewals
\$14M	as part of the \$100M roads program
\$11.1M	Open spaces
\$9.7M	Sewer assets
\$4.8M	Resurfacing roads



*Nabiac Water Upgrade*



*The Falls Bridge, Elands*

# Public Spaces Highlights

Over \$11.1 million was spent on public spaces projects in 2023-24 including over \$7.15 million of grant funding, a number of projects are listed below:

Project
Tuncurry Fazio Park Water Playground and Amenities
Halls Bushfire Recovery project (47 sites)
Jack Ireland Sports Complex at Bulahdelah Showground
Wingham Library Upgrade
Taree Universities Fit-out
Pindimar Boardwalk Decking
Ellenborough Falls Walkway Upgrade
Forster Pelican Boardwalk - Low Level Water Sports Landing
Gloucester District Park Upgrade
Great Lakes Pearl Dragon Storage Shed



Tuncurry Water Playground



Wingham Library



Pindimar Boardwalk

# Service Area Highlights

The following pages provide a summary of the highlights and achievements delivered by Council over the 2023-24 financial year. The services are arranged in alphabetical order.

- Aged Care Support
- Arts & Culture
- Building Services
- Business
- Community Assets
- Community Development
- Corporate Performance & Development
- Customer Service
- Development Assessment
- Disability Services
- Emergency Management
- Engagement, Communication & Education
- Environmental Health
- Finance
- Governance
- Human Resources
- Information & Communications Technology
- Land Use Planning
- Legal & Property
- Libraries
- Natural Systems
- Open Spaces & Recreation
- Procurement, Fleet & Stores
- Regulatory Services
- Resilience & Recovery
- Sewer Services
- Stormwater Drainage, Flooding & Coastal Engineering
- Transport Network
- Waste Services
- Water Supply & Treatment

# Aged Care Support

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide personalised support services to older people (those aged over 65 years) and their carers to assist them to maintain an active lifestyle and to live independently in their own home longer
<b>Department</b>	MidCoast Assist
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager MidCoast Assist
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>

## Key achievements

- 100% compliance with Quality Standards for Home Care Package clients
- Volunteer database reviewed

## Volunteering connections

A review of our volunteer database was conducted as part of Council's Volunteer Framework. Recognition events are regularly held to celebrate the contributions our volunteers make to MidCoast Assist and across Council.

## MidCoast Assist

Council decisions on 7 February and 22 May 2024 were made to transition MidCoast Council out of providing aged care services.

A decision was made to enter negotiations, and then contracts, with Kiriniari Community Services for the provision of aged care services provided by MidCoast Assist.

Kiriniari Community Services was selected following a rigorous 'request for proposal' process that was very strongly contested.

The resolution of Councillors also acknowledged the work of MidCoast Assist staff, recognising all staff and volunteers for their efforts in ensuring MidCoast Assist clients and participants had continued to receive high quality services.



*The efforts staff and volunteers made regularly assisting MidCoast Assist participants with their day-to-day needs was acknowledged by Councillors.*

# Arts & Culture

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide visual and performing arts programs and events via the Manning Entertainment Centre and the Manning Regional Art Gallery
<b>Department</b>	Libraries, Community & Cultural Services
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Libraries, Community & Cultural Services
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<p><b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b></p> <p><b>3: A thriving and strong economy</b></p>

## Key achievements

- 77 events hosted at the Manning Entertainment Centre
- 20 exhibitions hosted by the Manning Regional Art Gallery
- 184 events hosted by the Manning Regional Art Gallery
- Art and Culture Reference Group and fund established
- Australian Institute of Architects country division award for public architecture of Beryl Jane Flett Studio

## Support for Arts

Council developed and established the MidCoast Arts Support Program with \$15,000 of funding enhancing the opportunities in the arts and cultural sector in the MidCoast.

Council offered a host of creative public programs through collaboration with the Waste Services and Resilience and Recovery team. These programs include:

- National Seniors Week
- MidCoast Libraries Nourish to Flourish program
- MidCoast Festival of Stories, run by MidCoast Council Libraries
- NAIDOC week all schools NAIDOC day and community days

The Arts and Creative Industries Reference Group has been established to provide strategic advice to Council on the planning, development and delivery of services to support the arts and creative industries in the MidCoast region and will support the implementation of the MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036.



*Council supports local artists through its funding for Arts program*

## Upgrading Accessibility

Upgrades have been completed at the Manning Entertainment Centre to improve accessibility. These improvements include new footpaths, handrails, automatic doors and a portable wheelchair lift.



*The Manning Entertainment Centre*

## Award Winning Art at the Manning Regional Art Gallery

The Saltwater Freshwater Arts 2023 exhibition showcased Aboriginal art and contemporary cultural objects from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island artists who reside in the Worimi, Biripi, Dunghutti and Gumbaynggirr nations.

The touring exhibition was displayed during December 2023 and January 2024.



## Circus performance at the MEC

In March 2024 the groundbreaking production of *The Wet* was performed by the First Nations-led contemporary circus ensemble Circa Cairns at the Manning Entertainment Centre. The performance wowed the crowd drawing on ancient stories in a dynamic acrobatic show.

The troupe also conducted a skills workshop with local Indigenous students at Taree High School. The workshop was sponsored by the Manning Entertainment Centre as a public program of MidCoast Council Cultural Services.

Created by Harley Mann (Wakka Wakka) on country across Far North Queensland, *The Wet* is inspired by the landscape and endless yarns with community.

Circa Cairns is an initiative supported by the Queensland Government and the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation. Circa Cairns received support in 2022 by the Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund – an Australian Government initiative.





# Building Services

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Undertake building inspections, swimming pool safety and fire safety audits and inspections. Also processes building approvals and small-scale development approvals
<b>Department</b>	Development Assessment and Building Certification
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Development Assessment and Building Certification
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>
	<b>2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments</b>

## Key achievements

- 45 days median determination time for small-scale Development Applications
- 21,753 building and development related enquires taken over phone
- 12 days average time taken to process Fast Track Planning Applications
- 3,620 individual customer requests received

## Housing Barriers Review

Taking a proactive approach in determining the barriers to achieving good quality development outcomes, Council engaged independent consultants to undertake the Housing Barriers Review Project.

This project was funded through grant funding from the NSW Government Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund.

It identified the barriers that unnecessarily complicate the development assessment process and impede the delivery of good housing outcomes.

The final Housing Barriers Review Findings Report was presented to Council on 23 October 2023 where it was endorsed and the implementation plan within the report was adopted.

Through the implementation plan we are working towards internal process improvements, industry engagement and ongoing development of our planning controls to best meet the challenges of the current housing market.

Quarterly reports to the elected Council on the delivery of the implementation plan commenced in February 2024 with the implementation of immediate and short-term actions having commenced.



*The Housing Barriers Review implementation plan identifies 53 actions to provide a smoother and less complicated approach to the development assessment process*

# Business

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Develop and support business generation initiatives, tourism programs and events to build economic and employment capability and capacity within the MidCoast region
<b>Department</b>	Growth Economic Development & Tourism
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Economic and Destination Development
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>
	<b>3: A thriving and strong economy</b>

## Key achievements

- The AH202 Project (Community Connector) supported 222 people, representing 86 professionals relocating to the region.
- Our Destination Experience team welcomed over 22,000 visitors through the accredited Visitor Information Centres in Forster and Gloucester.
- The MidCoast Destination Management Plan was endorsed with a focus on growing the visitor economy in a sustainable way.
- Council awarded 52 event sponsorship grants for the community worth \$181,890
- Council approved over 70 events held on Council-owned land
- 300 businesses participated in the Vibrant Spaces Program
- 320 businesses in 23 locations participated in the Shop MidCoast Program

## Opening of Forster Civic Centre

The new Forster Civic Centre opened in October 2023. It is now home to three community services including a new library, visitor centre and customer service point to support the area.

This space provides accessible visitor and community services. It is an asset to local businesses with meeting and conference rooms and a public community space.

The building also increases the housing supply in the Forster Town Centre with apartments above and through the addition of retail services increasing jobs in the town centre.



*The Forster Civic Centre opened to the public in 2023*

# Community Assets

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Manage 3,000 hectares of parks and open spaces, 26 sporting complexes, 84 playgrounds, 34 cemeteries, 560 council buildings (including amenities, halls administration etc) and Taree Airport operations
<b>Department</b>	Public Spaces
<b>Responsibility</b>	Executive Manager Public Spaces
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>
	<b>3: A thriving and strong economy</b>
	<b>4: Strong leadership and good governance</b>

## Key achievements

- Development of Asset Management Plans for Open Space Infrastructure
- Open Space and Recreation Strategy 2023-2035 adopted
- Completion of 40 capital works projects across our Public Spaces
- Strategic and Master Planning Award at the 2024 Parks and Leisure Australia NSW/ACT Awards of Excellence

## Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Following an extensive community consultation program in 2022, the MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy was developed and adopted by Council in July 2023.

The purpose of the strategy is to deliver a comprehensive and prioritised plan for the sustainable management of the MidCoast public open space as well as for future development on these spaces, including sport and recreation facilities and programs in the MidCoast Local Government area until 2035.

The Open Space and Recreation Strategy is underpinned by a number of specific strategies and plans that were identified as actions from this strategy. These documents have since been developed and adopted by Council following consultation with the community. They include:

- Playspace Strategy
- Skatepark Strategy
- Outdoor Sports Court Strategy
- Sports Lighting Plan
- Recreational Boating Infrastructure Plan



## Tuncurry Water Park

Following planning and engagement over many years regarding an opportunity to re-purpose the Tuncurry pool a plan for a water playground was developed. This incorporated key elements that the community identified.

Funding from the Australian Government, Council and developer contributions saw an 'all abilities' water playground and new amenities block completed in August 2023.

Future plans for Vincent Fazio Park include expanding our facilities and constructing a children's safety bike path.



*Tuncurry Water Park opened on 1 September 2023*

## Planning at Old Bar

A master plan for the Old Bar Foreshore and Old Bar Reserve was developed and placed on public exhibition between April - May 2024.

The plan aims to improve the safety, visual amenity and usability of the space for the community.

An accessible viewing platform, upgraded skatepark, amphitheatre, dedicated area for the war memorial, shared pathway with public art and a regional playground are some of the features of the master plan.



*Old Bar Foreshore*

## Exciting plans for future play spaces

Our Playspace Strategy was developed following an audit of the playgrounds in the MidCoast and community feedback to provide high quality, accessible and inclusive playgrounds.

Adopted in December 2023 the strategy sets the future direction for the planning of play spaces in the region over the next 12 years.



*The playground at Tea Gardens Library identified for future upgrading in our Playspace Strategy*

# Community Development

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Develop strong, inclusive, connected communities through building capacity and partnerships. Key groups include the Aboriginal community, young people, people with disability and seniors. Also implements the Volunteer Framework and administers Council's community donations program
<b>Department</b>	Libraries & Community Services
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Libraries & Community Services
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>

## Key achievements

- Establishment of the MidCoast Youth Action Collective
- Implementation of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)
- Implementation of the Ageing Strategy
- Evaluation of the Youth Strategic Plan 2023
- MidCoast Youth Awards
- \$31,943 of community donations distributed to nine organisations

## Youth Week Awards

The MidCoast Youth Awards recognise the achievements of young people and the contributions they make to our community.

Young people in the region were celebrated on 12 September 2023 at the MidCoast Youth Award ceremony.

Held at the Manning Entertainment Centre, the ceremony was attended by more than 130 people which included award nominees and their guests and family members.

Award partners and sponsors included the PCYC, LJ Hooker, Grow a Star, Rotary International District 9660, Friends of the Manning Regional Art Gallery and MidCoast Council. 59 nominations were received resulting in 11 award winners across six award categories.



Winners of the MidCoast Youth Awards 2023

# Corporate Performance & Development

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Support and coordinate Council’s Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) requirements, business planning, service reviews and business improvement initiatives. Also provide internal change management advisory service and organisational development programs that support staff to be more effective in their roles
<b>Department</b>	Strategy & Performance
<b>Responsibility</b>	Chief Strategy & Performance Manager
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>4: Strong leadership and good governance</b>

## Key achievements

- Pilot service optimisation reviews commenced
- Community engagement completed for the Community Strategic Plan review
- Delivery Program revised and Operational Plan developed and adopted by Council
- Implementation of the LEAD Program to grow future leaders
- Implementation of Culture Support Program to support organisational performance

## Reviewing the community’s plan

From April to June 2024 our engagement team met with members of our community at workshops and pop-up events to collect feedback for the review of our Community Strategic Plan.

Four workshops and 10 pop-up sessions were held around the region. Feedback was also collected through our Have Your Say platform and over the phone.

This feedback will be used to update our Community Strategic Plan for the period 2025-2035. This plan sets the direction for our community for the next 10 years. It is reviewed every four years to check in with the community to see what has changed and make sure the plan reflects the community’s aspirations for MidCoast area.



*The Community Strategic Plan is reviewed every four years*

# Customer Service

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide support and advice across a range of services, including customer enquiries, application lodgement and receipt of payments. The Gloucester Customer Service Point also operates as the Service NSW and Services Australia outlet
<b>Department</b>	Customer Experience
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Customer Experience
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>4: Strong leadership and good governance</b>

## Key achievements

- Provided responses to 5,000 building and development enquiries
- Received over 170,000 receipted payments
- 1,711 Service NSW customer transactions
- Answered over 103,000 phone enquiries
- Created over 3,200 applications

## Combined Customer Services

The relocation of the Forster Customer Service Point to the Forster Civic Centre has made it more accessible for local residents to access Council services.

The new site combines the Forster Library, Customer Service Point and Visitor Information Centre into one building.

## New Customer Request system

As part of Council’s Business Transformation Project, a new customer request management system was implemented in early December 2023.

This new system assists with streamlining the response process to ensure customer requests and enquiries through the Council’s website are directed efficiently.

Customers are also able to opt in for automated updates or to check the status of their request by using their request number through the website.



*The new Customer Service Point has opened at the Forster Civic Centre, making it easier for residents to access Council services*

# Development Assessment

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide planning advice, assessment and determination of large-scale development applications for land use, subdivision, residential development and commercial and industrial development
<b>Department</b>	Major Assessment & Regulatory Services
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Major Assessment & Regulatory Services
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<p><b>2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments</b></p> <p><b>4: Strong leadership and good governance</b></p>

## Key achievements

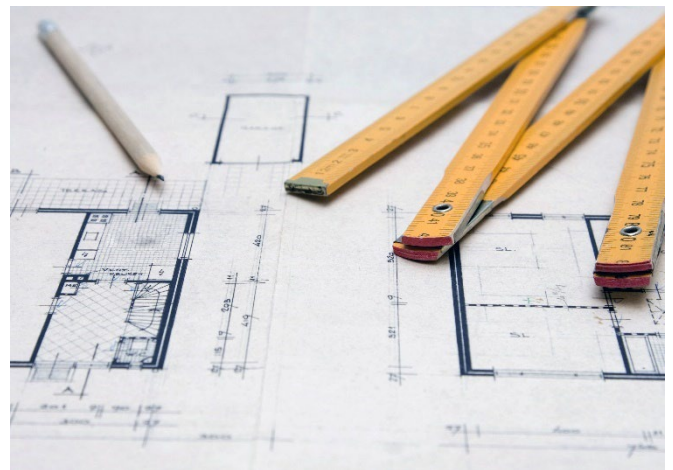
- 88 days average determination time for large-scale Development Applications
- Over \$440 million of Development Applications approved
- 1,304 development and modification applications processed

## Improving processes to accelerate results

Builders and developers are showing continued confidence in the MidCoast region.

As shown on the NSW Government’s ‘Planning Council League Table’ MidCoast Council both received and processed more development applications in the 2023-24 financial year than all other regional councils.

The average Development Assessment processing time for Regional Councils for the 2023-24 financial year was 101 days. The average processing time for MidCoast Council for the same period was 88 days.



*MidCoast Council continues to aim for greater efficiency in the Development Application process*



# Disability Services

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide support to people living with disability as a registered National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) provider to support them to stay connected with their community and lead the lives they want and live as independently as possible
<b>Department</b>	MidCoast Assist
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager MidCoast Assist
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>

## Key achievements

- 100% compliance with NDIS Practice Standards

## MidCoast Assist

At the Council meeting on 7 February and 22 May 2024 it was decided that MidCoast Council was to transition out of providing disability services.

A decision was made to enter negotiations, and then contracts with Ability Options for the provision of disability services provided by MidCoast Assist.

This organisation was selected following a rigorous 'request for proposal' process that was very strongly contested.

The resolution of Councillors also acknowledged the work of MidCoast Assist staff, recognising all staff and volunteers for their efforts in ensuring MidCoast Assist clients and participants have continued to receive high quality services.



*Staff and volunteers were recognised for their efforts ensuring high quality services through MidCoast Assist*

# Emergency Management

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Emergency Management planning and mitigation measures to reduce the impacts of natural disasters on the community. The role acts as a conduit between Council and state government agencies during emergency management and the Local Emergency Management Committee
<b>Department</b>	Infrastructure & Engineering Division
<b>Responsibility</b>	Director Infrastructure & Engineering Services
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>

## Key achievements

- Management and coordination of the Local Emergency Management Committee
- 100% compliance of Local Emergency Management Plan
- Practice emergency response exercise held at Taree Airport
- Update of Local Emergency Management Plan endorsed by the Regional Emergency Management Committee
- Three Local Emergency Management Committee meetings held

## Upgrades of Rural Fire Service Facilities

Council approved the construction of additions to the Wallaby Joe Rural Fire Station in Wingham and for a contract for the construction of a replacement Rural Fire Service Brigade station for Johns River.

The Wallaby Joe additions project will be funded through the Black Summer Bushfire Recovery grants program. The replacement of the Brigade Station Johns River will be funded through the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery grants program and the Emergency Services Levy Reserve.



*Additions will be made to the Wallaby Joe Rural Fire Station in Wingham*

# Engagement, Communication & Education

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Deliver internal and external education, communication, stakeholder engagement and marketing to build community knowledge and understanding of Council's decisions, services, facilities, events and activities
<b>Department</b>	Communication, Engagement & Marketing
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Communication, Engagement & Marketing
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<p><b>2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments</b></p> <p><b>4: Strong leadership and good governance</b></p>

## Key achievements

- Community Strategic Plan review engagement
- Old Bar Park master plan engagement
- Swimming pool operations consultation
- Local Environment Plan consultation
- Open Space and Recreation Strategy engagement
- 8,625 people involved in community engagement activities
- 3,721 people registered for Council's online engagement platform
- 8,653 Council eNewsletter subscriptions
- 1.7million visitors to Council's website

## Engaging with our community

During 2023-24 we were actively out in our community listening to their views on a range of important issues.

We spoke to thousands of people on issues that mattered to them, including how we operate our pools, a new draft planning framework and the development of a range of strategies to support long term improvements to our open space and recreational facilities.

We also consulted with our community to help inform the development of our revised Community Strategic Plan, which will set the direction for our community for the next 10 years.

Extensive consultation was also undertaken on a number of significant community projects including the Old Bar Master Plan and the Open Space and Recreation Strategy. Consultation was also undertaken as part of our swimming pool operations review and for our draft Local Environmental Plan.



# Environmental Health

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Protect public health by monitoring compliance in retail food safety, health premises regulation (hairdressers, beauticians, tattooists), On-site Sewage Management (OSSM), underground fuel storage systems, noise regulation, air quality, air and odour control, pollution incidents and contaminated land issues
<b>Department</b>	Building & Environmental Health Services
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Building & Environmental Health Services
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>
	<b>2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments</b>

## Key achievements

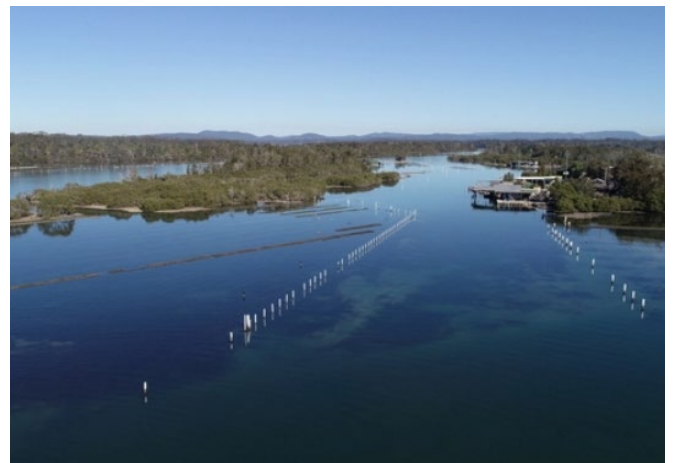
- Implementation of MidCoast On-site Wastewater Management Strategy
- 92% of food outlets with 5 or 4 'Scores on Doors' rating
- 100% of new on-site sewage management approvals compliant with the Australian Standards and NSW Best Practice Guidelines
- 100% of hairdressers, beauticians, tattooists, retail outlets assessed as high risk were inspected

## On-site Wastewater Management

The On-site Wastewater Management Strategy was adopted in July 2023.

The strategy outlines how we manage the approximately 13,000 septic systems across the region, particularly in environmentally sensitive areas where failing or poorly operated systems could harm the environment, public health, local tourism and oyster farming businesses.

Since implementation of the strategy approximately 500 systems have been inspected and noncompliance is being resolved within the parameters of the strategy.



*Proper management of wastewater is essential to protect our estuaries*

# Finance

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Support Council to deliver services by providing financial and management accounting systems and services including accounts payable, payroll, treasury management, taxation and compliance, and revenue billing and recovery. It also provides external and internal financial reporting services
<b>Department</b>	Finance
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Finance
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>4: Strong leadership and good governance</b>

## Key achievements

- Financial statements prepared, audited and lodged with Office of Local Government in accordance with Audit Office Engagement Plan
- Adoption of the Financial Sustainability Review Action Plan

## Financial Sustainability

In May 2024 Councillors adopted the Financial Sustainability Review Action Plan 2024-2027.

The Financial Sustainability Review Action Plan has five key objectives. These are:

- Expenditure is managed to ensure the limited funds are controlled and spent effectively
- Council operations are effective, efficient, and lean, delivering value for money to the community
- Council assets are strategically managed across their entire lifecycle and asset management capability is continually developed and improved
- Revenue sources are regularly reviewed to align with expenses and agreed service levels
- Generate sufficient unrestricted cash as determined by Council policy



*MidCoast Council aims to be financially sustainable into the future.*

# Governance

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Responsible for legislative compliance, information management, records management, risk and insurance management, business continuity across the organisation and corporate support to Council and the elected representatives
<b>Department</b>	Governance
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Governance
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>4: Strong leadership and good governance</b>

## Key achievements

- 100% of formal Government Information Public Access (GIPA) applications completed within legislative timeframes
- Formal Risk Management and Code of Conduct education held across MidCoast Council
- Internal Risk Management Funding Program to support service initiatives and mitigate identified risks
- Annual review of Council’s Business Continuity Plan to ensure critical services can continue in the event of major disruption or emergency

## PID Training

In accordance with training obligations set out by the NSW Ombudsmen and in line with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022 mandatory training was rolled out to all Council staff in October 2023.

The Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 applies to all NSW public sector agencies. It provides a framework for public officials to report serious wrongdoing in the public sector.



## Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee

The establishment of an Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee is a statutory requirement noted in the Local Government Act 1993 and the supporting draft Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW Guidelines. MidCoast Council's committee was established by resolution of Council at its meeting held 28 February 2018.

The MidCoast Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee provides independent assurance and assistance to the Council on risk management, controls, governance, internal audits, organisational performance and improvement and external accountability responsibilities.

A rolling 12-month reporting schedule is prepared to ensure the committee is supported and have a planned approach to each meeting.

Membership to the Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee consists of three independent members and two Councillor representatives. Members attend meetings each quarter with an additional two meetings held to review the financial statements. Membership and meeting attendance information is included in the table below.

Member	Position	Role	Eligible	Attended
Stephen Coates	Independent	Chair	6	6
Sheridan Dudley	Independent	Member	3	3
Mark McCoy	Independent	Member	6	5
Shane Hubble	Independent	Member	2	2
Cr Alan Tickle	Councillor	Member	6	5
Cr Jeremy Miller	Councillor	Member	6	6

Committee meetings were held 18 August 2023, 17 November 2023, 1 March 2024 and 17 May 2024, with the financial meetings held 4 September 2023 and 23 October 2023.

In addition to the Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee Annual Report prepared and presented to Council by the General Manager each year, the committee has developed the Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee Strategic Plan to guide the work of the committee over the next four years.

The Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee Charter, Annual Reports, Strategic Plan and further information in relation to the committee are available on the website:  
[www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/ARIC](http://www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/ARIC)



*MidCoast Council's ARIC was established by resolution of Council at its meeting held 28 February 2018*

## Council Meetings

Council meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 2pm.

All meetings are held at the Council Chambers located in Yalawanyi Ganya on Biripi Way, Taree and are also livestreamed for the members of the public to view.

The meetings follow the Code of Meeting Practice and the procedure for Attendance by Councillors at meetings via audio-visual link.

Meeting agendas are available a few days in advance of the meetings, and minutes are tabled after the meeting. Our community are invited to speak at a Council meeting to address an agenda item or a matter of importance to them that is not on the agenda.

### Councillor Meeting Attendance 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024

Meeting Type	Number of meetings held
Pre-meeting Briefings	14
Ordinary Council Meetings	14
Councillor Workshops	24

Councillor Name	Pre-meeting Briefings	Ordinary Council Meetings	Councillor Workshops
Cr Alan Tickle	13	13	19
Cr Claire Pontin	12	13	22
Cr David West	10	13	20
Cr Dheera Smith	14	14	22
Cr Jeremy Miller	12	13	24
Cr Katheryn Stinson	10	11	17
Cr Kathryn Bell	12	12	14
Cr Paul Sandilands	13	13	22
Cr Peter Epov	6	8	15
Cr Peter Howard	8	10	16
Cr Troy Fowler	12	11	19



# Human Resources

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide human resource related services to Council including workforce planning, recruitment, industrial relations, training and development, performance management; and workplace health and safety.
<b>Department</b>	Human Resources
<b>Responsibility</b>	Chief Strategy & Performance Manager
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>3: A thriving and strong economy</b>
	<b>4: Strong leadership and good governance</b>

## Key achievements

- Implementation of a LEAD program for future leaders
- Implementation of staff reward and recognition program
- Implementation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan
- Employee Based Training Program reviewed

## Employee Based Training Program

Council’s Employee Based Training Program offers employment based training positions including traineeships, apprenticeships, cadetships and graduate programs.

The Employee Based Trainee Program was reviewed in 2023 with six new positions created including additional trainees for the water operations.

The Employee Based Training Program supports a key objective of the Workforce Strategy to attract and retain apprentices, trainees and graduates into our organisation.



# Information & Communications Technology

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide and manage the Information & Communications Technology (ICT) systems and equipment across Council, manages Council communication equipment on towers and provides spatial information for the local area for NSW State agencies (such as Rural Fire Services and other emergency services) and the general public
<b>Department</b>	Information Technology
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Information Technology
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>
	<b>4: Strong leadership and good governance</b>

## Key achievements

- 99.54% communications network uptime for critical assets
- 99.92% of 10.7 Planning Certificates released within 5 working days
- Implementation of new customer request management system through the Business Transformation Program
- Continued implementation of Cyber Security Awareness Program

## Improving efficiencies through the Business Transformation Program

A Customer Request Management project was successfully completed and made available for the community to access in early December 2023.

The system is designed to manage all customer requests including the community requests for a service or information.

The new system delivers key benefits such as enabling customers to self-lodge and track requests with accessibility to automatic updates via customers preferred communication method.

Another key benefit of the new system is the automated workflow processes and the ability to direct customer requests directly to the relevant internal department and team member. This supports our goal to speed up our response rates as staff receive requests in a more efficient and timely manner.



*The Business Transformation Program is a five-year commitment to improving our customer experience and operational excellence whilst increasing staff productivity and engagement*

# Land Use Planning

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Deliver a sustainable land use planning framework for the MidCoast by working with the community and NSW Government
<b>Department</b>	Land Use Planning
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Land Use Planning
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>
	<b>2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments</b>

## Key achievements

- Community consultation on draft MidCoast Local Environmental Plan
- Provision of \$29,000 of funding through the Local Heritage Fund
- Commenced drafting of MidCoast Development Control Plan

## Know Your Zone

Since 2017 Council has been working to consolidate three Local Environmental Plans from the former Council areas to provide a consistent direction on how development in the MidCoast will occur and improve planning outcomes.

A consolidated Local Environmental Plan was drafted and in October 2023 was endorsed to be presented to the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure for a 'Gateway Determination'.

Community consultation on the planning proposal and draft Local Environmental Plan was held from April to July 2024 through pop-up information sessions. An online mapping tool was also created so that community members could check any proposed changes to their land.



*The creation of a consolidated Local Environmental Plan will provide a consistent direction on development in the MidCoast*

# Legal & Property

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provision of timely and accurate legal services relating to Council operations and property portfolio management
<b>Department</b>	Governance
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Governance
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>4: Strong leadership and good governance</b>

## Key achievements

- 0% vacancy rate of Council land, buildings and premises available for leasing/licensing purposes
- Review of Leasing and Licensing of Council Land and Buildings Policy adopted September 2023
- 9.55% increase in total revenue of property management portfolio

## Yalawanyi Ganya Funding Strategy completed

The funding strategy to support the centralised administration and customer service centre to Yalawanyi Ganya in 2018 is complete. The strategy involved the sale or lease of a number of Council properties with the funds going towards the purchase and fit out of Yalawanyi Ganya.

The sale of MidCoast Council’s former administration and library building in Breese Parade, Forster was the final part of the funding strategy.

With the total funds realised from the sales exceeding the initial estimates by \$6.15 million Council has been able to reduce the amount of money that was borrowed to fund the project.

The additional funds realised from the sales will also allow for some funds to be invested in Council’s Future Land Development Reserve, which has been established to invest in properties which can deliver a sustainable commercial return to Council.



*The funding strategy was developed for the centralisation of Council’s administrative offices*

# Libraries

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Operate 11 facilities that provide access to physical and digital library collections and information. Services include home library services; remote access to eResources; eServices; educational and recreational events; support for literacy programs; school holiday programs; access to local heritage materials and access to computers, internet and WiFi
<b>Department</b>	Libraries & Community Services
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Libraries & Community Services
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>

## Key achievements

- 1,740 library events and programs held
- 19,777 people attended events and programs
- 663,070 items loaned throughout the year
- Forster Library relocated to the Forster Civic Centre

## Relocation of Forster Library

The Forster library was relocated to the new Forster Civic Centre building and opened on 9 October 2023. The new library is more than twice the size of the old Breese Parade site.

The new library consists of two stories which provides a designated space for young adults, a storytime area for the younger visitors and a functional podcast room.



Forster Library

## Home Library Services

Across the region our Home Library Service has experienced an increase in membership of 12.77% in the Manning population catchment, and 45.5% increase in the Great Lakes population catchment in the 6 months leading to 30 June 2024.

During the 2023-24 financial year 35,922 items were loaned through the home library service which is a 9.5% increase in loans.



Home Library Deliveries

# Natural Systems

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Responsible for meeting community expectations for the protection and management of the natural environment and ensuring legislative requirements are met. This includes partnering with other organisations, landholders and community groups to restore and improve the management of our: landscape and catchments; waterways and coastal areas; endangered ecological communities and threatened species. The service also manages weeds and biosecurity as well as monitoring and reporting on the condition of our waterways and the environment
<b>Department</b>	Natural Systems
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Natural Systems
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments</b>

## Key achievements

- Development and adoption of the MidCoast Koala Strategy
- Development of an asset management plan for all water quality assets
- Audit and prioritisation of all natural reserves under Council management as part of the development of an asset management framework
- Completion of the Tuncurry boat ramp maintenance dredging as the delivery partner for Transport for NSW
- Concept design prepared for the restoration of the Wingham wetland to treat stormwater runoff and pollution from the Wingham central business district

## Dredging works in Tuncurry

Navigation dredging works in Tuncurry were completed that saw up to 17,000 cubic meters of sand dredged from the estuary to improve safe navigation for users around the Tuncurry boat ramp in Wallis Lake.

Through an Expression of Interest process the sand was sold to an approved development site for beneficial use.

The works saw the removal of accumulated marine sediments in the channel from west of the Point Road boat ramp and extended out to the main channel of the lake.

Dredging works covered a larger area than previous navigation dredging campaigns in this section of the lake due to considerable sand accumulation within the main channel south of the Forster Tuncurry Bridge.



*Dredging works near the Point Road boat ramp were completed.*

## MidCoast Koala Conservation Strategy

In June 2024 MidCoast Council adopted our five year Koala Conservation strategy. This forms part of the broader koala conservation program called the Koala Safe Spaces Program. The Koala Conservation Strategy and Koala Safe Spaces Program are funded through the NSW and Commonwealth Governments.

The decline in koala population and distribution threatens the species with extinction in the wild in NSW. Council and community must work together to build knowledge to improve koala conservation.

Council is supporting and partnering with landholders through the Koala Safe Spaces Program to protect and restore koala habitat on private land, with associated benefits for landholders such as weed reduction. Numerous landholders, organisations and community groups have been undertaking restoration and conservation activities over a number of years. This interest continues to grow due to the 2019 bush fires, the uplifting of the threatened status of koalas to 'endangered' and the release of the NSW Koala Strategy.

We are confident that the MidCoast Koala Strategy will be supported by the community and have a positive impact on the conservation of koala populations.



*Image: Peter Goonan*

# Open Spaces & Recreation

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide over 3,000 hectares of parks and open spaces, 26 sporting complexes, 34 cemeteries
<b>Department</b>	Public Spaces
<b>Responsibility</b>	Executive Manager Public Spaces
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>

## Key achievements

- 100% of memorial gardens and cemeteries maintained and managed in accordance with legislative requirements
- 100% of internment compliant with NSW Public Health requirements
- Delivery of the annual sports field renovation program to improve the quality and performance of sports fields across the region.
- Maintenance of 8 ocean baths/estuary swimming enclosures across the region.
- 69 Landowner permission letters issued to community groups to support grant applications
- Supported over 1,000 open space volunteers

## Preparing for community events

Council prepares parks and sports fields for community use and events. In 2023 some of the large events included the 2023 Women’s Masters Field Hockey State Championships (North), Old Bar Beach Festival and the 2023 NSW Rugby Union Youth 7’s State Championships.



Old Bar Beach Festival

## Cemeteries Strategy

In March 2024 Council adopted the Cemeteries Strategy. Community consultation was undertaken across the MidCoast region to inform the development of the strategy.

MidCoast Council manages 34 cemeteries across the region and it is important that we plan to meet future demand of a growing and ageing population.

The strategy aims to renew our approach to maintaining Council-managed cemeteries and improving cemetery services into the future.



Killabakh Cemetery



# Procurement, Fleet & Stores

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide oversight and delivery of Council’s procurement activities and fleet management
<b>Department</b>	Governance
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Governance
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments</b>
	<b>3: A thriving and strong economy</b>
	<b>4: Strong leadership and good governance</b>

## Key achievements

- 14% of Council’s passenger vehicle fleet comprised of non-Internal Combustion Engine (hybrid, PHEV, BEV, FCEV) vehicles\*

## Cost saving measures

During the period Council focused on improving strategic procurement activities and commenced a review of its contract management systems.

Initiatives for strategic activities that provided the highest potential for cost saving, compliance assurance, and reduced risks were identified and adopted into ongoing planning and reporting activities.

A full review of the procurement framework, with its associated document suite, was also commenced. This included a transition to a greater use of internally developed and maintained documents. As well as reducing costs this work improves the ability to customise the documents for Council.



# Regulatory Services

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Investigate and undertake compliance activities including illegal dumping, illegal building, companion animals (dogs and cats), animal noise complaints, parking and abandoned vehicles, public area usage
<b>Department</b>	Environmental Health & Regulatory Services
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Environmental Health & Regulatory Services
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>

## Key achievements

- Six activities to proactively educate the community on school zone parking
- Ongoing proactive activities to educate the community on companion animal ownership
- 100% compliance of the companion animal register with Office of Local Government requirements
- Draft Vehicles on Beaches policy updated

## Easing congestion at Seal Rocks

During the holiday season Council rangers worked with NSW Police and the National Parks and Wildlife Service to target illegal parking, illegal camping, driving on beaches without a permit and rubbish dumping.

Visitor numbers to Seal Rocks peak during the two weeks after Christmas Day, causing significant traffic and parking issues. Designated car parks become filled and this leads to illegal parking on the narrow entry road.

Council asked visitors coming for day trips to rethink plans.

The increase of illegal overnight camping throughout the village is an ongoing issue for local tourism providers and community members and puts an additional strain on resources during this period.

Council will continue to work with the community to look at other solutions for coming years such as user pays parking and 'No Camping' zones.



Road congestion at Seal Rocks

# Resilience & Recovery Services

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Resilience & Recovery Program works in partnership with stakeholders and the community to assist community members in need, as well as in building disaster-resilient communities that are better able to prepare for, respond to and recover from natural disasters  <i>NB: Funding for this program concluded in June 2024 and the service has now ceased.</i>
<b>Department</b>	Libraries, Community & Cultural Services
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Libraries, Community & Cultural Services
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>

## Key achievements

- Connected with communities to plan and deliver community workshops
- Distribution of Black Summer Bushfire Recovery kits
- 52 community events / training hosted or supported
- 10 interagency recovery meetings held

## Preparation is key

Our successful bushfire safety campaign reached almost 10,000 households over the past 15 months. This program was put together to encourage residents to write a bushfire preparedness plan which could potentially save lives and assets in future emergencies.

Through Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Grant funds we hosted more than 70 workshops throughout the MidCoast region and distributed almost 10,000 bushfire preparedness kits. Information sessions were held at community events.

The kits were distributed to those in bushfire prone areas and contained a Rural Bushfire Services Survival Plan template, a hand cranked and solar powered radio with a light that also becomes a power bank for mobile phones, and a waterproof document holder.



*Fire at Gloucester Road compromised by flood damage*

# Sewer Services

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide a quality sewerage network including collection, treatment and recycling of sewage, laboratory testing, planning and construction of sewer infrastructure, operations and maintenance of sewerage network as well as 24 / 7 network breakdown response	
<b>Department</b>	Water Operations Water Project Delivery	Water Management & Treatment Water Planning & Assets
<b>Responsibility</b>	Executive Manager Water & Systems	
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>	
	<b>2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments</b>	

## Key achievements

- 99.5% Water treatment test results comply with EPA licence requirements
- Award for Excellence in Water & Wastewater Engineering from the IPWEA at their NSW State Conference

## Reducing infiltration of our network

We have implemented further actions from our long-term water strategy Our Water Our Future 2050 to reduce inflow and infiltration. Reducing the amount of stormwater and groundwater that enters our sewerage network causing overflows in wet weather.

Due to the combination of high volume in some parts of our sewage network and recent wet weather this is a high priority.

Investigations and rectification works on targeted sewer catchments in Taree, Cundletown and Harrington led to a reduction in the instances of wet weather overflows.



Winners of the award for 'Excellence in Water & Wastewater Engineering' from the IPWEA at their NSW State conference

# Stormwater Drainage, Flooding & Coastal Engineering

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide and manage an integrated stormwater drainage network (including detention basins), flood risk management and natural disaster impact mitigation	
<b>Department</b>	Projects & Engineering Operations South	Transport Assets Operations North
<b>Responsibility</b>	Executive Manager Transport & Engineering	
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	1: A resilient and socially connected community	
	2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments	

## Key achievements

- Upper Myall and Bulahdelah Flood Study completed and presented to Council

## Understanding flood behaviour in Bulahdelah

Bulahdelah residents were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft Bulahdelah Flood study in September 2023.

The aim of the study is to improve understanding of flood behaviour and impacts. This can help Council to manage the impacts of flooding in the area.

The Flood Study has been developed by expert consultants, working with MidCoast Council’s Floodplain Management Advisory Committee.

The Committee includes representatives from the community and farming industry; Council’s planners and engineers; NSW Department of Planning Industry and Environment; Biodiversity, Conservation and Science division; and NSW emergency services and first responders.



Lions Park in Bulahdelah impacted by flooding

# Transport Network

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide and maintain a transport network of roads, bridges, shared pathways (includes footpaths, cycleways), streetscapes, and streetlighting throughout our 10,052 square kilometre region, including Traffic and Safety Regulation	
<b>Department</b>	Transport Assets Projects & Engineering	Operations North Operations South
<b>Responsibility</b>	Executive Manager Transport & Engineering	
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments	
	3: A thriving and strong economy	
	4: Strong leadership and good governance	

## Key achievements

- Over five kilometres of road constructed as part of The Bucketts Way Route Upgrade Strategy
- Delivery of Road Safety Workshops targeting learner drivers, safe towing and motorcyclists
- Safety barrier and road surfacing upgrade at Thunderbolts Way, Giro
- MidCoast Road Strategy presented to Council which identifies the current state of our roads, future desired state, challenges and improvement opportunities

## \$100 Million Roads Program

As part of the ongoing \$100 million roads program, over \$14 million was invested in 2023-24.

Some of the projects included:

- The Lakes Way, Boolambayte (ongoing)
- The Lakes Way (near Big Buzz), Rainbow Flat
- Stroud Hill Road, Nooroo
- Old Bar Road, Old Bar (ongoing)



## Network Renewal Programs

Council has delivered road renewals projects across our urban, rural and regional transport networks. Some key projects include:

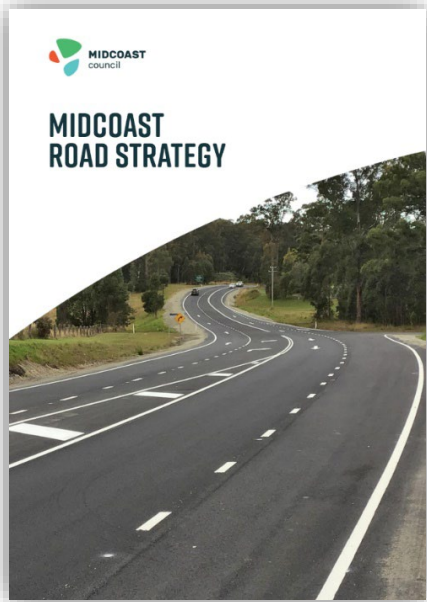
- Farquhar St / Bent St, Wingham
- Blackbutt Drive, Failford
- York Street, Taree
- Point Road, Tuncurry
- Lansdowne Road, Langley Vale
- The Bucketts Way, Stroud
- Warwiba Road, Old Bar

## Bridge Replacement Works

- Limeburners Creek Bridge replaced
- Deep Creek Bridge replaced
- Commenced Cedar Party Creek Bridge replacement

## MidCoast Road Strategy

The MidCoast Road Strategy was presented to Council on 1 May 2024. This strategy plots a path towards a better future where our roads better meet the community's needs, where safety and resilience are improved and where our resources better align with the community's expectations.



## Road safety for Learner driver supervisors

Council has delivered free workshops for parents and supervisors of learner drivers. Participants gained knowledge about the laws around 'L' and 'P' plate drivers, how to complete learner driver logbooks, low risk driving and how to safely supervise learner drivers.

One of the key objectives of the workshops was providing practical advice on how to best support learner drivers.



## Motorcycling workshops

Council delivered free motorcycling safety workshops facilitated by Survive the Ride Association of NSW.

The Centre for Road Safety statistics for the 2018-2022 period show that motorcyclists in the Hunter Region were involved in 11% of crashes, with the 50-59 year age group most at risk.

The workshops enable motorcyclists to collaborate on decision making techniques and adjustments to riding habits that make a difference to personal safety. Focus areas include lane positioning, speed management and riding posture to allow appropriate action in the face of hazards or potential problems.



# Waste Services

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide domestic, public and commercial waste collection and disposal service; a waste education program; operation of six waste management centres located at Taree, Tuncurry, Gloucester, Tea Gardens, Stroud and Bulahdelah
<b>Department</b>	Waste Services
<b>Responsibility</b>	Manager Waste Services
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>
	<b>2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments</b>

## Key achievements

- Implementation of new Contract Management System and Framework
- New Gas Collection system contracts awarded for Tuncurry and Taree Landfill sites
- New Waste Transfer Station opened at the Stroud Waste Management Centre
- 47.32% of tonnes of waste diverted from landfill
- 4,874,922 total red, green and yellow bin lifts
- Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) facility Design, Build, Own Operate tender completed

## Business Efficiency Improvements

Waste Services made significant upgrades to its facilities, including the construction of the Stroud Waste Transfer Station and a new green waste processing area at the Taree Waste Management Centre. These developments have enhanced the overall service standard, ensuring greater capacity to handle increasing waste volumes while improving processing efficiency.

Other operational efficiencies included the implementation of drone survey and GPS technology for managing landfill operations. These tools provide real-time data on landfill compaction rates and machine performance, enabling more precise management of landfill space and reducing costs associated with overuse of equipment and wasted landfill space.

Waste Services also introduced a contract management system and framework to better oversee our largest service contracts. This system enhances accountability and ensures that service providers consistently meet performance standards.



Stroud Waste Transfer Station



# Water Supply & Treatment

<b>Key Service Description</b>	Provide a quality water supply to the community via a water network which includes extraction, treatment and testing of water, planning and construction of water infrastructure, operation and maintenance of water network as well as 24 / 7 breakdown response	
<b>Department</b>	Water Operations Water Management & Treatment	Water Project Delivery Water Planning & Assets
<b>Responsibility</b>	Executive Manager Water and Systems	
<b>Community Outcomes</b>	<b>1: A resilient and socially connected community</b>	
	<b>2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments</b>	

## Key achievements

- Adoption of Our Water Our Future 2050 Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy
- Award for Excellence in Water & Wastewater Engineering from the Institute for Public Works Engineers Australasia
- \$25 million invested in water assets
- 100% compliance to Australian Drinking Water Guidelines
- Water Wiser Grant funding project launched

## Gloucester Water Upgrade

To improve town issues with water including pressure and improve Gloucester’s water security in the long term we committed to upgrading the water network.

A seven megalitre main service reservoir was constructed along with a small, elevated service reservoir.

The upgrade will largely eliminate the need for pressure booster pump stations and ensure adequate water pressure is supplied to all parts of the town.



## Solar Power at water and sewer sites

Over 400 solar panels have been installed at Tuncurry Recycled Water Treatment Plant, Bulahdelah Water Treatment Plant, Tea Gardens Sewer Pump Station 13 and the Coopernook and Manning Point sewage treatment plants, enabling the sites to generate a considerable proportion of their own energy

In addition to installing solar power systems at these large water and sewer sites, Council has been powering all its small water and sewer sites with 100% renewable energy since the start of 2023.

## Our Water Our Future 2050

In August 2023 Councillors adopted the long-term water strategy Our Water Our Future 2050, which outlines how we will provide sustainable and affordable water and sewerage services to our community over the next 30 years.

Some of the key features of Our Water Our Future 2050 include:

- Building off-stream storage dams
- Exploring opportunities to increase the amount of wastewater Council recycles annually
- Improving water efficiency
- An updated drought management plan
- An adaptive plan that allows for alternative solutions to be explored
- A sustainable price pathway for the next 30 years



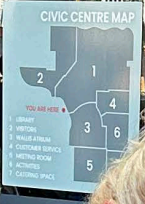
*Solar Panels at Bulahdelah Water Treatment Plant*



*Our Water Our Future 2050 is Council's long-term water strategy*



Forster Civic Centre



03

STATUTORY REPORTING

# Statutory Reporting 2023-24

Under the Local Government Act 1993, Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 and other NSW Government Acts, the following Statutory reports are required to be included in our Annual Report.

## Activities Funded Via a Special Rate Variation

*Special Rate Variation Guidelines (SRV Guidelines) 7.1*

### Special Rate Variation

\$7.338 million was levied in 2023-24 for allocation to existing 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 2024, \$11.621 million of funds remain restricted for these purposes. During the year Council made loan repayments totalling \$3.352 million and spent \$5.525 million on renewal works on the road network for:

- Rural Bridge Construction \$461,544
- Regional Road Rehabilitation \$902,535
- Gravel Re-sheeting \$1,500,000
- Rural Road Construction \$1,521,045
- Rural Road Rehabilitation \$250,000
- Rural Road Resurfacing \$250,000
- Urban Road Rehabilitation \$200,000
- Urban Road Resurfacing \$250,000
- Stormwater Construction \$190,000

There were new borrowings of \$11 million taken out during the 2023-24 financial year under the Road Upgrade Program. Repayments on these and previous borrowings will be met from the Special Variation and then accumulated reserve balance.

### Environmental Rate

\$4.514 million was levied in 2023-24 through the Environmental Rate component of Ordinary Rates. During 2023-24, \$4.356 million of the Environmental Rate funds were spent. Funded projects included:

- Implementation of projects from the Manning Estuary Coastal Management Program including: education and awareness; partnerships with landholders to improve water quality on farms and restore refuge pools; and sediment management at road creek crossings
- Implementation of the Karuah Catchment Plan

- Implementation of the Wallis and Smiths Lake Estuary Coastal Management Plan
- Implementation of the MidCoast Biodiversity Framework
- Water Sensitive Urban Design priorities and projects
- Upgrade of life expired gross pollutant traps and completion of scheduled maintenance
- Maintenance of Council's natural area reserves through bush regeneration
- Water quality/ecological impact assessment for planning proposals, development applications and Council managed projects
- Waterway health assessment monitoring and reporting
- Development of the Southern Estuaries Coastal Management Program
- Big Swamp and Cattai Wetland management
- Koala Strategy development
- Catchment and Marine discovery program
- Climate change and sustainability initiatives
- Riverbank restoration projects
- Threatened species conservation and management focusing on grey headed flying fox camp management, migratory birds, koala, yellow bellied glider at Smiths Lake and Manning River helmeted turtle

At 30 June 2024, \$5.626 million of funds remain restricted for the purposes for which the rate was approved. Many of the programs listed above are multi-year delivery projects for which the funds on hand are allocated.

## **Anti-slavery**

*Local Government Act 1993 Act s428(4)(c)*

No issues were raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner during the year concerning the operations of Council.

## **Audited Financial Reports**

*Local Government Act 1993 s428(4)(a)*

Audited financial statements are provided in part four of this report.

## Bodies in which council held a controlling interest

### *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 217(1)(a7)*

For nearly 70 years, local government in the Hunter has found significant benefit in working together through positive cooperation and resource sharing.

The ten Hunter 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, and Upper Hunter Shire Council.

Arising from this collaboration, the ten Hunter councils collectively own and manage the following corporate entities:

**Hunter Joint Organisation (JO)** – a statutory body under the *Local Government Act 1993*, 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 the community.

**Arrow Collaborative Services Limited** (and its wholly owned subsidiary **Hunter Councils Legal Services Limited**) – companies limited by guarantee under the *Corporations Act 2001* and established to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided by Hunter councils and local government more broadly across NSW. The services provided focus on specialised planning and environmental law, and regional purchasing and procurement. Arrow also provides direct support to the operations of the Hunter Joint Organisation.

**Hunter Councils Incorporated** – an incorporated association under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009* that holds property assets for the Hunter Joint Organisation and Arrow Collaborative Services.

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.

## Bodies in which council participated during the year

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

### Delegated Committees

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

### Reference Group

Committee	Membership	Representatives
Aboriginal Reference Group	Two Councillors Up to four Local Aboriginal Land Councils representatives – one from each Up to four Aboriginal Working Parties representatives – one from each Up to eight Aboriginal community member representatives who may be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Elders or Traditional Owners</li> <li>o Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people from the MidCoast</li> <li>o Aboriginal young people aged 18+</li> <li>o Gathang language holders</li> </ul>	Cr C Pontin (Chair) Cr J Miller Cr D Smith
Arts & Creative Industries Reference Group	Two Councillors Up to nine community representatives One Aboriginal community member	Cr C Pontin Cr A Tickle Cr J Miller
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 K Smith (Co-Chair) Cr P Sandilands (Co-Chair) Cr A Tickle (alternate)
Community Inclusion & Wellbeing Reference Group	Two Councillor representatives plus alternate Eight community representatives Four representatives from relevant government and non-government agencies	Cr D Smith (Chair) Cr K Stinson
Community Resilience & Disaster Recovery Reference Group	Two Councillors Up to six representatives from	Cr P Epov (Chair) Cr P Sandilands

Committee	Membership	Representatives
	<p>government agencies &amp; NGOs</p> <p>Up to five community members from bushfire affected areas</p> <p>Up to five community members from flood affected areas</p> <p>MidCoast Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO)</p>	Cr D Smith (alternate)
Floodplain Management Advisory Committee	<p>Up to two Councillors</p> <p>Local State Emergency Service (SES)</p> <p>Representative from NSW Office of Environment &amp; Heritage (OEH)</p> <p>Up to eight community representatives</p> <p>Manager Transport Assets</p> <p>Team Leader Coastal Flooding &amp; Drainage</p> <p>Manager Land Use Planning</p> <p>Coastal &amp; Flooding Engineer</p> <p>Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO)</p>	Cr A Tickle (Chair) Cr D West
Heritage Reference Group	<p>Two Councillor representatives</p> <p>Representatives from historical groups</p> <p>Up to five community representatives</p>	Cr K Bell (Chair) Cr D Smith
MidCoast Destination Management Plan Review Reference Group	<p>Two Councillors</p> <p>One representative from MidCoast Business Chamber</p> <p>One representative from Destination North Coast</p> <p>Up to five members of the tourism industry</p> <p>Reference Group dissolved 20 March 2024</p>	Cr C Pontin Cr P Howard Cr T Fowler (alternate)
MidCoast Koala Reference Group	<p>Two Councillors</p> <p>Eight community representatives</p> <p>Two representatives from NSW Department of Planning &amp; Environment (DPE)</p> <p>One representative from National Parks</p> <p>One representative NSW Forestry</p> <p>One representative Crown Lands</p> <p>One representative Hunter Local Land Services (LLS)</p>	Cr C Pontin Cr D Smith Cr P Epov
Old Bar – Manning Point Coastal Management Program Reference	<p>Two Councillors</p> <p>Five public authority representatives</p> <p>One traditional owner</p>	Cr J Miller (Chair) Cr K Stinson



Committee	Membership	Representatives
Group	<p>One Old Bar Sand Replenishment Group</p> <p>One Manning Point Concerned Citizens Group</p> <p>One Manning River Action Group</p> <p>One Old Bar – Manning Point CoC</p> <p>One boating / fishing representative</p> <p>One bird watchers representative</p> <p>One community member</p> <p>One Manning Coastcare representative</p>	
Southern Estuaries Coastal Management Program Reference Group	<p>Up to two Councillors</p> <p>Up to six representatives from key public authorities who represent the major public land or asset owners within this Coastal Management Program area who have the expertise, ability, and responsibility to influence the management of the Southern Estuaries Coastal Management Program</p> <p>Up to two representatives from Traditional owners within the project area</p> <p>One representative from the Oyster Industry</p> <p>Two rural representatives from the Dairy/ Beef/ Poultry industries</p> <p>One professional from the fishing industry</p> <p>One representative with a boating or recreational fishing interest</p> <p>Two general community members within the project area</p> <p>One member representing Landcare</p>	<p>Cr K Stinson</p> <p>Cr P Sandilands</p> <p>Cr D Smith</p>

### Internal Committees and Working Groups

Committee	Membership	Representatives
Annual Donations Assessment Panel	Three Councillors	<p>Cr P Howard</p> <p>Cr K Stinson</p> <p>Cr P Epov</p>
Asset Advisory Committee		<p>Cr C Pontin</p> <p>Cr T Fowler</p> <p>Cr A Tickle</p>
Duralie Funding	Three Councillors	<p>Cr P Howard</p> <p>Cr K Stinson</p> <p>Cr P Epov</p>

Committee	Membership	Representatives
Event Sponsorship Assessment Panel	Three Councillors	Cr P Howard Cr K Stinson Cr P Epov
NAIDOC Funding	Four Councillors	Cr C Pontin (Chair) Cr P Sandilands Cr T Fowler Cr K Stinson
Policy Working Group	Four Councillors (including the Mayor)	Cr C Pontin Cr A Tickle Cr K Stinson Cr D West

### External Committees

Committee	Membership	Representatives
Duralie Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee	State endorsed Committee	Cr P Sandilands Cr K Stinson
Gloucester Exploration Project Community Consultative Committee – Gloucester Resources Limited (GRL)	State endorsed Committee	Cr K Stinson
Hunter JO	Mayor	Mayor Pontin
Hunter Regional Weeds Committee		Cr D Smith Cr K Stinson (Alternate)
Joint Regional Planning Panels		Cr West Cr Tickle Cr Bell (Alternate)
Local Traffic Committee		Cr Fowler Cr Howard (Alternate)
Manning Valley Liquor Consultative Committee		Cr Fowler Cr Miller (Alternate)
NSW Public Libraries Association		Cr West Cr D Smith (Alternate)

Committee	Membership	Representatives
Stratford Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee		Cr K Stinson Cr Pontin (Alternate)
Stroud Heritage Conservation Inc		Cr Sandilands

### Other

Committee	Membership	Representatives
General Manager's Performance Review Panel	Mayor Deputy Mayor One Councillor	Cr C Pontin Cr A Tickle Cr P Sandilands
Hunter – SSA/GMAC	General Manager's from Hunter JO	General Manager

## Capital Works Projects

### *OLG Capital Expenditure Guidelines*

All of the major capital works are reported monthly for Water, Transport, Community Spaces, Waste, Natural System & Forster Civic Precinct. Quarterly reporting is provided for the Business Transformation Project.

## Carers Recognition

### *Carer Recognition Act 2010 s8(2)*

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 Carer (Recognition) Act 2010.

During the reporting period, Council worked to ensure service delivery activities, policies and procedures reflect the principles of the NSW Carers Charter. Actions taken include:

- Planning and completion of meetings for carers
- Regular consultation with carers
- Referral of carers to other available supports and services.

## Coastal Protection Services

### *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 217(1)(e1)*

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

## Companion Animals

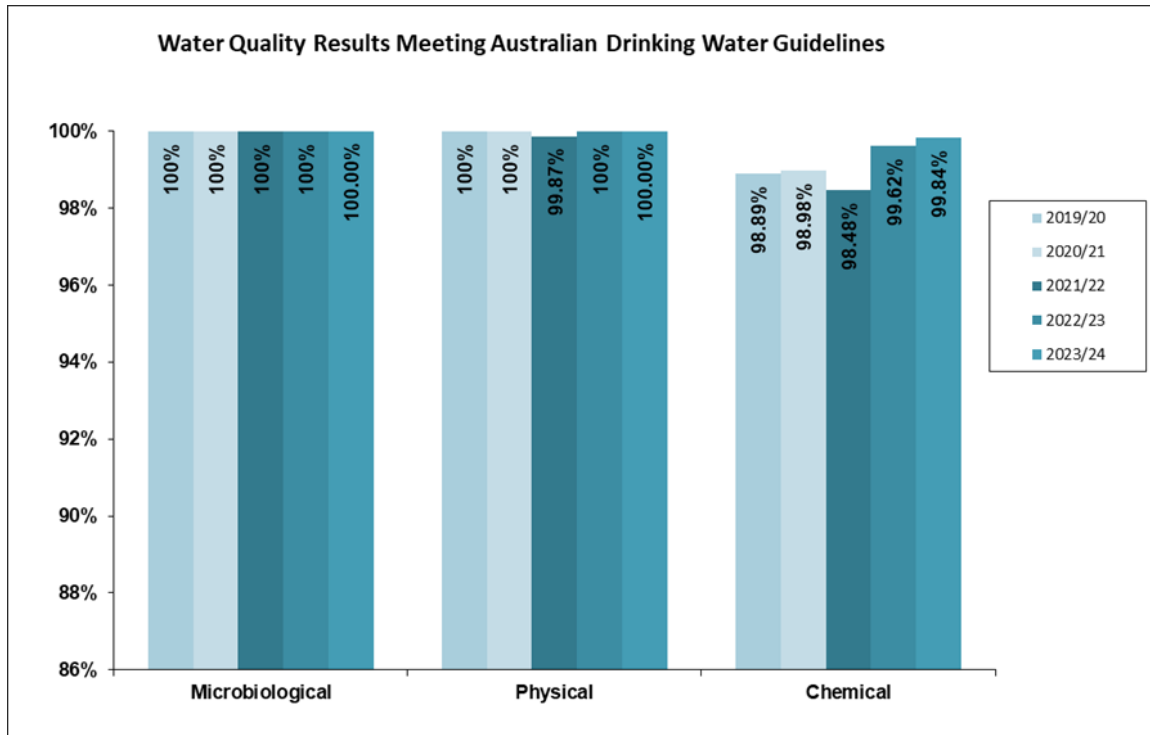
*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 217(1)(f) and Guidelines on the Exercise of Functions under the Companion Animals Act 1988*

Requirement	Status
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 \$90,000 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>	Council's Companion Animal Officer and Rangers team have facilitated and participated in six information and drop-in sessions to promote responsible pet ownership
Strategies council has in place to promote and assist the de-sexing of dogs and cats <i>16.2(d) Guidelines</i>	Council worked with the Animal Welfare League to promote a subsidised desexing program for community members attending information, vaccination and microchipping days
Strategies in place to comply with the requirement under Section 64 of the <i>Companion Animals Act</i> to seek alternatives to euthanasia for unclaimed animals <i>16.2(e) Guidelines</i>	Animals are released to Animal Welfare Groups for no fee. Bulk email to all approved Section 88b organisations and additional emails to selected rescues. 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>	<p>There are several off-leash areas for dogs in the MidCoast Local Government Area. Please note that each location listed below has specific leash free times and designated leash free areas. All dogs must remain under effective control in these areas at all times. Detailed maps for each specific area listed below can be viewed at the following website address: <a href="http://www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/dogs">www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au/dogs</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coomba Park – Reserve between Tallawalla Road and Moorroba Road</li> </ul>

Requirement	Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forster – Various drainage reserves off Kularoo Drive and Goldens Road; One Mile Beach; Cape Hawke reserve between Akala Avenue and Panorama Crescent; Pipers Bay Foreshore Reserve</li> <li>• Harrington – Dolphin Park Crescent Reserve</li> <li>• Gloucester – Eastern side of Captain Cook Park, Avon Street; Northern end of Gloucester Park, bordered by the northern carpark, the river path and Thunderbolts Way</li> <li>• Hawks Nest – Bennetts Beach; Providence Bay; Yacaaba Peninsula</li> <li>• Pacific Palms – Blueys Beach; Boomerang Beach</li> <li>• Smiths Lake – Sandbar/Cellito Beach</li> <li>• Tarbuck Bay – Brambles Reserve</li> <li>• Taree – Saxby Park, Stevenson Street</li> <li>• Tuncurry – Beach Street Reserve; Nine Mile Beach; Taree Street foreshore</li> </ul>
<p>Detailed information on fund money used for managing and controlling companion animals in the area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council is targeting responsible pet ownership and worked alongside the Animal Welfare League and RSPCA to assist the community in understanding responsible pet ownership. Rangers also attended NAIDOC week activities providing information around responsible pet ownership. Council has also been providing free microchipping to encourage compliance within the community.</li> </ul>
<p>There has seen a significant increase of animals to our pound due to the impact of the local housing availability and financial constraints impacting the community. There has also been an increase due to animal ownership during COVID.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 371 dogs and cats processed through the pounds</li> <li>• 177 rehomed in partnership with animal welfare agencies</li> <li>• 71 collected by their owners</li> <li>• 45 classified under the <i>Companion Animals Act</i> as unsuitable for rehoming and euthanised</li> <li>• 38 sold to new owners</li> </ul>	

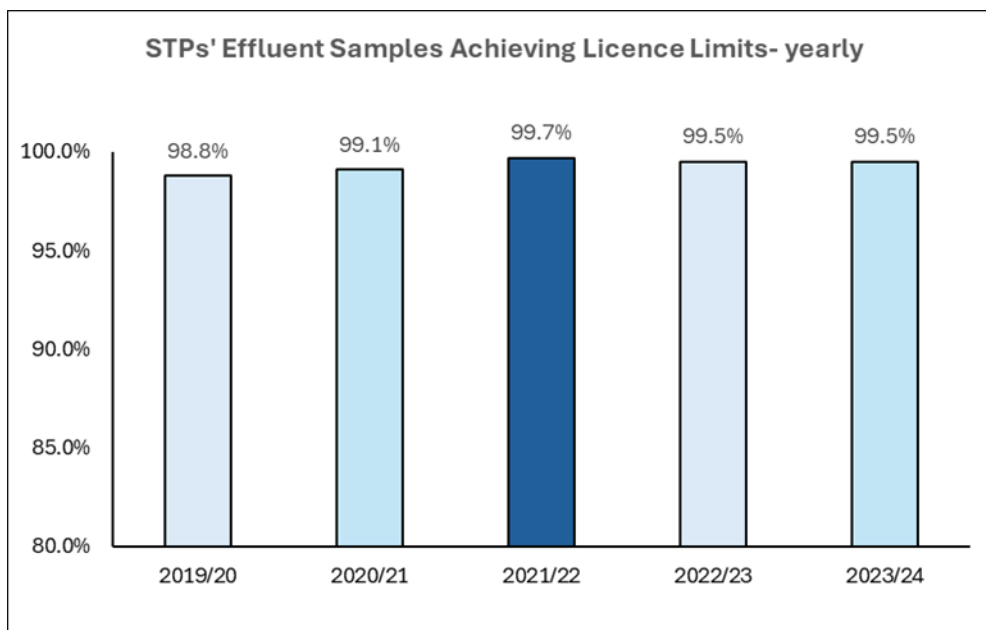
## Compliance with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG)

During 2023-24, 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 2023-24 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 Regulatory & Assurance Framework for Local Water Utilities

*Local Government Act 1993 and the Regulation and Regulatory and Assurance Framework for Local Water Utilities (Department of Planning and Environment)*

As a Council responsible for water supply and sewerage services, MidCoast Council must comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993 and the NSW Government's Regulatory and Assurance Framework for Local Water Utilities (the Framework) which came into effect on 1 July 2022.

This Framework provides a flexible and outcomes-focused approach to the delivery of safe, secure, accessible, and affordable water supply and sewerage services. This approach offers the community and other key stakeholders an insight into the way that Council manages key risks both now and into the future, and in the event of significant shocks, such as drought.

The delivery of the Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) strategy, Our Water Our Future 2050 and the Water Strategic Business Plan will address each of the 12 strategic outcomes described within the Framework. As reflected in the figure below, a traffic light grading system has been applied to illustrate whether each of the strategic outcomes currently meet:

- a reasonable standard,
- are partially addressed or
- not addressed within the IWCM strategy.

A reasonable standard is met when each outcome has been considered and addressed in a way that is sufficient, appropriate, and robust.

MidCoast Council will seek to engage the assurance function offered by the Department of Planning and Environment once each of the 12 outcomes have been assessed internally as meeting the reasonable standard.

 <h2>1 Understanding service needs</h2> <p>Actioned by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Engagement Report</li> <li>• Water demand and sewer loading forecasts</li> <li>• Our Water Our Future 2050</li> </ul>	 <h2>2 Understanding water security</h2> <p>Actioned by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues Paper</li> <li>• Options and Scenarios Report</li> <li>• Water Yield Assessment Report</li> </ul>	 <h2>3 Understanding water quality</h2> <p>Actioned by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drinking Water Quality Management System</li> </ul>
 <h2>4 Understanding environmental impacts</h2> <p>Actioned by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pollution incident response management plans</li> <li>• Emergency management plans</li> <li>• Compliance, testing and monitoring in line with Environmental Protection Licenses</li> </ul>	 <h2>5 Understanding system capacity, capability and efficiency</h2> <p>Actioned by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water demand and sewer loading forecasts</li> <li>• Our Water Our Future 2050- everyday scenario including water efficiency and water education programs</li> </ul>	 <h2>6 Understanding other key risks and challenges</h2> <p>Actioned by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues Paper risk assessment</li> <li>• Coarse screening workshops</li> <li>• Compliance with relevant legislation, regulations and standards</li> <li>• Emergency management plans</li> </ul>
 <h2>7 Understanding solutions to deliver services</h2> <p>Actioned by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Water Our Future 2050</li> <li>• Service Optimisation Program</li> <li>• Water demand and sewer loading forecasts</li> <li>• Asset management strategies &amp; plans</li> <li>• Water Resilience Team</li> </ul>	 <h2>8 Understanding resourcing needs</h2> <p>Actioned by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Business Plan,</li> <li>• Service Optimisation Program</li> <li>• 30-year Capital and Operating Plan</li> <li>• Asset management strategies &amp; plans</li> <li>• Strategic Business Plan</li> </ul>	 <h2>9 Understanding revenue sources</h2> <p>Actioned by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Water Our Future 2050</li> <li>• 30-year Capital and Operating Plan</li> <li>• Fees &amp; Charges</li> <li>• Community Engagement Report</li> <li>• ID forecast socio-economic data</li> </ul>
 <h2>10 Make and implement sound strategic decisions</h2> <p>Actioned by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Optimisation Program</li> <li>• Strategic Business Plan</li> <li>• Community Strategic Plan</li> <li>• Financial Modelling Report</li> <li>• LWU Performance Monitoring</li> </ul>	 <h2>11 Implement sound pricing and prudent financial management</h2> <p>Actioned by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Modelling Report</li> <li>• 30-year Capital and Operating Plan</li> <li>• Pricing and equity review</li> </ul>	 <h2>12 Promote integrated water cycle management</h2> <p>Actioned by Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Water Our Future 2050</li> <li>• Community Strategic Plan</li> <li>• Biosolids management review and strategy</li> <li>• Our Water Our Future 2050- everyday scenario</li> </ul>



## Contracts Awarded (other than employment contracts & contracts < \$150,000)

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 217(1)(a2)*

Contractor	Details	Value (inc GST)
Hazmat Services Pty Ltd	Asbestos Consulting Edinburgh Park, Taree	\$152,776.00
Alliance Construction Group Pty Ltd	Tuncurry MRF Stormwater Upgrades	\$375,505.80
Technology One Ltd	TechnologyOne Saas Fee	\$2,030,163.30
JR Richards and Sons	CCTV Forster Central	\$241,112.28
Alliance Construction Group Pty Ltd	Pacific Palms STP Access road Causeway Rectification Works	\$413,268.26
Holcim Australia Pty Ltd	Forest Lane - gravel supply	\$175,708.61
JR Richards and Sons	CCTV Sewer Catchment TA01 - Stage 2	\$502,564.66
All Pavement Solutions Pty Limited	Road Seal Upper Lansdowne Rd s70,80,100	\$172,169.53
Fenworx Pty Ltd	Road seal Cemetery Rd (Bucketts Way) Gloucester	\$272,855.52
Finn Valley Plant & Civil Pty Ltd	Bowman Fm Rd and Thunderbolts Way Culvert Repair, Guard Rail Restoration	\$298,654.69
Fenworx Pty Ltd	Jacks Rd, Asphalt works	\$265,365.73
Pacific Blue Metal Pty Ltd	Base layer Durallie / The Bucketts Way	\$152,722.65
Stabilcorp Pty Ltd	RLRRP Programme	\$3,261,769.48
The Graham Dong Trust	Civic Centre Variations	\$271,863.89
KPMG Australia Technology Solutions Pty Ltd	Business Transformation Program 23/24	\$3,264,826.94
Toisch Pty Ltd	Wilsons Bridge Replacement	\$1,087,727.20
Active Bush Works	Specialist Bush regeneration services various sites	\$152,900.00

Contractor	Details	Value (inc GST)
Simmons Group Building Pty Ltd	Compliance Upgrade – 2 Pulteney Street	\$247,389.43
Finn Valley Plant & Civil Pty Ltd	Comboyne Road Slope Stabilisation	\$311,991.19
BARRC - Bushland & Rainforest Restoration & Consulting	Bush regeneration services various sites	\$187,000.00
WesTrac Pty Ltd	CATERPILLAR 924KCL2 Wheel Loader for Gloucester WMC	\$437,515.18
Pacific Blue Metal Pty Ltd	Pavement Base layer -Stroud Hill Road	\$259,402.19
Finn Valley Plant & Civil Pty Ltd	Scone Road 2022 Flood Works	\$314,621.74
Interflow Pty Ltd	Sewer Pipe Lining works- Bulahdelah	\$225,986.21
Lenovo Global Financial Services (Australia & New Zealand)	Lenovo devices	\$160,303.03
StateCover Mutual Ltd	Workers Comp - Deposit Premium 2023-24	\$878,402.55
Baker Built Pty Ltd	Main Constuctions Works Hawks Nest Community Hall	\$584,773.88
JR Richards and Sons	Domestic Collection, Domestic Diversion/Recycling, Non-Domestic Collection 2023/24 -Gloucester region	\$473,000.00
JR Richards and Sons	Domestic Collection, Domestic Diversion/Recycling, Non-Domestic Collection 2023/24- Tuncurry, Tea Gardens , Bulahdelah, Stroud	\$6,300,000.00
Environment Protection Authority - Waste Levy	Tuncurry S88 Levy Payment 2023/2024	\$200,000.00
Hazmat Services Pty Ltd	Asbestos Consulting - Taree Rec Ground	\$408,129.12
Hazmat Services Pty Ltd	Asbestos Consulting - Stokes Park Taree	\$286,190.92
JR Richards and Sons	Taree, Tuncurry, Tea Gardens, Stroud, Bulahdelah TFS & Landfill ContCosts 2023/2024	\$7,608,000.00

Contractor	Details	Value (inc GST)
JR Richards and Sons	Domestic Collection - 2023/2024, Domestic Diversion/Recycling - 2023/2024, Non-Domestic Collection 2023/2024- Manning Region	\$5,074,940.00
Saltwater Earthmoving	Clay Haulage Minimbah to Taree WMC	\$166,065.63
Interflow Pty Ltd	Sewer pipe lining works- Forster	\$223,442.23
Alliance Construction Group Pty Ltd	Provision of Road Approaches Limeburners Ck Bridge and Deep Creek Bridge Replacements	\$1,457,500.02
CRS Creative Recreation Solutions Pty Ltd	Coopernook Park Playground Upgrade	\$205,454.40
Environment Protection Authority - Waste Levy	Gloucester Section 88 Levy Payment 23/24	\$450,000.00
Environment Protection Authority - Waste Levy	Taree S88 Levy Payment 2023/2024	\$7,000,000.00
Parkwood Modular Buildings Pty Limited	Gloucester District Park Store/Canteen Building	\$264,902.00
Goldsprings Group Pty Ltd	Road reconstruction The Lakes Way Boolambayte	\$8,147,569.85
Humes	Stormwater Culverts for Upper Myall Rd	\$249,110.09
Stabilised Pavements of Australia Pty Ltd	Stabilisation Works Coomba Road	\$214,548.65
Stowe Australia Pty Ltd	HV & LV Construction Nabiac Borefields	\$1,466,550.80
Fenworx Pty Ltd	Failford Rd , Head St Forster Resurfacing	\$287,596.92
StateCover Mutual Ltd	Workers Comp Premium Balance MidCoast Council	\$3,416,424.26
S5 Technology Group Pty Ltd	Level 4 Support Contract IT Infrastructu, Level 4 Support Contract IT Infra/Water	\$377,229.58
S5 Technology Group Pty Ltd	Check Point Total Protection Year 1, Check Point Total Protection Year 3, Check Point Total Protection Year 2	\$620,289.62

Contractor	Details	Value (inc GST)
Stabilised Pavements of Australia Pty Ltd	Stabilisation works - Coromont Dr	\$273,145.11
Stabilised Pavements of Australia Pty Ltd	Stabilisation works - Blackbutt	\$275,695.15
Stabilcorp Pty Ltd	Myall Way - Heavy Patching	\$438,830.67
Surf Life Saving Services Pty Ltd	Lifeguard Services, Additional Easter L/Guard Services	\$454,155.53
Valuer General NSW	Land Valuation Services	\$398,886.69
AECOM Australia Pty Ltd	Gloucester Off-Stream Storage-Concept	\$328,529.30
AECOM Australia Pty Ltd	Bulahdelah Off-Stream Storage-Concept	\$320,397.00
Pacific Blue Metal Pty Ltd	Chelmsbrook asphalt works	\$454,163.96
DGP Water Pty Ltd	Detailed Design Tea Gardens Rising Main	\$323,811.40
Johnson Controls Australia Pty Ltd	Replacement Air Handling Units	\$269,632.00
Daniel Stallworthy	Little Street Foreshore	\$266,530.00
Ethos Urban Pty Ltd	Northern Gateway Airport/Transport Hub, Northern Gateway Project	\$725,384.55
Optimal Stormwater Pty Ltd	Little Street GPT Retification	\$406,057.52
Saltwater Earthmoving	Replacement culvert Tinonee/Alpine Rds, Tinonee	\$163,255.18
Data #3 Ltd	Adobe VIP Renewal 9/11/23	\$245,066.04
MC Trucks Pty Ltd	Isuzu Truck LWB with VLC Water Ops	\$224,933.10
MC Trucks Pty Ltd	Isuzu Truck LWB with VLC Water Ops	\$224,933.10
All Pavement Solutions Pty Limited	Roads Maintenance program final seal	\$308,598.94
Data #3 Ltd	Year 2 of Cloud Service Provider	\$334,860.23

Contractor	Details	Value (inc GST)
	Agreement	
Reece Family Holdings Pty Ltd	Taree University Campus Fitout	\$475,449.70
Goldsprings Group Pty Ltd	Stoney Creek- Additional works	\$248,108.56
Fenworx Pty Ltd	Asphalt Wearing NGC Industrial Access Rd	\$514,827.93
Jim Anderson Earthmoving Pty Ltd	Rocky Crossing Construction works	\$411,321.76
Accurate Asphalt & Road Repairs Pty Ltd	Seg 40 Bucketts Way, Kundibakh Semi Rehab	\$207,925.50
Iplex Pipelines	Supply OPVC Blue pressure pipe & Lubricant	\$240,364.43
Finn Valley Plant & Civil Pty Ltd	Wallanbah Road Seg 500 Embankment Repair	\$192,406.78
Baker Built Pty Ltd	MCA Forster CC	\$163,088.45
Forster Surf Life Saving Club	Forster Main Beach Retaining Wall Project	\$256,363.80
Hunter Wharf and Barge Pty Ltd	Construct Apex Park Pontoon	\$771,650.00
Saunders Civilbuild Pty Ltd	Khatambuhl Creek Bridge restoration	\$572,444.78
Dredging Solutions	Tuncurry Channel Dredging	\$398,442.11
YMCA Manning Aquatic Leisure Centre	Management Fee and Subsidy Dec-Jun 23\24	\$462,272.23
YMCA Great Lakes	Management Fee and Subsidy Dec-Jun 23\25	\$236,265.12
YMCA NSW	Management Fee and Subsidy Dec-Jun 23\26	\$173,513.34
Alliance Construction Group Pty Ltd	Bundacree Creek Bridge Replacement	\$870,965.68
YMCA Tea Gardens	Management Fee and Subsidy Dec-Jun 23\25	\$176,762.25

Contractor	Details	Value (inc GST)
Savills Project Management Pty Ltd	MRAG Consultants	\$247,203.00
Trazilbat Pty Ltd	Nabiac Borefield Watermain Construction	\$1,300,000.00
Eire Construction Pty Ltd	Black Flat Lane Culvert replacement	\$277,905.45
C. J. Hogan and Co Pty Ltd	Cundletown Oval Amenities upgrade	\$338,514.00
Fulton Hogan Industries Pty Ltd	Road Seal -Stroud Hill Road	\$249,000.00
Mavin Truck Centre Pty Ltd	Hino FG1628 Tipper Truck S/Cab	\$167,282.50
Finn Valley Plant & Civil Pty Ltd	Stroud Hill Rd - Gabion Wall	\$619,600.43
Hunter Wharf and Barge Pty Ltd	Allworth Baths Improvement Project	\$188,600.00
M&J Marine Services Pty Ltd	Replacement of Aquatic Infrastructure	\$2,948,490.22
Symal Infrastructure Pty Ltd	Cedar Party Creek Bridge Replacement	\$37,780,957.50
Jim Anderson Earthmoving Pty Ltd	Fencing and Footpath Works for Wingham Tennis Club works	\$287,318.90
Barnett Earthmoving	RERR Program - Kerb & SW Drainage Work	\$175,183.80
Ground Stabilisation Systems Pty Ltd	Wingham Tennis Club Landslip Restoration	\$1,374,526.45
Cleveland Services Pty Ltd	Cleaning Contract Council Buildings	\$523,634.10
Stabilised Pavements of Australia Pty Ltd	Reseals SPA - RMCC Works	\$248,765.59
Aquatec Maxcon Pty Ltd	Forster STP EAT 1 & 2 Decant Mechanism Renewal Project	\$948,657.60
Technology One Ltd	BTP Module implementation	\$435,826.60
Pacific Blue Metal Pty Ltd	Little Street night works	\$358,371.27
Brown Environmental Earthworks Planning Pty Ltd	Smiths Lake FT Newtwork Upgrade	\$171,934.40

Contractor	Details	Value (inc GST)
Baker Built Pty Ltd	Stroud Football Club Amenities	\$255,496.58
C. J. Hogan and Co Pty Ltd	Taree Recreation Centre Contract Costs	\$628,643.50
Gongues Constructions Pty Ltd	TA-SPS-06 Civil & Structural Works	\$473,000.00
Simmons Group Building Pty Ltd	Gloucester Grandstand	\$699,975.32
Jim Anderson Earthmoving Pty Ltd	Old Bar Rd Segments 210-230	\$4,037,144.00
Saltwater Earthmoving	Clay Haulage Minimbah to Taree WMC	\$207,388.49
Worth Building	MRAG Restroom revamp	\$180,400.00
Interflow Pty Ltd	Provision of Pipe Relining Services	\$908,142.39
Organicrecycle Pty Ltd	Hawks Nest STP Sludge Lagoon Dewatering, Pontoon Hire, Mobilisation/Demobilisation	\$163,552.40
Audit Office of NSW	Audit of 2023-2024 Financial Statements	\$263,775.00
SMEC Australia Pty Ltd	Taree Landfill Design and Closure Plan	\$306,000.00
M&J Marine Services Pty Ltd	Coomba Park Baths Swimming Enclosure	\$212,300.00
Collaborative Construction Solutions Pty Ltd	Tuncurry Sustainability Centre	\$1,455,377.00
WPL Civil Pty Ltd	Nabiac Borefield Borehuts & Bore Pump	\$1,200,000.00
Grillex Pty Ltd	Public Litter Bin Enclosures - Tuncurry	\$324,759.00
Pacific Blue Metal Pty Ltd	RERRF Program - Asphalt Mill and Resheet	\$329,128.99
Daniel Stallworthy	Construction Esmond Hogan Multipurpose Facility	\$446,098.93
BNJ Landscaping Pty Ltd	Design and Construction of Playspace at Endeavour Park	\$462,000.00
Technology One Ltd	TechnologyOne Saas Fee 24/25	\$2,478,799.39

Contractor	Details	Value (inc GST)
Holcim Australia Pty Ltd	Lansdowne Rd s170 - gravel	\$185,000.00
Stabilised Pavements of Australia Pty Ltd	Spray Seal Works	\$151,115.51
Kentan Machinery Pty Ltd	Dawson STP - Kubota Tractor replacement	\$168,744.98
Saltwater Earthmoving	Restoration of Boat Ramps	\$203,500.00
Eire Construction Pty Ltd	Balance of works Cemetery Rd, Gloucester	\$230,000.00
Edge Construction & Project Management Pty Ltd	Construction Johns River RFS Shed	\$617,418.35

## Councillor Expenses

### *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 217(1)(a1)*

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 updated and adopted on 24 July 2024. 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 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.



## Allowances

Allowance Description	Amount
Mayoral allowance	\$64,390.00
Elected Member allowance	\$286,770.00
Superannuation	\$38,627.26
Expenses	\$30,299.74
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$420,087.00</b>

## Reportable Expenses

Reportable Expenses Description	Amount
Dedicated office equipment	\$0.00
Telephone & internet expenses	\$4,306.09
Conference & seminars	\$9,240.00
Training	\$9,205.02
Partner's expenses	\$0.00
Childcare expenses	\$1,074.00

## Reimbursed Expenses

Reimbursed Expenses Description	Amount
Travel within LGA	\$12,118.88
Travel outside LGA	\$3,395.45
Conferences	\$9,240.00
Professional Development	\$9,205.02
Non-Council-Issues Phone / Internet	\$3,588.36
Home Office	\$0.00
Accommodation / Meals	\$5,175.63
Carer Expenses	\$1,074.00

## Councillor Overseas Visits

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

There were no overseas visits by councillors, council staff or other persons representing council (including visits sponsored by other organisations) during 2023-24.

## Councillor Professional Development

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 186*

Type of Training and Development	Names of Councillors who completed / participated in the training / course
Induction training	N / A
Induction refresher course	N / A
Supplementary induction course	N / A
Ongoing professional development program	<p><b>LGNSW Annual Conference</b> 12-14 November 2023 – attended by Cr Pontin, Cr Eпов, Cr Fowler, Cr Howard, Cr Miller, Cr Sandilands, and Cr Stinson</p> <p><b>Cultural Awareness Training</b>  <u>13 March 2024 at Taree</u>            Cr Pontin, Cr West, Cr Fowler, Cr Howard, Cr Miller, Cr Smith and Cr Sandilands</p> <p><u>15 May 2024 at Forster</u>            Cr Pontin, Cr Howard, Cr Smith</p> <p><b>Reviewing Council Financial Accounts</b> with external provider – attended by Cr Pontin, Cr Tickle and Cr Smith</p> <p><b>Council Investments</b> course with external provider – attended by Cr Pontin, Cr Smith</p> <p><b>Performance Infrastructure</b> course with external provider – attended by Cr Smith</p> <p><b>LGNSW Understanding LG Financials</b> with external provider – attended by Cr Smith</p> <p><b>IPWEA Road Congress</b> – attended by Cr Sandilands and Cr Smith</p>

## Development contributions and development levies

*Environment Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 cl 218A(1) (2)(a),(b),(c),(d),(e),(f),(g) (3)(a),(b)*

Project number & description	Kind of public amenity or public service to which the project relates	Amount of monetary contributions or levies used or expended on the project	Percentage of cost of the project funded by contributions or levies	Amounts expended that have been temporarily borrowed from money to be expended for another purpose under the same or another contributions plan	Value of land and material public benefit other than money or land used for the project	Project complete - Yes / No
No Project – Funds Released via Council Resolution of 25/09/2019 – 2001 GTCC Superseded Plans	Greater Taree 2001 Superseded Plan – Central Library	\$20,059	0%	\$0	\$0	Yes
No Project – Funds Released via Council Resolution of 25/09/2019 – 2001 GTCC Superseded Plans	Greater Taree 2001 Superseded Plan – Aquatic Centre	\$7,383	0%	\$0	\$0	Yes

Project number & description	Kind of public amenity or public service to which the project relates	Amount of monetary contributions or levies used or expended on the project	Percentage of cost of the project funded by contributions or levies	Amounts expended that have been temporarily borrowed from money to be expended for another purpose under the same or another contributions plan	Value of land and material public benefit other than money or land used for the project	Project complete - Yes / No
No Project – Funds Released via Council Resolution of 25/09/2019 – 2001 GTCC Superseded Plans	Greater Taree 2001 Superseded Plan – Rural Fire Fighting	\$17,871	0%	\$0	\$0	Yes
No Project – Funds Released via Council Resolution of 25/09/2019 – 2001 GTCC Superseded Plans	Hallidays Point 2001 Superseded Plan – Rural Fire Fighting	\$9,132	0%	\$0	\$0	Yes
Project 100896 - Forster Surf Life Saving Club	Forster District Surf Life Saving Plan – Allocation approved by Council resolution 242/2023 Ordinary Meeting 28/06/2023	\$93,554	100%	\$0	\$0	Yes

Project number & description	Kind of public amenity or public service to which the project relates	Amount of monetary contributions or levies used or expended on the project	Percentage of cost of the project funded by contributions or levies	Amounts expended that have been temporarily borrowed from money to be expended for another purpose under the same or another contributions plan	Value of land and material public benefit other than money or land used for the project	Project complete - Yes / No
Project 100896 - Forster Surf Life Saving Club	Tuncurry CBD Car Parking Plan– Allocation approved by Council resolution 242/2023 Ordinary Meeting 28/06/2023	\$0	100%	\$706,446	\$0	Yes
Project 101759 & 101763 - Wallis Lake Boardwalk Project	Forster District Open Space Plan – Allocation approved by Council resolution 78/2023 Ordinary Meeting 22/03/2023	\$105,000	25%	\$0	\$0	No
Project 100114 - Forster Civic Centre Project	Forster District Library Plan – Allocation approved by Council resolution	\$1,731,378	8%	\$0	\$0	Yes
Project 100114 - Forster Civic Centre Project	Great Lakes Wide Forster Headquarters Building Plan – Allocation	\$230,063	8%	\$0	\$0	Yes

Project number & description	Kind of public amenity or public service to which the project relates	Amount of monetary contributions or levies used or expended on the project	Percentage of cost of the project funded by contributions or levies	Amounts expended that have been temporarily borrowed from money to be expended for another purpose under the same or another contributions plan	Value of land and material public benefit other than money or land used for the project	Project complete - Yes / No
	approved by Council resolution					
Project 101868 - Hawks Nest Community Centre Upgrade	Tea Gardens / Hawks Nest District Community Facilities Plan – Allocation approved by Council resolution 214/2023 Ordinary Meeting 28/06/2023	\$173,063	53%	\$0	\$0	Yes
Project 101868 - Hawks Nest Community Centre Upgrade	Tea Gardens District Open Space Plan – Allocation approved by Council resolution 214/2023 Ordinary Meeting 28/06/2023	\$0	53%	\$126,937		Yes
Project 100040 - Developer Contributions	Great Lakes Wide Section 94 Plan	\$10,585	100%	\$0	\$0	No

Project number & description	Kind of public amenity or public service to which the project relates	Amount of monetary contributions or levies used or expended on the project	Percentage of cost of the project funded by contributions or levies	Amounts expended that have been temporarily borrowed from money to be expended for another purpose under the same or another contributions plan	Value of land and material public benefit other than money or land used for the project	Project complete - Yes / No
Plans Review	Administration					
Project 100320 - Library Books Capital Replacement	Great Lakes Wide Library Books Plan – Approved in Original Budget	\$50,000	14%	\$0	\$0	Yes
Project 100320 - Library Books Capital Replacement	Greater Taree 2001 Superseded Plan – Library Bookstock	\$50,000	14%	\$0	\$0	Yes
Project 100367 – Manning Entertainment Centre – New Studio Space	GTCC 2016 Contributions Plan – Greater Taree Facilities	\$8,615	11%	\$0	\$0	No
Project 100361 – Manning Entertainment Centre – New Studio Space – Additional Items	Taree 2001 Superseded Plan – Open Space – Allocation approved by Council resolution	\$55,275	11%	\$0	\$0	No

Project number & description	Kind of public amenity or public service to which the project relates	Amount of monetary contributions or levies used or expended on the project	Percentage of cost of the project funded by contributions or levies	Amounts expended that have been temporarily borrowed from money to be expended for another purpose under the same or another contributions plan	Value of land and material public benefit other than money or land used for the project	Project complete - Yes / No
Project 101916 – Blackhead Sports Field Lighting	Hallidays Point 2001 Superseded Plan – Open Space – allocation approved by Council resolution 78/2023 Ordinary Meeting 22/03/2023	\$19,615	100%	\$0	\$0	No
Project 102081 - Land Purchase – Boulevarde, Tallwoods	Hallidays Point 2001 Superseded Plan – Open Space – allocation approved by Council resolution 78/2023 Ordinary Meeting 22/03/2023	\$516,535	100%	\$0	\$0	Yes
Project 102081 - Land Purchase – Boulevarde, Tallwoods	GTCC 2016 Contributions Plan – Hallidays Point – allocation approved by Council resolution 78/2023 Ordinary Meeting 22/03/2023	\$183,465	100%	\$0	\$0	Yes



Project number & description	Kind of public amenity or public service to which the project relates	Amount of monetary contributions or levies used or expended on the project	Percentage of cost of the project funded by contributions or levies	Amounts expended that have been temporarily borrowed from money to be expended for another purpose under the same or another contributions plan	Value of land and material public benefit other than money or land used for the project	Project complete - Yes / No
Project 100494 – Roads - \$100m Project	GTCC 2016 Contributions Plan – Greater Taree Facilities (GT14)	\$300,000	2%	\$0	\$0	Yes
Project 100494 – Roads - \$100m Project	GTCC 2016 Contributions Plan – Greater Taree Facilities	\$646,583	4%	\$0	\$0	Yes
Project 100494 – Roads - \$100m Project	Great Lakes Council Road Haulage Plan	\$250,000	1.6%	\$0	\$0	Yes

The total value of all contributions and levies received during the 2023-24 financial year was \$5,959,024.

The total value of all contributions and levies expended during the 2023-24 financial year was \$5,311,556.

# Disability Inclusion Action Plan

*Disability Inclusion Act 2014 s13(1)*

## Overview

MidCoast Council's second Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) was developed in 2022 after consultation with people with disability and their carers', and disability service providers. The DIAP was adopted by Council on 27 July 2022. This report outlines progress made against the strategies in the DIAP during 2023-24.

## Focus Area 1 – Attitudes and Behaviours

### Objective – People living with disability on the MidCoast are recognised and valued

**Action:** Campaign to educate and raise awareness in the community about people living with disability

The MidCoast Dementia Friendly project commenced in August 2023 to work towards creating a dementia friendly community. Dementia Alliance groups have been established in Taree, Forster, Gloucester and Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest and aim to:

- Increase involvement and inclusion of people living with dementia and their carers in community events, facilities, and projects.
- Increase access to information about dementia and support options and training available in the community.
- Create a more dementia friendly community in the MidCoast.

Alliance members include people living with dementia and carers, who provide expertise and insights from lived experience. Discussions identified that it is difficult for individuals recently diagnosed with dementia and their families to access information and support. In response, the Alliance established monthly drop-in information sessions in Forster and Tea Gardens to address this need. The sessions are supported by a worker from the sector and someone with lived experience.

Several members have undertaken training to become dementia hosts and now run information sessions to educate the community and reduce the stigma of dementia. Approximately 200 people attended presentations this year. A contact resource sheet has been developed for use across the LGA.

Plans are underway for a Dementia Australia roadshow across the LGA to target the business community and provide training and support for hosts.

## Focus Area 1 – Attitudes and Behaviours cont.

In December 2023 the Manning Regional Art Gallery hosted the Art after Brain Injury – continuance: therapy: compulsion: exhibition. The exhibition featured several artists with many different types of brain injuries, from mild to severe with a huge variety of outcomes. The exhibition highlighted how differently artists see the world after brain injury providing a sense of purpose and way of communicating their new world. The opening was well attended and raised the profile of people with disability in the community.

### Objective – MidCoast Council’s use of graphics is representative of our community

**Action:** Use content that includes people with disabilities when depicting the community

The Communication, Engagement and Marketing team utilises a range of graphics in Council content that is reflective of the diverse community including age, gender and culture. Graphic representation of people with disability is challenging as most disabilities (at least 90%) are invisible. Council is conscious not to stereotype people with disability with tokenistic images of people in wheelchairs. How best to include representation of people with disability appropriately is front of mind and ongoing.

### Objective – Tourism operators and local businesses are aware of the benefits of being accessible

**Action:** Campaign to educate tourism operators and local businesses of the needs of people with disability and benefit of promotion as an accessible business.

Planning is in progress for a Dementia Australia representative to visit the MidCoast to run information sessions for businesses to raise awareness of the needs of people with Dementia and progress making their businesses dementia friendly. While people with dementia represent a small proportion of all people with disability, this is an important first step towards raising awareness of the needs of people with disability.

## Focus Area 1 – Attitudes and Behaviours cont.

### Objective – MidCoast Council staff are aware of the needs of people with disability

**Action:** Include disability awareness component within staff induction process.

Continuing education across the organisation.

Customer service staff at Forster Library and the Visitor Information Centre have undertaken dementia awareness training with Dementia Australia including use of VR goggles. Dementia Australia conducted a dementia audit at the new Forster Civic Centre providing a written report. The report rated the centre highly for accessibility and inclusiveness and will continue to guide ongoing improvements.

Libraries continue to invest in and enhance the service offering including:

- Computers across all branches have accessibility features including touch screen monitors, enhanced speakers and Bluetooth connectivity for hearing devices.
- Loan kiosks have font size adjustment and screen design can be adjusted to suit wheelchair users.
- The Home Library Service continues to grow with 52 new members this year and over 31,000 items loaned to these clients. This service enables people with mobility issues to access the library service.
- A new audio book service ULibrary and Indyreads has both eBooks and eAudio options.
- Continued provision of a wide range of large-print books, audiobooks, DVD and CD collections, assisting people with vision impairment and low literacy to access resources. Dyslexic and literacy collections are also updated regularly. Requests from disability support groups contribute to the relevancy and currency of the collection.
- Regular hosting of disability groups and individual client visits from various support agencies including Dundaloo Support Services, House with No Steps and Samaritans.
- Tech Savvy Seniors program continues to run in the library, assisting people with the skills needed to use online platforms.

The Customer Service team will undergo disability awareness training in the coming year.

## Focus Area 1 – Attitudes and Behaviours cont.

### Objective – MidCoast Council staff are aware of the needs of people with disability

**Action:** Include disability awareness component within staff induction process.  
Continuing education across the organisation.

Following the Recruitment Review report, work on the introduction of online induction and mandatory disability awareness training has progressed throughout the year and will be introduced next year. This training will be added to the New Starter training and undertaken by customer service officers. Voluntary disability awareness training continues to be available to staff through Go1 online training modules.

### Objective – Community events sponsored by Council are accessible and inclusive

**Action:** Inclusivity is taken into account when assessing event sponsorship opportunities.

Due to the types and variety of events it is not appropriate to address inclusivity and accessibility in the Event Sponsorship Program at the application stage. Rather, this is assessed at the event application approval stage. Council's 'Holding an event' web page provides information on inclusivity and accessibility at events including a link to the NSW Government toolkit to assist event organisers.

## Focus Area 2 – Liveable Communities

### Objectives – Footpath safety and connectivity are improved; Opportunities for active transport are improved and promoted

**Action:** Seek funding for additional works not identified in the Pedestrian Access & Mobility Plan  
Continue to consult with the community to identify improvements

Concrete path works have been undertaken to improve access and increase the opportunity for active transport at the following locations:

- Edinburgh Drive, Taree
- Nabitac Street, Nabitac
- Gloucester Road, Wingham
- Boomerang Drive, Elizabeth Beach

## Focus Area 2 – Liveable Communities cont.

- Waterman Street, Old Bar

Planning was finalised for improvements for car parking at Crowdy Head thanks to Federal funding through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program. Council has secured \$841,000 to transform an area used as an informal car parking space into a 59-space sealed car park, adjacent to the Crowdy Head Surf Life Saving Club. The project will improve access at this popular spot.

Funding was secured from the Crown Lands Reserve Trust to contribute to works on the foreshore of Wallis Lake. Enjoying a stroll along the Little Street foreshore in Forster will soon be a whole lot easier. Shared pathway users will be able to travel from the Little Street Baths through to the Pelican Boardwalk on Memorial Drive. Council will start work on the shared path extension between the Waterline Boatshed and the Number One Boatshed in October. Standby parking facilities for customers of the foreshore businesses will improve safety and access at this busy location.

## Objective – MidCoast Council’s Community Inclusion & Wellbeing Reference Group advocates for the needs of people with disability

**Action:** Council officers advise the Community Inclusion & Wellbeing Reference Group and support identified actions

The Community Inclusion and Wellbeing Reference Group (CIWRG) met at the MEC in November 2023 for a tour and discussion about access challenges and advised Council that this was important given the ageing demographic of our community, and that the proportion of people with disability in the MidCoast LGA is almost double the NSW and Australia averages. The CIWRG supported and encouraged the allocation of funding and search for external funding to address the issues.

## Focus Area 2 – Liveable Communities cont.

### Objectives – Council’s amenities meet the needs of people with disability. Council’s recreational space meets the needs of people with disability

**Action:** Seek funding to install lift-and-change facilities where appropriate.

Provide compliant accessible toilets.

#### **Nabiac Showground Hall Upgrade**

Significant works were undertaken at the Nabiac Showground Hall which improved safety and access. The works included upgrades to the kitchen and emergency exits and improved disabled amenities.

The project was jointly funded by Council and the Federal Government which contributed \$50,000 under Phase 4 of the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.

#### **Forster Civic Centre**

The Forster Civic Centre has been completed and became operational in November 2023. The centre includes a new library, visitor information centre, Council customer service point and a suite of meeting/function rooms. The facility has many accessibility features including an internal lift allowing people with mobility issues to access the basement carpark and lower and second level of the library, accessible toilets and ambulant cubicles. The library has been designed with wide spaces and clutter-free set up of shelving and displays to allow for easy movement for people with mobility aids or wheelchairs.

#### **Wingham Park**

The Wingham CBD Masterplan was developed during the year and will be placed on public exhibition in the new financial year. It includes several improvements for the Wingham CBD that will improve access for residents and visitors:

- Wingham Park entry (Cnr Bent and Wynter Streets) will be widened to provide barrier free access and wayfinding signage.
- The mid-block entry (Bent St), steps will be widened and a ramp added.
- An all-abilities playground is planned for the corner of Wynter and Farquhar Streets.
- A footpath connecting Wynter St to the Wingham Brush is planned

The toilets on Farquhar St will be upgraded.

### Public Spaces and Facilities Improvements

The Manning Entertainment Centre (MEC) commissioned an Access Audit in August 2023 to identify improvements to a facility that was built in 1987.

Works to improve access have since been completed, including foot path, lighting and carpark upgrades and the installation of automatic main entry front doors.

A wheelchair lift to provide access to the main stage for people using wheelchairs has been purchased.



Several infrastructure improvements and accessibility actions have taken place across the MidCoast area during the year including:

- Installation of an accessible bathroom in the Hawks Nest Community Hall.
- Installation of an accessible ramp at the Gloucester Kiosk (Gloucester District Park). Installation of a new amenities kiosk and accessibility toilet at Cundletown Park.
- Provision of an incontinence bin in the male toilets at Billabong Park, Gloucester.
- Pathway upgrade with improved access to amenities and improved line of sight from the playground at Leo Carney Park in Krumbach.
- Following the adoption of the Nabiac Showground Plan of Management, works undertaken include the addition of two disability car parking spaces and the construction of a pathway linking pedestrians from town to the showground.
- The development of a Public Toilets in Parks Strategy commenced and will be placed on public exhibition July.
- An all-ability play space and pathway access at the Cooperbrook playground has been completed.





## Focus Area 2 – Liveable Communities cont.

### Open Space and Recreation Strategy

The following strategies and plans that sit under the umbrella of the Open Space and Recreation Strategy were adopted through the year and include consideration of people with disability:

- Playspace Strategy – adopted in December 2023.
- MidCoast Regional Sporting Precinct Development Strategy and Master Plan – adopted in May 2024.
- MidCoast Recreational Boating Infrastructure Plan – adopted in June 2024.

The Old Bar Park Master Plan and Stroud Showground Plan are currently on public exhibition and will be finalised next year.

### Objective – Ensure adequate accessible parking bay provision

**Action:** Conduct parking surveys in high-use areas to ensure adequate accessible parking bays available

Follow standards/guidelines regarding the number of accessible parking bays provided for any new works

An audit of accessible parking spaces across the LGA was conducted and a report summarising the findings was presented to Council in July 2024.

Data on 284 accessible parking spaces in the Council area was captured and reviewed with only 14 parking spaces considered compliant or near compliant to the current standards. This is not surprising as the suite of Australian Standards for accessibility underwent significant changes between 2020 and 2022. Most of the accessible spaces were installed well before this time.

Councillors resolved to note the report and present the findings to the Community Inclusion & Wellbeing Group. Grant funding will be sought to assist with the upgrade of the non-compliant parking and a report outlining a works program to address the issues/options raised by the audit will be presented to Council.

### Objective – Locals and visitors can easily find information about accessible accommodation and experiences on the MidCoast

**Action:** Promote opportunities to contribute content to Barrington Coast website about accessible accommodation and experiences

The Barrington Coast website has an accessibility search filter within the accommodation section to assist people with mobility or other special needs to find appropriate accommodation in the area.

## Focus Area 3 – Employment

### Objective – MidCoast Council is an accessible and inclusive place of work and people with disability feel comfortable and safe working here

**Action:** Undertake a Recruitment Review through the Australian Network on Disability.

Develop an Action Plan from the Australian Network on Disability Recruitment Review report.

Following the Recruitment Review conducted by the Australian Network on Disability in October 2022, Council continued to progress implementation of actions identified in the Review. The Human Resources team has been investigating options to increase the number of applications from people with disability including 'The Field' AI platform. While this format is currently not compatible with Council's systems, other strategies are being investigated in the pursuit of Council's Equal Employment Opportunity objectives.

Actions for the coming year include working directly with Disability Employment Services (DES), to develop a customised approach for participants. This aims to remove barriers to the application and interview processes and consider potential barriers within the workplace for potential candidates. DES organisations will provide expert advice on being disability friendly and making reasonable adjustments for individuals during the interview process, with the position description and onboarding process enabling employees to be effective. DES providers will also support applicants through the employment process.

### Objectives – Raise awareness with local businesses of the benefits of employing people with disability

**Action:** Liaise with Chambers of Commerce to raise awareness of the benefits of employing people with disability

Council contributed to an advisory workshop on future business ideas for Dundaloo Support Services.

Council supported a partnership between Dundaloo Support Services and Chatham High School through the Vibrant Spaces Program. The project for a food van to operate on Wingham Road provides a practical training opportunity for people with disability.

Council facilitated the implementation of an onsite manual Return & Earn at Dundaloo Support Services, providing an opportunity for participants to be employed.

### Focus Area 3 – Employment cont.

#### Objectives – People with disability are included on Council interview panels

**Action:** Explore opportunity for people with disability to be on interview panel for Council employees as appropriate.

This action was initially intended to be undertaken with people from MidCoast Assist who would have supported people with disability to be involved. As MidCoast Assist has ceased to operate, this action is no longer being pursued. Other avenues for people with disability to be appropriately involved will be considered. In the immediate future, an individualised reasonable adjustments approach with DES providers will be actioned.

### Focus Area 4 – Systems and Processes

#### Objective - People living with disability are included in engagement activities and their ideas are considered in the development of plans for services, facilities and activities.

**Action:** Community Relations team continues to upskill in engagement practices.

Improvements to make the website more disability friendly are ongoing. The team is working towards improving the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) accessibility rating. The ability to track accessibility and use of the website informs the improvement process. Team members undertook accessibility training this year to support continuous improvement efforts.

**Action:** Increase opportunity for participation of people with disability in community engagement activities.

An equitable engagement framework has been implemented for all community engagement activities. This provides consideration for people with disability when designing and undertaking engagement plans, activities and programs. For example, physical location, multiple options for how to engage, and targeted stakeholder approaches to ensure various groups are represented. Demographic data is compiled during engagements to ensure it reflective of the demographic profile of the area.

The development of engagement tool kits to assist staff engaging with people with disability are planned for the coming year.

## Environmental Upgrade Agreements

*Local Government Act 1993 Act s54P(1)*

MidCoast Council did not enter into any environmental upgrade agreements during the reporting period.

## Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) management plan activities

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

- Mandatory training for all employees on bullying & harassment.
- Mandatory training for all employees on managing psychosocial hazards at work.
- Mandatory training for all employees on preventing and responding to workplace violence and aggression.
- Mandatory training for all employees on updates to the Work Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- Mandatory training for all employees on Public Interest Disclosures.
- Mandatory training for all new employees on sexual harassment.
- Mandatory training for all new employees on code of conduct.
- Annual Employment Based Training Scheme to offer traineeship and apprenticeship opportunities
- Access to a “Welcome to Local Government” video induction for all new employees explaining the role of employee unions.
- Implementation of a LEAD program for future leaders.
- Implementation of a Manager Leadership Development Program for all current managers.
- Employee participation in the “Rural Management Challenge” to develop potential leaders.
- Adoption of “Special Days Guidelines” to recognise important days to be promoted by Council, including National Reconciliation Week, RUOK Day, 16 Days of Activism, Harmony Day, International Women’s Day, International Day of People with Disabilities, and Pride Day.

## External bodies that exercised functions delegated by council

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

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.

## Government Information Public Access

*Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 s125(1) and Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018 cl 8, Schedule 2*

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 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.

Government Information (Public Access) Act – Annual Report for Agency Mid-Coast Council

Clause 8A: Details of the review carried out by the agency under section 7 (3) of the Act during the reporting year and the details of any information made publicly available by the agency as a result of the review

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

Clause 8B: The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year (including withdrawn applications but not including invalid applications)

Total number of applications received
63

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

Number of Applications Refused	Wholly	Partly	Total
	0	0	0
% of Total	0.00%	0.00%	

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

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	0.00%
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Private sector business	3	10	0	1	2	0	0	0	16	20.51%
Not for profit organisations or community groups	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.28%
Members of the public (by legal representative)	3	7	2	2	1	0	0	0	15	19.23%
Members of the public (other)	16	18	4	4	3	1	0	0	46	58.97%
Total	23	35	6	7	6	1	0	0	78	
% of Total	29.49%	44.87%	7.69%	8.97%	7.69%	1.28%	0.00%	0.00%		

\* 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*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	20	29	4	6	5	0	0	0	64	82.05%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	3	6	2	1	1	1	0	0	14	17.95%
Total	23	35	6	7	6	1	0	0	78	
% of Total	29.49%	44.87%	7.69%	8.97%	7.69%	1.28%	0.00%	0.00%		

\* 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)	2	100.00%
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0	0.00%
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0	0.00%
Total number of invalid applications received	2	100.00%
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	0	0.00%

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	0.00%
Cabinet information	0	0.00%
Executive Council information	0	0.00%
Contempt	0	0.00%
Legal professional privilege	4	100.00%
Excluded information	0	0.00%
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0	0.00%
Transport safety	0	0.00%
Adoption	0	0.00%
Care and protection of children	0	0.00%
Ministerial code of conduct	0	0.00%
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0	0.00%
Privilege generally - Sch 1(5A)	0	0.00%
Information provided to High Risk Offenders Assessment Committee	0	0.00%
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	2	4.88%
Law enforcement and security	1	2.44%
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	34	82.93%
Business interests of agencies and other persons	4	9.76%
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0	0.00%
Secrecy provisions	0	0.00%
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0	0.00%
Total	41	

Table F: Timeliness

	Number of applications*	% of Total
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	59	93.65%
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	4	6.35%
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0	0.00%
Total	63	



Table G: Number of applications reviewed under Part 5 of the Act (by type of review and outcome)

	Decision varied	Decision upheld	Total	% of Total
Internal review	2	0	2	100.00%
Review by Information Commissioner*	0	0	0	0.00%
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	0	0	0	0.00%
Review by NCAT	0	0	0	0.00%
Total	2	0	2	
% of Total	100.00%	0.00%		

\*The Information Commissioner does not have the authority to vary decisions, but can make recommendations to the original decision-maker. The data in this case indicates that a recommendation to vary or uphold the original decision has been made by the Information Commissioner.

Table H: Applications for review under Part 5 of the Act (by type of applicant)

	Number of applications for review	% of Total
Applications by access applicants	2	100.00%
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)	0	0.00%
Total	2	

Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies.

	Number of applications transferred	% of Total
Agency-Initiated Transfers	0	0.00%
Applicant - Initiated Transfers	1	100.00%
Total	1	

## Legal Proceedings (Costs Incurred)

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

Matter	Court	Cost	Status	Result
MCC vs Palm Lake Resorts Pty Ltd	Land and Environment Court of NSW	\$ 229,503.98	Ongoing	Ongoing
MCC vs Tea Gardens Farms Pty Ltd	Land and Environment Court of NSW	\$5,772.22	Ongoing	Ongoing
MCC vs Simmons Civil Contracting Pty Ltd	Local Court	\$4,962.40	Ongoing	Ongoing
MCC vs Gregory Lee	Local Court	\$4,845.60	Ongoing	Ongoing
Decourte vs MCC	Land and Environment Court of NSW	\$45,073.70	Ongoing	Ongoing
MCC vs Greer	Land and Environment Court of NSW	\$18,093.13	Ongoing	Ongoing
Ina Operations Pty Ltd vs MCC	Land and Environment Court of NSW	\$6,637.40	Ongoing	Ongoing
MCC vs Gazecki	Land and Environment Court of NSW	\$35,988.00	Ongoing	Ongoing
Hawks Nest Village Pty Ltd vs MCC	Land and Environment Court of NSW	\$4,269.10	Ongoing	Ongoing
Allam Property Group Pty Ltd vs MCC	Land and Environment Court of NSW	\$15,000.00	Ongoing	Ongoing
Judicial Review – Code of Conduct	Supreme Court	\$2,264.35	Ongoing	Ongoing

## Modern slavery

*Local Government Act 1993 Act s428(4)(d)*

Council's Statement of Business Ethics Policy is referenced when Council seeks proposals for goods and services. The policy contains an explicit requirement that all suppliers to Council must comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (NSW) and also states that compliance with the Statement of Business Ethics Policy is applicable to all proposals submitted by suppliers.

Additionally, the policy includes information regarding Council's opposition to all forms of modern slavery and its requirements of its suppliers in regard to human rights.

During the reporting period Council purchased a specialised resources toolkit to support compliance and better practice in relation to the Modern Slavery Act 2018 (NSW). The use of these resources is being incorporated into a review of Council's overall procurement framework and processes.

Council will continue to develop its processes, controls and reporting in accordance with direction from the Office of the NSW Anti-slavery Commissioner.

## Private swimming pool inspections

*Swimming Pools Act 1992 s22F(2) and Swimming Pools Regulation 2018 (SP Reg) cl 23*

39 inspections of tourist and visitor pools.

37 inspections of properties with more than two dwellings.

113 Inspections resulted in the issuance of compliance certificate.

82 Inspections resulted in the issuance of a non-compliance certificate.

## Public interest disclosure

### *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 s78*

Annual reporting requirements under section 78 of the Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 (PID Act) require agencies to prepare and submit an annual report on their obligations under the PID Act within 30 days of the end of the reporting period. For NSW Local Government Councils, being agencies under the PID Act, this date is 30 July.

### Statistical Information on PIDs

Description	July 2023 – June 2024
Number of public officials who made PIDs	2
Number of PIDs received	2
Of PIDs received, number primarily about:	
Corrupt Conduct	1
Maladministration	0
Serious and substantial waste	1
Government information contravention	0
Local government pecuniary interest contravention	0
Privacy contravention	0
Number of PIDs finalised	2

### Commentary on PID Obligations

In accordance with the new legislation, MidCoast Council adopted a Public Interest Disclosure Policy on 27 September 2023.

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. The definition of a Disclosure Officer was changed to include anyone who supervises staff, leading to additional training for all Supervisors. 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 is available for staff to access on the Intranet.

## Rates & charges written off during the year

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 132*

Description	Amount
Postponed Rates and Charges <i>Local Government Act 1993 s 595</i>	\$26,461.73
Council Resolution <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 131</i>	\$49,623.29
Pensioner Rate Reductions <i>Local Government Act 1993 s 575(2)</i>	\$4,658,748.85
Concealed Leak Applications <i>Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 132</i>	\$145,957

## Recovery and threat abatement plans

*Fisheries Management Act 1994 s220ZT(2)*

Not applicable to MidCoast Council

## Service Optimisation Program

*Local Government Act 1993 s428(3) & Integrated Planning & Reporting Guidelines (5.3)*

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines (September 2021) introduced a requirement to encourage continuous improvement across Council operations by identifying a program of service reviews and including them in the operational plan. This requirement was met in April 2023 when Council was presented some analysis on all of Council's services at a workshop and some suggested Service Review options. As a result, Council endorsed the 2024-25 priority service reviews.

At the same workshop it was reported to Council that the Service Optimisation Program had established a Program Plan and Service Optimisation Framework and was piloting the proposed service review methodology by undertaking a 'Deep-dive' service review of the Manning Entertainment Centre (MEC) and the Library Service. An overview of the Service Optimisation Framework and the Service Review methodology was also provided to Council for discussion and feedback.

In summary, at the Conclusion of the 2023-24 Financial Year the Service Optimisation Program had the following key achievements:

- Service Optimisation Program Plan, Communications Plan and Framework including Service Review methodology was established
- The Pilot Service Review of the Manning Entertainment Centre (MEC) was 100% complete and implementation of the preferred optimisation option and associated priority actions had commenced
- The Library Services Service review was 80% complete including a final report that encompassed comparative data on all 11 Libraries; key opportunities for improvements

within the Service; and a preliminary Action Plan. This was handed over to the Libraries Leadership Team for discussion with options to be developed in 2024-25

- A new section of the Service Optimisation Framework was drafted and endorsed detailing the outputs of service reviews and how actions are prioritised
- Implementation of the Communications Plan commenced
- The 2024-25 Service Review priorities have been endorsed by Council and scoping of the planned service reviews for the ensuing year commenced.

## **Stormwater management services**

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

\$896,443 was levied in 2023-24 through the Stormwater Management Charge.

During 2023-24 \$790,929 was spent on projects, including:

- Completed investigation and approvals for Dunns Creek water quality improvement wetland
- Refurbishment of the gross pollutant trap at Condell Place Forster
- Installed a gross pollutant trap at Little Street Forster
- Completed an independent audit of wetlands and bioretention to inform asset management program
- Maintenance of gross pollutant traps, water quality improvement wetlands and bioretention.
- Completed the initial investigation for the refurbishment of Wingham wetland.
- Decommissioned two gross pollutant traps at Smiths Lake
- Eastslope Way, North Arm Cove drainage upgrade
- Sandbar View Place, Smiths Lake drainage upgrade
- Binda Street, Hawks Nest drainage enhancement works
- Skyline Drive Wingham drainage works
- Dune Springs Close, Diamond Beach drainage upgrades
- Cove Boulevard, North Arm Cove stormwater upgrade
- Oxley Street, Taree preliminary works for drainage upgrade

An amount of \$1,038,457 remains in the Stormwater Management Reserve for ongoing works.

## Total persons who performed paid work on Wednesday 14 February 2024

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 217(1)(d)*

On Wednesday 14 February 2024, there were 1,052 persons directly employed by Council. This is detailed in the following table:

Description	Number
Persons employed on a permanent full-time basis	756
Persons employed on a permanent part-time basis	123
Persons employed on a casual basis	93
Persons employed under a fixed term contract	45
Persons employed by Council who are "senior staff" for the purposes of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>	3
Persons engaged by Council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, that is wholly or principally for the labour of the person	44
Persons supplied to Council under a contract of other arrangement with the person's employer, as an apprentice or trainee	0

## Total remuneration package of the General Manager

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 217(1)(b)*

Description	Amount
Total value of salary component of the package	\$414,827.00
Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments	\$0.00
Super	\$45,631.00
Non-Cash	\$0.00
Fringe Benefits	\$0.00

## Total remuneration of senior staff members

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 217(1)(c)*

Description	Amount
Total value of salary component of the package	\$869,520.00
Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments	\$0.00
Super	\$97,451.00
Non-Cash	\$0.00
Fringe Benefits	\$0.00

## Total amount contributed or otherwise granted to financially assist others

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 217(1)(a5) and Local Government Act 1993 s356*

The total amount contributed or otherwise granted to financially assist other for the 2023-24 year was \$244,361.



## Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPA)

*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 s7.5(5)*

VPA	Overview	Status
661 The Lakes Way Darawank (2018)	Agreement between Council and Raymond John Hill and Susan Eve Hill regarding dedication of a Biodiversity Lot in exchange for two residential lots	Current – no activity during reporting period. To be actioned after subdivision construction works are completed
Carmona Drive, South Forster (2012)	Agreement between Council and Acornlane Pty Limited and Homeborne Pty Limited and the Minister for Environment in connection with rezoning of land. Relates to environmental restoration works and dedication of land to the Minister	Current – no activity during reporting period
Seven Mile Beach, The Lakes Way, South Forster (2007)	Agreement between Council and Seven Mile Beach Holdings Pty Limited in connection with rezoning of land	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 offsets via a vegetation management plan and requires any development over the site to meet a set of water quality objectives	Current – no activity during reporting period
210 Diamond Beach Road, Diamond Beach (2013)	Agreement between Council and SAF Properties Pty Limited regarding the provision of environmental corridors and community infrastructure such as access, facilities and landscaping	Current – Subdivision construction occurred. Landowner paid \$286,279 toward construction of children's playground, picnic, barbecue and toilet facilities, pedestrian bridge and cycle path and 'Knoll' Amphitheatre services. Maintenance bond paid. Bushland restoration and planting works have commenced
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 October 2020 and	Current – no activity during reporting period

VPA	Overview	Status
	subsequent dedication of land and a footpath providing public access along the eastern boundary by the developer	
391 Diamond Beach Road, Diamond Beach (2019)	Agreement between Council and Sybury Pty Limited regarding the preparation of a Public Access Strategy by Council and adoption by 11 October 2020, and the subsequent dedication of land and a footpath providing public access along the eastern boundary by the developer	Current – landowner paid \$88,000 in 2020/21. Development Application (DA2021/1724) approved by Council on 21 December 2022 that would enable subsequent dedication of land to Council for construction of footpath through a condition of consent
90 High Street, Black Head (2014)	Agreement between Council and Halliday Shores Retirement Living Pty Limited regarding the provision of landscaping	Current – no activity during reporting period
303 Blackhead Road, Hallidays Point (2010)	Agreement between Council, John Earnings Pty Limited, Island Point Plantations Pty Limited, and Brichris Pty Limited regarding the dedication of lands and associated works at Tallwoods Village, Hallidays Point	Current – Development Application (DA2022/0665) lodged during the reporting period and is still under assessment
323 Blackhead Road, Hallidays Point (2010)	Agreement between Council and Benvenutos regarding dedication of lands and associated works at Tallwoods Village, Hallidays Point	Current – no activity during reporting period
Harrington Waters Estate (2007)	Agreement between Council and Roche Group Pty Limited 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 Pty Limited, 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 Limited regarding dedication of a Biodiversity Lot to	Current – and has been dedicated to Council and the monetary contribution paid to

VPA	Overview	Status
	Council and payment of a monetary contribution towards ongoing management	Council. On-ground works have commenced in relation to bushland management and restoration
Tropic Gardens Drive, Smiths Lake (2013)	Agreement between Council and Overpa Pty Limited regarding the rezoning of land at Tropic Gardens Drive Relates to environmental restoration works and protection of land	Current – no activity during reporting period
Tallwoods Eastern Lands (2010)	Agreement between Council and Tallwoods Pty Limited regarding the rehabilitation, embellishment and maintenance of vegetation and bushfire asset protection zones	Current – the Planning Agreement has been modified with an agreed deed that refines the outcomes. A Development Application has been lodged that will (if approved) execute parts of the Deed
Brimbin (2014)	Agreement between Council and Roche Group Pty Limited 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 is currently working on the masterplan for the development
FIGTREES on the Manning (2010)	Agreement between Council, Chase Taree Developments Pty Limited, Hocana Pty Limited and Spychala regarding the provision of public infrastructure associated with redevelopment of the former Lower Manning Dairy Cooperative at Chatham	Current – infrastructure in this development has been funded from a Commonwealth grant. The agreement will need to be revised following completion of these works
Kolodong Estate, Kolodong Road, Taree (2019)	Agreement between Council, Wayne Peter Green and Nancy Jean Green and Benwaydan Pty Limited regarding the landowner contributing to the cost of an intersection upgrade at Kolodong/Wingham Roads if Council undertakes the works prior to the development proceeding	Current – at the 28 September 2022 meeting, Councillors adopted an amended planning agreement for the Kolodong Estate, after a period of public exhibition. The revised agreement allows the main landowner to construct a roundabout at the intersection of Kolodong and Wingham Roads

VPA	Overview	Status
North Shearwater at Tea Gardens (2012)	Agreement between Council and Wolin Investments Pty Limited 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 Road, Tuncurry (2008)	Agreement between Council and 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 Development Control Plan	Current – partly implemented by preparation of a Development Control Plan. The required land dedication will be implemented when the next Development Application for residential subdivision on the land is lodged
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	Completed – agreement finalised and discharged during reporting period. Removed from the title of the land
Sanderling Avenue, Hawks Nest (2021)	Agreement between Council and Core Property Development Pty Limited and Leric Group Pty Limited to pay a monetary contribution to Council to fund environmental research and restoration, open space improvements and a contribution to the Hawks Nest Surf Club	Current – no activity during reporting period. Funds have previously been paid to Council, and planning has commenced for the expenditure of the environmental research and restoration elements of the funding
Parry's Cove Subdivision, Tea Gardens (2022)	Agreement between Council and Sheargold Property Developments Pty Limited, SGD 1 Pty Limited and SGD 2 Pty Limited to dedicate land to Council and transferring the Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement for this land to Council	Current – the developer is working with the NSW Government to establish the Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement over the land to be transferred to Council
Pacific Highway, Bulahdelah (2022)	Agreement between Council and Lindfield Property Nominee Pty Limited and N G P Investments (No. 2) Pty Limited to pay Council \$500,000 in two payments to offset any adverse potential economic impacts of a Highway Service Centre on the Bulahdelah business community	Current – initial \$50,000 funds were used to construct a shade shelter over playground equipment in Wade Park
Lowes Lane Booral (2023)	Agreement between Council, Michael Richard Downes and Barrington Tops Developments Pty Ltd for the conservation of environmentally	Current – no activity during reporting period.

VPA	Overview	Status
	sensitive land in association with a four-lot subdivision.	

## Work Carried Out on Private Land

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl 217(1)(a4) and Local Government Act 1993 s67, 67(2)(b), 67(3)*

There were no resolutions of Council for private works.



04

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
2023-24

# MidCoast Council

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
for the year ended 30 June 2024

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# MidCoast Council

GENERAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
for the year ended 30 June 2024

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# MidCoast Council

## General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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### Overview

MidCoast Council is constituted under the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) and has its principal place of business at:

Yalawanyi Ganya  
2 Biripi Way  
Taree NSW 2430

Council's guiding principles are detailed in Chapter 3 of the LGA and includes:

- principles applying to the exercise of functions generally by council,
- principles to be applied when making decisions,
- principles of community participation,
- principles of sound financial management, and
- principles for strategic planning relating to the development of an integrated planning and reporting framework.

A description of the nature of Council's operations and its principal activities are provided in Note B1-2.

Through the use of the internet, we have ensured that our reporting is timely, complete and available at minimum cost. All press releases, financial statements and other information are publicly available on our website: [www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au).

# MidCoast Council

## General Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Statement by Councillors and Management

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Statement by Councillors and Management made pursuant to Section 413 (2c) of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW)

The attached general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

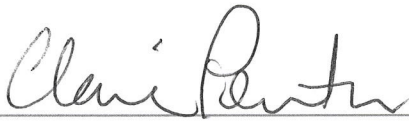
- the *Local Government Act 1993* and the regulations made thereunder,
- the Australian Accounting Standards and other pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board
- the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

To the best of our knowledge and belief, these statements:

- present fairly the Council's operating result and financial position for the year
- accord with Council's accounting and other records.

We are not aware of any matter that would render these statements false or misleading in any way.

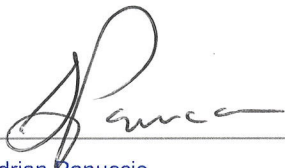
Signed in accordance with a resolution of Council made on 04 September 2024.



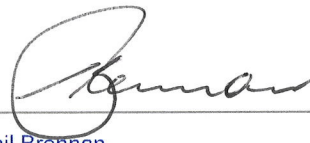
Claire Pontin  
**Mayor**  
04 September 2024



Alan Tickle  
**Councillor**  
04 September 2024



Adrian Panuccio  
**General Manager**  
04 September 2024



Phil Brennan  
**Responsible Accounting Officer**  
04 September 2024



## MidCoast Council

### Statement of Comprehensive Income

for the year ended 30 June 2024

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
<b>Net operating result for the year - from Income Statement</b>		<b>72,383</b>	36,036
<b>Other comprehensive income:</b>			
Amounts which will not be reclassified subsequently to the operating result			
Gain (loss) on revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-7	<u>197,382</u>	191,944
<b>Total items which will not be reclassified subsequently to the operating result</b>		<b>197,382</b>	191,944
<b>Total other comprehensive income for the year</b>		<b>197,382</b>	191,944
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to Council</b>		<b>269,765</b>	227,980

The above Statement of Comprehensive Income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## MidCoast Council

## Statement of Financial Position

as at 30 June 2024

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	C1-1	74,334	50,691
Investments	C1-2	134,750	120,550
Receivables	C1-4	61,931	68,300
Inventories	C1-5	1,534	1,394
Other		3,044	981
Non-current assets classified as 'held for sale'	C1-6	6,261	–
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>281,854</b>	<b>241,916</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Investments	C1-2	162,902	159,377
Receivables	C1-4	628	628
Inventories	C1-5	661	1,034
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (IPPE)	C1-7	4,500,513	4,273,132
Investment property	C1-8	33,025	27,912
Right of use assets	C2-1	1,967	2,525
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>4,699,696</b>	<b>4,464,608</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>4,981,550</b>	<b>4,706,524</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Payables	C3-1	36,362	39,485
Contract liabilities	C3-2	48,022	36,504
Lease liabilities	C2-1	762	694
Borrowings	C3-3	17,792	17,331
Employee benefit provisions	C3-4	24,741	23,591
Provisions	C3-5	11,360	6,546
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>139,039</b>	<b>124,151</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Payables	C3-1	245	–
Lease liabilities	C2-1	1,378	2,037
Borrowings	C3-3	141,827	148,368
Employee benefit provisions	C3-4	1,124	1,799
Provisions	C3-5	26,861	28,858
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>		<b>171,435</b>	<b>181,062</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>310,474</b>	<b>305,213</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>4,671,076</b>	<b>4,401,311</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Accumulated surplus	C4-1	3,140,160	3,067,777
IPPE revaluation surplus	C4-1	1,530,916	1,333,534
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>4,671,076</b>	<b>4,401,311</b>

The above Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## MidCoast Council

### Statement of Changes in Equity

for the year ended 30 June 2024

\$ '000	Notes	2024			2023		
		Accumulated surplus	IPPE revaluation surplus	Total equity	Accumulated surplus	IPPE revaluation surplus	Total equity
<b>Opening balance at 1 July</b>		<b>3,067,777</b>	<b>1,333,534</b>	<b>4,401,311</b>	3,031,741	1,141,590	4,173,331
<b>Net operating result for the year</b>		<b>72,383</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>72,383</b>	36,036	-	36,036
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>							
Gain (loss) on revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	C1-7	-	197,382	197,382	-	191,944	191,944
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>		<b>72,383</b>	<b>197,382</b>	<b>269,765</b>	<b>36,036</b>	<b>191,944</b>	<b>227,980</b>
<b>Closing balance at 30 June</b>		<b>3,140,160</b>	<b>1,530,916</b>	<b>4,671,076</b>	<b>3,067,777</b>	<b>1,333,534</b>	<b>4,401,311</b>

The above Statement of Changes in Equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## MidCoast Council

### Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2024

Original unaudited budget 2024	\$ '000	Notes	Actual 2024	Actual 2023
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>				
<i>Receipts:</i>				
174,245	Rates and annual charges		175,282	165,693
57,829	User charges and fees		61,300	56,569
73,974	Grants and contributions		127,731	124,017
9,383	Interest received		13,148	6,940
–	Bonds, deposits and retentions received		–	150
6,426	Other		32,121	30,478
<i>Payments:</i>				
(110,974)	Payments to employees		(92,603)	(84,678)
(89,110)	Payments for materials and services		(106,195)	(104,922)
(8,542)	Borrowing costs		(8,439)	(8,943)
–	Bonds, deposits and retentions refunded		(276)	–
(11,706)	Other		(24,234)	(5,126)
101,525	<b>Net cash flows from operating activities</b>	G1-1	<b>177,835</b>	<b>180,178</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>				
<i>Receipts:</i>				
–	Redemption of term deposits		111,550	86,200
–	Sale of investments		14,000	13,540
–	Sale of real estate assets		432	1,300
1,500	Proceeds from sale of IPPE		1,651	1,033
<i>Payments:</i>				
–	Acquisition of term deposits		(138,000)	(112,000)
–	Purchase of investments		(5,300)	(8,000)
(116,834)	Payments for IPPE		(131,619)	(160,510)
(115,334)	<b>Net cash flows from investing activities</b>		<b>(147,286)</b>	<b>(178,437)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>				
<i>Receipts:</i>				
11,000	Proceeds from borrowings		27,545	7,100
<i>Payments:</i>				
(17,660)	Repayment of borrowings		(33,625)	(19,233)
–	Principal component of lease payments		(826)	(772)
(6,660)	<b>Net cash flows from financing activities</b>		<b>(6,906)</b>	<b>(12,905)</b>
(20,469)	<b>Net change in cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>23,643</b>	<b>(11,164)</b>
50,691	Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		50,691	61,855
30,222	<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>	C1-1	<b>74,334</b>	<b>50,691</b>
279,927	plus: Investments on hand at end of year	C1-2	297,652	279,927
310,149	<b>Total cash, cash equivalents and investments</b>		<b>371,986</b>	<b>330,618</b>

The above Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

# MidCoast Council

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# MidCoast Council

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## A About Council and these financial statements

### A1-1 Basis of preparation

These financial statements were authorised for issue by Council on 04 September 2024. Council has the power to amend and reissue these financial statements in cases where critical information is received from public submissions or where the OLG directs Council to amend the financial statements.

The material accounting policy information related to these consolidated financial statements are set out below. Accounting policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Australian Accounting Interpretations, the *Local Government Act 1993 (Act)* and *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (Regulation)*, and the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

Council is a not for-profit entity.

The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars, except where amounts are shown in text.

#### **Historical cost convention**

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of certain infrastructure, property, plant and equipment and investment property.

#### **Significant accounting estimates and judgements**

The preparation of financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the Council's accounting policies. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that may have a financial impact on the Council and that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

#### **Critical accounting estimates and assumptions**

Council makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year include:

- i. fair values of investment properties – refer Note C1-8
- ii. fair values of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment – refer Note C1-7
- iii. tip remediation provisions – refer Note C3-5
- iv. employee benefit provisions – refer Note C3-4.

#### **Significant judgements in applying the Council's accounting policies**

- i. Impairment of receivables – refer Note C1-4.
- ii. Determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific and whether the contract is within the scope of AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* and / or AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* – refer to Notes B2-2 – B2-4.
- iii. Determination of the lease term, discount rate (when not implicit in the lease) and whether an arrangement contains a lease – refer to Note C2-1.

### **Monies and other assets received by Council**

#### **The Consolidated Fund**

In accordance with the provisions of Section 409(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*, all money and other assets received by Council is held in the Council's Consolidated Fund unless it is required to be held in the Council's Trust Fund.

Cash and other assets of the following activities have been included as part of the Consolidated Fund:

- General purpose operations
- Water service
- Sewerage service.

#### **The Trust Fund**

In accordance with the provisions of Section 411 of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* (as amended), a separate and distinct Trust Fund is maintained to account for all money and other assets received by the Council in trust which must be

## A1-1 Basis of preparation (continued)

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applied only for the purposes of, or in accordance with, the trusts relating to those monies. Trust monies and other assets subject to Council's control have been included in these reports.

A separate statement of monies held in the Trust Fund is available for inspection at the council office by any person free of charge.

### **Volunteer services**

Council does not recognise volunteer services in the financial statements because the fair value of those services cannot be measured reliably.

### **New accounting standards and interpretations issued but not yet effective**

Certain new accounting standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2024 reporting period. Council has elected not to apply any of these pronouncements before its operative date in the annual reporting period beginning 1 July 2023.

As at the date of authorisation of these financial statements, Council does not consider that any of these new (and still to be applied) standards and interpretations are likely to have a material impact on the Council's future financial statements, financial position, financial performance or cash flows.

### **New accounting standards adopted during the year**

During the year, Council adopted all accounting standards which were mandatorily effective for the first time from 1 July 2023. The adoption of these accounting standards has not had any material impact on the disclosures or on the amounts reported in these financial statements.

## B Financial Performance

### B1 Functions or activities

#### B1-1 Functions or activities – income, expenses and assets

Income, expenses and assets have been directly attributed to the following functions or activities. Details of those functions or activities are provided in Note B1-2.

\$ '000	Income		Expenses		Operating result		Grants and contributions		Carrying amount of assets	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
<b>Functions or activities</b>										
Our Unique Diverse & Culturally Rich Communities	24,323	22,904	36,053	37,468	(11,730)	(14,564)	7,115	6,765	280,646	265,152
Our Connected Community	221,447	208,525	224,272	233,075	(2,825)	(24,550)	99,241	94,352	4,400,721	4,157,762
Our Environment	9,660	9,096	14,936	15,522	(5,276)	(6,426)	3,256	3,096	26,925	25,439
Our Thriving & Growing Economy	4,804	4,524	7,626	7,926	(2,822)	(3,402)	1,984	1,887	64,356	60,803
Strong Leadership & Shared Vision	141,271	133,027	46,235	48,049	95,036	84,978	23,098	21,961	208,902	197,368
<b>Total functions and activities</b>	<b>401,505</b>	<b>378,076</b>	<b>329,122</b>	<b>342,040</b>	<b>72,383</b>	<b>36,036</b>	<b>134,694</b>	<b>128,061</b>	<b>4,981,550</b>	<b>4,706,524</b>

## B1-2 Components of functions or activities

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**Details relating to the Council's functions or activities as reported in B1-1 are as follows:**

### **Our Unique, Diverse and Culturally Rich Communities**

- We are a diverse community that works together to care for all our members
- We will embrace the uniqueness and creativity of our communities

### **Our Connected Community**

- We feel connected to each other
- It is safe and easy to get around our region
- We utilise technologies to connect us locally and beyond
- We protect the health and safety of our communities

### **Our Environment**

- We protect maintain and restore our natural environment
- We manage resources wisely
- We balance the needs of our natural and built environments

### **Our Thriving and Growing Economy**

- Our region is a popular place to visit, live, work and invest
- Our villages and business precincts are vibrant commercial, cultural and social hubs
- We encourage greater rural and agricultural diversity

### **Strong Leadership & Shared Vision**

- We work in partnership with our community and government to ensure council is a trusted and flexible organisation that delivers on their needs
- We maintain strong organisational health that contributes to council's success and community-focussed culture
- We make opportunities available for the community to inform decisions that shape our future
- We develop and encourage community and civic leadership

## B2 Sources of income

### B2-1 Rates and annual charges

\$ '000	2024	2023
<b>Ordinary rates</b>		
Residential	70,550	67,338
Farmland	9,923	9,602
Business	11,587	11,112
Mining	182	213
Less: pensioner rebates (mandatory)	(2,302)	(2,282)
<b>Rates levied to ratepayers</b>	<b>89,940</b>	<b>85,983</b>
Pensioner rate subsidies received	1,252	1,253
<b>Total ordinary rates</b>	<b>91,192</b>	<b>87,236</b>
<b>Annual charges (pursuant to s496, 496A, 496B, 501 &amp; 611)</b>		
Domestic waste management services	19,580	18,645
Stormwater management services	893	886
Water supply services	15,905	15,080
Waste management services (non-domestic)	7,371	6,953
Sewerage services	41,327	41,107
Less: pensioner rebates (mandatory)	(2,357)	(2,351)
<b>Annual charges levied</b>	<b>82,719</b>	<b>80,320</b>
Pensioner annual charges subsidies received:		
– Water	420	485
– Sewerage	385	446
– Domestic waste management	357	357
<b>Total annual charges</b>	<b>83,881</b>	<b>81,608</b>
<b>Total rates and annual charges</b>	<b>175,073</b>	<b>168,844</b>

Council has used 2022 year valuations provided by the NSW Valuer General in calculating its rates.

#### Material accounting policy information

Rates and annual charges are recognised as revenue at the beginning of the rating period to which they relate. Prepaid rates are recognised as a financial liability until the beginning of the rating period.

Pensioner rebates relate to reductions in rates and certain annual charges for eligible pensioners' place of residence in the local government council area.

Pensioner rate subsidies are received from the NSW Government to provide a contribution towards the pensioner rebates and are recognised within the underlying revenue item based on their substance.

## B2-2 User charges and fees

\$ '000	2024	2023
<b>Specific user charges (per s502 - specific 'actual use' charges)</b>		
Water supply services	29,417	26,155
Sewerage services	3,059	2,600
Trade Waste	196	108
<b>Total specific user charges</b>	<b>32,672</b>	<b>28,863</b>
<b>Other user charges and fees</b>		
<b>(i) Fees and charges – statutory and regulatory functions (per s608)</b>		
Planning and building regulation	3,355	3,128
Section 10.7 certificates (EPA Act)	320	326
Section 603 certificates	306	272
Laboratory Fees	108	121
Water & Sewerage Connection Fees	881	644
Animal control	106	109
Beach vehicle licencing	716	757
Community health fees (food inspection fees etc.)	231	212
Engineering – fixing levels and DA fees	138	51
On site sewer waste management fees	1,048	1,050
Other	73	65
<b>Total fees and charges – statutory/regulatory</b>	<b>7,282</b>	<b>6,735</b>
<b>(ii) Fees and charges – other (incl. general user charges (per s608))</b>		
Cemeteries	923	1,343
Waste disposal tipping fees	6,540	7,041
Leaseback fees – Council vehicles	1,248	1,201
Saleyards	253	210
Swimming centres	227	222
Entertainment centre	516	533
Ageing services	1,979	1,938
Damage bonds	201	199
Mooring fees	132	134
Transport for NSW fees for service	952	621
Parks and recreation	162	188
National disability insurance scheme	4,863	5,011
Other service fees and misc income	1,738	1,691
<b>Total fees and charges – other</b>	<b>19,734</b>	<b>20,332</b>
<b>Total other user charges and fees</b>	<b>27,016</b>	<b>27,067</b>
<b>Total user charges and fees</b>	<b>59,688</b>	<b>55,930</b>
<b>Timing of revenue recognition for user charges and fees</b>		
User charges and fees recognised over time	48,254	44,473
User charges and fees recognised at a point in time	11,434	11,457
<b>Total user charges and fees</b>	<b>59,688</b>	<b>55,930</b>

### Material accounting policy information

Revenue arising from user charges and fees is recognised when or as the performance obligation is completed and the customer receives the benefit of the goods / services being provided.

The performance obligation relates to the specific services which are provided to the customers and generally the payment terms are within 30 days of the provision of the service or in some cases the customer is required to pay upfront. There is no material obligation for Council in relation to refunds or returns.

Licences granted by Council are all either short-term or low value and all revenue from licences is recognised at the time that the licence is granted rather than over the term of the licence.

## B2-3 Other revenues

\$ '000	2024	2023
Fines	227	494
Legal fees recovery – rates and charges (extra charges)	5	3
Commissions and agency fees	211	189
Diesel rebate	245	213
Insurance claims recoveries	1,078	1,840
Recycling	1,240	1,610
Reimbursements	1,590	1,827
Other	877	1,058
<b>Total other revenue</b>	<b>5,473</b>	<b>7,234</b>
<b>Timing of revenue recognition for other revenue</b>		
Other revenue recognised over time	–	–
Other revenue recognised at a point in time	5,473	7,234
<b>Total other revenue</b>	<b>5,473</b>	<b>7,234</b>

### Material accounting policy information for other revenue

Where the revenue is earned for the provision of specified goods / services under an enforceable contract, revenue is recognised when or as the obligations are satisfied.

Statutory fees and fines are recognised as revenue when the service has been provided, the payment is received or when the penalty has been applied, whichever occurs first.

Other revenue is recorded when the payment is due, the value of the payment is notified, or the payment is received, whichever occurs first.



## B2-4 Grants and contributions

\$ '000	Operating 2024	Operating 2023	Capital 2024	Capital 2023
<b>General purpose grants and non-developer contributions (untied)</b>				
<b>Current year allocation</b>				
Financial assistance – general component	828	3,553	–	–
Financial assistance – local roads component	290	1,754	–	–
<b>Payment in advance - future year allocation</b>				
Financial assistance – general component	13,224	14,842	–	–
Financial assistance – local roads component	6,054	6,789	–	–
<b>Amount recognised as income during current year</b>	<b>20,396</b>	<b>26,938</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>Special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (tied)</b>				
<b>Cash contributions</b>				
Water supplies	–	–	1,041	935
Sewerage services	–	–	324	–
Library	209	145	24	108
Storm/flood damage	9,548	8,158	641	796
Bushfire and emergency services	1,537	2,699	258	131
Community care	1,523	1,293	–	–
Employment and training programs	261	924	–	–
Heritage and cultural	233	122	76	450
Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme subsidy	–	43	–	–
Street lighting	517	216	–	–
Transport for NSW contributions (regional roads, block grant)	1,304	1,102	3,735	3,844
Transport (roads to recovery)	6,599	–	–	–
Transport (other roads and bridges funding)	865	839	37,986	46,833
Waste and sustainability	–	–	142	252
Environmental works	2,722	1,144	1	162
Recreation improvements	–	–	5,310	3,769
Stronger country community funding	–	56	886	444
Crown reserve contribution (caravan parks)	673	616	–	–
Misc. contributions	257	240	–	–
Other specific grants	912	1,383	533	283
Other contributions	808	565	304	176
<b>Total special purpose grants and non-developer contributions – cash</b>	<b>27,968</b>	<b>19,545</b>	<b>51,261</b>	<b>58,183</b>
<b>Non-cash contributions</b>				
Bushfire services	540	145	912	947
Sewerage (excl. section 64 contributions)	–	–	4,753	1,489
Water supplies (excl. section 64 contributions)	–	–	1,529	1,651
Dedications – subdivisions (other than by s7.4 and s7.11 – EP&A Act, s64 of the LGA)	–	–	15,635	4,987
Other	–	–	819	–
<b>Total other contributions – non-cash</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>23,648</b>	<b>9,074</b>
<b>Total special purpose grants and non-developer contributions (tied)</b>	<b>28,508</b>	<b>19,690</b>	<b>74,909</b>	<b>67,257</b>
<b>Total grants and non-developer contributions</b>	<b>48,904</b>	<b>46,628</b>	<b>74,909</b>	<b>67,257</b>
<b>Comprising:</b>				
– Commonwealth funding	28,539	29,550	5,845	4,721
– State funding	20,036	17,035	46,023	54,233
– Other funding	329	43	23,041	8,303
	<b>48,904</b>	<b>46,628</b>	<b>74,909</b>	<b>67,257</b>

## B2-4 Grants and contributions (continued)

### Developer contributions

\$ '000	Notes	Operating 2024	Operating 2023	Capital 2024	Capital 2023
<b>Developer contributions:</b>					
<b>(s7.4 &amp; s7.11 - EP&amp;A Act, s64 of the LGA):</b>					
<b>Cash contributions</b>					
S 7.11 – contributions towards amenities/services	G4	–	–	5,813	7,988
S 64 – sewerage service contributions		–	–	2,536	3,311
S 64 – water supply contributions		–	–	2,532	2,877
<b>Total developer contributions – cash</b>		<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>10,881</b>	<b>14,176</b>
<b>Total developer contributions</b>		<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>10,881</b>	<b>14,176</b>
<b>Total contributions</b>		<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>10,881</b>	<b>14,176</b>
<b>Total grants and contributions</b>		<b>48,904</b>	<b>46,628</b>	<b>85,790</b>	<b>81,433</b>
<b>Timing of revenue recognition for grants and contributions</b>					
Grants and contributions recognised over time		–	56	47,106	54,163
Grants and contributions recognised at a point in time		48,904	46,572	38,684	27,270
<b>Total grants and contributions</b>		<b>48,904</b>	<b>46,628</b>	<b>85,790</b>	<b>81,433</b>

### Unspent grants and contributions

Certain grants and contributions are obtained by Council on the condition they be spent in a specified manner or in a future period but which are not yet spent in accordance with those conditions are as follows:

\$ '000	Operating 2024	Operating 2023	Capital 2024	Capital 2023
<b>Unspent grants</b>				
Unspent funds at 1 July	4,440	4,851	33,473	23,395
<b>Add:</b> Funds recognised as revenue in the reporting year but not yet spent in accordance with the conditions	–	9	–	–
<b>Add:</b> Funds received and not recognised as revenue in the current year	1,840	2,470	30,715	26,582
<b>Less:</b> Funds recognised as revenue in previous years that have been spent during the reporting year	(786)	(2,293)	(226)	(460)
<b>Less:</b> Funds received in prior year but revenue recognised and funds spent in current year	(1,583)	(597)	(19,454)	(16,044)
<b>Unspent funds at 30 June</b>	<b>3,911</b>	<b>4,440</b>	<b>44,508</b>	<b>33,473</b>
<b>Unspent Contributions</b>				
Unspent funds at 1 July	–	–	54,999	58,313
Add: contributions recognised as revenue in the reporting year but not yet spent	–	–	13,175	15,660
<b>Less:</b> contributions recognised as revenue in previous years that have been spent during the reporting year	–	–	(15,535)	(18,974)
<b>Unspent contributions at 30 June</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>52,639</b>	<b>54,999</b>

## B2-4 Grants and contributions (continued)

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### Material accounting policy information

#### Grants and contributions – enforceable agreement with sufficiently specific performance obligations

Grant and contribution revenue from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised as or when control of each performance obligations is transferred.

The performance obligations vary according to the agreement but include programs, workshops, events. Payment terms vary depending on the terms of the grant, cash is received upfront for some grants and on the achievement of certain payment milestones for others.

Performance obligations may be satisfied either at a point in time or over time and this is reflected in the revenue recognition pattern. Point in time recognition occurs when the beneficiary obtains control of the goods / services at a single time (e.g. completion of the project when a report / outcome is provided), whereas over time recognition is where the control of the services is ongoing throughout the project (e.g. provision of community services through the year).

Where control is transferred over time, generally the input methods being either costs or time incurred are deemed to be the most appropriate methods to reflect the transfer of benefit.

#### Capital grants

Capital grants received by Council under an enforceable contract for the acquisition or construction of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment to identified specifications which will be under Council's control on completion are recognised as revenue as and when the obligation to construct or purchase is completed.

For construction projects, this is generally as the construction progresses in accordance with costs incurred since this is deemed to be the most appropriate measure of the completeness of the construction project.

For acquisitions of assets, the revenue is recognised when the asset is acquired and controlled by the Council.

#### Developer contributions

Council has obligations to provide facilities from contribution revenues levied on developers under the provisions of sections 7.4, 7.11 and 7.12 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

While Council generally incorporates these amounts as part of a Development Consents Order, such developer contributions are only recognised as income upon receipt by Council, due to the possibility that individual development consents may not be acted upon by the applicant and, accordingly, would not be payable to Council.

Developer contributions may only be expended for the purposes for which the contributions were required, but Council may apply contributions according to the priorities established in work schedules for the contribution plan.

#### Other grants and contributions

Assets, including cash, received from other grants and contributions are recognised at fair value when the asset is received. Council considers whether there are any related liability or equity items associated with the asset which are recognised in accordance with the relevant accounting standard.

Once the assets and liabilities have been recognised then income is recognised for any remaining asset value at the time that the asset is received.

## B2-5 Interest and investment income

\$ '000	2024	2023
<b>Interest on financial assets measured at amortised cost</b>		
– Overdue rates and annual charges (incl. special purpose rates)	1,618	876
– Cash and investments	13,453	7,954
– Other	131	176
<b>Total interest and investment income</b>	<b>15,202</b>	<b>9,006</b>

## B2-6 Other income

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
<b>Reversal of revaluation decrements on IPPE previously expensed</b>			
Bridges		8,738	–
Footpaths		–	6,225
<b>Total reversal of revaluation decrements on IPPE previously expensed charged to Income Statement</b>	C1-7	<b>8,738</b>	<b>6,225</b>
<b>Fair value increment on investment properties</b>			
Fair value increment on investment properties		–	110
<b>Total fair value increment on investment properties</b>	C1-8	<b>–</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Rental income</b>			
<b>Investment properties</b>			
Lease income (excluding variable lease payments not dependent on an index or rate)		1,563	1,344
Lease income relating to variable lease payments not dependent on an index or a rate		104	161
<b>Total Investment properties</b>		<b>1,667</b>	<b>1,505</b>
<b>Other lease income</b>			
Other Council properties		970	1,161
<b>Total other lease income</b>		<b>970</b>	<b>1,161</b>
<b>Total rental income</b>	C2-2	<b>2,637</b>	<b>2,666</b>
<b>Total other income</b>		<b>11,375</b>	<b>9,001</b>

## B3 Costs of providing services

### B3-1 Employee benefits and on-costs

\$ '000	2024	2023
Salaries and wages	79,015	72,071
Employee leave entitlements (ELE)	9,007	9,214
Superannuation	9,737	8,910
Workers' compensation insurance	3,973	3,394
Payroll tax	1,276	1,277
Training costs (other than salaries and wages)	401	341
Protective clothing	403	349
Other	68	49
<b>Total employee costs</b>	<b>103,880</b>	<b>95,605</b>
Less: capitalised costs	(10,490)	(10,409)
<b>Total employee costs expensed</b>	<b>93,390</b>	<b>85,196</b>

#### Material accounting policy information

Council participates in a defined benefit plan under the Local Government Superannuation Scheme, however, sufficient information to account for the plan as a defined benefit is not available and therefore Council accounts for its obligations to defined benefit plans on the same basis as its obligations to defined contribution plans, i.e. as an expense when it becomes payable – refer to Note E3-1 for more information.

## B3-2 Materials and services

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
Raw materials and consumables		15,257	15,523
Contractor costs		48,258	58,041
Consultancy costs		3,536	3,417
Audit Fees	F2-1	215	227
Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses	F1-2	456	437
Advertising		453	452
Bank charges		383	494
Electricity and heating		7,483	6,995
Insurance		3,640	3,285
Postage		541	405
Printing and stationery		377	360
Street lighting		1,350	1,112
Subscriptions and publications		567	550
Telephone and communications		860	848
Valuation fees		426	418
Travel expenses		254	135
Plant running costs		5,066	4,845
Other expenses		1,641	2,107
<b>Legal expenses:</b>			
– Legal expenses: planning and development		543	1,419
– Legal expenses: other		158	73
Expenses from short-term leases		61	20
Expenses from leases of low value assets		263	348
Variable lease expense relating to usage		59	54
<b>Total materials and services</b>		<b>91,847</b>	<b>101,565</b>
<b>Total materials and services</b>		<b>91,847</b>	<b>101,565</b>

## B3-3 Borrowing costs

### (i) Interest bearing liability costs

Interest on loans		8,444	8,803
Interest on leases		87	95
<b>Total interest bearing liability costs</b>		<b>8,531</b>	<b>8,898</b>
<b>Total interest bearing liability costs expensed</b>		<b>8,531</b>	<b>8,898</b>

### (ii) Other borrowing costs

Amortisation of discounts and premiums:			
– Remediation liabilities	C3-5	1,348	295
<b>Total other borrowing costs</b>		<b>1,348</b>	<b>295</b>
<b>Total borrowing costs expensed</b>		<b>9,879</b>	<b>9,193</b>

## B3-4 Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
<b>Depreciation and amortisation</b>			
Plant and equipment		5,408	5,580
Office equipment		16	26
Furniture and fittings		211	175
Computer equipment		1,281	1,244
Land improvements (depreciable)		369	334
<b>Infrastructure:</b>	C1-7		
– Buildings		12,168	11,556
– Other structures		888	626
– Roads		30,242	28,987
– Bridges		2,234	3,374
– Footpaths		594	773
– Stormwater drainage		5,252	4,291
– Water supply network		15,485	14,112
– Sewerage network		10,849	10,539
– Swimming pools		270	244
– Other open space/recreational assets		2,485	2,140
Right of use assets	C2-1	706	649
<b>Other assets:</b>			
– Library books		354	362
– Cemetery assets		27	28
<b>Reinstatement, rehabilitation and restoration assets:</b>			
– Tip assets	C3-5,C1-7	1,154	249
– Quarry assets	C3-5,C1-7	–	16
<b>Total depreciation and amortisation costs</b>		<b>89,993</b>	<b>85,305</b>
<b>Impairment / revaluation decrement of IPPE and other non-financial assets</b>			
<b>Infrastructure:</b>	C1-7		
– Bridges		–	22,108
Non-current assets held for sale	C1-6	4,022	–
<b>Total IPPE and other non-financial assets impairment / revaluation decrement costs charged to Income Statement</b>		<b>4,022</b>	<b>22,108</b>
<b>Total depreciation, amortisation and impairment for non-financial assets</b>		<b>94,015</b>	<b>107,413</b>

### Material accounting policy information

#### Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation and amortisation are calculated using the straight line method to allocate their cost, net of their residual values, over their estimated useful lives.

#### Impairment of non-financial assets

Council assets held at fair value that are not held primarily for their ability to generate net cash flow, and that are deemed to be specialised, are not assessed for impairment since these assets are assessed on an annual basis to ensure that the carrying amount is not materially different from fair value and therefore, an impairment loss would be captured during this assessment.

Other non-financial assets that do not meet the criteria above are tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognised for the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount. The recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use.

For the purposes of assessing impairment, assets are grouped at the lowest levels for which there are separately identifiable cash inflows that are largely independent of the cash inflows from other assets or groups of assets (cash-generating units).

Impairment losses for revalued assets are firstly offset against the amount in the revaluation surplus for the class of asset, with only the excess to be recognised in the Income Statement.

## B3-5 Other expenses

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
<b>Impairment of receivables</b>			
Rates and annual charges		220	–
User charges and fees		91	90
<b>Total impairment of receivables</b>	C1-4	<b>311</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Fair value decrement on investment properties</b>			
Fair value decrement on investment properties		7,272	–
<b>Total fair value decrement on investment properties</b>	C1-8	<b>7,272</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>Fair value decrement on investments</b>			
Fair value decrement on investments through profit and loss		25	–
<b>Total Fair value decrement on investments</b>	C1-2	<b>25</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>Other</b>			
– Emergency services levy		441	253
– NSW fire brigade levy		295	250
– NSW rural fire service levy		2,588	2,047
– Waste levy		6,436	6,375
– Other contributions/levies		1,482	651
Donations, contributions and assistance to other organisations (Section 356)		390	486
Adjustment to Asset Remediation Provision		14	6,148
<b>Total other</b>		<b>11,646</b>	<b>16,210</b>
<b>Total other expenses</b>		<b>19,254</b>	<b>16,300</b>



## B4 Gains or losses

## B4-1 Gain or loss from the disposal, replacement and de-recognition of assets

\$ '000	Notes	2024	2023
<b>Gain (or loss) on disposal of property (excl. investment property)</b>			
Proceeds from disposal – property		–	–
Less: carrying amount of property assets sold/written off		<b>(1,134)</b>	–
<b>Gain (or loss) on disposal</b>		<b>(1,134)</b>	–
<b>Gain (or loss) on disposal of plant and equipment</b>			
	C1-7		
Proceeds from disposal – plant and equipment		<b>1,641</b>	1,033
Less: carrying amount of plant and equipment assets sold/written off		<b>(1,096)</b>	(2,089)
<b>Gain (or loss) on disposal</b>		<b>545</b>	(1,056)
<b>Gain (or loss) on disposal of infrastructure</b>			
	C1-7		
Proceeds from disposal – infrastructure		<b>10</b>	–
Less: carrying amount of infrastructure assets sold/written off		<b>(20,345)</b>	(22,538)
<b>Gain (or loss) on disposal</b>		<b>(20,335)</b>	(22,538)
<b>Gain (or loss) on disposal of real estate assets held for sale</b>			
	C1-5		
Proceeds from disposal – real estate assets		<b>432</b>	1,300
Less: carrying amount of real estate assets sold/written off		<b>(245)</b>	(79)
<b>Gain (or loss) on disposal</b>		<b>187</b>	1,221
<b>Gain (or loss) on disposal of investments</b>			
	C1-2		
Proceeds from disposal/redemptions/maturities – financial assets		<b>14,000</b>	13,540
Less: carrying amount of financial assets sold/redeemed/matured		<b>(14,000)</b>	(13,540)
<b>Gain (or loss) on disposal</b>		<b>–</b>	–
<b>Gain (or loss) on disposal of term deposits</b>			
	C1-2		
Proceeds from disposal/redemptions/maturities – term deposits		<b>111,550</b>	86,200
Less: carrying amount of term deposits sold/redeemed/matured		<b>(111,550)</b>	(86,200)
<b>Gain (or loss) on disposal</b>		<b>–</b>	–
<b>Net gain (or loss) from disposal of assets</b>		<b>(20,737)</b>	(22,373)

## B5 Performance against budget

### B5-1 Material budget variations

Council's original budget was adopted by the Council on 28 June 2023 and is not required to be audited. The original projections on which the budget was based have been affected by a number of factors. These include state and federal government decisions, including new grant programs, changing economic activity, environmental factors, and by decisions made by Council.

While these General Purpose Financial Statements include the original budget adopted by Council, the Act requires Council to review its financial budget on a quarterly basis, so it is able to manage the variation between actuals and budget that invariably occur during the year.

**Material variations of more than 10%** between original budget and actual results or where the variance is considered material by nature are explained below.

**Variation Key:** **F** = Favourable budget variation, **U** = Unfavourable budget variation.

\$ '000	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2024 ----- Variance -----		
<b>Revenues</b>					
<b>Rates and annual charges</b>	174,245	175,073	828	0%	<b>F</b>
<b>User charges and fees</b>	57,829	59,688	1,859	3%	<b>F</b>
<b>Other revenues</b>	3,836	5,473	1,637	43%	<b>F</b>
The material variations from the original budget include insurance claim recoveries in excess of budget (\$0.8 million), reimbursement of expenditure incurred by Council in excess of budget (\$0.9 million), largely associated with Council's aquatic facilities, offset by lower fines income (\$0.2 million) and lower legal fees recovery (\$0.2 million).					
<b>Operating grants and contributions</b>	33,057	48,904	15,847	48%	<b>F</b>
The material variations in respect of this item are impacted by the Accounting Standard revenue recognition requirements for grants and contributions and by the manner in which Council budgets for grants and contributions. Council's budget reflects the expected total grant funding provided under the grant agreement for the relevant project, not the anticipated amount that may be recognised during the financial period. As such it is difficult to reconcile actual grant income with the original budget.					
Material variations from the original budget include:					
- Additional storm damage grant approvals and receipts for prior year events (\$9.5 million)					
- Additional environmental grant receipts (\$2.4 million)					
<b>Capital grants and contributions</b>	40,917	85,790	44,873	110%	<b>F</b>
The material variations in respect of this item are impacted by the Accounting Standard revenue recognition requirements for grants and contributions and by the manner in which Council budgets for grants and contributions. Council's budget reflects the expected total grant funding provided under the grant agreement for the relevant project, not the anticipated amount that may be recognised during the financial period. As such it is difficult to reconcile actual grant income with the original budget.					
The following variations above budgeted amounts are included in the actual amount:					
- Non-cash contributions of assets (\$16.6 million)					
- Additional Section 7.11 developer contributions (\$3.1 million)					
- Additional grant funding of road-related programs (\$16 million)					
- Additional recreation and other open space improvements (\$6.2 million)					
<b>Interest and investment income</b>	9,383	15,202	5,819	62%	<b>F</b>
The material variations from the original budget include:					
- Interest income on cash and investments in excess of budget (\$4.9 million)					
- Interest on overdue rates and annual charges in excess of budget (\$0.8 million)					
<b>Other income</b>	2,590	11,375	8,785	339%	<b>F</b>
Due to the inherent uncertainty in predicting the impact of valuation movements through the indexation / revaluation process, this was not included in the preparation of the original budget.					

The material variation from the original budget relates to the recognition of the reversal of revaluation decrements previously expensed for the bridges asset class (\$8.7 million).

## B5-1 Material budget variations (continued)

\$ '000	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2024 ----- Variance -----	
<b>Expenses</b>				
<b>Employee benefits and on-costs</b>	110,974	93,390	17,584	16% <b>F</b>
Council's original budget does not exclude employee costs that will be capitalised from the Income Statement. When these costs are taken into account (\$10.137m) the variance to budget reduces to under 10%. The recorded variance also include the impact of the provision for the divestment of the MidCoast Assist Business unit of \$2.089m.				
<b>Materials and services</b>	89,110	91,847	(2,737)	(3)% <b>U</b>
<b>Borrowing costs</b>	8,542	9,879	(1,337)	(16)% <b>U</b>
The material variation from the original budget relates to the amortisation of the remediation liability which is not included in the original budget (\$1.348 million)				
<b>Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets</b>	86,694	94,015	(7,321)	(8)% <b>U</b>
<b>Other expenses</b>	11,706	19,254	(7,548)	(64)% <b>U</b>
The material variations from the original budget include:				
- The fair value decrement on the revaluation of Council's Investment Properties (\$7.272 million)				
- Contribution towards the Forster Surf Life Saving Club building (\$0.8 million)				
Offset by:				
- Lower Waste Levy (\$1.6 million)				
<b>Net losses from disposal of assets</b>	729	20,737	(20,008)	(2,745)% <b>U</b>
Council's original budget does not provide for a significant estimate of movements in this item. The original budget acknowledges some losses through the capitalisation process associated with water and sewer network assets but does not cover other asset classes. The actual result in the current year reflects the value of assets written-off as part of the capitalisation process across all asset classes, offset by the net gains associated with real estate land sales in the current year.				
<b>Statement of cash flows</b>				
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>	101,525	177,835	76,310	75% <b>F</b>
The budget Cash Flow Statement is largely based on the Income Statement with adjustments for significant non-cash items, namely depreciation expense. The variations are therefore reflective of the variances outlined in the Income Statement categories above.				
Cashflows from operating activities are also grossed up to include the impact of cashflows related to GST, which are net of GST in the income statement. The impact of the gross up of GST payments is reflected in payments for materials and services (most payments to suppliers include 10% additional GST on the expense which is claimed as an input tax credit) and within Other payments which includes the GST paid on payments for IPPE which is required to be disclosed as an operating cash flow. The recoupment of this GST paid from the ATO is included within Other receipts.				
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>	(115,334)	(147,286)	(31,952)	28% <b>U</b>
The variation is related to an increase in the holdings of investments (net increase of \$17.75 million between 30 June 2023 and 30 June 2024) and an additional \$14.785 million in capital expenditure on IPPE.				
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>	(6,660)	(6,906)	(246)	4% <b>U</b>

## C Financial position

### C1 Assets we manage

#### C1-1 Cash and cash equivalents

<b>\$ '000</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Cash assets</b>		
Cash on hand and at bank	<b>45,158</b>	23,823
Cash equivalent assets		
– Deposits at call	<b>29,176</b>	26,868
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>74,334</b>	<b>50,691</b>
 <b>Reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents</b>		
Total cash and cash equivalents per Statement of Financial Position	<b>74,334</b>	50,691
<b>Balance as per the Statement of Cash Flows</b>	<b>74,334</b>	<b>50,691</b>

## C1-2 Financial investments

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
<b>Financial assets at fair value through the profit and loss</b>				
Unlisted equity securities	–	202	–	227
<b>Total</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>227</b>
<b>Debt securities at amortised cost</b>				
Long term deposits	111,500	127,000	106,550	105,500
NCD's, FRN's (with maturities > 3 months)	23,250	35,700	14,000	53,650
<b>Total</b>	<b>134,750</b>	<b>162,700</b>	<b>120,550</b>	<b>159,150</b>
<b>Total financial investments</b>	<b>134,750</b>	<b>162,902</b>	<b>120,550</b>	<b>159,377</b>
<b>Total cash assets, cash equivalents and investments</b>	<b>209,084</b>	<b>162,902</b>	<b>171,241</b>	<b>159,377</b>

### Material accounting policy information

Financial instruments are recognised initially on the date that Council becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

On initial recognition, all financial instruments are measured at fair value plus transaction costs (except for instruments measured at fair value through profit or loss where transaction costs are expensed as incurred).

### Financial assets

All recognised financial assets are subsequently measured in their entirety at either amortised cost or fair value, depending on the classification of the financial assets.

### Classification

On initial recognition, Council classifies its financial assets into the following categories – those measured at:

- amortised cost
- fair value through profit and loss (FVTPL)
- fair value through other comprehensive income – equity instrument (FVOCI-equity)

Financial assets are not reclassified subsequent to their initial recognition.

### Amortised cost

Council's financial assets measured at amortised cost comprise trade and other receivables, term deposits and cash and cash equivalents in the Statement of Financial Position. Term deposits with an initial term of more than 3 months are classified as investments rather than cash and cash equivalents.

Subsequent to initial recognition, these assets are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method less provision for impairment.

Interest income, impairment and gains or loss on de-recognition are recognised in profit or loss.

### Financial assets through profit or loss

All financial assets not classified as measured at amortised cost or fair value through other comprehensive income are measured at fair value through profit or loss.

Net gains or losses, including any interest or dividend income, are recognised in profit or loss.

Council's financial assets measured at fair value through profit or loss comprise Council's 8.1% interest in Arrow Collaborative Services Limited.

## C1-3 Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments

\$ '000	2024	2023
(a) Externally restricted cash, cash equivalents and investments		
<b>Total cash, cash equivalents and investments</b>	<b>371,986</b>	330,618
Less: Externally restricted cash, cash equivalents and investments	<u>(260,691)</u>	<u>(258,727)</u>
<b>Cash, cash equivalents and investments not subject to external restrictions</b>	<b>111,295</b>	71,891
<b>External restrictions</b>		
<b>External restrictions – included in liabilities</b>		
External restrictions included in cash, cash equivalents and investments above comprise:		
Specific purpose unexpended loans – general	582	2,630
Subdivision bonds	4,582	4,813
Sundry bonds and deposits	4,887	4,854
Other sale of land, planning guarantee and relocation, tender and sundry deposits	32	34
Specific purpose unexpended grants – general fund	48,022	36,504
<b>External restrictions – included in liabilities</b>	<b>58,105</b>	48,835
<b>External restrictions – other</b>		
External restrictions included in cash, cash equivalents and investments above comprise:		
Developer contributions – general	31,623	29,686
Developer contributions – water fund	–	5,986
Developer contributions – sewer fund	21,016	19,327
Specific purpose unexpended grants (recognised as revenue) – general fund	397	1,409
Water fund	18,283	27,061
Domestic waste management	40,679	41,888
Stormwater management	1,038	940
Sewer fund	84,530	78,748
Stratford-Duralie Coal Contributions	1,453	1,490
Crown Lands Act – Section 106 (Forster Boat Harbour)	432	363
Other contributions to works	678	678
ARTC Rail Crossing	521	521
Cattai Wetlands – Environmental Trust	495	474
Nabiac Showground	219	213
Other	1,222	1,108
<b>External restrictions – other</b>	<b>202,586</b>	209,892
<b>Total external restrictions</b>	<b>260,691</b>	258,727

Cash, cash equivalents and investments subject to external restrictions are those which are only available for specific use by Council due to a restriction placed by legislation or third-party contractual agreement.

**C1-3 Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments (continued)**

<b>\$ '000</b>	<b>2024</b>	2023
<b>(b) Internal allocations</b>		
<b>Internal allocations</b>		
At 30 June, Council has internally allocated funds to the following:		
Plant and vehicle replacement	10,077	7,286
Employees leave entitlement	5,968	4,282
Carry over works	4,092	2,099
Building Infrastructure Reserves	1,809	2,385
Environmental Levy Reserve	6,112	6,021
Commercial Waste	3,607	1,823
Election	741	516
Emergency Management	1,190	1,263
Land & Property Reserves	4,649	4,468
IT Infrastructure Reserves	4,302	3,214
Budget Management Reserves	851	851
Parks Infrastructure Reserves	397	511
Road Infrastructure Reserves	2,122	2,226
SRV Infrastructure Reserve	11,621	13,249
FAG in advance	19,278	15,000
Other	3,530	3,351
<b>Total internal allocations</b>	<b>80,346</b>	<b>68,545</b>

Cash, cash equivalents and investments not subject to external restrictions may be internally allocated by resolution or policy of the elected Council.

<b>\$ '000</b>	<b>2024</b>	2023
<b>(c) Unrestricted and unallocated</b>		
<b>Unrestricted and unallocated cash, cash equivalents and investments</b>	<b>30,949</b>	3,346

## C1-4 Receivables

\$ '000	2024	2024	2023	2023
	Current	Non-current	Current	Non-current
Rates and annual charges	18,926	–	18,611	–
Interest and extra charges	3,258	–	2,170	–
User charges and fees	6,701	–	6,926	–
Accrued revenues				
– Interest on investments	4,050	–	3,027	–
– Water & Sewerage Accrued Income	3,543	–	3,191	–
– Other income accruals	1,641	–	1,427	–
Government debtors	23,561	–	28,997	–
Net GST receivable	1,674	–	2,369	–
On site sewer management charges	155	–	134	–
Other receivables	74	628	2,789	628
<b>Total</b>	<b>63,583</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>69,641</b>	<b>628</b>
<b>Less: provision for impairment</b>				
Rates and annual charges	(636)	–	(473)	–
Interest and extra charges	(463)	–	(406)	–
User charges and fees	(553)	–	(462)	–
<b>Total provision for impairment – receivables</b>	<b>(1,652)</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>(1,341)</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>Total net receivables</b>	<b>61,931</b>	<b>628</b>	<b>68,300</b>	<b>628</b>

### Material accounting policy information

Receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. Receivables are generally due for settlement within 30 days.

### Impairment

Impairment of financial assets measured at amortised cost is recognised on an expected credit loss (ECL) basis.

When estimating ECL, Council considers reasonable and supportable information that is relevant and available without undue cost or effort. This includes both quantitative and qualitative information and analysis based on Council's historical experience and informed credit assessment, and including forward-looking information.

Council uses the simplified approach for trade receivables where the expected lifetime credit losses are recognised on day 1.

When considering the ECL for rates and annual charges debtors, Council takes into account that unpaid rates represent a charge against the rateable property that will be recovered when the property is next sold.

Credit losses are measured at the present value of the difference between the cash flows due to the entity in accordance with the contract, and the cash flows expected to be received. This is applied using a probability weighted approach.

Council writes off a receivable when there is information indicating that the debtor is in severe financial difficulty and there is no realistic prospect of recovery, e.g. when the debtor has been placed under liquidation or has entered into bankruptcy proceedings.

None of the receivables that have been written off are subject to enforcement activity.

Where Council renegotiates the terms of receivables due from certain customers, the new expected cash flows are discounted at the original effective interest rate and any resulting difference to the carrying value is recognised in profit or loss.



## C1-5 Inventories

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
<b>(i) Inventories at cost</b>				
Real estate for resale	446	661	302	1,034
Stores, materials and/or trading stock	1,088	–	1,092	–
<b>Total inventories at cost</b>	<b>1,534</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>1,394</b>	<b>1,034</b>
<b>Total inventories</b>	<b>1,534</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>1,394</b>	<b>1,034</b>

### (i) Other disclosures

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
<b>(a) Details for real estate development</b>				
Residential	92	115	92	115
Industrial/commercial	354	546	210	919
<b>Total real estate for resale</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>1,034</b>

### Material accounting policy information

#### Raw materials and stores, work in progress and finished goods

Costs are assigned to individual items of inventory on the basis of weighted average costs.

#### Land held for resale

Cost is assigned by specific identification and includes the cost of acquisition, and development and borrowing costs during development.

## C1-6 Non-current assets classified as held for sale

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
<b>Non-current assets held for sale</b>				
Land	2,138	-	-	-
Buildings	4,123	-	-	-
<b>Total non-current assets held for sale</b>	<b>6,261</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total non-current assets classified as held for sale</b>	<b>6,261</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

### Details of assets and disposal groups

Non-current assets held for sale comprises Land and Buildings previously classified within Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment which at reporting date Council are committed to sell the assets, the assets are available for sale in their present condition and the sale is expected to be completed within the next financial year.

### Reconciliation of non-current assets held for sale

\$ '000	2024 Assets 'held for sale'	2023 Assets 'held for sale'
<b>Opening balance</b>	-	-
<u>Plus new transfers in:</u>		
- Assets held for sale	10,283	-
<u>Less impairment losses:</u>		
- Assets held for sale (losses on reclassification)	(4,022)	-
<b>Closing balance of held for sale non-current assets and operations</b>	<b>6,261</b>	<b>-</b>

### Material accounting policy information

Non-current assets (or disposal groups) are classified as held for sale if their carrying amount will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through continued use and are measured at the lower of their carrying amount and fair value less costs to sell.

Non-current assets (including those that are part of a disposal group) are not depreciated or amortised while they are classified as held for sale.

## C1-7 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

By aggregated asset class	At 1 July 2023			Asset movements during the reporting period										At 30 June 2024		
	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount	Additions renewals <sup>1</sup>	Additions new assets	Carrying value of disposals	Depreciation expense	Impairment reversal / prior period revaluation decrements reversal (via P&L)	WIP transfers	Adjustments and transfers	Tfrs from/(to) 'held for sale' category	Tfrs from/(to) investment properties	Revaluation increments (decrements) to equity (ARR)	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount
Capital work in progress	160,512	–	160,512	93,012	63,363	–	–	–	(239,576)	–	–	–	–	77,312	–	77,312
Plant and equipment	77,700	(43,782)	33,918	–	–	(1,096)	(5,408)	–	6,976	–	–	–	–	79,776	(45,386)	34,390
Office equipment	264	(180)	84	–	–	–	(16)	–	–	–	–	–	–	264	(195)	69
Furniture and fittings	5,215	(3,378)	1,837	–	–	–	(211)	–	1,691	–	–	–	–	6,906	(3,588)	3,318
Computer equipment	4,253	(2,341)	1,912	–	–	–	(1,281)	–	1,511	–	–	–	–	5,764	(3,622)	2,142
<b>Land:</b>																
– Operational land	97,701	–	97,701	–	–	–	–	–	270	–	(3,677)	(857)	2,163	95,600	–	95,600
– Community land	191,546	–	191,546	–	–	–	–	–	700	–	–	–	(3,307)	188,940	–	188,940
– Land under roads (post 30/6/08)	171	–	171	–	12	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	182	–	182
Land improvements – depreciable	6,985	(4,083)	2,902	–	–	–	(369)	–	231	–	–	–	128	7,550	(4,658)	2,892
<b>Infrastructure:</b>																
– Buildings	473,559	(199,324)	274,235	–	–	(1,134)	(12,168)	–	26,686	–	(6,606)	(11,528)	12,450	464,907	(182,973)	281,934
– Other structures	15,102	(4,422)	10,680	–	–	(19)	(888)	–	8,071	–	–	–	1,802	25,489	(5,840)	19,649
– Roads	1,802,787	(685,536)	1,117,251	–	–	(13,389)	(30,242)	–	94,122	–	–	–	64,459	1,964,371	(732,170)	1,232,201
– Bridges	201,802	(54,616)	147,186	–	–	(1,215)	(2,234)	8,738	12,296	2,255	–	–	–	227,245	(60,219)	167,026
– Footpaths	49,092	(14,802)	34,290	–	–	(69)	(594)	–	4,006	–	–	–	2,077	55,916	(16,206)	39,710
– Bulk earthworks (non-depreciable)	800,176	–	800,176	–	–	(1,867)	–	–	15,144	–	–	–	44,903	858,355	–	858,355
– Stormwater drainage	506,769	(171,975)	334,794	–	–	(1,729)	(5,252)	–	12,475	(2,255)	–	–	18,659	541,167	(184,473)	356,694
– Water supply network	805,529	(251,735)	553,794	–	–	(879)	(15,485)	–	36,122	–	–	–	29,074	882,455	(279,830)	602,625
– Sewerage network	656,143	(204,702)	451,441	–	–	(654)	(10,849)	–	13,879	–	–	–	23,009	702,453	(225,628)	476,825
– Swimming pools	12,123	(7,015)	5,108	–	–	–	(270)	–	400	–	–	–	242	13,101	(7,621)	5,480
– Other open space/recreational assets	57,025	(21,226)	35,799	–	–	(525)	(2,485)	–	4,508	–	–	–	1,723	63,268	(24,248)	39,020
<b>Other assets:</b>																
– Library books	4,797	(3,747)	1,050	–	–	–	(354)	–	447	–	–	–	–	5,243	(4,102)	1,141
– Cemetery assets	1,249	(709)	540	–	–	–	(27)	–	41	–	–	–	–	1,290	(736)	554
– Other	1,117	–	1,117	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,117	–	1,117
<b>Reinstatement, rehabilitation and restoration assets (refer Note C3-5):</b>																
– Quarry assets	182	(182)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	182	(182)	–
– Tip assets	26,111	(11,023)	15,088	–	–	–	(1,154)	–	–	(596)	–	–	–	25,515	(12,178)	13,337
<b>Total infrastructure, property, plant and equipment</b>	<b>5,957,910</b>	<b>(1,684,778)</b>	<b>4,273,132</b>	<b>93,012</b>	<b>63,375</b>	<b>(22,576)</b>	<b>(89,287)</b>	<b>8,738</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>(596)</b>	<b>(10,283)</b>	<b>(12,385)</b>	<b>197,382</b>	<b>6,294,368</b>	<b>(1,793,855)</b>	<b>4,500,513</b>

(1) Renewals are defined as the replacement of existing assets (as opposed to the acquisition of new assets).

## C1-7 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (continued)

By aggregated asset class	At 1 July 2022			Asset movements during the reporting period											At 30 June 2023			
	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount	Additions renewals <sup>(1)</sup>	Additions new assets	Carrying value of disposals	Depreciation expense	Impairment loss / revaluation decrements (recognised in P/L)	Impairment reversal / prior period revaluation decrements (via P&L)	WIP transfers	Adjustments and transfers	Tfrs from / (to) Inventory	Tfrs from/(to) 'held for sale' category	Tfrs from/(to) investment properties	Revaluation increments (decrements) to equity (ARR)	Gross carrying amount	Accumulated depreciation and impairment	Net carrying amount
Capital work in progress	125,729	–	125,729	118,555	36,082	–	–	–	–	(119,854)	–	–	–	–	–	160,512	–	160,512
Plant and equipment	74,775	(40,238)	34,537	–	–	(730)	(5,580)	–	–	5,692	–	–	–	–	–	77,700	(43,782)	33,918
Office equipment	4,418	(4,305)	113	–	–	(2)	(26)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	264	(180)	84
Furniture and fittings	5,137	(3,203)	1,934	–	–	–	(175)	–	–	78	–	–	–	–	–	5,215	(3,378)	1,837
Computer equipment	9,836	(5,324)	4,512	–	–	(1,357)	(1,244)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4,253	(2,341)	1,912
<b>Land:</b>																		
– Operational land	97,183	–	97,183	–	–	–	–	–	–	476	–	42	–	–	–	97,701	–	97,701
– Community land	140,047	–	140,047	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	51,499	191,546	–	191,546	
– Land under roads (post 30/6/08)	164	–	164	–	7	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	171	–	171	
Land improvements – depreciable	6,260	(3,534)	2,726	–	–	–	(334)	–	–	356	–	–	–	153	6,985	(4,083)	2,902	
<b>Infrastructure:</b>																		
– Buildings	438,604	(176,944)	261,660	–	–	(206)	(11,556)	–	–	10,140	(208)	–	–	14,405	473,559	(199,324)	274,235	
– Other structures	14,587	(3,806)	10,781	–	–	(7)	(626)	–	–	572	(39)	–	–	–	15,102	(4,422)	10,680	
– Roads	1,498,913	(729,493)	769,420	–	–	(14,995)	(28,987)	–	–	63,504	(572)	–	–	328,881	1,802,787	(685,536)	1,117,251	
– Bridges	356,388	(149,186)	207,202	–	–	(700)	(3,374)	(22,108)	–	4,093	147	–	–	(38,073)	201,802	(54,616)	147,186	
– Footpaths	37,378	(20,379)	16,999	–	–	(24)	(773)	–	6,225	1,368	1,860	–	–	8,636	49,092	(14,802)	34,290	
– Bulk earthworks (non-depreciable)	1,071,748	–	1,071,748	–	–	(1,463)	–	–	–	8,867	207	–	–	(279,184)	800,176	–	800,176	
– Stormwater drainage	388,805	(183,906)	204,899	–	–	(1,078)	(4,291)	–	–	8,073	298	–	–	126,894	506,769	(171,975)	334,794	
– Water supply network	929,657	(403,008)	526,649	–	–	(1,542)	(14,112)	–	–	8,080	–	–	–	34,717	805,529	(251,735)	553,794	
– Sewerage network	793,571	(276,668)	516,903	–	–	(2,368)	(10,539)	–	–	5,591	–	–	–	(58,146)	656,143	(204,702)	451,441	
– Swimming pools	11,168	(6,399)	4,769	–	–	–	(244)	–	–	314	–	–	–	270	12,123	(7,015)	5,108	
– Other open space/recreational assets	54,558	(18,866)	35,692	–	–	(155)	(2,140)	–	–	2,204	(1,693)	–	–	1,892	57,025	(21,226)	35,799	
<b>Other assets:</b>																		
– Library books	4,350	(3,386)	964	–	–	–	(362)	–	–	446	–	–	–	–	4,797	(3,747)	1,050	
– Other	1,117	–	1,117	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,117	–	1,117	
– Cemetery assets	1,249	(681)	568	–	–	–	(28)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1,249	(709)	540	
<b>Reinstatement, rehabilitation and restoration assets (refer Note C3-5):</b>																		
– Tip assets	11,023	(10,775)	248	–	–	–	(249)	–	–	–	15,088	–	–	–	26,111	(11,023)	15,088	
– Quarry assets	182	(166)	16	–	–	–	(16)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	182	(182)	–	
<b>Total infrastructure, property, plant and equipment</b>	<b>6,076,847</b>	<b>(2,040,267)</b>	<b>4,036,580</b>	<b>118,555</b>	<b>36,089</b>	<b>(24,627)</b>	<b>(84,656)</b>	<b>(22,108)</b>	<b>6,225</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>15,088</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>191,944</b>	<b>5,957,910</b>	<b>(1,684,778)</b>	<b>4,273,132</b>

(1) Renewals are defined as the replacement of existing assets (as opposed to the acquisition of new assets).

## C1-7 Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (continued)

### Material accounting policy

#### Useful lives of IPPE

Land is not depreciated. Depreciation on other assets is calculated using the straight line method to allocate their cost, net of their residual values, over their estimated useful lives as follows:

<b>Plant and equipment</b>	Years	<b>Other equipment</b>	Years
Office equipment	3 to 10	Playground equipment	5 to 15
Office furniture	4 to 30	Benches, seats etc.	5 to 40
Computer equipment	3 to 10		
Vehicles	3 to 20	<b>Buildings</b>	
Heavy plant/road making equipment	3 to 30	Buildings	5 to 100
Other plant and equipment	4 to 25		
<b>Water and sewer assets</b>		<b>Stormwater assets</b>	
Dams and reservoirs	10 to 200	Drains	20 to 100
Bores	20 to 80	Culverts	50 to 100
Sewer Pipe Network	25 to 131	Long life assets	to 200
Water Pipe Network	15 to 90		
Pumps and telemetry	10 to 70		
<b>Transportation assets</b>		<b>Other infrastructure assets</b>	
Sealed roads: surface	10 to 100	Bulk earthworks	Infinite
Sealed roads: structure	15 to 100	Swimming pools	3 to 50
Unsealed roads	15 to 100	Other open space/recreational assets	3 to 100
Bridges	50 to 100	Other structures	4 to 80
Road pavements	15 to 100		
Kerb, gutter and footpaths	5 to 100		

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each reporting date.

#### Revaluation model

Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment are held at fair value. Comprehensive valuations are performed at least every five years, however the carrying amount of assets is assessed by Council at each reporting date to confirm that it is not materially different from current fair value.

Water and sewerage network assets are indexed at each reporting period in accordance with the Rates Reference Manual issued by Department of Planning and Environment – Water.

Increases in the carrying amounts arising on revaluation are credited to the IPPE Revaluation Surplus. To the extent that the increase reverses a decrease previously recognising profit or loss relating to that asset class, the increase is first recognised as profit or loss. Decreases that reverse previous increases of assets in the same class are first charged against IPPE Revaluation Surplus to the extent of the remaining reserve attributable to the class; all other decreases are charged to the Income Statement.

#### Land under roads

Land under roads is land under roadways and road reserves including land under footpaths, nature strips and median strips.

Council has elected not to recognise land under roads acquired before 1 July 2008. Land under roads acquired after 1 July 2008 is recognised in accordance with the IPPE accounting policy.

#### Crown reserves

Crown reserves under Council's care and control are recognised as assets of Council. While ownership of the reserves remains with the Crown, Council retains operational control of the reserves and is responsible for their maintenance and use in accordance with the specific purposes to which the reserves are dedicated.

Improvements on Crown reserves are also recorded as assets, while maintenance costs incurred by Council and revenues relating to the reserves are recognised within Council's Income Statement.

## C1-8 Investment properties

### Owned investment property

<b>\$ '000</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>At fair value</b>		
Opening balance at 1 July	<b>27,912</b>	27,802
Transfers from/(to) owner-occupied property (Note C1-7)	<b>12,385</b>	–
Net gain/(loss) from fair value adjustments	<b>(7,272)</b>	110
<b>Closing balance at 30 June</b>	<b>33,025</b>	<b>27,912</b>

#### **Material accounting policy information**

Investment property, principally comprising freehold buildings, is held for long-term rental yields and is not occupied by Council.

## C2 Leasing activities

### C2-1 Council as a lessee

Council has leases over a range of assets including land, office equipment, plant and equipment, computer equipment and buildings. Information relating to the leases in place and associated balances and transactions is provided below.

#### Terms and conditions of leases

##### Land

Council leases operational land; the leases are generally between 5 and 20 years and some of them include a renewal option to allow Council to renew for up to half the noncancellable lease term at its discretion. The leases contain an annual pricing mechanism based on either fixed increases or CPI movements at each anniversary of the lease inception.

##### Office Equipment

Council leases office equipment with lease terms generally for 5 years. The lease payments are fixed during the lease term.

##### Plant and equipment

Council leases plant and equipment with lease terms generally for 4 years. The lease payments are fixed during the lease term.

##### Computer Equipment

Council leases computer equipment with lease terms generally for 5 years. The lease payments are fixed during the lease term.

##### Buildings

Council leases buildings with lease terms generally for 5 years. The leases include renewal options to allow Council to renew for up to 2 additional lease terms at its discretion. The leases contain an annual pricing mechanism based on CPI movements at each anniversary of the lease inception.

##### Extension options

Council includes options in the measurement of its land leases to provide flexibility and certainty to Council operations and reduce costs of moving operational fixtures. At commencement date and each subsequent reporting date, Council assesses where it is reasonably certain that the extension options will be exercised.

#### (a) Right of use assets

\$ '000	Land	Office Equipment	Plant and Equipment	Computer Equipment	Buildings	Total
<b>2024</b>						
Opening balance at 1 July	300	383	177	857	808	2,525
Additions to right-of-use assets	-	-	45	-	-	45
Adjustments to right-of-use assets due to re-measurement of lease liability	27	110	(63)	-	29	103
Depreciation charge	(24)	(179)	(62)	(383)	(58)	(706)
<b>Balance at 30 June</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>779</b>	<b>1,967</b>
<b>2023</b>						
Opening balance at 1 July	317	575	61	1,240	808	3,001
Additions to right-of-use assets	-	-	153	-	-	153
Adjustments to right-of-use assets due to re-measurement of lease liability	5	(39)	-	-	54	20
Depreciation charge	(22)	(153)	(37)	(383)	(54)	(649)
<b>Balance at 30 June</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>857</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>2,525</b>

## C2-1 Council as a lessee (continued)

### (b) Lease liabilities

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Lease liabilities	762	1,378	694	2,037
<b>Total lease liabilities</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>1,378</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>2,037</b>

### (c) (i) The maturity analysis

The maturity analysis of lease liabilities based on contractual undiscounted cash flows is shown in the table below:

\$ '000	< 1 year	1 – 5 years	> 5 years	Total	Total per Statement of Financial Position
<b>2024</b>					
Cash flows	820	673	851	2,344	2,140
2023					
Cash flows	765	1,347	922	3,034	2,731

### (d) Income Statement

The amounts recognised in the Income Statement relating to leases where Council is a lessee are shown below:

\$ '000	2024	2023
Interest on lease liabilities	87	95
Variable lease payments based on usage not included in the measurement of lease liabilities	59	54
Depreciation of right of use assets	706	649
Expenses relating to short-term leases	61	20
Expenses relating to leases of low-value assets	263	348
	<b>1,176</b>	<b>1,166</b>

### (e) Statement of Cash Flows

Total cash outflow for leases	1,209	1,194
	<b>1,209</b>	<b>1,194</b>

### Material accounting policy information

Council has elected not to separate non-lease components from lease components for any class of asset and has accounted for payments as a single component.

The right-of-use asset is measured using the cost model where cost on initial recognition comprises: the lease liability, initial direct costs, prepaid lease payments, estimated cost of removal and restoration, less any lease incentives received. The right-of-use is depreciated over the lease term on a straight-line basis and assessed for impairment in accordance with the impairment of asset accounting policy.

#### **Exceptions to lease accounting**

Council has applied the exceptions to lease accounting for both short-term leases (i.e. leases with a term of less than or equal to 12 months) and leases of low-value assets. Council recognises the payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.



## C2-2 Council as a lessor

### Operating leases

Council leases out a number of properties; these leases have been classified as operating leases for financial reporting purposes and the assets are included in the Statement of Financial Position as:

- investment property – where the asset is held predominantly for rental or capital growth purposes (refer note C1-8)
- property, plant and equipment – where the rental is incidental, or the asset is held to meet Council's service delivery objective (refer note C1-7).

\$ '000	2024	2023
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#### (i) Assets held as investment property

Investment property operating leases relate to the Tuncurry Supermarket, Wallis Street Motel, Muldoon Street office building and Pulteney Street building.

The amounts recognised in the Income Statement relating to operating leases where Council is a lessor are shown below

Lease income (excluding variable lease payments not dependent on an index or rate)	1,563	1,344
Lease income relating to variable lease payments not dependent on an index or a rate	104	161
<b>Total income relating to operating leases for investment property assets</b>	<b>1,667</b>	<b>1,505</b>

#### Operating lease expenses

Direct operating expenses that generated rental income	189	191
<b>Total expenses relating to operating leases - investment properties</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>191</b>

#### (ii) Assets held as property, plant and equipment

Lease income (excluding variable lease payments not dependent on an index or rate)	970	1,161
<b>Total income relating to operating leases for Council assets</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>1,161</b>

#### (iii) Maturity analysis of contractual lease income

Maturity analysis of future lease income receivable showing the undiscounted lease payments to be received after reporting date for all operating leases:

< 1 year	1,968	1,905
1–2 years	1,780	1,727
2–3 years	1,628	1,546
3–4 years	1,492	1,221
4–5 years	1,354	1,125
> 5 years	7,466	4,745
<b>Total undiscounted lease payments to be received</b>	<b>15,688</b>	<b>12,269</b>

## C3 Liabilities of Council

### C3-1 Payables

\$ '000	2024		2023	
	Current	Non-current	Current	Non-current
Prepaid rates	5,320	–	4,739	–
Goods and services	13,965	–	18,463	–
Accrued expenses:				
– Borrowings	930	–	925	–
– Salaries and wages	5,185	–	4,431	–
Security bonds, deposits and retentions	10,311	–	10,587	–
Prepaid rental	299	245	127	–
Other	352	–	213	–
<b>Total payables</b>	<b>36,362</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>39,485</b>	<b>–</b>

#### Current payables not anticipated to be settled within the next twelve months

\$ '000	2024	2023
The following liabilities, even though classified as current, are not expected to be settled in the next 12 months.		
Payables – security bonds, deposits and retentions	9,793	9,956
<b>Total payables</b>	<b>9,793</b>	<b>9,956</b>

#### Material accounting policy information

Council measures all financial liabilities initially at fair value less transaction costs, subsequently financial liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

Payables represent liabilities for goods and services provided to Council prior to the end of financial year that are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

## C3-2 Contract Liabilities

\$ '000	Notes	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Funds to construct Council controlled assets	(i)	44,507	–	33,247	–
Funds received prior to performance obligation being satisfied (upfront payments) - AASB 15	(ii)	3,515	–	3,257	–
<b>Total contract liabilities</b>		<b>48,022</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>36,504</b>	<b>–</b>

### Notes

(i) Council has received funding to construct assets including sporting facilities, bridges, library and other infrastructure. The funds received are under an enforceable contract which require Council to construct an identified asset which will be under Council's control on completion. The revenue is recognised as Council constructs the asset and the contract liability reflects the funding received which cannot yet be recognised as revenue. The revenue is expected to be recognised in the next 12 months.

(ii) The contract liability relates to grants received prior to the revenue recognition criteria in AASB 15 being satisfied since the performance obligations are ongoing.

### (i) Revenue recognised (during the financial year) from opening contract liability balances

\$ '000	2024	2023
Funds to construct Council controlled assets	19,454	16,896
Funds received prior to performance obligation being satisfied (upfront payments) - AASB 15	1,583	596
<b>Total revenue recognised that was included in the contract liability balance at the beginning of the period</b>	<b>21,037</b>	<b>17,492</b>

## C3-3 Borrowings

\$ '000	2024		2023	
	Current	Non-current	Current	Non-current
Loans – secured <sup>1</sup>	17,792	141,827	17,331	148,368
<b>Total borrowings</b>	<b>17,792</b>	<b>141,827</b>	<b>17,331</b>	<b>148,368</b>

(1) Loans are secured over the general rating income of Council.

Disclosures on liability interest rate risk exposures, fair value disclosures and security can be found in Note E1-1.

### (a) Changes in liabilities arising from financing activities

\$ '000	2023		Non-cash movements				2024
	Opening Balance	Cash flows	Acquisition	Fair value changes	Acquisition due to change in accounting policy	Other non-cash movement	Closing balance
Loans – secured	165,699	(6,080)	–	–	–	–	159,619
Lease liability (Note C2-1b)	2,731	(824)	45	101	–	87	2,140
<b>Total liabilities from financing activities</b>	<b>168,430</b>	<b>(6,904)</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>161,759</b>

\$ '000	2022		Non-cash movements				2023
	Opening Balance	Cash flows	Acquisition	Fair value changes	Acquisition due to change in accounting policy	Other non-cash movement	Closing balance
Loans – secured	177,832	(12,133)	–	–	–	–	165,699
Lease liability (Note C2-1b)	3,235	(772)	153	20	–	95	2,731
<b>Total liabilities from financing activities</b>	<b>181,067</b>	<b>(12,905)</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>168,430</b>

### (b) Financing arrangements

\$ '000	2024	2023
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#### Total facilities

Total financing facilities available to Council at the reporting date are:

Credit cards/purchase cards

	250	250
<b>Total financing arrangements</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>250</b>

#### Drawn facilities

Financing facilities drawn down at the reporting date are:

– Credit cards/purchase cards

	84	82
<b>Total drawn financing arrangements</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>82</b>

#### Undrawn facilities

Undrawn financing facilities available to Council at the reporting date are:

– Credit cards/purchase cards

	166	168
<b>Total undrawn financing arrangements</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>168</b>

### Additional financing arrangements information

#### Breaches and defaults

During the current and prior year, there were no defaults or breaches on any of the loans.

### C3-4 Employee benefit provisions

\$ '000	2024 Current	2024 Non-current	2023 Current	2023 Non-current
Annual leave	8,838	–	8,575	–
Long service leave	15,903	1,124	15,016	1,799
<b>Total employee benefit provisions</b>	<b>24,741</b>	<b>1,124</b>	<b>23,591</b>	<b>1,799</b>

#### Current employee benefit provisions not anticipated to be settled within the next twelve months

\$ '000	2024	2023
The following provisions, even though classified as current, are not expected to be settled in the next 12 months.		
Provisions – employees benefits	16,888	15,973
	<b>16,888</b>	<b>15,973</b>

#### Material accounting policy information

##### Other long-term employee benefit obligations

The liability for long-service leave and annual leave that is not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service is recognised in the provision for employee benefits and measured as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the end of the reporting period using the projected unit credit method.

Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures, and periods of service.

Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the end of the reporting period on national government bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

## C3-5 Provisions

\$ '000	2024		2023	
	Current	Non-Current	Current	Non-Current
<b>Other provisions</b>				
Restructuring	2,089	–	–	–
<b>Sub-total – other provisions</b>	<b>2,089</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>Asset remediation/restoration:</b>				
Asset remediation/restoration (future works)	9,271	26,861	6,546	28,858
<b>Sub-total – asset remediation/restoration</b>	<b>9,271</b>	<b>26,861</b>	<b>6,546</b>	<b>28,858</b>
<b>Total provisions</b>	<b>11,360</b>	<b>26,861</b>	<b>6,546</b>	<b>28,858</b>

## Description of and movements in provisions

\$ '000	Other provisions		
	Restructuring	Asset remediation	Total
<b>2024</b>			
At beginning of year	–	35,404	35,404
Unwinding of discount	–	1,348	1,348
Additional provisions	2,089	–	2,089
Amounts used (payments)	–	(36)	(36)
Other	–	(584)	(584)
Total other provisions at end of year	<b>2,089</b>	<b>36,132</b>	<b>38,221</b>
<b>2023</b>			
At beginning of year	–	13,874	13,874
Unwinding of discount	–	294	294
Additional provisions	–	21,236	21,236
Total other provisions at end of year	<b>–</b>	<b>35,404</b>	<b>35,404</b>

## Nature and purpose of provisions

### Restructuring

The restructuring provision relates to redundancy costs incurred in relation to Council's divestment out of aged care and disability services. The majority of the affected employees will transition from Council in August and September 2024.

### Asset remediation

The asset remediation provision represents the present value estimate of future costs Council will incur to restore, rehabilitate and reinstate the tips and quarries as a result of past operations.

### Material accounting policy information

Provisions are recognised when Council has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events, it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation, and the amount has been reliably estimated.

Where there are a number of similar obligations, the likelihood that an outflow will be required in settlement is determined by considering the class of obligations as a whole. A provision is recognised even if the likelihood of an outflow with respect to any one item included in the same class of obligations may be small.

Provisions are measured at the present value of management's best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the present obligation at the reporting date. The discount rate used to determine the present value reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the liability. The increase in the provision due to the passage of time is recognised as a borrowing cost.

### Asset remediation - tips and quarries

Close-down and restoration costs include the dismantling and demolition of infrastructure, and the removal of residual materials and remediation of disturbed areas. Estimated close-down and restoration costs are provided for in the accounting period when the obligation arising from the related disturbance occurs, whether this occurs during the development or during the operation phase, based on the net present value of estimated future costs. Provisions for close-down and restoration costs do not include any additional obligations which are expected to arise from future disturbance. The cost estimates are calculated annually

## C3-5 Provisions (continued)

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during the life of the operation to reflect known developments, e.g. updated cost estimates and revisions to the estimated lives of operations, and are subject to formal review at regular intervals.

The ultimate cost of environmental remediation is uncertain and cost estimates can vary in response to many factors, including changes to the relevant legal requirements, the emergence of new restoration techniques, or experience at other locations. The expected timing of expenditure can also change, for example in response to changes in quarry reserves or production rates. As a result, there could be significant adjustments to the provision for close down and restoration and environmental clean-up, which would affect future financial results.

Other movements in the provisions for close-down and restoration costs, including those resulting from new disturbance, updated cost estimates, changes to the estimated lives of operations, and revisions to discount rates, are capitalised within infrastructure, property, plant and equipment. These costs are then depreciated over the lives of the assets to which they relate. Once the related asset has reached the end of its useful life, all subsequent changes in the liability are recognised in profit or loss as they occur.

### **Restructuring**

A restructuring provision is recognised when Council has developed a detailed formal plan for the restructuring and has raised a valid expectation in those affected that it will carry out the restructuring by starting to implement the plan or announcing its main features to those affected by it. The measurement of a restructuring provision includes only the direct expenditures arising from the restructuring, which are those amounts that are both necessarily entailed by the restructuring and not associated with the ongoing activities of the entity.

## C4 Reserves

### C4-1 Nature and purpose of reserves

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#### **IPPE Revaluation Surplus**

The infrastructure, property, plant and equipment (IPPE) revaluation surplus is used to record increments and decrements in the revaluation of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment.



## D Council structure

### D1 Results by fund

General fund refers to all Council activities other than water and sewer. All amounts disclosed in this note are gross i.e. inclusive of internal charges and recoveries made between the funds. Assets and liabilities shown in the water and sewer columns are restricted for use for these activities.

#### D1-1 Income Statement by fund

\$ '000	General 2024	Water 2024	Sewer 2024
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>			
Rates and annual charges	117,867	15,511	41,695
User charges and fees	23,139	32,287	4,262
Interest and investment income	12,005	629	2,568
Other revenues	5,243	26	204
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	48,904	–	–
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	73,075	5,103	7,612
Other income	11,375	–	–
<b>Total income from continuing operations</b>	<b>291,608</b>	<b>53,556</b>	<b>56,341</b>
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>			
Employee benefits and on-costs	75,656	9,179	8,555
Materials and services	58,604	16,236	17,007
Borrowing costs	3,197	4,023	2,659
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	65,526	16,885	11,604
Other expenses	17,858	440	956
Net losses from the disposal of assets	19,204	879	654
<b>Total expenses from continuing operations</b>	<b>240,045</b>	<b>47,642</b>	<b>41,435</b>
<b>Operating result from continuing operations</b>	<b>51,563</b>	<b>5,914</b>	<b>14,906</b>
<b>Net operating result for the year</b>	<b>51,563</b>	<b>5,914</b>	<b>14,906</b>
<b>Net operating result attributable to each council fund</b>	<b>51,563</b>	<b>5,914</b>	<b>14,906</b>
<b>Net operating result for the year before grants and contributions provided for capital purposes</b>	<b>(21,512)</b>	<b>811</b>	<b>7,294</b>

## D1-2 Statement of Financial Position by fund

\$ '000	General 2024	Water 2024	Sewer 2024
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	33,755	15,283	25,296
Investments	105,000	3,000	26,750
Receivables	48,587	8,809	4,535
Inventories	1,534	–	–
Other	3,044	–	–
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	6,261	–	–
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>198,181</b>	<b>27,092</b>	<b>56,581</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Investments	109,402	–	53,500
Receivables	628	–	–
Inventories	661	–	–
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	3,307,441	671,764	521,308
Investment property	30,259	1,383	1,383
Right of use assets	1,664	216	87
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>3,450,055</b>	<b>673,363</b>	<b>576,278</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>3,648,236</b>	<b>700,455</b>	<b>632,859</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Payables	32,998	1,810	1,554
Contract liabilities	48,022	–	–
Lease liabilities	759	(6)	9
Borrowings	7,041	5,362	5,389
Employee benefit provision	18,495	3,123	3,123
Provisions	11,360	–	–
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>118,675</b>	<b>10,289</b>	<b>10,075</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Payables	245	–	–
Lease liabilities	1,047	250	81
Borrowings	48,094	60,297	33,436
Employee benefit provision	960	82	82
Provisions	26,861	–	–
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>77,207</b>	<b>60,629</b>	<b>33,599</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>195,882</b>	<b>70,918</b>	<b>43,674</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>3,452,354</b>	<b>629,537</b>	<b>589,185</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Accumulated surplus	2,227,874	451,152	461,134
Revaluation reserves	1,224,480	178,385	128,051
<b>Council equity interest</b>	<b>3,452,354</b>	<b>629,537</b>	<b>589,185</b>
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>3,452,354</b>	<b>629,537</b>	<b>589,185</b>

## E Risks and accounting uncertainties

### E1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held

Council's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks including **(1)** price risk, **(2)** credit risk, **(3)** liquidity risk and **(4)** interest rate risk.

Council's overall risk management program focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the Council.

Council does not engage in transactions expressed in foreign currencies and is therefore not subject to foreign currency risk. Financial risk management is carried out by Council's finance section under policies approved by the Council. The fair value of Council's financial assets and financial liabilities approximates their carrying amount.

Council's objective is to minimise the risk to capital. Preservation of capital is the principal consideration of the investment policy and portfolio construction. The second consideration is to ensure that there are sufficient liquid funds to meet all reasonably anticipated cash flow requirements. Council then aims to achieve the best possible return given the above considerations. Council's finance team manages the cash and Investments portfolio with the assistance of independent advisors.

Council has an investment policy which complies with the s625 of the Local Government Act and the Ministerial Investment Order. The policy is regularly reviewed by Council and a monthly investment report is provided to Council setting out the make-up and performance of the portfolio as required by local government regulations.

The risks associated with the instruments held are:

- **Market risk - Interest rate risk** – the risk that movements in interest rates could affect returns
- **Liquidity risk** – the risk that Council will not be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due
- **Credit risk** – the risk that a contracting entity will not complete its obligations under a financial instrument resulting in a financial loss to Council.

Council manages these risks (amongst other measures) by diversifying its portfolio and only purchasing investments with high credit ratings or capital guarantees. Council also seeks advice from independent advisers before placing any funds in cash equivalents and investments.

#### (a) Market risk – interest rate risk

\$ '000	2024	2023
---------	------	------

The impact on result for the year and equity of a reasonably possible movement in the interest rates is shown below. The reasonably possible movements were determined based on historical movements and economic conditions in place at the reporting date.

Impact of a 1% movement in interest rates		
– Equity / Income Statement	1,333	1,183

#### (b) Credit risk

Council's major receivables comprise (i) rates and annual charges and (ii) user charges and fees.

Council manages the credit risk associated with these receivables by monitoring outstanding debt and employing stringent debt recovery procedures.

The credit risk for liquid funds and other short-term financial assets is considered negligible, since the counterparties are reputable banks with high quality external credit ratings.

There are no significant concentrations of credit risk, whether through exposure to individual customers, specific industry sectors and/or regions.

Council makes suitable provision for doubtful receivables as required.

There are no material receivables that have been subjected to a re-negotiation of repayment terms.

## E1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held (continued)

### Credit risk profile

#### Receivables – rates and annual charges, interest and extra charges and on site sewer management charges

Credit risk on rates and annual charges, interest and extra charges and on site sewer management charges is minimised by the ability of Council to secure a charge over the land relating to the debts – that is, the land can be sold to recover the debt. Council is also able to charge interest on overdue rates and annual charges at higher than market rates which further encourages the payment of debt.

\$ '000	Not yet overdue rates and annual charges			Total
	Not yet overdue	< 5 years	≥ 5 years	
<b>2024</b>				
Gross carrying amount	–	20,032	2,306	22,338
<b>2023</b>				
Gross carrying amount	–	18,910	2,004	20,914

#### Receivables - non-rates and annual charges, interest and extra charges and on site sewer management charges

Council applies the simplified approach for non-rates and annual charges, interest and extra charges and on site sewer management charges debtors to provide for expected credit losses prescribed by AASB 9, which permits the use of the lifetime expected loss provision. To measure the expected credit losses, non-rates and annual charges debtors have been grouped based on shared credit risk characteristics and the days past due.

The loss allowance provision as at 30 June is determined as follows. The expected credit losses incorporate forward-looking information.

\$ '000	Not yet overdue	Overdue debts				Total
		0 - 30 days	31 - 60 days	61 - 90 days	> 91 days	
<b>2024</b>						
Gross carrying amount	37,798	726	229	502	2,616	41,871
Expected loss rate (%)	0.50%	8.48%	7.18%	10.92%	8.89%	1.32%
<b>ECL provision</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>553</b>
<b>2023</b>						
Gross carrying amount	46,439	566	206	315	1,829	49,355
Expected loss rate (%)	0.42%	8.56%	11.58%	7.10%	9.51%	0.94%
<b>ECL provision</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>462</b>

### (c) Liquidity risk

Payables, lease liabilities and borrowings are both subject to liquidity risk – the risk that insufficient funds may be on hand to meet payment obligations as and when they fall due.

Council manages this risk by monitoring its cash flow requirements and liquidity levels and maintaining an adequate cash buffer. Payment terms can be extended in extenuating circumstances.

Borrowings are also subject to interest rate risk – the risk that movements in interest rates could adversely affect funding costs and debt servicing requirements. Council manages this risk through diversification of borrowing types, maturities and interest rate structures.

The timing of cash flows presented in the table below to settle financial liabilities reflects the earliest contractual settlement dates. The timing of expected outflows is not expected to be materially different from contracted cashflows.

The amounts disclosed in the table are the undiscounted contracted cash flows for non-lease liabilities and therefore the balances in the table may not equal the balances in the Statement of Financial Position due to the effect of discounting.

## E1-1 Risks relating to financial instruments held (continued)

\$ '000	Weighted average interest rate	Subject to no maturity	≤ 1 Year	payable in: 1 - 5 Years	> 5 Years	Total cash outflows	Actual carrying values
<b>2024</b>							
Borrowings	5.48%	–	26,204	80,525	108,474	215,203	159,619
Payables	0.00%	10,311	26,051	245	–	36,607	36,607
<b>Total financial liabilities</b>		<b>10,311</b>	<b>52,255</b>	<b>80,770</b>	<b>108,474</b>	<b>251,810</b>	<b>196,226</b>
<b>2023</b>							
Borrowings	5.26%	–	25,745	82,208	116,576	224,529	165,699
Payables	0.00%	10,587	28,899	–	–	39,486	39,485
<b>Total financial liabilities</b>		<b>10,587</b>	<b>54,644</b>	<b>82,208</b>	<b>116,576</b>	<b>264,015</b>	<b>205,184</b>

**Loan agreement breaches**

There were no occurrences of breaches to loan agreements during the reporting year.

## E2-1 Fair value measurement

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Council measures the following assets at fair value on a recurring basis:

- Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment
- Investment property

During the reporting period, Council also measured the following assets at fair value on a non-recurring basis:

- Non-current assets classified as held for sale

The carrying amount of the non-current assets held for sale were higher than their fair value and therefore the assets were written down to fair value.

### Fair value hierarchy

All assets and liabilities measured at fair value are assigned to a level in the fair value hierarchy as follows:

**Level 1:** Unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that Council can access at the measurement date.

**Level 2:** Inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.

**Level 3:** Unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

The table below shows the assigned level for each asset and liability held at fair value by Council:

## E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

\$ '000	Notes	Fair value measurement hierarchy					
		Level 2 Significant observable inputs		Level 3 Significant unobservable inputs		Total	
		2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
<b>Recurring fair value measurements</b>							
<b>Investment property</b> C1-8							
Tuncurry Supermarket		21,500	21,500	–	–	21,500	21,500
Wallis Street Motel		3,560	3,565	–	–	3,560	3,565
Muldoon Street office building		2,765	2,847	–	–	2,765	2,847
Pulteney Street building		5,200	–	–	–	5,200	–
<b>Total investment property</b>		<b>33,025</b>	<b>27,912</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>33,025</b>	<b>27,912</b>
<b>Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment</b> C1-7							
Work In Progress		–	–	77,312	160,512	77,312	160,512
Plant & Equipment		–	–	34,390	33,918	34,390	33,918
Office Equipment		–	–	69	84	69	84
Furniture & Fittings		–	–	3,318	1,837	3,318	1,837
Computer Equipment		–	–	2,142	1,912	2,142	1,912
Operational Land		–	–	95,600	97,701	95,600	97,701
Community Land		–	–	188,940	191,546	188,940	191,546
Land Under Roads (pre 1/7/2008)		–	–	182	171	182	171
Land Improvements Depreciable		–	–	2,892	2,902	2,892	2,902
Buildings		–	–	281,934	274,235	281,934	274,235
Other Structures		–	–	19,649	10,680	19,649	10,680
Roads		–	–	1,232,201	1,117,251	1,232,201	1,117,251
Bridges		–	–	167,026	147,186	167,026	147,186
Footpaths		–	–	39,710	34,290	39,710	34,290
Bulk Earthworks		–	–	858,355	800,176	858,355	800,176
Stormwater Drainage		–	–	356,694	334,794	356,694	334,794
Swimming Pools		–	–	5,480	5,108	5,480	5,108
Other Open Space Recreational		–	–	39,020	35,799	39,020	35,799
Library books		–	–	1,141	1,050	1,141	1,050
Cemetery Assets		–	–	554	540	554	540
Other		–	–	1,117	1,117	1,117	1,117
Tip Assets		–	–	13,337	15,088	13,337	15,088
Water Network		–	–	602,625	553,794	602,625	553,794
Sewerage Network		–	–	476,825	451,441	476,825	451,441
<b>Total infrastructure, property, plant and equipment</b>		<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>4,500,513</b>	<b>4,273,132</b>	<b>4,500,513</b>	<b>4,273,132</b>
<b>Non-current assets classified as held for sale</b> C1-6							
Land and buildings		6,261	–	–	–	6,261	–
<b>Total NCA's classified as held for sale</b>		<b>6,261</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>6,261</b>	<b>–</b>

## E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

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### Valuation techniques

Where Council is unable to derive fair valuations using quoted market prices of identical assets (ie. level 1 inputs) Council instead utilises a spread of both observable inputs (level 2 inputs) and unobservable inputs (level 3 inputs).

The fair valuation techniques Council has employed while utilising level 2 and level 3 inputs are as follows:

#### Investment property

Council obtains an independent fair valuation of its investment property on an annual basis at the end of each reporting period to ensure the financial statements reflect the most up-to-date valuation.

The valuations used for the period ending 30 June 2024 were as follows:

The valuations were obtained from First State Property Valuers, AAPI, Registered Valuer Number 19471.

Tuncurry Supermarket:

Fair value was determined using the capitalisation of net income approach.

Wallis Street Motel, Forster:

Fair value was determined using the capitalisation of net income approach and direct comparison approach relying upon sales of comparable properties with adjustments for differences.

Muldoon Street office building:

Fair value was determined using the capitalisation of net income approach.

Pulteney Street building:

Fair value was determined using the capitalisation of net income approach.

The valuation techniques utilised Level 2 inputs.

The observable inputs included current rental income, rent reviews, capitalisation rate, price per square metre, direct comparison of the sales evidence, zoning, planning controls, land area, configuration and sale data of comparable properties.

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### Art Works

Artworks were revalued as at 30 June 2021. Council currently owns individual Artworks comprising paintings, drawings, etchings, pottery, engravings, photographs and sculptures. The value of the collection has been determined through engaging external experts, the Art Gallery's trained staff and the original cost.

The valuations were completed using the replacement cost approach and market value. The replacement value was determined by the price the items could be purchased from a reputable dealer, gallery or retail outlet.

This asset class is categorised as Level 3 as some of the inputs mentioned above used to value these assets required significant professional judgement and are unobservable. Valuation techniques remained unchanged during the reporting period.

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### Cemetery Assets

Assets in this class comprise improvements to our cemeteries including columbarium walls, concrete beams and plinths. This asset class is valued at cost less accumulated depreciation and reported at fair value. Other inputs include remaining useful life, condition and residual value which require professional judgement to assess.

Cemetery assets are reviewed on a regular basis for evidence of change in condition/value.

This asset class is categorised as Level 3 as some of the inputs mentioned above used to value these assets required significant professional judgement and are unobservable. Valuation techniques remained unchanged during the reporting period.

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### Plant, Office & Computer Equipment, Furniture & Fittings



## E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

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Plant, Office & Computer Equipment and Furniture & Fittings are valued at cost. Typical examples of assets within these classes are as follows:

Plant & Equipment: Trucks, Motor Vehicles, Street Sweepers, Earthmoving and other heavy equipment.

Office Equipment: Scanners, GPS Mappers and other equipment.

Computer Equipment: Computers, Monitors, Software and other equipment.

Furniture & Fittings: Workstations, Office fit out and other fittings.

The key unobservable inputs to the valuation of these assets are the useful and remaining useful life and any residual value that may be applicable. All assets in these classes are deemed to be Level 3 inputs. The asset class is reviewed and adjusted each year for any impairment.

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### Operational Land

Council obtains an independent fair valuation of its operational land every 5 years. The last full revaluation was on 30 June 2022. Council indexed Operational land at 30 June 2024 by 2.32% based on changes in Council's operational land values provided by the NSW Valuer General.

The last valuation obtained was performed by Scott Fullarton Valuations Pty Ltd, Director Scott Fullarton, FAPI, Registered Valuer No. 2144.

The valuations were determined by establishing the nature of the asset, characteristics important to market participants, the appropriate market & valuation premise.

Given that some of the valuation techniques used are unobservable, the land is classified as Level 3.

Council obtains new independent valuations every five years. Any assets acquired between valuations are recorded at cost and deemed to reflect level 3.

There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

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### Community Land

Community land was revalued at 30 June 2023. Valuations of all Council's Community Land and Council managed land were based on the land values provided by the Valuer-General. These are the same values used for rating purposes. The last valuation obtained by Council is July 2022. Council indexed Community land at 30 June 2024 by -1.73% based on changes in Council's community land values provided by the NSW Valuer General.

As these rates were not considered to be observable market evidence they have been classified as Level 3 inputs.

There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

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### Land Under Roads

Council has elected to recognise land under roads in accordance with AASB 1051. Council has used the "Englobo" valuation method for land under roads.

This requires an average Site Value (SV) across the Council area on a \$ per m2 to be calculated.

The site value is "the value of the underlying land assuming that any existing improvements have not been made.

Adjustment factors for 65% and 25% respectively have been applied for Englobo value. Land under roads acquired is recognised in accordance with AASB 116 - Property, Plant and Equipment.

Land under roads is land under roadways and road reserves including land under footpaths, nature strips and median strips.

Given the unobservable characteristics of valuing land under roads they have been classified as Level 3. There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

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## E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

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### Land Improvements - Depreciable

Land Improvements were comprehensively revalued at 30 June 2022. Council indexed land improvements at 30 June 2023 by 5.58% and at 30 June 2024 by a further 4.62% based on the movement in the building price index from Rawlinson since last revaluation. This asset class comprises land improvements such as foreshore improvements, streetscaping and landscaping. These assets may be located on parks, reserves and also within road reserves.

The last valuation obtained was performed by Scott Fullarton Valuations Pty Ltd, Director Scott Fullarton, FAPI, Registered Valuer No. 2144.

Inputs such as estimates of pattern of consumption, asset condition and useful life required extensive professional judgement and impacted significantly on the final determination of fair value. As such these assets were all classified as having been valued using Level 3 valuation inputs.

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### Buildings Non Specialised & Specialised

Council obtains an independent fair valuation of all buildings, both specialised and non-specialised every 5 years. The last full revaluation was on the 30 June 2022. Council indexed buildings at 30 June 2023 by 5.58% and at 30 June 2024 by a further 4.62% based on the movement in the building price index from Rawlinson since last revaluation.

The last valuation obtained was performed by Scott Fullarton Valuations Pty Ltd, Director Scott Fullarton, FAPI, Registered Valuer No. 2144.

The valuation was determined by establishing the nature of the asset, characteristics important to market participants, the appropriate market & valuation premise. Having maximised the level of valuation input the adopted technique deemed appropriate for Non Specialised and Specialised Buildings was predominately the cost approach and as such these assets were all classified as having been valued using Level 3 valuation inputs.

The key unobservable inputs include the replacement cost, remaining useful life and condition rating.

Council obtains new independent valuations every five years, any assets acquired between valuations are recorded at cost.

There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

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### Other Structures, Other Open Space & Recreation Assets and Swimming Pools

Council revalued Other Structures at 30 June 2021. Council indexed other structures at 30 June 2022 by 5.30% and at 30 June 2024 by a further 10.10% based on the movement in the building price index from Rawlinson since last revaluation. Other open space/recreational assets and Swimming Pools were revalued at 30 June 2022. Council indexed other open space/recreational assets and Swimming Pools at 30 June 2023 by 5.58% and at 30 June 2024 by a further 4.62% based on the movement in the building price index from Rawlinson since last revaluation.

The valuation was determined by establishing the nature of the asset, characteristics important to market participants, the appropriate market & valuation premise. Having maximised the level of valuation input the adopted technique deemed appropriate for these assets was predominately the cost approach and as such these assets were all classified as having been valued using Level 3 valuation inputs.

The key unobservable inputs include the replacement cost, remaining useful life and condition rating.

Council obtains new independent valuations every five years. Any assets acquired between valuations are recorded at cost.

There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

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### Library Books

Library Books are valued at cost but are disclosed at fair value in the notes. The carrying amount of these assets is assumed to approximate fair value due to the nature of the items.

The carrying amount of these assets is deemed to approximate the fair value without any material discrepancy due to the nature of the items.

## E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

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The key unobservable inputs include the replacement cost, remaining useful life and condition rating and as such they have been classified as Level 3 inputs.

There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

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### Landfill Remediation

Council operates landfills for the management of waste throughout the local government area.

Closure of a landfill will involve a wide range of activities including final capping of the landfill, site re-vegetation, installation of a final landfill gas management system, revision of the surface water management system and leachate management infrastructure to suit post-closure operation, decommissioning and removing infrastructure and equipment that will not be required post-closure, and fencing sensitive infrastructure.

An evaluation of the cost associated with the closure of the landfills was performed at 30 June 2024.

The key unobservable inputs are the discount factor, timing and any escalation in costs and future environmental issues and as such the asset has been classified as level 3.

There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

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### Infrastructure Assets

Infrastructure assets represent the bulk of Council's assets and comprise roads, bridges, footpaths, cycle ways, kerb & guttering, roundabouts and stormwater drainage.

Infrastructure Assets were comprehensively revalued at 31 March 2023. Council indexed Infrastructure assets at 30 June 2024 by 5.52% based on the movement in the road and bridge construction NSW producer price index from the Australian Bureau of Statistics since last comprehensive revaluation.

Infrastructure assets generally have long useful lives and as there is no ready market for their sale determining an appropriate fair value requires the use of considerable unobservable inputs.

The following components are included in the valuation process:

- Sealed Roads Surface (flexible seal and asphalt)
- Sealed Roads Pavement
- Unsealed Roads Pavement
- Formation/Earthworks
- Roundabouts
- Kerb & Gutter
- Footpaths and Cycle Ways
- Ancillary Assets (signs, guard fencing, line marking)
- Bridges (timber and concrete)
- Stormwater drainage

Standard replacement costs were developed for each of the asset components using achieved unit rates of like assets recently constructed by Council.

The useful life of assets was determined by using data from sample assets within the component types and the remaining useful life for roads were determined from a condition assessment by Council officers and independent contractors using multi laser profilometry and video and visual surveys.

The key unobservable inputs are the unit rates, residual values, useful life and remaining useful life and as such the asset has been classified as level 3.

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### Work In Progress

Assets within the category of work in progress are incomplete.

The assets are valued at cost but disclosed as fair value in the notes. Upon completion they will be transferred to the asset class that best fits the asset and subject to the valuation process for that asset class.

The key unobservable include type of asset, unit rate and as such they have been classified as level 3.

## E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

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There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

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### **Sewer & Water Network Infrastructure**

This asset class comprises of sewer pressure reticulation mains, rising mains, gravity mains, vent shafts, sewer manholes, and water mains, water meters.

Water, and sewer network infrastructure were comprehensively revalued at 31 March 2023. Water and sewerage network assets have been indexed by 5.07% to 30 June 2024 in accordance with the Rates Reference Manual issued by the Department of Planning and Environment - Water.

The 'cost approach' using level 3 inputs was used to value the sewer and water infrastructure asset class. There has been no change to the valuation process during the reporting period.

Sewer Manholes are an integral part of the sewer services. The lifetime of concrete manholes is considered to be between 35 and 50 years with any defects in the manhole usually identified only a few years prior to replacement.

The pipes may have a lifespan of 30 - 70 years depending on environmental conditions. Pipes retain no residual value as once failure occur the pipes or section of pipe will be replaced. The time to replace is a short span of time as leaks and breaks become more frequent and it usually indicates serious structural problems with the pipe and replacement is inevitable.

The useful life of sewer and water mains varies according to pipe material for example Ductile Iron Cement Lined (DICTL) and Vitrified Clay (VC) may reach 100 years in service. Asbestos Cement (AC) has been revised to 45 years according to WSAA standards. The material being transported has an effect on useful life and sewer rising mains are subject to fluctuations in exposure to corrosive materials and oxygen hence will experience shorter time in service than gravity mains. The ground conditions also have an effect on useful life and acid sulphate soils will corrode the exterior of the pipe. The residual value is set at zero.

### **Non-current assets classified as 'held for sale'**

This asset class includes Land and Buildings previously classified within Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment which, at reporting date, Council are committed to sell. The assets are available for sale in their present condition and the sale is expected to be completed within the next financial year.

The assets within the asset class relate to the land and buildings at 4-8 Breese Parade Forster, and the land at 101 Goldens Road, Forster.

The fair value of 4-8 Breese Parade, Forster was based on the agreed contracted price for sale, following a market based sales transaction, with settlement of the transaction occurring in July 2024.

The fair value of 101 Goldens Road, Forster was based on the agreed transfer price by Council at its 26 June 2024 Ordinary Council meeting.

## E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

### Fair value measurements using significant unobservable inputs (level 3)

#### b. Significant unobservable valuation inputs used (for level 3 asset classes) and their relationship to fair value.

The following table summarises the quantitative information relating to the significant unobservable inputs used in deriving the various level 3 asset class fair values.

	Valuation technique/s	Unobservable inputs
<b>Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment</b>		
Plant and equipment	Cost Approach	Useful life Residual value Asset condition
Office equipment	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition
Furniture and fittings	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition
Computer equipment	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition
Community land	Land value as supplied by NSW Valuer-General	Land value may not reflect market value Varies significantly from asset to asset
Operational land	Market Value /Cost Approach	Methods used by external valuers may include unobservable inputs
Land under roads	Price Per Square Metre	Area of Council rateable land
Land improvements depreciable	Discount factors	Area of Council road pattern
	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition
Buildings specialised and non-specialised	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition
		Methods used by external valuers may include unobservable inputs
Other structures	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition
Other open space and recreational assets	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition
Swimming pools	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition
Other assets	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition
Library books	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition

## E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

	Valuation technique/s	Unobservable inputs
Landfill remediation	Cost Approach	Cost Assessment Discount Rates Environmental Issues Future costs
Roads	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition Unit rate methodology
Earthworks	Cost Approach	Asset condition Unit rate methodology
Bridges	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition Unit rate methodology
Footpaths	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition Unit rate methodology
Stormwater drainage	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition Unit rate methodology
Work in progress	Cost Approach	Incomplete work Useful life Asset condition Unit rate methodology
Other infrastructure	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition Unit rate methodology
Water network assets	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition Unit rate methodology
Sewerage network assets	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition Unit rate methodology
Cemetery assets	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition Unit rate methodology
Quarry assets	Cost Approach	Useful life Asset condition Unit rate methodology

## E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

A reconciliation of the movements in recurring fair value measurements allocated to Level 3 of the hierarchy is provided below:

\$ '000	Work in progress		Plant and equipment		Office equipment		Furniture and fittings		Computer equipment		Operational land		Community land	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
<b>Opening balance</b>	<b>160,512</b>	125,729	<b>33,918</b>	34,537	<b>85</b>	113	<b>1,837</b>	1,934	<b>1,911</b>	4,512	<b>97,701</b>	97,183	<b>191,546</b>	140,047
<b>Total gains or losses for the period</b>														
Recognised in other comprehensive income – revaluation surplus	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	<b>2,163</b>	–	<b>(3,307)</b>	51,499
<b>Other movements</b>														
Transfer from another asset category	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	<b>(4,534)</b>	42	–	–
Transfers from/(to) another asset class	<b>(239,576)</b>	(119,854)	<b>6,975</b>	5,691	–	–	<b>1,691</b>	78	<b>1,511</b>	–	<b>270</b>	476	<b>700</b>	–
Purchases (GBV)	<b>156,377</b>	154,637	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Disposals (WDV)	–	–	<b>(1,096)</b>	(730)	–	(2)	–	–	–	(1,357)	–	–	–	–
Depreciation and impairment	–	–	<b>(5,408)</b>	(5,580)	<b>(16)</b>	(26)	<b>(211)</b>	(174)	<b>(1,281)</b>	(1,244)	–	–	–	–
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>77,313</b>	160,512	<b>34,389</b>	33,918	<b>69</b>	85	<b>3,317</b>	1,838	<b>2,141</b>	1,911	<b>95,600</b>	97,701	<b>188,939</b>	191,546

\$ '000	Water network		Sewerage network		Buildings		Roads		Bridges		Footpaths stormwater earthworks		Other structures	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
<b>Opening balance</b>	<b>553,792</b>	526,649	<b>451,442</b>	516,904	<b>274,235</b>	261,660	<b>1,117,251</b>	769,420	<b>147,187</b>	207,202	<b>1,169,261</b>	1,293,646	<b>10,681</b>	10,781
<b>Total gains or losses for the period</b>														
Recognised in other comprehensive income – revaluation surplus	<b>29,074</b>	34,717	<b>23,009</b>	(58,146)	<b>12,450</b>	14,405	<b>64,459</b>	328,881	–	(38,073)	<b>65,640</b>	(143,654)	<b>1,802</b>	–
<b>Other movements</b>														
Transfer from another asset category	–	–	–	–	<b>(18,133)</b>	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Transfers from/(to) another asset class	<b>36,122</b>	8,080	<b>13,879</b>	5,591	<b>26,685</b>	9,931	<b>94,122</b>	62,932	<b>14,551</b>	4,240	<b>29,370</b>	20,673	<b>8,072</b>	533
Disposals (WDV)	<b>(879)</b>	(1,542)	<b>(654)</b>	(2,368)	<b>(1,134)</b>	(206)	<b>(13,389)</b>	(14,995)	<b>(1,215)</b>	(700)	<b>(3,665)</b>	(2,565)	<b>(19)</b>	(7)
Depreciation and impairment	<b>(15,484)</b>	(14,112)	<b>(10,849)</b>	(10,539)	<b>(12,168)</b>	(11,555)	<b>(30,242)</b>	(28,987)	<b>6,503</b>	(25,482)	<b>(5,846)</b>	1,161	<b>(888)</b>	(626)
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>602,625</b>	553,792	<b>476,827</b>	451,442	<b>281,935</b>	274,235	<b>1,232,201</b>	1,117,251	<b>167,026</b>	147,187	<b>1,254,760</b>	1,169,261	<b>19,648</b>	10,681

\$ '000	Open space swimming pools		Other asset classes		Total	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
<b>Opening balance</b>						
		<b>40,908</b>		40,461	<b>20,864</b>	5,802
					<b>4,273,131</b>	4,036,580

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## E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

\$ '000	Open space swimming pools		Other asset classes		Total	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
Recognised in other comprehensive income – revaluation surplus	<b>1,965</b>	2,162	<b>128</b>	153	<b>197,383</b>	191,944
Transfer from another asset category	–	–	–	–	<b>(22,667)</b>	42
Transfers from/(to) another asset class	<b>4,908</b>	825	<b>122</b>	15,891	<b>(598)</b>	15,087
Purchases (GBV)	–	–	<b>12</b>	7	<b>156,389</b>	154,644
Disposals (WDV)	<b>(525)</b>	(155)	–	–	<b>(22,576)</b>	(24,627)
Depreciation and impairment	<b>(2,755)</b>	(2,385)	<b>(1,904)</b>	(989)	<b>(80,549)</b>	(100,538)
<b>Closing balance</b>	<b>44,501</b>	40,908	<b>19,222</b>	20,864	<b>4,500,513</b>	<b>4,273,132</b>



## E2-1 Fair value measurement (continued)

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### Highest and best use

All of Council's non-financial assets are considered as being utilised for their highest and best use.

## E3-1 Contingencies

The following assets and liabilities do not qualify for recognition in the Statement of Financial Position, but their knowledge and disclosure is considered relevant to the users of Council's financial report.

### LIABILITIES NOT RECOGNISED

#### 1. Guarantees

##### (i) Defined benefit superannuation contribution plans

Council is party to an Industry Defined Benefit Plan under the Local Government Superannuation Scheme, named The Local Government Superannuation Scheme – Pool B (the Fund) which is a defined benefit plan that has been deemed to be a 'multi-employer fund' for purposes of AASB119 Employee Benefits for the following reasons:

- Assets are not segregated within the sub-group according to the employees of each sponsoring employer.
- The contribution rates have been the same for all sponsoring employers. That is, contribution rates have not varied for each sponsoring employer according to the experience relating to the employees of that sponsoring employer.
- Benefits for employees of all sponsoring employers are determined according to the same formulae and without regard to the sponsoring employer.
- The same actuarial assumptions are currently used in respect of the employees of each sponsoring employer.

Given the factors above, each sponsoring employer is exposed to the actuarial risks associated with current and former employees of other sponsoring employers, and hence shares in the associated gains and losses (to the extent that they are not borne by members).

##### *Description of the funding arrangements.*

Pooled employers are required to pay future service employer contributions and past service employer contributions to the Fund.

The future service employer contributions were determined using the new entrant rate method under which a contribution rate sufficient to fund the total benefits over the working life-time of a typical new entrant is calculated. The current future service employer contribution rates are:

Division B	1.9 times employee contributions for non-180 Point Members; Nil for 180 Point Members*
Division C	2.5% salaries
Division D	1.64 times member contributions

For 180 Point Members, employers are required to contribute 8.5% of salaries for the year ending 30 June 2024 (increasing to 9.0% in line with the increase in the Superannuation Guarantee) to these members' accumulation accounts, which are paid in addition to members' defined benefits.

The past service contribution for each Pooled Employer is a share of the total past service contributions of \$20.0 million per annum for 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2024, apportioned according to each employer's share of the accrued liabilities as at 30 June 2023. These past service contributions are used to maintain the adequacy of the funding position for the accrued liabilities.

The adequacy of contributions is assessed at each triennial actuarial investigation and monitored annually between triennials.

##### *Description of the extent to which Council can be liable to the plan for other Council's obligations under the terms and conditions of the multi-employer plan.*

As stated above, each sponsoring employer (Council) is exposed to the actuarial risks associated with current and former employees of other sponsoring employers and hence shares in the associated gains and losses.

However, there is no relief under the Fund's trust deed for employers to walk away from their defined benefit obligations. Under limited circumstances, an employer may withdraw from the plan when there are no active members, on full payment of outstanding past service contributions. There is no provision for allocation of any surplus which may be present at the date of withdrawal of the Council.

There are no specific provisions under the Fund's trust deed dealing with deficits or surplus on wind-up.

## E3-1 Contingencies (continued)

The amount of Council employer contributions to the defined benefit section of the Local Government Superannuation Fund and recognised as an expense for the year ending 30 June 2024 was \$482,646.78. The last formal valuation of the Fund was performed by the Fund Actuary, Mr Richard Boyfield, as at 30 June 2023.

Council's expected contribution to the plan for the next annual reporting period is \$317,030.25.

The estimated employer reserves financial position for the Pooled Employers at 30 June 2024 is:

Defined Benefit reserves only *	\$millions	Asset Coverage
Assets	2,237.5	-
Past Service Liabilities	2,141.9	104.5%
Vested Benefits	2,159.8	103.6%

\* excluding other accumulation accounts and reserves in both assets and liabilities.

The share of this deficit that is broadly attributed to Council is estimated to be in the order of \$182,243.97 as at 30 June 2024.

Council's share of that deficiency cannot be accurately calculated as the Fund is a mutual arrangement where assets and liabilities are pooled together for all member councils. For this reason, no liability for the deficiency has been recognised in Council's accounts. Council has a possible obligation that may arise should the Scheme require immediate payment to correct the deficiency.

The key economic long term assumptions used to calculate the present value of accrued benefits are:

Investment return	6.0% per annum
Salary inflation	3.5% per annum
Increase in CPI	3.5% FY23/24 2.5% per annum thereafter

The contribution requirements may vary from the current rates if the overall sub-group experience is not in line with the actuarial assumptions in determining the funding program; however, any adjustment to the funding program would be the same for all sponsoring employers in the Pooled Employers group.

### (ii) Statewide Limited

Council is a member of Statewide Mutual, a mutual pool scheme providing liability insurance to local government.

Membership includes the potential to share in either the net assets or liabilities of the fund depending on its past performance. Council's share of the net assets or liabilities reflects Council's contributions to the pool and the result of insurance claims within each of the fund years.

The future realisation and finalisation of claims incurred but not reported to 30 June this year may result in future liabilities or benefits as a result of past events that Council will be required to fund or share in respectively.

### (iii) StateCover Limited

Council is a member of StateCover Mutual Limited and holds a partly paid share in the entity.

StateCover is a company providing workers compensation insurance cover to the NSW local government industry and specifically Council.

Council has a contingent liability to contribute further equity in the event of the erosion of the company's capital base as a result of the company's past performance and/or claims experience or as a result of any increased prudential requirements from APRA.

These future equity contributions would be required to maintain the company's minimum level of net assets in accordance with its licence requirements.

### (iv) Other guarantees

Council has provided no other guarantees other than those listed above.

## E3-1 Contingencies (continued)

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### 2. Other liabilities

#### (i) Third party claims

The Council is involved from time to time in various claims incidental to the ordinary course of business including claims for damages relating to its services.

Council believes that it is appropriately covered for all claims through its insurance coverage and does not expect any material liabilities to eventuate.

#### (ii) Potential land acquisitions due to planning restrictions imposed by Council

Council has classified a number of privately owned land parcels as local open space or bushland.

As a result, where notified in writing by the various owners, Council will be required to purchase these land parcels.

At reporting date, reliable estimates as to the value of any potential liability (and subsequent land asset) from such potential acquisitions has not been possible.

### ASSETS NOT RECOGNISED

#### (i) Land under roads

As permitted under AASB 1051, Council has elected not to bring to account land under roads that it owned or controlled up to and including 30/6/08.

#### (ii) Infringement notices/fines

Fines and penalty income, the result of Council issuing infringement notices is followed up and collected by the Infringement Processing Bureau.

Council's revenue recognition policy for such income is to account for it as revenue on receipt.

Accordingly, at year end, there is a potential asset due to Council representing issued but unpaid infringement notices.

Due to the limited information available on the status, value and duration of outstanding notices, Council is unable to determine the value of outstanding income.

## F People and relationships

### F1 Related party disclosures

#### F1-1 Key management personnel (KMP)

Key management personnel (KMP) of the council are those persons having the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the council, directly or indirectly. Council's 11 Councillors and 4 senior staff, comprising the general manager and 3 directors, have been identified as representing Council's KMP.

The aggregate amount of KMP compensation included in the Income Statement is:

\$ '000	2024	2023
<b>Compensation:</b>		
Short-term benefits	1,636	1,570
Post-employment benefits	182	165
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,818</b>	<b>1,735</b>

#### Other transactions with KMP and their related parties

Council has determined that transactions at arm's length between KMP and Council as part of KMP using Council services (e.g. access to Council swimming pool) will not be disclosed.

Nature of the transaction	Ref	Transactions during the year	Outstanding balances
\$ '000			
<b>2024</b>			
<b>Employee expenses relating to close family members</b>	1	<b>161</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>2023</b>			
Employee expenses relating to close family members	1	170	–
Property rental from grazing lease	2	1	–
Provision of Services - Planning and Building regulation	3	12	–

1 There are two (2023: three) close family members of Council's KMP employed by MidCoast Council under current Council award on an arms length basis.

2 1 KMP previously had a grazing lease over Council property which is used for agistment of cattle with rental paid on a quarterly basis. This lease expired on 31 December 2022.

3 In 2023 Council purchased planning and building regulation services during the year from a company controlled by a member of the KMP and their close family members of Council. Amounts were billed based on normal rates for such supplies and were due and payable under normal payment terms following Council's procurement processes. No such service were purchased in 2024.

#### F1-2 Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses

\$ '000	2024	2023
Mayoral fee	64	63
Councillors' fees	287	278
Other Councillors' expenses (including Mayor)	105	96
<b>Total</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>437</b>

The aggregate amount of Councillor and Mayoral fees and associated expenses included in materials and services expenses in the Income Statement are:

## F2 Other relationships

### F2-1 Audit fees

\$ '000	2024	2023
Audit and other assurance services: Auditors of the Council - NSW Auditor General:		
Audit of financial statements	215	227
<b>Total fees paid or payable to the Auditor-General</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>227</b>

## G Other matters

### G1-1 Statement of Cash Flows information

#### (a) Reconciliation of Operating Result

\$ '000	2024	2023
<b>Net operating result from Income Statement</b>	<b>72,383</b>	36,036
<b>Add / (less) non-cash items:</b>		
Depreciation and amortisation	89,993	85,305
(Gain) / loss on disposal of assets	20,737	22,373
Non-cash capital grants and contributions	(24,188)	(9,219)
Reversal of prior year IPP&E revaluation decrements / impairment previously costed direct to the P&L	(8,738)	(6,225)
Losses/(gains) recognised on fair value re-measurements through the P&L:		
– Investments classified as ‘at fair value’ or ‘held for trading’	25	–
– Investment property	7,272	(110)
– Revaluation decrements / impairments of IPP&E direct to P&L	4,022	22,108
Unwinding of discount rates on reinstatement provisions	1,348	294
Interest on leases	87	95
<b>Movements in operating assets and liabilities and other cash items:</b>		
(Increase) / decrease of receivables	6,058	(13,818)
Increase / (decrease) in provision for impairment of receivables	311	90
(Increase) / decrease of inventories	4	38
(Increase) / decrease of other current assets	(2,063)	2,579
Increase / (decrease) in payables	(4,498)	6,807
Increase / (decrease) in accrued interest payable	5	(139)
Increase / (decrease) in other accrued expenses payable	754	529
Increase / (decrease) in other liabilities	861	274
Increase / (decrease) in contract liabilities	11,518	11,559
Increase / (decrease) in employee benefit provision	475	366
Increase / (decrease) in other provisions	1,469	21,236
<b>Net cash flows from operating activities</b>	<b>177,835</b>	<b>180,178</b>

#### (b) Non-cash investing and financing activities

Bushfire services	912	947
Subdivider contributions ‘in kind’	21,917	8,127
Other dedications	808	–
<b>Total non-cash investing and financing activities</b>	<b>23,637</b>	<b>9,074</b>

## G2-1 Commitments

### Capital commitments (exclusive of GST)

\$ '000	2024	2023
Capital expenditure committed for at the reporting date but not recognised in the financial statements as liabilities:		
<b>Property, plant and equipment</b>		
Sewerage and water infrastructure	4,223	6,509
Road infrastructure	41,884	24,612
Buildings	3,951	2,881
Other	15,977	9,515
<b>Total commitments</b>	<b>66,035</b>	<b>43,517</b>
<b>These expenditures are payable as follows:</b>		
Within the next year	66,035	43,517
<b>Total payable</b>	<b>66,035</b>	<b>43,517</b>
<b>Sources for funding of capital commitments:</b>		
Unexpended Loans	–	1,855
Future grants and contributions	10,245	723
Externally restricted reserves	47,813	38,325
Internal allocations	7,977	2,614
<b>Total sources of funding</b>	<b>66,035</b>	<b>43,517</b>



### G3-1 Events occurring after the reporting date

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Council is unaware of any material or significant 'non-adjusting events' that should be disclosed.

## G4 Statement of developer contributions

### G4-1 Summary of developer contributions

\$ '000	Opening balance at 1 July 2023	Contributions received during the year			Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2024	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
		Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other					
Drainage	511	–	–	–	22	–	–	533	–
Roads	8,166	1,265	–	–	393	(250)	–	9,574	–
Parking	1,571	–	–	–	37	(706)	706	1,608	–
Open space	6,310	808	–	–	267	(823)	127	6,689	–
Community facilities	1,330	267	–	–	61	(173)	(127)	1,358	–
Other	5,100	2,205	–	–	264	(1,139)	–	6,430	–
Surf Life Saving	277	53	–	–	10	(94)	(706)	(460)	–
Bushfire Facilities	759	117	–	–	37	(27)	–	886	–
Administration Building	116	243	–	–	5	(230)	–	134	–
Multi Purpose Community Centre	356	9	–	–	15	–	–	380	–
Library Book Stock	480	44	–	–	18	(100)	–	442	–
Aquatic Centre	632	151	–	–	33	(7)	–	809	–
Rec & Community Facilities	139	–	–	–	5	–	–	144	–
Central Library Building	1,491	260	–	–	–	(1,751)	–	–	–
Other - Finance	218	40	–	–	9	–	–	267	–
Plan Administration	903	111	–	–	43	(11)	–	1,046	–
<b>S7.11 contributions – under a plan</b>	<b>28,359</b>	<b>5,573</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>1,219</b>	<b>(5,311)</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>29,840</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>S7.12 levies – under a plan</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>862</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>Total S7.11 and S7.12 revenue under plans</b>	<b>29,064</b>	<b>5,696</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>1,253</b>	<b>(5,311)</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>30,702</b>	<b>–</b>
S7.11 not under plans	166	–	–	–	7	–	–	173	–
S7.4 planning agreements	457	260	–	–	31	–	–	748	–
S64 contributions	25,312	5,069	–	–	859	(10,224)	–	21,016	–
<b>Total contributions</b>	<b>54,999</b>	<b>11,025</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>2,150</b>	<b>(15,535)</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>52,639</b>	<b>–</b>

Under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, Council has significant obligations to provide Section 7.11 (contributions towards provision or improvement of amenities or services) infrastructure in new release areas. It is possible that the funds contributed may be less than the cost of this infrastructure, requiring Council to borrow or use general revenue to fund the difference.

### G4-2 Developer contributions by plan

\$ '000	Opening balance at 1 July 2023	Contributions received during the year			Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2024	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
		Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other					

**CONTRIBUTION PLAN (former Gloucester Shire Council)**

continued on next page ...

## G4-2 Developer contributions by plan (continued)

\$ '000	Opening balance at 1 July 2023	Contributions received during the year				Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2024	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
		Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other						
Roads	515	-	-	-	22	-	-	537	-	
Parking	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	
Rec & Community Facilities	139	-	-	-	5	-	-	144	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN - FORSTER DISTRICT (former Great Lakes Council)</b>										
Drainage	498	-	-	-	21	-	-	519	-	
Roads	1,173	928	-	-	89	-	-	2,190	-	
Parking	1,503	-	-	-	34	(706)	706	1,537	-	
Open space	2,996	694	-	-	153	(105)	-	3,738	-	
Community facilities	1,162	261	-	-	61	-	-	1,484	-	
Surf Life Saving	51	43	-	-	-	(94)	(706)	(706)	-	
Central Library	1,491	240	-	-	-	(1,731)	-	-	-	
Aquatic Centre	632	144	-	-	33	-	-	809	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,506</b>	<b>2,310</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>(2,636)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9,571</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>CONTRIBUTION - GREAT LAKES WIDE (former Great Lakes Council)</b>										
Library Book stocks	278	38	-	-	11	(50)	-	277	-	
Bushfire facilities	759	90	-	-	37	-	-	886	-	
Administration building	116	243	-	-	5	(230)	-	134	-	
Plan Administration	534	110	-	-	27	(11)	-	660	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,687</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>(291)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,957</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN - TEA GARDENS / HAWKS NEST (former Great Lakes Council)</b>										
Roads	187	17	-	-	9	-	-	213	-	
Parking	61	-	-	-	3	-	-	64	-	
Open space	459	15	-	-	15	(127)	127	489	-	
Community facilities	168	6	-	-	-	(173)	(127)	(126)	-	
Surf Life Saving	47	1	-	-	2	-	-	50	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>(300)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>690</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN - ROAD HAULAGE (former Great Lakes Council)</b>										
Roads	803	145	-	-	30	(250)	-	728	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>(250)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN - RURAL ROADS BULADHDELAH, STROUD &amp; RURAL OPEN SPACE (former Great Lakes Council)</b>										
Roads	693	26	-	-	31	-	-	750	-	
Open space	200	14	-	-	9	-	-	223	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>973</b>	<b>-</b>	

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## G4-2 Developer contributions by plan (continued)

\$ '000	Opening balance at 1 July 2023	Contributions received during the year				Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2024	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
		Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other						
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN - THE BRANCH LANE (former Great Lakes Council)</b>										
Roads	123	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	128	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN - COOMBA RD &amp; SHALLOW BAY RD (former Great Lakes Council)</b>										
Roads	198	2	-	-	9	-	-	-	209	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN - 2001 PLAN GREATER TAREE (former Greater Taree City Council)</b>										
Open Space	221	18	-	-	10	-	-	-	249	-
Surf Life Saving	179	9	-	-	8	-	-	-	196	-
Library Book Stock	202	6	-	-	7	(50)	-	-	165	-
Central Library Building	-	20	-	-	-	(20)	-	-	-	-
Aquatic Centre	-	7	-	-	-	(7)	-	-	-	-
Bushfire Facilities	-	18	-	-	-	(18)	-	-	-	-
Other - Finance	74	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	77	-
Plan Administration	369	1	-	-	16	-	-	-	386	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,045</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>(95)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,073</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN 2001 PLAN TAREE (former Greater Taree City Council)</b>										
Roads	574	-	-	-	25	-	-	-	599	-
Open space	274	-	-	-	9	(55)	-	-	228	-
Other - Finance	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>(55)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN - 2001 PLAN WINGHAM (former Greater Taree City Council)</b>										
Roads	453	-	-	-	19	-	-	-	472	-
Open Space	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
Bushfire Facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN - 2001 HALLIDAYS POINT (former Greater Taree City Council)</b>										
Roads	989	147	-	-	49	-	-	-	1,185	-
Open Space	947	63	-	-	20	(536)	-	-	494	-
Bushfire facilities	-	9	-	-	-	(9)	-	-	-	-
MP Community Centre	153	9	-	-	7	-	-	-	169	-
Other - Finance	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,090</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>(545)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,849</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN - 2010 PLAN OLD BAR (former Greater Taree City Council)</b>										
Drainage	13	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	14	-
Roads	1,459	-	-	-	62	-	-	-	1,521	-
Open Space	1,010	-	-	-	43	-	-	-	1,053	-

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## G4-2 Developer contributions by plan (continued)

\$ '000	Opening balance at 1 July 2023	Contributions received during the year				Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2024	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
		Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other						
Bushfire Facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
MP Community Centre	167	-	-	-	7	-	-	174	-	
Other - Finance	54	-	-	-	2	-	-	56	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,703</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,818</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN - 2001 PLAN HARRINGTON (former Greater Taree City Council)</b>										
Roads	999	-	-	-	43	-	-	1,042	-	
Open space	203	-	-	-	8	-	-	211	-	
Bushfire Facilities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
MP Community Centre	36	-	-	-	1	-	-	37	-	
Other - Finance	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,239</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,291</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN NUMBER 2016</b>										
Other	5,100	2,205	-	-	264	(1,139)	-	6,430	-	
Other - Finance	82	40	-	-	4	-	-	126	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,182</b>	<b>2,245</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>(1,139)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,556</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>S7.12 Levies – under a plan</b>										
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN OLD BAR (former Greater Taree City Council)</b>										
General Purpose	81	-	-	-	3	-	-	84	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN MCC 2016 (covers former Greater Taree City Council area)</b>										
General Purpose	565	112	-	-	28	-	-	705	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>CONTRIBUTION PLAN GLOUCESTER 2015 (former Gloucester Shire Council)</b>										
General Purpose	59	11	-	-	3	-	-	73	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>-</b>	

## G4-3 Contributions not under plans

\$ '000	Opening balance at 1 July 2023	Contributions received during the year				Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2024	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
		Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other						
<b>(former Great Lakes Council)</b>										
Roads	166	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	173	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>-</b>

## G4-4 S7.4 planning agreements

### 363 Diamond Beach Road, Diamond Beach (Seashells)

Other	60	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	63	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>-</b>

### 391 Diamond Beach Road, Diamond Beach

Other	91	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	95	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>-</b>

### Murray Road, Wingham

Other	123	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	128	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>-</b>

### Sanderling Avenue, Hawks Nest

Other	132	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	138	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>-</b>

### 72 Clarkson Street, Nabiac

Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

### Bulahdelah Highway Service Centre

Other	51	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	53	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>-</b>

### 210 Diamond Beach Road, Diamond Beach

Other	-	260	-	-	11	-	-	-	271	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>-</b>

## G4-5 S64 contributions

### Former MidCoast Water Contributions

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## G4-5 S64 contributions (continued)

\$ '000	Opening balance at 1 July 2023	Contributions received during the year				Interest and investment income earned	Amounts expended	Internal borrowings	Held as restricted asset at 30 June 2024	Cumulative balance of internal borrowings (to)/from
		Cash	Non-cash Land	Non-cash Other						
Water Contributions	5,986	2,532	–	–	–	(8,518)	–	–	–	
Sewer Contributions	19,326	2,536	–	–	859	(1,706)	–	21,015	–	
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,312</b>	<b>5,068</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>(10,224)</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>21,015</b>	<b>–</b>	

## G5 Statement of performance measures

### G5-1 Statement of performance measures – consolidated results

\$ '000	Amounts 2024	Indicator 2024	Indicator 2023	Benchmark
<b>1. Operating performance ratio</b>				
Total continuing operating revenue excluding capital grants and contributions less operating expenses <sup>1,2</sup>	<b>10,222</b>	<b>3.33%</b>	(2.47)%	> 0.00%
Total continuing operating revenue excluding capital grants and contributions <sup>1</sup>	<b>306,977</b>			
<b>2. Own source operating revenue ratio</b>				
Total continuing operating revenue excluding all grants and contributions <sup>1</sup>	<b>258,073</b>	<b>65.71%</b>	65.55%	> 60.00%
Total continuing operating revenue <sup>1</sup>	<b>392,767</b>			
<b>3. Unrestricted current ratio</b>				
Current assets less all external restrictions	<b>168,483</b>	<b>4.49x</b>	2.58x	> 1.50x
Current liabilities less specific purpose liabilities	<b>37,527</b>			
<b>4. Debt service cover ratio</b>				
Operating result before capital excluding interest and depreciation/impairment/amortisation <sup>1</sup>	<b>110,094</b>	<b>4.16x</b>	2.99x	> 2.00x
Principal repayments (Statement of Cash Flows) plus borrowing costs (Income Statement)	<b>26,437</b>			
<b>5. Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage</b>				
Rates and annual charges outstanding	<b>21,085</b>	<b>10.72%</b>	10.70%	< 10.00%
Rates and annual charges collectable	<b>196,598</b>			
<b>6. Cash expense cover ratio</b>				
Current year's cash and cash equivalents plus all term deposits	<b>312,834</b>	<b>15.04 months</b>	14.10 months	> 3.00 months
Monthly payments from cash flow of operating and financing activities	<b>20,804</b>			

(1) Excludes fair value increments on investment properties, reversal of revaluation decrements, reversal of impairment losses on receivables, net gain on sale of assets and net share of interests in joint ventures and associates using the equity method and includes pensioner rate subsidies

(2) Excludes impairment/revaluation decrements of IPPE, fair value decrements on investment properties, net loss on disposal of assets and net loss on share of interests in joint ventures and associates using the equity method



## G5-2 Statement of performance measures by fund

\$ '000	General Indicators <sup>3</sup>		Water Indicators		Sewer Indicators		Benchmark
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	
<b>1. Operating performance ratio</b>							
Total continuing operating revenue excluding capital grants and contributions less operating expenses <sup>1,2</sup>	<b>0.22%</b>	(7.48)%	<b>3.66%</b>	(0.05)%	<b>16.39%</b>	16.74%	> 0.00%
Total continuing operating revenue excluding capital grants and contributions <sup>1</sup>							
<b>2. Own source operating revenue ratio</b>							
Total continuing operating revenue excluding capital grants and contributions <sup>1</sup>	<b>56.88%</b>	56.48%	<b>90.47%</b>	89.02%	<b>86.49%</b>	90.64%	> 60.00%
Total continuing operating revenue <sup>1</sup>							
<b>3. Unrestricted current ratio</b>							
Current assets less all external restrictions	<b>4.49x</b>	2.58x	<b>2.63x</b>	3.95x	<b>5.62x</b>	5.00x	> 1.50x
Current liabilities less specific purpose liabilities							
<b>4. Debt service cover ratio</b>							
Operating result before capital excluding interest and depreciation/impairment/amortisation <sup>1</sup>	<b>7.27x</b>	4.25x	<b>2.41x</b>	2.08x	<b>2.74x</b>	2.44x	> 2.00x
Principal repayments (Statement of Cash Flows) plus borrowing costs (Income Statement)							
<b>5. Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage</b>							
Rates and annual charges outstanding	<b>12.08%</b>	10.80%	<b>8.92%</b>	11.46%	<b>7.55%</b>	10.15%	< 10.00%
Rates and annual charges collectable							
<b>6. Cash expense cover ratio</b>							
Current year's cash and cash equivalents plus all term deposits	<b>12.45 months</b>	10.16 months	<b>7.14 months</b>	14.41 months	<b>39.63 months</b>	37.98 months	> 3.00 months
Monthly payments from cash flow of operating and financing activities							

(1) - (2) Refer to Notes at Note G5-1 above.

(3) General fund refers to all of Council's activities except for its water and sewer activities which are listed separately.



## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

### Report on the general purpose financial statements

#### MidCoast Council

To the Councillors of MidCoast Council

### Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of MidCoast Council (the Council), which comprise the Statement by Councillors and Management, the Income Statement and Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2024, the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2024, the Statement of Changes in Equity and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information and other explanatory information.

In my opinion:

- the Council's accounting records have been kept in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Chapter 13, Part 3, Division 2 (the Division)
- the financial statements:
  - have been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the requirements of this Division
  - are consistent with the Council's accounting records
  - present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Council as at 30 June 2024, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards
- all information relevant to the conduct of the audit has been obtained
- no material deficiencies in the accounting records or financial statements have come to light during the audit.

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

### Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under the standards are described in the 'Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements' section of my report.

I am independent of the Council in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Australian Auditing Standards
- Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 'Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)' (APES 110).

Parliament promotes independence by ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their roles by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of councils
- precluding the Auditor-General from providing non-audit services.

I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with APES 110.

I believe the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

## **Other Information**

The Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2024 includes other information in addition to the financial statements and my Independent Auditor's Report thereon. The Councillors are responsible for the other information. At the date of this Independent Auditor's Report, the other information I have received comprise the special purpose financial statements and Special Schedules (the Schedules).

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information. Accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion on the other information. However, as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*, I have separately expressed an opinion on the special purpose financial statements and Special Schedule - Permissible income for general rates.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude there is a material misstatement of the other information, I must report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

## **The Councillors' Responsibilities for the Financial Statements**

The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Local Government Act 1993* and for such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting.

## **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements**

My objectives are to:

- obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- issue an Independent Auditor's Report including my opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but does not guarantee an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect material misstatements. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions users take based on the financial statements.

A description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: [www.auasb.gov.au/auditors\\_responsibilities/ar4.pdf](http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf). The description forms part of my auditor's report.

The scope of my audit does not include, nor provide assurance:

- that the Council carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- on the Original Budget information included in the Income Statement, Statement of Cash Flows, and Note B5-1 'Material budget variations
- on the Special Schedules. A separate opinion has been provided on Special Schedule - Permissible income for general rates
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited financial statements on any website where they may be presented
- about any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the financial statements.



Lawrissa Chan  
Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

22 October 2024  
SYDNEY



Councillor Claire Pontin  
 Mayor  
 MidCoast Council  
 PO Box 482  
 TAREE NSW 2430

Contact: Lawrissa Chan  
 Phone no: (02) 9275 7255  
 Our ref: R008-2124742775-7387

22 October 2024

Dear Mayor

## Report on the Conduct of the Audit for the year ended 30 June 2024 MidCoast Council

I have audited the general purpose financial statements (GPFS) of the MidCoast Council (the Council) for the year ended 30 June 2024 as required by section 415 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act).

I expressed an unmodified opinion on the Council's GPFS.

This Report on the Conduct of the Audit (the Report) for the Council for the year ended 30 June 2024 is issued in accordance with section 417 of the Act. This Report should be read in conjunction with my audit opinion on the GPFS issued under section 417(2) of the Act.

### INCOME STATEMENT

#### Operating result

	2024 \$m	2023 \$m	Variance %
Rates and annual charges revenue	175.1	168.8	↑ 3.7
Grants and contributions revenue	134.7	128.1	↑ 5.2
Operating result from continuing operations	72.4	36.0	↑ 101.1
Net operating result before capital grants and contributions	(13.4)	(45.4)	↑ 70.5

Rates and annual charges revenue (\$175.1 million) increased by \$6.3 million (3.7 per cent) in 2023–24 due to rate peg increase of 3.9 per cent.

Grants and contributions revenue (\$134.7 million) increased by \$6.6 million (5.2 per cent) in 2023–24 due to an increase in non-cash contributions, offset by a reduction in developer contributions and financial assistance grants as 85 per cent was received in advance (compared to 100 per cent in 2022–23).

Council’s operating result from continuing operations was \$72.4 million, including depreciation, amortisation and impairment expense of \$94.0 million. This was \$36.4 million higher than the 2022–23 result, mainly due to the increase in interest and investment income, rates and annual charges, and in the prior year, there was a \$22.1 million revaluation decrement for bridges recognised in the income statement (nil in the current year).

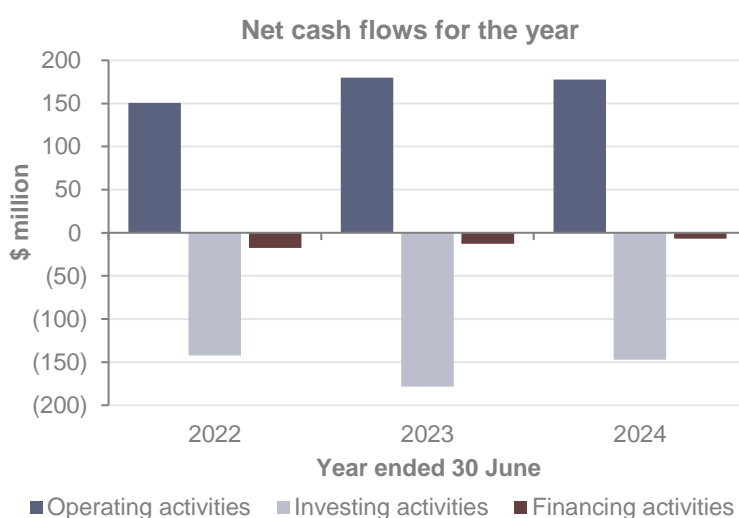
The net operating result before capital grants and contributions was a deficit of \$13.4 million. This improved by \$32.0 million compared with 2022–23, due to similar reasons as mentioned above.

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

Cash flows from operating activities decreased by \$2.3 million mainly due to an increase in employees and other payments, which is offset by higher rates and annual charges and interest and investment income.

Cash flows used in investing activities decreased by \$31.2 million due to a reduction in payments for infrastructure, property, plant and equipment.

Cash flows used in financing activities decreased by \$6.0 million, mainly due to higher repayments offset by new borrowings.



## FINANCIAL POSITION

### Cash and investments

Cash and investments	2024	2023	Commentary
	\$m	\$m	
<b>Total cash, cash equivalents and investments</b>	<b>372.0</b>	<b>330.6</b>	Externally restricted balances comprise mainly of developer contributions, water and sewer funds. Externally restricted cash has remained steady compared to the prior year.
Restricted and allocated cash, cash equivalents and investments:			Internal allocations are determined by council policies or decisions, which are subject to change. The increase of \$11.8 million is mainly due to additional funds set aside for plant and vehicle replacement and financial assistance grants received in advance.
• External restrictions	260.7	258.7	
• Internal allocations	80.3	68.5	

## Debt

At 30 June 2024, Council had:

- \$159.6 million in secured loans (\$165.7 million in 2022–23), including \$17.8 million classified as current, while the remaining balance classified as non-current
- \$0.25 million in credit card facility with \$0.17 million unused (\$0.25 million with \$0.17 million unused in 2022–23).

## PERFORMANCE

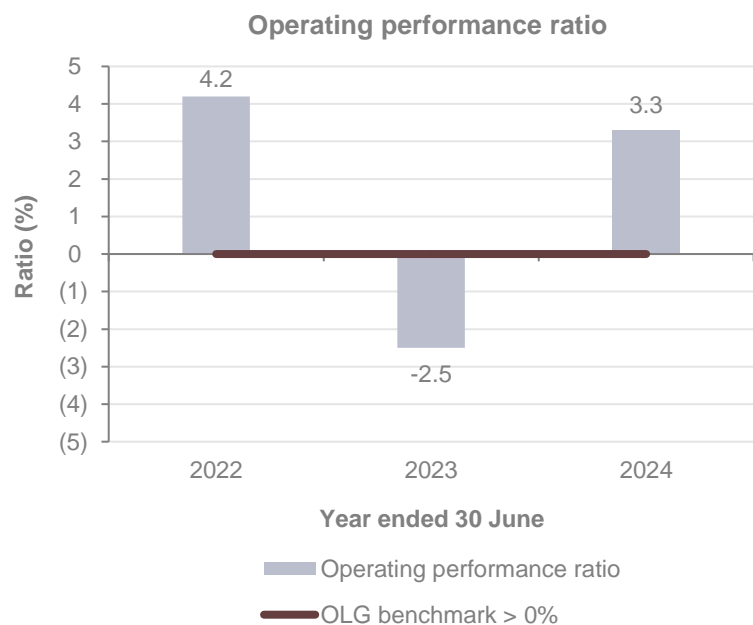
### Performance measures

The following section provides an overview of the Council's performance against the performance measures and performance benchmarks set by the Office of Local Government (OLG) within the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

### Operating performance ratio

Council exceeded the benchmark for the current reporting period.

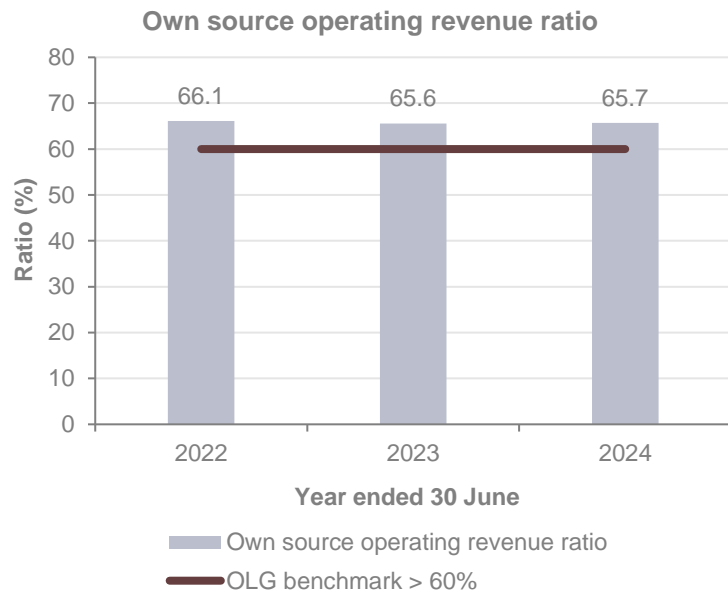
The 'operating performance ratio' measures how well council contained operating expenditure within operating revenue (excluding capital grants and contributions, fair value adjustments, and reversal of revaluation decrements). The benchmark set by OLG is greater than zero per cent.



### Own source operating revenue ratio

Council exceeded the benchmark for the current reporting period.

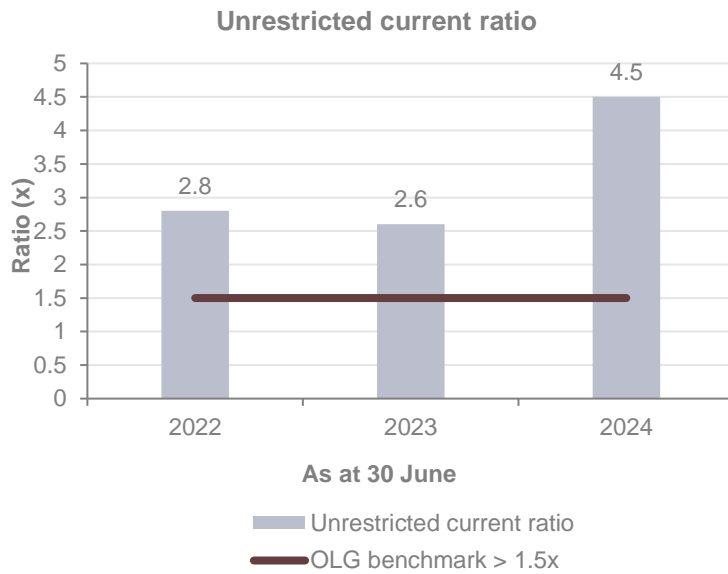
The 'own source operating revenue ratio' measures council's fiscal flexibility and the degree to which it relies on external funding sources such as operating grants and contributions. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than 60 per cent.



### Unrestricted current ratio

Council exceeded the benchmark for the current reporting period.

The 'unrestricted current ratio' is specific to local government and represents council's ability to meet its short-term obligations as they fall due. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than 1.5 times.

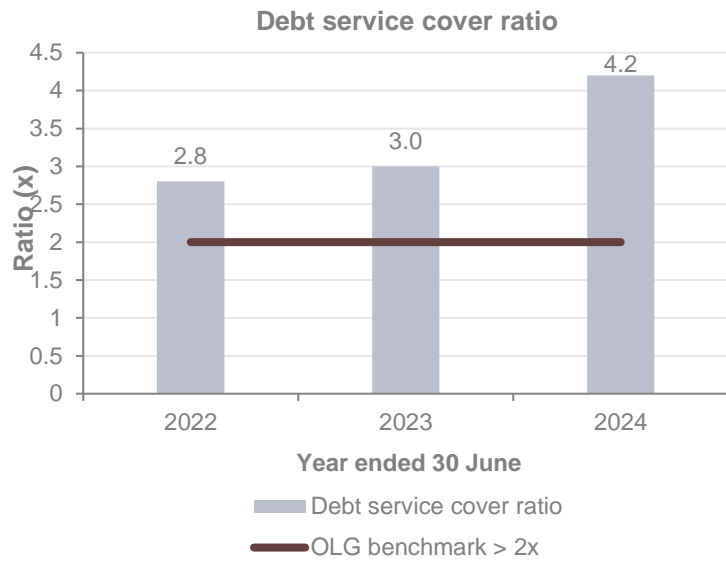




### Debt service cover ratio

Council exceeded the benchmark for the current reporting period.

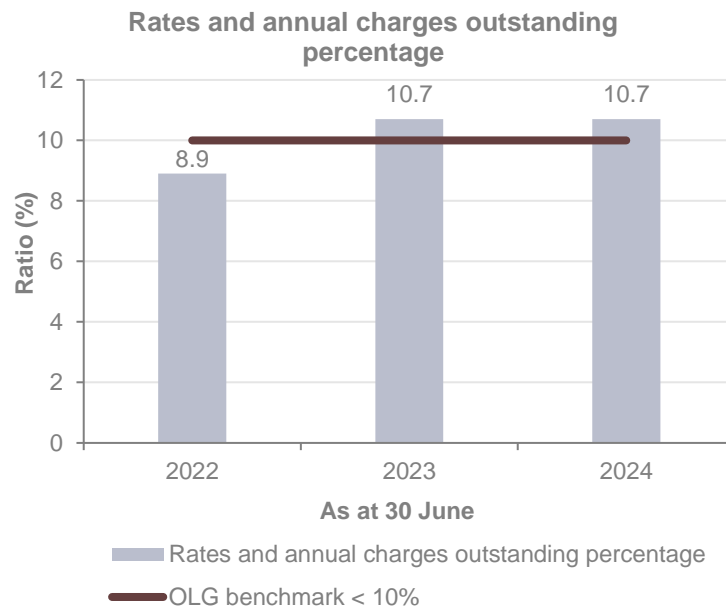
The 'debt service cover ratio' measures the operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than two times.



### Rates and annual charges outstanding percentage

Council did not meet the benchmark for the current reporting period.

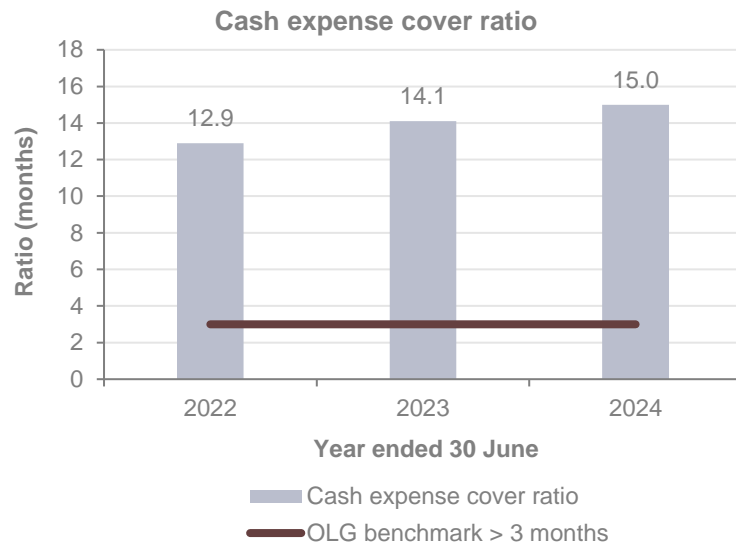
The 'rates and annual charges outstanding percentage' assesses the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on council's liquidity and the adequacy of debt recovery efforts. The benchmark set by OLG is less than 10 per cent for regional and rural councils.



## Cash expense cover ratio

Council exceeded the benchmark for the current reporting period.

This liquidity ratio indicates the number of months the council can continue paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflow. The benchmark set by OLG is greater than three months.



## Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment renewals

Council renewed \$93.0 million of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment during the 2023–24 financial year (\$118.6 million in 2022–23). This was mainly spent on roads (\$56.4 million) and bridges (\$13.4 million). A further \$63.4 million was spent on new assets (\$36.1 million in 2022–23) including capital work in progress of \$24.1 million on water supply network, \$10.3 million on roads and \$7.7 million on sewerage network.

## OTHER MATTERS

### Legislative compliance

My audit procedures did not identify any instances of material non-compliance with the financial reporting requirements in Chapter 13, Part 3, Division 2 of the LG Act and the associated regulation or a material deficiency in the Council's accounting records or financial statements. The Council's:

- accounting records were maintained in a manner and form to allow the GPFS to be prepared and effectively audited
- staff provided all accounting records and information relevant to the audit.

Lawrissa Chan  
Director, Financial Audit

Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

# MidCoast Council

SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
for the year ended 30 June 2024

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# MidCoast Council

## Special Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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### Background

- i. These Special Purpose Financial Statements have been prepared for the use by both Council and the Office of Local Government in fulfilling their requirements under National Competition Policy.
- ii. The principle of competitive neutrality is based on the concept of a 'level playing field' between persons/entities competing in a market place, particularly between private and public sector competitors.

Essentially, the principle is that government businesses, whether Commonwealth, state or local, should operate without net competitive advantages over other businesses as a result of their public ownership.

- iii. For Council, the principle of competitive neutrality and public reporting applies only to declared business activities.

These include **(a)** those activities classified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as business activities being water supply, sewerage services, abattoirs, gas production and reticulation, and **(b)** those activities with a turnover of more than \$2 million that Council has formally declared as a business activity (defined as Category 1 activities).

- iv. In preparing these financial statements for Council's self-classified Category 1 businesses and ABS-defined activities, councils must **(a)** adopt a corporatisation model and **(b)** apply full cost attribution including tax-equivalent regime payments and debt guarantee fees (where the business benefits from Council's borrowing position by comparison with commercial rates).

## MidCoast Council

### Special Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

### Statement by Councillors and Management

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#### Statement by Councillors and Management made pursuant to the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

The attached special purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

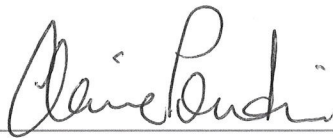
- NSW Government Policy Statement, *Application of National Competition Policy to Local Government*
- Division of Local Government Guidelines, *Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses: A Guide to Competitive Neutrality*
- The Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting
- Sections 3 and 4 of the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's (DCCEE) *Regulatory and assurance framework for local water utilities, July 2022*.

To the best of our knowledge and belief, these statements:

- present fairly the operating result and financial position for each of Council's declared business activities for the year,
- accord with Council's accounting and other records; and
- present overhead reallocation charges to the water and sewerage businesses as fair and reasonable.

We are not aware of any matter that would render these statements false or misleading in any way.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of Council made on 04 September 2024.



Claire Pontin  
**Mayor**  
04 September 2024



Alan Tickle  
**Councillor**  
04 September 2024



Adrian Panuccio  
**General Manager**  
04 September 2024



Phil Brennan  
**Responsible Accounting Officer**  
04 September 2024

## MidCoast Council

## Income Statement of water supply business activity

for the year ended 30 June 2024

\$ '000	2024	2023
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>		
Access charges	15,511	14,694
User charges	31,022	27,401
Fees	1,265	1,207
Interest and investment income	629	520
Other income	26	505
<b>Total income from continuing operations</b>	<b>48,453</b>	<b>44,327</b>
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>		
Employee benefits and on-costs	9,179	8,829
Borrowing costs	4,023	4,194
Materials and services	16,236	15,353
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	16,885	15,486
Net loss from the disposal of assets	879	2,213
Calculated taxation equivalents	272	269
Debt guarantee fee (if applicable)	657	710
Other expenses	440	470
<b>Total expenses from continuing operations</b>	<b>48,571</b>	<b>47,524</b>
<b>Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations before capital amounts</b>	<b>(118)</b>	<b>(3,197)</b>
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	5,103	5,463
<b>Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations after capital amounts</b>	<b>4,985</b>	<b>2,266</b>
<b>Surplus (deficit) from all operations before tax</b>	<b>4,985</b>	<b>2,266</b>
<b>Surplus (deficit) after tax</b>	<b>4,985</b>	<b>2,266</b>
<b>Plus opening retained profits</b>	<b>445,369</b>	<b>442,251</b>
<b>Plus adjustments for amounts unpaid:</b>		
– Taxation equivalent payments	272	269
– Debt guarantee fees	657	710
<b>Less:</b>		
– Tax equivalent dividend paid	(131)	(127)
<b>Closing accumulated surplus</b>	<b>451,152</b>	<b>445,369</b>
<b>Return on capital %</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>
<b>Subsidy from Council</b>	<b>24,981</b>	<b>24,221</b>
<b>Calculation of dividend payable:</b>		
Surplus (deficit) after tax	4,985	2,266
Less: capital grants and contributions (excluding developer contributions)	(1,041)	(935)
<b>Surplus for dividend calculation purposes</b>	<b>3,944</b>	<b>1,331</b>
<b>Potential dividend calculated from surplus</b>	<b>1,972</b>	<b>666</b>

## MidCoast Council

### Income Statement of sewerage business activity

for the year ended 30 June 2024

\$ '000	2024	2023
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>		
Access charges	41,695	40,738
User charges	3,871	3,222
Fees	391	282
Interest and investment income	2,568	1,918
Other income	204	405
<b>Total income from continuing operations</b>	<b>48,729</b>	<b>46,565</b>
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>		
Employee benefits and on-costs	8,555	8,120
Borrowing costs	2,659	2,980
Materials and services	17,007	16,175
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	11,604	11,306
Net loss from the disposal of assets	654	3,039
Calculated taxation equivalents	235	233
Debt guarantee fee (if applicable)	388	443
Other expenses	956	145
<b>Total expenses from continuing operations</b>	<b>42,058</b>	<b>42,441</b>
<b>Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations before capital amounts</b>	<b>6,671</b>	<b>4,124</b>
Grants and contributions provided for capital purposes	7,612	4,801
<b>Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations after capital amounts</b>	<b>14,283</b>	<b>8,925</b>
<b>Surplus (deficit) from all operations before tax</b>	<b>14,283</b>	<b>8,925</b>
Less: corporate taxation equivalent (25%) [based on result before capital]	(1,668)	(1,031)
<b>Surplus (deficit) after tax</b>	<b>12,615</b>	<b>7,894</b>
<b>Plus opening retained profits</b>	<b>446,341</b>	<b>436,856</b>
<b>Plus adjustments for amounts unpaid:</b>		
– Taxation equivalent payments	235	233
– Debt guarantee fees	388	443
– Corporate taxation equivalent	1,671	1,031
<b>Less:</b>		
– Tax equivalent dividend paid	(116)	(116)
<b>Closing accumulated surplus</b>	<b>461,134</b>	<b>446,341</b>
<b>Return on capital %</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>
<b>Subsidy from Council</b>	<b>13,086</b>	<b>12,781</b>
<b>Calculation of dividend payable:</b>		
Surplus (deficit) after tax	12,615	7,894
Less: capital grants and contributions (excluding developer contributions)	(324)	–
<b>Surplus for dividend calculation purposes</b>	<b>12,291</b>	<b>7,894</b>
<b>Potential dividend calculated from surplus</b>	<b>6,146</b>	<b>3,947</b>

## MidCoast Council

### Income Statement of Midcoast Assist

for the year ended 30 June 2024

\$ '000	2024 Category 1	2023 Category 1
<b>Income from continuing operations</b>		
Fees	7,975	8,352
Grants and contributions provided for operating purposes	1,305	1,042
Other income	36	243
<b>Total income from continuing operations</b>	<b>9,316</b>	<b>9,637</b>
<b>Expenses from continuing operations</b>		
Employee benefits and on-costs	9,235	7,465
Borrowing costs	2	2
Materials and services	1,324	1,418
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	65	105
Calculated taxation equivalents	445	335
Other expenses	17	–
<b>Total expenses from continuing operations</b>	<b>11,088</b>	<b>9,325</b>
<b>Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations before capital amounts</b>	<b>(1,772)</b>	312
<b>Surplus (deficit) from continuing operations after capital amounts</b>	<b>(1,772)</b>	312
<b>Surplus (deficit) from all operations before tax</b>	<b>(1,772)</b>	312
Less: corporate taxation equivalent (25%) [based on result before capital]	–	(78)
<b>Surplus (deficit) after tax</b>	<b>(1,772)</b>	<b>234</b>
<b>Plus accumulated surplus</b>	<b>1,414</b>	767
<b>Plus adjustments for amounts unpaid:</b>		
– Taxation equivalent payments Payroll	445	335
– Corporate taxation equivalent	–	78
<b>Add:</b>		
<b>Less:</b>		
<b>Closing accumulated surplus</b>	<b>87</b>	1,414
<b>Return on capital %</b>	<b>(713.7)%</b>	72.9%
<b>Subsidy from Council</b>	<b>1,781</b>	–



## MidCoast Council

### Statement of Financial Position of water supply business activity

as at 30 June 2024

\$ '000	2024	2023
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	15,283	16,547
Investments	3,000	13,500
Receivables	8,809	8,847
Other	–	29
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>27,092</b>	<b>38,923</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Investments	–	3,000
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	671,764	627,302
Investment property	1,383	1,424
Right of use assets	216	231
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>673,363</b>	<b>631,957</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>700,455</b>	<b>670,880</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Payables	1,810	1,547
Contract liabilities	–	204
Lease liabilities	(6)	(6)
Borrowings	5,362	5,347
Employee benefit provisions	3,123	2,973
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>10,289</b>	<b>10,065</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Lease liabilities	250	258
Borrowings	60,297	65,639
Employee benefit provisions	82	239
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>60,629</b>	<b>66,136</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>70,918</b>	<b>76,201</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>629,537</b>	<b>594,679</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Accumulated surplus	451,152	445,368
Revaluation reserves	178,385	149,311
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>629,537</b>	<b>594,679</b>

## MidCoast Council

### Statement of Financial Position of sewerage business activity

as at 30 June 2024

\$ '000	2024	2023
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	25,296	17,825
Investments	26,750	25,000
Receivables	4,535	6,028
Other	–	29
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>56,581</b>	<b>48,882</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Investments	53,500	55,250
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	521,308	494,660
Investment property	1,383	1,423
Right of use assets	87	69
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>576,278</b>	<b>551,402</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>632,859</b>	<b>600,284</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Payables	1,554	1,344
Lease liabilities	9	6
Borrowings	5,389	5,445
Employee benefit provisions	3,123	2,973
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>10,075</b>	<b>9,768</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Lease liabilities	81	66
Borrowings	33,436	38,824
Employee benefit provisions	82	240
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>33,599</b>	<b>39,130</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>43,674</b>	<b>48,898</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>589,185</b>	<b>551,386</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Accumulated surplus	461,134	446,343
Revaluation reserves	128,051	105,043
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>589,185</b>	<b>551,386</b>

## MidCoast Council

### Statement of Financial Position of Midcoast Assist

as at 30 June 2024

\$ '000	2024 Category 1	2023 Category 1
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	2,852	2,041
Receivables	511	554
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>3,363</b>	<b>2,595</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	248	431
Right of use assets	–	92
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>523</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>3,611</b>	<b>3,118</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Payables	685	795
Lease liabilities	–	31
Employee benefit provisions	750	779
Provisions	2,089	–
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>3,524</b>	<b>1,605</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Lease liabilities	–	62
Employee benefit provisions	–	37
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>3,524</b>	<b>1,704</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>1,414</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Retained earnings	87	1,414
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>1,414</b>

## Note – Material accounting policy information

A statement summarising the supplemental accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the special purpose financial statements (SPFS) for National Competition Policy (NCP) reporting purposes follows.

These financial statements are SPFS prepared for use by Council and the Office of Local Government. For the purposes of these statements, the Council is a non-reporting not-for-profit entity.

The figures presented in these special purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement criteria of relevant Australian Accounting Standards, other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) and Australian Accounting Interpretations.

The disclosures in these special purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993 (Act)*, the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (Regulation)* and the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

The statements are prepared on an accruals basis. They are based on historic costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, fair value of non-current assets. Certain taxes and other costs, appropriately described, have been imputed for the purposes of the National Competition Policy.

The Statement of Financial Position includes notional assets/liabilities receivable from/payable to Council's general fund. These balances reflect a notional intra-entity funding arrangement with the declared business activities.

Council prepares SPFS for the MidCoast Assist business activity as it is considered a Category 1 business activity as outlined below. Council at its 7 February 2024 Ordinary Council meeting resolved to begin a process to transition out of providing Aged Care and Disability Services and cease the provision of Aged Care and Disability Services by 30 September 2024 (or whenever practical after this date). This transition was ongoing as at balance date of 30 June 2024 with the majority of the Aged Care and Disability Services to cease being provided by MidCoast Assist by 30 September 2024.

The 30 June 2024 SPFS for the MidCoast Assist business activity have been prepared on the basis that Council intends to cease the Provision of Aged Care and Disability Services by 30 September 2024. As at 30 June 2024, all liabilities are classified as current and include a provision for restructuring. Current and non-current assets are based on historic costs however reflect fair value. Any remaining net surplus or deficit within the MidCoast Assist business activity following the divestment will be transferred to or from the general fund.

### National Competition Policy

Council has adopted the principle of 'competitive neutrality' in its business activities as part of the National Competition Policy which is being applied throughout Australia at all levels of government. The framework for its application is set out in the June 1996 NSW Government Policy statement titled 'Application of National Competition Policy to Local Government'. *The Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses – A Guide to Competitive Neutrality* issued by the Office of Local Government in July 1997 has also been adopted.

The pricing and costing guidelines outline the process for identifying and allocating costs to activities and provide a standard for disclosure requirements. These disclosures are reflected in Council's pricing and/or financial reporting systems and include taxation equivalents, Council subsidies, and returns on investments (rate of return and dividends paid).

### Declared business activities

In accordance with *Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses – A Guide to Competitive Neutrality*, Council has declared that the following are to be considered as business activities:

#### Category 1

##### Water Services

The provision of Water Services throughout the Midcoast Council region.

##### Sewerage Services

The provision of Sewerage Services throughout the MidCoast Council region.

##### MidCoast Assist

Council provides Ageing and Disability Services to its community as a National Disability Insurance Scheme provider.

Council declared at a Council Meeting held on 26 June 2019 that MidCoast Assist was to be considered as a Category 1 business activity.

## Note – Material accounting policy information (continued)

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### Taxation equivalent charges

Council is liable to pay various taxes and financial duties. Where this is the case, they are disclosed as a cost of operations just like all other costs. However, where Council does not pay some taxes, which are generally paid by private sector businesses, such as income tax, these equivalent tax payments have been applied to all Council-nominated business activities and are reflected in special purpose financial statements.

For the purposes of disclosing comparative information relevant to the private sector equivalent, the following taxation equivalents have been applied to all Council-nominated business activities (this does not include Council's non-business activities):

#### Notional rate applied (%)

Corporate income tax rate – **25%** (22/23 25%)

Land tax – the first \$1,075,000 of combined land values attracts **0%**. For the combined land in excess of \$1,075,000 up to \$6,571,000 the rate is **\$100 + 1.6%**. For the remaining combined land value that exceeds \$6,571,000 a premium marginal rate of **2.0%** applies.

Payroll tax – 5.45% on the value of taxable salaries and wages in excess of \$1,200,000. This applies to the MidCoast Assist Business Activity. Water & Sewer Funds are not exempt from Payroll Tax and actual payments are included.

In accordance with DCCEEW's regulatory and assurance framework, a payment for the amount calculated as the annual tax equivalent charges (excluding income tax) must be paid from water supply and sewerage business activities.

The payment of taxation equivalent charges, referred to in the regulatory and assurance framework as a 'dividend for taxation equivalents', may be applied for any purpose allowed under the Act.

Achievement of substantial compliance to the DCCEEW's regulatory and assurance framework is not a prerequisite for the payment of the tax equivalent charges; however the payment must not exceed \$3 per assessment.

### Income tax

An income tax equivalent has been applied on the profits of the business activities. Whilst income tax is not a specific cost for the purpose of pricing a good or service, it needs to be taken into account in terms of assessing the rate of return required on capital invested.

Accordingly, the return on capital invested is set at a pre-tax level – gain/(loss) from ordinary activities before capital amounts, as would be applied by a private sector competitor. That is, it should include a provision equivalent to the corporate income tax rate, currently 25% (22/23 25%).

Income tax is only applied where a gain from ordinary activities before capital amounts has been achieved. Since the taxation equivalent is notional – that is, it is payable to the 'Council' as the owner of business operations – it represents an internal payment and has no effect on the operations of the Council.

Accordingly, there is no need for disclosure of internal charges in the SPFS. The rate applied of 25% is the equivalent company tax rate prevalent at reporting date.

### Local government rates and charges

Rates and charges have been included as an expense for all Category 1 businesses.

### Loan and debt guarantee fees

The debt guarantee fee is designed to ensure that council business activities face 'true' commercial borrowing costs in line with private sector competitors.

In order to calculate a debt guarantee fee, Council has determined what the differential borrowing rate would have been between the commercial rate and Council's borrowing rate for its business activities. A rate of 1% has been used in relation to the 2023/2024 financial period.

## Note – Material accounting policy information (continued)

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### (i) Subsidies

Government policy requires that subsidies provided to customers, and the funding of those subsidies, must be explicitly disclosed.

Subsidies occur when Council provides services on a less-than-cost-recovery basis. This option is exercised on a range of services in order for Council to meet its community service obligations.

### (ii) Return on investments (rate of return)

The NCP policy statement requires that councils with Category 1 businesses 'would be expected to generate a return on capital funds employed that is comparable to rates of return for private businesses operating in a similar field'.

Funds are subsequently available for meeting commitments or financing future investment strategies. The rate of return is disclosed for each of Council's business activities on the Income Statement.

The rate of return is calculated as follows:

**Operating result before capital income + interest expense**

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**Written down value of I,PP&E as at 30 June**

As a minimum, business activities should generate a return equal to the Commonwealth 10 year bond rate which is 4.30% at 30/6/2024.

### (iii) Dividends

Council is not required to pay dividends to either itself (as owner of a range of businesses) or to any external entities.

Local government water supply and sewerage businesses are permitted to pay an annual dividend from its water supply or sewerage business surplus.

Each dividend must be calculated and approved in accordance with DCCEEW's regulatory and assurance framework and must not exceed:

- 50% of this surplus in any one year, or
- the number of water supply or sewerage assessments at 30 June 2024 multiplied by \$30 (less the payment for tax equivalent charges, not exceeding \$3 per assessment).

In accordance with DCCEEW's regulatory and assurance framework, statement of compliance and statement of dividend payment, dividend payment form and unqualified independent financial audit report are submitted to DCCEEW.



## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

### Report on the special purpose financial statements

#### MidCoast Council

To the Councillors of MidCoast Council

### Opinion

I have audited the accompanying special purpose financial statements (the financial statements) of MidCoast Council's (the Council) Declared Business Activities, which comprise the Statement by Councillors and Management, the Income Statement of each Declared Business Activity for the year ended 30 June 2024, the Statement of Financial Position of each Declared Business Activity as at 30 June 2024 and the Material accounting policy information note.

The Declared Business Activities of the Council are:

- Water Supply Business Activity
- Sewerage Business Activity
- MidCoast Assist.

In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Council's declared Business Activities as at 30 June 2024, and their financial performance for the year then ended, in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards described in the Material accounting policy information note and the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting 2023–24 (LG Code).

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

### Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under the standards are described in the 'Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements' section of my report.

I am independent of the Council in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Australian Auditing Standards
- Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 'Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)' (APES 110).

Parliament promotes independence by ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their roles by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as the auditor of councils
- precluding the Auditor-General from providing non-audit services.

I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with APES 110.

I believe the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

### **Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting**

Without modifying my opinion, I draw attention to the Material accounting policy information note to the financial statements which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements have been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Council's financial reporting responsibilities under the LG Code. As a result, the financial statements may not be suitable for another purpose.

### **Other Information**

The Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2024 includes other information in addition to the financial statements and my Independent Auditor's Report thereon. The Councillors are responsible for the other information. At the date of this Independent Auditor's Report, the other information I have received comprise the general purpose financial statements and Special Schedules (the Schedules).

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information. Accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion on the other information. However, as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*, I have separately expressed an opinion on the general purpose financial statements and Special Schedule 'Permissible income for general rates.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude there is a material misstatement of the other information, I must report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

### **The Councillors' Responsibilities for the Financial Statements**

The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements and for determining that the accounting policies, described in the Material accounting policy information note to the financial statements, are appropriate to meet the requirements in the LG Code. The Councillors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting.

### **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements**

My objectives are to:

- obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- issue an Independent Auditor's Report including my opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but does not guarantee an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect material misstatements. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions users take based on the financial statements.

A description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: [www.auasb.gov.au/auditors\\_responsibilities/ar4.pdf](http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf). The description forms part of my auditor's report.



The scope of my audit does not include, nor provide assurance:

- that the Council carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited financial statements on any website where they may be presented
- about any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the financial statements.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lawrissa Chan', written in a cursive style.

Lawrissa Chan  
Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

22 October 2024  
SYDNEY

# MidCoast Council

SPECIAL SCHEDULES  
for the year ended 30 June 2024

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MidCoast Council

Special Schedules

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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## MidCoast Council

### Permissible income for general rates

\$ '000	Notes	Calculation 2023/24	Calculation 2024/25
<b>Notional general income calculation <sup>1</sup></b>			
Last year notional general income yield	a	88,742	92,817
Plus or minus adjustments <sup>2</sup>	b	642	617
<b>Notional general income</b>	c = a + b	<b>89,384</b>	<b>93,434</b>
<b>Permissible income calculation</b>			
Percentage increase	d	3.90%	5.20%
Plus percentage increase amount <sup>3</sup>	f = d x (c + e)	3,486	4,859
<b>Sub-total</b>	g = (c + e + f)	<b>92,870</b>	<b>98,293</b>
Plus (or minus) last year's carry forward total	h	31	84
<b>Sub-total</b>	j = (h + i)	<b>31</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Total permissible income</b>	k = g + j	<b>92,901</b>	<b>98,377</b>
Less notional general income yield	l	92,817	98,338
<b>Catch-up or (excess) result</b>	m = k - l	<b>84</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Carry forward to next year <sup>4</sup></b>	p = m + n + o	<b>84</b>	<b>39</b>

#### Notes

- (1) The notional general income will not reconcile with rate income in the financial statements in the corresponding year. The statements are reported on an accrual accounting basis which include amounts that relate to prior years' rates income.
- (2) Adjustments account for changes in the number of assessments and any increase or decrease in land value occurring during the year. The adjustments are called 'supplementary valuations' as defined in the *Valuation of Land Act 1916 (NSW)*.
- (3) The 'percentage increase' is inclusive of the rate-peg percentage, and/or special variation and/or Crown land adjustment (where applicable).
- (4) Carry-forward amounts which are in excess (an amount that exceeds the permissible income) require Ministerial approval by order published in the *NSW Government Gazette* in accordance with section 512 of the Act. The OLG will extract these amounts from Council's Permissible income for general rates Statement in the financial data return (FDR) to administer this process.



## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

### Special Schedule – Permissible income for general rates

#### MidCoast Council

To the Councillors of MidCoast Council

### Opinion

I have audited the accompanying Special Schedule – Permissible income for general rates (the Schedule) of MidCoast Council (the Council) for the year ending 30 June 2025.

In my opinion, the Schedule is prepared, in all material respects in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting 2023–24 (LG Code) and is in accordance with the books and records of the Council.

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

### Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under the standards are described in the 'Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Schedule' section of my report.

I am independent of the Council in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Australian Auditing Standards
- Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 'Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)' (APES 110).

Parliament promotes independence by ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their roles by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of councils
- precluding the Auditor-General from providing non-audit services.

I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with APES 110.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

### Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

Without modifying my opinion, I draw attention to the special purpose framework used to prepare the Schedule. The Schedule has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Council's reporting obligations under the LG Code. As a result, the Schedule may not be suitable for another purpose.

## Other Information

The Council's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2024 includes other information in addition to the Schedule and my Independent Auditor's Report thereon. The Councillors are responsible for the other information. At the date of this Independent Auditor's Report, the other information I have received comprise the general purpose financial statements, special purpose financial statements and Special Schedule 'Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024.

My opinion on the Schedule does not cover the other information. Accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion on the other information. However, as required by the *Local Government Act 1993*, I have separately expressed an opinion on the general purpose financial statements and the special purpose financial statements.

In connection with my audit of the Schedule, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the Schedule or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude there is a material misstatement of the other information, I must report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

## The Councillors' Responsibilities for the Schedule

The Councillors are responsible for the preparation of the Schedule in accordance with the LG Code. The Councillors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the Schedule that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the Schedule, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting.

## Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Schedule

My objectives are to:

- obtain reasonable assurance whether the Schedule as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- issue an Independent Auditor's Report including my opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but does not guarantee an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect material misstatements. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions users take based on the Schedule.

A description of my responsibilities for the audit of the Schedule is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: [www.auasb.gov.au/auditors\\_responsibilities/ar8.pdf](http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar8.pdf). The description forms part of my auditor's report.

The scope of my audit does not include, nor provide assurance:

- that the Council carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited Schedule on any website where it may be presented
- about any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the Schedule.



Lawrissa Chan  
Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

22 October 2024  
SYDNEY

## MidCoast Council

## Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024

Asset Class	Asset Category	Estimated cost		2023/24 Required maintenance <sup>a</sup>	2023/24 Actual maintenance	Net carrying amount	Gross replacement cost (GRC)	Assets in condition as a percentage of gross replacement cost				
		Estimated cost to bring assets to satisfactory standard	to bring to the agreed level of service set by Council					1	2	3	4	5
		\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000					
<b>Buildings</b>	Other Buildings	6,599	6,599	538	238	27,433	48,945	6.4%	20.1%	65.6%	7.9%	0.0%
	Council Offices/Administration Centres	513	513	500	514	38,699	45,414	67.4%	23.7%	5.3%	3.5%	0.1%
	Council Works Depots	4,000	4,000	776	346	48,195	70,590	6.9%	67.3%	19.2%	6.6%	0.0%
	Council Public Halls	4,214	4,214	277	30	12,333	25,210	0.0%	3.1%	85.4%	11.4%	0.1%
	Libraries	518	518	294	177	23,905	26,767	74.5%	13.6%	9.2%	2.7%	0.0%
	Cultural/Community Facilities	36,129	36,129	2,728	2,156	131,369	247,981	3.5%	9.8%	71.3%	15.4%	0.0%
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>51,973</b>	<b>51,973</b>	<b>5,113</b>	<b>3,461</b>	<b>281,934</b>	<b>464,907</b>	<b>14.46%</b>	<b>20.83%</b>	<b>53.53%</b>	<b>11.16%</b>	<b>0.02%</b>
<b>Other structures</b>	Other structures Not Included In Buildings	1,647	1,647	280	479	19,649	25,489	46.0%	31.7%	8.8%	13.5%	0.0%
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>1,647</b>	<b>1,647</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>19,649</b>	<b>25,489</b>	<b>46.00%</b>	<b>31.70%</b>	<b>8.80%</b>	<b>13.50%</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
<b>Roads</b>	Sealed roads	169,430	169,430	14,797	14,359	1,056,556	1,665,644	18.2%	37.2%	29.7%	12.9%	2.0%
	Unsealed roads	8,383	8,383	3,882	4,143	47,913	78,954	17.3%	26.6%	52.8%	1.8%	1.5%
	Bridges	8,409	8,409	2,198	452	167,026	227,245	24.3%	56.4%	15.1%	4.1%	0.1%
	Footpaths/Cycleways	3,335	3,335	733	471	39,710	55,916	33.3%	27.1%	37.0%	2.1%	0.5%
	Kerb & Guttering	25,127	25,127	366	365	127,732	219,773	12.8%	10.5%	72.5%	3.4%	0.8%
	Bulk earthworks	–	–	–	–	858,355	858,355	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>214,684</b>	<b>214,684</b>	<b>21,976</b>	<b>19,790</b>	<b>2,297,292</b>	<b>3,105,887</b>	<b>41.12%</b>	<b>25.98%</b>	<b>24.17%</b>	<b>7.54%</b>	<b>1.19%</b>
<b>Water supply network</b>	Water supply network	54,757	54,757	9,689	9,455	602,625	882,455	35.9%	32.2%	15.0%	13.9%	3.0%
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>54,757</b>	<b>54,757</b>	<b>9,689</b>	<b>9,455</b>	<b>602,625</b>	<b>882,455</b>	<b>35.90%</b>	<b>32.20%</b>	<b>15.00%</b>	<b>13.90%</b>	<b>3.00%</b>
<b>Sewerage network</b>	Sewerage network	50,785	50,785	10,019	9,688	476,825	702,453	29.0%	32.9%	24.3%	8.3%	5.5%
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>50,785</b>	<b>50,785</b>	<b>10,019</b>	<b>9,688</b>	<b>476,825</b>	<b>702,453</b>	<b>29.00%</b>	<b>32.90%</b>	<b>24.30%</b>	<b>8.30%</b>	<b>5.50%</b>
<b>Stormwater drainage</b>	Stormwater drainage	35,489	35,489	2,739	1,783	356,694	541,167	23.7%	44.4%	27.9%	3.6%	0.4%
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>35,489</b>	<b>35,489</b>	<b>2,739</b>	<b>1,783</b>	<b>356,694</b>	<b>541,167</b>	<b>23.70%</b>	<b>44.40%</b>	<b>27.90%</b>	<b>3.60%</b>	<b>0.40%</b>



## MidCoast Council

## Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024 (continued)

Asset Class	Asset Category	Estimated cost		2023/24 Required maintenance <sup>a</sup>	2023/24 Actual maintenance	Net carrying amount	Gross replacement cost (GRC)	Assets in condition as a percentage of gross replacement cost				
		Estimated cost to bring assets to satisfactory standard	to bring to the agreed level of service set by Council					1	2	3	4	5
		\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000	\$ '000					
Open space / recreational assets	Swimming pools	3,105	3,105	144	1,178	5,480	13,101	0.6%	4.8%	41.0%	53.6%	0.0%
	Other Recreational/Open Space Assets	4,956	4,956	696	7,800	39,020	63,268	26.4%	41.4%	23.3%	8.8%	0.1%
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>8,061</b>	<b>8,061</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>8,978</b>	<b>44,500</b>	<b>76,369</b>	<b>21.97%</b>	<b>35.12%</b>	<b>26.34%</b>	<b>16.49%</b>	<b>0.08%</b>
<b>Total – all assets</b>		<b>417,396</b>	<b>417,396</b>	<b>50,656</b>	<b>53,634</b>	<b>4,079,519</b>	<b>5,798,727</b>	<b>34.86%</b>	<b>29.22%</b>	<b>25.45%</b>	<b>8.67%</b>	<b>1.80%</b>

(a) Required maintenance is the amount identified in Council's asset management plans.

## Infrastructure asset condition assessment 'key'

#	Condition	Integrated planning and reporting (IP&R) description
1	Excellent/very good	No work required (normal maintenance)
2	Good	Only minor maintenance work required
3	Satisfactory	Maintenance work required
4	Poor	Renewal required
5	Very poor	Urgent renewal/upgrading required

## MidCoast Council

## Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024

## Infrastructure asset performance indicators (consolidated) \*

\$ '000	Amounts 2024	Indicator 2024	Indicator 2023	Benchmark
<b>Buildings and infrastructure renewals ratio</b>				
Asset renewals <sup>1</sup>	<u>93,012</u>	<b>115.59%</b>	128.13%	> 100.00%
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	<u>80,467</u>			
<b>Infrastructure backlog ratio</b>				
Estimated cost to bring assets to a satisfactory standard	<u>417,396</u>	<b>10.04%</b>	10.33%	< 2.00%
Net carrying amount of infrastructure assets	<u>4,156,831</u>			
<b>Asset maintenance ratio</b>				
Actual asset maintenance	<u>53,634</u>	<b>105.88%</b>	135.76%	> 100.00%
Required asset maintenance	<u>50,656</u>			
<b>Cost to bring assets to agreed service level</b>				
Estimated cost to bring assets to an agreed service level set by Council	<u>417,396</u>	<b>7.20%</b>	7.54%	
Gross replacement cost	<u>5,798,727</u>			

(\*) All asset performance indicators are calculated using classes identified in the previous table.

(1) Asset renewals represent the replacement and/or refurbishment of existing assets to an equivalent capacity/performance as opposed to the acquisition of new assets (or the refurbishment of old assets) that increases capacity/performance.

## MidCoast Council

### Report on infrastructure assets as at 30 June 2024

#### Infrastructure asset performance indicators (by fund)

\$ '000	General fund		Water fund		Sewer fund		Benchmark
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	
<b>Buildings and infrastructure renewals ratio</b>							
Asset renewals <sup>1</sup>							
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	<b>151.74%</b>	158.21%	<b>23.95%</b>	42.01%	<b>66.00%</b>	49.77%	> 100.00%
<b>Infrastructure backlog ratio</b>							
Estimated cost to bring assets to a satisfactory standard							
Net carrying amount of infrastructure assets	<b>10.13%</b>	10.18%	<b>9.09%</b>	10.33%	<b>10.65%</b>	11.29%	< 2.00%
<b>Asset maintenance ratio</b>							
Actual asset maintenance							
Required asset maintenance	<b>111.45%</b>	160.87%	<b>97.58%</b>	104.40%	<b>96.70%</b>	90.19%	> 100.00%
<b>Cost to bring assets to agreed service level</b>							
Estimated cost to bring assets to an agreed service level set by Council							
Gross replacement cost	<b>7.40%</b>	7.59%	<b>6.21%</b>	7.10%	<b>7.23%</b>	7.77%	

(1) Asset renewals represent the replacement and/or refurbishment of existing assets to an equivalent capacity/performance as opposed to the acquisition of new assets (or the refurbishment of old assets) that increases capacity/performance.



05

ANNUAL CARBON  
EMISSIONS REPORT

## Executive Summary

This report is the annual emissions report to track actions and progress in line with the Climate Change Strategy. Council produces an update report every 6 months to track and report progress.

MidCoast Council adopted its Climate Change Strategy in June 2021 which includes targets to achieve net zero emissions by 2040 and 100% renewable energy by 2040. Council has also adopted an updated Waste Management Strategy which includes a revised target to divert 70% of waste (including 50% organic waste) from landfill by 2030 in order to reach net zero emissions.

This report presents the carbon emissions that were generated from Council's operations during 2023-24 and summarises the key initiatives that are currently being implemented by Council to lower its emissions. Council continues to invest in projects that will decrease our operational costs, lower carbon emissions and improve our environmental performance.

Emissions from landfill gas and electricity use have decreased in 2023/24 compared to 2022/23, while fuel emissions have remained stable. Although the addition of sewage treatment emissions to our annual report has resulted in an overall increase in our reported total emissions, sewage treatment emissions have not actually increased, they were previously not included in the annual report.

## Background

The Climate Change Strategy (June 2021) analyses Council's carbon footprint and identifies the actions Council can undertake to reduce its greenhouse emissions and adapt its practices and infrastructure to become more resilient to the impacts of climate change. These actions include:

- investing in renewable energy
- buying clean energy
- becoming more energy efficient
- sequestering carbon and offsetting
- sustainable procurement
- transitioning to more sustainable transport options; and
- reducing our waste to landfill.

In adopting the Strategy, Council committed to achieving **net zero emissions** from its operations (including electricity, fleet and waste) and **100% renewable energy for its operations by 2040**.

Over 150 actions are proposed in the Strategy to meet these targets and Council will offset those emissions that can't be mitigated by purchasing renewable energy and investing in local carbon sequestration initiatives such as tree planting programs and the restoration of degraded coastal wetlands (Blue Carbon).

Specifically, the Strategy focuses Council's efforts on increasing the uptake of on-site solar photovoltaic (PV) systems and batteries (particularly for its water and sewer assets), energy efficiency, and purchasing renewable energy in the short to medium term, to progressively increasing its renewable energy supply as batteries and electric vehicles become more cost effective over time.

This report provides a summary of Council's resource consumption and associated carbon emissions during the 2023-24 financial year to show how Council is tracking towards the net zero emissions target. It also provides a summary of the major initiatives undertaken by Council during this period to reduce its carbon footprint.

## Discussion

Council staff are currently modelling future carbon emissions to project how expected changes to waste management, a cleaner electricity grid and expected uptake of electric vehicles will impact our emissions profile. Major changes include;

- the trial and implementation of landfill gas flaring,
- implementation of Food Organics & Garden Organics (FOGO) in waste management,
- increased uptake of behind-the-meter solar at Council owned sites,
- increased grid-scale renewable energy,
- planned closures of coal fired power stations and
- projected uptake of electric vehicles.

## Council's 2023-24 Carbon Emissions

Council currently subscribes to Azility's energy efficiency software platform to help monitor its water, electricity and fuel consumption and the associated costs, waste to landfill, and carbon emissions. Council continues to improve its understanding of sources of emissions and is improving the methodologies for calculating emissions from the landfill sites and sewage treatment plants.

Greenhouse gas emissions are expressed as carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sup>2</sup>-e). CO<sup>2</sup>-e expresses the warming effect of different greenhouse gases as an equivalent amount of carbon dioxide. It is the amount of carbon dioxide that would give the same warming effect as each greenhouse gas that is emitted or stored by an activity. For example, methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) has a global warming potential (GWP) of 25, which means 1 tonne of CH<sub>4</sub> is 25 tonnes of CO<sup>2</sup>-e.

Council is now using the Clean Energy Regulator (CER) approved National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGER) Solid Waste calculator. Previously, Council have relied on the NGER scope 3 method for calculating landfill emissions. The change in methodology has not resulted in a significant change in the total emissions reported by Council, however, changing the calculation method allows Council to more accurately track and report landfill emissions, especially as we prepare for landfill gas flaring which will reduce landfill emissions.

Council's total carbon emissions for 2023/24 was 117,056 t CO<sup>2</sup>-e and are presented in the table 1 and figure 1 and 2 below. Council's annual carbon emissions since the baseline year of 2018/19 are also included in Table 1 below. 2023/24 is the first year where sewage treatment emissions are included in the annual total.

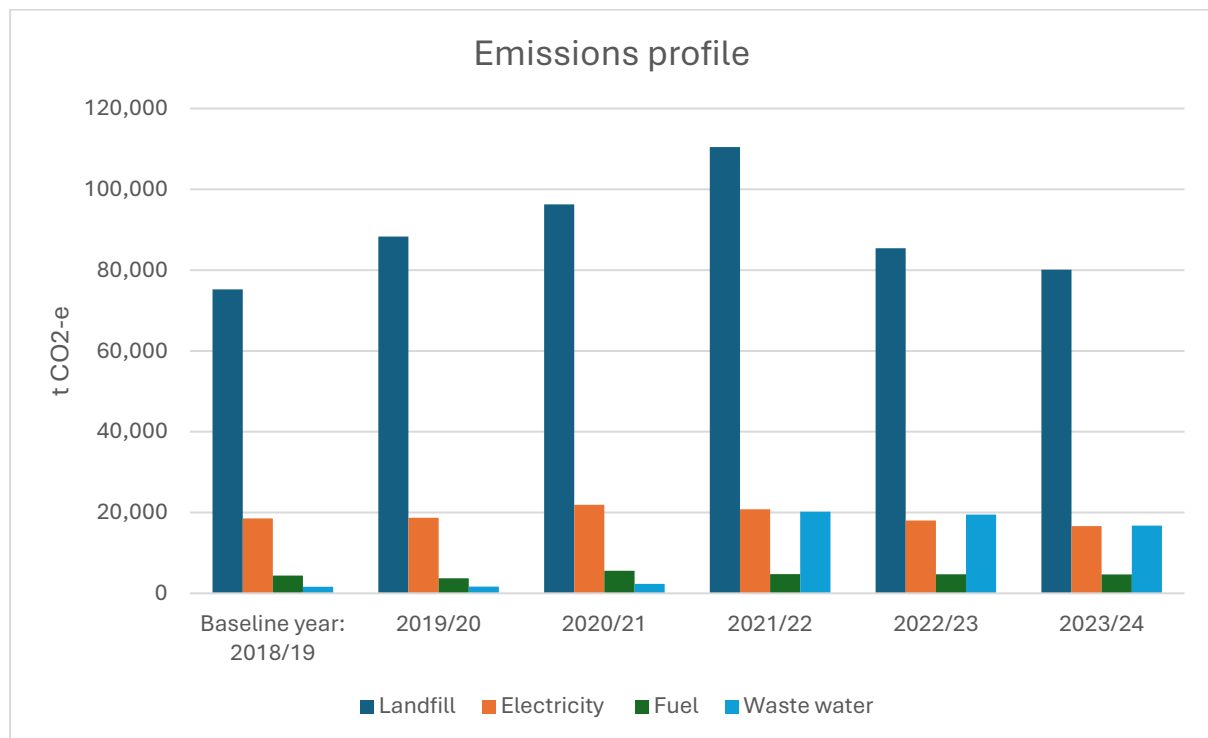
Emissions from sewage treatment have previously been excluded from the annual emissions report, despite being included in the Climate Change Strategy. There has previously been an inconsistency in the methodology for calculating sewage treatment emissions, as such the total emissions from sewage treatment increased from 202/21 to 2021/22. For consistency with previous reporting, annual have not been changed from 2018/19 – 2022/23.

Council will continue to implement improvements in reporting of emissions to ensure that the most accurate and transparent calculation methods are used in alignment with the CER and NGER guidelines.

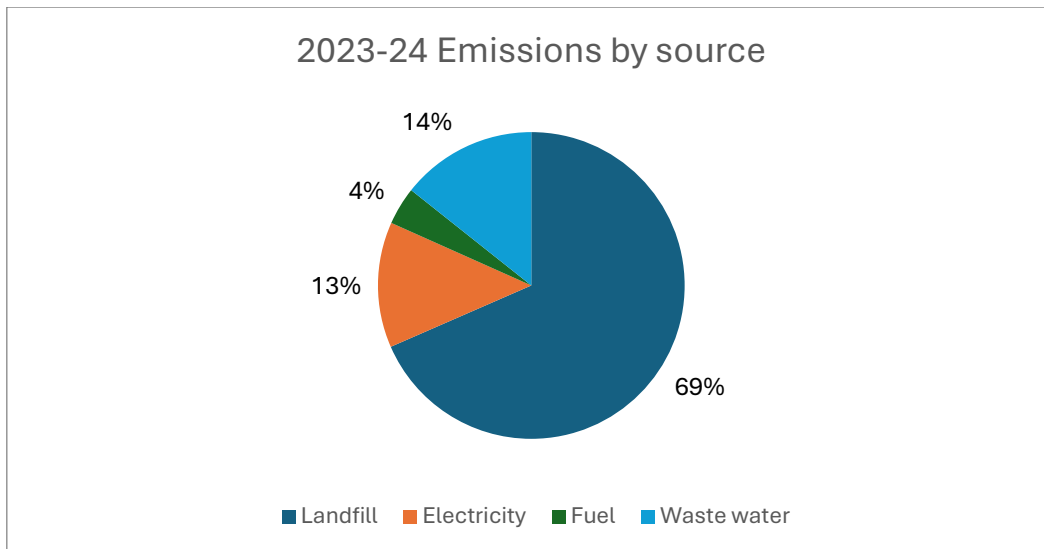
**Table 1: Annual CO2-e emissions by source**

Source (t CO2-e)	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Fuel	4,383	3,729	5,574	4,741	4,708	4,668
Electricity	25,037	22,737	24,224	22,503	18,008	15,494
Landfill	75,228	88,326	96,258	110,469	85,423	80,126
Waste Water treatment	1628	1,649	2,344	20,217	19,475	16,768
<b>Total</b>	<b>104,649*</b>	<b>114,792</b>	<b>126,058</b>	<b>137,714</b>	<b>108,138</b>	<b>117,056</b>

\*note, Waste water emissions are included in the Climate Change Strategy but have previously been excluded from the annual emissions reporting (previously excluded data is displayed in red).



**Figure 1: Annual CO2-e emissions by source.**



**Figure 2: 2023/24 Emissions breakdown**

## Landfill emissions

Approximately 69% of Council’s carbon emissions are a direct result of waste sent to landfill. Although the waste is generated by the community, Council is the owner of the landfill sites where the emissions are produced. Council’s adopted Waste Strategy and Climate Change Strategy outline a range of projects and objectives to decrease the emissions generated by waste, as well as identify opportunities to offset the emissions that cannot be reduced.

When organic material enters a landfill, it is compacted and buried. The landfill site is compacted to reduce the space required to store waste and maximise how much waste can fit into the cell. When organic material breaks down in the presence of oxygen, it releases the carbon dioxide that was stored within the material. But when organic material breaks down in an anaerobic (without oxygen) environment such as a landfill site, methane is produced rather than carbon dioxide. Methane is 25 times more potent as a greenhouse gas compared to carbon dioxide.

The Waste Strategy has set an ambitious target of diverting 70% of waste from landfill. This target requires a multi-pronged approach to change the composition of what the community sends to landfill, how Council processes this waste and how it deals with the emissions from the landfill sites.

## Landfill gas flaring

Council will be implementing a trial of landfill gas flaring. This trial will determine the commercial viability of gas flaring. The trial will also inform how much gas can be captured for flaring and the quantity of carbon-offsets that can be generated by this process. Flaring methane at a landfill site can generate Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) that can be sold, traded or retired depending on volume, price and business needs.

Organic materials have embodied carbon that has been absorbed from the environment while the organism was living. When organic material breaks down in a natural aerobic environment, it releases the stored carbon back into the atmosphere. This short-term carbon cycle operates in a 1-for-1 exchange and is therefore carbon-neutral. When organic material breaks down in an anaerobic setting, methane is produced instead of carbon dioxide, increasing the potency



of the gas exchange by 25 times. By flaring (burning) the methane gas, the methane is turned back into carbon dioxide and 'corrects' the carbon exchange.

## **FOGO**

Council already has a successful green waste program for garden organic material and will be implementing Food Organics & Garden Organics (FOGO) to further divert organic material from entering the landfill sites. FOGO will mean that residents will be able to place their kitchen scraps into their green bin rather than the red bin. The contents of the green bin will then be composted in a new purpose-built facility that treats the organic material to reduce the production of methane and produce a rich organic material that can be used as a soil conditioner. For every tonne of organic material that is diverted from landfill, it is expected that 1.9 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-e is avoided.

A 2021 audit of Council's kerbside waste collection scheme indicated that approximately 50% of red bin contents could be collected and recycled by the FOGO service if sorted correctly at the household. This would significantly decrease the quantity of organic matter breaking down in landfill and reduce landfill emissions. In the lead up to FOGO being implemented, Council will increase community engagement to help residents understand how to use the new services.

## **Sustainability Centre**

MidCoast Council has recently completed the construction of the MidCoast Sustainability Centre, jointly funded through the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund and MidCoast Council Waste Services. Located at Tuncurry Waste Management Facility, the building showcases sustainable architecture principles including solar passive design, recycled brick, timber and low emissions concrete. The landscape has been planted with bushfire resilient species and will act as a living plant library, complete with plant identification plaques, for visitors to view.

The purpose of the facility is to provide education to the community aligned with sustainability initiatives, circular economies, waste reduction and recycling. The facility has three workshop spaces where information sessions will be held. The Sustainability Centre also has a small office for MCC staff and a food safe kitchen for catering.

The centre is due to open officially on Monday the 11th of November in alignment with commencement of National Recycling Week. On Saturday the 16th of November, a community open day will be held. During this event the Sustainability Centre will be used to run a series of workshops for the community including composting and permaculture, DIY bees wax wraps and Insects and ecosystems. There will also be waste facility tours, activities and a showcase of information and pop-up stalls.

## **Community waste engagement**

Community consultation and engagement is essential to improving recycling practices and identifying areas for improvement in waste diversion. Current data indicates that approximately 9% of materials in kerbside red landfill bins are recyclable, while kerbside yellow recycling bins contain about 12% contamination. Contamination rates hinder recycling efforts and threaten MidCoast Council's 2030 target to reduce waste to landfill by 70%.

Envirocom has been engaged to support the Waste Team to deliver a strategic community engagement plan designed to both improve the recovery rate of recyclables and prepare the

community for the future transition to FOGO. This plan includes a broad range of actions from waste audits, surveys, improved educational material, business waste reduction plans, school education and media campaigns.

Waste and recycling pop-up stalls will continue across the LGA, led by the Waste Team. These stalls are designed to educate the community on waste management and improve recycling practices. The stalls also serve as a platform to address community inquiries regarding waste collection services, such as bulky waste disposal, bin collection schedules, and navigation of the MidCoast Council website for waste-related information. Over 2,633 people have been engaged over six months with the intent to continue to improve and adapt to community needs.

## **Energy emissions**

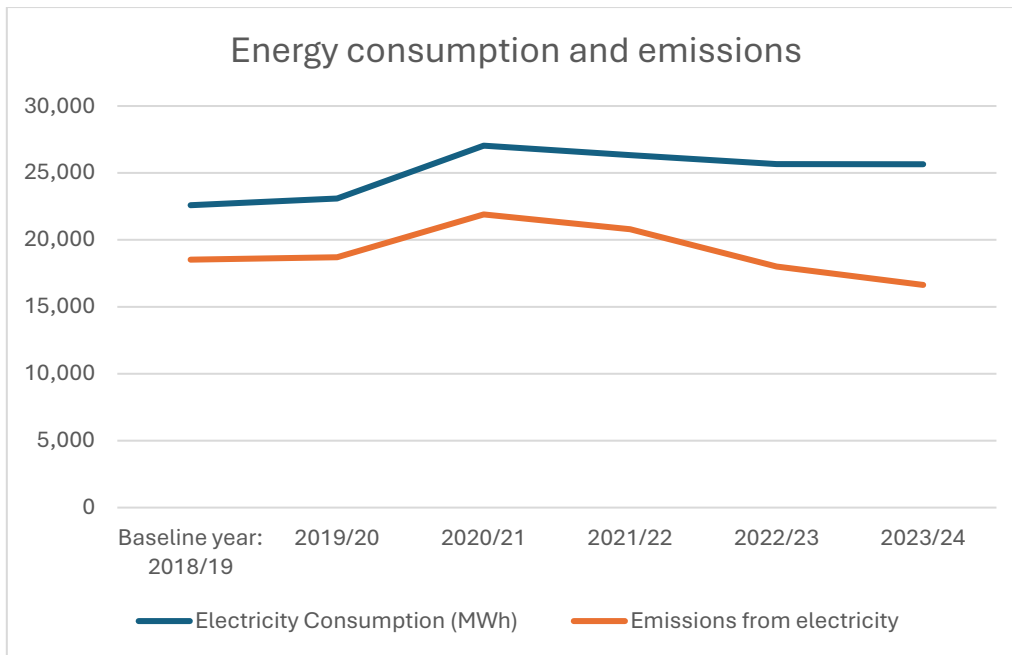
In 2023/24 Council consumed 26,056 MWh of electricity from the grid. This figure has been relatively consistent for the last four years. Water & Systems consume approximately 70% of Council's electricity use for water and sewer. Electricity consumption contributes approximately 13% of Council's total emissions with a total of 15,494 t CO<sub>2</sub>-e from electricity consumption.

Water treatment and pumping requirements do not tend to change significantly from year to year. Sewage treatment energy needs also remain consistent, even as the population grows, the treatment plants tend to operate relatively consistently.

The National Energy Market (NEM) continues to become cleaner, meaning more and more of the grid electricity that Council consumes is coming from renewable energy sources.

In the 2023/24 financial year, Council installed 84.4 kW of roof top solar at two Water & Systems sites and a Waste Management Facilities sites. The Water & Systems team also continued purchasing 100% renewable energy for the Water & Systems small site contract accounts.

The purchase of 100% renewable energy for Water & Systems small contract accounts has decreased the emissions by 1,951 t CO<sub>2</sub>-e this financial year. In the graph below we can see that the gap between the electricity consumption and the associated emissions is growing. This gap will increase as the grid gets cleaner and Council purchases more renewable electricity.



**Figure 3: Electricity consumption data measured by our electricity retailers and associated CO2-e emissions, the gap between consumption (measured in MWh) and emissions (measured in CO2-e) will continue to grow as the grid becomes cleaner and Council purchases more renewable electricity.**

Council is preparing to install rooftop solar at the Manning Aquatic & Leisure Centre as well as the Great Lakes Aquatic Centre. The new rooftop systems will provide most of the energy required to operate the centres during the middle of the day. Aquatic Centres consume significant amounts of electricity for pumping, filtering and heating water. Detailed system designs have been developed for the installation of these systems and work is expected to be completed in the 2024/25 financial year.

The Water & Systems Team have also undertaken a study on an improved filter cleaning process at Tea Gardens Water Treatment Plant. The study resulted in an improved pumping efficiency of 23% and will result in 38.9 MWh per year in energy savings when one filter has been cleaned. A second filter onsite is due to be cleaned in coming months and will further improve efficiency and energy savings.

It is likely that despite energy efficiency and behind the meter renewable energy projects, Council's total electricity consumption will increase in the medium and long term. Electrification of vehicles and an increase in population will continue to drive energy consumption up. Purchasing renewable electricity will mean that even if Council's electricity consumption grows, the emissions from electricity will not grow.

## **Fugitive emissions from sewage treatment**

The treatment of sewage at Council's sewage treatment plants results in greenhouse gas emissions. During the process of treating sewage, nitrous oxides, methane and carbon dioxide are released as gases. The term Fugitive Emissions is used to describe emissions that 'leak' from a site, rather than as a result on burning a fossil fuel. (landfill gas emissions are also a fugitive emission). These gases are released into the atmosphere and contribute to the enhanced greenhouse gas effect. Due to the nature of Council's sewage treatment network, most of the treatment plants are relatively small in scale and greenhouse gas reduction technologies are not technically or financially viable. Council will continue to monitor the

industry for new and improved technologies that could assist in the future to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from these sites.

## **Fuel emissions**

The CO<sub>2</sub>-e emissions from Council's fleet (including passenger vehicles, light commercial vehicles [LCVs] and trucks) has remained steady over the last 12 months. The Fleet Team is continuing to consider CO<sub>2</sub>-e emissions in fleet asset procurement decisions. Currently there is a very limited range of lower emission options for LCVs and trucks with none considered suitable for Council. Electric and hydrogen trucks are not considered to be practical at this stage.

There is continued development of vehicle technology to support fleet emissions reduction. Ongoing industry monitoring by Council including involvement in relevant industry associations will help identify suitable opportunities. This includes trialling EVs that could replace ICE vehicles.

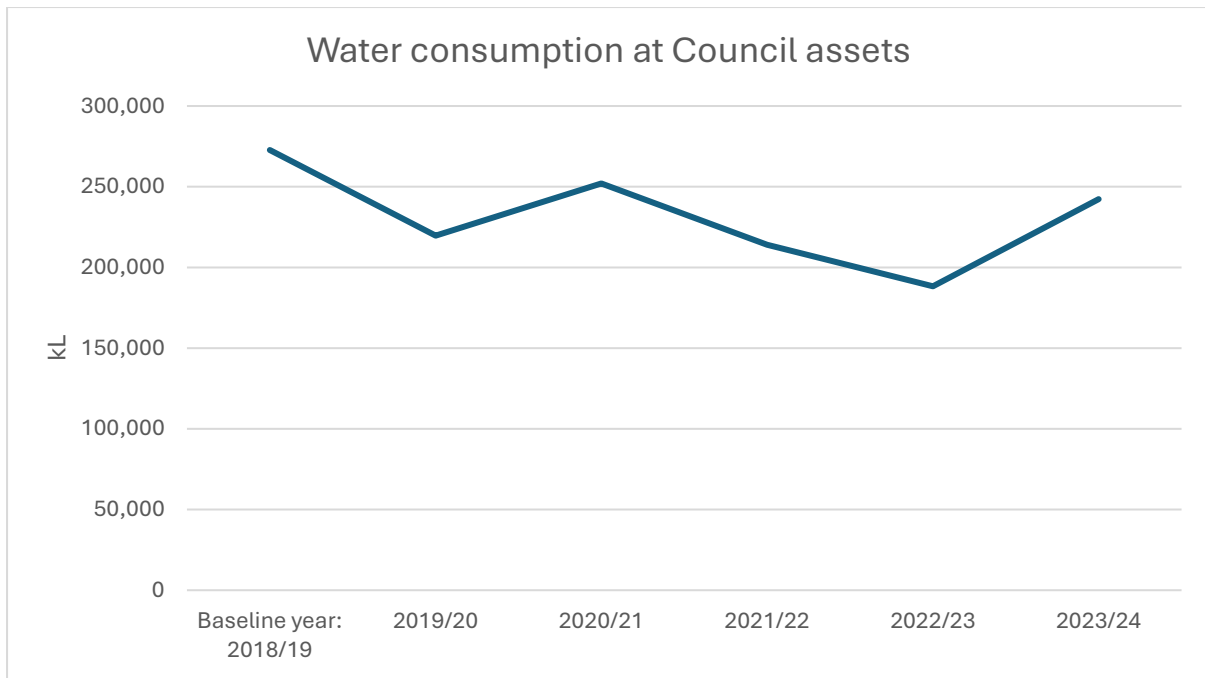
In the passenger vehicle fleet there has been an increase in the selection of hybrid vehicles. The proportion of the passenger fleet comprised of BEV, HEV and PHEV vehicles has more than doubled (from 6% to 14% in the last reporting period) and work is in progress to support the ongoing increase of this metric through improved staff awareness and appropriate policy changes. This transition will contribute to reduced fuel use and emissions.

Council's operational staff are increasingly using battery powered electric power tools. These tools do not rely on petrol for power and as such, are quieter, safer and easier to use. Battery technology continues to improve and become available in more and more commercial applications. Some of the benefits to staff include no fumes, less vibration, less noise, easier to start, no need to carry fuels, reduced disturbance to residents and businesses and the ability for the batteries to be used on multiple tools.

The batteries for these tools are charged overnight and last the full day while staff work. Chainsaws, leaf blowers, hedgers, pole pruners and whipper snippers are all being used with very positive feedback from the staff who are using them.

## **Water Consumption**

Water consumption at Council assets has been declining since the 2018/19 baseline. Weather conditions have contributed to a decrease in water consumption through a decrease in irrigation requirements and reduced evaporation. Council has also increased smart metering which helps detect leaks and prevent wastage. Although the 2023/24 financial year saw an increase from 2022/23, the overall trend is still decreasing.



**Figure 5: Downward trend in water consumption driven by weather conditions and water efficiency measures.**

## Water Conservation – Leak Detection

As part of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) Regional Leak Detection Program, Council completed its second annual review across approximately 500 km of mains assets. Theoretical system wide leaks in the magnitude of 7.4 ML / week were identified through the use of audible leak detection technology. As at the end of August 2024, 110 of 112 identified leaks had rectification works completed. Some 52 private leaks were also identified, with over half having been confirmed repaired by customers.

As part of the MidCoast Council Holiday Park Community of Practice, its 22 member parks are engaged with water conservation, efficiency and awareness programs. Leveraging data loggers to track their water consumption, they are also alerted of leaks; the average leak rate ending June 2023 was 4.6L / min / site from the high in January of 14.3 L / min / site. This significant reduction was largely achieved through two holiday parks finding and repairing several large leaks, alongside the continued incremental improvements in several other parks.

A reduction in water leaks indirectly results in a reduction in emissions as less potable water is required to be produced at the water treatment plants, saving energy at the treatment plant and pumping stations.

## Consultation

This report was prepared in consultation with the members of Council's Climate Change Project Control Group and Sustainability Working Group.

## **Community Impacts**

While the Climate Change Strategy largely focuses on addressing Council's carbon emissions and climate change risks, Council does recognise through its June 2019 resolution and climate emergency declaration the important role of government in building the capacity of the community and households to take their own action. The first step in influencing the community to take action is for Council to lead by example which can be demonstrated by adopting emission reduction and renewable energy targets and undertaking measures to reduce its own carbon footprint.

Council has facilitated the installation of electric vehicle charging stations at Wynter Street, Taree. The 12 electric vehicle charging bays will attract travellers from the Pacific Highway to visit Taree. The location for these chargers was selected based on available space for the supporting transformers and proximity to shops.

Council will focus on supporting the community to reduce its own emissions as part of its Phase 2 work on the community's climate change response. This will encompass action around strategic planning, education and capacity building, advocacy and collaboration, infrastructure development and land use planning.

Council's Senior Sustainability and Climate Change Officer has recently undertaken a community workshop at the Taree University Campus. The workshop discussed climate change, the carbon cycle and actions that Council and the community can take to address the current carbon imbalance.

## **Governance**

The Climate Change Project Control Group has been working within Council to better coordinate Council's response to climate change including the implementation of the Climate Change Strategy.

Council has recently undertaken an Internal Audit process to review our response to climate change and climate risks. Outcomes of this process are guiding our ongoing response to climate change and the risks posed to Council assets and the community.

During 2023-24 Council continued its participation in the NSW Government's Sustainability Advantage and Sustainable Choice Programs. Council has also been working closely with the Hunter JO on several sustainability working groups that will strengthen our sustainability performance.

# Alignment with MidCoast Community Strategic Plan

Actions to reduce Council's carbon emissions align with the outcomes and strategies outlined in Council's Community Strategic Plan, specifically:

**Community Outcome 2:** *An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments.*

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

**Strategic Objective 2.3:** *Council works towards net zero emissions.*

**2.3.1** *Incorporate renewable energy and energy efficiency in future design and planning*

**2.3.2** *Promote energy and resource efficiency initiatives to our community*

**2.3.3** *Invest in renewable energy efficient measures, power purchasing agreements and carbon sequestration*

**2.3.4** *Minimise waste through education, reduction, reuse, recycling and repurposing*

Climate Change is also one of five key areas of importance that are addressed in the service statements throughout Council's current Delivery Program and Operational Plan, particularly in relation to waste, fleet, energy efficient streetlighting and the installation of renewable energy systems such as solar PV.



06

STATE OF THE  
MIDCOAST 2024





### **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.

## How to contact us

Taree	Forster	Gloucester	Stroud	Tea Gardens
Yalawanyi Ganya 2 Biripi Way Taree NSW 2430	4 Lake Street Forster NSW 2428	89 King Street Gloucester NSW 2422	6 Church Lane Stroud NSW 2425	Myall Street Tea Gardens NSW 2324
Monday to Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm	Monday to Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm	Monday to Friday 9:00am - 4:00pm	Monday to Friday 9:00am - 12:00pm	Monday to Friday 9:00am - 4:00pm

### Phone

General enquiries: 02 7955 7777

Water and sewer faults: 1300 133 455 (24 hours)

### Email

[council@midcoast.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@midcoast.nsw.gov.au)

### Web

[www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au](http://www.midcoast.nsw.gov.au)

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# Introduction

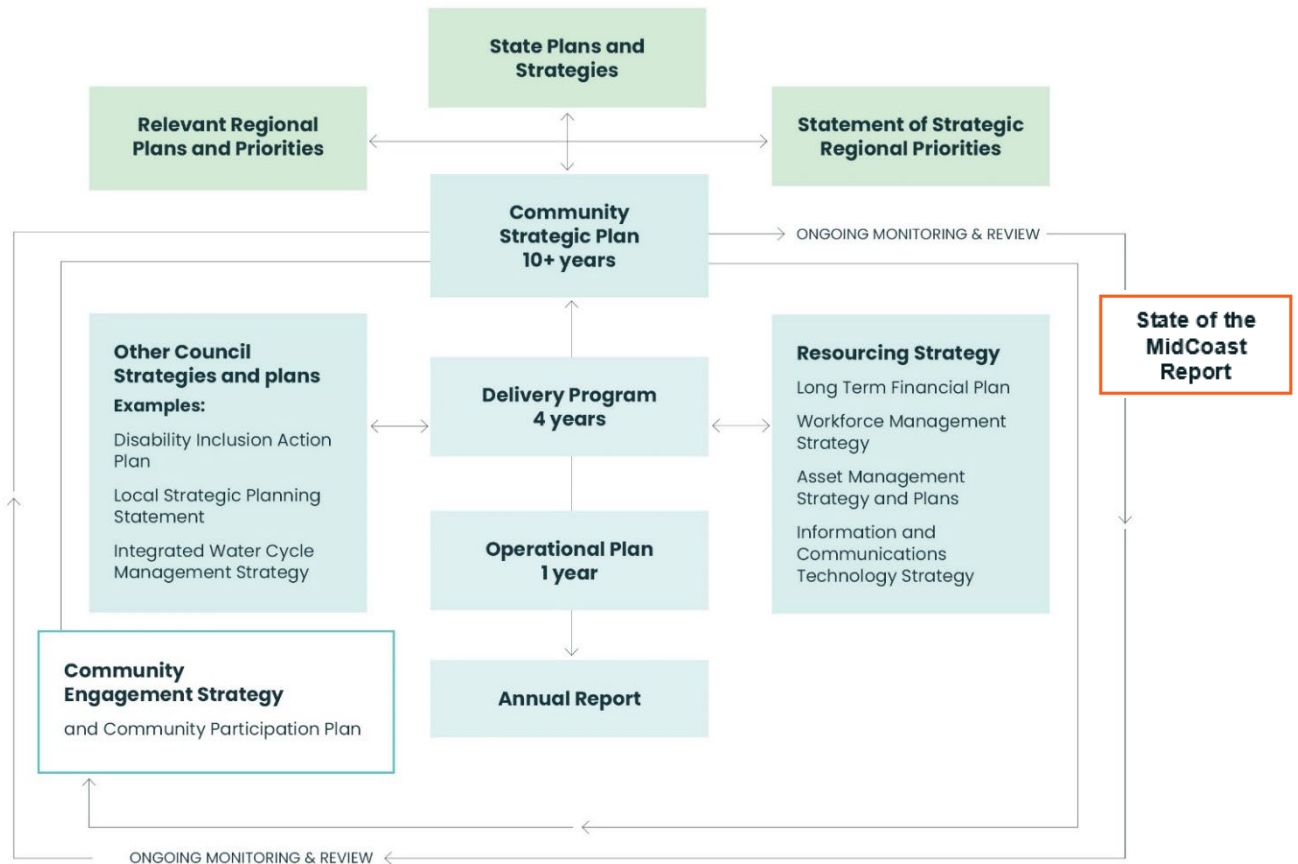
The State of the MidCoast Report is prepared in accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework (as shown below) and legislative requirements under the *Local Government Act 1993*.

The purpose of the State of the MidCoast Report is to provide an update on the progress towards achieving the long-term community vision as described in the Community Strategic Plan (CSP). It outlines the progress Council and other stakeholders have made against the social, environmental, economic and civic leadership objectives identified in the CSP over the previous Council term (December 2021 to September 2024). We recommend reading this report in conjunction with the [MidCoast Community Strategic Plan 2032](#).

In line with the framework below, Council also reports on the progress of activities in our Delivery Program and Operational Plan through six monthly Delivery Program Progress Reports and in our Annual Reports.

*Note: The State of the MidCoast report generally covers a four-year period which is the usual length of a Council term. The delay in the 2020 Local Government elections due to the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a reduced Council term.*

For more information visit: [www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/integrated-planning-and-reporting/](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/integrated-planning-and-reporting/)



# Our MidCoast

Home to an estimated resident population of 97,909 (ABS ERP 2023), the MidCoast region offers our diverse community a wide range of lifestyle opportunities.

Located on the mid north coast of NSW, the geographical area of the MidCoast local government area covers more than 10,000 km<sup>2</sup> and extends from the coastline, west to the escarpment of the Great Dividing Range. The Gathang-speaking people are the traditional owners of the land.

The region is well known for its natural beauty and is a key holiday destination that attracts over 2 million tourists and visitors each year. The area spans from sparkling beaches on the coast to mountains in the hinterland, with expansive national parks and green spaces in between. It includes the Manning River valley, the Wallis, Smiths and Myall Lakes systems, the northern foreshore of Port Stephens, the agricultural hinterland and rugged, forested ranges of the Woko and Tapin Tops National Parks, and the World Heritage-listed Barrington Tops National Park.

These natural features contribute to our lifestyles, livelihoods and wellbeing, and protecting and celebrating them is an important focus for our future.



Image: Map of MidCoast Local Government Area (LGA)

# Strategic Direction

The following summary of the MidCoast Community Strategic Plan 2032 outlines the community's aspirations for the future of the MidCoast Local Government Area (LGA) over the 10-year period from 2022-2032.

## Our Community's Vision

The vision describes what the MidCoast community wants our region to be in the future:

*MidCoast is 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 Community Outcomes, Strategic Objectives and Strategies

**Community Outcomes:** The community outcomes are the big picture results that we will keep in sight and focus on achieving. They align with the four themes of the quadruple bottom line: social, environment, economic and civic leadership. The purpose of using these themes is to make sure that everything is considered in a balanced and sustainable way. The community values were used to shape the community outcomes.

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework requires that a Council's Community Strategic Plan addresses social, environmental, economic and civic leadership issues in an integrated and sustainable way. This is known as the 'quadruple bottom line' principle.

**Strategic Objectives:** These are the long-term priorities that define what the community's long-term vision will look like once it is achieved. The purpose is to answer the question 'where does the community want to be in 10 years' time?'

**Strategies:** These describe how the strategic objectives will be achieved. In other words, 'How will we get there?'. These strategies are further expanded with specific and measurable actions, timeframes and responsibilities in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

### Community Outcome 1: A resilient and socially connected community

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

### Community Outcome 2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments

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

### Community Outcome 3: A thriving and strong economy

A strong regional economy that supports business and jobs growth.

### Community Outcome 4: Strong leadership and good governance

Council is focused on being sustainable, well-governed, and delivering the best outcomes for the community.

## How to read this report

The report shows the progress made towards achieving the high-level strategies and objectives identified in the CSP. While Council has a custodial role in initiating, preparing and maintaining the CSP on behalf of the local government area, it is not wholly responsible for its implementation.

The structure of the report is set out by each Community Outcome area in the CSP. For each community outcome, we provide highlights related to the strategic objectives with a summary of progress for each of the strategies we have employed to help us reach these objectives.

This report tracks progress against the baseline toward the desired targets. The results are obtained from a variety of sources including Council's Community Satisfaction Survey, MidCoast Councils audited Financial Statements and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Where performance results are sourced from the Community Satisfaction Survey an asterisk (\*) has been added to the Performance Indicator/Measure. The Baseline is from the February 2020 survey and the Performance Results 2023-24 are from the August 2023 survey. The results of these surveys are subjective and measure a respondent's feelings, attitudes and perceptions.


















# OUR PROGRESS

## **Community Outcome 1:**

A resilient and socially connected community



<p><b>55</b> community halls</p> 	<p> <b>9</b> patrolled beaches</p>	<p><b>9%</b> need daily help</p>  <p>due to living with disability</p>	 <b>1</b> entertainment centre
<p><b>1</b> regional art gallery</p> 	<p><b>42%</b> aged over 60</p> 	 <b>11</b> libraries	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>protected aboriginal places</p>
<p><b>15.7%</b> volunteer</p> 	 <b>76</b> playgrounds	<p><b>5</b> hospitals</p> 	<p><b>7.3%</b> identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander</p> 
 <b>9</b> public swimming pools	<p><b>10.1%</b> born overseas</p> 	 <b>71</b> full size playing fields	<p><b>14</b> heritage conservation areas</p> 

# 1.1 We celebrate our history, culture, creativity and diversity

## NAIDOC funding and celebrations

Across every generation, Aboriginal Elders have played an important role in communities and families. Many NAIDOC events celebrate our Elders as cultural knowledge holders, trailblazers, nurturers, advocates, teachers, survivors, leaders, workers and loved ones.

MidCoast Council continued to support NAIDOC community events through its NAIDOC Grants program which provided \$16,000 each year in support for four community-led events in both 2023 and 2024.

The events consisted of community days with cultural activities, markets and workshops across the region to inspire and celebrate the richness of our Aboriginal heritage and culture.

The NAIDOC Forster Tobwabba Aboriginal Community Event, Taree Purfleet, Gloucester & Tea Gardens Events were held during July each year.

Celebrations also included a community basketball shootout, youth discos, 'Koorioke' events, a church service, an outdoor corroboree at Saltwater National Park and a flag raising ceremony.



## Preserving local history



We have continued to celebrate and support the preservation of local heritage through our Local Heritage Fund. This is a collaboration of funding between Council and Heritage NSW.

Each year grants of up to \$2,000 are available for eligible property owners.

Projects included painting and repairs to commercial and community buildings in Taree and the restoration of heritage houses in Gloucester, Wingham, Booral, Stroud, Taree and Coopernook. The historic Cundletown Post Office was funded for roof and gutter replacement.

Significant heritage restoration was undertaken by Council on the Wingham Library (pictured) which was officially re-opened in August 2023. Extensions and the addition of a lift improved access to the library, re-establishing the first floor for community use. All works retained the heritage features of the library.



## Funding for arts

The pilot MidCoast Arts Support Program was rolled out with grant funding of \$14,920 allocated across four projects. The program aims to enhance opportunities for artists to contribute to a thriving community through a public art project, an idea for a creative industry development workshop or a way our community can learn and participate in caring for Country.

## Summary of our progress

### 1.1.1 Celebrate, acknowledge and empower our local Aboriginal heritage through sharing of art, stories, history and places

First Nations theatre was promoted at the Manning Entertainment Centre (MEC) through our entrepreneurial program, by providing workshops and other engagement opportunities for local arts practitioners, offering excursion and incursions for local schools and offering a selection of tickets to elders where possible.

The Manning Regional Art Gallery and library services held programs and initiatives that recognise culture and place. Programs included the *'Home: Aboriginal Art from NSW'* program which is a partnership between Wiradjuri community at Wagga Wagga, The Arts Unit, NSW Department of Education, Wagga Wagga Art Gallery and the Art Gallery of NSW, and connects schools to local Aboriginal artists, community, language and culture and *'Saltwater Freshwater arts'* A showcase of Aboriginal art and contemporary cultural objects from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island artists who reside in the Worimi, Biripi, Dughutti and Gumbaynggirr nations.

### 1.1.2 Foster a welcoming community where everyone feels included and where cultural diversity is appreciated and valued

Our Community Inclusion and Wellbeing Reference Group continued to provide feedback to assist Council in making the MidCoast an accessible, inclusive and cohesive community, where all people can participate fully in community life, regardless of their age, ability or background.

As an action implemented from the MidCoast Aboriginal Action Plan Council's first Aboriginal reference group was formed. The reference group will support a collaborative approach between Council and the local Aboriginal community to achieve outcomes across the six key focus areas in the Aboriginal Action Plan.

Council continues to maintain our strong relationship with the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) who invest in our Council to deliver on strategies in the Aboriginal Action Plan and Youth Action Plan.

In our libraries we highlighted books in languages other than English to celebrate the cultural diversity of our community.

### 1.1.3 Encourage community connection by supporting and delivering a diverse range of cultural, creative and community programs and events

Cultural diversity was celebrated at the MEC with performances by the Soweto Gospel Choir (South Africa), Mother Africa, a number of touring Irish groups and the staging of the Indian Cultural Festival. The Taree Film Society presented movies in the Beryl Jane Flett Studio focusing on content from different perspectives and cultures.

The 29th annual Taree Envirofair and Multicultural Festival returned in 2023 after a four-year hiatus due to COVID-19. The festival included multicultural dance and music performances as well as cultural food stalls.

The *'Home'* program mentioned above connects professional Aboriginal artists, students and teachers with local Aboriginal community, regional galleries and the Art Gallery of NSW to explore cultural practice, language and artmaking. It is a series of workshops, virtual excursions and a teaching and learning program for primary students culminating in an exhibition at the Manning Regional Art Gallery.

**1.1.3 Encourage community connection by supporting and delivering a diverse range of cultural, creative and community programs and events *(continued)***

Council progressed the implementation of the MidCoast Cultural Plan 2036 and has made a direct investment into future growth of our cultural spaces and activities in supporting a Cultural Officer role, investment in the Beryl Jane Flett Studio and Art gallery upgrades.

**1.1.4 Celebrate and preserve the unique and distinctive character, history and cultural heritage of our towns, villages and significant places**

There are almost 550 heritage places and 14 heritage conservation areas listed across the MidCoast Council area which are eligible for funding through the Local Heritage Fund program. Council supported 15 projects with a total contribution of \$29,000.

## **1.2 We have access to a wide range of services and activities that contribute to the wellbeing of all members of our community**

### **Tuncurry water playground**

Following engagement with the community between July and August 2017 a decision was made to repurpose the Tuncurry pool and construct an accessible water playground.

The Tuncurry Water Playground opened in September 2023 and was designed with inclusivity at the forefront of the design process.

The playground recycles the water on site and includes a fully accessible amenities block with a disability hoist and an all-age change table.



### **Home library services**

Our Home Library Service supports local residents with mobility issues to access the library service from their home.

Across the region the service continued to grow with a substantial increase in home library membership over the past 12 months of 12.77% in the Manning population catchment, and 45.5% in the Great Lakes population catchment.



### **Accessibility at the Manning Entertainment Centre**

Council implemented accessibility upgrades to the Manning Entertainment Centre.

Completed works include footpath, lighting and carpark upgrades and the installation of automatic main entry front doors.

A wheelchair lift to provide access to the main stage for people using wheelchairs has also been purchased.



## Summary of Our Progress

### 1.2.1 Provide accessible and safe local community spaces and facilities

In October 2023 the Forster Library was re-located to the new Forster Civic Centre. This larger space is over double the size of the previous Forster Library, and now has the space to meet the demands of the expanding population in the area.

Significant works were undertaken at the Nabiac Showground Hall which improved safety and access, including upgrades to the kitchen and emergency exits and improved disabled amenities. The project was jointly funded by Council and the Federal Government.

New grandstand seating was installed at the Bert Gallagher Field in Gloucester with grant funding from the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund. The grandstand includes an accessible seating area and provides seating for 300 spectators.

Council adopted the Tree Maintenance on Council-managed Land Policy to better manage the risks to our community associated with trees on land managed and controlled by MidCoast Council.

### 1.2.2 Deliver services and facilities to support the ageing population and people with disabilities

We have continued to invest in enhancing service offerings in our libraries by installing computers that have accessibility features, wheelchair accessible loan kiosks, a new audio book service and continued provision of large-print books, audiobooks, DVD and CD collections, which assist people with vision impairment and low literacy to access resources.

We implemented year one actions from the Ageing Strategy and Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) in consultation with stakeholders. We celebrated the 2024 NSW Seniors Festival through activities held at our libraries and gallery and a tour of Cattai Wetlands.

The MidCoast Dementia Friendly project commenced in August 2023 and is working towards creating a dementia-friendly community. Dementia Alliance groups have been established in Taree, Forster, Gloucester and Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest.

### 1.2.3 Strengthen the capacity of our young people to participate and thrive in community life

In 2023 we evaluated the Youth Strategic Plan (YSP), through a consultation process that included meeting with the youth sector to discuss focus areas, one on one interviews with service providers to gain feedback on the influence of the strategy and a survey with service providers to measure YSP related outcomes. A comprehensive evaluation report was completed through this process. The report has been useful in helping Council to better understand the needs of young people in the MidCoast and has helped inform the consultation for the next iteration of the YSP.

We continued to celebrate Youth Week, with a wide range of activities delivered across the MidCoast. The Youth Week activities were planned in consultation with young people across the LGA including headspace's Youth Reference Group, and students from Bulahdelah Central School and Gloucester High School. Young people were also involved in the delivery of a number of the events.

12 school holiday programs were held in library sites, wetlands, Council reserves and the gallery to engage young people and their families in civic life.

#### 1.2.4 Provide learning hubs to support learning opportunities

New community partnerships were developed to deliver learning, literacy and cultural outcomes. Partnerships were formed including the Taree Universities Campus HSC Study Partnership, Forster Fellas Partnership, Great Lakes Women's Shed Partnership and the Forster Knit & Spin Partnership.

#### 1.2.5 Advocate for regional health services to meet demand

The Mayor and General Manager met with community groups including the Manning Great Lakes Community Health Action Group and Bulahdelah and District Health Action Group to hear first-hand what health facilities and services are needed in the MidCoast region to meet current demand.

They have also met with representatives from the Hunter New England Local Health District and the Manning Base Hospital to advocate for upgraded facilities.

They have advocated for improved funding for hospital services to:

- The Hon. Chris Minns, MP, Premier
- The Hon. Daniel Mookhey, MLC, Treasurer
- The Hon. Courtney Houssos, MLC, Minister for Finance
- The Hon. Emily Suvaal, MLC, Duty MLC for Myall Lakes
- The Hon. Ryan Park MP, Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health
- The Hon. Tara Moriarty, MLC, Minister for Regional NSW
- The Hon. Yasmin Catley MP, Minister for the Hunter
- The Hon. Matt Kean, MP, Shadow Minister for Health
- The Hon. Bronnie Taylor MP, Shadow Minister for Regional Health
- Dr David Layzell MP, Member for Upper Hunter
- Mrs Leslie Williams, Member for Port Macquarie
- Mrs Kate Washington, Member for Port Stephens

The Mayor has also attended various events hosted by health-related community groups to show her support and to understand the issues.



## 1.3 We work towards being a sustainable, resilient and socially connected community

### Resilient connections

Council supported the establishment of the Small Communities Supporting Each Other (SCSEO) network which comprises representatives from over 30 communities, the RFS, SES and NSW Reconstruction Authority, who have self-identified the value of sharing community preparedness strategies.

The network held workshops regarding disaster resilient communications. When natural disasters cause prolonged power outages, communities struggle to stay connected as many mobile phone networks are down and other mainstream telecommunication options require a dedicated power supply to stay operational. UHF radios were found to be the most practical alternative telecommunications technology available to community groups and individual community members.

MidCoast Council's Community Recovery Officer facilitated a partnership with 14 communities in the SCSEO network and Taree Lions Club to provide fixed UHF radios, masts, antennas and batteries. Lions committed over \$20,000 in funding for the installation of the UHF infrastructure.

Communities supported by this funding included Killabakh, Upper Lansdowne, Lansdowne, Marlee, Wherrol Flat, Burrell Creek, Harrington, Mitchells Island, Oxley Island, Hannam Vale, Moorall Creek, and Mount George.



*Floodplains near Mt George*

## Summary of our progress

### 1.3.1 Encourage and support volunteering to enable community participation opportunities

As part of Council's Volunteer Framework, we created a volunteer database to ensure we had accurate information on the number of Council's active volunteers. This review found we have 1614 volunteers, and that they are mainly working in outdoor spaces. This database is integral to ensuring the future safety, supervision and education for Council's volunteers.

Council's volunteers are essential across various operations, including parks and recreation, libraries, the MEC, the Manning Regional Gallery, community halls, and local heritage. They maintain public spaces, assist in libraries, serve at the MEC, support gallery activities, manage community halls, and contribute to historical societies.

We continued to celebrate the contribution our volunteers make to our community by holding four annual volunteer recognition events with the 2024 event attended by 192 volunteers.

Local volunteer Ted Bickford was awarded at the NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards for his commitment to the removal of Graffiti in the MidCoast area. Ted has developed a relationship with local youth to put a stop to graffiti in the area.

### 1.3.2 Support communities to identify priorities to ensure they are sustainable into the future

Over the term Council's Community Recovery Officer led the Local Community Resilience Network. This network of disaster recovery providers collaborated on community recovery works and completed the MidCoast Pre-event Disaster Recovery Plan, stepping out how recovery organisations will work together for future recovery operations.

### 1.3.3 Strengthen social connectedness through programs and partnerships with community groups, government agencies and other service providers

The MidCoast Arts, Culture & Environment team was reformed as the MidCoast Youth Action Collective in 2024 and continues to provide a consistent platform for young people across the MidCoast to have a voice and share their opinions and perspective on community issues. The group aims to increase youth participation in community and civic life and provide young people with opportunities to connect with service providers and the community, develop their skills, and take part in organising and leading initiatives for young people. The group is delivered in partnership with MidCoast Council, Mid North Coast Community College, Taree Universities Campus, Manning Support Services, Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group and Catholic Care.

Council partnered with Dementia Australia in working towards making the MidCoast a dementia-friendly community by holding workshops throughout the Region.

### **1.3.3 Strengthen social connectedness through programs and partnerships with community groups, government agencies and other service providers (continued)**

A community planting day, planting flora that provides bush tucker, was held at Minimbah Reserve in Gloucester with support from Deadly Ed. The project aimed to restore Indigenous significance in the reserve and provide educational resources that present and future generations can learn from.

Council continued to assist organisations to connect through facilitating Community Interagency meetings. A total of nineteen meetings enabled over 50 agencies to regularly engage and network over the past three years. These collaborative events enabled service providers to identify needs and gaps and facilitated referrals and partnerships to benefit the community.

As a condition of the 2011 Development Approval for the Duralie Coal Mine near Stroud, Duralie Coal was required to make developer contributions to fund community projects in the area in which the mine operated. While the mine has ceased operating, Council continued to administer the Community Fund to benefit community projects in the Stroud, Stroud Road and Wards River areas. The fund is now exhausted with \$284,202 being allocated to 14 community projects over the last three years.

The Community Donations Policy continued to be administered, providing \$405,433 in financial support to community groups for capacity building activities across the following funding streams:

- Annual Donation
- Seed Funding
- Small Donations
- Recurrent funding (Rates & Fixed)

### **1.3.4 Support individuals, families and communities to prepare, respond and recover from natural disasters or emergency events**

Our Bushfire Safety Campaign 'The Preparation to Resilience Project' reached almost 10,000 residents over 15 months. The campaign was funded through the Federal Government Black Summer Bushfire Recovery Program. We held more than 70 workshops throughout the MidCoast region through libraries assisting residents to write a plan to prepare for any future disasters.

Over \$1.4 million dollars of grant funding was used to make upgrades and improvements to 23 Council owned and 32 community-owned halls, including electrical upgrades, water supply, storage and toilet facilities. Community halls are a focal point for communities during natural disasters. The funding was provided through the Australian Government's Bushfire Recovery Exceptional Assistance Immediate Support Package.

Following the declaration of the MidCoast as a disaster-impacted region in July of 2022, we partnered with organisations to provide face-to-face support at Disaster Recovery Hubs to affected people and businesses across the MidCoast.

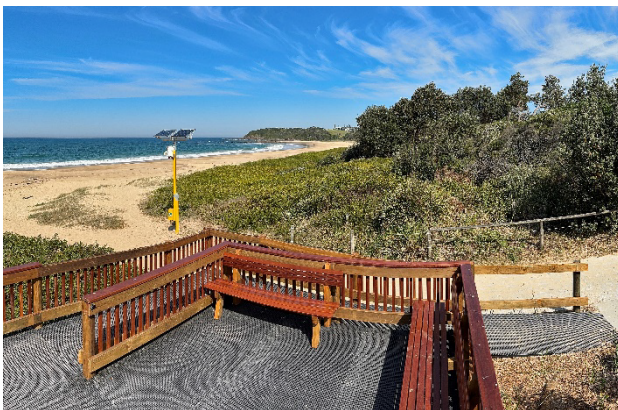
In partnership with the Red Cross, we delivered four resilience workshops on cultural weaving to educate on disaster preparedness.

## 1.4 We protect the health and safety of our communities

### Providing safer access

Upgrades were made to boardwalks and viewing platforms in our area to improve accessibility (pictured below).

- Diamond Beach viewing platform
- Browns Creek walkway
- Pelican Boardwalk Forster



## Summary of our progress

### 1.4.1 Uphold public health and safety standards and increase the capacity of our community to understand and meet them

Council's Environmental Health Officers held a series of free Food Safety seminars designed for both business owners and their staff. They also held a community group seminar at the Gloucester Country Women's Association Hall in July 2023, which was attended by nearly 100 participants from 21 groups. These seminars were delivered to inform the community about recent changes to food safety rules including the new food standards code.

Over the term 100% of food outlets, hairdressers, beauticians, tattooists and retail outlets in the LGA that were assessed as high risk were inspected for compliance.

Currently, there are 418 food businesses in the MidCoast Council area categorised as high or medium risk, requiring bi-annual or annual inspections. During the reporting period, Council's Environmental Health Officers completed 485 initial inspections and conducted various follow-up activities. Approximately 91% of businesses achieved a 5-star (excellent) or 4-star (very good) rating based on the 'Scores on Doors' system.

In May 2023 we partnered with Animal Welfare League NSW to assist with the registration of companion animals. The Animal Welfare League brought a mobile vet truck to the Taree Showground to microchip and vaccinate the animals.

Alcohol Free Zones and Alcohol Prohibited Areas were re-established in eight areas across the region. These were implemented in accordance with the Local Government Act and used to help police and Council rangers enforce inappropriate behaviour across the region. These were re-established in consultation with the Police, Liquor Accords, community, Councillors and staff to ensure that they are established in appropriate areas with the aim of increasing public safety.

### 1.4.2 Provide safe and sustainable networks of water, sewer and stormwater systems to meet community needs and health and safety standards

As of June 2024, our overall Drinking Water Quality Compliance was at 99.7% under the Australian Drinking water guidelines.

The quality of the treated effluent that was discharged complied with 99.6% of our EPA licence conditions.

Our Sewer Inflow & Infiltration Reduction Program targeted sewer catchments in Taree, Cundletown and Harrington. The program has resulted in significant reduction of wastewater flows during wet weather reducing the instances and risk of overflows in these catchments.

Programmed water and sewer asset renewals have been delivered as reported monthly to Council.

Under the MidCoast Onsite Sewage Management (OSSM) Strategy approximately 500 high risk systems were inspected in 2024 and remedial action was undertaken.

Our stormwater program resulted in 75km of stormwater pipelines being inspected using CCTV camera systems. Over 1100 Drainage related requests were responded to during the year.

Pipe-relining/repairs were completed at Strand Street and Burrawong Place, Forster and Palanas Drive, Taree.

#### **1.4.2 Provide safe and sustainable networks of water, sewer and stormwater systems to meet community needs and health and safety standards (continued)**

Drainage system improvements were completed in:

- Pervil Street and Alpine Drive, Tinonee
- Elliot Street and Craven Close, Gloucester
- Napunyah Drive, Taree
- Tiri Road, Tiri
- Lethbridge Street, Elizabeth Beach
- Blue Gum and Eucalypt Close, Wingham
- Cove Boulevard and Promontory Way, North Arm Cove
- Headland Drive and Belbowrie Avenue, Boomerang Beach
- Peace Parade and Cunningham Street, Pindimar
- Macquarie and West Street, Coopersnook
- Jubilee Parade, Dune Springs Drive and Saltwater Crescent, Diamond Beach
- Banksia Street, Blueys Beach
- Maslin Close, Red Head
- Oceanic Place, Old Bar
- Coastal View Drive, Tallwoods Village

#### **1.4.3 Encourage physical health and fitness and social connectedness by providing safe and appropriate recreational facilities**

The Tuncurry Water Playground which opened in September 2023 is an all-age, all-ability water splash pad with a water slide, water tower and active water play equipment. The playground is designed with no standing water to exclude the need for lifeguards.

Resurfacing works were completed to the ageing courts at Nancy Smith Netball Complex, with grant funding from the Australian Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.

During peak periods our surf club volunteers and/or Council's contracted service provider (Australian Lifeguard Services) provided surf lifesaving patrols across Bennetts, Blackhead, Boomerang, Crowdy Head, Elizabeth, Forster Main and One Mile Beaches. Over the 2022 and 2023 seasons over 220,000 people were recorded each year visiting MidCoast Council beaches during lifeguard patrols with a total of 84 rescues performed and 435 first aid responses recorded over the reporting period.

We also undertook a review of swimming pool operations across Council's nine swimming pools to ensure that an appropriate and consistent level of service is being provided to the community.

We continued our maintenance of the eight ocean baths/estuary swimming pools across the region.

# Community Outcome 1: challenges and future opportunities

**Funding challenges** - Funding community development and cultural programs is an ongoing challenge for Council.

Funding for the Resilience and Recovery Program concluded in June 2024, limiting Council's ability to provide ongoing support and resources to help the community prepare for future natural disasters and emergency situations. Council is reliant on government funding being made available in the future when these events occur which is a reactive rather than proactive approach.

Many of Council's community development projects are supported through funding from the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). The DCJ currently funds positions within Council that are integral to supporting young people and Aboriginal people across the MidCoast. The funding contracts expire in 2025. Should DCJ redirect or not renew funding for these positions, Council will need to fund these positions by seeking alternative opportunities or reconsider the delivery of these services. This includes the delivery of actions identified in the Aboriginal Action Plan to develop, grow knowledge of, and incorporate Aboriginal culture across various facets of Council operations and in the community.

There has also been a decrease in cultural funding from the NSW Government to regional areas as funds have been redirected to other projects. Council will continue to pursue opportunities to become more self-reliant in funding its community development and cultural activities. This will include:

- Exploring partnership and sponsorship opportunities to support cultural projects and facilities.
- Working with community stakeholders to access grant funding for collaborative community and cultural projects.
- Partnering with community support agencies to access available health funding to support the delivery of community assistance services.
- Building the capacity of community groups to access and improve their success in obtaining grant funding.

**Effectively managing Council volunteers** - Volunteers are critical to Council's ability to deliver a range of services across the LGA including maintenance of outdoor spaces and library services. With over 1600 volunteers (which is more than Council's paid workforce) and limited resources allocated to working with them we face challenges in ensuring the sustainability and safety of this important group.

**Facilitating equitable access to services and facilities across the region** - The combination of MidCoast's large geographic footprint, accessibility options and a concentration of services in larger townships to serve the 195 localities across the LGA makes it difficult for many of MidCoast's residents to access important services (such as health and education), employment opportunities and community facilities and events.

Council has an ongoing role to play in advocating for greater availability of health services and improved public/community transport across the region as well as improving mobility options (e.g. more cycleways and footpaths) for those people who do not have access to a motorised transport. Ongoing funding to improve the accessibility of community facilities and spaces is also crucial to ensuring that all residents can participate in community life.

**Impacts of weather events** - Over the term, Council was challenged to deliver and support the delivery of outdoor programs and events designed to connect the community, with events such as the 2024 Envirofair and the Emergency Services Expo being cancelled due to bad weather. With a significant amount of rain and a lack of large indoor spaces, these events could not proceed.

The forecasted increase in the frequency and severity of weather events will continue to impact Council's cultural assets and its ability to deliver community-connecting programs. Council will continue to explore emerging technologies to enhance service delivery and provide opportunities for the community to connect in non-traditional ways.

Extensive wet weather experienced during 2022, 2023 and 2024 has resulted in many sports field closures across the region impacting on community sporting competitions and events.

**Delivering and managing the LGA's expanding Open Space facilities** - Council adopted the MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy in July 2023 followed by a number of supporting strategies and plans. These documents set the future direction for these important community facilities across the region through to 2035. The delivery of actions within these strategies is largely reliant on grant funding.

Continuing to maintain and manage the increasing number of buildings and facilities within budgetary constraints is also challenging. Council is implementing a Community Assets Inspection policy and procedure to ensure that the state of these assets is maintained in a way to increase their service life.

**Opportunities** include exploring collaborative partnerships such as the Coastline Community Foundation where funding is provided to help school students attend education programs at MidCoast Council's cultural facilities, the Manning Regional Art Gallery, Manning Entertainment Centre, and Libraries.





# OUR PROGRESS

## **Community Outcome 2:**

An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments

<p>Area</p>  <p><b>10,052KM<sup>2</sup></b></p>	<p><b>192KM</b> of coastline</p> 	 <p><b>50,484</b> dwellings</p>	<p><b>7</b> waste management centres</p> 
 <p><b>826</b> parks and open space</p>	<p><b>13</b> major water catchments</p> 	 <p><b>14%</b> Council fleet EV</p>	<p><b>5</b> wetlands of national significance</p> 
 <p><b>9 BIL LITRES</b> annual water supplied</p>	 <p><b>\$816M</b> building approvals</p>	 <p><b>5</b> coastal lakes and lagoons</p>	<p><b>162</b> threatened species</p> 
 <p><b>58</b> national parks and reserves</p>	<p><b>45</b> water reservoirs</p> 	 <p><b>34</b> cemeteries</p>	 <p><b>14</b> sewage treatment plants</p>

## 2.1 We protect, manage and restore our natural environment and our biodiversity

### Keeping our koalas safe

In 2023 we entered a four-year regional partnership with the NSW Government to fund and support koala conservation in our area. Parts of the MidCoast local government area contain some of the highest densities of koalas in NSW.

Through the MidCoast Regional Koala Partnership we aim to provide more habitat for koalas, support local community action, improve koala safety and health, and build our knowledge to improve koala conservation.

So far through this partnership we have:

- Received 208 expressions of interest from landholders interested in undertaking koala conservation projects on their properties
- Conducted site visits at 108 properties with landholders interested in koala projects
- Planted 30,000 koala food trees
- Undertaken weed control on 250 ha of private property making more koala habitat available
- Given away 4500 trees to the community



Image: Peter Goonan

Continuing our community engagement around koala conservation, we also held a koala artwork competition for school aged children and a Speaking for the Planet event at the Forster Civic Centre.

On 26 June 2024 Councillors adopted the MidCoast Koala Conservation Strategy which guides us in our role as a regional partner.



## Summary of our Progress

### 2.1.1 Protect, maintain and rehabilitate natural areas

Our biosecurity program continued to focus on new and emerging species. In 2023 we were winners in the Invasive Species Management category at the Excellence in the Environment Awards organised by Local Government NSW for our 'Rapid response biosecurity program to eradicate Plume Poppy.'

The 'Smiths Lake Backyards for Biodiversity Program' involved inspections of urban properties to look for the presence of problematic weeds in backyards and work with landholders to treat and remove the plants. Key benefits of the program included successfully identifying priority weeds and engaging landholders with Council's biosecurity team.

We engaged the community to increase awareness of feral deer in our area with a focus on reporting sightings. This program was funded by Hunter Local Land Services and involved instating a control program across south Forster, Coomba Park, and Diamond Beach.

### 2.1.2 Encourage community involvement to care for our natural environment

Our Annual Waterway and Catchment Report Card is delivered in conjunction with the NSW Department of Planning and Environment to compare current conditions of our waterways with the condition we would like our waterways to be. We celebrated the release of the report card in 2023 by holding a water awareness workshop to educate the community on ways urban runoff pollutants can impact the water quality in our estuaries and how re-introducing natural processes such as raingardens can help protect them.

We continued to deliver community education on threatened species, such as the yellow-bellied glider, koala, Manning River turtle and included citizen science activities. The biosecurity team also attend multiple events to help engage the community on weed management issues.

### 2.1.3 Improve and maintain water quality for our beaches, lakes and waterways

Council conducted an audit and refurbished all gross pollutant traps. An asset management plan was developed establishing a maintenance cycle for the traps. An asset management system was also developed for water quality improvement bio-retention systems and constructed wetlands.

Wingham Wetland refurbishment works have commenced with a concept design developed, which is now ready to move to the construction phase. This work will see the replacement of a life expired water treatment wetland that treats urban stormwater from a large part of the Wingham CBD and urban area helping to improve water quality in Cedar Party Creek and the Manning River.

We have also completed a detailed design of the Dunns Creek Water Quality improvement system and commenced tendering. The system will improve stormwater discharge to Pipers Bay in Wallis Lake, with construction expected to commence in 2025.

Council continued the development of our Coastal Management Programs, with the Manning River Estuary Coastal Management Program completed in 2022. These programs are formed with the intention of improving and maintaining the water quality of beaches and lakes in these areas.

## 2.2 We understand and manage environment and climate change risks and impacts

### Assessing climate-related risks

Council participated in a Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils' project funded under the NSW Disaster Risk Reduction Fund to identify any gaps in Council's risk reduction and risk mitigation measures. Opportunities were also identified where MidCoast communities can implement place-based, pragmatic solutions to reduce local and regional risks and improve their disaster resilience.

Climate risks for Council were also reviewed as part of the periodic review of Council's Risk Management Framework in June 2024.

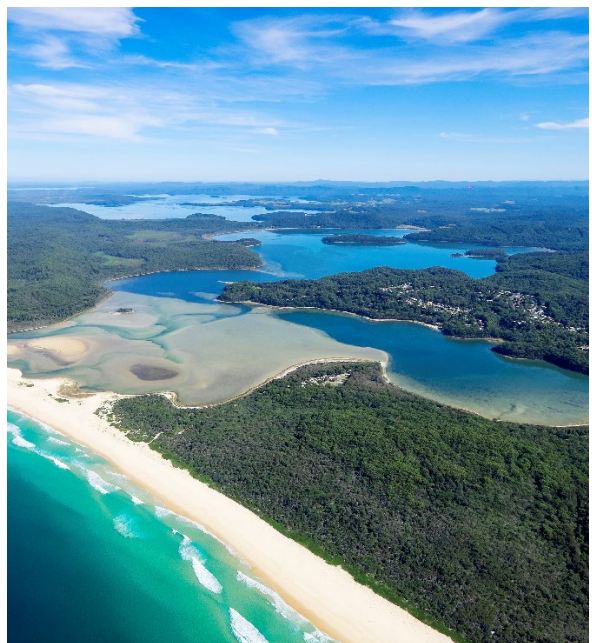


### Old Bar Manning Point and Southern Estuaries Coastal Management Programs

Council is developing Coastal Management Programs (CMPs) for the LGA's coastal areas to set the long-term strategy for the co-ordinated management of the coast. The CMPs will identify a range of site-specific management options to address hazard risks to private, public and environmental assets while taking into account the social, economic, ecological and heritage values of the area.

The development of the Old Bar Manning Point CMP has been prioritised because of concerns about rapid coastal erosion and shoreline recession in the area and the need to provide the community with a clear direction about how this area is managed in the future.

Scoping studies were completed for both the Old Bar Manning Point and the Southern Estuaries CMPs over the reporting period. Supporting community reference groups have also been established to provide strategic stakeholder input to the development of the CMPs.



## Summary of our Progress

### 2.2.1 Promote understanding of place-based risks and vulnerabilities and develop resilience and adaptation plans

Council continued to work with the Floodplain Management Advisory Committee to help develop and implement Floodplain Risk Management Plans for the MidCoast to reduce the impact of flooding and flood liability on the community and reduce private and public losses resulting from flooding. Bulahdelah residents were invited to provide feedback on the review of the Bulahdelah Flood Study. The finalisation of the Flood Study will be a key input into the Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan and will inform decision-making for investing in the floodplain and managing flood risk.

As part of the Southern Estuaries Coastal Management Programs, we completed a tidal inundation study, which modelled dry water flooding as a result of projected rising sea levels.

Throughout 2023, Council, in partnership with the Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils (Hunter JO), hosted workshops in bushfire-affected communities across the LGA to help residents prepare for disasters by developing their own bushfire preparedness plans. The Hunter JO showcased a digital sand table which simulated how fire moves across local landscapes and provided residents with a realistic demonstration of how their property and community could be affected by fire. The project was funded by the Federal Government's Black Summer Fire Grants.

Updated bushfire mapping provided by the NSW Government is integrated into Local Environmental Plans and used in land use planning and development assessments. An online mapping tool is available to the community through the NSW Rural Fire Service that identifies bush fire prone land.

### 2.2.2 Climate change risk management planning and adaptation frameworks are applied in development proposals, infrastructure planning and land use planning

One of the aims of the draft MidCoast Local Environment Plan (LEP) which was developed during the reporting period is to minimise the exposure of development to natural hazards and promote climate change resilience. As an example of this, the draft LEP includes provisions to ensure that potential flood behaviour and sea level rise as a result of climate change are considered in the approval of development applications.

Climate change was an important consideration in the development of two key infrastructure strategies – the Our Water, Our Future 2050 Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy (IWCMS) and the MidCoast Road Strategy. The IWCMS Options and Scenarios Report which informed the development of Our Water, Our Future 2050, assessed 10 climate change adaptation options against six projected long-term climate change trends:

- Increased temperatures including longer and hotter heat waves
- Increased rainfall intensity and flooding
- Rising sea levels
- Increased frequency and severity of bushfires
- Increased frequency and severity of drought and associated water scarcity
- Increased frequency and severity of extreme storms

The revision of our IWCMS included modelling of 15 different climate projections covering a wide range of projected and climate change impacts. Additionally, we continue to implement Councils Climate Action Strategy.

## 2.2.2 Climate change risk management planning and adaptation frameworks are applied in development proposals, infrastructure planning and land use planning (continued)

This allowed our long-term strategy to be developed based on the worst-case scenarios ensuring we are well positioned to counter climate change risks in future for our water supply. This analysis along with other strategic issues then informed the development of Council's preferred strategy and 30-year investment plan.

The impact of climate change and coastal erosion is being considered for Seal Rocks Road with work progressing on the investigation of long-term stability of the road and development of an alternative road access proposal. This is the first of the adaption planning projects for our transport infrastructure to address the impacts of climate change over the longer term.

## 2.3 Council works towards net zero emissions

### Charting a path towards sustainability

In 2022 Council established the Climate Change Project Control Group to better integrate sustainability into the organisation's everyday operations and support implementation of Council's Climate Change Strategy and achievement of associated targets. These targets include Council achieving net zero emissions by 2040, 100% renewable energy by 2040, net zero emissions from landfill by 2050 and 75% waste to landfill diversion rate by 2030.

As part of the NSW Government's Sustainability Advantage Program, Council undertook a Sustainability Diagnostic in September 2023, which assessed Council's understanding of and progress towards achieving sustainability across Council's operations. Based on the results of the Diagnostic, actions were identified to improve Council's sustainability performance across the organisation.



### Sustainability centre

Council has recently completed the construction of the MidCoast Sustainability Centre, jointly funded through the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund and MidCoast Council Waste Services. Located at Tuncurry Waste Management Facility, the building showcases sustainable architecture principles including solar passive design, recycled brick, timber and low emissions concrete. The landscape has been planted with bushfire resilient species and will act as a living plant library, complete with plant identification plaques, for visitors to view.

The purpose of the facility is to provide education to the community aligned with sustainability initiatives, circular economies, waste reduction and recycling. The facility has three workshop spaces where information sessions will be held.

The Centre is due to officially open on Monday 11 November 2024 in alignment with the commencement of National Recycling Week.





## Summary of our Progress

### 2.3.1 Incorporate renewable energy and energy efficiency in future design and planning

Council has been working to reduce its carbon emissions through the installation of rooftop solar systems at key Council sites across the LGA. Since 2022 Council has installed over 300 kW of rooftop solar including 84.4 kW across two water and sewer systems sites and a waste management facilities site in the 2023-24 financial year.

Council has also prepared detailed designs and business cases for a further 350 kW of solar at the Manning Aquatic & Leisure Centre and the Great Lakes Aquatic Centre. The new rooftop systems will provide most of the energy required to operate the centres during the middle of the day. Aquatic Centres consume significant amounts of electricity for pumping, filtering and heating water. The installation of these systems is expected to be completed in the 2024-25 financial year. These solar projects reduce the operating costs of these facilities while improving Council's environmental performance.

Despite Council's electricity consumption being relatively stable over the reporting period, the carbon emissions from electricity have reduced by over 30% due to energy efficiency initiatives and the move to renewable energy sources.

### 2.3.2 Promote energy and resource efficiency initiatives to our community

The Waste Team have delivered targeted campaigns, workshops, and school programs designed to raise awareness about sustainable waste management. These initiatives educate residents and businesses on reducing waste generation, proper recycling practices, and the importance of resource recovery. Pop-up stalls, public seminars, and digital media have been utilised to foster community participation in these initiatives.

In 2024, Council introduced the Water Wise Grant program which offers one-off grants up to the value of \$10,000 to schools, community groups and other organisations to co-fund projects and activities that increase water conservation and sustainability while protecting and enhancing our natural environment.

This may include:

- Water efficiency solutions
- Water education programs
- Conservation initiatives and more.

To celebrate World Water Day in 2024, Council launched the Water Wiser Hub, a new online resource which provides MidCoast residents with a range of useful tips and tools to help them save water inside and outside their homes.

We continued to teach children the importance of saving water and looking after the environment through engagement with Whizzy the Waterdrop. Whizzy and his helper visited more than 80 preschools and primary schools across the region. During school holidays the Whizzy the Waterdrop program was also held at our libraries.

### 2.3.2 Promote energy and resource efficiency initiatives to our community *(continued)*

To celebrate National Water Week, we held a quiz and giveaway and promoted the National Water Night in which we asked individuals and households not to turn on any taps or water source between 5pm-10pm on a night in October. During Water Week we also conducted tours of our sewage treatment plants to raise community awareness about the importance of water and sewerage processing.

Smart water meters have been installed on some properties, allowing organisations to track water usage and to help identify leaks. This has provided real time data to major users and those at high risk of wastage due to leakage, saving a significant volume of water.

Council is working with several community stakeholders including the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Local Aboriginal Land Councils and tourism operators to achieve ECO Destination Accreditation for the LGA. Managed in Australia by Ecotourism Australia, the global certification process has 91 criteria across six categories that must be met and maintained. The program assures travellers that certified destinations are backed by a strong, well managed commitment to sustainable practices and provide high quality nature-based tourism experiences. Council is sponsoring three local operators to complete the ECO Business Certification Program - Forster Dive Centre, Waukivory Estate and The Steps Barrington. Myall River Camp are already an ECO Certified Business in our LGA.

Council continues to actively promote grant funding (e.g. for destination EV charging) and education opportunities which support sustainable practices to its tourism and business base via its regular newsletters.

### 2.3.3 Invest in renewable energy efficient measures, power purchasing agreements and Carbon sequestration

Council moved to purchasing 100% renewable electricity for small water and sewer electricity accounts during the reporting period and is currently in negotiations to extend this to streetlighting from January 2025 and large sites from January 2026 via a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). This long-term energy contract would deliver renewable energy until 2030, provide budget certainty for Council and achieve a reduction in current energy costs.

Council has introduced three electric vehicles in the fleet of pool vehicles which are largely powered by Council's rooftop solar at the Yalawanyi Ganya building in Taree. Electric vehicles (including Battery EVs, Hybrid and Plug-in Hybrid EVs) now make up 14% of the passenger fleet. Council continues to support the ongoing increase of this metric through improved staff awareness, trialling of electric vehicles and appropriate policy changes. This transition will contribute to reduce fuel use and emissions.

Council facilitated the installation of 12 electric vehicle charging bays at Wynter Street, Taree. These stations are in addition to the existing 2 public charging stations in the carpark of Councils' Yalawanyi Ganya building.

Council's operational staff are increasingly using battery powered electric power tools. As these tools do not rely on petrol for power, they are quieter, safer and easier to use. Some of the benefits to staff include no fumes, less vibration, less noise, easier to start, no need to carry fuels, reduced disturbance to residents and businesses and the ability for the batteries to be used on multiple tools.

### 2.3.4 Minimise waste through education, reduction, reuse, recycling and repurposing

In 2023 alone, over 41,937.64 tonnes of recyclables were processed, including green waste into mulch, concrete into recycled aggregate, second hand goods diverted and sold through Reviva Shops (tip shops), mattress foam and springs, E-Waste, batteries, problem waste, paper, cardboard, glass, plastics, steel and aluminium. This has helped divert 47.32% of waste from landfill, contributing significantly to emissions reductions and extending landfill lifespans.

Recognising that a significant portion of our emissions come from organic waste in landfills, (primarily methane) Council commenced implementation of two significant waste projects for the LGA.

The Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) system will divert organic waste from landfills, reduce methane emissions and promote composting across the community. The design, construction and operation of the FOGO facility was tendered during the reporting period.

Council also tendered for the design, construction, and operation of gas management systems at both the Taree and Tuncurry landfill sites. These systems will significantly reduce emissions by destroying harmful greenhouse gases like methane, thereby greatly enhancing the environmental performance of these landfill sites. Additionally, they will generate a positive revenue stream through the creation of Australian Carbon Credit

Both projects will commence operations during the next term of Council.

## 2.4 We have an adequate and reliable water supply



### Gloucester Water Upgrade

The construction of a seven-megalitre main service reservoir and gravity water main in Gloucester represents a significant step forward in enhancing water security for the community and has reduced reliance on booster pumps to provide adequate water pressure to residents.

Despite facing delays due to unforeseen circumstances, this \$27 million project has successfully addressed historical issues with water pressure and treated water storage, particularly during wet weather events.

By providing residents with a reliable and modern water supply network, this project helps ensure that Gloucester will have the necessary infrastructure to meet the growing demands of its population and adapt to future challenges.

*Below: Unveiling of the Gloucester water reservoir upgrade*





## Our Water Our Future

In August 2023, Council adopted Our Water, Our Future 2050, Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy which sets out Council's 30-year plan for the sustainable and affordable delivery of MidCoast's water services.

In developing this strategy, Council focused on the largest water-related challenge we will face over the next 30 years, water security. Council also considered how we should approach the key strategic issues of managing our effluent sustainably, dealing with the impacts of climate change, and providing water and sewer connections for our unsewered villages.

The adaptive plan for the next 30 years includes:

- Constructing off-river storage dams for the Manning, Bulahdelah, Gloucester and Stroud water supply schemes
- Additional water recycling to provide cost-effective irrigation for public open spaces
- Delivering sewer services to high-risk unsewered villages where funding allows
- Continuing to target leakages in our network and with our customers
- Progressing cost-effective water conservation measures
- Integrating catchment management initiatives into our water management
- Minimising the impacts of development on stormwater runoff to protect the aesthetic, recreational and ecological value of our waterways.
- A sustainable price pathway for the next 30 years

## Summary of our Progress

### 2.4.1 Manage all elements of the water cycle to deliver an adequate and reliable water supply that meets community needs now and into the future

Our projects to expand the Nabisac bore-field and the upgrade at the Nabisac Water Treatment Plant are a part of MidCoast Council's strategy to address water security issues in the Manning Water Supply Scheme. By increasing the volume of water extracted from the Nabisac Aquifer, the project will enhance the capacity of the treatment plant to provide potable water to the community. This increased water supply will not only help mitigate the impacts of drought but also ensure a more resilient and sustainable water system for the region.

The Peg Leg Creek Off-river Storage Dam project has progressed with preliminary environmental studies, biodiversity assessment work and a funding application to the National Water Grid Fund. The off-river storage projects for the Gloucester and Bulahdelah Water Supply Schemes have progressed with options for suitable locations assessed to allow the concept designs to be progressed.

Implementation of our Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Program over the term has led to a considerable drop in stormwater entering MidCoast Councils' sewerage system. Our Inflow and Infiltration Reduction team has worked to identify defects on private properties where stormwater was getting into the system through unauthorised plumbing connections, poorly designed landscaping or broken or missing sewer shaft caps. Residents have been active in fixing defects on their properties with close to 90% of homeowners who were notified about an issue taking steps to fix them. The team has also identified defects in our own sewerage network and worked to rectify them. This has reduced the amount of overflow from the system into the environment, which had been exacerbated by the pressure put on the system from recent wet weather.

Through the upgrade of the Hawks Nest Sewage Treatment Plant, we will have increased treatment capacity, which will address peak holiday loadings and accommodate future population growth. Moreover, these upgrades will ensure compliance with regulatory licensing requirements, further safeguarding the environment and public health.

## 2.5 We balance the needs of our natural and built environment

### Strategic land use planning

The development of the draft MidCoast Local Environment Plan (LEP) is a significant step forward in land use planning for the LGA. The LEP will provide consistent and renewed planning controls that reflect the diversity and character of the MidCoast and replaces the three existing LEPs for the previous Taree, Great Lakes and Gloucester LGAs.

The draft MidCoast LEP is based on extensive work undertaken over the past five years in the development of the following Land Use Planning strategies and reviews:

- Housing Strategy (June 2021)
- MidCoast Recreation Zones Review (July 2022)
- MidCoast Rural Strategy – The Way Forward (December 2022)
- MidCoast Employment Zones Review (August 2021)
- Infrastructure Zones Review (July 2022)

All documents were developed in consultation with the community and relevant NSW Government Departments.

Aims of the draft LEP which are relevant to this community outcome include:

- Protecting and enhancing biodiversity, natural ecosystems, ecological processes and landscapes
- Minimising the exposure of development to natural hazards and promoting climate change resilience
- Protecting places and objects of cultural and heritage value
- Encouraging sustainable living, housing affordability and diversity.

Community consultation on the draft LEP concluded in September 2024 and feedback is being considered in the finalisation of the LEP which is expected to be put before Council for adoption in early 2025.



## Summary of our Progress

### 2.5.1 Practice integrated land use planning that balances the environmental, social and economic needs of present and future generations and our existing natural, heritage and cultural assets

The Draft MidCoast Local Environmental Plan was developed in consultation with State Government. On 20 March 2024 a Gateway determination was provided by the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. Community consultation and State Government consultation concluded on 14 July 2024.

Future planning controls for rural and natural landscapes were identified and included in the draft MidCoast Local Environmental Plan, following adoption of the 'MidCoast Rural Strategy – the way forward' document.

A draft Heritage Conservation Areas Review was also undertaken, this was required to help bring together the 14 heritage conservation areas across the three existing LEPs. We developed new heritage planning controls for the draft MidCoast Local Environmental Plan that provide a consistent approach in preserving our region's heritage. The draft is subject to further consultation, prior to inclusion in the draft MidCoast LEP.

A master plan for the Old Bar Foreshore and Old Bar Reserve was developed and placed on public exhibition. Old Bar Park is a key precinct within the Old Bar community and provides a range of sporting, event, tourism, social and recreational activities. Following community feedback and consultation the final master plan was adopted at the 24 July 2024 Council meeting.

Council conducts internal referrals including Transport Assets, Ecology, Environmental Health, Building Services and other specialist areas of Council. 245 coastal, flooding and stormwater development application internal referrals were completed over the term.

Council engages external agencies in the assessment process including Department of Planning and Environment, Department of Planning and Environment-Water, Department of Primary Industries (Fisheries), WaterNSW, Transport for NSW, Essential Energy and the Rural Fire Service.

In March 2024 Council adopted the Cemeteries Strategy identifying six principles for the future management of cemeteries across the region including environmental assets, respect and care, heritage and history, accessible documentation, consistency and cultural understanding.

### 2.5.2 Plan, provide, manage and advocate for infrastructure that continues to meet the needs of our community

Through the development of Our Water, Our Future 2050 we plan for our future water infrastructure to continue to meet the needs of our community.

Over the term we have completed projects to provide infrastructure for the future needs of our community including:

#### **Water and Sewer**

- Gloucester water upgrade to improve Gloucester's water security for the long term.
- Halliday's point sewer pump station 13 to allow for future growth and development in the area.
- Manning River Drive water main renewal to allow for future growth in the Cundletown area.



## 2.5.2 Plan, provide, manage and advocate for infrastructure that continues to meet the needs of our community (*continued*)

Sewer and water mains renewal projects also commenced at a number of sites in Harrington, Smiths Lake, Hallidays Point, Hawks Nest, Forster, Manning Point, Taree South, Tuncurry, Stroud, Old Bar, Pacific Palms.

### Community Spaces

- Manning Entertainment Centre (MEC) building and car park upgrades
- Upgrade of Tuncurry John Wright Park Amenities
- Upgrade of Marine Drive Tea Gardens boating facility
- Upgrade to facilities at Forster Boronia Park Sporting Complex
- Upgrade of Bulahdelah Showground fencing and cattle shed

The Mayor and General Manager have met with community groups and business owners to understand their concerns regarding improvements to local infrastructure.

They have made representations for new or improved infrastructure to meet the needs of the community to:

- The Hon. Paul Toole MP, Deputy Premier
- The Hon David Elliott MP; NSW Minister for Transport
- The Hon Dugald Saunders MP, NSW Minister for Agriculture
- The Hon James Griffin MP, NSW Minister for Environment and Heritage
- The Hon Sam Farraway MLC, NSW Minister for Regional Transport and Roads
- The Hon Kevin Anderson MP, NSW Minister Lands and Water
- The Hon. Yasmin Maree Catley MP, NSW Shadow Minister for Customer Service, Digital, and the Hunter
- The Hon. Rose Jackson MLC, NSW Minister for Water
- Dr David Gillespie, Federal Member for Lyne
- The Hon. Tanya Plibersek, Minister for the Environment and Water of Australia

They have also advocated for causes like the Tuncurry Slipway upgrade, Wallis Lakes sand shoaling and the Peg Leg Creek off-river storage dam.

## 2.6 We have a diverse range of housing options

### Housing Barriers Review Report

The Housing Barriers Review project was developed to seek an understanding of what barriers unnecessarily complicate the development assessment process and/or impede the delivery of good housing outcomes within the MidCoast Council LGA.

One of the strategies identified was to work with the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure to review opportunities to increase land release options. The aim is to stimulate the next wave of post-pandemic housing with a focus on where land is most able and ready to be developed.

The Housing Barriers Review Findings report was endorsed by Council on the 25 October 2023 and an implementation plan adopted.



## Summary of our Progress

### 2.6.1 Plan and advocate for a range of housing options to meet the diverse needs of our community

The draft MidCoast Local Environmental Plan aims to offer a broad range of housing options to cater for our diverse needs while simultaneously delivering housing that is affordable. A range of residential zones are proposed to meet our diverse housing needs.

MidCoast Council processed over 1300 development and modification applications for residential housing each year worth over \$376m in 2022-23 and \$440m in 2023-24 financial years.

The Mayor and/or the General Manager advocated for housing options for the MidCoast region through:

- Meeting with various community groups to discuss homelessness, supported living arrangements and short-term and long-term housing options for domestic and family violence victims.
- Participating in the Local Government New South Wales Housing Roundtable facilitated by The Hon. Paul Scully, NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and The Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC the NSW Minister for Housing, Homelessness and the North Coast.
- Meeting with The Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC the NSW Minister for Housing, Homelessness, Water and the North Coast and the Hon. Deborah O'Neill Duty Senator for Lyne to discuss housing affordability and availability as well as meeting with individual owners and community members.

Council also wrote to all local property managers and rate payers encouraging them to transition short-term accommodation to more longer-term accommodation to help alleviate the housing crisis.

## Community Outcome 2: challenges and future opportunities

**Supporting population growth** - The MidCoast population is expected to grow by 16.33% by 2036. Facilitating the delivery of sufficient housing and the required supporting infrastructure and services to meet this growth is a key challenge and will place a strain on both the LGA's natural environment and Council resources.

Council will need to continue to look at ways to support the natural environment and minimise the negative impacts of the built environment as land rezoned under the Urban Release Area program is released for development.

With housing supply and affordable housing being a national issue, there is an opportunity for Council to advocate for State and Federal Government support in providing cost-effective housing to meet the diverse needs of the MidCoast community where housing stress is comparatively high.

**Mitigating and adapting to climate change** – Council faces challenges in achieving carbon emission reduction targets, while still maintaining the required levels of service to the community. For example, Council is battling an increase in carbon emissions from its vehicle fleet (particularly its heavy vehicle fleet) due to the current lack of suitable electric vehicle options.

Council does however have opportunities to implement additional energy efficiency initiatives and increase the use of solar photovoltaic at Council sites. These projects both reduce Council's carbon footprint and contribute to Council's financial sustainability. There are also opportunities to incorporate lower emission materials in Council's infrastructure projects and investigate carbon offset projects to help meet emissions targets.

Managing the impacts from the expected increase in the severity and frequency of weather events on both the natural and built environment will require significant resourcing (both in people and funding). Council is dependent on State and Federal funding for reconstruction of infrastructure following natural disasters which may pose issues for Council in the future.

Community satisfaction rate for water service remains high, and over the term Council has continued to implement cost and water saving initiatives and programs such as leak detection projects. Future water availability, however, may become more of a prominent issue due to changes in rainfall patterns. Delivery of projects that allow for greater water production and storage may need to be accelerated to keep up with demand.

**Water Security** We have made progress to improve water security across the MidCoast following adoption of the revised Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan (Our Water, Our Future 2050) in August 2023. The expansion of the Nabic Water System is providing an immediate boost to water security, but it's not enough to fill the gap in our long-term water security challenge. We are in the early planning phases for the proposed Peg Leg Creek Dam Project, which will be a significant undertaking. The project will be the single largest project ever undertaken by Council.

**Managing our waste** – With an increased population, comes more waste. Waste is also the most significant contributor to Council's carbon emissions profile and an area subject to ongoing changes in policy, regulation and legislation as well as changing recycling and processing markets and technologies.

Council will need to keep abreast of emerging technologies that contribute to improved delivery of our waste services, improve community engagement and education on waste management services and initiatives including the new FOGO service when it comes on-stream.

**Funding implementation of strategies and programs** – Council has made significant progress over the past term in the development of strategies and programs to support the delivery of housing and essential services such as water and waste, as well as frameworks and programs to protect our natural environment.

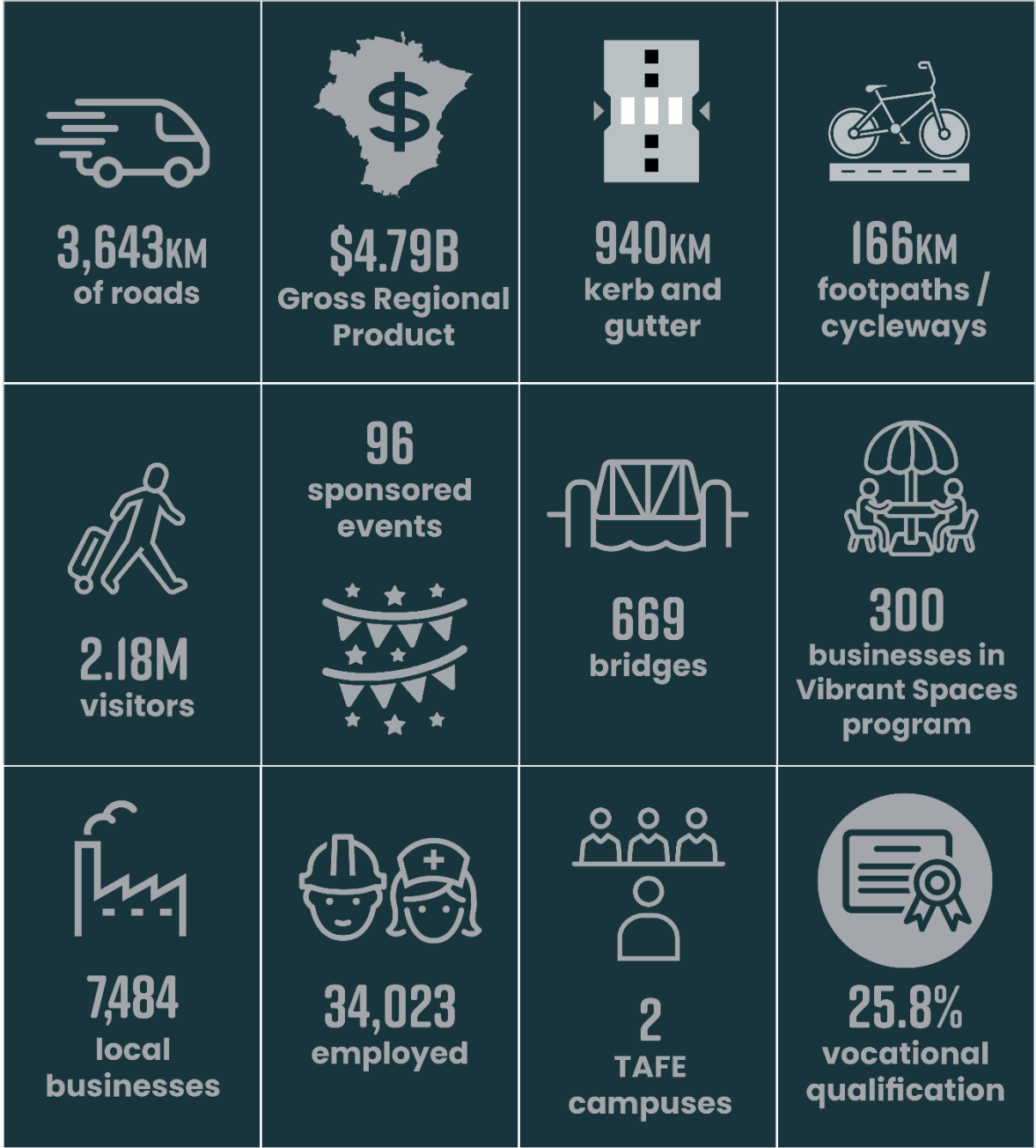
Council will need to advocate for and pursue external funding to support the implementation of these strategies and programs which are key to maintaining and improving the liveability of the LGA.



# OUR PROGRESS

## **Community Outcome 3:**

A thriving and strong economy



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## 3.1 MidCoast is a great place to visit, work and invest

### Forster Civic Centre

The Forster Civic Centre opened on Monday 9 October 2023.

Significant community consultation informed the design of this impressive new building which includes a customer service point, the Forster Library and flexible community spaces.

The project was delivered with funding from Council, Federal Government and the developer.



### Winning gold

In November 2022 MidCoast Council won two Gold Awards at the NSW Tourism Awards for our Destination Barrington Coast campaign.

The categories were Tourism Marketing and Campaigns and the Local Government Award for Tourism.



### Supporting festivals and events

Events and festivals are important for bringing tourism and to increase spending into the local area supporting local businesses. In 2022 and 2023 Council provided over \$120,000 of event sponsorship.

Some of the events sponsored included:

- Lakeside Music Festival
- Wingham Music Festival
- NSW Rugby 7s Youth and senior State Championships
- Hawks Nest Triathlon
- Old Bar Beach Festival
- Taree Rowing Regatta
- Stroud Rodeo and Camp draft
- Gloucester Open Tennis Tournament
- Lakes Trail Festival (pictured)
- Tastefest on the Manning





## Summary of our Progress

### 3.1.1 Identify and harness opportunities for businesses and economic development

MidCoast Council, in partnership with the MidCoast Economic Development Strategy Reference Group developed the MidCoast Economic Development Strategy 2023-2028. With 10 action areas to achieve the objectives of 'attract' and 'grow'. These actions are a joint responsibility with local business and industry and will rely heavily on attracting external funding. The Strategy was endorsed by Council in June 2023.

During the reporting period, Council received over \$1.2 million in grants from the State Government to deliver a range of activities and programs including, Small Business Month business workshops and the development of the Northern Gateway Transport Hub Strategy and Masterplan.

On 20 March 2024 Council adopted our updated Destination Management Plan. This plan sets to set the direction and priorities to sustainably grow our visitor economy to 2030 and beyond.

In July 2024 Council endorsed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd. The MoU aims to:

- Promote Taree Regional Airport as a secondary hub / reliever hub for Newcastle Airport General Aviation activities to alleviate Newcastle Airport constraints
- Expand freight services at the Taree Regional Airport site in conjunction with Air Freight capability development at Newcastle Airport
- Create support for an aviation training hub at Taree Regional Airport
- Grow employment and economic opportunities for the MidCoast region
- Drive visitation (including international visitors) to the Barrington Coast through cooperative marketing opportunities
- Collaborate on in-bound and out-bound trade and investment delegations

The following masterplans were developed for future opportunities to attract funding for upgrades to the area, support industry growth and develop the economy and to attract visitors:

- Wingham Racecourse Masterplan
- Northern Gateway Transport Hub Masterplan
- MidCoast Regional Sporting Precinct Strategy and Masterplan

### 3.1.2 Advocate for and encourage local education and vocational training to cover skill and employment gaps

Council staff have continued to support the high school entrepreneurial programs by mentoring students and connecting them with industry.

Council has on-going association and meets regularly with Taree Universities Campus following the signing of a 25-year lease agreement for the use of the former MidCoast Council building in Taree CBD.

Council supports and encourages local education by participating in events such as CareerQuip, MidCoast Council Youth Awards, MidCoast Council Hackathon and attending many local schools for assemblies and graduations.

### **3.1.3 Advocate for improved telecommunications and utilities to provide consistency across the region**

NBN services have increased across the region with most areas not serviceable by wired or wireless connection able to connect through satellite.

The General Manager regularly meets with the NSW Telco Authority, Essential Energy and Telstra to build stronger partnerships and discuss plans for the MidCoast region.

### **3.1.4 Support and encourage the development and attraction of strategic events**

On 22 May 2024 MidCoast Council approved a sponsorship package for a regionally significant event. The Barrington Coast Airshow is scheduled for the 9 November 2024. This partnership between MidCoast Council and Paul Bennet Airshows is expected to draw more than 6,000 visitors and have more than a \$2 million economic impact to local businesses.

During the reporting period 190 events were approved for sponsorship. It was a difficult period with several events being cancelled due to COVID-19 and weather events.

We continue to support tourism development and growth in the visitor economy through our Destination Barrington Coast management team.

## 3.2 Our villages and business precincts are dynamic commercial spaces

### Vibrant Spaces Program

Our town centres are places where we are entertained, shop, dine and catch up with friends and family.

The concept of vibrant spaces centres around businesses utilising the footpath, free of charge, in return for some innovative thinking and a commonsense approach to adding colour and vibrancy to our streets. The aim is to encourage people to stop, linger, shop and dine, which benefits local businesses.

Over 300 businesses are registered to participate in the program which ensures active and vibrant town centres.



*Wingham Main Street*

### Summary of our Progress

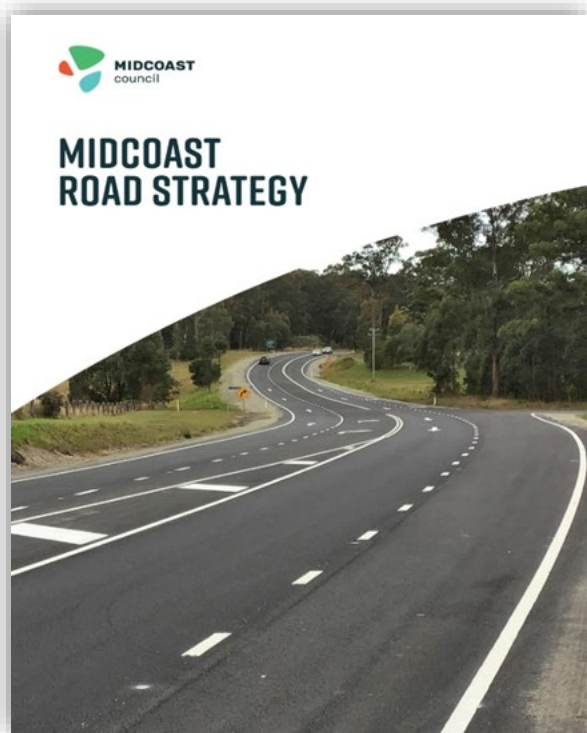
#### 3.2.1 Implement innovative programs and projects to support business precincts in creating and maintaining vibrant spaces

There has been an annual competition that encourages local businesses to decorate their shopfronts / windows during the Christmas period. The purpose of the competition is to foster a colourful, festive atmosphere in our shopping precincts which encourages the community to travel to the location, linger and shop.

A project team and working party of Wingham residents finalised the details of the Wingham CBD Masterplan and stage one of the Masterplan was implemented with roadwork completed at the intersection of Bent and Farquhar streets.

Through Council's Footpath Activities in Town Centres (Vibrant Spaces) Policy, Council supported the 'Who Let The Cows Out' initiative which was undertaken by the Lions Club of Taree in partnership with the local Women in Dairy Group.

### 3.3 Our integrated transport networks meet the needs of our businesses and the community



#### Roads Strategy Developed

Council has the second largest public road network in NSW, extending over more than 3,600 km with roughly equal parts sealed and unsealed. The community has identified the need to improve the road conditions and Council has prioritised road maintenance by investing a substantial proportion of its annual budget.

The strategy shows that more than a quarter of the sealed road network has significant cracking. Timely maintenance is fundamental to ensure a road can achieve its useful life at the lowest lifecycle cost.

Extreme weather, including heavy rain and flash flooding has also put pressure on the network. Inflation and the related increases are among other challenges Council faces.

The MidCoast Road Strategy identifies a range of actions that are required to ensure the road network doesn't deteriorate further as well as actions required to improve the network over time. The extent to which these can be applied will depend on funding.

#### Northern Gateway progression

Stage two of the Northern Gateway new industrial access road was completed in December 2023. Council extended the scope of works to include a second roundabout to better facilitate access into the industrial lands.

This is a high priority project in both the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 and the MidCoast Regional Economic Development Strategy, with the NSW Government providing \$15 million for infrastructure works.



## Lakes Way / Blackhead Road Roundabout

The upgrade of the intersection at Lakes Way / Blackhead Road was completed in January 2023.

The project upgraded the intersection to a three-leg roundabout to improve safety and traffic efficiency.

The \$4 million project was funded by the Federal Government through Transport for NSW to address known road safety blackspots.



## Bridges

Bridges are amongst our best managed assets. Most bridges form a critical link in the transport network forming the shortest routes between locations. Bridges have been prioritised over other infrastructure by Federal, State and Local Governments for a long time. As a result, the replacement of timber bridges is regularly progressing. MidCoast Council has around 10% of NSW's remaining timber bridges which is disproportionate to the 1% of the State's population that live in the region.



- Bundacree Creek Bridge replaced - *funded by MidCoast Council.*
- Deep Creek Bridge and Limeburners Creek Bridges replaced - *funded by the Australian Government's Roads of Strategic Importance initiative (\$20 million contribution), with an additional contribution from the NSW Government for works on The Bucketts Way (\$5 million contribution).*
- Cedar Party Creek Bridge commenced - *funded by \$28 million grant from the NSW Government's Fixing Country Bridges Program, and a \$5 million grant from the Australian's Government Bridge Renewal Program. \$6 million is being covered by MidCoast Council.*
- The Falls Bridge replaced - *funded through the NSW State Government's Fixing Country Bridges Program.*



## Summary of our Progress

### 3.3.1 Plan, provide and advocate for safe and efficient regional transport networks

MidCoast Council administers the Mid North Weight of Loads Group on behalf of 14 member Councils in the Mid North Coast, Northern Tablelands and North-West Slopes areas of NSW.

The Weight of Loads Group has a strong focus on education to assist heavy vehicle operators in understanding and complying with their legal requirements. This includes inspectors presenting truck and caravan weighing days / workshops and providing practical advice on correct loading techniques. This Group also undertakes an enforcement function to ensure the safety of all road users and minimise the risk of damage to road infrastructure due to overloading.

Taree Airport has maintained 100% compliance with Airport Safety Standards as audited by Civil Aviation Safety Authority.

The Mayor and General Manager have advocated for a safer and more efficient transport network within the MidCoast region making representations to local state members:

- The Hon. (Jenny) Jennifer Kathleen Aitchison, NSW Minister for Regional Transport and Roads
- The Hon. Sam Faraway, MLC NSW Shadow Minister for Regional Transport and Roads
- The Hon. Deborah O'Neill, Duty Senator for Lyne
- The Hon. Tara Moriarty, MLC, Minister for Regional NSW

They advocated for both short-term and long-term solutions to ease traffic congestion on state classified roads through Forster and Tuncurry, upgrade intersections at critical interchanges on the Pacific Highway and for more funding to maintain and renew our locally managed road network.

Council has also advocated for the handover of key regional roads such as The Lakes Way, The Bucketts Way and The Thunderbolts Way to the State Government. These roads should form part of the State Road network funded and maintained by the State Government, reducing the burden on Council.

The General Manager also meets regularly with Transport for NSW to build a strong partnership and discuss plans for the MidCoast region.

### 3.3.2 Design, construct and maintain safe and efficient local transport and mobility networks

Councillors allocated an additional \$7.5 million in the 2022-23 budget specifically for a local road repair program. Over 35 roads or road sections were completed in addition to roadwork undertaken in the annual roadworks plan.

The sections of road identified for repair were those that regularly result in requests from the community for repair, needed excessive maintenance and were in a condition that could be repaired (rather than requiring full reconstruction).

In addition to the Natural Disaster Recovery works that were fully funded by the State and Federal Governments, Council received over \$15 million in funding under the State Government's 'Pothole' program to undertake urgent works on the road network. Council targeted this funding to sections of the local road network that were no longer reasonably maintainable where the low speed, low-risk environment meant that they would not normally be prioritised.

### 3.3.2 Design, construct and maintain safe and efficient local transport and mobility networks *(continued)*

The Thunderbolts Way works program has been completed with over 9km of road rehabilitation works in accordance with the Thunderbolts Way Corridor Strategy.

The Bucketts Way Route Access Strategy upgrade program Stage 1 has delivered over 14km of the road rehabilitation works. Stage 2 is well underway which includes the replacement of the Limeburners Creek Bridge and Deep Creek Bridge.

Improvements were made to the following footpaths around the area to maintain safety:

- Oxley Street, Taree
- Mirren and Tuloa Street, Hawks Nest
- Waterman Street, Old Bar
- Edinburgh Drive, Taree
- Nabiac Street, Nabiac
- Gloucester Road, Wingham
- Boomerang Drive, Elizabeth Beach
- Likely Street, Forster

## Community Outcome 3: Challenges and future opportunities

**Realisation of economic opportunities** - The key economic challenge for the MidCoast over the next decade is to ensure the realisation of the region's economic opportunities to help drive growth within the region. With the attrition of some industries over the previous decade, it is now time to strategically plan how Council can help to maintaining core economic sectors, whilst providing support to emerging industry sectors is the key economic challenge for the MidCoast over the next decade.

The recently completed Northern Gateway Transport Hub provides the MidCoast with a significant opportunity to grow the transport and supply chain sector in the region, given its proximity to the Pacific Highway. Over time, the Hub could be connected to other transport forms including air and rail. With the infrastructure in place, the key challenge is to attract transport-related businesses such as freight transport facilities, truck depots, transport depots, warehouses and distribution centres to the Hub.

**Strong foundations in place but economic stimulation needed** - The MidCoast's Gross Regional Product (GRP) and job growth have been slower compared to the Mid North Coast, Regional NSW, and national averages. This indicates room for economic and policy interventions that could support job creation and stimulate broader economic activity. Additionally, productivity per worker in the MidCoast has fallen behind, suggesting a need for enhanced capital investment and other productivity drivers.

There are, however, positive trends. The unemployment rate in the MidCoast, which was notably higher than in benchmark regions in late 2020, had nearly converged with these areas by December 2023. This reflects a stabilising economy which provides a strong foundation for future growth.

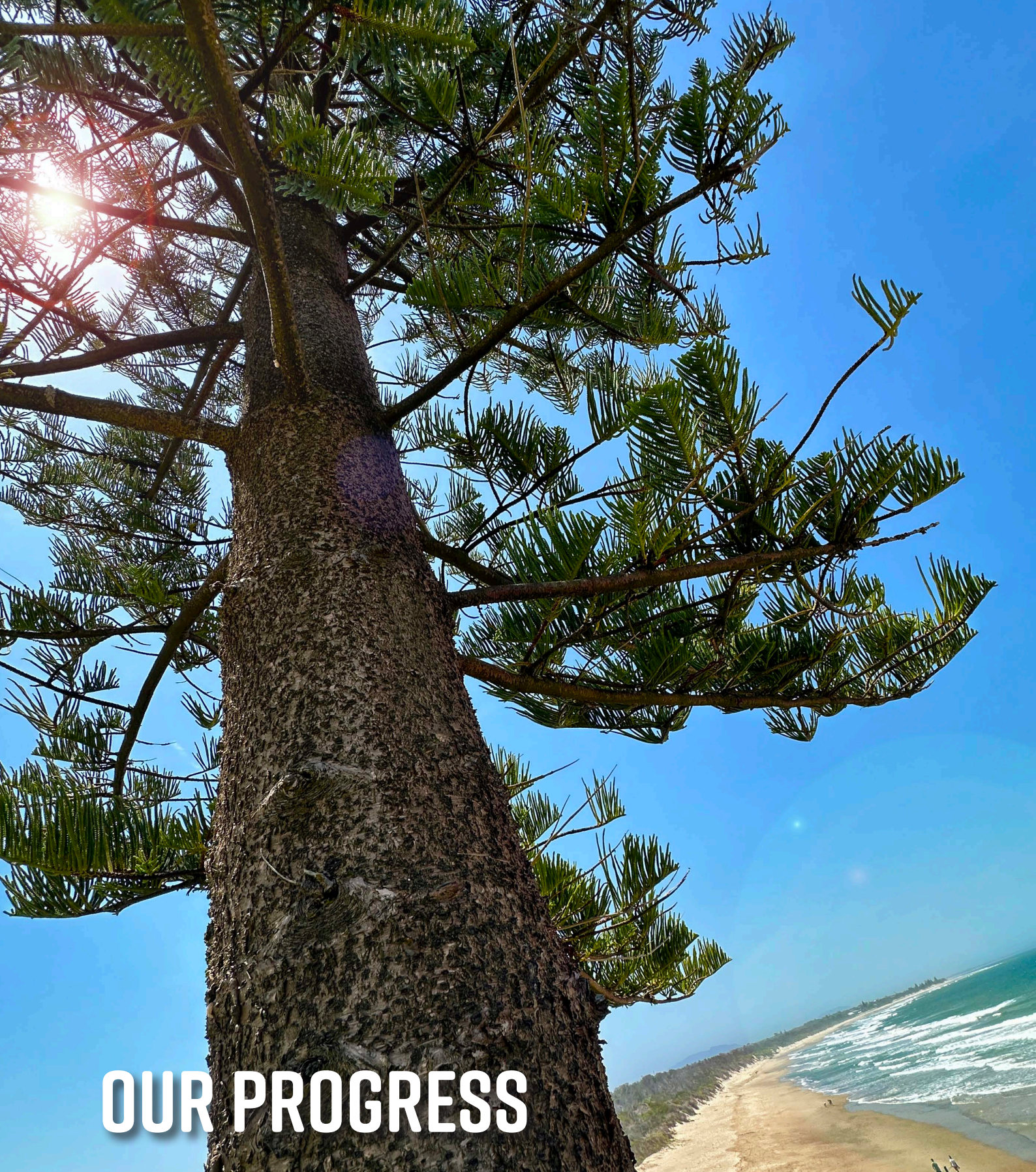
**Maximising competitive advantage** - The availability of residential and industrial zoned land for development is a major strength for potential investors. MidCoast Council's 2021 Urban Release Areas Report identifies land in the MidCoast that can be used for residential or employment zones to meet the demand for additional housing, and business or industrial growth.

While development and building construction activity is slowing up slightly compared to previous years, builders and developers are still showing great confidence in the MidCoast region. Rising building costs and shortages in licensed trades are challenges nationally and may hamper development activity. NSW Government investment in the vocational sector to train additional workers, as well as government interventions to increase housing supply, may help to offset these challenges.

**Transport challenges** - Community satisfaction with roads continues to be a challenge. While the community expectations on traffic, safety and comfort grow, Council is contending with roads that have legacy issues as they were built to past standards and/or within budget constraints. Ongoing increases in population leading to additional roads and increased usage of existing roads and extreme weather, including heavy rain and flash flooding continue to put pressure on the network.

Our Road Strategy identified that we can only afford to undertake half of the renewals and two-thirds of the maintenance we should be doing on our road network each year. Without an increase in funding or grants the proportion of the network in poor condition will more than double over the next ten years. This is increasing the future costs and resulting in inefficiency, with many works deferred to meet the available budget for expenditure. Addressing the \$26.5 million per annum shortfall in road maintenance and road renewals is a key challenge in achieving financial sustainability. Council adopted a Financial Sustainability Action Plan in May 2024 and this Action Plan sets out tangible actions to progress Council towards a sustainable financial and asset position.





# OUR PROGRESS

## **Community Outcome 4:**

**Strong leadership and good governance**

 <p><b>5</b> customer service points</p>	<p><b>5.8%</b> council employees with disability</p> 	 <p><b>100%</b> GIPA applications completed on time</p>	<p><b>195</b> towns and villages</p> 
 <p><b>1,058</b> council employees</p>	<p><b>3,721</b> online engagement registrations</p> 	 <p><b>11</b> councillors</p>	<p><b>8,653</b> eNewsletter subscriptions</p> 
 <p><b>15</b> community conversation locations</p>	<p><b>13</b> council committees</p> 	 <p><b>97,909</b> population</p>	<p><b>34%</b> council workforce identify as First Nations</p> 

## 4.1 The community has confidence in Council decisions and planning for the future

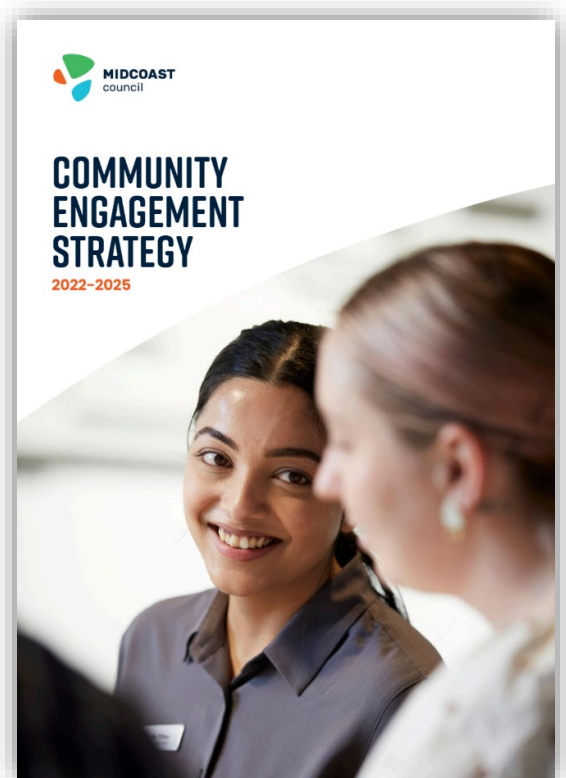
### Community engagement

Council revised and adopted its Community Engagement Strategy in December 2022.

The 'Have Your Say' section of the website has been developed to better provide information and receive feedback on Council projects.

We increased our focus on face-to-face engagement across the local government area to be able to connect with as many sections of our community as possible on important issues such as future water resources, recreational needs, planning frameworks, master planning for important community spaces and more.

During the 2022-2024 period we have had more than 11,000 individual interactions with community members and received almost 4,000 pieces of feedback to help inform our decision making and future planning.



*The way we inform and consult with our community is guided by our Community Engagement Strategy.*



## Summary of our Progress

### **4.1.1 Enable the community to participate in decisions that affect them**

We have sought to increase opportunities for participation in engagement for hard-to-reach groups and developed a program for location specific information in community newsletters.

We revised the format of our Community Conversations programs to include six monthly presentations from each of the Directors focusing on the items of interest to the particular community.

From April – June 2024 we held 10 pop ups engaging with 218 people, four workshop events in which 82 people attended and received 269 surveys from members of the community while reviewing our Community Strategic Plan.

### **4.1.2 Provide clear, accessible, timely and relevant information to the community about council projects and services**

Under the Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements in the Local Government Act, Council reports on the progress of its Delivery Program and Operational plan every six months.

We provide monthly finance and capital works reports and quarterly reports on the implementation of the Housing Barriers Review actions and our Financial Sustainability Action Plan.

Council's website was upgraded with a redevelopment that included a design refresh and an information architecture review to increase accessibility for the community. We also provide livestreaming and recordings of Council meetings to the community via Council's website for those unable to attend in person. Our engagement through digital communication channels, including websites and social media has increased over the term.

## **4.2 Council demonstrates good governance and financial management to ensure decisions and transactions are ethical, efficient, safe and fair**

### **Financial Sustainability Review and Strategy**

Councillors requested a report on how to achieve financial sustainability. The information tabled confirmed the challenges Council continues to face post-merger in its journey to long term financial sustainability. A key recommendation of the report was to develop a Financial Sustainability Strategy. Council appointed AEC Group Ltd to conduct an independent review of Councils financial sustainability. The review was delivered to Council in December 2023 and Council adopted a Financial Sustainability Action Plan on 1 May 2024.

The Strategy and supporting Action Plan have the following five key objectives:

1. Expenditure is managed to ensure the limited funds are controlled and spent effectively.
2. Council operations are effective, efficient, and lean - delivering value for money to the community.
3. Council assets are strategically managed across their entire lifecycle and asset management capability is continually developed and improved.
4. Revenue sources are regularly reviewed to align with expenses and agreed service levels.
5. Sufficient unrestricted cash is generated as determined by Council policy.

Together, achievement of these objectives will ensure that Council is financially sustainable i.e. Council has sufficient funds to meet all of its resourcing and financial obligations, including the provision of agreed services and properly maintaining Council assets.

A number of strategies and programs identified in the Financial Sustainability Action Plan including the MidCoast Roads Strategy, Service Optimisation Program, and the Business Transformation Program are in various stages of development and implementation.

There will be six monthly progress reports to Council on the Action Plan.



## Summary of our Progress

### 4.2.1 Use governance frameworks and processes to guide our decisions and to ensure council is accountable to the community

Council established the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) in 2018. The objective of ARIC is to provide independent assurance, oversight and assistance to Council on risk management, control, governance, internal audits, organisational performance and external responsibilities in an advisory capacity. Membership of the committee comprised of three independent experts as well as two Council representatives. The Committee's role is to review aspects of Council's operations and provide advice and guidance to Council for the purpose of improving the performance of its functions.

Key achievements of ARIC over the reporting period included:

- Understanding and implementing the new legislative requirements included in the Local Government (General) Amendment (Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees) Regulation 2023 and the Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW Guidelines
- Developing the MidCoast ARIC Framework that connects Council's plans and strategies with the work ARIC is undertaking
- Developing the four-year MidCoast ARIC Strategic Plan and Annual Work Plan that includes a Framework for ARIC reporting to Council and performance measures
- Undertaking an assessment of the strengths, opportunities and improvements of the ARIC and associated activities of Council.

### 4.2.2 Use business improvement, project management and risk management methodologies to ensure best outcomes

Council adopted a five-year Business Transformation Program (the Program) on 29 June 2022 as part of the Delivery Program 2022-26 and Operational Plan 2022-23 after it was placed on exhibition during May and June 2022.

At the core of the Program is one central purpose; becoming a community centric organisation that is easy to do business with/for our community and staff. This will be achieved through a wide variety of projects, delivering significant improvements to our customer experience. Internally we will align business processes and policies with our latest software, removing double handling and frustration for both our customers and staff.

The Program will provide organisation wide benefits to Council and will have a significant positive impact on the community and residents. By the end of the Program, our community can expect an improved customer experience when making requests or putting in applications to Council.

Council has included the following benefits from the transformation program in its adopted Financial Sustainability Action Plan:

- 2024-25 (Savings from initial components of the Program will be progressively identified and realised during 2024-25 with full financial year benefits accumulating from 2025-26)
- 2025-26 (\$1.131 million)
- 2026-27 (\$1.291 million)
- 2027-28 (\$2.149 million)
- 2028-29 (\$3.137 million)
- 2029-30 (\$3.537 million)
- 2030-31 (\$3.451 million)
- 2031-32 (\$3.368 million)
- 2032-33 (\$3.286 million)

#### **4.2.2 Use business improvement, project management and risk management methodologies to ensure best outcomes (*continued*)**

In 2024 Council developed a Project Management Framework to increase consistency in the delivery, predictability, financial management and success of capital and operational projects across the organisation. The Framework has been systemised as part of the Business Transformation Program.

Council has also developed a Service Optimisation Framework which will drive the ongoing review of Council's services and ensure that appropriate levels of service are provided to the community while still being financially sustainable to deliver.

Council has an adopted Risk Management Framework and Roadmap for the integration of risk management through its business activities and associated strategies, processes and systems. This includes project management, business continuity, climate change and operational risk profiles which all support informed decision making and processes improvement at all levels throughout the organisation.

#### **4.2.3 Council manages our services and infrastructure in a sustainable manner to balance community need and expectations**

Over the reporting period a number of key strategies were developed that identify the infrastructure needs of the community into the future. These include:

- The MidCoast Roads Strategy and associated Transport Assets Strategic Business Plan.
- The Our Water, Our Future 2050 Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy.
- The MidCoast Open Space and Recreation Strategy and supporting strategies including the Skatepark Strategy and Playspace Strategy.

The delivery of infrastructure and projects identified within these strategies will be dependent on available funding and prioritisation by Councillors in the development of each 4-year Delivery Program.

## **4.3 Council builds a healthy and community-focused culture that contributes to our success**

### **Customer Request Management**

As part of our Business Transformation Program a new customer request system was developed. This system improves the way customers make requests by streamlining the process and ensuring the correct department receives the request for response or action.

Since the implementation in December 2023 Council has received 40,934 requests through the system. On average the requests are completed within six days.

Customers can also opt in for automatic notifications on the progress of their request. In the seven months between December 2023 and June 2024, 33.35% of customers opted in for SMS notifications and 28.43% opted in for email notifications.





## Summary of our Progress

### 4.3.1 Develop and grow a skilled, motivated, accountable and a 'high-performing' workforce

Council has a Workforce Management Strategy 2022-2026 that identifies a range of strategies and initiatives that will help us create and maintain a positive and meaningful employee experience.

The strategy has been developed to meet the following objectives:

- To position MidCoast Council as an 'employer of choice'
- To shape a positive organisational culture and move it towards our preferred culture
- To assist every employee to continually deliver on our organisational vision:
- To be a high performing organisation where we are always striving to be better; one where we work collaboratively and are trusted.

We continued to offer entry-level career opportunities for apprentices, graduates and trainees as part of our Employment Based Training Strategy.

Council provides training and development opportunities to support staff to improve and develop in their roles and coordinate the Employment-Based Training Scheme with further support for development provided through Council's "LEAD" and "Manager Leadership" programs.

### 4.3.2 Provide a safe, accessible, fair and equitable work environment

Following the Recruitment Review conducted by the Australian Network on Disability in October 2022, Council continued to progress implementation of actions identified in the Review. The Human Resources team has been investigating options to increase the number of applications from people with disability including 'The Field' AI platform. While this format is currently not compatible with Council's systems, other strategies are being investigated in the pursuit of Council's Equal Employment Opportunity objectives.

Council's "Women Rising" program was established to support and mentor careers of high potential female talent.

### 4.3.3 Provide the community with an accessible, responsive and efficient customer experience

The community can access face to face customer service at any of our five customer service points, including Services Australia and Service NSW at the Gloucester customer service point. The Forster Civic Centre opened to the public in October 2023 and included a new customer service point. Customers can also access specialist planning and development advice at our customer service centre at Yalawanyi Ganya.

There is now a single phone number that allows the community to access Council's call centre during opening hours. 103,000 calls were received over the 2022-2024 reporting period.

A customer request system was introduced in December 2023 that allows the community to request information or a service and report an issue 24/7, even from a mobile device.

## 4.4 We encourage community and civic leadership



### Empowering Community Groups

In March 2023, Council facilitated workshops to assist and educate community groups and organisations in the preparation of grant applications.

The workshops were free to attend and covered topics including making local connections, identifying opportunities, managing change, effective leadership and funding opportunities.

Attendees were informed of effective ways to work with their community, create partnerships, collaborate, build competency within their organisation and plan for the future.

The workshops aimed to provide long lasting benefits to MidCoast communities by providing education that can assist with strengthening an organisation's innovation, processes, and resources.

They were also a learning opportunity where attendees could benefit from networking with others who have the shared goal of improving the sustainability and liveability of the MidCoast.

## Summary of our Progress

### 4.4.1 Inform, educate and empower community groups and leaders to respond and adapt to challenges and change

Committees and Reference Groups are an important way that Council works with community members to help deliver on the outcomes identified in the CSP. Over the reporting period, Council continued to work collaboratively with the following community-based groups

- Aboriginal Reference Group
- Arts and Creative Industries Reference Group
- Community Inclusion and Wellbeing Reference Group
- Community Resilience and Disaster Recovery Reference Group
- Heritage Reference Group
- Destination Management Plan Review Reference Group.
- MidCoast Koala Reference Group
- Local Traffic Committee

### 4.4.2 Identify and participate in initiatives for regional cooperation and collaboration

Council is a member of The Hunter Joint Organisation where it collaborates with nine other Hunter councils including Cessnock City Council, Dungog Shire Council, Lake Macquarie City Council, Maitland City Council, Muswellbrook Shire Council, City of Newcastle, Port Stephens Council, Singleton Council, and Upper Hunter Shire Council.

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 the community.

The Mayor and General Manager advocate through their association with the Hunter Joint Organisation, Country Mayors Association and through their attendance at the National General Assembly, Local Government New South Wales Conferences and the Local Government New South Wales Rural and Regional Summit.

## Community Outcome 4 - Challenges and Future Opportunities

**Financial sustainability** – Financial sustainability is a challenge across local government broadly. In particular, the recent sustained period of inflation growth, and increases exceeding inflation in material costs for infrastructure projects, combined with the constraints of rate pegging, have placed increased pressure on Council's bottom line. Balancing the service level expectations of the community within available budgets continues to be a challenge. Further commentary on financial sustainability is made on page 62 'Financial Sustainability Review and Strategy' on and page 70 'Financial Performance Overview'.

**Managing risk** - Climate risks for Council were reviewed as part of the periodic review of Council's Risk Management Framework in June 2024. Cyber security is a high priority risk for Council. Although Council has implemented improvements to increase Council's cyber security posture, work will need to continue into the future.

**Delivering, managing and maintaining a growing asset base** – Work continued on developing asset management plans across key areas of Council infrastructure. The challenge remains in funding the necessary maintenance of our growing asset base to ensure that assets do not deteriorate prematurely, thereby requiring more costly replacement.

**Skill shortage** - Like many regional councils, MidCoast Council continues to face a skills shortage in key areas of its operations. Council continued to implement action plans to develop and grow a skilled, motivated, accountable and high performing workforce. Training from within included leadership programs and recruitment of trainees and graduates.

**Effectively engaging with our community** – Connecting with hard to reach groups remains a challenge when engaging with the broader community, particularly on high level strategies and long-term planning. We continue to work on improving how we do this and are constantly reviewing and implementing changes to our approach to maximise feedback from all sections of the community to inform our decision making.

## Financial Performance Overview

Financial performance within the Community Strategic Plan is identified in Strategic Objective 4.2 – *Council demonstrates good governance and financial management to ensure decisions and transactions are ethical, efficient, safe and fair.*

This is measured against five indicators as outlined in the table below along with the results at 30 June 2024. The financial indicators are taken from the draft 2023-24 Financial Statements that are currently subject to audit.

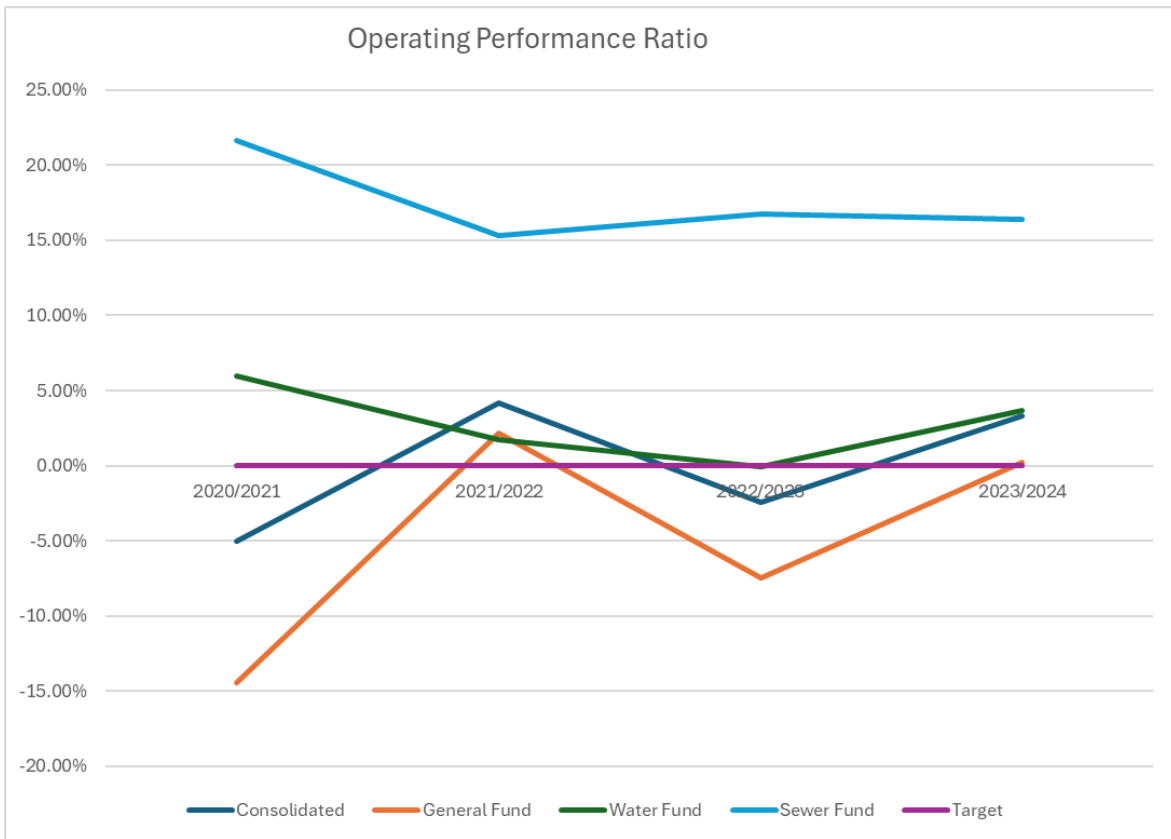
Performance Indicator / measure	Source	Baseline	Target	Performance Results 2023-24
Operating performance ratio	MidCoast Council Annual Financial Statements	-5.00%	>0.00%	3.33%
Debt service cover ratio	MidCoast Council Annual Financial Statements	1.77x	>2.00x	4.16x
Infrastructure backlog ratio	MidCoast Council Annual Financial Statements	4.01%	<2.00%	10.04% <sup>2</sup>
Building & infrastructure renewal ratio	MidCoast Council Annual Financial Statements	94.46%	≥100.00%	115.59%
Community satisfaction with financial management*	MidCoast Community Satisfaction Survey	63%	Increase	54%

**(Note:** The baseline for the financial indicators above is from the 2020-21 audited Financial Statements)

<sup>2</sup> The large increase in this indicator reflects a change in the condition rating of infrastructure assets that is used in the calculation of this ratio. The baseline measure is based on cost to bring assets to a condition rating of 3 – Satisfactory. This was amended in the 2022-2023 Financial Statements to a condition rating of 2 – Good. This is an Office of Local Government requirement unless Council has agreed a different condition rating with its community through a community engagement exercise.

To better understand these results, it is important to understand that Council operates three separate funds (general, water and sewer) and the financial results of each are consolidated to give the ratios identified above. The separate accounting for the Water and Sewer operations of Council is a legislative requirement.

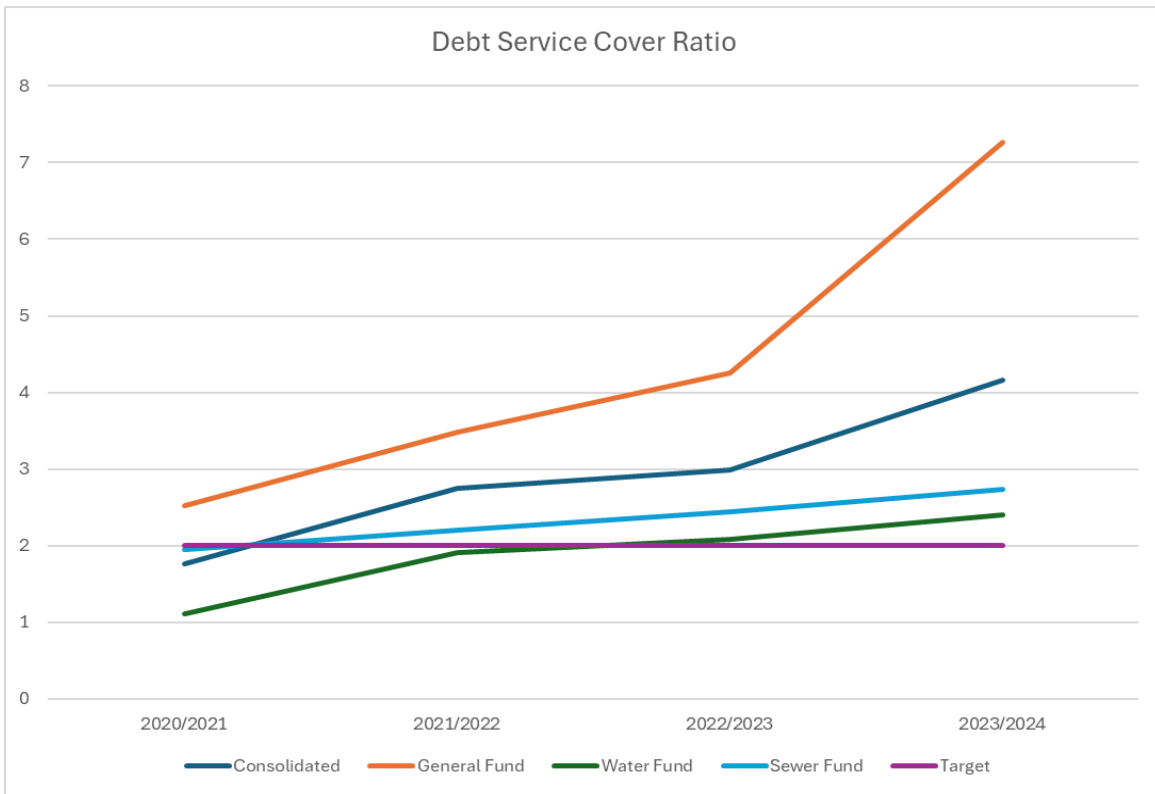
The series of charts included below highlight the annual performance for each measure on a consolidated basis and on a fund level basis. This provides additional information on the strengths and challenges of each Fund.



The Operating Performance ratio is a core measure of Council’s financial sustainability. It measures Council’s ability to contain operating expenditure within operating revenue. The Office of Local Government benchmark is that Council should record a breakeven operating position or better (over 0%).

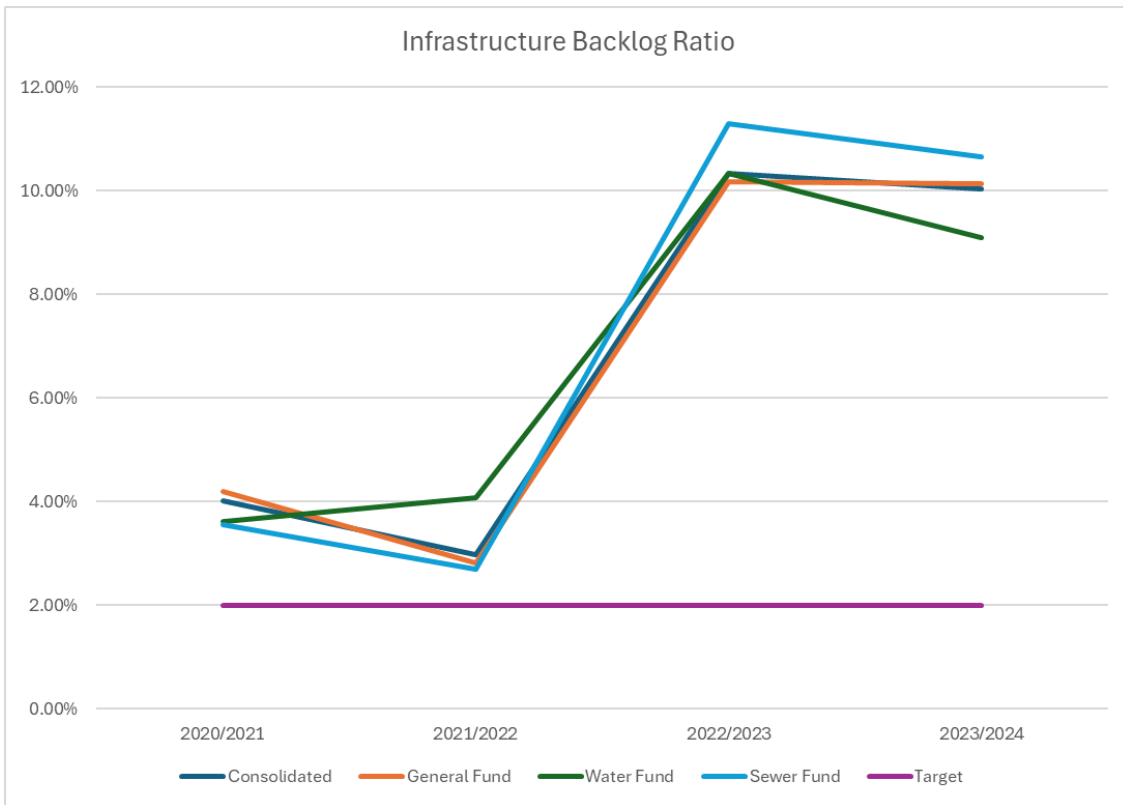
The chart shows that Council’s General Fund has and is experiencing challenges in meeting the required benchmark on a consistent basis. These results have confirmed the projections contained within the Long-term Financial Plan and reinforce why Council engaged the AEC Group in 2023 to undertake an independent Financial Sustainability Review.

The Water Fund continues to record small positive results while the Sewer Fund is generating a healthy annual result for this indicator.



The Debt Service Cover ratio measures the availability of operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments. The Office of Local Government benchmark is greater than 2 (i.e. Council has \$2 or more of available operating cash to meet every \$1 of debt that is due).

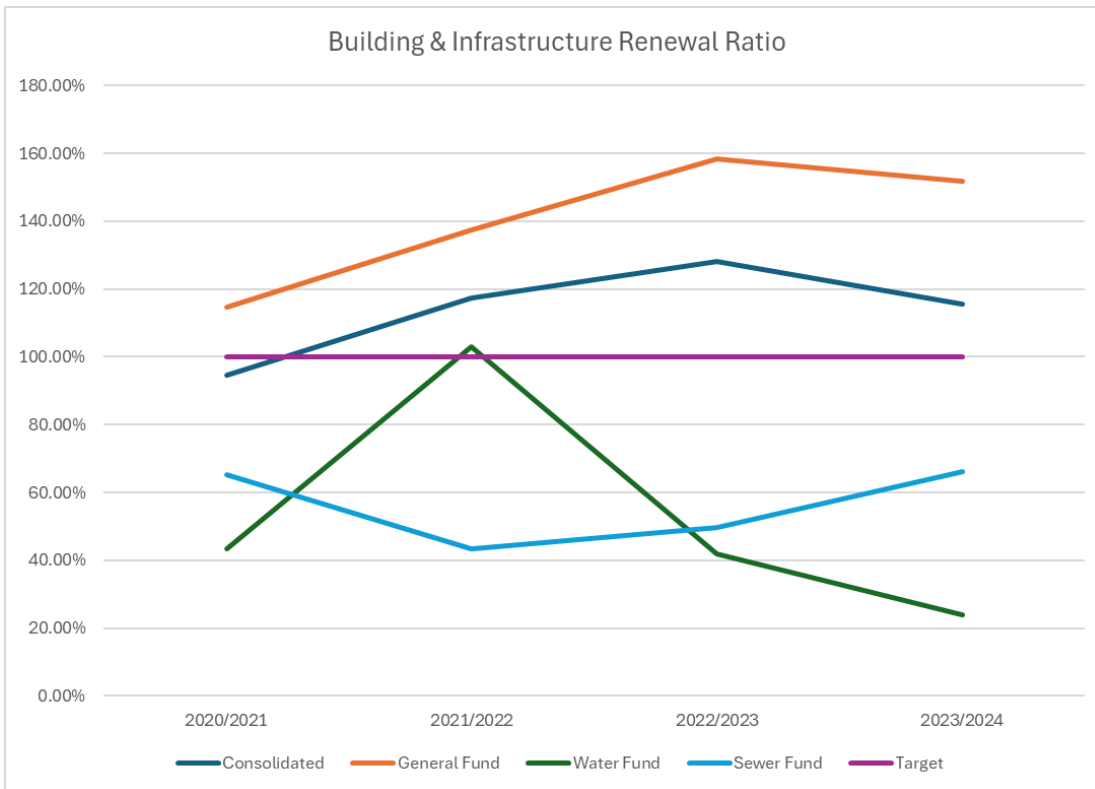
The chart above shows that the General Fund is in a strong position in respect of this indicator. Both the Water and Sewer Fund are meeting the benchmark. The Water Fund continues to record results just above the benchmark and this is reflective of the large (but decreasing) debt that this Fund carries. This is related to major capital works programs carried out a number of years ago that were funded by loan borrowings.



The Infrastructure Backlog ratio shows what proportion the infrastructure backlog is against the total value of a Council’s infrastructure. The benchmark is less than 2%.

As indicated above this ratio is impacted by the change in underlying condition on which the indicator is calculated. However (after recalculating the ratios on the 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 basis) the underlying trend has been positive with a gradual decrease over time in all Funds.





The Building & Infrastructure Renewal ratio assesses the rate at which assets are being renewed against the rate at which they are depreciating. The benchmark is greater than 100%.

The General Fund asset renewal position has benefited from a large influx of government grants that have targeted our road network. This has allowed Council to address asset renewal requirements in excess of the benchmark.

The ongoing results for the Water and Sewer Funds are being addressed through the consideration of asset data and review of resource allocations to ensure that funding is being allocated to achieve the optimal asset outcome.

### Community Satisfaction with Financial Management Measure

Council measure for this indicator has decreased following the completion of the 2023 Satisfaction Survey.

It is important to note that the underlying question the Community Satisfaction Survey is measuring is generally a reference to how Council spends its funds and the priorities it sets not financial reporting and financial statements.

## Financial Performance - Current and Future Actions

Council adopted a Long-term Financial Plan in June 2022 and has completed an annual review of that initial plan in June 2023 and June 2024.

Those reviews confirmed the underlying challenges that faced the Council during its term and into the future, particularly in respect of asset management. Each iteration of the LTFP indicated that Council was not generating sufficient funds to meet the optimal asset management requirements of its asset base and as such its long-term financial sustainability was under threat.

Council took action on several fronts to address this challenge. It requested that a Roads Strategy be developed and that a Financial Sustainability Review be undertaken to quantify the challenge and to provide options for the future. It also established an Asset Advisory Committee to provide strategic oversight of:

1. Councils adopted Asset Management Strategy and any revisions.
2. Councils Operational Property Portfolio and commercial property reserve established by Resolution 346/2023.
3. Other strategic property asset issues to improve operating performance and financial sustainability.

The AEC Group was engaged in 2023 to conduct this independent Financial Sustainability Review and provided their report to Council in December 2023. Council reviewed the Final Report and recommendations and developed a Financial Sustainability Action Plan 2024-2027 which was adopted in May 2024.

### **This Action Plan has the following goal and objectives:**

MidCoast Council aims to be financially sustainable. This means having sufficient funds to meet all of our resources and financial obligations, including the provisions of agreed services and properly maintaining our assets.

It also means:

- a) Being able to maintain infrastructure (physical assets) over the long term for our future generations.
- b) Having sufficient cash reserves to accommodate unexpected financial events.

**Objective 1:** Expenditure is managed to ensure that limited funds are controlled and spent effectively.

**Objective 2:** Council operations are effective, efficient, and lean – delivering value for money to the community.

**Objective 3:** Council assets are strategically managed across their entire lifecycle and asset management capability is continually developed and improved.

**Objective 4:** Revenue sources are regularly reviewed to align expenses and agreed service levels.

**Objective 5:** Generate sufficient unrestricted cash as determined by Council policy.

In tandem with the engagement with AEC Group, a Roads Strategy was developed and presented to Council in May 2024. The Roads Strategy outlines what would be required to improve our road network condition and meet the community's expectations. It contains more than 50 recommendations that improve and develop the maturity of Council's road asset management systems, processes and actions.

# Performance Results

## Community Outcome 1: A resilient and socially connected community

Strategic Objective	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2023-24
1.1 We celebrate our history, culture, creativity and diversity	The MidCoast community is harmonious, cohesive and inclusive*	46% of residents Agree	Increase	38% of residents agree
	There is a good range of opportunities for cultural and artistic activities and expression*	54% of residents Agree	Increase	49% of residents agree
	Community satisfaction rate for festival and events programs*	85%	Maintain	82%
	Community satisfaction rate with heritage sites protected and maintained*	86%	Maintain	81%

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Number of events hosted at the Manning Entertainment Centre	119 (2023) 54 (2024)
Number of exhibitions hosted by the Manning Regional Art Gallery	24 (2023) 20 (2024)
Number of events hosted by the Manning Regional Art Gallery	187 (2023) 184 (2024)
Number of exhibitions, events and programs that celebrate First Nations Culture supported by Council	11 (2023) 12 (2024)
Number of Community Inclusion and Wellbeing Reference Group meetings held	3 (2023) 3 (2024)

## Community Outcome 1: A resilient and socially connected community (continued)

Strategic Objective	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2023-2024
<b>1.2</b> We have access to a wide range of services and activities that contribute to the wellbeing of all members of our community	There is a good range of leisure and recreation opportunities*	66% of residents Agree	Increase	57% of residents Agree
	Community satisfaction rate with youth activities*	72%	Maintain	64%
	Community satisfaction rate with library services*	97%	Maintain	93%
	People have fair opportunity to participate in community life*	67% of residents Agree	Increase	62% of residents Agree

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Percentage of Disability Inclusion Action Plan legislative requirements met	100% (2023 and 2024)
Library visitation rate per capita (visits per person per year)	2.5 (2023) 2.6 (2024)

## Community Outcome 1: A resilient and socially connected community (continued)

Strategic Objective	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2023-2024
1.3 We work towards being a sustainable, resilient and socially connected community	There is a good range of community groups and support networks for residents*	66% of residents Agree	Increase	53% of residents Agree
	Living in the LGA gives you a sense of living in a community*	68% of residents Agree	Increase	58% of residents Agree
	Community satisfaction rate with Emergency Management*	88%	Maintain	84%

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Number of community events / training opportunities hosted, or supported per year	149 (2023) 52 (2024)
Number of interagency recovery meetings	36 (2023) 10 (2024)
Local Emergency Management Plan compliant with legislation	100% (2023 and 2024)

## Community Outcome 1: A resilient and socially connected community (continued)

Strategic Objective	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2023-2024
1.4 We protect the health and safety of our communities	Meeting Australian Drinking Water Guidelines	Microbiological >99% Physical >99% Chemical >95%	Maintain	Maintained
	Community satisfaction rate with sewerage services*	92%	Maintain	91%
	Community satisfaction rate with stormwater drainage*	74%	Maintain	72%
	Residents feel safe using public facilities*	68% of residents Agree	Increase	60% of residents Agree
	Community satisfaction rate with Water Quality*	89%	Maintain	84%
	Sporting facilities in the area meet our needs*	70% of residents Agree	Maintain	62% of residents Agree

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Compliance to Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWF) for monitoring program sites	100% (2023 and 2024)
Compliance with Airport Safety Standards as audited by CASA (Civil Aviation Safety Authority) met	100% (2023 and 2024)
On-site sewage management high-risk systems, (systems within proximity to aquaculture sites) that are regularly inspected at a frequency based on risk	100% (2023 and 2024)
Level of interment compliance with NSW Public Health requirements	100% (2023 and 2024)

## Community Outcome 2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments

Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2023-24
Waterway report card scores	Grade A = 4 Grade B = 11 Grade C = 3	Maintain or Improve	Grade A = 3 Grade B = 10 Grade C = 8 <i>(Note: These are the 2023 results which are the latest results at June 2024. There are 3 additional waterways now monitored and all are at a grade 'C')</i>

Waterways report scores are given for algae and water clarity. Overall water clarity was quite high in most waterways, however due to algae growth there was a decline in score for some locations.

Higher algal growth strongly influenced the grades in 2023, this is likely due to lower rainfall than the previous year which resulted in improved water clarity, less turnover of water within the waterbodies and thus more light, and more time for algae to grow.

Refer to our [Waterway and Catchment Report Card | Have Your Say \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/waterway-and-catchment-report-card) for the full report card.

Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2023-24
Threatened species status in MidCoast	Plants 43 Mammals 30 Frogs 8 Reptiles 2 Sea turtles 3 Birds 52 Insects 1 Fish 5	Maintain	Plants 45 Mammals 30 Frogs 7 Reptiles 2 Sea turtles 4 Birds 69 Insects 1 Fish 4

*Note: A decrease in the figures in the above table could indicate that either the species are no longer threatened, or alternatively have become extinct.*

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Proportion of bushland reserves under weed control program	42% (2023) 53% (2024)
Landholders participating in land for wildlife and other conservation programs	125 (2023) 399 (2024)

## Community Outcome 2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments *(continued)*

Strategic Objective	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2022-2024
<b>2.2</b> We understand and manage environment and climate change risks and impacts	Community satisfaction rate with Climate change*	62%	Increase	68%
<b>2.3</b> Council works towards net zero emissions	Recycling bins contamination rate of yellow recycling bins that are contaminated with non-recyclable material	11%	Decrease	11%
	Red waste bin recycling or organic material of red recycling bins that include organic or recycling material <i>(materials that could have been diverted)</i>	15% (12% recycling material, 3% organic material)	10-11%	12%
	Waste diverted from landfill	37.4 % per capita	Increase	47.32% per capita
	Dwellings with Solar Panels in MidCoast	35.3%	Increase	Approx. 44.7% of dwellings
	CO <sub>2</sub> emissions from Council's fleet (light commercial vehicles, passenger vehicles and trucks)	New Measure Baseline	New Measure	3,324 tonnes

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Percentage of Council's passenger vehicle fleet that is comprised of non-ICE (hybrid, PHEV, BEV, FCEV) vehicles	10% (2023) 14% (2024)



## Community Outcome 2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments *(continued)*

Strategic Objective	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2022-2024
2.4 We have an adequate and reliable water supply	Water consumption does not exceed water production	100%	Maintain	100%
	Community satisfaction rate for Water service*	80%	Increase	84%

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Compliance to Australian Drinking Water Guidelines for monitoring program sites	100% (2023 and 2024)
Percentage of identified water asset renewals delivered per the Water Asset Renewals Program	100% (2023 and 2024)

## Community Outcome 2: An integrated and considered approach to managing our natural and built environments *(continued)*

Strategic Objective	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2022-2024
<b>2.5</b> We balance the needs of our natural and built environment	Council's planning and leadership are contributing to a sustainable environment in the MidCoast LGA*	28% of residents agree	Increase	25% of residents agree
<b>2.6</b> We have a diverse range of housing options	Community satisfaction rate with residential development*	79%	Maintain	64%
	Residents feel able to afford a reasonable standard of housing in this area*	67%	Increase	49%
	Dwellings in MidCoast region  <i>Medium density = townhouses and 1-2 storey flats and units</i>  <i>High density = 3+ storey flats, units and apartments</i>	<b>Separate house</b> - 36,923 <b>Medium density</b> - 7,006 <b>High density</b> - 1,790	Increase	<b>Separate house</b> - 40,030 <b>Medium density</b> - 7,136 <b>High density</b> - 1,935  <i>Results from 2021 Census</i>

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Median determination time for small-scale Development Applications	51 days (2023) 45 days (2024)
Average days taken to process Fast Track planning applications	12 days (2023 and 2024)
Amount of building approvals	\$376 M (2023) \$440 M (2024)

## Community Outcome 3: A thriving and strong economy

Strategic Objective	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2022-2024
3.1 MidCoast is a great place to visit, work and invest	Planning for local economic growth and development is adequate*	35% of residents agree	Increase	25% of residents agree
	Community satisfaction rate with Economic development*	64%	Increase	61%
	Community satisfaction rate for support for local business*	70%	Increase	69%
	Gross Regional Product	\$3.433 billion	Maintain or increase	\$4.79 billion
	Gross Regional Product per capita	\$36,026	Maintain or increase	\$48,922
	Local jobs	30,250	Maintain or increase	35,546
	Persons aged 15+ with University Qualifications	11%	Increase	12%
	Persons aged 15+ with trade qualifications (certificate)	24%	Increase	26%
	Local business	6,951	Maintain or increase	7,484
	Visitation rate	2.18 million	Maintain	2.18 million
	Total visitors spend	\$612 million	Increase by 4%	\$811 million
	Average overnight visitors spend	\$453	Increase by 1.5%	\$564
	NBN coverage in MidCoast	Hawks Nest, Tea Gardens, Karuah and Stroud currently do not have NBN coverage	NBN coverage in Hawks Nest, Tea Gardens, Karuah and Stroud	NBN coverage now in Hawks Nest, Tea Gardens, Karuah and Stroud

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Number of events sponsored and supported by Council (Community and local events, events and festivals, regionally significant events)	93 (2023) 71 (2024)
Number of professionals supported by the Community Connector Program to relocate to the area	86 (2024)

### Community Outcome 3: A thriving and strong economy (continued)

Strategic Objective	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2022-2024
<b>3.2</b> Our villages and business precincts are dynamic commercial spaces	Shops and services in shopping areas meet residents' needs*	66% of residents agree	Increase	52% of residents agree

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Businesses registered in the Vibrant Spaces program	>250 (2023) >300 (2024)

## Community Outcome 3: A thriving and strong economy (continued)

Strategic Objective	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2022-2024
<b>3.3</b> Our integrated transport networks meet the needs of our businesses and the community	Community satisfaction with local roads*	43%	Increase	26%
	Community satisfaction with road safety*	85%	Maintain	79%
	Community satisfaction with maintaining local bridges*	75%	Maintain	77%
	Community satisfaction with maintaining footpaths*	61%	Increase	60%
	Public transport is adequate for your needs*	39% of residents agree	Increase	29% of residents agree

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Sealed roads resurfaced	223,000m <sup>2</sup> (2023) 252,334m <sup>2</sup> (2024)
Unsealed roads re-sheeted by MidCoast Council	84km (2023) 94.5km (2024)
Number of bridges replaced by MidCoast Council	6 (2023) 6 (2024)

## Community Outcome 4: Strong leadership and good governance

Strategic Objectives	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2022-2024
<b>4.1</b> The community has confidence in Council decisions and planning for the future	Community satisfaction with engaging the community in planning*	60%	Increase	58%
	Council plans well to help secure the community's long-term future*	28% of residents Agree	Increase	23%
	Community satisfaction with long-term planning for the MidCoast Local Government Area*	71%	Increase	61%
	Community satisfaction with provision of Council information to the community*	60%	Increase	61%

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
People involved in community engagement activities	2,477 (2023) 8,625 (2024)
People registered for Council's online engagement platform	2,533 (2023) 3,721 (2024)
Council eNewsletter subscriptions	4,911 (2023) 8,653 (2024)
Average Councillor attendance at meetings	93.94% (2023) 85.06% (2024)
Average Councillor attendance at workshops and pre-briefings	87.22% (2023) 79.40% (2024)

Performance Measures and results for outcome 4.2 relate to financial performance – please see page 70 for results and financial performance overview.

## Community Outcome 4: Strong leadership and good governance (continued)

Strategic Objectives	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2022-2024
<b>4.3</b> Council builds a healthy and community-focused culture that contributes to our success	Workforce turnover rates (excluding fixed term contract employees)	12.3%	10-12%	11.31% <i>(at 30 September 2024 excluding the transition of MidCoast assist staff to other service providers)</i>
	Unplanned absences (days/FTE)	8.24 days	Decrease	3.75 days
	Lost time injuries rate	0.62 claims per \$1M of wages	Maintain	0.23 claims per \$1M of wages
	Community satisfaction with the ease in which they were able to contact Council*	New	A target will be set once we have a baseline	74% of residents
	Community Satisfaction overall with the way their contact with a Council officer was handled*	New	A target will be set once we have a baseline	66% of residents who had contacted council

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Number of requests received through the new Customer Request Management System	40,934 <i>(September 2024)</i>
Percentage of customers utilising self-lodgement request process through new Customer Request Management System	18.58% <i>(August 2024)</i>

## Community Outcome 4: Strong leadership and good governance (continued)

Strategic Objectives	Performance Indicator / measure	Baseline at 2021-22	Target	Performance Results 2022-2024
<b>4.4</b> We encourage community and civic leadership	Community satisfaction with support for community groups*	83%	Increase	78%

### Additional measures

Measure	Result for 2022-2024
Landowner permission letters issued to community groups to support grant applications	69 (2024)



