



# Annual Report

2022 - 2023

Ngayan marrungku paran wiyau Wanaruah,  
mirumalikan para ani parraykupa, ngatan ngayan  
marrung wiyau Ngarrakay paranpa yurakaykal ngatan  
pangaykal.

We acknowledge the Wanaruah people, traditional  
keepers of this land, and we pay respects to their  
Elders, past and present.

**Translation by Aunty Sharon Edgar-Jones.**

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# Upper Hunter Shire

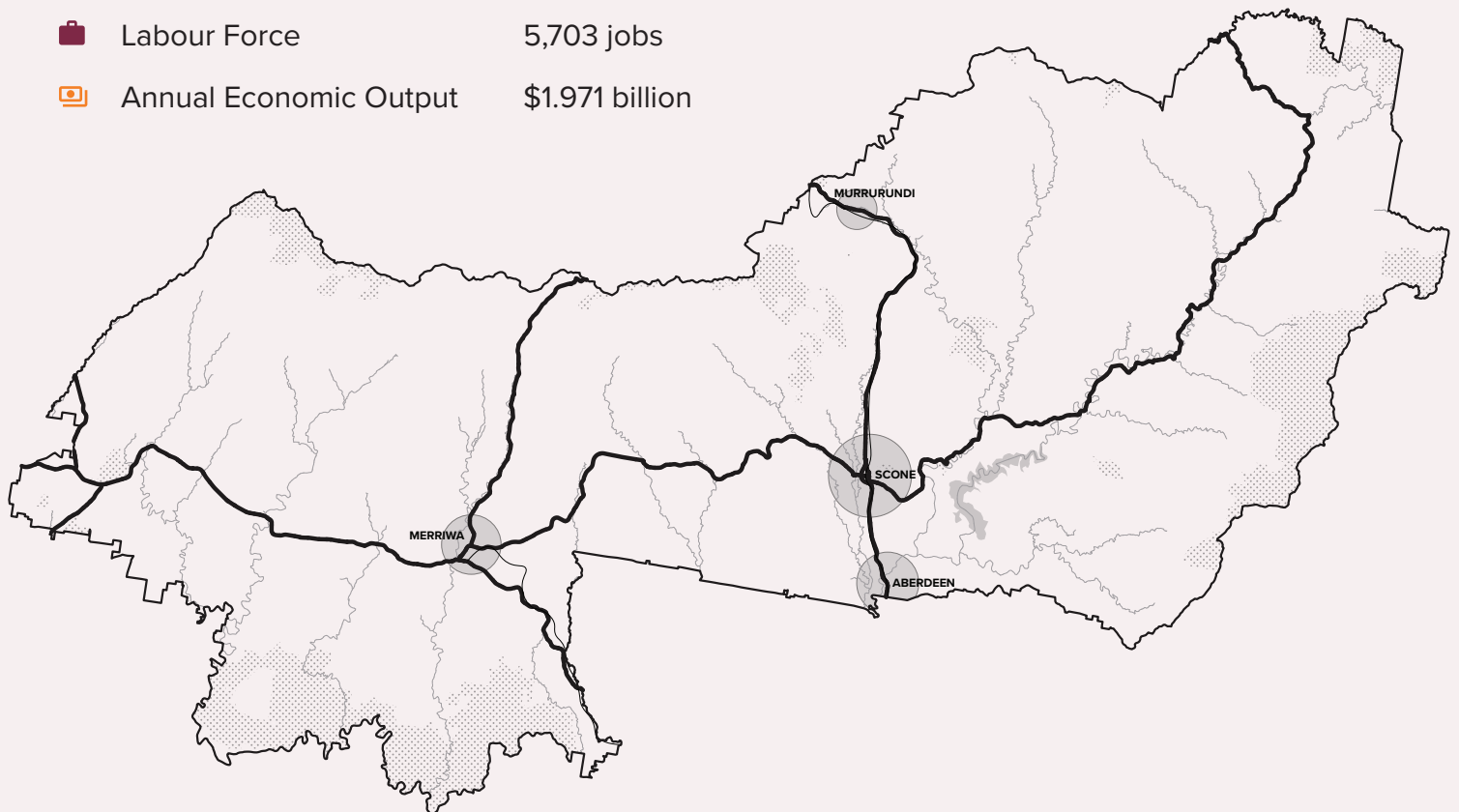
Upper Hunter Shire is located in the Hunter region of New South Wales, about 250 kilometres north of Sydney. It is bound by Liverpool Plains Shire and the Tamworth Regional Council area in the north, Mid-Coast Council and Dungog Shire in the east, Singleton Council and Muswellbrook Shire in the south and the Mid-Western Regional Council area and Warrumbungle Shire in the west.

The Upper Hunter Shire is a predominantly rural area and encompasses a total land area of about 8000 square kilometres, of which a large proportion is national park and nature reserves. Most of the rural area is used for grazing, dairy farming, horse studs and general farming. The main townships in the Shire are Scone and Aberdeen to the south, Murrurundi to the north and Merriwa to the west. Nestled among our

main townships are many local villages and rural communities.

The Shire is a major cattle, crop, goat, pig, poultry and sheep producer, has an increasing number of vineyards, an abattoir which supplies the Australian and overseas markets, and the best and friendliest rural community within easy travelling distance from Sydney and Newcastle.

 Land Area	8,100km <sup>2</sup>
 National Parks	686km <sup>2</sup>
 Population	14,293
 Labour Force	5,703 jobs
 Annual Economic Output	\$1.971 billion









# Mayoral Message



**Cr Maurice  
Collison**

As Mayor, it's my privilege to share with you some of the recent accomplishments and initiatives of Upper Hunter Shire Council, especially as we continue to build our community in the wake of economic and environmental challenges.

One of the key highlights has been our robust bridge replacement program. This initiative not only enhances the safety and reliability of our infrastructure but also reflects our commitment to improving accessibility and connectivity within our region. By replacing aging bridges, we are not only addressing immediate safety concerns but also investing in the long-term sustainability of our transport networks.

Another significant achievement is the successful introduction of the FOGO (Food Organics Garden Organics) service. This initiative represents a major step forward in our environmental stewardship, reducing landfill waste and promoting sustainable waste management practices. It's heartening to see our community embracing this green initiative, which contributes significantly to our broader environmental goals.

Moreover, the revival and success of community events post-COVID have been a source of joy and pride. The return of these events has not only boosted local morale but also provided a much-needed lift to our local economy. These gatherings have been instrumental in reconnecting our community, showcasing our resilience, and celebrating our rich cultural and social fabric.

While we celebrate these strides, we must also acknowledge the broader economic context. The regional Australian economy in 2023 has shown resilience despite facing numerous challenges such as labour shortages, rising living costs, and the impact of climate change. These issues have been particularly pronounced in regional areas, where they can affect local economies more intensely. The ongoing labour shortages have been a notable concern, impacting sectors crucial to our region such as agriculture and healthcare. However, these challenges also present opportunities for innovation and growth, particularly in areas like renewable energy and sustainable practices, aligning well with our Council's recent endeavours.

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to our staff and community members for their unwavering dedication and hard work. Your contributions are the backbone of our success. Together, let's keep this momentum going, building a stronger, more connected Upper Hunter Shire. Your support and collaboration are key as we navigate the future, striving for a thriving and resilient community.

# General Manager's Message



**Greg  
McDonald**

As the General Manager of Upper Hunter Shire Council, I am pleased to reflect on our notable achievements over the past year, even as we face the ongoing challenges of managing and upgrading our regional infrastructure.

We've made significant strides in enhancing our community's quality of life through projects like the Scone CBD Revitalisation, which promises to transform our town into a dynamic regional hub. Our successful Upper Hunter 'Hall Crawl' initiative brought joy and unity to our community, demonstrating the strength and resilience of our people in the face of adversity. The transition of our major sites to renewable energy is a proud step towards a sustainable future.

However, amidst these achievements, the state of our regional infrastructure, particularly our roads, remains a pressing concern. Our local roads, which form the backbone of our community's connectivity and safety, are in dire need of attention and investment. The reality is that many rural councils, including ours, struggle with the resources needed to adequately maintain these crucial assets.

The challenge is not just a matter of funding, but also of governance and support. While our Council is committed to ensuring the safety

and efficiency of our infrastructure, the scale of the task often outstrips our financial capabilities. The gradual reduction in untied funding has severely impacted our ability to maintain and improve our roads. We estimate that a significant investment is required just to maintain our roads at their current state, let alone improve them.

The situation calls for a concerted effort from both federal and state governments. An increase in core funding to local governments, particularly for road maintenance and upgrades, is crucial. This should be complemented by a more equitable distribution of financial assistance grants, ensuring that funding reaches where it is most needed. Additionally, reforms in tied funding arrangements are necessary to reduce the administrative burden on councils and enable more efficient allocation of resources.

We also advocate for the establishment of a national road hierarchy and minimum service level standards, along with support for councils to manage their road networks more effectively. This includes the provision of necessary technology, software, and training for council staff.

Our call to action is clear: we need more than just acknowledgment of the problem. We need concrete steps and committed support to address the challenges of regional infrastructure. As we continue to build and enhance our community, the support and cooperation of higher levels of government are essential to ensure that Upper Hunter Shire, and regions like ours, are not left behind in the journey towards a more connected and resilient Australia.

# Councillors

Upper Hunter Shire Council consists of 9 Councillors who are elected by the residents of the Shire every 4 years.



Cr Maurice Collison  
Mayor



Cr James Burns  
Deputy Mayor



Cr Belinda McKenzie  
First Meeting Decemeber 2022



Cr Ron Campbell



Cr Tayah Clout



Cr Elizabeth Flaherty



Cr Allison McPhee



Cr Lee Watts



Cr Adam Williamson



Cr Sue Abbott  
Resigned November 2022



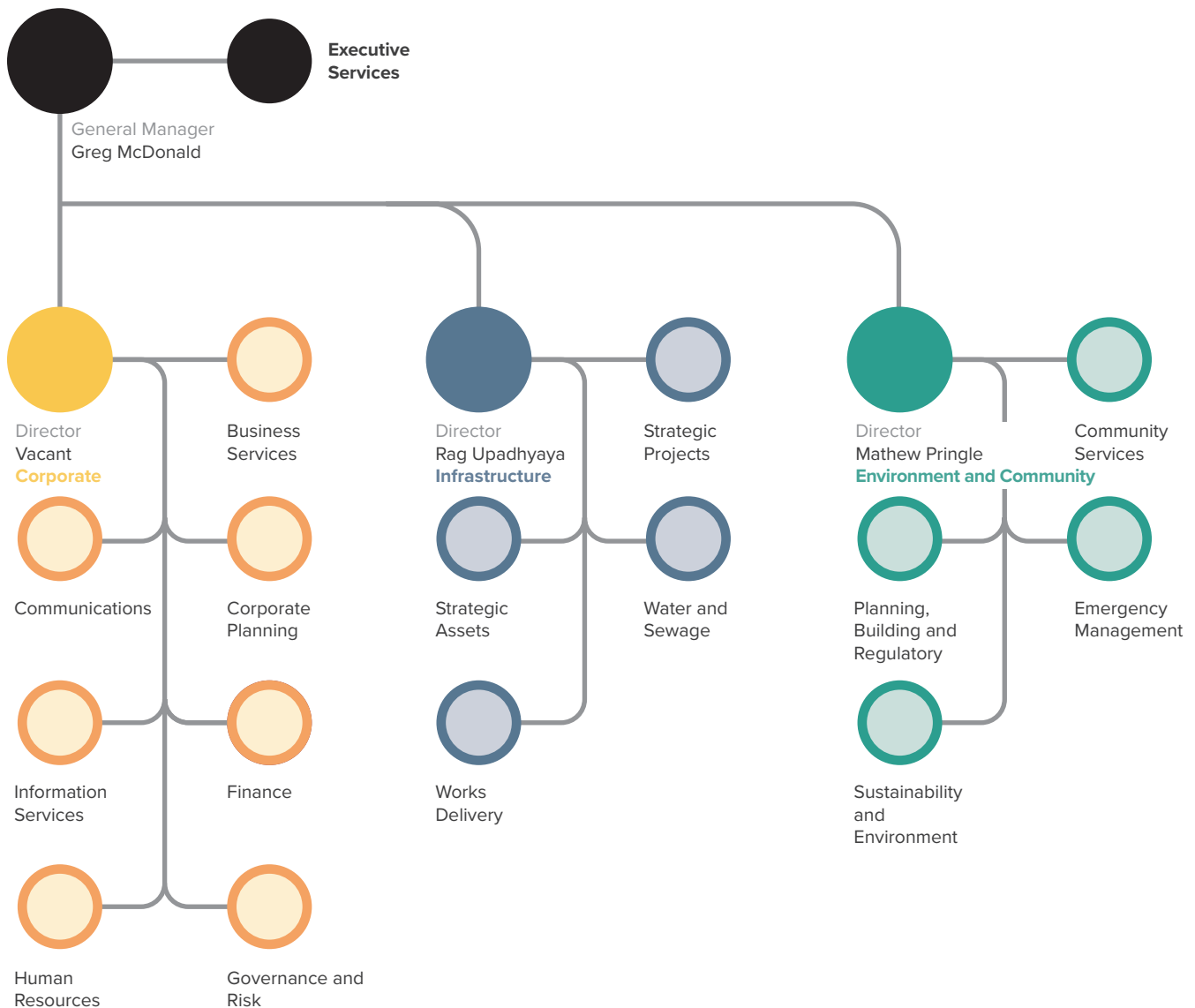
# Organisation

## Vision

**A Quality Rural Lifestyle  
in a vibrant, caring &  
sustainable community.**

## Values

- Mutual respect for people and cultures.
- Ensure staff and community safety.
- Efficient, effective and reliable service.
- Honest, open and accountable.
- Deliver on our commitments.
- Improved environmental responsibility.



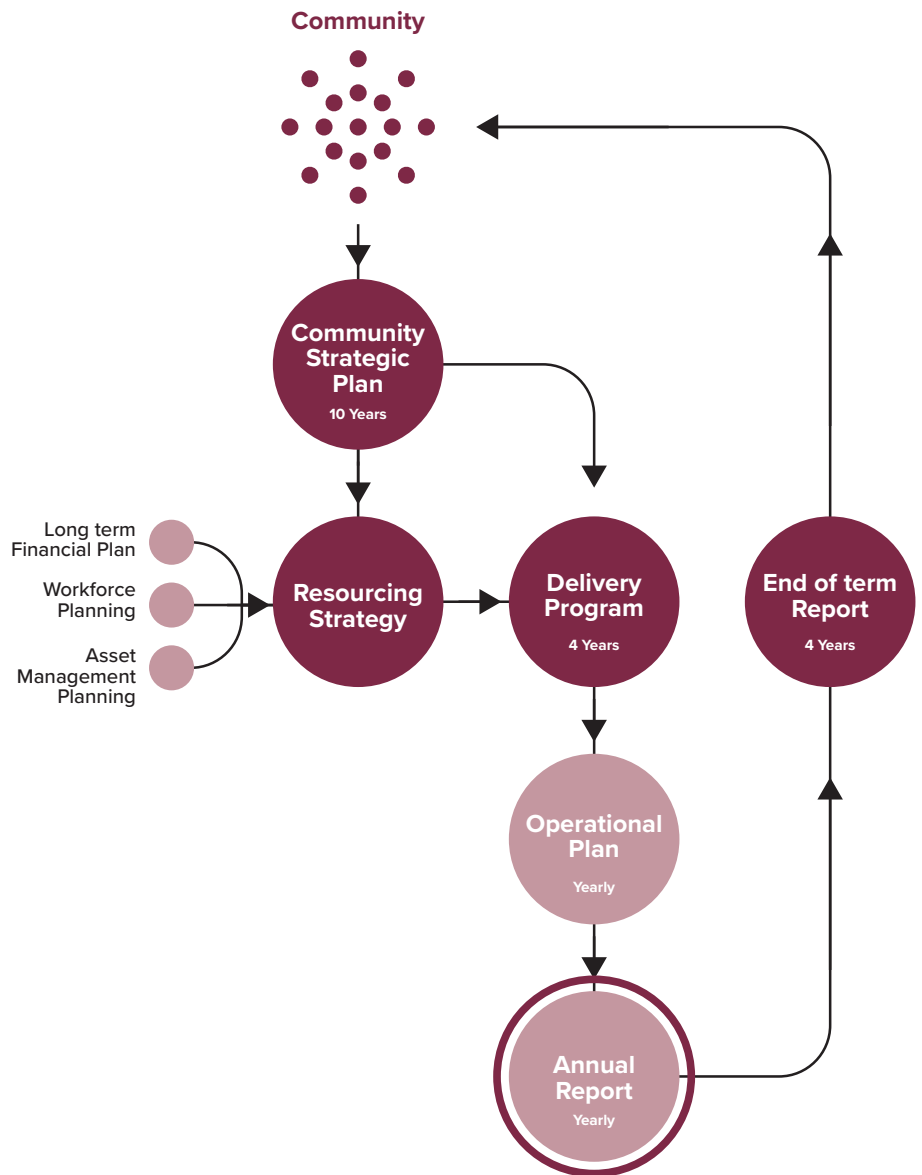
# Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework

In NSW, local governments like Upper Hunter Shire Council must follow specific laws for planning and reporting. Since 2009, there's been a focus on long-term planning through the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework. This framework requires three key plans:

- A Community Strategic Plan that outlines long-term goals (at least 10 years).
- A Delivery Program for a 4-year span, explaining how Council will achieve those goals.
- An annual Operational Plan for short-term actions.

The IP&R framework aims to make communities safer, healthier, and more sustainable. It helps Council coordinate various plans for a well-rounded and sustainable future. This ensures that all of Upper Hunter Shire Council's plans work in harmony to benefit the community.

> **The diagram shows the integration of Councils' reporting framework**



# Community Priorities

Upper Hunter 2032 is the Community Strategic Plan for Upper Hunter Shire. It defines the community's vision and is our roadmap for the future. It brings together extensive community feedback to set key directions and priorities.

Upper Hunter 2032 has been built around five community priorities that reflect the needs and values of the people who live in our region.

## Connected Community

Developing and deepening connections of people to each other and their community.

## Protected Environment

Ensuring the ongoing protection of our environment and natural resources.

## Thriving Economy

Strengthening our vibrant industries and economy while seizing emerging opportunities.

## Quality Infrastructure

Maintaining and developing our infrastructure network to meet the ongoing needs of our population.

## Responsible Governance

Providing efficient and responsible governance in order to effectively serve the community.

**Each goal is broken down to a series of actionable strategic objectives, which underpin Council's activities, services and decision making.**

# Community Priorities

## Strategic Objectives

### A connected Community

**1.1**  
Advocate for and increase the availability and affordability of health services.

**1.2**  
Work collaboratively to address social disadvantage.

**1.3**  
Increase promotion of healthy lifestyle.

**1.4**  
Enhance partnerships to maintain a safe community.

**1.5**  
Advocate for, support and provide services and facilities for the community.

**1.6**  
Provide and support a range of community events, festivals and celebrations.

**1.7**  
Acknowledge and respect our Aboriginal culture, heritage and people.

### Protected Environment

**2.1**  
Advocate for, facilitate and support programs that protect and sustain our diverse environment for future generations.

**2.2**  
Encourage and support community participation to care for our environment.

**2.3**  
Ensure all actions, decisions and policy response to natural hazards and climate change remain current.

**2.4**  
Implement and regularly review Strategic Land Use Plans, Environmental Planning Instruments and Development Controls, which reflect the needs and expectations of the broad Community.

**2.5**  
Provide efficient and effective advisory, assessment and regulatory services focused on being customer 'friendly', responsive and environmentally responsible.

**2.6**  
Plan, facilitate and provide for a changing population for current and future generations.

**2.7**  
Provide efficient and effective waste and recycling services and support improved waste minimisation and recycling practices.

### **2.8**

Implement policies to ensure the protection of strategic agricultural lands, equine critical industry clusters, natural resources and heritage.

### Thriving Economy

**3.1**  
Broaden and promote the range of business and industry sectors.

**3.2**  
Encourage retail and commercial business to increase local employment opportunities.

**3.3**  
Provide attractive and functional town centres and support revitalisation of the towns and villages including investment in built heritage and improvement of existing buildings.

**3.4**  
Provide diversity in tourist attractions and experiences.

**3.5**  
Promote the Upper Hunter's unique brand identity.

**3.6**  
Facilitate and support increased and innovative tourism and marketing opportunities.



# Community Priorities

## Strategic Objectives

### Quality Infrastructure

- 4.1** Provide for replacement, improvement and additional Community and open space infrastructure through investment, best practice and risk management.
- 4.2** Provide inviting public spaces that are clean, green, properly maintained, well designed, encourage active participation, family friendly and accessible to all.
- 4.3** Provide safe and reliable water and sewerage services to meet the demands of current and future generations.
- 4.4** Upgrade and maintain the road network and bridges.
- 4.5** Advocate and improve access to communication services.

### Responsible Governance

- 5.1** Effectively and efficiently manage the business of Council, while encouraging an open and participatory Council with an emphasis on transparency, community engagement, action and response.
- 5.2** Council is focused on innovation and continuous improvement to ensure a high quality of service which is aligned with business needs and community priorities.
- 5.3** Effective financial and asset management to ensure council's long-term sustainability.
- 5.4** Open and effective communication methods and technology are utilised to share information about Council plans, intentions, actions and progress.
- 5.5** Community is effectively engaged, can provide opinion and contribute to decisions that plan for the present and future of the Upper Hunter Shire.
- 5.6** Develop and maintain effective reporting systems that enable Council to measure and report on performance.
- 5.7** Effective management of risk underpins all Council decisions, service delivery and behaviours.
- 5.8** Develop leadership skills and build networks through a range of formal and informal opportunities.
- 5.9** Ensure Council is a great place to work by supporting Council employees in maximising their contribution.
- 5.10** Encourage and build strong partnerships between the Community, business and all levels of government to support implementation of the CSP 2032 and to deliver the Community priorities.
- 5.11** To participate and encourage regional coordination and planning between Councils and other organisations.
- 5.12** Provide timely and effective advocacy and leadership on key community issues and priorities.



# Connected Community

Developing and deepening connections of people to each other and their community.

## Community Priorities

1.1

Advocate for and increase the availability and affordability of health services.

1.4

Enhance partnerships to maintain a safe community.

1.7

Acknowledge and respect our Aboriginal culture, heritage and people.

1.2

Work collaboratively to address social disadvantage.

1.5

Advocate for, support and provide services and facilities for the community.

1.3

Increase promotion of healthy lifestyle.

1.6

Provide and support a range of community events, festivals and celebrations.





Hall Crawl





Flag raising ceremony, Scone

**Upper Hunter Shire Council continued to strengthen community bonds, in line with the Upper Hunter 2032 objectives.**

Upper Hunter Shire Council achieved funding for telehealth services at Gummun Place Hostel, enhancing access to specialist healthcare. Additionally, Council actively contributed to the Local Area Health Committee in Merriwa, Murrurundi, and Scone, advocating for improved child health, physiotherapy, dental, and x-ray services.

Tackling Social Disadvantage was another focal point. Through funding from the Department of Communities and Justice’s Targeted Early Intervention program, a collaborative effort with numerous agencies and groups was made to enhance service delivery for vulnerable families. A strong partnership was fostered with Upper Hunter Homeless Support, which has been instrumental in providing crucial accommodation and service access for families facing financial hardship or domestic violence. A variety of early intervention services were offered to vulnerable youth and their families, which included advice,

education support, counselling, and one-on-one mentoring.

On the front of Promoting Healthy Lifestyles, Council celebrated local residents’ positive contributions through Hidden Treasure nominations and Australia Day awards. ‘Cooking for One’ healthy cooking classes were organised in Merriwa and Murrurundi, adding a flavourful touch to healthy living. Additionally, funds were successfully secured through the Place to Play grant for developing a mountain bike track on Scone Mountain National Park. This initiative, alongside a range of activities, was aimed at boosting sports participation and promoting healthy living across the Shire.



Community Safety saw a blend of educational activities concerning crime prevention, drug action, family violence, and rural safety carried out in collaboration with Hunter Valley Local Area Command and other community agencies. The introduction of 'Mocktails' alcohol-free events in the Upper Hunter Hall Crawl series was a novel approach to promote safe party plans.

In terms of Community Service Provision and Advocacy, support was extended to families through Family Day Care and the Early Learning Centre, with referrals made to relevant support agencies when necessary. Actions from the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 were implemented to better the lives of individuals with disabilities. Libraries continued to be a cornerstone of community learning, offering a vast range of services including free library membership, WIFI access, and various reading and craft activities, along with the highly successful '1000 books before school' program to promote literacy.

Celebrating Community and Cultural Diversity remained a vibrant part of Council's endeavours. Australia Day ceremonies and family fun day activities were hosted across Merriwa, Murrurundi, and Scone. Various events like the Merriwa Family Fun Day, Scone Colour Run, and 'Upcycle your Wardrobe' events were organised, promoting community engagement and environmental consciousness. The "Mayor for a Day" schools competition was conducted, encouraging students to voice their opinions on significant community issues.

Lastly, the Acknowledgement and Promotion of Aboriginal Culture were carried forward through Acknowledgement to Country at all official events, partnering with Winanga-Li family support service for NAIDOC Week events. A Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country for Belltrees Public School's Keep Australia Beautiful/Green Flag Accreditation through Eco-Schools Australia were coordinated, alongside a Flag Raising Ceremony during Reconciliation Week, in collaboration with Wanaruah Local Aboriginal Lands Council and other local entities.

Wheelchair basketball in Scone







Major Project

# Hall Crawl

The Upper Hunter 'Hall Crawl' project stands as a testament to the power of community spirit and resilience. Originating from a need to reconnect and rejuvenate communities after the compounded stress of droughts, bushfires, and the COVID-19 pandemic, this project began on May 28, 2021, and concluded on December 31, 2022. Council, recognising the therapeutic and unifying power of communal gatherings, developed the 'Hall Crawl' concept - a series of events across various local halls, each tailored to the unique characteristics and preferences of its respective community.







These events were not just social gatherings but multifaceted engagements that provided a platform for local entertainers, opportunities for community groups to fundraise, and a stage for the Rural Fire Service (RFS) to promote their invaluable work. Each event was crafted to reach full capacity, reflecting the community’s overwhelming response and the project’s success in achieving its objectives.

Central to the ‘Hall Crawl’ was its impact on the community’s social fabric. In the wake of severe natural disasters and prolonged isolation,

these events offered a sanctuary for people to come together, share experiences, and reinforce communal bonds. They served as a celebration of survival and a collective step towards recovery. Additionally, the project provided an economic boost to local caterers and entertainers and offered the RFS a unique opportunity to engage with the community on crucial issues like bushfire plans and volunteer recruitment.

Despite its success, the project faced challenges, primarily due to unpredictable weather conditions that led to last-minute changes in entertainment and venue

arrangements. The high demand for entertainers in the post-COVID era also posed a logistical challenge. However, these obstacles were met with flexibility and quick thinking, ensuring the continuity and success of the events.

The ‘Hall Crawl’ project demonstrated a sustainable model for community engagement, showcasing how events can be pivotal in fostering community resilience, especially in the aftermath of crises. It highlighted the importance of local community halls as central assets for gatherings and the significance of acknowledging and celebrating the efforts of local volunteers. The project’s popularity and impact suggest potential for expansion, indicating that such initiatives can be vital components of recovery and resilience strategies in rural communities.

In essence, the Upper Hunter ‘Hall Crawl’ was a vibrant, community-driven initiative that not only provided immediate joy and relief but also laid a foundation for long-term community cohesion and resilience. Its success serves as a blueprint for similar initiatives in communities facing recovery from adversities, emphasising the role of communal activities in healing and rebuilding the social fabric.







# Protected Environment

Developing and deepening connections of people to each other and their community.

## Community Priorities

2.1

Advocate for, facilitate and support programs that protect and sustain our diverse environment for future generations.

2.2

Encourage and support community participation to care for our environment.

2.3

Ensure all actions, decisions and policy response to natural hazards and climate change remain current.

2.4

Implement and regularly review Strategic Land Use Plans, Environmental Planning Instruments and Development Controls, which reflect the needs and expectations of the broad Community.

2.5

Provide efficient and effective advisory, assessment and regulatory services focused on being customer 'friendly', responsive and environmentally responsible.

2.6

Plan, facilitate and provide for a changing population for current and future generations.

2.7

Provide efficient and effective waste and recycling services and support improved waste minimisation and recycling practices.



Merriwa





Recycling Educational programs

**In alignment with our commitment to ensuring the ongoing protection of our environment and natural resources, several significant strides were made during the 2022/2023 financial year.**

**Renewable Energy Transition**

In a significant step towards sustainability, Council entered into a Power Purchase Agreement to transition fifteen of its largest electricity-consuming sites, including all street lighting, to 100% renewably sourced electricity. This initiative marks a major milestone in reducing Council’s corporate greenhouse gas footprint, as these sites account for a substantial 20% of the total emissions.

**Climate Resilience**

The proactive measures outlined in our Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan were brought to life to curb Council’s corporate greenhouse gas emissions. Key actions, such as the introduction of the Food Organics/ Garden Organics (FOGO) kerbside collection service, the formulation of an emissions reduction masterplan, and the overhaul of street lighting, were successfully implemented.

**Enhanced Streetlight Efficiency**

Approximately 90% of Upper Hunter Shire’s streetlights were upgraded to energy-efficient LED luminaires, significantly cutting down on electricity consumption, costs, and greenhouse gas emissions. The remaining 150 main road streetlights are slated for an upgrade in the 2023/2024 financial year.

**Community-Led Sustainability Initiatives**

Council endorsed the establishment of a new community garden in Scone and progressed with the development application for a community nursery in Merriwa, fostering local sustainability and community engagement.

**Advancements in Waste Management**

With community insights, new waste transfer stations in Murrurundi and Merriwa were approved, advancing towards modern, sustainable waste management solutions. Concurrently, Closure Plans for the existing Murrurundi and Merriwa landfills are being prepared, setting the stage for environmentally sound closure of these facilities.



### Food Organics/Garden Organics Collection Service

Launched on 1 July 2022, the FOGO kerbside collection service has been a resounding success. Over 1,756 tonnes of FOGO material were collected and repurposed into compost in its inaugural year, resulting in a remarkable 1,053-tonne reduction in landfill waste. This initiative has propelled the recycling rate of Council's kerbside waste services to 54.4%, a significant leap from the previous 20%.

### > Aberdeen Waste Facility Weighbridge

The newly installed weighbridge at Aberdeen Waste Facility, powered entirely by renewable energy, epitomizes our stride towards operational sustainability. This facility now allows for fair billing, with customers charged based on the actual weight of the waste they deposit.





# Thriving Economy

Strengthening our vibrant industries and economy while seizing emerging opportunities.

## Community Priorities

3.1

Broaden and promote the range of business and industry sectors.

3.4

Provide diversity in tourist attractions and experiences.

3.5

Promote the Upper Hunter's unique brand identity.

3.2

Encourage retail and commercial business to increase local employment opportunities.

3.3

Provide attractive and functional town centres and support revitalisation of the towns and villages including investment in built heritage and improvement of existing buildings.

3.6

Facilitate and support increased and innovative tourism and marketing opportunities.





Little Night  
Out, Scone





Hunter Warbirds

**Upper Hunter Shire Council navigated a path of economic rejuvenation and connectivity within the community, anchored by several strategic ventures and projects.**

A cornerstone initiative was the unfolding of a comprehensive brand identity strategy for the Upper Hunter region. Kicking off with an Expression of Interest (EOI) to adept branding agencies, the project witnessed robust interest from a variety of reputable, including internationally acclaimed agencies. By 30 June 2023, the evaluation of these submissions was advancing, with a notable collaborative effort with Muswellbrook Shire Council aiding in the shortlisting process. Moreover, the UHSC secured a grant exceeding \$250,000 from the Department of Regional NSW's Resources for Region program, a significant stride towards fostering economic opportunities in regional NSW's mining communities.

The continued success of the Hunter Warbirds Aviation Centre has significantly boosted Scone's conference and tourism offerings. As an integral part of the region's attractions, it complements the Council's strategy to enliven evening activities in rural centres. This strategy

supports key local events, including the Scone Horse Festival, Aberdeen Highland Games, Merriwa Festival of the Fleeces, and King of the Ranges Festival in Murrurundi, thereby reinforcing Upper Hunter Shire Council's commitment to fostering a vibrant community and thriving local economy.





The period also saw an acceleration in Destination Management plan actions, encompassing the expansion of cycling tourism in Merriwa and Scone, support for the Merriwa wool processing investigation, and the perennial backing of the Carp Fishing competition on Lake Glenbawn, among other initiatives. Additional strides included securing funding for a Horse Museum and the orchestration of seasonal light shows and a regional events calendar in alliance with the Hunter Joint Organisation; embodying Upper Hunter Shire Council's commitment to a thriving, dynamic economy.

Furthermore, the adoption of the Development Control Plan 2023 (DCP) was a significant achievement under the 'Thriving Economy' pillar. The DCP, designed to provide a robust development assessment framework, clear and concise guidelines for various forms of

development, and encourage innovation in design, underlines the Council's commitment to promoting viable retail and commercial activity, integrating new developments into local commercial/business centres, and maintaining the heritage character of the business centres across the towns in the Shire. It also supports the diversification in tourist attractions and experiences, evident from its guidelines on tourist and visitor accommodation facilities, which aim to benefit the local tourism industry and economy.

Twilight  
Christmas  
Carnival,  
Murrurundi







Score CBD  
Revitalisation,  
June 2023

Major Project

# Score CBD Revitalisation

The Score CBD Revitalisation Project, with a project value exceeding \$10 million, marked its inception in March 2023. This initiative is part of a broader vision to turn Score into a hub of economic growth by enhancing the appeal of its central business district (CBD). The project is anchored on the Town Centre Masterplan for Score, evolving since 2016, and gained traction following the completion of the New England Highway bypass in 2020.



The initial phase of the project, beginning in March 2023, entailed essential preparatory work including securing necessary approvals from Transport for NSW and conducting condition assessments of adjacent properties. By April, with the requisite approvals in place, the project transitioned into the construction phase focusing on Kelly Street and St Aubins Square. The subsequent months of May and June witnessed the project advancing with the commencement of stormwater drainage upgrade, water main service installations, and pavement reconstructions.

This strategic initiative encompasses a blend of infrastructure enhancements and aesthetic upgrades, including significant roadworks, stormwater improvements, and footway landscaping. The project aims to provide a safer and more vibrant environment, enhancing the area's appeal to both locals and visitors.

St Aubins Town Square is expected to be completed in late 2023, followed by the west section of Block 2 shortly afterwards.

The west section of Block 1 is anticipated to be finished in early 2024. The east sections of Block 2 and Block 1 are on track for completion in mid and late 2024, respectively.

Through a combination of infrastructural enhancements and aesthetic upgrades, the Scone CBD Revitalisation Project is poised to significantly contribute to the economic vitality of Scone, embodying a forward-looking approach to regional development and community engagement.



Scone CBD Revitalisation, sod turning



# Quality Infrastructure

Maintaining and developing our infrastructure network to meet the ongoing needs of our population.

## Community Priorities

4.1

Provide for replacement, improvement and additional Community and open space infrastructure through investment, best practice and risk management.

4.2

Provide inviting public spaces that are clean, green, properly maintained, well designed, encourage active participation, family friendly and accessible to all.

4.3

Provide safe and reliable water and sewerage services to meet the demands of current and future generations.

4.4

Upgrade and maintain the road network and bridges.

4.5

Advocate and improve access to communication services.







Upper Hunter Shire Council made significant strides in advancing the region's infrastructure to better serve the community, aligning with the strategic directions set under the Quality Infrastructure theme. The initiatives span across various domains including road network maintenance, water and sewer systems upgrade, and urban development projects, reflecting the Council's dedication to enhancing public spaces and utility services.



#### Works Delivery

In the sphere of Works Delivery, council undertook a comprehensive inspection and maintenance routine covering local and regional bridges, the stormwater network, and road networks, ensuring their safety and functional integrity. Significant achievements include the resealing of 26.7 kilometres of local roads, sweeping 348 kilometres of urban roads, and executing a 100% completion of the reseal program covering 39.9 kilometres. Additionally, Council successfully carried out numerous road and drainage improvement projects across the shire, promoting better accessibility and safety.

#### Water and Sewer

The Water and Sewer department marked the year with notable advancements in improving the efficiency and safety of water and sewer systems. Among the accomplishments were the ongoing replacement of town water mains, repair of sewer shafts, and the upgrade of intake works at Hunter River. Moreover, the adoption of a Drought Emergency Response Management Plan and the initiation of discussions on the decommissioning of the Murrurundi Dam underscore Council's proactive approach to managing water resources amidst changing environmental conditions.





Murrurundi Dam

**Major Projects**

On the front of Strategic Assets and Major Projects, Council embarked on a robust Bridges Renewal Program, with construction commencing on replacing 14 timber bridges with new concrete structures. The program, with a total budget of \$11.58 million, saw the completion of Little Street Bridge, Scotts Creek, and Warlands Creek bridges within the financial year. Moreover, Council initiated substantial roadwork projects on Moonan Brook Road, Barrington Tops Forest Road, and Hunter Road, aiming to improve, widen, and initially seal various stretches of these roads, enhancing connectivity and safety.

The CBD Revitalisation project marked a significant milestone with the appointment of Daracon Contractors Pty Ltd for Stage 1 of the Scone CBD Revitalisation Project. This initiative encompasses the redevelopment of Kelly Street and the construction of St Aubins Town Square, aiming to uplift the

urban aesthetic and functionality by constructing wider footpaths, additional crossings, parking spaces, and utility upgrades. The progress toward year-end includes substantial drainage works, pavement reinstatement, and kerb and gutter placements, setting a solid foundation for the continuation of the project into the next financial year.

Aberdeen Sewer Treatment Plant





# Bridge Replacement Program



Allan Bridge  
before  
restoration

Under the Quality Infrastructure Pillar, the Bridge Replacement Program has been a focal point over the past year with the commencement of construction, aiming to replace 14 timber bridges with new concrete structures. During the financial year, \$2.61 million was spent from the total program budget of \$11.58 million.

As of the end of June 2023, notable progress was made with the completion and opening to traffic of Little Street Bridge, Scotts Creek #4, and Warlands Creek #1 bridges. Additionally, Scotts Creek #2 and Scotts Creek #3 bridges are 90% complete and are anticipated to be open to traffic by September 2023.



Looking forward, there is a structured plan for the upcoming period, with Warlands Creek #2, 3, 4, and 5 projected to be fully constructed and operational to traffic by April 2024. This initiative is a reflection of Council's commitment to enhancing infrastructure, ensuring safer and more reliable roadways for the community. Through diligent execution of the program, Council is steadily achieving the strategic objectives set within the Quality Infrastructure Pillar, facilitating a more connected and robust infrastructure network within the Upper Hunter Shire.

Cameron  
Bridge Works





# Responsible Governance

Providing efficient and responsible governance in order to effectively serve the community.

## Community Priorities

5.1

Effectively and efficiently manage the business of Council, while encouraging an open and participatory Council with an emphasis on transparency, community engagement, action and response.

5.5

Community is effectively engaged, can provide opinion and contribute to decisions that plan for the present and future of the Upper Hunter Shire.

5.9

Ensure Council is a great place to work by supporting Council employees in maximising their contribution.

5.2

Council is focused on innovation and continuous improvement to ensure a high quality of service which is aligned with business needs and community priorities.

5.6

Develop and maintain effective reporting systems that enable Council to measure and report on performance.

5.10

Encourage and build strong partnerships between the Community, business and all levels of government to support implementation of the CSP 2032 and to deliver the Community priorities.

5.3

Effective financial and asset management to ensure council's long-term sustainability.

5.7

Effective management of risk underpins all Council decisions, service delivery and behaviours.

5.11

To participate and encourage regional coordination and planning between Councils and other organisations.

5.4

Open and effective communication methods and technology are utilised to share information about Council plans, intentions, actions and progress.

5.8

Develop leadership skills and build networks through a range of formal and informal opportunities

5.12

Provide timely and effective advocacy and leadership on key community issues and priorities.





Cameron Bridge  
Opening





Merriwa Racecourse Improvements

The governance structure of Upper Hunter Shire Council is crafted to ensure responsible governance, aligning with the strategic directions in Council’s Community Strategic Plan. Our monthly Council meetings, supported by three standing committees—Corporate Services, Environmental & Community Services, and Infrastructure Services—serve as the pivotal point for decision-making. Additionally, we have 15 advisory committees including notable ones like the Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee and the four Community Advisory Committees, assisting in guiding our decisions effectively. Public participation is encouraged at Council meetings, offering community

members an avenue to engage in the decision-making process. We ensure key documents are easily accessible on our website, reinforcing transparency. Policies are reviewed regularly, at least once every Council term, ensuring they remain current and effective. Our connection with organisations such as the Office of Local Government and Independent Commission Against Corruption, alongside the attendance of relevant seminars and conferences by Councillors and senior staff, ensure we remain informed and up to date with the evolving landscape of local governance.

Council significantly amplified its digital presence, marking a pivotal stride towards broader community engagement. Council’s Facebook page reach expanded to over 516,335, alongside increasing its following to 9,135 individuals. In October 2022, Council unveiled its redesigned website, aimed at fostering an inclusive and accessible online environment for the community. The website attracted 41,000 users, with an average engagement time of 1 minute and 15 seconds per visit, and diverse traffic sources, indicating robust interaction and a high level of activity with 171,000 views and 456,000 event counts.



This digital evolution didn't stop at social media and website enhancement; Council also transitioned to digital application forms, simplifying the submission process for residents. This initiative reflects a commitment to leveraging modern technology to improve service delivery, embodying the Responsible Governance strategic directions. It signifies a forward-thinking approach aimed at innovation and continuous improvement, which not only enhances accessibility but also fosters open communication.

Upper Hunter Shire Council demonstrated a strong commitment to Responsible Governance through a myriad of initiatives funded by various grants. These initiatives reflect Council's dedication towards effective management, transparency, innovation, and community engagement, all pivotal elements under the Responsible Governance pillar.

One of the key areas of focus was the restoration and enhancement of the Shire's infrastructure following flood and storm damage. The funds sourced from the Infrastructure Betterment Fund and National Disaster Declaration, amounting to over \$5 million, were pivotal in facilitating these vital repairs. Through this, Council ensured that the community's assets are well-managed and restored to a standard that meets the present and future needs of the Upper Hunter Shire.

The youth of the Shire were not left behind. Through the (NSW) Regional Youth – School Holidays initiative, Council received just over \$20,000 which was channelled towards various activities. This not only provided a platform for the youth to interact and learn but also underscored Council's endeavour in engaging the community and particularly the youth, in meaningful and enriching activities.



Kelly St  
Amenities Block

Council was also able to secure funding for the creation of recreational facilities like the Scone Mountain Bike Trail and the establishment of a new Youth Centre in Murrurundi. These facilities not only serve as avenues for promoting healthy living but also as spaces where the community can come together, fostering a sense of belonging and unity.

In a bid to enhance the aesthetic appeal and functionality of the Shire, the Stronger Country Communities Fund was leveraged. This fund supported a variety of projects including the Merriwa CBD Activation and the Niagara Café Mural Restoration among others. These projects not only beautify the town but also have a potential economic impact by attracting visitors and investors.

The Resources for Regions funding was another significant stride towards economic growth and community development. Projects like the White Park Equine Facility Upgrade and the Campbells Corner Restoration were funded. Moreover, the funding facilitated the development of a Branding Strategy for the Upper Hunter Shire, a project aimed at revitalising the identity of the Shire, promoting economic growth, and fostering a sense of community.

Other notable projects securing funding include the Bellmans Hangar project at Hunter Warbirds under the Regional Tourism Activation Fund, and road works on Hunter Road through the Fixing Local Roads initiative. These projects not only enhance the infrastructure but also contribute to the tourism and overall economic growth of the Shire.

Upper Hunter Shire Council is deeply embedded in a network of partnerships at both the regional and national levels, fostering collaborative efforts to address various community and economic development challenges. Through engaging with Local Government NSW (LGNSW), Council aligns with an entity committed to supporting, promoting, and improving communities across the state of New South Wales. Additionally, Council's participation in the 2022 National General Assembly of Local Government, orchestrated by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), exemplifies its commitment to national dialogue and action on pertinent local government issues.

Beyond these structured engagements, Council is part of an regional inter-Council partnership focused on sectors crucial to the Upper Hunter, such as mining, renewable energy, and rural development. These partnerships facilitate collective action, sharing of best practices, and a unified voice in advocating for regional interests in broader forums.

At a more localised regional level, Upper Hunter Shire Council cultivates strategic partnerships with neighbouring councils including Muswellbrook, Singleton, and Dungog, particularly centring on economic development initiatives. These collaborative endeavours are instrumental in promoting regional economic resilience, sharing resources, and fostering a conducive environment for investment and community development.



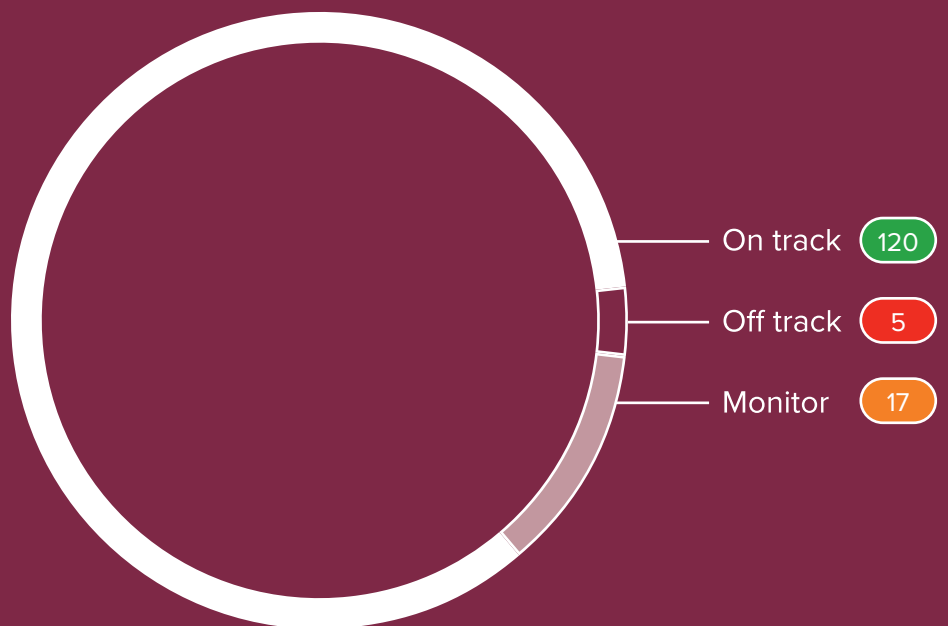
Hunter Warbirds  
Official Opening



# Delivery Program Objectives, Strategies & Performance.

## Overall Performance Summary

This section details our performance against the KPIs set in our Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Out of the total, 120 KPIs are on track, 5 are off target, and 17 are under monitoring. For in-depth information, please refer to our Delivery Program and Operational Plan on our website.



Service	Performance Measurement	Target	Actual
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>			
<p><b>Asset Management</b></p> <p>Establish and maintain public assets and improve the amenity of the Shire.</p>	Asset Management Strategy finalised, which will form part of the Resourcing Strategy for the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2033.	100%	100%
	Capital Works Program Survey and Design preparation finalised	100%	100%
	Major review and update of Asset Management Plans - Bridges, Buildings, Open Spaces, Roads, Sewerage, Stormwater, Water, Swimming Pools, Airport and Saleyards	100%	100%
	Provide Asset Management inspection schedule	100%	100%
<p><b>Communications</b></p> <p>All communication provided is concise, transparent, accurate, timely and relevant.</p>	Increase website visits annually, by improving content, navigation and accessibility	100%	100%
	Number of proactive media releases distributed to media outputs	150	154
<p><b>Customer Services</b></p> <p>Council will provide excellence in customer service by actively managing each customer's experience.</p>	Median response time for correspondence requiring action and response (days)	14	7.875
<p><b>Financial Services</b></p> <p>Maintain integrity of financial reporting in accordance with Office of Local Government and Council policy.</p>	Operating Performance Ratio	0%	14.74%
	Own Source Operating Revenue	60%	55.53%
	Building Infrastructure Renewals Ratio	100%	100%
	Infrastructure Backlog Ratio	2	2
	Maintenance Ratio	100%	100%
	Debt Service Ratio	2	2.05
	Annual Statutory Financial Statements and returns lodged to Office of Local Government	100%	100%
	Monthly operating results to budget reported to Council	10	11
	Investment Reports to Council	12	12
	Review Investment Policy Annually	100%	100%
<p><b>Fleet Management</b></p> <p>Council conducts reviews of vehicle models to ensure optimal cost efficiencies and makes informed purchasing decisions, considering market conditions and both operational and environmental factors.</p>	Fleet vehicles servicing undertaken within 28 days or 5,000 km's of manufacturers specification	95%	96.58%
	Percentage of Plant replacement achieved according to the plant replacement schedule	80%	100%
	Undertake review of Plant Replacement Program	100%	100%



Service	Performance Measurement	Target	Actual
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>			
<p><b>General Management</b></p> <p>All of Council's functions carried out at a level that meets the Community needs and within authorised budgets.</p>	Compliance with Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) requirements	100%	<b>100%</b>
<p><b>Governance &amp; Risk</b></p> <p>Ensures Council's decision-making is transparent, compliant, and risk-aware, fostering integrity and accountability within local government operations.</p>	Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meetings	4	<b>4</b>
<p><b>Human Resources</b></p> <p>All Human Resources functions undertaken in a timely and efficient manner. Council provides a workplace focused on staff wellbeing, welfare and safety.</p>	Complete Workforce Management Plan with the linkage to the development of the Community Strategic Plan	100%	<b>100%</b>
	Annual Employee turnover percentage (reported on a quarterly basis)	15%	<b>16.29%</b>
<p><b>Information Services</b></p> <p>Council's technology is sourced and maintained at a level that meets Council's increasing requirements.</p>	Review ICT Strategic Plan annually	100%	<b>100%</b>
	Facilitate ICT Steering Committee Meetings Annually	4	<b>4</b>
<p><b>Operational Support Services</b></p> <p>Improved systems to assist managers in meeting customer requirements. Efficiently manage resources to maximise the delivery of infrastructure and projects to the Community.</p>	Completed cemetery register review	100%	<b>100%</b>
	Completed key security system audit	100%	<b>100%</b>
<p><b>Revenue Services</b></p> <p>Rates levied by due dates and recovery action taken to ensure that the levels of outstanding rates are kept at an appropriate level. Water accounts are issued on a timely basis, four times a year.</p>	Rates follow-up work undertaken promptly to ensure minimum outstanding at year end	10%	<b>8.53%</b>
	Average days per quarterly water billing cycle	95	<b>89.50</b>
	Value of unarranged Accounts Receivable greater than 90 days old	\$200,000	<b>\$243,691</b>
<p><b>Stores/Purchasing Services</b></p> <p>Continue to provide store services and efficient procurement service.</p>	Number of stocktakes undertaken during year	2	<b>2</b>
	Maximum value of inventory on hand at month end	\$820,000	<b>\$971,647</b>
	Percentage of stock lines with variances at Stocktake	10%	<b>7.5%</b>
<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p>Provide and support projects and programs that protect and sustain our diverse environment.</p>	Reduction of Council's green house gas emissions	25%	<b>30%</b>

Service	Performance Measurement	Target	Actual
<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES &amp; ADMINISTRATION</b>			
<b>Administration and Education</b>	Engagements with organisations in partnership programs per annum	110	<b>106</b>
Communities are kept informed of opportunities available to them and participate in those opportunities provided.	Number of grant applications to enhance community physical and social infrastructure per annum	10	<b>18</b>
<b>Aged Care Gummun Place Hostel</b>	Government funding per calendar day per bed	\$120	<b>\$179</b>
The provision of 16 bed care facility in Merriwa that meets all accreditation standards by regulatory agencies.	Overall satisfaction rating	90%	<b>96.25%</b>
	Percentage of year that rooms are occupied	95%	<b>93.53%</b>
<b>Aged Care Independent Living Units</b>	Percentage of year that units are tenanted.	95%	<b>96.75%</b>
That independent living units are provided and maintained for older residents and people with a disability who live in our communities.	Independent Living Units inspected annually.	100%	<b>100%</b>
<b>Children's Service Early Learning Centre</b>	Average utilisation of ELC as a percentage of the base 43 children per day capacity	97.5%	<b>92%</b>
Council provides a long day care service that meets Community needs.	Early Learning Centre attains satisfied or highly satisfied user feedback on annual survey	95%	<b>95%</b>
<b>Children's Service Family Day Care</b>	Satisfied or highly satisfied user feedback on annual survey	95%	<b>95%</b>
Council provides a family day care service that meets Community needs.	Average Full Time Equivalent (FTE) utilisation.	45%	<b>33.36%</b>
<b>Social Protection</b>	Number of social protection meetings where Council is represented.	45	<b>53</b>
Council will provide information, services, facilities and activities within the Upper Hunter Shire community for special target groups.			
<b>Youth Services</b>	Early Intervention Program targets (units) met per annum	250	<b>261</b>
Focus on unified service provision across all shire towns and communities along with an increased reach of programs.	Working partnerships implemented with schools/ organisations per annum	24	<b>37</b>
	Social media posts for youth centres and Youth Council	24	<b>120</b>



Service	Performance Measurement	Target	Actual
<b>ECONOMIC AFFAIRS</b>			
<b>Camping Areas and Caravan Parks</b>  The provision of safe and healthy Council camp areas and caravan parks.	Number of caravan park site nights booked annually	1,500	<b>2,117</b>
	Number of camping ground site nights occupied per annum	300	<b>987</b>
<b>Economic Promotion</b>  Support the economic capacity of the Shire to grow and employ more people.	Council & Community external grant funding secured	10,000,000	<b>10,663,611</b>
	Implementation of Economic Development and Tourism Plan priority strategies	100	<b>0</b>
<b>Private Works</b>  That a private works service be provided at commercial competitive rates to supplement Council's operations, within the capacity of the teams to deliver	Level of Return achieved in terms of additional income	20%	<b>20%</b>
<b>Real Estate</b>  Council will manage its portfolio of real estate assets in an efficient and cost effective manner	Percentage of all commercial and residential leases in place for Council owned property	80%	<b>94.25%</b>
	Achieved budgeted lease revenue	80%	<b>92.69%</b>
	Complete review and update of land register	100%	<b>100%</b>
	Annual strategic review of property portfolio.	100%	<b>100%</b>
<b>Saleyards</b>  Operate and maintain an efficient and safe saleyard operation, within environmental guidelines. Manage a saleyard operation that maintains approved environmental standards.	Cattle sales per annum	38,000	<b>36,959</b>
	Achieve operating compliance by recording the number of noncompliance incidents	4	<b>0</b>
<b>Tourism &amp; Area Promotion</b>  To maintain a high level of professional and impartial tourism services to visitors and the Community and to implement the Economic Development and Tourism Strategic Plan in collaboration with other organisations.	Number of visitors through the Visitor Information Centres	7,500	<b>16,980</b>
	Referrals to accommodation	1,800	<b>1,892</b>
	Referrals to local attractions including stud tours	6,000	<b>34,315</b>
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>			
<b>Stormwater Management</b>  Provide and maintain a capital upgrade of stormwater drainage across the Shire.	Completion of planned inspections of the stormwater network.	100%	<b>100%</b>
	Completion of maintenance program, subject to funding.	90%	<b>53.4%</b>
	Number of complaints due to drainage overflows received annually	24	<b>24</b>
	Complete all funded stormwater capital works within budget and timeframe.	90%	<b>73.05%</b>

Service	Performance Measurement	Target	Actual
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>			
<b>Street Cleaning</b> Maintain clean streets, graffiti and litter removal from streets and public places on a regular basis	Length of Urban and CBD roads swept annually	464km	<b>1392km</b>
<b>Waste Management</b> Provide the Community with education on waste minimisation and recycling practices to help achieve a sustainable environment.	Conduct community education initiatives (inc. media and joint activities) promoting the benefits of waste avoidance, minimisation composting and recycling, including problem waste disposal at CRC (activities)	6	<b>15</b>
	Kerbside collection services are provided to timetable unless notified (eg Christmas holidays) (% bins)	95%	<b>99%</b>
	Kerbside waste diverted from landfill	50%	<b>50%</b>
	Total waste diverted from landfill	25%	<b>28.38%</b>
<b>GENERAL PURPOSE REVENUE</b>			
<b>Rates, Grants and Interest Revenues</b> Income is maximised to achieve best financial outcomes for Council.	All eligible rate payer notices to be distributed by 31 July each year	100%	<b>100%</b>
	Achieve 90 day average BBSW benchmark return on Council's investments	100%	<b>100%</b>
<b>GOVERNANCE</b>			
<b>Council Services</b> We will represent and lead the Community consistent with the Community priorities and Community strategies identified in the Community Strategic Plan 2027 and our legislative responsibilities.	Preparation of Integrated Planning and Reporting documents. Delivery Program, Operational Plan, Annual Report	100%	<b>100%</b>
<b>HEALTH</b>			
<b>Health Services</b> Committed to protecting public health and the environment	Number of health inspections undertaken per annum	120	<b>94</b>
	Number of On-site Sewer Management Systems (OSMS) inspections undertaken per annum	375	<b>212</b>
<b>HOUSING &amp; COMMUNITY AMENITIES</b>			
<b>Low Income Housing</b> Ensure housing provisions available to the disadvantaged and those in need.	Inspection of low income housing annually	100%	<b>100%</b>
	Review of tenancy data (Low Income Housing)	50%	<b>100%</b>
	Review partnership agreement with Upper Hunter Homelessness Support	100%	<b>100%</b>



Service	Performance Measurement	Target	Actual
<b>HOUSING &amp; COMMUNITY AMENITIES</b>			
<b>Public Cemeteries</b>  Inspect, maintain and improve Council's cemeteries and provide plaque service to customers to agreed standard.	Percentage of Customer Requests for cemetery maintenance responded to within 14 days	100%	<b>100%</b>
	Delivery of funded capital work priorities for cemeteries completed within allocated time frames	45%	<b>50%</b>
<b>Public Conveniences</b>  Inspect, maintain and improve public toilet facilities across the Shire.	Number of customer requests of unsatisfactory cleanliness of public conveniences annually	10	<b>3</b>
<b>Street Lighting</b>  Ensure all street lights achieve minimum Australian Standards. Request any unserviceable street lights are repaired to agreed standard by provider.	Number of customer requests of faulty and broken street lighting annually	30	<b>7</b>
<b>Town Planning</b>  Regulation enforcement functions provided to meet Community expectations and statutory obligations.	Average 10.7 planning Certificate processing time (days)	5	<b>3.95</b>
	Average Subdivision Certificates processing time (days)	14	<b>12.5</b>
	Median time taken to determine Applications (days)	40	<b>36.5</b>
<b>MINING, MANUFACTURING &amp; CONSTRUCTION</b>			
<b>Building Control</b>  Building control functions provided to meet Community expectations and statutory obligations.	Median time taken to process construction certificates (days)	14	<b>13.46</b>
	Median time taken to process occupation certificates (days)	14	<b>12.83</b>
<b>Quarry Operations</b>  To operate Council's quarries in accordance with the Mine Safety Management Plan.	Review current Mine Safety Management Plan consistent with mine guidelines	100%	<b>100%</b>
<b>PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY</b>			
<b>Animal Control</b>  Animal control functions provided to the Community at levels that meet their expectations.	Percentage of impounded animals released or re-homed	80%	<b>98.83%</b>
	Percentage of urgent customer complaints/inquiries responded to within 24 hours (Animal Control)	90%	<b>100%</b>
<b>Fire Service Levy &amp; Fire Protection</b>  Update EMPLAN and operating procedures in accordance with state guidelines. Develop Local Emergency Operations centres in cooperation with Rural Fire Service (RFS). Continue to undertake plant maintenance and services to support RFS in line with Service Level Agreement.	Ensure that fire service and protection priorities reviewed and maintained.	100%	<b>100%</b>

Service	Performance Measurement	Target	Actual
<b>PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY</b>			
<b>Local Government Regulation Enforcement</b>  Regulation enforcement functions provided to meet Community expectations and statutory obligations.	Number of inspections of private swimming pools per annum	150	<b>160</b>
<b>RECREATION &amp; CULTURE</b>			
<b>Community Centres &amp; Halls</b>  Public halls and facilities are provided and maintained for the use of the Community for social, recreational, educational and cultural activities.	Number of bookings per annum (halls)	600	<b>606</b>
	Review of community hall fees and charges	100%	<b>100%</b>
<b>Cultural Services</b>  Inspect, maintain and improve Council's cemeteries and provide plaque service to customers to agreed standard.	Number of cultural community activities facilitated annually	25	<b>32</b>
<b>Museums</b>  Museums are provided and maintained for the use of the Community for social, recreational, educational and cultural activities. Facilities are functional and historic items are safely preserved, displayed and housed.	Maintenance inspection carried out on Council owned buildings annually	100%	<b>100%</b>
<b>Other Sport &amp; Recreation</b>  Continued focus on increasing sports participation within the LGA.	Number of meetings instigated or facilitated to develop and support recreational activities in the Shire	10	<b>33</b>
	Number of Sports activity days in school holidays	25	<b>62</b>
	Number of sports development and participation programs per annum including school activities	25	<b>83</b>
<b>Parks &amp; Gardens</b>  Maintain all Council's parks to agreed standards.	Delivery of funded capital work priorities for parks and open space completed within allocated timeframes	90	<b>105%</b>
	Number of customer requests of unsatisfactory cleanliness and maintenance condition of parks and open space annually	35	<b>27</b>
<b>Public Libraries</b>  To provide high quality, accessible library facilities and services. To investigate opportunities to enhance library facilities.	Number of library promotions developed	60	<b>311</b>
	Develop new technology options	0	<b>6</b>
	Number of organised consultations with community regarding the collections material	6	<b>6</b>
	Number of new resources and/or collection items added to improve collection	1,250	<b>2,349</b>



Service	Performance Measurement	Target	Actual
<b>RECREATION &amp; CULTURE</b>			
<b>Sporting Grounds &amp; Venues</b>  All Council's sporting grounds and venues are maintained to agreed standards with the community	Delivery of funded capital work priorities for sporting grounds and venues completed within allocated timeframes	90%	<b>90.85%</b>
	Number of customer requests of unsatisfactory ground condition of sporting grounds annually	12	<b>9</b>
<b>Swimming Pools</b>  Provide adequate facilities that are safe and friendly	Percentage of time pools open during the season	100%	<b>100%</b>
<b>TRANSPORT &amp; COMMUNICATION</b>			
<b>Aerodrome</b>  To provide an airport that meets the needs of existing and future aviation related industries.	Number of aircraft movements (landings) per year	7,500	<b>7,933</b>
	Number of outstanding actions to resolve safety hazards and incidents that have occurred and/or have been identified	0	0
	Number of safety hazards identified through inspections and audits completed	0	0
<b>Bridges – Local</b>  All bridges to be inspected and maintained in accordance with industry standards and specifications.	Delivery of funded capital work priorities for Local Bridges completed within allocated timeframes	90%	<b>95.86%</b>
	Inspect 87 bridges annually on Local Roads	87	<b>87</b>
	Number of customer requests received concerning condition of bridge network	20	<b>20</b>
<b>Footpaths &amp; Cycleways</b>  To provide and maintain a safe cycleway and footpath network across Council.	Delivery of funded capital work priorities for footpaths and cycleways completed within allocated timeframes	90%	<b>76%</b>
	Number of customer requests received concerning unsafe conditions of concrete footpath surfaces	13	<b>27</b>
	Percentage of network that is rated in condition 3 or better.	95%	<b>95%</b>
<b>TRANSPORT &amp; COMMUNICATION</b>			
<b>Roads State</b>  Delivery of state road maintenance under contract.	Average days after end of month contract claim lodged with RMS	15	<b>15</b>
	Percentage of operational maintenance and works orders projects on state roads completed	90%	<b>95%</b>
<b>Roads Local</b>  All roads will be inspected and maintained in accordance with industry standards and specifications	Delivery of funded capital work priorities for local roads completed within allocated timeframes	90%	<b>91%</b>
	Length of gravel unsealed pavement network inspected	969.6km	<b>994km</b>
	Length of local road sealed network resealed (26kms)	26km	<b>41.2km</b>
	Length of sealed pavement network inspected	459.6m	<b>475km</b>
	Length of unsealed grading completed	1,154km	<b>649.14km</b>

Service	Performance Measurement	Target	Actual
<b>TRANSPORT &amp; COMMUNICATION</b>			
<p><b>Roads Regional</b></p> <p>All roads and bridges to be inspected and maintained in accordance with industry standards and specifications</p>	Delivery of funded capital work priorities for regional roads and bridges completed within allocated timeframes	90%	<b>95%</b>
	Percentage of regional Bridges inspected biennially	50	<b>51</b>
	Length of regional networks road pavement (174kms) inspected	174km	<b>366.28km</b>
	Length of regional road network resealed	16km	<b>16km</b>
<p><b>Transport Ancillaries</b></p> <p>Provide adequate facilities that are safe and friendly</p>	Delivery of funded capital work priorities for local roads completed within allocated timeframes	90%	<b>109.18%</b>
	Maintenance of identified traffic signs and line marking completed annually	90%	<b>100%</b>
<p><b>Water Services</b></p> <p>To provide a suitable water supply that meets the demands of the users and the requirements of the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines To meet NSW Government's Best Practice Management of Water Supply Guidelines.</p>	Delivery of funded capital work priorities for water services completed within allocated timeframes	90%	<b>118.25%</b>
	Number of complaints of poor water quality	6	<b>1</b>
	Water Asset renewal as a percentage of depreciation	100%	<b>148.26%</b>
<p><b>Sewage Services</b></p> <p>Continue to provide efficient sewerage systems for Scone/Aberdeen, Murrurundi and Merriwa that meet health and environmental standards and the demands of the users. Legislative reporting and license requirements are met as required. Provide an efficient sewerage system for Cassilis</p>	Delivery of funded capital work priorities for water services completed within allocated timeframes	90%	<b>61.31%</b>
	Number of customer complaints regarding sewerage services	24	<b>0</b>
	Percentage of treated effluent recycled (Scone STP)	70%	<b>70.96%</b>
	Sewer Asset renewal as a percentage of depreciation	100%	<b>51.49%</b>



# Statutory Statements

# Statutory Statements

The following Statutory Statements are required by such instruments as **Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – REG 217** and other NSW Government Acts. The relevant clause is highlighted beside each report.

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (A) Overseas Travel Undertaken by Mayor, Councillors and Staff

There was no overseas travel by the Mayor, any Councillor or staff member in 2022/2023

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (A1) Mayoral and Councillors' Fees and Provision of Facilities

Council's policy identifies the expenses that will be paid and the provision of facilities to the Mayor and Councillors in relation to discharging the duties of civic office. The policy was adopted on March 28, 2022 and review is required within the first 12 months of each Council term.

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 policy can be read and downloaded from Council's website at [www.upperhunter.nsw.gov.au](http://www.upperhunter.nsw.gov.au)

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

## Councillor Training and Provision of Skill Development

Only minimal training was provided and/or requested by Councillors during the year. Training provided to Councillors is mainly to assist with the induction into local government and provide assistance with the legislative and operational activities of Council. A budget is provided to Councillors to request training each year.

Allowances	\$
Mayoral allowance	40,250
Total amount for 8 Councillors' fees and allowances	99,942
Councillors' expenses (see below)	19,021
<b>Total Allowances</b>	<b>159,213</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Advertising	0
Telephone/Internet	2,574
Conferences/Seminars	2,138
Training	180
Subscriptions	0
Catering	5,350
Events/Ceremonies	1,098
Mayoral & Councillor Vehicle allowances	7,681
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>19,021</b>



# Councillors Attendance at Council Meeting

## Current Term

Meeting Date	Cr Abbott	Cr Burns	Cr Campbell	Cr Clout	Cr Collison	Cr Flaherty	Cr McKenzie	Cr McPhee	Cr Watts	Cr Williamson
25 Jul 22	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
29 Aug 22	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	A		✓	✓	✓
26 Sep 22	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	A		✓	✓	✓
31 Oct 22	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
28 Nov 22		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
19 Dec 22		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
30 Jan 23		A	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
27 Feb 23		✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
27 Mar 23		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
24 Apr 23		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
29 May 23		A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
E 9 June 23		✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A
26 June 23		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	A	A

Legend      ✓ = Present                      A = Apology                      X = Absent                      Cr Abbott Resigned, Cr McKenzie Start

# Councillors Attendance at Committee Meetings

## Current Term

Current Term	Cr Abbott	Cr Burns	Cr Campbell	Cr Clout	Cr Collison	Cr Flaherty	Cr McKenzie	Cr McPhee	Cr Watts	Cr Williamson
<b>Environmental &amp; Community Services Committee</b> Chair Cr Watts. Members: Crs McPhee, Flaherty & Campbell										
9 Aug 22			✓		✓	A		✓	✓	
13 Sep 22			✓		✓	A		✓	✓	
11 Oct 22			✓			A		✓	A	
8 Nov 22			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	
13 Dec 22			✓	✓	✓	X		✓	✓	
14 Feb 23			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	
14 Mar 23			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	
13 Jun 23			A			X		✓	A	
<b>Infrastructure Services Committee</b> Chair Cr Campbell. Members: Crs Collison, McPhee, Clout										
12 Jul 22			✓	A	A			✓		
9 Aug 22			✓	✓	✓			✓		
13 Sep 22			✓	A	✓			✓		
11 Oct 22			✓	✓	✓			✓		
8 Nov 22			✓	✓	✓			✓		
13 Dec 22			✓	✓	✓			✓		
14 Feb 23			✓	✓	✓			✓		
14 Mar 23			✓	✓	✓			✓		
11 Apr 23			✓	✓	✓			✓		
9 May 23			✓	A	✓			✓		
13 Jun 23			✓	✓	A			✓		
<b>Corporate Services Committee</b> Chair: Cr Adam Williamson. Members: Crs Burns, Flaherty, McKenzie										
15 Jul 22	A	A				✓				✓
19 Aug 22	A	✓				A				✓
16 Sep 22	A	✓			✓	A				✓
21 Oct 22	A	✓			✓	✓				A
18 Nov 22		✓				X				✓
9 Dec 22		✓				✓				✓
17 Feb 23		✓				✓	✓			✓
17 Mar 23		✓				✓	✓			✓
14 Apr 23		✓				✓	✓			✓
19 May 23		✓				✓	✓			✓
16 Jun 23		✓				✓	✓			A
Legend	✓ = Present    A = Apology    X = Absent    Cr Abbott Resigned, Cr McKenzie Start    ✓ = In Attendance									



## CLAUSE 217 (1) (A2)

# Major Contracts

Council must report the details of each contract awarded that exceeds \$250,000.

Project or Service	Successful Supplier or Contractor	Financial Year Tender Let	Term of Type of Contract	Total Contract Value (Inc GST)
Kerbside Waste Collection Services	JR and EG Richards Pty Limited T/A JR Richards	2018	14 years waste	SOR
Kerbside Waste Collection Services	JR and EG Richards Pty Limited T/A JR Richards	2018	5 years recycle	SOR
Supply and Delivery of Road Surfacing	Various - Vendor Panel List	2019	3 years plus 1 year option	SOR
Supply and Delivery of Passenger, Truck and Earthmover Tyres	Various - Vendor Panel List	2023	2 years with 1 year option	SOR
Supply and Delivery of Water Meters	Cadia Group	2023	2 years with 1 year option	SOR
Supply and Delivery of Bulk Cationic Bitumen CRS	Bitupave Ltd t/a Boral Asphalt NSW/ACT	2023	2 years with 1 year option	SOR
Provision of Road Stabilising	Various - Vendor Panel List	2023	2 years with 1 year option	SOR
Supply and Delivery of Ductile Iron Cement Lined Pipes	Cadia Group	2023	2 years with 1 year option	SOR
Supply and Delivery of Bulk Water Treatment	Various - Vendor Panel List	2023	2 years with 1 year option	SOR
Supply and Delivery of Bulk Fuel	Maxi-Tankers Pty Ltd	2023	2 years with 1 year option	SOR
Supply of Services	Various - Vendor Panel List	2023	2 years	SOR
Hire of Plant	Various - Vendor Panel List	2023	2 years	SOR
Supply and Delivery of Electricity for Non-Contestable Sites (Small Consumption)	AGL	2021	2 years	SOR
Supply and delivery of Road Base Materials	Various - Vendor Panel	2021	2 years with 1 year option	SOR
Supply and Installation of Supply Only of Road Safety Barrier Systems	Various - Vendor Panel	2021	2 years with 1 year option	SOR
Provision of Commercial Cleaning Services	VGD Services Pty Ltd	2021	3 years with 2x 12mth options	SOR
Provision of Legal Services	Various - Vendor Panel	2021	3 years with 2x 12mth options	SOR
Management of the Scone, Murrurundi & Merriwa Pool Operations	Community Aquatic Pty Ltd	2022	3 years with 2 year option	\$1,170,000
Supply and construction of the Scone Airport perimeter fencing	Sunset Group Australia Pty Ltd	2022	Lump Sum	\$409,119

**Schedule of rates (SOR):** Contract value based on schedule of rates to supply goods and services as and when required by Council. The value over the term of the contract may be in excess of \$250,000 (incl GST).

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (A2)

# Major Contracts

Council must report the details of each contract awarded that exceeds \$250,000.

Project or Service	Successful Supplier or Contractor	Financial Year Tender Let	Term of Type of Contract	Total Contract Value (Inc GST)
Design and construction of Nine (9) bridge replacements	GC Civil Pty Ltd	2022	Lump Sum	\$3,762,164
Supply of electricity to contestable sites (>100Mwh per annum) and street lighting	Diamond Energy Pty Ltd	2023	10 years	SOR
Design and construction of Aberdeen Intake Works Station	EMT Pty Ltd	2022	Lump Sum	\$640,321
Design and construction of Merriwa Cycle and Walkway (Concrete)	Deloma Pty Ltd	2022	Lump Sum	\$724,525
Design and construction of Merriwa Cycle and Walkway (Bitumen)	Deloma Pty Ltd	2022	Lump Sum	\$200,250
Processing of Kerbside Collection of Food Organics/Garden Organics	Loop Organics Pty Ltd	2022	1 years with 1 year option	SOR
Design and construction of Bobialla and Dartbrook Bridges	Saunders Civilbuild Pty Ltd	2023	Lump Sum	\$2,159,160
Design and construction of Albana, Ashford and Lapstone Gully Bridges	Waeger Construction Pty Ltd	2023	Lump Sum	\$2,497,000
Scone CBD Revitalisation Stage 1	Daracon Contractors Pty Ltd	2023	Lump Sum	\$13,238,329
Merriwa Sewer Treatment Plant Sludge Removal	Dredging Solutions Pty Ltd	2023	Lump Sum	\$1,028.96
Water Mains Renewal Program	TCM Civil Pty Ltd	2023	Lump Sum	\$1,967,240
Sewer Relining Program	Abergeldie Rehabilitation Pty Ltd	2023	Lump Sum	\$768,169

**Schedule of rates (SOR):** Contract value based on schedule of rates to supply goods and services as and when required by Council. The value over the term of the contract may be in excess of \$250,000 (incl GST).



# Statutory Statements

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (A3) Legal Proceedings

The table that follows provides a summary of the amounts incurred by Council in relation to legal proceedings taken by and or against Council during the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

Workers compensation and other employment matters, public liability and professional indemnity claims are not included in the summary.

Category/ Legal Matter	Status/ Comments	Costs
Planning matters	Finalised for the year	\$94,380
General legal advice	Not applicable	\$25,474
Rates/water recovery action	Finalised for the year	\$38,632
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$158,486</b>

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (A4) Works on Private Land

The following summary relates to private works undertaken by delegated authority or resolution of Council. Private works are neither fully nor partially subsidised by Council. There were no specific resolutions in regard to Private Works by Council during 2022/2023.

Nature of Work	Costs
Bitumen sealing and repairs	\$16,242
Water connections / repairs / other	\$44,226
Private rural road repairs	\$9,631
Plant hire	\$3,715
Sewer	\$10,541
Rural road grid signs	\$0
Contract Works	\$23,228
Other	\$311
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$107,944</b>

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (A5) Financial Assistance

Council is required to report the total amount contributed or otherwise granted under section s356 of the Local Government Act. During 2022/2023, Council made available the following financial assistance:

1. Council provided hardship rate relief and rates donations under s601 and s356 of the Local Government Act 1993 amounting to: **\$2,156**.
2. Council provided the following concessions, relief from rates and charges.

Pensioner concessions	General	\$251,782
	Water	\$69,822
	Sewer	\$71,800
Postponed rates		\$590
Small debts (interest)		\$2038
Conservation agreement		\$6,848
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$402,880</b>

3. Council provided donations and support for numerous organisations and individuals during the year for the following programs:

Cultural activities and grants	\$26,864
Community groups	\$38,982
School & Education	\$8,400
Sporting groups & representations	\$1,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75,946</b>

# Statutory Statements

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (A6)

### External Bodies Exercising the Functions of Council

Council must report all external bodies that exercised functions of the Council. The Upper Hunter Weeds County Council and the Mid North Weight of Loads were the only external bodies which exercised functions delegated by Council.

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (A7)

### External Bodies of Which Council Has Controlling Interests

Council must report on all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which Council (whether alone or in conjunction with other councils) held a controlling interest during the reporting period. In 2022/23 this was Arrow Collaborative Services Ltd .

### Hunter Joint Organisation Group Entities

The Hunter Joint Organisation group is the hub for local government collaboration, which strengthens our communities by being the local voice on regional strategic issues in the Hunter and delivering tailored local government solutions. For over sixty years, local government in the Hunter has found significant benefit in working together through positive cooperation and resource sharing.

There are four key entities creating and operating as part of the current enterprise offering:-

- **Hunter Joint Organisation** – a statutory body under the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW), established in 2018 to identify, advocate for and collaborate on regional strategic

priorities for the Hunter.

- **Arrow Collaborative Services** (and its wholly owned subsidiary Hunter Councils Legal Services Limited) – are companies limited by guarantee under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) and established to improve the quality and efficiency of local government services throughout the Hunter Region. These organisations offer tailored local government services through its five divisions; Local Government Training Institute, Local Government Legal, Regional Procurement, Screen Hunter (which, under delegation from member councils, licences film production on council owned and control land), and the Environment Division (which delivers a regional environmental management program on behalf of both member councils from the Hunter region and Central Coast Council).
- **Hunter Councils Incorporated** - an incorporated association under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW) that holds property assets for the Hunter Joint Organisation group.

Upper Hunter Shire Council has representation on each entity's Board, and shares ownership and/or control with the other nine councils of the Hunter Region.

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (A8)

### External Bodies in Which Council Has Participated

Council must report on all corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated) in which Council participated during that year. Other than indicated above, Council has not participated in any external body. Council participated in the following external bodies:

- Destination NSW & Destination Sydney Surrounds North
- Local Buying Foundation Advisory Committee (Division of BHP)
- Murrurundi King of the Ranges

- Merriwa Festival of the Fleeces
- NSW Food Authority
- NSW Water Directorate
- Regional Library Network
- Scone Chamber of Commerce
- Scone Horse Festival
- Scone Literary Festival
- Service NSW
- The Business Centre
- Upper Hunter Country Tourism
- Upper Hunter Water Utilities Alliance

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (A9)

### Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Activities

Council is committed to continually strive to develop an equitable and diverse workforce which is representative of our community and the region as a whole. Council has and continues to implement the strategies outlined in the EEO Management Plan including the following:

- Providing training and education to all staff on EEO principles and requirements.
- Conducting detailed analysis of employee engagement and exit surveys to assist to identify any potential EEO issues.
- Update of all staff job descriptions to ensure they clearly define EEO responsibilities.
- Improved data collection by amending employment forms and developing a system for effective data collection and reporting.
- Review of Council's higher duties administrative principle to ensure that higher duties and secondment positions are assigned in accordance with EEO principles

Council's workforce management plan analyses Council's current workforce and develops strategies to ensure that Council has the right number of people with the right skills in the right jobs at the right time. Strategies have been developed to



# Statutory Statements

ensure a focus on workplace equity and diversity those that have been implemented this year include:

- Annual analysis of Council’s current workforce against the community profile.
- Improved data collection by amending employment forms and developing a system for effective data collection and reporting.
- Ensuring that HR practices are regularly updated to ensure that they are free from discrimination and equitable for all employees.

Council has been pleased to see an increase in the diversity of our workforce which remains reflective of the community profile. This has included an increase in staff numbers from a non-English speaking background.

Council’s workforce has continued to maintain an encouraging equal participation rate of males and females, with a good cross section of age groups throughout the workforce.

Council’s Consultative Committee deals with all matters relating to EEO policy and procedures. This committee meets every 6 weeks and have been proactive in providing input into EEO matters.

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (B) AND (C) General Manager Salary

Section 332 of the Local Government Act 1993 provides the definition of senior staff. At 30 June 2023 the General Manager’s remuneration package totalled:

Salary Component	\$283,153
Bonus/Performance	\$0
Employee’s Contribution to Super	\$30,527
Non-Cash Benefits	\$13,433
Fringe Benefits Tax	\$11,912
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$339,025</b>

## CLAUSE 217 (1)(d)(i),(ii),(iii),(iv)

### Statement of total number of persons who performed paid work on Wednesday 31 May 2023, including, in separate statements, total number of:

Persons employed by the council on a permanent full-time, permanent part-time or casual basis or under a fixed-term contract:

Permanent	165
Other or Casual	89
<b>Total</b>	<b>254</b>

Persons employed by the council as senior staff members:

General Manager	1
-----------------	---

Persons engaged by the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person’s employer, wholly or principally for the labour of the person:

0

Persons supplied to the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person’s employer, as an apprentice or trainee:

10

## Annual Charge for Stormwater Management

Council has been levying an annual charge for stormwater management services for a number of years. The charge is being used to increase the level of stormwater projects above those previously funded under the general rate.

The annual charge raises \$98,821 for stormwater projects within the Shire each year.

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (E1) Annual Charge for Coastal Protection

Not applicable to Upper Hunter Shire.

## CLAUSE 217 (1) (F) Companion Animals Act Reporting

Council provides an annual return to the Office of Local Government on activities to enforce and ensure compliance with the Companion Animals Act and Regulations, including lodgement of pound data collection returns. Council also reports information on an incident-by-incident basis related to dog attacks.

The Animal Control expenditure for the 2022/2023 financial year was \$157,991 which was a 4% increase on the previous year. The majority of this expenditure can be attributed to companion animals.

Ongoing community education through various forms of media has promoted responsible pet ownership and plays an important role in reducing the number of stray and unwanted animals.

Council has also resolved to desex all cats prior to rehoming from shelter at Council’s expense. Council continues to work with rescue and rehoming organisations to prevent the euthanising of animals with behavioural issues.

Advertising of animals that may be suitable for rehoming is undertaken via contact with local vets, media advertising, including social media, and response to requests from the community for pets. Council continues to work with registered rehoming organisations in an effort to reduce the numbers of euthanised animals.

The number of animals being euthanised has decreased significantly relative to previous years due to ongoing work with animal rescue groups such as Dog Rescue Newcastle, Cat Rescue as well as specific breed rescue agencies.

# Statutory Statements

Council maintains a total of four (4) off-leash areas throughout the Upper Hunter Shire with one in each of the main centres of Aberdeen, Merriwa, Murrurundi and Scone. A review of the off-leash areas is currently being undertaken by Council to identify possible upgrades.

Animal Control revenue was approximately \$15,794 of which \$11,552 was attributable to Companion Animal Registrations and renewals .

Dog and cat related enquiries were relatively consistent to the previous year with a total of 177 customer requests recorded during 2022/2023.

## Swimming Pools Act Reporting

Council provides details of inspections of private swimming pools under the Swimming Pools Act (SP Act) 1992, s 22F (2) and Swimming Pools Regulation 2018 (SP Reg) cl 23.

The Swimming Pools inspection expenditure for the 2022/2023 financial year was \$21,739 of which Council received \$14,791 in revenue.

Total inspections for 2022/2023	160
Inspection of tourist and visitor accommodation	0
Inspections for premises with more than 2 dwellings	0
Issue of certificate of Compliance	109
Issue of Certificate of Non-Compliance	28

## Recovery and Threat Abatement Plans

The Fisheries Management Act 1994, s220ZT(2) requires Councils to report on actions taken to implement measures as to the state of the environment when Council is identified in a Recovery and Threat

Abatement Plan as responsible for implementation. Council was not identified in 2022/2023 in a Recovery and Threat Abatement Plan.

## Code of Conduct

Council's adopted Code of Conduct is based on the "Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW" published by the NSW Office of Local Government in 2020.

During the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023, the annual reporting period for Code of Conduct statistics, Council received two (2) complaints, both of which were resolved by Council during the period although one (1) of these is still subject to investigation by the Office of Local Government.

## Access to Information

### Review of Proactive Release Program

As provided by the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and the associated Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018, agencies must review their programs for the release of government information to identify the types of information that can be made publicly available. This review must be undertaken at least once every 12 months.

During the reporting period, Council reviewed this program by ensuring there is an ongoing monitoring program of all applications/requests for information whether they were formal, informal or other requests. The program also includes information from Council officers with respect to the information they are producing.

As a result of this review, Council has not added any additional information to the proactive release provision.

Copies of Council's Agency Information Guide can be obtained from Council's offices located in Merriwa, Murrurundi and Scone or can be downloaded from Council's website.

The Agency Information Guide provides details of what information Council holds and how you can obtain access.

Visit Council's website to access the appropriate form or for further information contact Council's Administration Centres on 02 6540 1100.

## Number of Access Applications Received

During the reporting period, Council received a total of 10 formal access applications (including withdrawn applications but not invalid applications) .

## Information on Number of Refused Applications

During the reporting period, Council refused 0 formal access application.



# Statutory Statements

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	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	10
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Private sector business	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	40
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Members of the public (by legal representative)	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	20
Members of the public (other)	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	3	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>% of Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>		

\* 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
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	5	2	0	0	1	1	0	1	10	100
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>% of Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>		

\* 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) .

# Statutory Statements

Statistical information about access applications to be included in annual report.

**Table C:**  
Invalid Applications

Reason for Invalidity	No of Applications	% of Total
Application does not comply with formal requirements (s41 of the Act)	0	0
Application is for excluded information of the agency (s43 of the Act)	0	0
Application contravenes restraint order (s110 of the Act)	0	0
Total number of invalid applications received	0	0
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	

**Table D:**  
Conclusive Presumption of Overriding Public Interest Against Disclosure: Matters Listed in Schedule 1 of Act

	No. of Times Consideration Used*	% of Total
Overriding secrecy laws	0	0
Cabinet information	0	0
Executive Council information	0	0
Contempt	0	0
Legal professional privilege	0	0
Excluded information	0	0
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0	0
Transport safety	0	0
Adoption	0	0
Care and protection of children	0	0
Ministerial code of conduct	0	0
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	

\*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.



# Statutory Statements

Statistical information about access applications to be included in annual report.

**Table E:**  
Other Public Interest Considerations against disclosure

	No. of Times Consideration Used*	% of Total
Responsible and effective government	1	13
Law enforcement and security	0	0
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	5	63
Business interests of agencies and other persons	2	25
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0	0
Secrecy provisions	0	0
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	

**Table F:**  
Timelines

	No. of Times Consideration Used*	% of Total
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	10	100
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	0	0
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	

**Table G: Number of Applications Reviewed Under Part 5 of the Act (by type of review and outcome)**

	Decision Varied	Decision Upheld	Total	% of Total
Internal review	0	0	0	0
Review by Information Commissioner*	0	1	1	100
Internal review following recommendation under	0	0	0	0
Review by NCAT	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>% of Total</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>100</b>		

# Statutory Statements

Statistical information about access applications to be included in annual report.

**Table H: Applications for Review Under Part 5 of the Act (by type of applicant)**

	No of Applications	% of Total
Applications by access applicants	1	100
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see s54 of the Act)	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	

**Table I: Applications Transferred to Other Agencies**

	No of Applications	% of Total
Agency – initiated Transfers	0	0
Applicant – initiated Transfers	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	

## Public Interest Disclosures

Section 31 of the Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 requires Council to report on the number of disclosures received and to what the disclosures related . The summary of disclosures as reported to the NSW Ombudsman is shown in the next column:

Statement	No. Made By Public Officials Performing Their Day to Day Functions	No. Under a Statutory or Other Legal Obligation
No . of public interest disclosure received by your public authority	0	0
No of public office who made public interest disclosures to your public	0	0
<b>No of public interest disclosures received, how many were primarily about:</b>		
Corrupt conduct	0	0
Maladministration	0	0
Serious and substantial waste	0	0
Government information contravention	0	0
Local government pecuniary interest contravention	0	0
No of public interest disclosures (received since 1 Jan 2012) that have been finalised in this reporting Period	0	0
Have you established an internal reporting policy?	Yes	Yes
Has the head of your public authority taken action to meet their staff awareness obligations?	Yes	Yes
Staff have been made aware through:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy briefing from senior managers</li> <li>• Links on intranet site</li> <li>• Messages in staff newsletters</li> <li>• Training provided to new staff during induction</li> </ul>		

# Statutory Statements

## Condition of Civil Assets

Special Schedule 7 of Council's audited financial accounts contains details of the condition ratings of civil assets. The section headed Capital Works in this report contains Council's completed capital works for 2022/23.

## Planning Agreements

The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 s7.5(5) requires that a planning authority that has entered into one or more planning agreements must, while any such planning agreements remain in force, include in its annual report particulars of compliance with and the effect of the planning agreements during the year to which the report relates.

Council has prepared and adopted the Upper Hunter Shire Council Section 94A Levy Contributions Plan 2017. The Plan provides opportunities for applicants to enter into voluntary planning agreements.

Council did not enter into any voluntary planning agreements in 2022/23.

However, Council has resolved to enter into two (2) Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPA) when completed for The Hills of Gold Wind Farm Pty Ltd and MACH Energy Australia Pty Ltd projects which will provide contributions to a community fund that will be utilised for public purposes and infrastructure to benefit respective communities.

## Carers Recognition Act 2010

The Carers Recognition Act 2010 (CR Act), s 8(2) considers Councils to be 'human services' agencies under the CR Act and provide services directed at carers and/or people being cared for by carers. Council must report on the compliance with the CR Act 2010-2019.

Council promotes awareness and understanding of the principles outlined in the Carer Recognition Act 2010. This is achieved by providing access to information, resources and support in the workplace for employees with caring responsibilities, or in turn, supporting people with caring responsibilities.

Council supports employees who are carers through its employment policies and encourages staff to discuss carer arrangements with their supervisor or manager.

Council's Consultative Committee provides a forum for employees for questions and discussion.

Council promotes R U OK Day and other awareness raising events every year, focusing on mental health and well-being of staff. Council also provides an Employee Assistance Program offering confidential counselling for work-related or personal problems.

Council regularly engages and consults with staff and community, including people with disabilities, carers and families to recognise and support the valuable contribution of carers.



Statutory Statements

# Disability Inclusion Act 2014

Focus Area 1

## Promoting positive attitudes and behaviours

**What The Issue is About**

The attitudes and behaviours of the general community towards people with disability have been described as the single greatest barrier to full access and inclusion. Attitudes and behaviour permeate all aspects of life. Consultation to date has identified that attitudes towards people with disability are often determined by ignorance, fear or lack of opportunity to interact. Developing positive attitudes involves increasing awareness and changing negative perceptions over time. This is a long term goal that may need to be dealt with in stages.

**What the Community Told Us**

We need to raise the awareness of our staff so they can be more empathic and provide more appropriate services for people with disabilities; we need to raise awareness in the general community about people with disabilities; our media -social and hardcopy needs to support raising awareness and presenting positive role models who have disability; we need to highlight the achievements of people with disabilities; we need to provide information for people with disabilities about facilities and activities in our Shire in a range of accessible forms;

we need to consult or have access to specialist staff; we need to support the work of other disability services in the Shire.

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Indicators	Achievements to 30 June 2023
<b>Promote understanding and positive attitudes among Council staff</b>				
Provide disability awareness training to staff and Councillors as part of induction programs and ongoing professional development to encourage inclusive practice to improve service delivery and complaints handling for people with disability	Human Resources  Community Services	Ongoing	All new Council staff and Councillors receive disability awareness training at induction  Knowledge and skills enhanced and staff feel more confident communicating with people with disability	All new Councillors or Council staff complete Code of Conduct paperwork which includes information about inclusive practices as well as complete Local Government trailored online training modules

## Statutory Statements

**Disability Inclusion Act 2014**

## Focus Area 1

**Promoting positive attitudes and behaviours**

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Indicators	Achievements to 30 June 2023
<b>Promote access and inclusion in the community</b>				
Planning of Council activities and events to consider aspects of inclusion and access	Community Services  Business Services  Tourism and Events	Short term 1 - 2 years	Checklist / tool developed to support planning of accessible activities and events	Venues are accessible. Invites and media are inclusive and promoted widely
Include images of people with disability in Council publications and promotion of mainstream activities and events	Communications	Ongoing	Inclusive images included in Council documents and promotional material.	Image curation for publication always considers inclusivity
Update Council website directory and relevant resources with information about disability services, accessible facilities, social and recreational opportunities etc	Communications	Ongoing	Information is current.	Directory information reviewed and update
Seek partnerships with a broad range of community groups, services and clubs to undertake projects to educate the community on the complex and often hidden elements of disability.	Community Services	Partnerships developed		Strong interagency networks with key stakeholders to raise awareness of needs of people with disability including health and well-being
Support International Day of People with Disability to recognise the contribution of people with disability	Community Services  Communications	Annually		Media coverage to raise awareness
Encourage representation of people with disability at meetings, consultations and planning of activities and events	Community Services  Senior Management Team	Ongoing	People with disability engaged in consultation processes and planning activities in Council	Inclusive membership- advertise to all community members and ensure access to buildings is suitable
Promote positive stories of inclusion and access through Council media	Communications	Ongoing	Positive stories are promoted and in media and on Council website	Digital Content strategy includes a requirement to publish a certain amount of stories and pieces that promote inclusion

Statutory Statements

# Disability Inclusion Act 2014

Focus Area 2

## Creating Liveable Communities

**What The Issue is About**

Creating liveable communities will focus attention and resources on the elements of community life that most people desire. Creating liveable communities for people with disability is more than modifying the physical environment, it covers areas such as accessible housing, access to transport, community recreation, social engagement and universal design.

**What the Community Told Us**

We need to improve our pathways of travel and the paths themselves; we need to work on transport options for people with disability getting around our Shire; we need to look at how we can improve access into shops and services in our towns; we need to increase the number of accessible toilets and adult change tables in key areas of the central business districts; we need to improve access to our buildings; we need to provide more parking for people with disability; we need to consult more with people with disability and experts working in the disability design field; we need

to improve access to our pools and other community recreation areas and facilities.

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Indicators	Achievements to 30 June 2023
<b>Improve access in the community and to Council facilities</b>				
Ensure Council information and processes are inclusive and accessible for members of the public to encourage reporting of physical access barriers around footpaths and Council facilities	Infrastructure Services	Medium term	Reviewed forms and processes for reporting and actioning CRMs	All events planned with disability and accessibility considered including Australia Day awards and celebrations, International Women’s Day and Seniors Festival
	Community Services	2 – 3 years		
Investigate an audit tool to support staff to identify access issues at Council key facilities and prioritise improvements and upgrades	Community Services	Long term	Identified and implemented a suitable audit tool for assessing priority Council facilities	Scheduled for 2024-25
	Environmental Services	3 – 4 years		
Develop Council staff knowledge and skills in the principles of universal design to assist in planning and delivering projects and activities that are inclusive of all community members	Community Services	Long term	Knowledge and skills enhanced and staff feel more confident in universal design	Scheduled for 2024-25
	Environmental Services	3 – 4 years		



Statutory Statements

# Disability Inclusion Act 2014

Focus Area 2

## Creating Liveable Communities

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Indicators	Achievements to 30 June 2023
Ensure Council events and activities are accessible with consideration of suitable venues, transport options, toilets and parking	Community Services	Medium term	Events and activities are accessible with relevant information included in promotional material	Ongoing
	Business services Tourism and Events	2 – 3 years		
<b>Council communications promote and showcase accessible features in the community</b>				
Improve provision of information, maps and signage to promote accessible toilets, parking and accessible features in the community	Community Services	Long term	Maps and signage include information on location of accessible facilities in the community	Scheduled for 2024-25
	Communications	3 – 4 years		
Maintain information on the National Public Toilet Map	Community Services	Annually	Information reviewed and updates provided	Ongoing
	Infrastructure Services			
<b>Work collaboratively with local business to improve access</b>				
Liaise with local business to raise awareness about the economic benefits of inclusion and accessible design	Business Services	Long term	Opportunities taken to discuss and educate local business on inclusion and access	
		3 – 4 years		

Statutory Statements

# Disability Inclusion Act 2014

Focus Area 3

## Supporting Access To Meaningful Employment

**What The Issue is About**

The Government Sector Employment Act 2013 (GSE Act) requires the integration of workforce diversity, including the employment of people with disability, into workforce planning. This legislation supports workforce diversity obligations and processes across the government sector.

Employment and economic security for most people are closely related. Employment contributes to feelings of self-worth, social interaction and mental health, and increases opportunities to support individual choice and control. Employment rates for people with disability are significantly lower than those without disability across all sectors. People with disability experience multiple barriers at all stages of the employment process, ranging from inaccessible interview venues, lack of

reasonable adjustments to the work environment, poor career planning opportunities, rigid role descriptions and online testing that may place applicants at a disadvantage. These factors reduce their opportunities to gain and retain employment.

While there are many aspects to consider in executing a diversity and inclusion employment agenda, most benefit will come from taking an ‘inclusion by design’ approach. That is, employers and managers will maximise their ability to employ and retain a diverse workforce if they build inclusion into work design, workforce strategy and system-level decision making (as opposed to simply making reasonable adjustments to accommodate persons with disability on a case-by-case basis).

**What the Community Told Us**

We should employ more people with disabilities where possible and adapt the environment and work conditions to the individuals special needs; we should ensure our employment systems enable people with disabilities to apply and be considered for positions; we should provide opportunities for people with disabilities to increase their employment skills; we should set an example to other businesses in our Shire and promote the employment of people with disabilities; we should provide training for our current staff to raise its awareness of dealing with people with disabilities.

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Indicators	Achievements to 30 June 2023
<b>Council employment processes and workplace are inclusive and accessible</b>				
Promote Council as an inclusive employer to encourage people with disability to apply for jobs including a statement of Council as an Equal Opportunity employer and availability of reasonable adjustment to workplace	Human Resources	Short term  1 – 2 years	People who identify as having disability have considered and / or applied for employment with Council	All job advertisements include our Equal Opportunity statement

Statutory Statements

# Disability Inclusion Act 2014

Focus Area 3

## Supporting Access To Meaningful Employment

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Indicators	Achievements to 30 June 2023
Review recruitment processes to support meaningful employment of people with disability through its policy of diversity and inclusion workforce planning	Human Resources	Medium term 2 – 3 years	Recruitment and on-boarding processes reviewed	Pre-employment medicals are conducted where disclosure of any disability can be reviewed and adjustments can be made to accommodate particular needs

**Opportunities for people with disability to gain work experience in Council**

Investigate opportunities to develop traineeships, volunteer and work experience for people with disability within Council.	Human Resources Community Services	Long term 3 – 4 years	Initiatives identified and considered for im-plementation	Scheduled for 2024-25
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**Access to employment for people with disability**

Advocate for training and employment opportunities in local business for people with disability	Business Services	Long term 3 – 4 years	Initiatives identified and considered for im-plementation.	Scheduled for 2024-25
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**Access to employment for people with disability**

Advocate for training and employment opportunities in local business for people with disability	Business Services	Medium term 2 – 3 years	Opportunities for advocacy identified and implemented.	Scheduled for 2024
Strengthen relationships with local disability employment services to better understand employment pathways for people with disability	Community Services	Medium term 2 – 3 years	Interagency networks and forums attended and relationships developed.	



Statutory Statements

# Disability Inclusion Act 2014

Focus Area 4

## Improving Access to Services Through Better Systems and Processes

**What The Issue is About**

A common issue for people with disability is the difficulty in navigating systems and processes to access the services and supports they need in the community. Some of these difficulties stem from the quality of service and training of front line personnel, the systems and processes required to access services, and the lack of accessible options for communicating, accessing information or providing input or feedback. There is often confusion about what services are provided across the three levels of government, and there is frequent repetition of information to be provided to public authorities and services.

**What the Community Told Us**

We need to improve our documentation, digital media and communication methods so information can be accessed by more people with disabilities; we need to improve opportunities for inclusion of people with disabilities in community activities such as sports, workshops, and community events; we need to continue to communicate face to face with the community (as the DPOP consultations have been appreciated) and build further links with disability organisations; we need to ensure that people with disabilities are represented on Council committees.

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Indicators	Achievements to 30 June 2023
<b>Council communications systems are accessible for people with disability</b>				
Review Council's public documents, information and feedback mechanisms to ensure they are available in accessible formats such as large print, electronic, radio etc.	Community Services Communications	Medium term 2 – 3 years	Documents and systems reviewed	Large print copies of Murrurundi newsletter, The Link, are provided each month at the Library
Review website design to ensure it is compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0	Communications	Medium term 2 – 3 years	Website reviewed and compliance issues adjusted	Website is constantly optimised to be user-focused and follow accessibility guidelines. Introduced AI augmented user-experience and accessibility auditing systems
Explore opportunities for additional Council resources to assist with communications for people with disability e.g. hearing augmentation, touch screens and translation services	Community Services Communications	Long term 3 – 4 years	Opportunities identified and considered for budgets and implementation	Ongoing

Statutory Statements

# Disability Inclusion Act 2014

Focus Area 4

## Improving Access to Services Through Better Systems and Processes

Action	Responsibility	Timing	Indicators	Achievements to 30 June 2023
<b>Community engagement and internal processes are accessible</b>				
Engage people with disability in Council consultation processes and in-clude their ideas and comments in plans for Council services, facilities and activities	All sections	Ongoing	People with disability engaged in consultation processes and planning activities in Council	Community consultation about the new Youth Centre
<b>Council is a source of information for people with disability</b>				
Participate in local networks and forums to obtain information on innovative and successful inclusive practices for local government and community services and groups	Community Services	Ongoing	Networks and forums participated in	Hunter Councils CD and SP meetings attended and ideas shared
Support local services and groups to improve information distribution for people with disability	Community Services	Ongoing	Number of services and groups supported with distribution of resources	

# Acknowledgement of Grant Funding

Council receives grant funding for various projects that it undertakes on behalf of the community each year. The following authorities have requested acknowledgment that they have provided funding for inclusion in Council's Annual Report for 2022/2023. This covers grant funding actually received by Council in 2022/2023 and not funding we were advised that we are receiving and will be included in the next financial year

Program / Project	Provider
Community Arts Support Program (CASP) – Creature Creation	Regional Arts NSW
Scone CBD Revitalisation	NSW Government Drought Stimulus and NSW Government Regional Growth Economic Activation Fund
Murrurundi & Merriwa Waste Transfer Facilities Closure and planned upgrade	NSW Government Waste Less Recycle More
Moonan Brook Rd Initial Seal & upgrade	State Government Fixing Local Roads
Scone to Murrurundi Pipeline	Safe and Secure Water Program Round 3
Village Reticulation Scheme	Safe and Secure Water Program Round 2 and 3
Cassilis Sewerage Scheme	Safe and Secure Water Program Round 3
Murulla Street Causeway Upgrade	NSW Govt Upper Hunter Region Mine Affected Roads
Cameron Bridge Replacement	NSW Govt Fixing Country Roads and Federal Govt Bridges Renewal Program
White Park Complex Electrical Supply Upgrade	Federal Government Resources for Regions Round 7
St Aubins Square Scone Open Space	NSW Government Public Spaces Legacy Program
Upper Hunter Shire Australia Day Celebrations	Federal Government COVID safe Australia Day Program
Merriwa Caravan Park Site Office	Federal Government Local Roads & Community Infrastructure Fund - Phase 1
Barrington Forest Road - Initial Seal and Upgrade - Stage 1	NSW Government Fixing Local Roads
14 Bridge Replacement Program	NSW Government Fixing Country Bridges Program
Guardrail Replacement Program	Federal and NSW Governments Road Safety Program
Bunnan Road (MR62) Shoulder Widening	Federal and NSW Governments Road Safety Program
Upper Hunter Hall Crawl	NSW Government Bushfire Community Resilience and Recovery Fund
Abbottsford Park Toilet facilities upgrade	Federal Government Drought Communities Program
Adverse Event Plan	Federal Government Drought Communities Program
Merriwa Oval Upgrade	NSW Government - Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 2
Scone Regional Airport Redevelopment and Hunter Warbirds aviation centre	Federal Government Regional Airport Funding, NSW Government Regional Growth - Environment and Tourism Fund, NSW Government Drought Stimulus Program
Bunnan Road (MR62) Widening and Pavement Strengthening	NSW Government Fixing Country Roads Program
Amaroo Park Playspace	NSW Government Every One Can Play Grant
Barrington Forest Road - Initial Seal and Upgrade - Stage 2	NSW Government Fixing Local Roads
Scone Emergency Control Centre	NSW Government - Resilience NSW
Regional Youth Holiday Programs	NSW Government Office of Regional Youth
Organics Waste Collection Implementation	NSW Government Environmental Trust
Litter Prevention	NSW Government Environmental Trust

Council acknowledges the contributions and thanks the above organisations for assisting Council in delivering valuable services to its Community.



## Acknowledgement of Grant Funding

### Continued

Program / Project	Provider
Scone Library relocation and redevelopment	NSW State Libraries
Naracoote Road to Glenmore Bridge - Initial Seal and upgrade	Federal Government - Heavy Vehicle Safety & Productivity Program Round 7
Regional Roads Block Grant & Repair Funding	NSW Government - Transport for NSW
Roads to Recovery Program	Federal Government
Merriwa Cycle and Walkway	NSW Government - Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund
Farems Lane Scone Reconstruction	Federal Government Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund Phase 2
Rouchel Road Aberdeen Reconstruction	Federal Government Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund Phase 2
Ringwood Road Merriwa	Federal Government Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund Phase 2
Cullingral Road Merriwa	Federal Government Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund Phase 2
Scone Memorial Swimming Pool Amenities Upgrade	NSW Govt - Stronger Country Community Fund - Round 4
Merriwa Olympic Pool Amenities Upgrade	NSW Govt - Stronger Country Community Fund - Round 4
Scone Tennis Court Refurbishment	NSW Govt - Stronger Country Community Fund - Round 4
Mural Restoration Niagara Café	NSW Govt - Stronger Country Community Fund - Round 5
Murray Bain Oval Lighting Upgrade	NSW Govt - Stronger Country Community Fund - Round 5
Merriwa CBD Activation	NSW Govt - Stronger Country Community Fund - Round 5
Hunter Warbirds Activation	NSW Govt - Stronger Country Community Fund - Round 5
Muffet St Scone Reconstruction	Federal Government Resources for Regions Round 8
Murrurundi Transfer Station	Federal Government Resources for Regions Round 8
Merriwa Transfer Station	Federal Government Resources for Regions Round 8
Bill Rose Complex Scone Master Plan	Federal Government Resources for Regions Round 8
White Park Equine Complex Upgrade	Federal Government Resources for Regions Round 9
Upper Hunter Regional Brand Strategy	Federal Government Resources for Regions Round 9
Scone Indoor Sporting Facility Concept Plan	Federal Government Resources for Regions Round 9
Campbells Cnr facade restoration	Federal Government Resources for Regions Round 9
Scone library Relocation & Fitout	Federal Government Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund Phase 3
Barrington Forest Road Stage 1	Federal Government Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Fund Phase 3
Scone Mountain National Park Bike Trail	NSW Government Open Spaces Program
Hunter Road - Initial seal and upgrade	NSW Government Fixing Local Roads Round 4

Council acknowledges the contributions and thanks the above organisations for assisting Council in delivering valuable services to its Community.

# Government Information (Public Access) Act Annual Report

## The manner in which agencies are to make government information publicly available

Council has a range of information made publicly available under the GIPA Act. Links to access mandatory publications, open access information and other documents are published on Council's website [upperhunter.nsw.gov.au](http://upperhunter.nsw.gov.au) and/or copies of documents are also available on request.

If the information or document is not readily available, an application may be made in writing or by completing an application form provided by Council, or by contacting Council's Right to Information Officer.

## The manner in which an access application can be made

Council holds many files, documents, manuals and electronic media related to its operations. In some circumstances (e.g. personal, privacy, business) certain documentation may not be readily available for public viewing under certain provisions of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act (PPIPA), or without first a formal application being made under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009.

Council encourages the release of information without the need for a

formal application, unless there is good reason to require one. In limited circumstances, access to information will require formal access application. If a formal application for information is required, the relevant application form is available from Council and will need to be submitted along with the applicable fees.

Details on how to apply for access to documents under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 are contained in the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009, Part 4 – Access Applications.

Council records are maintained on a Civica Authority computer system as well as an electronic document management system (Content Manager).

Copies of non-restricted documents can be supplied at an appropriate copying cost. Copies of petitions, minutes held by Council of meetings by public groups and submissions made by the public in response to any exhibition or request for public input made by Council may be supplied at the appropriate copying fee.

Documents subject to copyright may be viewed only. Copies can be obtained from the author.

## The adoption and amendment of agency information guides by agencies (including the obligations of agencies to consult with the information commissioner in connection with agency information guides and the adoption of model agency information guides developed by the information commissioner)

In accordance with Section 20 of the GIPA Act, Council must have an Agency Information Guide. This Guide is to be reviewed and adopted at intervals of not more than 12 months.

Council's Agency Information Guide was reviewed and copies can be downloaded from Council's website [upperhunter.nsw.gov.au](http://upperhunter.nsw.gov.au).

# Government Information (Public Access) Act Annual Report

## Information to be given to applicants for government information

Personal information (as defined by the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act) contained in any documents held by Upper Hunter Shire Council, will only be supplied in accordance with the PPIP Act.

## The circumstances in which and the extent to which an agency must or may waive, reduce or refund any fee or charge payable under this Act

Formal Access Applications require a \$30.00 application fee and can also incur an additional fee of \$30.00/hour processing charge.

A 50% reduction in processing charge may be granted to applicants in cases of financial hardship, where the applicant is the holder of a Pensioner Concession Card issued by the Commonwealth, the applicant is a full time student, or non-profit organization (including the person applying for or on behalf of a non-profit organization), or where information applied for is of special benefit to the public generally.

## Statistics

A full report including the yearly statistics can be found in Part 3 of this Annual Report. This report can be downloaded from Council's website [www.upperhunter.nsw.gov.au](http://www.upperhunter.nsw.gov.au).

Verbal enquiries should be directed to Ian Roberts, Manager Governance and Risk on 02 6540 1122.

Written requests should be addressed to:

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Scone Horse Festival





