



BUSINESS PAPER

ORDINARY MEETING

Tuesday, 22 October 2024

Commencing at 9:00 AM

Walgett Shire Council Chambers
77 Fox Street, Walgett

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to clause 7 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice that the Ordinary Council Meeting of Walgett Shire Council will be held on **Tuesday, 22 October 2024** commencing at **9:00 AM** to discuss the items listed in the Agenda.

Please Note: The Council Meetings are live streamed and recorded

Megan Dixon
GENERAL MANAGER

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

What is a “Conflict of Interests” – A conflict of interests can be two types:

Pecuniary – an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person or another person with whom the person is associated.

Non-Pecuniary – a private or personal interest that a Council official has that does not amount to a pecuniary interest as defined in the Local government Act (eg. A friendship, membership of an association, society or trade union or involvement or interest in an activity and may include an interest of a financial nature.)

Remoteness

A person does not have a pecuniary interest in a matter if the interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not reasonably be regarded as likely to influence any decision the person might make in relation to a matter or if the interest is of a kind specified in Section 448 of the Local Government Act.

Who has a Pecuniary Interest? – A person has a pecuniary interest in a matter if the pecuniary interest is the interest of:

- The person, or
- Another person with whom the person is associated (see below)

Relatives, Partners

A person is taken to have a pecuniary interest in a matter if:

- The person’s spouse or de facto partner or a relative of the person has a pecuniary interest in the matter, or
- The person, or a nominee, partners or employer of the person, is a member of a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter.

N.B. “Relative”, in relation to a person means any of the following:

- (a) the parent, grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, lineal descends or adopted child of the person or of the person’s spouse.
- (b) the spouse or de facto partners of the person or of a person referred to in paragraph (a)

No Interest in the Matter

However, a person is not taken to have a pecuniary interest in a matter:

- If the person is unaware of the relevant pecuniary interest of the spouse, de facto partner, relative or company of other body, or
- Just because the person is a member of, or is employed by, the Council.
- Just because the person is a member of, or a delegate of the Council to, a company or other body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter provided that the person has no beneficial interest in any shares of the company or body.

Disclosure and participation in meetings

- A Councillor or a member of a Council Committee who has a pecuniary interest in any matter with which the Council is concerned and who is present at a meeting of the Council or Committee at which the matter is being considered must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.
- The Councillor or member must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting of the Council or Committee:
 - (a) At any time during which the matter is being considered or discussed by the Council or Committee, or
 - (b) At any time during which the Council or Committee is voting on any question in relation to the matter.

No Knowledge – A person does not breach this Clause if the person did not know and could not reasonably be expected to have known that the matter under consideration at the meeting was a matter in which he or she had a pecuniary interest.

Non-Pecuniary Interest – Must be disclosed in meetings.

There are a broad range of options available for managing conflicts & the option chosen will depend on an assessment of the circumstances of the matter, the nature of the interest and the significance of the issue being dealt with. Non-Pecuniary conflicts of interest must be dealt with in at least one of the following ways:

- It may be appropriate that no action be taken where the potential for conflict is minimal. However, Councillors should consider providing an explanation of why they consider a conflict does not exist.
- Limit involvement if practical (e.g. Participate in discussion but not in decision making or vice versa). Care needs to be taken when exercising this option.
- Remove the source of the conflict (e.g. Relinquishing or divesting the personal interest that creates the conflict)
- Have no involvement by absenting yourself from and not taking part in any debate or voting on the issue as if the provisions in S451 of the Local Government Act apply (particularly if you have a significant non-pecuniary interest)

Disclosure to be Recorded (S453 Act)

A disclosure (and the reason/s for the disclosure) made at a meeting of the Council or Council Committee or Sub-Committee must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Local Government Act 1993
Chapter 3 section 8A
GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR COUNCILS

(1) Exercise of functions generally

The following general principles apply to the exercise of functions by councils:

- (a) Councils should provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making.*
- (b) Councils should carry out functions in a way that provides the best possible value for residents and ratepayers.*
- (c) Councils should plan strategically, using the integrated planning and reporting framework, for the provision of effective and efficient services and regulation to meet the diverse needs of the local community.*
- (d) Councils should apply the integrated planning and reporting framework in carrying out their functions so as to achieve desired outcomes and continuous improvements.*
- (e) Councils should work co-operatively with other councils and the State government to achieve desired outcomes for the local community.*
- (f) Councils should manage lands and other assets so that current and future local community needs can be met in an affordable way.*
- (g) Councils should work with others to secure appropriate services for local community needs.*
- (h) Councils should act fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the local community.*
- (i) Councils should be responsible employers and provide a consultative and supportive working environment for staff.*

(2) Decision-making

The following principles apply to decision-making by councils (subject to any other applicable law):

- (a) Councils should recognise diverse local community needs and interests.*
- (b) Councils should consider social justice principles.*
- (c) Councils should consider the long term and cumulative effects of actions on future generations.*
- (d) Councils should consider the principles of ecologically sustainable development.*
- (e) Council decision-making should be transparent, and decision-makers are to be accountable for decisions and omissions.*

(3) Community participation

Councils should actively engage with their local communities, through the use of the integrated planning and reporting framework and other measures.

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS**Oath or Affirmation of Office**

In taking the Oath or Affirmation of Office, each Councillor has made a commitment to undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the people of Walgett Shire Local Government Area and Walgett Shire Council and that they will faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the Local Government Act 1993 or any other Act to the best of their ability and judgment.

Conflicts of Interest

A councillor who has a conflict of interest in any matter with which the council is concerned, and who is present at a meeting of the council when the matter is being considered, must disclose the interest and the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable. Both the disclosure and the nature of the interest must be recorded in the minutes of the Council meeting where the conflict of interest arises. Councillors should ensure that they are familiar with Parts 4 and 5 of the Code of Conduct in relation to their obligations to declare and manage conflicts of interests.

Meeting Recordings

Walgett Shire Council takes an audio recording of all public meetings, which is then uploaded to Council's website at www.walgett.nsw.gov.au for public record.

PUBLIC FORUM PRESENTATIONS

The Council may hold a public forum prior to each Ordinary Meeting of the Council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting (listed on the Agenda).

Public forums may also be held prior to Extraordinary Council Meetings and meetings of committees of the Council. Public forums are to be chaired by the mayor or their nominee.

The General Manager or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented. A person may apply to speak on no more than 2 items of business on the agenda of the Council Meeting.

The General Manager or their delegate may refuse an application to speak at a public forum. No more than three (3) speakers are to be permitted to speak ‘for’ or ‘against’ each item of business on the agenda for the Council Meeting. If more than the permitted number of speakers apply to speak ‘for’ or ‘against’ any item of business, the General Manager or their delegate may, in consultation with the mayor or the mayor’s nominated chairperson, increase the number of speakers permitted to speak on an item of business, where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to allow the council to hear a fuller range of views on the relevant item of business.

Each speaker will be allowed five (5) minutes to address the Council. This time is to be strictly enforced by the Chairperson. The Chairperson of the meeting can grant one extension of up to a maximum of three (3) minutes, should further information, be considered to be important to the Council. This is solely at the discretion of the Chair.

Speakers at public forums must not digress from their nominated item on the agenda. If a speaker digresses to irrelevant matters, the Chairperson is to direct the speaker not to do so. If a speaker fails to observe a direction from the chairperson, the speaker will not be further heard.

A councillor (including the chairperson) may, through the chairperson, ask questions of a speaker following their address at a Public Forum. Questions put to a speaker must be direct, succinct and without argument. Debate will not be permitted by the speaker, Councillors or staff. Speakers are under no obligation to answer a question. Answers by the speaker, to each question are to be limited to three (3) minutes. Speakers at public forums cannot ask questions of the Council, Councillors or Council staff.

The general manager or their nominee may, with the concurrence of the chairperson, address the council for up 5 minutes in response to an address to the council at a public forum after the address and any subsequent questions and answers have been finalised.

SPEAKER	TOPIC

AGENDA

1 OPENING OF MEETING

Declaration of Webcasting

I inform all those in attendance at this meeting, that the meeting is being webcast and that those in attendance should refrain from making any defamatory statements concerning any person, Councillor or employee, and refrain from discussing those matters subject to Closed Council proceedings as indicated in clause 14.1 of the code of meeting practice.

It is requested that Councillors within the duration of the Meeting, limit discussions to only the business on the agenda and what is permissible under our Code of Meeting Practice. As stated in the Governance Rules, other than an official Council recording, no video or audio recording of proceedings of Council Meetings will be permitted without specific approval by resolution of the relevant Council Meeting.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In the spirit of reconciliation Walgett Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country in Walgett Shire and their connections to land, water and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

3 INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS PRESENT

4 APOLOGIES

5 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

6 ADOPTION AND CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

6.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

7 MAYORAL MINUTE

8 MAYORAL MONTHLY REPORT

8.1 MAYORAL ACTIVITIES FOR OCTOBER 2024

9 REPORTS OF COMMITTEE/DELEGATES

10 CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & ADVOCACY

11 REPORTS FROM OFFICERS

11.1 DELEGATES, REPRESENTATIVES AND/OR MEMBERS OF EXTERNAL BODIES

11.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

11.3 ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO CASTLEREAGH MACQUARIE COUNTY COUNCIL

11.4 CLOSEDOWN OF COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION OFFICES OVER THE 2024/2025 FESTIVE SEASON

- 11.5 REVIEW OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING DATES AND TIMES 2024/2025
- 11.6 COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE SCHEME 2024/2025 ROUND 1
- 11.7 COUNCIL PROJECTS UPDATE OCTOBER 2024
- 11.8 MATTERS OF BRIEF MENTION - PEOPLE, PLACE AND LIVEABILITY
- 11.9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND VISITOR ECONOMY
- 11.10 PAYMENT OF ALLOWANCE FOR DEPUTY MAYOR WHEN ACTING AS MAYOR
- 11.11 ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES POLICY REPORT
- 11.12 POLICY FRAMEWORK
- 11.13 BUSINESS ETHICS POLICY
- 11.14 COUNCILLOR AND STAFF INTERACTION POLICY
- 11.15 COUNCILLOR EXPENSES AND FACILITIES REPORT
- 11.16 PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY
- 11.17 SETTING OF COUNCILLOR FEES 2024/2025
- 11.18 INVESTMENTS REPORT 30 SEPTEMBER 2024
- 11.19 AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2025 AND BEYOND
- 11.20 MONTHLY GRADING REPORT SEPTEMBER 2024
- 11.21 UPDATE ON INFRASTRUCTURE REPORTS
- 11.22 INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMPLAINTS EXPENDITURE REPORT
- 11.23 STATE OF THE SHIRE 2021 TO 2024
- 11.24 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION FOR VARIATION TO LEP & PLANNING PROPOSAL FOR 66 DUFF STREET, WALGETT

12 NOTICES OF MOTION

- 12.1 CLR KEARL - QUESTION ON NOTICE - NON-RESIDENTIAL ROLL 2024 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION

13 MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION

14 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS/CLOSED COUNCIL MEETING

- 14.1 SECTION 713 SALE OF LAND FOR UNPAID RATES
- 14.2 CLR KEARL - QUESTION ON NOTICE - GENERAL MANAGER'S PERFORMANCE REVIEW
- 14.3 CLR KEARL - QUESTION ON NOTICE - REPORT ON THE ADOPTED RESTRUCTURE

15 RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

16 ADOPTION OF CLOSED SESSION REPORTS

17 CLOSE OF MEETING

ITEM 6.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Sherisse Fensom, Executive Officer
PURPOSE	For decision

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes from the:

1) Ordinary Meeting 27 August 2024 having been circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of this meeting.

2) Extraordinary Meeting 10 September 2024 having been circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of this meeting.

3) Extraordinary Meeting 8 October 2024 having been circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of this meeting.

Executive Summary

This report seeks Council's confirmation that the minutes from the Ordinary Meeting held on 27 August, Extraordinary Meeting 10 September and Extraordinary Meeting 8 October 2024 are accurate and reflect the resolutions made during the meetings. It is recommended that Council review and endorse the minutes as a true and correct record of the proceedings and advise if there are any corrections required.

Background

Not applicable

Current Situation

Not applicable

Consultation

Not applicable

Financial and Resource Implications

Not applicable

Legislation and Policy Implications

Local Government Act 1993 - Section 375

Walgett Shire Council's - Model Code of Meeting Practice 2022

Legal and Risk Considerations

[LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993 - SECT 375](#)

Minutes

(1) The council must ensure that full and accurate minutes are kept of the proceedings of a meeting of the council.

(2) The minutes must, when they have been confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the council, be signed by the person presiding at that subsequent meeting.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan**G 3.1 An accountable and representative Council**

3.1.4 Undertake the civic duties of Council with the highest degree of professionalism and ethics.

Alternative Options

Council may advise if there are corrections required before adopting the minutes.

Conclusion

Council is requested to confirm the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 27 August 2024, Extraordinary Meeting 10 September 2024 and Extraordinary Meeting 8 October 2024 and if necessary provide corrections or adjustments.

Attachments

1. 240827 - DRAFT Minutes Ordinary Meeting
2. 240910 - DRAFT Extraordinary Council Meeting Minutes
3. 241008 - DRAFT Extraordinary Council Meeting Minutes



MINUTES FOR THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Held Tuesday 27th August 2024

**Council Chambers | Walgett Shire Council
77 Fox Street, Walgett**

Megan Dixon
GENERAL MANAGER

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE WALGETT SHIRE COUNCIL HELD AT THE WALGETT SHIRE CHAMBERS ON TUESDAY 27 AUGUST 2024 AT 9.00 AM
MEETING OPEN

The Mayor declared the meeting open at 9:04am

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Deputy Mayor acknowledged the traditional owners of the lands within the Walgett Shire and acknowledged the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside within the Shire.

CONFIRMATION OF MEMBERS PRESENT**COUNCILLORS:**

Mayor Jasen Ramien
 Councillor Jane Keir
 Councillor Ian Woodcock
 Councillor Alf Seaton
 Councillor Daniel Walford

STAFF:

Kazi Mahmud	Director Infrastructure and Compliance
Ernest Mhande	Chief Financial Officer
Tim Williams	Acting Manager of Infrastructure (Roads)
Katherine Matts	Communications Consultant
Sherisse Fensom	Executive Officer / Minute Secretary

11/2024/01 RECESS AND AWARDS FROM 10.15AM

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **KEIR**; Seconded by Councillor **WOODCOCK**;
 That Council take a short recess at 10:15am, followed by the Citizenship Ceremony, Dick Colless Awards Presentation, and Councillor Awards Presentation at 10:30am.

11/2024/02 APOLOGISE AND APPLICATIONS FOR A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **WOODCOCK**; Seconded by Councillor **WALFORD**;
 That the apologise received for Councillor Currey, Councillor Cooke, Councillor Rummery and Deputy Mayor Colin Hundy are accepted.

5. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY/NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

<i>Councillor</i>	<i>Item No</i>	<i>Pecuniary/Non-Pecuniary</i>	<i>Reason</i>
Ramien	12.3.3	Non-Pecuniary	Family Business – Maintenance Grading
Keir	12.3.3	Non-Pecuniary	Family Business – Maintenance Grading

6. PUBLIC FORUM

Nil

11/2024/03 MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING 23 JULY 2024

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **KEIR**; Seconded by Councillor **SEATON**;

That the minutes from the Ordinary Council meeting held on the 23rd July 2024 having been circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of this meeting.

11/2024/04 MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING 13 AUGUST 2024

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **SEATON**; Seconded by Councillor **KEIR**;

That the minutes from the Extraordinary Council meeting held on the 13th August 2024 having been circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of this meeting.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE/DELEGATES

Nil

MAYORAL MINUTE

Nil

11/2024/05 MAYORAL MONTHLY REPORT

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **SEATON**; Seconded by Councillor **WOODCOCK**;

That the Mayoral Report for August 2024 be received and noted.

11/2024/06 IMAGINATION LIBRARY – LETTER TO PREMIER OF NSW

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **KEIR** ; Seconded by Councillor **SEATON**;

That Council notes the letter and support for the Imagination Library.

11/2024/07 INTEGRITY ISSUES RELATING TO THE 2024 NSW LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS – ICAC

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **KEIR**; Seconded by Councillor **WOODCOCK**;

That Council notes the letter from the Independent Commission Against Corruption regarding integrity issues relating to the 2024 NSW Local Government Elections.

11/2024/08 MATTERS IN PROGRESS

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **WALFORD**; Seconded by Councillor **WOODCOCK**;

That the Matters in Progress up until August 2024 be received and noted.

11/2024/09 IMPORTANT DATES – UPCOMING MEETING AND EVENTS

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **WOODCOCK**; Seconded by Councillor **SEATON**;

That Council receives and notes the list of upcoming meetings and events.

11/2024/10 CIRCULARS RECEIVED FROM NSW OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **KEIR**; Seconded by Councillor **SEATON**;

That the information contained in the following Department circular 24-13, 24-14 and 24,15 from the Local Government Division Department of Premier and Cabinet, be received and noted.

11/2024/11 GENERAL MANAGER DELEGATIONS DURING CARETAKER PERIOD

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **KEIR**; Seconded by Councillor **WALFORD**;

That Council grant the General Manager temporary delegated authority to make decisions on routine and administrative matters until the new Council is formally sworn in.

11/2024/12 COUNCIL PROJECTS UPDATE AUGUST 2024

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **WOODCOCK**; Seconded by Councillor **KEIR**;

That the Council projects list for August 2024 be received and noted.

11/2024/13 CASH AND INVESTMENT FOR JULY 2024

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **KEIR**; Seconded by Councillor **WOODCOCK**;
That the Investment report for July 2024 be received and noted.

11/2024/14 QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW STATEMENT

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **WOODCOCK**; Seconded by Councillor **SEATON**;
That Council adopt the attached Quarterly Budget Review Statement for 30 June 2024 as tabled.

11/2023/15 COMPLIANCE MATTERS FOR BRIEF MENTION JULY 2024

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **KEIR**; Seconded by Councillor **WOODCOCK**;
That the Council receive and note the matters for brief mention or information for compliance matters during July 2024.

11/2023/16 DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS JULY 2024

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **KEIR**; Seconded by Councillor **WOODCOCK**;
That Council receives and notes the development approvals for July 2024 report.

12.3.3 WORKS UPDATE FOR ROADS INFRASTRUCTURE JULY 2024

No resolution was reached on this matter due to a lack of quorum, as two Councillors declared a pecuniary interest. The matter will be deferred to a later meeting, though this decision was not made through a formal resolution.

Recommendation: That Council receive and note the works update for roads infrastructure report July 2024

[LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2009 - SECT 150EU Procedure if no quorum for deciding matter because of prescribed conflicts of interest or declarable conflicts of interest \(austlii.edu.au\)](#)

11/2023/18 INFRASTRUCTURE DEPARTMENT EXPENDITURE REPORT JULY 2024

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **WOODCOCK**; Seconded by Councillor **KEIR**;
That Council receive and note the Infrastructure Services expenditure report for July 2024.

11/2023/19 INFRASTRUCTURE MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE JULY 2024

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **WOODCOCK**; Seconded by Councillor **SEATON**;
That Council receive and note the Infrastructure major projects update report for July 2024.

11/2023/20 REVIEW OF FUNDING MODELS FOR LOCAL WATER UTILITIES

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **KEIR**; Seconded by Councillor **SEATON**;
That Council receive and note the attached Review of Funding Models for Local Water Utilities from the NSW Productivity and Equality Commission.

11C/2024/21 MOVE INTO CLOSED SESSION

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **WOODCOCK**; Seconded by Councillor **SEATON**;
That the public be excluded from the meeting pursuant to Sections 10A (2) (a) (f) the Local Government Act 1993 on the basis that the items deal with:

- 1) The matters and information are the following—
 - a. personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors),

(f) matters affecting the security of the council, councillors, council staff or council property.

Time: 9:40am

11C/2024/22 UNCONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE – 15 AUGUST 2024

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **KIER**; Seconded by Councillor **SEATON**;
That council receives and notes the Unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee – held via Teams on the 15 August 2024.

11C/2024/23 GENERAL MANAGERS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW REPORT

RESOLVED on MOTION by Councillor **KEIR**; Seconded by Councillor **SEATON**;
That Council note and receive information in this report.

10/2024/24 RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

RESOLVED on MOTION by Councillor **WOODCOCK**; Seconded by Councillor **SEATON**;
That Council return to open session.

10/2024/25 ADOPTION OF CLOSED SESSION REPORTS

RESOLVED on MOTION by Councillor **WOODCOCK**; Seconded by Councillor **KEIR**;
That Council adopt the recommendations of the Closed Committee Reports

- 1) 15.1.1 Unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee – 15 August 2024.
- 2) 15.1.2 General Managers Annual Performance Review Report

*With no further business the meeting was closed by Mayor Ramien at 10.02 pm
Minutes to be confirmed at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 22 October 2024*

.....
CHAIRPERSON

.....
GENERAL MANAGER



**MEETING MINUTES FOR EXTRA
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**

Tuesday 10th September 2024

**Council Chambers | Walgett Shire Council
77 Fox Street, Walgett**

PRESENT

Councillor Greg Rummery
Councillor Daniel Walford
Councillor Greg Rummery
Megan Dixon (General Manager)
Kazi Mahmud (Director Infrastructure and Compliance)
Carisa Wells (Director People, Place and Liveability)
Ernest Mahande (Chief Finance Officer)
Katherine Mutts (Manager Communications)
Sharon Smith (Minute Secretary)

PRESENT VIA TEAMS

Mayor Jasen Ramien
Councillor Ian Woodcock
Councillor Alf Seaton
Councillor Michael Cooke

ABSENT

Deputy Mayor Colin Hundy
Councillor Sue Currey
Councillor Jane Keir

MEETING OPENED AT 9.10am

10/2024/01 NOMINATION OF CHAIR

Megan Dixon called for nomination to chair the meeting due to the absence of the Mayor JASEN RAMIEN and Deputy Mayor COLIN HUNDY. Councillor DANIEL WALFORD nominated Councillor GREG RUMMERY, Seconded Councillor ALF SEATON

Councillor Rummery acknowledged the traditional owners of the lands within the Walgett Shire and acknowledged the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside within this Shire.

DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY/NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Nil

10/2024/02 LEAVE OF ABSENCE

RESOLVED on MOTION by Councillor WALFORD; Seconded by Councillor SEATON; That Council grant the leave of absences for Deputy Mayor COLIN HUNDY, Councillor Jane Keir and Councillor Sue Currey for 10 September 2024 Extra Ordinary Business Meeting.

10/2024/03 ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – 30 JUNE 2024

RESOLVED on MOTION by Councillor SEATON; Seconded by Councillor WALFORD;

1. That Council's Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2024 be referred for audit.

2. That the Mayor, Councillor, General Manager, and the Responsible Accounting Officer be authorised to sign the Statement by Councillors and Management on the Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2024.

MEETING CLOSED AT 9.28AM



MINUTES FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Held Tuesday 8th August 2024

**Council Chambers | Walgett Shire Council
77 Fox Street, Walgett**

Megan Dixon
GENERAL MANAGER

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE WALGETT SHIRE COUNCIL HELD AT
THE WALGETT SHIRE CHAMBERS ON TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2024 AT 9.00 AM****1. MEETING OPEN**

The General Manager declared the meeting open at 9:02am

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The General Manager acknowledged the traditional owners of the lands within the Walgett Shire and acknowledged the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside within the Shire.

3. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS PRESENT**COUNCILLORS:**

Scott Bailey
Jo Coleman
Michael Cooke
Pauline Kearl
Jane Keir
Jasen Ramien
Greg Rummery
Alf Seaton
Daniel Walford

STAFF:

Megan Dixon	General Manager
Kazi Mahmud	Director Infrastructure and Compliance
Ernest Mhande	Chief Financial Officer
Carisa Wells	Director of People, Place and Liveability
Andrew Brown	Special Projects – Governance, Risk & Human Resources
Sherisse Fensom	Executive Officer / Minute Secretary
Arabella Wells	Administration Trainee

4. APOLOGISE AND APPLICATIONS FOR A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

There were nil apologise or leave of absence requests for this meeting.

OATH OR AFFIRMATION BY COUNCILLORS**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That each Councillor takes an oath or make an affirmation of office in the prescribed format commensurate with the provisions of Section 233A of the Local Government Act 1993 as the first item of business.
2. That each Councillor reads out loud the prescribed wording of the oath or affirmation of office in front of the General Manager and signs a statement containing this oath or affirmation of office for Council's records

In the presence of the General Manager, each Councillor read out loud the prescribed wording of the oath or affirmation of office and signed a statement containing such for Council's records.

Scott Bailey
Jo Coleman
Michael Cooke
Pauline Kearl
Jane Keir

Jasen Ramien
Greg Rummery
Alf Seaton
Daniel Walford

**DETERMINATION OF METHOD OF VOTING FOR ELECTION OF MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR
RESOLVED ON MOTION** by Councillor **KEIR**; Seconded by Councillor **WALFORD** ;
That the method of voting for the election of Mayor and, if such an office is created, Deputy Mayor, be determined.

13/2024/01 AMENDMENT TO DETERMINATION OF VOTING

RESOLVED ON MOTION by Councillor **KEIR**; Seconded by Councillor **WALFORD** ;
That the method of voting for the election of Mayor and, if such an office is created, Deputy Mayor, be determined by closed ballot.

For: Keir, Walford, Coleman, Bailey, Cooke, Seaton, Ramien, Rummery
Against: Kearl

CARRIED

13/2024/02 ELECTION OF MAYOR FOR ENSURING TWO YEARS

RESOLVED on MOTION by Councillor **RUMMERY** ; Seconded by Councillor **SEATON** ;
1. That Council note that the General Manager or their nominee is the Returning Officer for this election.
2. That the General Manager or their nominee, as Returning Officer, advise of nominations for the election of Mayor for the two-year term of office from October 2024 to September 2026. 3. In the event of more than one (1) nomination that Council conducts the election of the Mayor by the determined resolution of item 6.1 of the agenda dated 8 October 2024 and in accordance with Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021
4. That following the election, the ballot papers used in the election of the Mayor be destroyed.

The General Manager advised that at the close of nominations for Mayor there was one (1) nomination being: Councillor Ramien In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulations 2005 the General Manager declared Councillor Jasen Ramien duly elected Mayor for the term ending in two (2) years.

13/2024/03 CREATION OF THE OFFICE OF DEPUTY MAYOR

RESOLVED on MOTION by Councillor **SEATON** ; Seconded by Councillor **KEIR** ;
1. That Council creates the office of Deputy Mayor.
2. That Council note that the General Manager or their nominee is the Returning Officer for the purpose of electing the Deputy Mayor.
3. That the General Manager or their nominee, as Returning Officer, advise of nominations for the election of Deputy Mayor for the two-year term of office, from October 2024 to September 2026;
4. In the event of more than one (1) nomination, that Council conduct the election of the Deputy Mayor by ordinary ballot and in accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021; and
5. That following the election, the ballot papers used in the election of the Deputy Mayor be destroyed.

The General Manager advised that at the close of nominations for Deputy Mayor there was two (2) nomination being: Councillor Kearl and Councillor Rummery.

An election was held via secret ballot.

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulations 2005 the General Manager declared Councillor Greg Rummery duly elected Deputy Mayor for the term ending in two (2) years.

Councillor Ramien assumed the Chair as Mayor and proceeded with the remaining items of business.

13/2024/04 DELEGATIONS OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

RESOLVED on MOTION by Councillor **SEATON** ; Seconded by Councillor **RUMMERY**;

1. That Council delegates to the General Manager of Walgett Shire Council the functions as outlined in the attached Instrument of Delegation to the General Manager

**All in Favour
CARRIED**

13/2024/05 COUNTBACK TO FILL COUNCILLOR CASUAL VACANCIES

RESOLVED on MOTION by Councillor **KEIR** ; Seconded by Councillor **COOKE**;

Pursuant to section 291A(1) (b) of the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act), Walgett Shire Council declares that casual vacancies occurring in the office of a councillor within 18 months after the last ordinary election of councillors for the Council on 14 September 2024 are to be filled by a countback of votes cast at that election for the office in accordance with section 291A of the Act and directs the general manager to notify the NSW Electoral Commissioner of the Council's decision within 7 days of the decision.

**All in Favour
CARRIED**

With no further business the meeting was closed by Mayor Ramien at 9.26am

Minutes to be confirmed at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 22 October 2024

.....
CHAIRPERSON

.....
GENERAL MANAGER

ITEM 8.1 MAYORAL ACTIVITIES FOR OCTOBER 2024

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Jasen Ramien - Mayor
PURPOSE	For noting

RECOMMENDATION

That the Mayoral Report for October 2024 be received and noted.

Executive Summary

This report provides Council with information regarding the activities of the Mayor for the past month.

Current Situation

Firstly, I want to sincerely thank the Councillors for their support in electing me as Mayor. I look forward to serving our communities and representing our Shire over the next two years.

The recent opening of the Collarenebri Artesian Bore Bath has been a great success for the Colly community, bringing in more visitors and giving local businesses a boost. I believe the entire Shire will benefit as more people continue to explore the artesian baths in our region.

The progress at the Opal Centre is also exciting, and I'm confident it will be another major driver for tourism in the Walgett Shire, showcasing our rich history and culture.

As we enter harvest season, I want to wish all our grain producers a prosperous and successful season.

It has only been a few weeks since our new Councillors were sworn in, and I'd like to thank the community for their continued support. I've had the opportunity to speak with 2WEB and was recently featured on Landline, where I discussed the positive impact the new Bore Baths have had on increasing visitors to such a small community.

And a big congratulations to the teams behind the Carinda Let's Dance Festival, the Come By Chance Races, the Bushman's Carnival, and the Collarenebri Classic Cod and Carp Muster for hosting such successful events. These events truly showcase the best of our region and bring us together as a community.

ITEM 11.1 DELEGATES, REPRESENTATIVES AND/OR MEMBERS OF EXTERNAL BODIES

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Sherisse Fensom, Executive Officer
PURPOSE	For decision

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council appoint its delegates for each of the listed Committees/Organisations with terms extending until September 2026 for the following:

- **Big Sky Libraries**
- **Kamilaroi Highway Group**
- **Outback Arts Incorporated**
- **Far North West JO (Mayor only)**
- **Western Division Councils of NSW**
- **Alliance of Western Councils**
- **Murray-Darling Basin Advisory**
- **Border Region Organisations of Councils (BROC) (Mayor + 1 alternate)**
- **Barwon Darling Customer Advisory Group (1 Councillor + 1 alternate)**

2. That Council discontinue their membership with the Australian Airport Association.

3. That Council discontinue their membership with the Mining Related Councils

Executive Summary

This report outlines the committees, reference groups, and external organisations that require the appointment of Councillor representatives.

Background

Council normally nominates delegates and representatives to these committees annually. However, this annual process can be disruptive for both Councillors and administration, as well as for external stakeholders. To provide greater continuity and stability, it is recommended that these appointments be reviewed in alignment with the mayoral elections in 2026. Councillors can still request changes if needed, and an earlier review can be conducted if required.

The role of the delegate or Council representative is to represent Council's position, and where appropriate, report back to Council at an Ordinary Council Meeting on the issues or progress of the committees and any recommendations made.

Noting that Outback Arts have requested Councillors Keir and Walford remain active members until their Annual General Meeting in March 2025.

The Australian Airports Association and the Mining Related Councils have been identified as lacking relevance to our Local Government Area. It is recommended that Council discontinue its current memberships, with the option to revisit them in the future if the need arises.

It is also suggested to consider nominating an alternative Council delegate to cover those occasions when the nominated delegate may be unavailable.

Current Situation

Councillors to nominate themselves to the following committees:

NAME	NOMINATIONS	DELEGATE	ALTERNATE
Australian Airports Association	Discontinue, Cooke		
Big Sky Libraries	Coleman,		
North West Zone Service Level Agreement (SLA)	Mayor	Mayor	
Kamilaroi Highway Group	Coleman		
Outback Arts Incorporated (Voting in March 2025)	Bailey, Coleman		
Local Government NSW – Voting Delegate	Mayor	Mayor	
Far Northwest Joint Organisation	Mayor	Mayor	
Western Division Councils of NSW	Mayor	Mayor	
Country Mayors Association	Mayor	Mayor	
Mining Related Councils	Discontinue, Bailey, Keir, Ramien		
Alliance of Western Council	Mayor	Mayor	
Murray-Darling Basin Advisory	Rummery,		
Border Regional Organisations of Councils	Mayor	Mayor	
Barwon Darling Customer Advisory Group	Rummery,		

Consultation

CONSULTATION	
INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
Councillors	Committee Chairs/Executive Assistants
Executive Leadership Team	Local Government NSW

Financial and Resource Implications

Certain committees require an annual contribution. To support Councillors' participation, there are dedicated funds within the Councillors' budget to cover expenses, this includes travel, accommodation, and meals.

Legislation and Policy Implications

Local Government Act 1993

Each committee will have a Terms of Reference, an Memorandum of Understanding or a service level

agreement which are being sourced for interested Councillors.

Legal and Risk Considerations

Nil

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

G 3.1 *An accountable and representative Council*

- 3.1.3 Provide strong representation for the community at regional, state and federal levels
- 3.1.4 Undertake the civic duties of Council with the highest degree of professionalism and ethics
- 3.1.5 Councillors represent the interests of the whole of the Shire area

Alternative Options

Councillors have the option to step down from representing Council on any of the committees. However, they should consider the services these committees provide before making their decision.

Councillors may also choose to continue their membership with the Australian Airports Association and Mining Related Councils.

Conclusion

Councillors have the opportunity to nominate themselves to external committees and to consider the option of discontinuing participation in the Australian Airport Association and Mining Related Councils.

Attachments

None

ITEM 11.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Sherisse Fensom, Executive Officer
PURPOSE	For Decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council nominate two Councillors and the General Manager to attend the Local Government NSW Annual Conference, and approve the attendance of any additional interested Councillors.

Executive Summary

The 2024 Local Government NSW (LGNSW) Annual Conference will be hosted by Tamworth Regional Council from Sunday, 17 to Tuesday, 19 November 2024, at the Tamworth Regional Entertainment and Conference Centre. This conference serves as the key policy-making event for the local government sector, where issues are debated, and motions are put forward for consideration by delegates. Two Councillors have already been registered, and rooms have been booked. Additional tickets and accommodations can be arranged if there is further interest.

Background

The LGNSW Annual Conference is an essential event for the local government sector, providing an opportunity for councils across New South Wales to discuss pressing issues, share knowledge, and help shape the strategic direction of the sector. The 2024 conference will be held at the Tamworth Regional Entertainment and Conference Centre with the Draft Program attached.

Current Situation

Two tickets for attending Councillors have already been purchased, and rooms have been booked. If any other Councillors or staff are interested in attending, additional tickets can still be acquired.

Consultation

Not applicable

Financial and Resource Implications

The total cost for attending the conference includes the early bird registration fee of \$1,155 per attendee, plus accommodation fees, travel expenses, and meal allowances. Three tickets and rooms have already been purchased for the General Manager and two Councillors but additional tickets and rooms can be secured if more attendees are confirmed.

The cost can be funded within the annual travel, accommodation and meetings budget for both the Executive and Elected Members sections

Legislation and Policy Implications

This conference aligns with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993, which encourages councils to participate in policy development and networking opportunities to address sector-wide issues.

Legal and Risk Considerations

Not attending the conference may result in missed opportunities for Council to raise relevant issues, engage in discussions with other councils, and understanding policy development affecting local governments across New South Wales.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan**G 3.1 An accountable and representative Council**

3.1.3 Provide strong representation for the community at regional, state and federal levels

3.1.4 Undertake the civic duties of Council with the highest degree of professionalism and ethics

3.1.5 Councillors represent the interests of the whole of the Shire area

Alternative Options

1. Council may choose not to send additional attendees, limiting participation to the General Manager and two Councillors.
2. Council may opt not to send any delegates to the conference.

Conclusion

The LGNSW Annual Conference provides Councillors with an opportunity to gain insight into the future direction of local government policy and engage with leaders in the sector. With two Councillors already registered and accommodation arranged, it is recommended that Council consider who would like to attend and whether there are additional members who would like to participate in the event.

Attachments

None

ITEM 11.3 ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO CASTLEREAGH MACQUARIE COUNTY COUNCIL

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	
REPORT AUTHOR	Sherisse Fensom, Executive Officer
PURPOSE	Election Required

RECOMMENDATION**That Council**

1. Conduct an election of two (2) Councillors to the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council for the period from September 2024 until the next Local Government Election, currently September 2028; and

2. Note that in accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021, the General Manager is the Returning Officer for the election.

Executive Summary

Council is required to elect two councillors to be Councillors of the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council.

Background

The Castlereagh Macquarie County Council (CMCC) is a noxious weeds County Council formed in 1949. Membership includes Walgett, Coonamble, Warren, Gilgandra and Warrumbungle Shire councils. The operation of County Councils are legislated by Part 5 of the *NSW Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and *NSW Local Government Regulations 2023*. Meetings are held every second month.

The Chairperson is elected from the County Council body.

As a County Council under the Act, CMCC is required to have a governing body made up of elected representatives of its Constituent Councils. The application of the Act to CMCC is outlined in Section 400.

Ten councillors including a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson make up the governing body of Castlereagh Macquarie County Council. Each Constituent Council is represented by two councillors who are elected as representatives for a four year term.

Current Situation

Under the Local Government Act 1993, Councillors have a responsibility to:

- Participate in the determination of the budget
- Play a key role in the creation and review of Council policies, objectives and criteria relating to the regulatory functions, and
- Review Council's performance and the delivery of services management plans and revenue policies

Meetings of Castlereagh Macquarie County Council are open to the public.

Meetings for the remainder of 2024 include

28th October 2024 – Coonamble Shire Council Chambers – 80 Castlereagh Street, Coonamble

2nd December 2024 – Coonamble Shire Council Chambers – 80 Castlereagh Street, Coonamble

In accordance with the provisions of Section 390 of the Act, Council is to elect two (2) Councillors to be members of the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council from September 2024 to September 2028 with such election to be conducted in accordance with Schedule 9 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (Regulation)*.

If the number of candidates nominated is not more than the number of vacancies to be filled (two), then

those candidates are declared elected.

If more than two (2) nominations are received then *Regulation 396* specifies the method of election of members of a county council, whereby Schedule 9 requires that "if there are more candidates nominated than the number to be elected, an election is to be determined by preferential ballot." The Regulations as currently drafted provide that votes for the election of members to county councils are to be in accordance with Schedule 4, namely the optional preferential system.

Schedule 9 of the Regulation states (in part):

When elections to be held

- (1) The first ordinary election of members of a county council is to be held within 2 months of its establishment.*
 - (2) Subsequent ordinary elections are to be held within 2 months after each ordinary election of Councillors under Part 4 of Chapter 10 of the Act (Local Government Act 1993).*
 - (3) A by-election to fill an office vacated by a member is to be held within 2 months after the occurrence of the vacancy.*
- 4 Returning officer*
The General Manager of the constituent council (or a person appointed by that general manager) is the returning officer.

5 Nomination

- (1) A Councillor of the constituent council may be nominated for election as a member of the county council.*
- (2) The nomination:*
 - (a) may be made without notice by any Councillor of the council*
 - (b) is to be in writing delivered or sent to the returning officer prior to the council meeting at which the election is to be held*
 - (c) is not valid unless the nominee has indicated consent to the nomination in writing*
- (3) The returning officer is to announce the names of the nominees at a council meeting.*

6 Election

- (1) If the number of candidates nominated is not more than the number of vacancies to be filled, those candidates are to be declared elected.*
- (2) If there are more candidates nominated than the number to be elected, an election is to be determined by preferential ballot. The ballot is to be conducted by the preparation, marking and counting of ballot-papers in the presence of the council.*

7 Ballot-papers and voting

- (1) The ballot-papers are to contain the names of all the candidates. The Councillors are to mark their votes by placing the figures 1, 2 and so on against the various names so as to indicate the order of their preference for at least the number of candidates to be elected.*
- (2) The formality of a ballot-paper under this Part is to be determined in accordance with clause 345 of this Regulation as if it were a ballot-paper referred to in that clause.*
- (3) An informal ballot-paper is to be rejected at the scrutiny of votes.*

8 Count

- (1) For the election of 1 member, the votes are to be counted in accordance with Schedule 4.*
- (2) For the election of 2 or more members, the votes are to be counted and the result of the election ascertained in accordance with the following procedures--*
 - (a) one of the candidates is elected in accordance with subsection (1),*
 - (b) all the unrejected ballot-papers are rearranged under the names of the respective candidates in accordance with the first preferences marked on the ballot-papers, except that each ballot-paper on which a first preference for the elected candidate is indicated is placed in the parcel of the candidate next in the order of the voter's preference,*
 - (c) the number of ballot-papers in the parcel of each candidate is counted and the total number of votes counted for each candidate is ascertained,*
 - (d) if a candidate then has an absolute majority of votes, the candidate is elected,*
 - (e) if a candidate does not have an absolute majority of votes, the count proceeds according to Schedule 4, section 3(d), (e) and (f), until 1 candidate has received an absolute majority of votes,*
 - (f) Schedule 4, section 3(d) and (e) are to be read for this section as if a reference in those paragraphs to first preference votes were a reference to all the votes counted to a candidate under this subsection,*
 - (g) the candidate who has received an absolute majority of votes is elected.*
- (3) If more than 2 candidates are to be elected, the votes are to be counted in accordance with the procedures under subsection (2) until the result of the election of additional candidates is ascertained.*
- (4) In the process of counting under subsection (1) or (2), exhausted ballot-papers are set aside as finally dealt with*

and are not taken into account in the election of a candidate.

9 Result

The result of the election (including the names of the candidates elected as members) is:

- (a) to be declared to the Councillors by the returning officer at the council meeting where the election is held
- (b) to be delivered or sent to the general manager of the county council and the Secretary.

Consultation

Not applicable

Financial and Resource Implications

The annual Constituent Council contribution for 2024/25 is \$123,371. Additional costs for travel, meals, and accommodation to attend meetings are budgeted under Councillor expenditures.

Legislation and Policy Implications

[Biosecurity Act 2015](#)

[Local Government Act 1993](#)

[Local Government \(General\) Regulation 2021](#)

Legal and Risk Considerations

Council operates under the regulations of the Local Government Act and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

G 3.1 An accountable and representative Council

- 3.1.3 Provide strong representation for the community at regional, state and federal levels
- 3.1.4 Undertake the civic duties of Council with the highest degree of professionalism and ethics

Alternative Options

Not applicable

Conclusion

Council must elect two representatives to serve as Councillors on the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council. If more than two candidates express interest, an election process will be conducted.

Attachments

None

ITEM 11.4 CLOSEDOWN OF COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION OFFICES OVER THE 2024/2025 FESTIVE SEASON

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Sherisse Fensom, Executive Officer
PURPOSE	For decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the closure of the office building and non-essential services from midday on 23rd December 2024, with services resuming on 2nd January 2025

Executive Summary

This report seeks Council approval for the closure of the office building and non-essential services from midday on 23rd December 2024, with operations resuming on 2nd January 2025. The closure period spans 10 days, including public holidays, weekends, and working days, during which staff will be required to use accumulated flex time and/or accrued annual leave.

Background

In recent years, Council has implemented a shutdown period over the Christmas and New Year period, allowing staff to take time off while maintaining essential services. This proposal follows a similar structure, with the office closure starting midday on 23rd December 2024 and reopening for business as usual on 2nd January 2025.

Current Situation

The proposed closure period spans from midday 23rd December 2024 to 2nd January 2025, inclusive of weekends and public holidays. This equates to **10 days** in total, covering:

- 23rd December 2024 (from midday)
- 24th December 2024 (full day)
- 25th December 2024 (Public Holiday – Christmas Day)
- 26th December 2024 (Public Holiday – Boxing Day)
- 27th to 29th December 2024 (weekend days)
- 30th and 31st December 2024 (working days)
- 1st January 2025 (Public Holiday – New Year's Day)

During this period, staff will be required to utilise accumulated flex time and/or balance their accrued annual leave. Council's essential services, such as garbage collection and water/sewer services, will continue to operate with emergency staff on call to ensure uninterrupted service in critical areas.

Consultation

The management team has reviewed the impact on services and staffing to ensure essential services remain unaffected during the shutdown.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no significant financial implications, as the proposal will not increase operational costs. Essential services will continue to be delivered through rostering and on-call arrangements, and non-essential staff will be using their accrued leave or flex time during the closure.

Legislation and Policy Implications

Local Government (State) Award 2023
Public Holidays Act 2010
Walgett Shire Council's Time-in-Lieu Policy

Legal and Risk Considerations

There are minimal risks associated with the office closure, as essential services will continue to be provided. A roster for on-call staff will be in place to ensure any emergencies are promptly addressed. The shutdown period will provide staff with an opportunity to recharge, reducing the risk of fatigue-related incidents.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

The Community Strategic Plan has no specific goals linked to this proposal.

Alternative Options

Council could opt to remain open during this period, however, there will be significant staff shortages due to leave and also interruptions of the work week due to the public holidays.

Council could also opt to reduce or extend the shut down period.

Conclusion

The proposed closure from midday 23rd December 2024 to 2nd January 2025 is a practical approach to balancing operational requirements and staff wellbeing during the holiday period. Essential services will still be available, and non-essential staff will utilise accrued flex time or annual leave. It is recommended that Council approve the office closure for this period.

Attachments

None

ITEM 11.5 REVIEW OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING DATES AND TIMES 2024/2025

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Brown, Special Projects (Governance, Risk and HR)
PURPOSE	For decision

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council set the dates, times, and locations for its Ordinary Council Meetings from November 2024 to September 2025 as outlined below:

- a. **Tuesday, 26 November 2024 at 10:00 am, Lightning Ridge Council Office**
- b. **Tuesday, 17 December 2024 at 10:00 am, Walgett Shire Council Chamber**
- c. **Tuesday, 25 February 2025 at 10:00 am, Lightning Ridge Council Office**
- d. **Tuesday, 25 March 2025 at 10:00 am, Walgett Shire Council Chamber**
- e. **Tuesday, 22 April 2025 at 10:00 am, Walgett Shire Council Chamber**
- f. **Tuesday, 27 May 2025 at 10:00 am, Lightning Ridge Council Office**
- g. **Tuesday, 24 June 2025 at 10:00 am, Walgett Shire Council Chamber**
- h. **Tuesday, 22 July 2025 at 11:00 am, Carinda Community Hall**
- i. **Tuesday, 26 August 2025 at 10:00 am, Walgett Shire Council Chamber**
- j. **Tuesday, 23 September 2025 at 10:00 am, Lightning Ridge Council Office**

Executive Summary

This report outlines the requirements and considerations for setting the schedule of Ordinary Council Meetings for the coming year.

Recent technological advancements, including video recording and improved connectivity, offer Council the flexibility to once again consider holding meetings in locations across the Shire.

This report recommends that Council consider adopting a schedule that includes quarterly meetings in Lightning Ridge and at least one meeting annually in a village location. This approach fosters community engagement and allows Council to be more accessible to residents throughout the Shire.

Background

In accordance with section 365 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) (the Act), Councils are required to hold a minimum of ten Ordinary Council Meetings each calendar year. Traditionally, Councils will usually set their meeting schedule annually, running from September to September to align with the normal election periods.

Walgett Shire Council has customarily held its meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month, with exceptions during the December holiday season and no scheduled meeting in January.

Clause 3.1 of the Council's *Code of Meeting Practice* specifies that Ordinary Meetings should be held on the fourth Tuesday of each month (excluding January and December) at 11:00 am in the Walgett Shire Council Chamber, unless otherwise resolved by Council. Despite this, meetings have usually commenced at 9:00 am.

Historically, Council meetings were conducted in various locations throughout the Shire, which allowed greater accessibility and engagement with local communities. This practice changed with the increased need for audio and video recording, centralising meetings at the Walgett Shire Council Chamber. However, advancements in technology and connectivity now make it feasible for Council to consider rotating meeting locations once more, bringing Council closer to different communities within the Shire.

Current Situation

The newly elected Council has the flexibility to establish a meeting schedule that meets its governance requirements and addresses community engagement objectives. With recent improvements in technology, including enhanced video recording capabilities, Council is now able to decentralise some of its meetings. As such, it is proposed that four meetings annually be held in Lightning Ridge, a key population centre within the Shire, to increase Council's visibility and accessibility. Additionally, it is recommended that at least one meeting per year be held in a village within the Shire, allowing Council to engage directly with residents in these smaller communities.

These changes would enable Council to balance the need for consistent and accessible governance with opportunities to foster local engagement and address issues specific to different areas within the Shire.

Consultation

Internal consultation with Councillors, the Executive Leadership Team and other relevant staff members.

Financial and Resource Implications

Should Council adopt the current practice of holding meetings within normal business hours, there would be no additional costs to the Council. Should Council amend meeting times to outside normal business hours, there will be a resulting financial implication for staffing costs.

Legislation and Policy Implications

The Council is required to meet at least 10 times each year in accordance with s 365 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) (the Act).

Legal and Risk Considerations

Council is legally obligated under Section 365 of the Act to hold a minimum of ten Ordinary Council Meetings per year. Failure to comply with this requirement could expose Council to legal and reputational risks or raise questions regarding transparency and governance.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan***G 3.2 Implement governance and financial management process that support the effective administration of Council***

3.2.1 Develop processes that ensure that legislative and financial standards are actioned in a timely manner

Alternative Options

Council may choose to adopt a different meeting schedule if desired. While the recommendation is to continue the current practice of holding meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month, Council has the flexibility to select alternate dates or times, provided the minimum requirement of ten meetings per year, each in a different month, is met.

Conclusion

Setting an annual schedule for Ordinary Council Meetings ensures that Council meets its legal obligations under the Act while providing a structured approach to governance.

It is recommended that Council adopt the current schedule with allowances for flexibility during holiday periods. By doing so, Council continues to foster an accessible, transparent, and legally compliant meeting structure that supports effective governance and community engagement.

Attachments

None

ITEM 11.6 COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE SCHEME 2024/2025 ROUND 1

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Sherisse Fensom, Executive Officer
PURPOSE	For noting

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the following recipients of the 2024/2025 Community Assistance Grant Round 1:

Lightning Ridge Community Inc. (Opal FM)	\$2,400
Walgett Amateur Swimming Club	\$1,000
Collarenebri Jockey Club	\$3,000
Burren Junction Progress Committee	\$3,000
Country Women’s Association Goodooga/Lightning Ridge	\$1,000
Lightning Ridge Football Club	\$1,000
Lightning Ridge Community Church	\$3,000
Cumborah Recreational Reserve	\$800
Walgett Pony Club	\$1,000
Carinda Let’s Dance	\$3,000
Carinda Jockey Club	\$3,000

Executive Summary

The aim of the Community Assistance Scheme is to enhance the capacity of the Shire's community groups and organisations, supporting their efforts to address identified community issues and priorities. The grants program offers limited financial assistance for the development of programs, projects, and activities.

Round 1 of the 2024/2025 applications opened later than usual due to staff availability during this period to oversee the scheme. The application period ran throughout July, with submissions closing on August 5, 2024.

A report was prepared for presentation to Councillors at the meeting on August 27, 2024. However, as this fell during the caretaker period and several Councillors were standing for re-election, to maintain the integrity of the decision-making process, under the delegated authority the General Manager reviewed the applications and allocated funds on the 29 August 2024.

Background

Applications for Round 1 of the 2024/2025 funding were invited from community organisations for financial assistance under the Community Assistance Scheme. The scheme was advertised Shire wide, with applications closing on 5th August 2024.

Applicants must be incorporated entities and/or registered not-for-profit organisations and based in, or affiliated with the Walgett Shire. The maximum amount per project is \$3,000 and is limited to one donation per organisation per year.

The Community Assistance Scheme objectives are to:

- Support charities and community projects, events and activities which occur within the Walgett Shire area, and are a benefit to the community;
- Foster or support new services, initiatives and resources within the Shire;
- Improve awareness and use of community services and resources within the Shire;
- Encourage increased participation in local community events within the Shire.

Council reserves the right to part fund applications or deny funding if previous grants have not been used and/or acquitted within the parameters of the scheme funding or the application does not align with the scheme objectives.

Current Situation

An allocation of \$30,000 has been made in the 2024/2025 budget to fund eligible donation applications under Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993. Based on current applications, the projected expenditure is \$19,700. This list includes many of the organisations that typically apply for funding during the financial year, so the expectation is that there will be less applications during round 2. Additional costs have arisen due to the Collarenebri Jockey Club needing to cover the expense of hiring the bar while the grandstand is out of use, as well as to assist with furnishing the renovated Jockey Room. Some organisations were able to use alternative funding, such as the Reconnecting Regional Grant in previous years, and have not needed to rely on Community Assistance for their events.

In round one, nine community organisations submitted applications for funding.

Community Assistance Scheme 2024/2025 – Round 1 Applications Summary					
Organisation	Project	Total Project Cost	Amount Requested	Granted	Funding 23/24
Lightning Ridge Community Inc.	Opal FM Radio Costs	-	\$2,400	\$,2400	Yes
Walgett Amateur Swimming Club	Purchase of swimming equipment	\$4,525	\$3,000	\$1,500	Yes
Collarenebri Jockey Club	Hire of bar facilities	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	Yes
Burren Junction Progress Committee	Enhancement Burren Junction Hall – Create accessibility at back door and items for Museum.	-	\$2,997	\$3,000	Yes
CWA Goodooga/Lightning Ridge	Pink Breakfast	\$3,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	Yes
Lightning Ridge Junior Football Club	Hire of Sports Grounds, Canteen and linemarking	-	\$3,000	\$1,000	No
Lightning Ridge Community Church	Fireworks Display for Community Christmas Carols	\$5,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	No
Cumborah Recreational Reserve	Fundraiser Sports Day	\$800.00	\$800.00	\$800.00	No
Walgett Pony Club	Professional Coaches, showground hire	\$7,100	\$3,000	\$1,000	No due to error
Carinda Lets Dance	Music Festival – this will cover the cost of a band for the event.	\$5,000 (total cost for the band)	\$3,000	\$3,000	Yes
Carinda Jockey Club	Catering equipment for the race club shed	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	No

Consultation

Consultation with each committee.

Financial and Resource Implications

2024/2025 budget allocation of \$30,000 for the 356 Community Assistance Scheme.

Legislation and Policy Implications

Section 356 of the Local Government Act:

Can a council financially assist others?

(1) A council may, in accordance with a resolution of the council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions.

Legal and Risk Considerations

Nil

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

C1.1 - Develop a connected, informed, resilient and inviting community

1.1.1 Support and initiate a range of local activities and projects that build community connections for all age sectors

1.1.5 Support, encourage and celebrate community participation and volunteerism

1.1.6 Work with other agencies and service providers to deliver community programmes, services and facilities which complement and enhance Council's service provision and quality of life

C1.2 - A safe, active and healthy Shire

1.2.1 Partner with health agencies and community organisations in promoting healthy lifestyles and better health outcomes

Alternative Options

Nil

Conclusion

Council notes the applications approved during the caretaker period.

Attachments

None

ITEM 11.7 COUNCIL PROJECTS UPDATE OCTOBER 2024

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Sherisse Fensom, Executive Officer
PURPOSE	The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with an update on the status and progress of key projects currently underway.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the October 2024 projects update.

Executive Summary

This report provides Council with an update on the current list of ongoing projects funded by both State and Federal governments. The projects outlined in this report reflect key initiatives that are currently underway or in planning; however, it is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list of all projects.

Background

Over the past few years, the Council has faced numerous challenges that have significantly impacted its operations and project delivery. Key issues have included high staff turnover, COVID-19, and multiple natural disasters, including flooding. These challenges have caused delays in project timelines.

Furthermore, the post-COVID environment has seen a marked increase in costs across various sectors, which has rendered many original project scopes and budgets unfeasible. This has forced the reassessment of certain projects, with some unable to proceed as initially planned due to the financial constraints.

Current Situation**Extension and refurbishment of Collarenebri Showground**

Funding: Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 4

Status: Works Completed, Acquittal in progress

The original scope of this project was to construct an extension for a female dressing room to ensure the Jockey Club's compliance with Racing NSW standards. However, after further investigation and budgetary considerations, it was determined that modifying the existing building layout would be a more cost-effective solution.

With the contractors' expertise and in consultation with the Collarenebri Jockey Club, the decision was made to create a second room within the current structure. This modification included the installation of a new toilet and shower room, as well as electrical and plumbing upgrades. Additionally, ceiling fans were installed, old flooring was removed and replaced, and necessary alterations to the walls were made, along with painting to complete the improvements.

The total expenditure for this project is yet to be finalised, as there are still outstanding invoices and project management fees to be settled.

Fencing of Collarenebri Sports Field

Funding: Stronger Country Communities Fund Round 5 Application

Status: Works Completed, Acquittal in progress

This project involved the installation of a new white picket fence around the Collarenebri Sporting Field. Due to an underspend, a variation was made to include additional enhancements such as tiered seating and electrical upgrades. These electrical improvements included the installation of a timer system for the field lights, allowing football clubs and other users to operate the lights for two-hour intervals.

The total expenditure for this project is yet to be finalised, as there are still outstanding invoices and project management fees to be settled.

Cumborah Cemetery Columbarium

Funding: Revenue

Status: In progress

This project has experienced significant delays due to internal staff turnover, as well as compliance and legislative requirements. External project managers with experience in similar projects for other councils have been engaged to assist in delivery.

Preliminary indications suggest that the \$15,000 allocated by Council may not be sufficient to complete the project within budget, excluding project management fees. A further report will be submitted to Council once the quotes have been received.

Rowena Hall Refurbishment

Funding: LRCI 3

Status: Complete

The Local Roads and Community Infrastructure (LRCI) Round 3 project allocations were required to be completed by the end of the 2023 financial year. Due to issues identified by building surveyors, the refurbishment of Rowena Hall could not be completed on time. The hall's piers need to be rectified, which will require a revised cost estimate and additional funding, as this was not covered within the funding round.

To ensure the allocated funds were not returned, we sought a variation to use the funding for fencing the hall, which was also a concern raised by local residents. The fencing project has been completed and the hall will be revisited to scope costs on repairs to the structure.



Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program Phase 4 – Approved Work Schedule

Council has recently secured approval for several projects under the LRCI Phase 4 round. Due to a change in staffing and the urgency of meeting the submission deadline, decisions on which projects could be delivered were made based on community expectations and the need to address some already funded but undelivered or underbudgeted projects.

Carinda Community Fencing

This project was initially part of LRCI Phase 3, with a budget allocation of \$40,000. Through discussions with community members, it was identified that their preference was not for a white picket fence but for an exclusion fence to prevent kangaroos from entering the grounds, as their droppings were becoming an issue. The scope of the project is to fence 800m.

Shade Sail - Walgett Splash Park

This project was recognised as a significant community need following multiple public concerns regarding the insufficient shade in the area. With children spending extended hours at the splash park during the hot summer months, the lack of shaded spaces posed safety and comfort issues. Additionally, the community expressed concern for the wellbeing of lifeguards, who were required to stand for prolonged periods under direct sunlight.

Connecting Collarenebri

This project involves the construction of a 467-meter concrete footpath and 600 meters of gravel walkways to connect the Collarenebri Sporting Fields and Primitive Camping areas with the Collarenebri township. The new footpath will provide a safe, secure, and accessible route for residents to walk or bike to the sporting fields, and for campers to easily access local shops and the newly developed bore baths. There was previously \$50,000 in funding for this project through Transport NSW which was inadequate.

Collarenebri Sports Ground – Traffic Safety

This project is closely aligned with the Collarenebri Primitive Camping Ground project, which lacked sufficient funding. With tourism in Collarenebri already increasing and further growth anticipated in the next season, this project will ensure that the camping grounds are safe and able to accommodate the rising number of visitors effectively.

Lightning Ridge Traffic and Pedestrian Safety

This project was identified through feedback from visitors and staff, as well as being raised by Councillors during an informal discussion. With increasing tourism to the region, the need to improve and repair the car parking areas around the Lightning Ridge Visitor Information Centre has become a priority. The car park serves not only tourists but also community markets and local residents, particularly older individuals using walking aids. Sealing the surface will enhance both safety and usability for vehicles and pedestrians, ensuring this high-traffic area meets the needs of the community and visitors alike.

Improved Access – Lightning Ridge Indigenous (Gem) Gardens

This project will involve the construction of gravel pathways to enhance accessibility. Developed by Council in collaboration with Aboriginal stakeholders, the Lightning Ridge Indigenous Gardens will benefit from this funding, which will provide the community with defined paths for easier navigation through the space. These pathways will also improve access for individuals using walking aids, ensuring a more inclusive and accessible environment for all visitors.

Stage 2 – Walgett Skate Park

The project is shovel-ready, with significant community involvement in the design process. However, due to limited funding, Council had to split the project into stages. Stage 1 has already been funded through the Stronger Country Communities program. With this additional contribution the entire skate park to be completed in one phase, which will not only reduce long-term costs but also ensure the project is delivered more efficiently with a single contractor overseeing the entire construction process.

Consultation

Consultation has been carried out with both internal and external stakeholders. Wherever possible, Council has engaged with community groups and members to ensure that projects, even if previously scoped, continue to align with community expectations and needs.

Financial and Resource Implications

Many of these projects were initiated prior to COVID-19, and as the original quotes have since expired, some have required changes in scope or additional funding. Internal staffing shortages caused delays, with many projects not being resumed until early 2024. In certain cases, external project managers have been engaged to ensure completion within the required grant funding timeframe. While this has helped maintain progress, it has also led to increased expenses in some areas.

The risks of not completing these projects, however, carry more serious implications. Failure to meet deadlines could result in funding bodies being less willing to support future applications, government agencies becoming less inclined to advocate for project delivery, and contractors who rely on Council for work seeking opportunities elsewhere, potentially causing further delays in future projects.

Legislation and Policy Implications

Each of these projects is governed by specific legislation, policies, and the terms outlined in the respective grant funding deeds. These funding deeds include strict reporting requirements and clearly defined milestones that Council must meet to ensure compliance. Failure to adhere to these obligations can lead to financial penalties, withdrawal of funding, or reputational risks for Council.

Council is also required to adhere to its internal policies regarding Work Health and Safety, procurement processes, and operational protocols and directives.

Legal and Risk Considerations

Council must ensure that all work is carried out in accordance with relevant legal standards, including Work, Health and safety regulations, building codes, and insurance requirements.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

C1.1 - Develop a connected, informed, resilient and inviting community

- 1.1.1 Support and initiate a range of local activities and projects that build community connections for all age sectors
- 1.1.2 Provide vibrant and welcoming town centres, streets and meeting places
- 1.1.3 Embellish our community with parks, paths, cycleways, facilities, and meeting places
- 1.1.4 Respect the heritage of the region and highlight and enhance our unique characteristics
- 1.1.5 Support, encourage and celebrate community participation and volunteerism
- 1.1.6 Work with other agencies and service providers to deliver community programmes, services and facilities which complement and enhance Council's service provision and quality of life.

C1.2 - A safe, active and healthy Shire

- 1.2.5 Provide, maintain and develop passive recreational facilities and parklands to encourage community greater utilisation and active participation
- 1.2.8 Provide and maintain accessible quality sport and recreation facilities that encourage community participation

E2.1 - An attractive environment for business, tourism and industry

- 2.1.5 Provision of caravan support facilities throughout the Shire

E2.2 - Employment opportunities that supports local industries

- 2.2.6 Identify partnerships and innovative funding approaches to provide for new and upgraded infrastructure for event hosting and tourism expansion

E 2.4 Communities that are well services with essential infrastructure

- 2.4.3 Provide the infrastructure to embellish public spaces and recreation areas

G 3.1 An accountable and representative Council

- 3.1.2 Engage with the community effectively and use community input to inform decision making.

Alternative Options

Not applicable

Conclusion

Council to receive and note the projects report.

Attachments

- 1. Projects Spreadsheet

PROJECT NAME	\$ SOURCE	\$ TOTAL	\$ GRANT	\$ COUNCIL	PROJECT STATUS	END DATE	NOTES
Carinda Sporting Facilities Water & Drainage	DSP-LSP	\$122,000	\$122,000	\$0	In Progress	31.12.2024	Project with new project manager
Rowena Hall Refurbishment (Fencing)	LRCI	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$0	Complete	31.6.2024	Fencing Complete
Hall Improvements - Rowena	DSP-LSP	\$96,500	\$96,500	\$0	On Hold	31.12.2024	Under review - structural damage
Enhancing Gray Park Walgett	SCCF4	\$72,822	\$72,822	\$0	In Progress	7.6.2026	BBQ & Lightning to be completed
Extension and refurbishment of Collarenebri Showground	SCCF4	\$77,168	\$77,168	\$0	Complete	7.6.2026	Acquittal in progress
Norman Tracker Walford Walkway Walgett	SCCF4	\$95,661	\$95,661	\$0	In Progress	7.6.2026	Bitumen sealing - end of October
Fencing of Collarenebri Sports Field	SCCF5	\$138,000	\$138,000	\$0	Complete	7.6.2026	Acquittal in progress
Collarenebri Main Street Beautification Project	SCCF5	\$205,000	\$205,000	\$0	In Progress	7.6.2026	In design stage
Footpath/Cycleway, Kerb & Guttering, Onyx Street Lightning	SCCF5	\$228,000	\$228,000	\$0	In Progress	7.6.2026	In design stage
Walgett Skate Park Precinct	SCCF5	\$169,000	\$169,000	\$0	In Progress	7.6.2026	DA & Tender initiating
Footpath Cycleway Pandora Street Lightning Ridge	SCCF5	\$181,322	\$181,322	\$0	In Progress	7.6.2026	In design stage with engineering
Crown Lands - Plans of Management	Grant	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0	In Progress	30.6.2024	Under review
Collarenebri New Bore Baths	MDBA	\$920,124	\$920,124	\$0	Complete	30.3.2024	Project Complete
Upgrade of Collarenebri Primitive Camping Grounds	Grant	\$274,950	\$274,950	\$0	On Hold		Expectation to start soon
Collarenebri Grandstand	MDBA	\$488,000	\$488,000	\$0	On Hold	11.9.2023	Still under legal advice
Conversion of Netball Courts to a Multi-Sport Complex	Grant	\$1,500,000	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	In Progress	30.6.2025	Requires Committee
Bin Banks	Revenue	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000	On Hold		New location required
Animal Pound	Revenue	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$0	On Hold		Rescoping
Walgett Rural Residential Strategy	Grant	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$0	On Hold		Needs to be reviewed due to costs
Flood Mitigation Works at Rowena Village	Grant	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$0	On hold		Issues with landholder and design
Waste Less Recycle More - Walgett Recycling Aggregation	Grant	\$190,300	\$137,500	\$52,800	On hold		Under review
Waste Less Recycle More - LR Landfill Consolidation	Grant	\$299,500	\$200,000	\$99,500	On hold		Under review
Waste Less Recycle More - Walgett Landfill Env. Improvements	Grant	\$172,208	\$123,920	\$48,288	On hold		Under review
Cumborah Cemetery Columbarium	Revenue	\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000	In Progress		Report to Council expected Nov.
Lightning Ridge Pipeline	Multiple	TBD	\$0	\$0	On hold		Awaiting further information
Walgett Memorial Pool Redevelopment	Grant	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$0	In Progress		Requires Committee
Carinda Community Fencing	LRCI4	\$180,500	\$180,500	\$0	In Progress	30.6.2025	Sourcing quotes
Shade Sail – Walgett Splash Park	LRCI4	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$0	In Progress	30.6.2025	Works to being end of October
Connecting Collarenebri	LRCI4	\$382,000	\$382,000	\$0	In Progress	30.6.2025	Preparing RFT documents
Collarenebri Sports Ground – Traffic Safety	LRCI4	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$0	In Progress	30.6.2025	Sourcing quotes
Lightning Ridge Traffic and Pedestrian Safety	LRCI4	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0	In Progress	30.6.2025	To be done in tourism off season
Improved access – Lightning Ridge Indigenous Gardens	LRCI4	\$50,915	\$50,915	\$0	In Progress	30.6.2025	Sourcing quotes
Stage 2 Walgett Skate Park	LRCI4	\$516,200	\$347,200	\$0	In Progress	30.6.2025	Design & stage 1 funding SCCF

ITEM 11.8 MATTERS OF BRIEF MENTION - PEOPLE, PLACE AND LIVEABILITY

DIRECTORATE	People Place and Liveability
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Carisa Wells, Director People Place & Liveability
PURPOSE	For noting

RECOMMENDATION

That the information contained within the report be noted.

Executive Summary

The Directorate of People, Place and Liveability (DPPL) is tasked with the management of customer service, community development, economic development, visitor economy, property and public spaces, pools, bore baths, libraries, cemeteries and aerodromes.

Background

This report is an overview of some of the key projects the team is currently focused on

Current Situation

Community Pool Update

The table below outlines the proposed opening dates and times for the community pools.

Pool	Opening Status	Opening Hours
Walgett (Manned)	Friday 18 October 2024	6-8am & 3-6pm Weekends 12-6pm
Collarenebri (Manned)	Expected opening date: Friday 25 October.	3-6pm Weekends 12-6pm
Carinda (Unmanned)	Friday 18 October 2024	Community entry
Burren Junction (Unmanned)	Friday 18 October 2024	Community entry

Current Grant Funding Applications

We are actively pursuing grant opportunities in the following streams to further enhance our programs and services.

Housing NSW	Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund
Closes	22 November
Funding being sought	To be confirmed – funding between \$20,000 to \$250,000
Co-contributions required	\$0
Scope/outline	This application is targeted to create: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a housing strategy for the whole shire • affordable housing strategy for whole of shire • place based housing masterplan • LEP amendments • Infrastructure planning for housing
Stakeholders	Planning department WSC, Homes North, Essential service providers.

More information:

www.planning.nsw.gov.au/policy-and-legislation/housing/regional-housing/regional-housing-strategic-planning-fund/round-3

Fed Dept of Infrastructure	Regional Precincts Partnership Program (rPPP)
Closes	Remain open until June 2025
Funding being sought	To be confirmed – funding from \$500,000 to \$5million
Co-contributions required	\$0

Scope/outline	<p>Stream One – is targeted at planning. The project scope is to fund a masterplan for the LGA which may include, but is not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character of the individual town and villages • Streetscape and main street beautification • Signage – directional, interpretive and place making • Plantings, including irrigation infrastructure • Traffic and pedestrian flows • Visitor zones – accommodation and activities • Infrastructure projects such as museums, cultural centres and community hubs 	
Stakeholders	Community groups, Aboriginal associations/councils, state government, visitor economy associations	
<p>More information: https://business.gov.au/grants-and-programs/regional-precincts-and-partnerships-program-precinct-delivery</p>		

Consultation

The team is consulting across all major stakeholders through the decision-making process.

Financial and Resource Implications

Funding for the pool operations has been provided for in the 2024/25 Budget.

Both grants being prepared, do not require co-contributions. If successful they will result in additional income for Council.

Legislation and Policy Implications

Nil

Legal and Risk Considerations

Nil

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

C1.1 - Develop a connected, informed, resilient and inviting community

1.1.6 Work with other agencies and service providers to deliver community programmes, services and facilities which complement and enhance Council’s service provision and quality of life

C1.2 - A safe, active and healthy Shire

1.2.1 Partner with health agencies and community organisations in promoting healthy lifestyles and better health outcomes

1.2.2 Support agencies and local organisations to address the availability of emergency services, affordable housing, disability and aged services and employment for people with disabilities

1.2.4 Provide, maintain and develop childrens’ play and recreational facilities that encourage active participation

1.2.5 Provide, maintain and develop passive recreational facilities and parklands to encourage community greater utilisation and active participation

1.2.8 Provide and maintain accessible quality sport and recreation facilities that encourage community participation

Alternative Options

Nil

Conclusion

The DPPL team are constantly on the look out for grant and funding opportunities to align with planning and project development to meet community needs and expectations.

DPPL being a newly formed directorate is quickly finding its focus, targeting key funding opportunities to drive community and economic development.

Attachments

None

ITEM 11.9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND VISITOR ECONOMY

DIRECTORATE	People Place and Liveability
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Anthony Doyle, Manager Economic Development and Visitor Economy
PURPOSE	To update Council on the Economic Development Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the report.

Executive Summary

The development of an Economic Develop Strategy is a community lead reference point to provide a pathway for the growth and development of the economy of Walgett Shire Council (WSC)

The four-month project will bring together research, analysis and consultation to show a shared community and strategic vision leading to a pathway for infrastructure, skills and initiatives which systematically grow a sustainable economy. The outcome of this project seeks to raise quality of life by expanding not only the economy, but retention of value circulating in local communities.

Background

The research phase of the Economic Development Strategy commenced in August of 2024.

The research phase of the strategy development has been timed to coincide with the development of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) to reach a cohesive and aligned strategy which adequately considers local social and cultural perspectives along with a community driven understanding of capacity and capability.

Anecdotal and desktop research along with benchmarking and audit processes have been undertaken to enable analysis of operations and systems specific to council operations and the greater economic ecosystem of the whole of shire and of individual communities with-in the shire.

Current Situation

Development of the Economic Development strategy is continuing with a focus on market research, data compilation and developing priorities resulting from desktop research and anecdotal consultation for comparison with CSP consultation.

The third stage of consultation continues with expected completion in late October.

Early indicators from research and anecdotal consultation are defining community priorities focused on housing, skilled worker needs and leveraging traffic flow to Lightning Ridge as a means of creating economic growth by creating demand for longer stays both in Lightning Ridge and across the whole of shire.

Consultation

Consultation for the Economic Development Strategy is being undertaken in 4 specific consecutive stages.

1. Informal anecdotal consultation or community listening serves to provide a high level of understanding of local context and knowledge at an individual community level, to ensure the strategy fairly considers the priorities and vision and concerns of locals and is undertaken in a manner which is driven and grows from local inspiration and knowledge.
2. CSP Consultation forms the foundational consultation for the strategy and determines the foundation of community priorities and vision.

3. Anecdotal community Consultation gathers conversational information with community stakeholders, industry and business leaders with WSC communities to undertake SWOT and PESTAL analysis of individual communities and the shire as a whole and to capture Economic insights and visions for communities and the whole of shire.
4. Council and Economic Development Advisory Committee consultation will be undertaken following the presentation of the strategy in December as a review and advisory process to ensure alignment of the strategy with councils' priorities.

Financial and Resource Implications

The Economic Development Strategic Plan development has no financial implication on budget.

Legislation and Policy Implications

The Economic Development Strategy is being developed with-in the parameters of current Policy and Legislation.

Legal and Risk Considerations

The Economic Development Strategy is an advisory document which bears no apparent Legal, Risk or elements of consideration until enacted into operational plans.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

The Economic Development Strategy has been timed to ensure alignment with the priorities and actions of Community Strategic Plan and acts as a complimentary strategy for longer term aspirations to build the Walgett Shire Economy.

E2.1 - An attractive environment for business, tourism and industry

E2.2 - Employment opportunities that supports local industries

E2.3 - An efficient network of arterial roads and supporting infrastructure; town streets and footpaths that are adequate a maintained

E 2.4 Communities that are well services with essential infrastructure

Alternative Options

Not Applicable

Conclusion

A planned program of research, consultation and market research will continue through October and November to present to Council in December 2024, in readiness for consultation with Council.

Attachments

None

ITEM 11.10 PAYMENT OF ALLOWANCE FOR DEPUTY MAYOR WHEN ACTING AS MAYOR

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Brown, Special Projects (Governance, Risk and HR)
PURPOSE	For decision

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council, in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW), resolves to compensate the Deputy Mayor with a daily fee, as outlined in this report, for each day they fulfil the role of Mayor; or
 2. That Council, in accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW), resolves to compensate the Deputy Mayor with a fee calculated at X% of the Mayoral fee, reflecting the period in which they are required to act as Mayor.
-

Executive Summary

In accordance with Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) (the Act), Council may pay the mayoral fee to the Deputy Mayor for periods in which they act as Mayor.

This report presents two payment options to ensure compliance: a daily rate based on actual days served or a conservative fixed percentage for time served as Mayor. These options align with legislative requirements and enable the Council to provide a fair and transparent allowance to the Deputy Mayor.

Background

Section 249 of the Act stipulates that payment to the Deputy Mayor above the standard councillor fee can only be made for the period the Deputy Mayor is required to act as the Mayor, with the amount reflecting the actual time served. Previously, Walgett Shire Council allocated a percentage of the mayoral fee to the Deputy Mayor for their general role, which is not permissible. This report provides two compliant alternatives: a daily rate for each day the Deputy Mayor acts as Mayor or a fixed, conservative percentage for periods of service supported by records.

Current Situation

Walgett Shire Council must revise its current payment structure to ensure compliance with the Act. Two alternative approaches are outlined:

1. **Daily Rate:** Calculated by dividing the annual mayoral fee by 365, this rate provides payment for each day, full or part, in which the Deputy Mayor fulfils the Mayor's role. Payment for any full or part day is set at the full-day rate, recognising travel time, prior preparation, and any applicable reporting time. This approach aligns payment precisely with service time while accommodating the demands associated with each day of mayoral duties and helps avoid the risk of overpayment.
2. **Fixed Percentage:** A conservative, predetermined percentage of the mayoral fee would be allocated for the Deputy Mayor's periods as Mayor. The Deputy Mayor would maintain a record of their service to confirm time spent acting in the role, ensuring payment does not exceed actual time served.

The General Manager will implement a process for each option, including documentation and adjustments to the Mayor's payment.

Consultation

Council has sought advice from the Office of Local Government who has confirmed the interpretation of the relevant section of the Act is as outlined in this report.

Financial and Resource Implications

Both options support Council's financial management objectives and comply with legislative standards. The daily rate provides precise, time-based payment, while the fixed percentage option if conservatively set, allows for ease of calculation but requires diligent tracking.

Legislation and Policy Implications

Section 249 of the Act requires that any allowance paid to the Deputy Mayor reflect the actual time spent performing mayoral duties. By adopting the daily rate or the fixed percentage, Council ensures compliance while accommodating the Deputy Mayor's role when needed.

Legal and Risk Considerations

Choosing a fixed percentage without tracking the Deputy Mayor's time could risk non-compliance. Adopting a conservative percentage with accurate records helps to mitigate this risk but does not remove it entirely. Alternatively, the daily rate offers direct alignment with service days, eliminating the potential for overpayment.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan***G 3.2 Implement governance and financial management process that support the effective administration of Council***

3.2.1 Develop processes that ensure that legislative and financial standards are actioned in a timely manner

Alternative Options

Council may choose not to pay the Deputy Mayor a fee except when the Mayor takes an official leave of absence, in which case the Deputy Mayor will be paid the Mayoral fee in accordance with the Act.

Conclusion

Council has two compliant options for addressing payments to the Deputy Mayor for acting as Mayor: a daily rate or a conservative fixed percentage with tracking. Both approaches comply with the Act while ensuring fair compensation for the Deputy Mayor's duties. It is recommended that the Council select their preferred option and authorise the General Manager to implement the necessary approval and record-keeping processes.

Attachments

None

ITEM 11.11 ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES POLICY REPORT

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Brown, Special Projects (Governance, Risk and HR)
PURPOSE	For Decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council place the Advisory Committees and Working Parties Policy on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, inviting submissions from the public, after which time the Policy shall be reported back to Council for adoption with a summary of submissions received.

Executive Summary

This report presents a new Advisory Committees and Working Parties Policy for Walgett Shire Council, developed in response to a recognised need among Councillors for enhanced communication channels and support in fulfilling their governance roles.

This policy outlines the purpose, establishment, and operational principles of advisory committees and working parties. The policy aims to foster community engagement and ensure alignment with the Council's governance goals. The report recommended for a 28-day public exhibition period to gather community and stakeholder feedback before final adoption.

Background

Walgett Shire Council has identified advisory committees and working parties as critical tools for informed decision-making and community engagement. These committees and working parties allow Councillors to better understand local needs, foster community involvement, and support Council in achieving objectives under the Community Strategic Plan.

The draft policy has been established to provide a structured framework outlining the purpose, function, and operating principles for advisory committees and working parties.

Current Situation

The Advisory Committees and Working Parties Policy sets clear guidelines for establishing and managing these bodies within Council. The policy specifies that such committees are not decision-making bodies but serve in an advisory capacity to provide insights and recommendations. This document outlines membership criteria, roles, reporting requirements, and governance expectations. By establishing a consistent approach, the policy enhances accountability, supports efficient resource use, and promotes effective engagement with the community.

The policy, now in draft form, has been structured to ensure that it aligns with Council's governance requirements and community expectations. Placing the draft on public exhibition will allow further input from the community and other stakeholders.

Consultation

It is recommended that the draft policy be placed on public exhibition for 28 days. During this period, Council will seek feedback from the community, and interested parties, allowing Council to incorporate relevant insights before final adoption.

If this policy is adopted, Terms of Reference for proposed Advisory Committees and Working Parties will be presented to Council for review and adoption.

Financial and Resource Implications

Nil

Legislation and Policy Implications

The policy aligns with Council's roles and responsibilities under the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) and is designed to support the Council's commitment to transparency, accountability, and community

engagement. Once adopted, it will provide a consistent framework for advisory committee and working party operations, supporting the Council's effective governance.

Legal and Risk Considerations

Adopting this policy ensures that Council meets its obligations under the Act by promoting structured community engagement and upholding governance principles.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

G 3.2 Implement governance and financial management process that support the effective administration of Council

3.2.1 Develop processes that ensure that legislative and financial standards are actioned in a timely manner

Alternative Options

Council may choose to forgo the public exhibition period and adopt the policy immediately. However, bypassing community consultation could lead to criticisms regarding transparency and might diminish public trust. Alternatively, Council could pursue a different policy approach. However, this option may delay the policy adoption and result in missed opportunities for enhanced governance and community collaboration.

Conclusion

The Advisory Committees and Working Parties Policy provides a comprehensive framework that supports governance and community engagement objectives.

Placing the policy on public exhibition for 28 days will allow Council to gather valuable feedback, ensuring that the final policy aligns with Council's governance objectives and community expectations.

Attachments

1. Draft - Advisory Committees and Working Parties Policy



ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES POLICY

Document Owner: Council
Responsible Department: Executive Services
Responsible Section: Governance and Risk
Responsible Officer: Manager Governance and Integrity
Effective Date:

Policy Statement

The Advisory Committees and Working Parties Policy (the Policy) provides a framework for establishing and operating advisory committees and working parties within Walgett Shire Council (Council).

The core role of these bodies is to provide advice to the governing body and the General Manager, contributing to the informed decision-making processes of Council. While not decision-making bodies themselves, they offer valuable insights and recommendations on strategic matters. Furthermore, where deemed appropriate by Council, these committees and working parties serve as a platform for community members to have input into Council's decisions and directions.

The Policy aims to support good governance and informed council decision-making by promoting clarity and consistency in operations and expectations associated with Council committees. It also aims to enhance service delivery, the economic and efficient use of public money, and public confidence in the Council.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Advisory Committee	A formally established body by the Council to provide non-binding strategic advice and recommendations on specific matters or issues. Advisory Committees may be composed of Councillors, staff, representatives from other agencies and/or community members.
Working Party	A formally established body by the Council or by an Advisory Committee to provide non-binding strategic advice and recommendations on specific matters or issues. Working Partys may be composed of Councillors, staff, representatives from other agencies and community members and may either report to Council or to the Advisory Committee who established the Working Party.
Community Member	A person appointed by the Council to serve on an Advisory Committee or Working Party. Community members must either reside within or demonstrate a strong connection to the Walgett Shire Local Government Area. These individuals are selected based on their ability to contribute

	valuable insights, local knowledge, or expertise relevant to the objectives of the Committee or Working Party.
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1. Policy

- 1.1. The Council may establish advisory committees or working parties through a resolution to enhance decision-making processes and engagement in achieving objectives under the Community Strategic Plan.
- 1.2. Such committees contribute to objectives by providing information and advice that the Council may rely on in its decision-making processes and complement the broader skills and knowledge available to the Council.
- 1.3. Advisory Committees and Working Parties are not decision-making bodies, and the decisions or recommendations made during meetings of Advisory Committees and Working Parties are not binding on the Council, the General Manager or any other member of staff, until resolved to be so by the Council.
- 1.4. Council will establish and approve individual Terms of Reference for each committee or working party to guide their operation and support effective engagement underpinned by strong governance.
- 1.5. Such Terms of Reference shall:
 - a. Including a clear purpose and function;
 - b. The makeup and term of committee membership, including how committee members are to be recruited;
 - c. Outline who is the chair of the committee or working party, or where such role is elected by the membership of the committee or working party, the limitations placed on who may be elected chair and the process and frequency in which such election takes place; and
 - d. explain how the committee or working party contributes to a key focus area and identify the relevant objective under the Community Strategic Plan.
- 1.6. This policy does not apply to the following committees:
 - a. Committees of the whole, governed by the Code of Meeting Practice
 - b. Statutory and other committees whose membership is determined by legislation, regulation, or separate Council policy. Examples of such committees include the Traffic Committee and Local Emergency Management Committee
 - c. Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee
 - d. Internal Council staff-only committees
 - e. Community operating committees or groups with authority delegated under section 355 of the *Local Government Act 1993*
 - f. 'External' committees which are administered outside Council.

2. Establishment of an Advisory Committee or Working Party.

- 2.1. Advisory Committees or Working Parties may only be established by resolution of Council.
- 2.2. The General Manager may, by putting a report forward to Council, recommend the establishment of an Advisory Committee or Working Party. When doing so, the General Manager should, where possible, present the Council with a draft Terms of Reference.

Otherwise, such Terms of Reference should be put to Council at the next available opportunity.

- 2.3. Councillors may, by way of Notice of Motion, seek the establishment of an Advisory Committee or Working Party. When doing so, Councillors should discuss the matter with the General Manager prior to lodging their notice. This allows the General Manager to consider the matter and any associated impacts, including on staffing and resources, to allow proper consideration by the Council.
- 2.4. Where an Advisory Committee or Working Party is resolved as a result of a Notice of Motion, the General Manager should present a draft Terms of Reference at the next Council meeting or the next available opportunity.

3. Councillor Members

- 3.1. Where the Terms of Reference for an Advisory Committee or Working Party includes Councillor membership, such Councillors shall be elected by resolution of the Council.
- 3.2. Councillor members of Committees or Working Parties established at the commencement of a Council term will serve a set term of two years.
- 3.3. Councillor terms for Committees or Working Parties established during a Council term will be set to a maximum period that aligns with the expiration date outlined in clause 3.2.
- 3.4. Councillors elected to fill vacancies at any time during the Council term will have the same expiration date as the Councillor initially appointed to that Committee or Working Party.
- 3.5. Notwithstanding clauses 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4, the Council may review or change Councillor members at any time during the Council term.

4. Community Members

- 4.1. Expressions of interest for membership on Advisory Committees or Working Parties will be called from the community as deemed appropriate by the Council.
- 4.2. Advertising for Expressions of Interest for Community Members will be done as widely as possible in the community.
- 4.3. The Council may impose eligibility requirements for community members wishing to serve on an Advisory Committee or Working Party. For instance, the Council may determine that eligibility is contingent upon the individual being a user of a specific facility, such as an airport or sporting field, or require that the individual identifies as a member of a particular group or community, such as identifying as Aboriginal or being from a designated town or location.
- 4.4. The Council may impose eligibility requirements stipulating that a community member must possess specific skills, experience, or qualifications in order to serve on an Advisory Committee or Working Party. For instance, the Council may determine that eligibility is contingent upon the individual being a member of a particular profession or having experience in a particular work area.
- 4.5. Expressions of Interest should include an outline of the applicant's skills and experience, why they believe they should be appointed and the value they will bring. Where Council has imposed eligibility restrictions, Expressions of Interest must also indicate how the applicant meets such restrictions.
- 4.6. Community members will be appointed by resolution of the Council following a review of expressions of interest.
- 4.7. The Council will set the term for community membership, with terms to be aligned with the Committee or Working Party's objectives and timelines.

- 4.8. The Council reserves the right to remove a community member from an Advisory Committee or Working Party at any time and for any reason, without prior notice.
- 4.9. Community members appointed to an Advisory Committee or Working Party will be subject to Council's Code of Conduct and are expected to adhere to the same ethical standards, behaviours, and responsibilities as outlined for Councillors and staff.
- 4.10. In accordance with clause 4.7, Community Members are required to disclose any interests or potential conflicts of interest that may affect their ability to provide impartial and independent advice to the Council. These disclosures must be made either at the time of the Community Member's appointment to an Advisory Committee or Working Party or as soon as the member becomes aware of any circumstances that could give rise to a conflict of interest.

5. Agency Representatives

- 5.1. The Council may invite agencies (such as the Police, Rural Fire Service, Royal Flying Doctors, or any other organisation) to nominate a representative to serve as a member of an Advisory Committee or Working Party. In such cases, the appointment of a representative is at the discretion of the agency.
- 5.2. The agency representative's term will continue until they are replaced by the agency or until the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee or working party are amended to remove the agency representative.
- 5.3. Agency representatives are required to disclose any interests or potential conflicts of interest that may affect their ability to provide impartial and independent advice to the Council. These disclosures must be made either at the time of the Community Member's appointment to an Advisory Committee or Working Party or as soon as the member becomes aware of any circumstances that could give rise to a conflict of interest.

6. Staff Members

- 6.1. The Council may appoint the General Manager and a set number of staff members to serve on an Advisory Committee or Working Party, as determined by the Council's resolution.
- 6.2. The General Manager, at their discretion, will appoint the most appropriate staff members to fill the staff positions on the Committee or Working Party.
- 6.3. Staff members appointed to an Advisory Committee or Working Party will serve for a duration as determined by the General Manager, based on the operational needs of the Committee or Working Party.

7. Reporting Requirements

- 7.1. Where the Chair of an Advisory Committee or Working Party is a Councillor, that Councillor will provide a verbal or written report to the Council within two months of each meeting.
- 7.2. If the Chair is not a Councillor, the attending Councillor members will collectively provide a report to the Council within two months of the meeting.
- 7.3. In the event that no Councillor is present at a meeting, the General Manager will ensure that a staff member provides a report to the Council within two months of the meeting.
- 7.4. Each year, the General Manager will provide a report to the Council detailing the number of meetings held by each Advisory Committee or Working Party.
- 7.5. The annual report will also include the attendance record for each Councillor and community member appointed to these committees or working parties.

8. Related Policy/Procedure

Code of Conduct.

History

Minute Number	Meeting Date	Description of Change

DRAFT

ITEM 11.12 POLICY FRAMEWORK

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Brown, Special Projects (Governance, Risk and HR)
PURPOSE	For decision

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council adopt the draft Policy Framework as attached to this report.
2. That Council rescind the following Council-adopted policies, noting that they will continue to be in force as Operational Directives until rescinded, replaced or updated in accordance with the Policy framework:

- i. Advertising Vacant Positions Policy and Procedure
- ii. Apprenticeships and Traineeships
- iii. Authorisation to Operate Construction Plant / Vehicles / Equipment
- iv. Chemical Spills
- v. Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Workplace Surveillance
- vi. Conditions of Employment
- vii. Council Building Workplace Emergency Response
- viii. Council Housing
- ix. Customer Service
- x. Drug and Alcohol
- xi. Entering Council Depots
- xii. Emergency Management
- xiii. First Aid Policy and Procedure
- xiv. Flexible Work Practices
- xv. Higher Duties
- xvi. Leave
- xvii. Manual Handling
- xviii. Motor Vehicle Use
- xix. Nine Day Fortnight (RDO)
- xx. Noise and Hearing Loss
- xxi. Payment for Additional Duties
- xxii. Payroll Information – Commencement of Employment
- xxiii. Professional Institute Memberships and Accreditation Policy and Procedure
- xxiv. Records Management
- xxv. Sharps and Other Possible Contaminant Injuries Policy and Procedure
- xxvi. Sharps Collection and Disposal Policy and Procedure
- xxvii. Smoke Free Workplace Policy and Procedure
- xxviii. Staff Induction Manual
- xxix. Staff Recruitment and Selection
- xxx. Staff Training
- xxxi. Staff Uniform
- xxxii. Time in Lieu Policy and Procedure
- xxxiii. Use of Internet and Email
- xxxiv. Work Health and Safety Manual
- xxxv. Working from Home
- xxxvi. Workplace Display Material Policy and Procedure

Executive Summary

A robust policy framework is essential to ensuring good governance and ensuring Council meets its obligations to the community.

A recent review of Council's adopted policies has revealed several areas of non-compliance with the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) (the Act) and clause 6.2 of the Code of Conduct.

The attached draft policy framework has been developed to clearly delineate the roles of Council as the governing body and the operational authority vested in the General Manager under section 335 of the Act. This framework is designed to reflect the organisation's current needs and aligns with best-practice governance principles

Background

Effective governance relies on a well-defined policy framework that guides decision-making and operational activities. Council policies serve as crucial governance tools, ensuring that Council meets its statutory obligations and delivers on its commitments to the community.

Section 335 of the Act outlines that the function of the General Manager includes, among other things, to appoint staff and to direct and dismiss staff. This section of the Act is further clarified in clause 6.2 of the Code of Conduct, which outlines that the Council must direct operational matters through the General Manager rather than issuing instructions directly to staff.

A review of the current adopted policies has identified a breach of these regulations. Many policies blur the lines between Council's governance role and the operational responsibilities which are legislative obligations of the General Manager. This lack of clarity increases the risk of non-compliance and undermines the effectiveness of Council's governance framework.

Current Situation

The draft Policy Framework has been developed to address several critical issues, including ensuring a clear distinction between Council's policy-setting role and the operational directives issued by the General Manager. Currently, a lot number of adopted Council policies are in breach of the Code of Conduct, as they direct the organisation's operations, a responsibility that legally belongs to the General Manager. Many of these policies are also outdated, no longer reflect current legislation or the provisions of the Local Government (State) Award 2023, and place both the organisation and the General Manager at risk of non-compliance with legislative obligations and industrial agreements.

The proposed Policy Framework ensures that the Council, as the governing body, focuses on strategic direction and governance, while the General Manager oversees operational implementation. This clear separation of roles mitigates the risk of non-compliance and improves operational effectiveness.

The Policy Framework aims to:

- Continually streamline and improve documents in the governance suite;
- Engage Councillors more actively and effectively in strategic policy development;
- Ensure document development, review, and implementation are appropriately resourced, systemic, and systematic (reducing administrative burden);
- Engage staff in policy development and review;
- Develop documents that better engage with diverse communities and support reconciliation, such as ensuring all documentation is written in plain language and cohesive with Western and Indigenous Governance principles.

The framework is built upon best-practice governance principles and is designed to meet the organisation's evolving needs while ensuring compliance with all relevant legislative requirements.

Adopting the Policy Framework also marks the start of Council's legislatively mandated post-election policy review.

Adopting the Policy Framework will significantly improve organisational efficiency, accountability, and transparency by fostering a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities within the Council.

Consultation

The development of the Policy Framework involved internal consultation, engaging with various staff across the organisation as well as with the Executive Leadership Team. Feedback from these stakeholders has been considered to ensure the framework is practical, aligned with operational needs, and reflects best practice governance principles.

Financial and Resource Implications

Nil

Legislation and Policy Implications

Various sections of the Act and other legislative instruments require that Council adopt and maintain a range of policies to ensure compliance with statutory obligations and effective governance. These policies are critical for managing public resources and ensuring transparency and accountability in Council operations.

Furthermore, section 335 of the Act assigns the responsibility for appointing, directing, and dismissing staff exclusively to the General Manager. This is further reinforced by clause 6.2 of the Code of Conduct, which explicitly prohibits Council from directing staff. The Policy Framework reflects these legal requirements, ensuring a clear distinction between Council's governance role and the operational responsibilities of the General Manager.

Legal and Risk Considerations

A failure to establish and maintain a clear separation between Council's governance role and the operational authority of the General Manager presents significant legal and operational risks. Without a comprehensive policy framework, there is a substantial risk that Council policies may not align with statutory requirements or industry standards, leaving the Council vulnerable to non-compliance with legislative obligations.

Policies developed without a structured framework may also lack proper consultation, oversight, or approval, leading to gaps in governance and ineffective policy implementation. This increases the likelihood of policies being unfit for purpose, outdated, or misaligned with best practices. The absence of a clear framework may result in policies that contradict or overlap with operational directives, creating confusion and inefficiency within the organisation. Without a well-defined process for policy review and approval, there is also a risk that critical governance policies could be developed in isolation or without the necessary input from key stakeholders, potentially undermining the policy's effectiveness and legal standing.

This misalignment could lead to operational inefficiencies, legal challenges, and reputational damage for the Council, further exacerbating the risk of non-compliance with legislative and regulatory frameworks. Repealing outdated and non-compliant policies and adopting a structured policy framework is essential to ensuring Council meets its statutory obligations and strengthens its governance processes.

Additionally, several existing policies currently direct staff, which breaches the Code of Conduct and section 335 of the Act. These policies need to be repealed, as maintaining such policies risks legal non-compliance, creates operational inefficiencies, and undermines the governance structure by blurring the lines between governance and management.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

G 3.2 Implement governance and financial management process that support the effective administration of Council

3.2.1 Develop processes that ensure that legislative and financial standards are actioned in a timely manner.

Alternative Options

Council has the option to either not adopt a policy framework or to develop an alternative one. However, this approach carries significant risks. Without a structured policy framework, Council may fail to comply with its legislative and industrial obligations, leading to potential legal consequences and governance failures.

Council has no alternative but to repeal the policies identified as being in breach of the Code of Conduct and the Act. Their continued existence creates an undue risk to both the organisation and the General Manager, as these policies direct staff operations, which is beyond Council's governance role. Failing to repeal these policies would expose the organisation to possible legal risks and operational inefficiencies.

Should Council choose to develop an alternative framework rather than adopting the proposed one, it would likely result in significant delays. Developing a new framework would postpone Council's ability to meet its statutory obligations, particularly the mandated review of policies following a general election. This delay would impede the governing body's capacity to ensure that existing policies are compliant and effective.

Additionally, postponing the adoption of a structured framework would impact the General Manager's ability to update and implement key staff directives. These updates are critical for improving staff management, aligning operational directives with Council's strategic goals, and ensuring efficient governance. Any delay in developing such a framework would create operational inefficiencies and hinder Council's ability to meet legislative deadlines, significantly increasing the likelihood of non-compliance and governance challenges.

Conclusion

Adopting the Policy Framework is essential for ensuring that Council meets its statutory obligations and operates within best-practice governance standards. The framework provides a clear distinction between Council's governance role and the operational authority vested in the General Manager, as required under the Act and the Code of Conduct. Without this framework, there is a substantial risk of non-compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements, leading to potential legal and operational challenges for both the organisation and the General Manager.

Additionally, numerous outdated policies, which improperly direct staff, must be repealed to ensure alignment with current legislation and prevent the organisation from being exposed to legal and operational risks. These policies blur the lines between governance and management, creating inefficiencies and undermining the effectiveness of the Council's leadership.

Adopting the Policy Framework will enable Council to streamline its governance suite, engage more effectively in strategic policy development, and ensure that policy processes are systematic and well-resourced. This will enhance organisational transparency, accountability, and efficiency while also fostering a more collaborative and legally compliant environment. Ultimately, the framework is designed to support the Council in meeting its obligations to the community and ensuring that governance processes are fit for purpose and aligned with current standards.

Attachments

1. Draft - Policy Framework



POLICY FRAMEWORK

Document Owner:	Council
Responsible Department:	Executive Services
Responsible Section:	Governance and Integrity
Responsible Officer:	Manager Governance and Integrity
Effective Date:	

Policy Statement

Policies, Operational Directives and Operational Procedures help Walgett Shire Council (Council) achieve its goals, ensure compliance with legislation, guide decision-making, manage risks, and provide a roadmap for innovative operations and positive outcomes for local communities. Governance documents protect the Council and Its Officers from non-compliance and define and shape culture by communicating an organisation's values, what officers can expect from the Council (benefits), what the Council expects from its officers (Code of Conduct), and what the community can expect from the Council.

Chapter 1: Purpose, Objectives and Scope

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This document intends to establish a Policy Framework, standards and principles for developing, approving, implementing, managing, and reviewing Council's governance documents (policies, operational directives, and related operational procedures).

2. Objective

- 2.1. The objectives of the Council's Policy Framework are to:

- a. develop a suite of governance documents that are easily accessed, written clearly in easy-to-understand language and reflect governance best practices;
- b. set a hierarchy of governance documents;
- c. achieve compliance with legislation and other regulatory requirements;
- d. enable Council to consistently achieve its strategic objectives, make decisions, manage risks, be effectively resourced, innovate and maximise quality and efficiency across all operations;
- e. provide appropriate quality assurance and monitoring processes for Policy and Operational Directive development, amendment and review and de-activating or removing policies and directives that are no longer relevant; and
- f. increase community, officer and organisational satisfaction by ensuring the framework is person-centred, supports cultural safety and wellness, outlines the principles, roles and responsibilities of quality governance and includes measures of success and indicators of poor-quality governance.

- 1.2. The governance of Council is underpinned by Council's Policy Framework, which outlines how Council operates fairly, responsibly, and transparently. Council's Policy Framework intends to guide people.
- 1.3. The framework will provide a consistent, logical structure, principles, and critical considerations for managing the Council's Policy Register (the official source of the Council's governance documentation), policies, and directive documents.

2. Scope

- 2.1. Council's Policy Framework applies to the Mayor, Councillors, Council Committees, the General Manager, and Council officers (employees, contractors, subcontractors and volunteers) to ensure that Council is accountable, fair, and transparent in its relationship with the community.
- 2.2. For the purpose of the Policy Framework, Council must comply with various legislation.

Chapter 2: definitions

Term	Meaning
Council Officer	An elected member of Council or any other person authorised in writing by Council or General Manager to undertake duties for Council (including Council's General Manager, Councillors, employees, contractors, subcontractors and volunteers).
Document Owner	The Document Owner is either the Council or the General Manager and indicates the approval process for the document. Documents owned by the Council can only be amended by a formal Council resolution. Documents owned by the General Manager may be amended in accordance with the direction of the General Manager.
Governance Document Suite	A collection of mandatory documents including Australian Law (legislation and associated Regulations), a By-law, an Office of Local Government (OLG) Guideline, Circular, or Code under section 23A of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> (NSW), a Policy, an Operational Directive or an Operational Procedure.
Legislation	An Act or Regulation created by the Parliaments of New South Wales and/or the Commonwealth of Australia.
Operational Directive	A Council-wide inward-facing operational document that describes how the Council implements mandatory standards, required practices, or policies through a series of prescribed actions or tasks. Operational Directives deal directly with the staff and facilities of the Council and must be performed to achieve a specific intent or outcome. These directives are approved and adopted by the General Manager or their delegate. Operational Directives are lawful directions issued to staff, contractors, subcontractors, and volunteers, and must be followed at all times. Compliance with these directives is mandatory to ensure the proper functioning and governance of the Council, and failure to adhere to them may result in disciplinary action or other appropriate measures.
Operational Procedure	Refers to a document typically established by directors or managers that provides detailed direction toward best practices. It outlines how an officer should perform a series of sequential steps and sub-steps to achieve a specific task or outcome. Operational Procedures must be followed at all

	<p>times unless authorisation for an adjustment is granted by the General Manager or relevant director.</p> <p>Procedures promote collaboration and collegiality, encouraging the seeking of informed second opinions from experienced colleagues. While they provide clear guidance, Operational Procedures are flexible, allowing for discretion and judgment when comparing and evaluating possible courses of action, particularly in decision-making processes where various options need to be considered.</p>
Policy	A high-level, Council-wide, strategic document that is generally outward-facing and deals with how the Council will work within the community. It contains an overarching statement or mandatory principle that guides Council's intentions or objectives through decision-making. Policies are mandatory and must be followed by all Council Officers, and they have been approved and adopted by the Council.
Rescind	The retraction, removal, or deletion of a document in the Policy Suite deemed to be obsolete.
Responsible Officer	The responsible Council officer(s) assigned to draft, amend, or review a document.
Support Document	All documents, information, and records, regardless of their form, medium or author, that officers use to implement, evidence, or review "good practice" and trace actions, steps, decisions, outcomes, and recommendations for improving processes.

Chapter 3: Policy statement

3. Hierarchy

- 3.1. Council's Governance Document Suite operates in the following hierarchy (from highest to lowest):
 - a. Legislation;
 - b. OLG guidelines, codes, circulars, and practice notes for functions that Council carries out under the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW);
 - c. Policies that prescribe mandatory obligations about Council's strategies and operations and approval responsibilities contained in Council's Delegations Register, including standards for interacting with and serving the community and other high-level strategic decisions.
 - d. Operational Directives that prescribe mandatory obligations and operational procedures, responsibilities, or a series of Council functions; these focus on standards of practice for Council employees, contractors, and volunteers, ensuring consistent and efficient operations in line with Council objectives.
 - e. Operational Procedures (work instructions) that explain in detail how to implement, manage, and review work tasks, steps, and sub-steps from start to finish;
 - f. Support documents (guides, plans, flowcharts, checklists, tutorials, maps, diagrams, photos, screenshots, illustrations, videos, notes, templates or supporting evidence) provide further information or improve clarity for how Council officers perform a task or step.
- 3.2. Where, there is an inconsistency between documents that are at different levels of the hierarchy; the higher-level document will prevail to the extent of any inconsistency.

3.3. If there is any inconsistency between peer level documents, the approval authority for those documents will decide the appropriate interpretation.

4. Principles

4.1. Council requires Council's Governance Document Suite to:

- a. be concise, written in plain English, and logically sequenced;
- b. articulate Policy separately from Operational Directives and Operational Procedures;
- c. provide a discernible distinction between strategic governance and operational management;
- d. mitigate all relevant risks to the extent possible and articulate expectations, responsibilities and consequences for actions and decisions;
- e. uphold and be consistent with:
 - i. applicable legislation and standards;
 - ii. any document higher in the Governance Document Suite hierarchy;
 - iii. Council's strategic plan, vision, and values;
 - iv. the principles and requirements set out in Council's Code of Conduct;
 - v. community expectations.

4.2. The development, implementation, management, and review of all documents in the Council's Governance Document Suite must:

- i. be systemic and systematic;
 - ii. identify the department which is primarily responsible for administration and scheduled review;
 - iii. be appropriately consultative; and
 - iv. be informed by principles of continuous improvement and sector best practices.
- a. A schedule, annexure, or another appendage to a document in Council's Governance Document Suite forms part of that document.
 - b. Proposed Council Policies must, after resolution of Council, be placed on public exhibition for a period of not less than 28 days. Council must consider any submissions made before a Policy can be adopted.
 - c. Adopted Council Policies must be published on Council's website and recorded in Council's Policy Register. These policies are:
 - i. In force from the time specified as the 'effective date'; and
 - ii. remain in force until the document is rescinded by decision of Council or superseded by another inconsistent policy.
 - d. Adopted Operational Directives must be published on Council's Intranet and recorded in Council's Policy Register. The Council Officers to whom the Operational Directives apply must receive regular instruction and guidance to support their effective implementation. This instruction may include workshops, informational sessions, or written guidelines that clarify expectations, processes, and responsibilities to ensure all staff, contractors, and volunteers are familiar with the requirements of the Directive.
 - e. These Directives are:

- i. In force from the time specified as the 'effective date'; and
- ii. Remain in force until the document is rescinded by the decision of the General Manager or superseded by another policy or directive.

5. Approval Authorities

- 5.1. Council Policy is established by a resolution of the Council.
- 5.2. Operational Directives and Operational Procedures are established by directive of the General Manager or their delegate.

6. Implementation and review

- 6.1. Once a policy is adopted, it:
 - a. Is in force from the document's, resolution's, or approval's stated "effective date", if stated;
 - b. Is in force from the date immediately following the approval or adoption if no effective date is stated; and
 - c. Remains in force until the document is rescinded, superseded, or suspended.
- 6.2. The General Manager must ensure that each Council Policy and Operational Directive is reviewed within 12 months following an Ordinary Council Election to examine whether the document remains relevant, current, and effective.
- 6.3. Circumstances that may also trigger the development of a new document or review of an existing document may include:
 - a. legislative, audit or other external needs;
 - b. changes to Council's strategic direction or structure;
 - c. content gaps or overlaps;
 - d. mitigation of specific risks; or
 - e. scheduled reviews.
- 6.4. Any amendment of an existing Policy deemed minor and administrative (i.e. changing position title, legislative details, organisation references or correcting typographical errors) may be implemented by the General Manager and do not require a resolution of Council.
- 6.5. Any amendment of an existing Policy that changes its intent or constitutes significant re-wording must be submitted to Council for resolution.
- 6.6. Details about Policy reviews and amendments (minor or significant) will be recorded in the "History" of the Policy document.

Related Policy/Procedure

Not applicable.

History

Minute Number	Meeting Date	Description of Change

ITEM 11.13 BUSINESS ETHICS POLICY

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Ernest Mhande, Chief Financial Officer
PURPOSE	For decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council place the Draft Business Ethics Policy on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, inviting submissions from the public, after which time the Policy shall be reported back to Council for adoption with a summary of submissions received.

Executive Summary

This report presents an updated Business Ethics Policy for Walgett Shire Council, outlining the ethical principles and standards that guide interactions with contractors, suppliers, and all external stakeholders. The proposed policy has been updated to reflect current legislative requirements, including modern slavery provisions, and aligns with best-practice governance principles. The updated policy is now recommended for a 28-day public exhibition to gather community and stakeholder feedback before final adoption.

Background

Walgett Shire Council's Business Ethics Policy ensures that Council's operations are conducted with integrity, transparency, and accountability. The policy governs how the Council, its representatives, and external contractors and suppliers conduct business dealings, ensuring compliance with the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) (the Act) and ethical business practices.

The current policy was last reviewed in September 2022 and needs updating to align with recent legislative changes, particularly the Modern Slavery Act 2018 and other relevant procurement standards.

Current Situation

A Business Ethics Policy, also known as a Statement of Business Ethics or Code of Business Ethics, is a vital governance document that establishes the ethical standards and principles that guide all interactions between Walgett Shire Council and its contractors, suppliers, and other external stakeholders. This policy ensures that all parties involved in Council's operations conduct themselves with integrity, fairness, and transparency, safeguarding public trust and promoting responsible use of public resources.

The Business Ethics Policy outlines key ethical principles such as value for money, impartiality, fairness, and preventing corruption in Council's business dealings. By setting clear expectations, the policy ensures that all business conducted with the Council is ethical and compliant with both statutory requirements and community expectations.

The updated policy includes several significant enhancements to align with evolving legal standards, particularly the Modern Slavery Act 2018, ensuring that Council's suppliers and contractors comply with ethical standards in preventing exploitative labour practices.

Additionally, it reinforces the Council's commitment to maintaining transparency in procurement processes, preventing corruption, and promoting fair competition.

This version of the Business Ethics Policy strengthens guidelines around reporting unethical behaviour, handling gifts and benefits, and managing conflicts of interest. It also emphasises the shared responsibility of all stakeholders to adhere to the principles of fairness, transparency, and ethical conduct in their dealings with the Council.

The primary amendments in the draft policy, as compared to the currently adopted policy, are outlined below:

- **Scope of Application:** The draft policy includes contractors, suppliers, and consultants, with a broader scope on business interactions, including virtual and digital communications.
- **Ethical Principles:** The draft policy introduces explicit commitments to human rights and modern slavery prevention, which the existing policy does not address.
- **Gifts and Benefits:** The draft policy strictly prohibits gifts related to procurement and mandates reporting, whereas the existing policy allows limited acceptance of gifts with recording requirements.
- **Use of Resources and Confidentiality:** The draft policy includes more detailed guidelines on the authorised use of Council resources and strict confidentiality in business interactions.
- **Modern Slavery Compliance:** The draft policy adds provisions to ensure Council's business dealings are free from modern slavery, aligning with legislative compliance.

The draft updated policy should be placed on public exhibition for 28 days. During this period, the Council will seek feedback from the community, contractors, and other stakeholders to ensure that the final version reflects best practices and meets the needs of both the Council and its partners. The updated policy, once adopted, will enhance the integrity of Council's operations and provide clear guidance for all business dealings.

Consultation

Internal consultation has been conducted with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that the draft policy aligns with current operational needs and governance requirements. The draft has been prepared in accordance with the reporting obligations under the Act. To ensure comprehensive community engagement, the draft will be placed on public exhibition for 28 days, during which public submissions will be invited. This process will allow for further consultation with the community and key stakeholders to gather valuable feedback and insights.

Financial and Resource Implications

Nil

Legislation and Policy Implications

The updated Business Ethics Policy is in compliance with the Act and relevant statutory provisions, including the Modern Slavery Act 2018. It ensures that Council's business practices reflect current legislative standards and reinforces its commitment to ethical conduct. The policy also aligns with Council's Code of Conduct and procurement practices.

Legal and Risk Considerations

Failure to adopt an updated and compliant Business Ethics Policy could expose Council to risks of non-compliance with legislative requirements, including those concerning modern slavery, conflict of interest, and procurement integrity.

The absence of an updated policy could lead to reputational damage and legal challenges, particularly in areas where Council interacts with external suppliers and contractors. This policy mitigates those risks by setting clear standards and expectations for ethical behaviour in all business dealings.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

G 3.2 Implement governance and financial management process that support the effective administration of Council

3.2.1 Develop processes that ensure that legislative and financial standards are actioned in a timely manner.

Alternative Options

Council has two primary alternatives to placing the updated Business Ethics Policy on public exhibition for 28 days. First, Council could bypass the public exhibition process and adopt the updated policy immediately. While this option would expedite the adoption of the policy, it would forgo the opportunity for community and stakeholder consultation, which is vital to ensuring transparency and gaining valuable

feedback. Adopting the policy without exhibition could also lead to criticisms about a lack of engagement, potentially diminishing public trust in Council's decision-making process.

Alternatively, Council could develop an entirely different or alternative policy. However, this would involve additional time and resources and may delay the process of bringing Council's policies into alignment with current legislative standards and best practices. Developing an alternate framework might also introduce the risk of non-compliance or create gaps in addressing key ethical and governance issues, especially if not developed with the same rigorous legal and operational considerations as the current draft.

Conclusion

The updated Business Ethics Policy provides a framework for ethical conduct in all Council business dealings, ensuring compliance with legal standards and fostering trust with the community and stakeholders.

Placing the updated policy on public exhibition for 28 days will allow Council to gather feedback before formal adoption. It is recommended that Council approve the exhibition of the updated policy to ensure it aligns with current governance principles and legislative obligations.

Attachments

1. Draft - Business Ethics Policy



BUSINESS ETHICS POLICY

Document Owner:	Council
Responsible Department:	Executive Services
Responsible Section:	Finance
Responsible Officer:	Chief Financial Officer
Effective Date:	

Policy Statement

The Business Ethics Policy (the Policy) establishes a framework for ethical conduct and decision-making in all business dealings with Walgett Shire Council (Council). The Policy sets clear expectations for Council representatives, staff, contractors, suppliers, and consultants, ensuring that business operations are conducted with integrity, fairness, and transparency. It outlines the ethical standards that must be upheld in procurement processes, service delivery, and partnerships, ensuring that Council's values and commitment to ethical business practices are reflected in all interactions.

The Policy aims to promote ethical behaviour, foster accountability, and safeguard public confidence in the Council's operations. The Policy supports sound governance and the responsible use of public resources by adhering to the principles of value for money, impartiality, and fairness. It also ensures that all parties involved in Council's business relationships are aligned with its ethical commitments, reinforcing transparency, integrity, and the responsible management of Council affairs.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Walgett Shire Council expects all its representatives, staff and Councillors to behave ethically and to abide by its Code of Conduct. Council also expects private industry and its representatives to maintain similar standards of ethical conduct in their dealings with Council.
- 1.2 It is essential that Councillors and Council staff ensure that every decision they make is in the best interests of both Council and the community. Councillors and Staff must uphold the reputation of Council by acting with integrity, maintaining transparency, and complying with the Council's Code of Conduct at all times.
- 1.3 There are two main principles that form the basis of Walgett Shire Council's business agreements. Firstly, there is the need to get the best possible value for public money. Secondly, Council needs to demonstrate impartiality and fairness at all stages of the process.
- 1.4 These principles enable suppliers to promote their interests productively and avoid potentially questionable activity. Those providing goods and services also benefit from the assurance that their competitors are required to behave in accordance with the same guidelines.
- 1.5 Council is also committed to upholding human rights in its operations and business relationships, including preventing modern-day slavery (also see 4.1) in its supply

chains. We expect all contractors, suppliers, and partners to adhere to ethical standards, ensuring that their operations and those of their subcontractors are free from exploitative labour practices.

- 1.6 Council staff and contractors must refrain from accepting any gifts or benefits of more than nominal or token value as defined by Council's Code of Conduct. Council employees involved in procurement processes (e.g., raising orders or authorising payments) should not accept any gifts of any value from suppliers of goods and services. All gifts, regardless of value, must be reported in writing to the General Manager and recorded in the Gift Register in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.

2. Application

- 2.1 This Business Ethics Policy applies to all Councillors, Council staff, contractors, suppliers, and consultants engaged in business with Walgett Shire Council.
- 2.2 This Policy applies to all business interactions, including procurement processes, service delivery, and partnerships, whether these interactions take place face-to-face, online (including social media and virtual meeting platforms), by phone, text message, or in writing.
- 2.3 All communication between Council and contractors or suppliers must be clear, direct, and through appropriate channels. This ensures transparency and minimises the risk of perceived inappropriate influence in business relationships.

3. Guiding Principles

3.1 Value For Money

- a. Value for money is determined by considering all the factors which are relevant to a particular process. For example quality, reliability, timeliness, service, initial and ongoing costs are all factors which can make a significant impact on benefits and costs.
- b. Value for money does not mean "lowest price". However, the lowest price bid might offer best value if it meets other essentials such as quality and reliability.

3.2 Impartiality and Fairness

- a. Impartiality and fairness involve being objective, even-handed, and reasonable in all dealings.
- b. An impartial person will work to objectively establish criteria for determining the best value for money and will diligently assess each quotation against those criteria.
- c. A fair person would not introduce or change selection criteria midway through the quotation process without notifying all participants submitting a quotation.
- d. Being impartial requires considering the practicalities of a given situation and does not necessitate inviting bids from firms that have previously performed poorly.
- e. In some instances, fairness may involve accounting for the effects of others' actions.
- f. Fairness does not equate to pleasing everyone, and some individuals may be adversely affected by fair decisions.
- g. The Council aims to act fairly in all dealings and strives to minimise any negative effects arising from its decisions where possible.
- h. Council expects all suppliers to disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest immediately upon identification.

4. Modern Slavery

- 4.1 Contractors and suppliers must ensure that goods and services procured by and for the Council during the year were not the product of modern slavery within the meaning of the *Modern Slavery Act 2018* and in compliance with *Local Government Act s 428(4)(d)*.

5. Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1 Walgett Shire Council expects staff and Councillors to:

- a. Respect and follow Council's policies and procedures.
- b. Treat all quotes for the supply of goods and services equitably.
- c. Promote fair and open competition while seeking best value for money.
- d. Protect confidential information.
- e. Meet or exceed public interest and accountability standards.
- f. Respond promptly to reasonable requests for advice and information.
- g. Avoid situations where private interest could conflict with public duty.
- h. Never solicit or accept remuneration, gifts or other benefits from a supplier for the discharge of official duties.
- i. Actively ensure that their actions do not contribute to modern-day slavery practices.
- j. Ensure that all business relationships, including subcontracting, respect intellectual property rights and are formally negotiated if access, licensing, or usage of intellectual property is required.

- 5.2 Council expects contractors, suppliers and consultants to:

- a. Respect the conditions set out in documents supplied by Council,
- b. Respect the obligation of Council staff to abide by Council's procurement and disposal policy.
- c. Abstain from collusive practices.
- d. Prevent unauthorised release of privileged information, including confidential Council information.
- e. Refrain from offering Council employees or Councillors any financial or other inducement which may give any impression of unfair advantage.
- f. Ensure that all business practices, including subcontracting, are free from forced labour or exploitative practices, and actively report any concerns regarding modern-day slavery in their operations.
- g. Disclose any conflicts of interest immediately upon identification, whether real or perceived.
- h. Ensure that all communication with Council is clear, direct, and made through appropriate channels.

6. Code of Conduct and Safety Commitment

- 6.1 Council contractors are required to observe the relevant provisions of Walgett Shire Council's Code of Conduct and its strong commitment to Work Health and Safety (WHS) and zero harm.
- 6.2 This includes mandatory participation in inductions, training, and risk assessments, as well as involvement in safety assessments, audits, and investigations.

6.3 Contractors must demonstrate a commitment to ensuring the health and safety of all staff, contractors, subcontractors, and the public, prioritising a safe working environment at all times.

7. Implementation and complaints

7.1 There is no absolute definition of “ethical behaviour”. If there is any doubt about the ethics of a proposed action, a sensible test is whether or not you would be happy to see your behaviour published in the local newspaper.

7.2 Staff and Councillors of Walgett Shire Council or those in the employ of a contractor, supplier or consultant who are concerned that a breach of the law or of ethical conduct may have taken place, should discuss the matter with Walgett Shire Council on (02) 6828 6100.

7.3 If an apparent breach of any agreed standard of ethical conduct is identified, then the matter should be immediately brought to the attention of the General Manager on (02) 6828 6100.

7.4 Any contractor, supplier, or individual who suspects corrupt conduct may be protected by the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994*. Council encourages individuals to report any suspected corruption directly to the General Manager by telephone on (02) 6828 6100 or via confidential email to gm@walgett.nsw.gov.au.

7.5 Alternatively, a complaint can be lodged with the NSW Ombudsman, ICAC, or the Office of Local Government.

8. Related Policy/Directive

8.1 Code of Conduct

8.2 Public Interest Disclosure Policy

8.3 Purchasing and Disposal Policy

History

Minute Number	Meeting Date	Description of Change

ITEM 11.14 COUNCILLOR AND STAFF INTERACTION POLICY

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Executive Officer
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Brown, Special Projects (Governance, Risk and HR)
PURPOSE	For decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy as attached to this report.

Executive Summary

This report presents the draft Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy, which establishes a framework to govern the interactions between councillors and staff. The policy ensures clarity of roles and responsibilities in line with the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) (the Act).

The policy has been reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the organisation's operational needs. It remains mostly unchanged from its previous version, except for minor updates related to staff accessibility and some formatting and wording changes. As there are no substantial changes, public exhibition is not required, and the policy is now recommended for adoption by Council.

Background

The Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy was first adopted in 2022, based on the Model Policy from the Office of Local Government. The policy establishes clear guidelines for interactions between Councillors and staff, ensuring that both groups understand their respective roles and responsibilities in accordance with the Act.

The policy is critical for maintaining effective governance, ensuring that Councillors and staff work together professionally and respectfully while adhering to statutory requirements. The review was undertaken to ensure the policy remains relevant and continues to support effective communication and decision-making within the organisation.

Current Situation

The Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy has been reviewed and found to be effective in supporting positive and professional relationships between Councillors and staff. The model policy was adopted in 2022, and following a review, it was determined that the existing framework continues to meet the needs of the organisation.

The only notable update is an increase in the number of staff with whom Councillors can directly communicate. This now includes the Directors, Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Executive Officer (EO), and Manager of Governance and Integrity, in addition to the General Manager.

This change has been implemented to provide Councillors with more timely and accurate access to information, which the previous policy did not fully support. These adjustments ensure Councillors can perform their civic duties more effectively without altering the core principles of the original policy.

Other changes in the draft policy, as compared to the currently adopted policy, are outlined below:

- **Expanded Communication Channels:** The draft policy includes guidance for interactions via digital platforms, such as social media and virtual meetings, which are not explicitly covered in the existing policy.
- **Councillor Request System:** The draft policy introduces a more detailed Councillor request system, including specific timeframes for responses and the ability for the General Manager to limit requests if they become excessive. The existing policy does not include these specifics.

- **Inclusion of Modern Record-Keeping Requirements:** The draft policy specifies that all Councillor requests are state records, aligning with the State Records Act 1998, whereas the existing policy lacks this detail.
- **Confidentiality and Access to Information:** The draft policy enhances confidentiality requirements and details the conditions under which the General Manager may deny access to information. The existing policy is less specific on these grounds.
- **Role Clarity and Access to Council Buildings:** The draft policy provides additional guidance on Councillors' access to Council buildings and specific staff-only areas, requiring approval from the General Manager. The existing policy does not detail this level of access control.

As the policy remains largely unchanged and continues to align with the model policy prepared by the OLG and legislative requirements, it is being recommended for adoption.

Consultation

Internal consultation was conducted during the review process to ensure the policy remains suitable for the organisation's operational needs. Given the minor nature of the updates, no further consultation is deemed necessary at this stage.

Financial and Resource Implications

Nil

Legislation and Policy Implications

The Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy complies with the Act and reflects the Code of Conduct. The policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of Councillors and staff, ensuring clarity and alignment with statutory provisions.

Legal and Risk Considerations

Adopting the reviewed policy ensures that Council maintains a clear framework for Councillor-staff interactions, reducing the risk of inappropriate communication and breaches of the Act or Code of Conduct. The policy safeguards both Councillors and staff by establishing professional boundaries and providing clear guidelines for interaction.

Failure to adopt the updated policy could lead to confusion about the roles and responsibilities of Councillors and staff, increasing the risk of non-compliance and potential governance issues.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

G 3.2 Implement governance and financial management process that support the effective administration of Council

3.2.1 Develop processes that ensure that legislative and financial standards are actioned in a timely manner.

Alternative Options

Council could choose to revise or alter the policy further. However, the policy has been deemed effective in its current form, with only minor updates required to reflect changes in staff accessibility. Developing an alternative policy would involve unnecessary time and resources, as the current policy aligns with the model policy prepared by the Office of Local Government.

Conclusion

The Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy has been reviewed and remains largely unchanged from the previously adopted version. The minor updates enhance Councillor access to key staff members without altering the core principles of the policy. As the policy continues to meet the organisation's needs and legislative obligations, it is recommended for immediate adoption without the need for public exhibition.

Attachments

1. Draft - Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy



COUNCILLOR AND STAFF INTERACTION POLICY

Document Owner:	Council
Responsible Department:	Executive Services
Responsible Section:	Governance and Integrity
Responsible Officer:	Manager Governance and Integrity
Effective Date:	

Policy Statement

The Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy ensures that Walgett Shire Council (Council) fosters a positive, effective, and professional working environment defined by mutual respect and courtesy between Councillors and staff. This policy facilitates appropriate and effective collaboration, ensuring Councillors receive accurate advice and have adequate access to information necessary for performing their civic duties.

The policy provides clear direction on interactions between Councillors and Staff for information requests and general situations, promoting transparent decision-making and robust governance.

By guiding these interactions, the policy aims to enhance the Council's reputation through consistent, professional, and positive engagement in day-to-day duties. It also establishes a consistent framework for managing breaches in alignment with the Code of Conduct.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy (the Policy) provides a framework for Councillors when exercising their civic functions by specifically addressing their ability to interact with, and receive advice from, authorised staff.
- 1.2. The Policy complements and should be read in conjunction with Walgett Shire Council's *Code of Conduct* (the Code of Conduct).
- 1.3. The aim of the Policy is to facilitate a positive working relationship between Councillors, as the community's elected representatives, and staff, who are employed to administer the operations of the Council. The Policy provides direction on interactions between Councillors and staff to assist both parties in carrying out their day-to-day duties professionally, ethically and respectfully.
- 1.4. It is important to have an effective working relationship that recognises the important but differing contribution both parties bring to their complementary roles.

2. Application

- 2.1. This Policy applies to all Councillors and Council staff.
- 2.2. This Policy applies to all interactions between Councillors and staff, whether face-to-face, online (including social media and virtual meeting platforms), by phone, text message or in writing.
- 2.3. This Policy applies whenever interactions between Councillors and staff occur, including inside or outside of work hours, and at both Council and non-Council venues and events.
- 2.4. This Policy does not confer any delegated authority upon any person. All delegations to staff are made by the General Manager.
- 2.5. The *Code of Conduct* provides that Council officials must not conduct themselves in a manner that is contrary to the Council's policies. A breach of this Policy will be a breach of the *Code of Conduct*.

3. Principles, roles and responsibilities

- 3.1. Several factors contribute to a good relationship between Councillors and staff. These include goodwill, understanding of roles, communication, protocols, and a good understanding of legislative requirements.
- 3.2. The Council's governing body and its administration (being staff within the organisation) must have a clear and sophisticated understanding of their different roles, and the fact that these operate within a hierarchy. The administration is accountable to the General Manager, who in turn, is accountable to the Council's governing body.
- 3.3. Section 232 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the LGA) states that the role of a Councillor is as follows:
 - a. to be an active and contributing member of the governing body
 - b. to make considered and well-informed decisions as a member of the governing body
 - c. to participate in the development of the integrated planning and reporting framework
 - d. to represent the collective interests of residents, ratepayers and the local community
 - e. to facilitate communication between the local community and the governing body
 - f. to uphold and represent accurately the policies and decisions of the governing body
 - g. to make all reasonable efforts to acquire and maintain the skills necessary to perform the role of a Councillor.
- 3.4. The administration's role is to advise the governing body, implement Council's decisions and to oversee service delivery.
- 3.5. It is beneficial if the administration recognises the complex political environments in which elected members operate and acknowledge that they work within a system that is based on democratic governance. Councillors similarly need to understand that it is a highly complex task to prepare information and provide quality advice on the very wide range of issues that Council operations cover.

3.6. Council commits to the following principles to guide interactions between Councillors and staff:

Principle	Achieved by
Equitable and consistent	Ensuring appropriate, consistent and equitable access to information for all Councillors within established service levels
Considerate and respectful	Councillors and staff working supportively together in the interests of the whole community, based on mutual respect and consideration of their respective positions
Ethical, open and transparent	Ensuring that interactions between Councillors and staff are ethical, open, transparent, honest and display the highest standards of professional conduct
Fit for purpose	Ensuring that the provision of equipment and information to Councillors is done in a way that is suitable, practical and of an appropriate size, scale and cost for a client group of 9 people.
Accountable and measurable	Providing support to Councillors in the performance of their role in a way that can be measured, reviewed and improved based on qualitative and quantitative data

3.7. Councillors are members of the Council's governing body, which is responsible for directing and controlling the affairs of the Council in accordance with the LGA. Councillors need to accept that:

- a. responses to requests for information from Councillors may take time and consultation to prepare and be approved prior to responding
- b. staff are not accountable to them individually
- c. they must not direct staff except by giving appropriate direction to the General Manager by way of a Council or committee resolution, or by the Mayor exercising their functions under section 226 of the LGA
- d. they must not, in any public or private forum, direct or influence, or attempt to direct or influence, a member of staff in the exercise of their functions
- e. they must not contact a member of staff on Council-related business unless in accordance with this Policy
- f. they must not use their position to attempt to receive favourable treatment for themselves or others.

3.8. The General Manager is responsible for the efficient and effective day-to-day operation of the Council and for ensuring that the lawful decisions of the Council are implemented without undue delay. Council staff need to understand:

- g. they are not accountable to individual Councillors and do not take direction from them. They are accountable to the General Manager, who is in turn accountable to the Council's governing body

- h. they should not provide advice to Councillors unless it has been approved by the General Manager or a staff member with a delegation to approve advice to Councillors
- i. they must carry out reasonable and lawful directions given by any person having the authority to give such directions in an efficient and effective manner
- j. they must ensure that participation in political activities outside the service of the Council does not interfere with the performance of their official duties

4. The Councillor requests system

- 4.1. Councillors have a right to request information provided it is relevant to Councillor's exercise of their civic functions. This right does not extend to matters about which a Councillor is merely curious.
- 4.2. Councillors do not have a right to request information about matters that they are prevented from participating in decision-making on because of a conflict of interest, unless the information is otherwise publicly available.
- 4.3. Councillors must not make requests of the General Manager or any other Council staff regarding matters related to the employment of Council staff, including but not limited to recruitment, performance management, or disciplinary actions.
- 4.4. Councillors must ensure they do not ask questions or make comments to any staff member that could directly or indirectly influence, or be perceived to influence, a staff member in the performance of their duties, particularly in relation to compliance, regulatory matters, or development assessments
- 4.5. The General Manager may identify Council support staff under this Policy for the management of requests from Councillors.
- 4.6. Councillors can use the Councillor requests system to:
 - a. request information or ask questions that relate to the strategic position, performance or operation of the Council
 - b. bring concerns that have been raised by members of the public to the attention of staff
 - c. request ICT or other support from the Council administration
 - d. request that a staff member be present at a meeting (other than a meeting of the Council) for the purpose of providing advice to the meeting.
- 4.7. Councillors must, to the best of their knowledge, be specific about what information they are requesting, and make their requests respectfully. Where a Councillor's request lacks specificity, the General Manager or staff member authorised to manage the matter is entitled to ask the Councillor to clarify their request and the reason(s) why they are seeking the information.
- 4.8. Authorised staff must make every reasonable effort to assist Councillors with their requests and do so in a respectful manner.
- 4.9. The General Manager or the staff member authorised to manage a Councillor request will provide a response within ten (10) working days. Where a response cannot be provided within that timeframe, the Councillor will be advised, and the information will be provided as soon as practicable.
- 4.10. Requests under clause 4.6 (d) must be made three (3) working days before the meeting. The General Manager, or members of staff that are listed at Schedule 1 of this Policy, are responsible for determining:

- a. whether a staff member can attend the meeting; and
- b. which staff member will attend the meeting.

Staff members who attend such meetings must be appropriately senior and be subject matter experts on the issues to be discussed at the meeting.

- 4.11. Councillors are required to treat all information provided by staff appropriately and to observe any confidentiality requirements.
- 4.12. Staff will inform Councillors of any confidentiality requirements for information they provide so Councillors can handle the information appropriately.
- 4.13. Where a Councillor is unsure of confidentiality requirements, they should contact the General Manager, or the staff member authorised to manage their request.
- 4.14. The General Manager may refuse access to information requested by a Councillor if:
 - a. the information is not necessary for the performance of the Councillor's civic functions, or
 - b. if responding to the request would, in the General Manager's opinion, result in an unreasonable diversion of staff time and resources, or
 - c. the Councillor has previously declared a conflict of interest in the matter and removed themselves from decision-making on it, or
 - d. the General Manager is prevented by law from disclosing the information.
- 4.15. Where the General Manager refuses to provide information requested by a Councillor, they must act reasonably. The General Manager must advise a Councillor in writing of their reasons for refusing access to the information requested.
- 4.16. Where a Councillor's request for information is refused by the General Manager on the grounds referred to under clause 4.12 (a) or (b), the Councillor may instead request the information through a resolution of the Council by way of a notice of motion. This clause does not apply where the General Manager refuses a Councillor's request for information under clause 4.12 (c) or (d).
- 4.17. Nothing in clauses 4.12, 4.13, and 4.14 prevents a Councillor from requesting the information in accordance with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.
- 4.18. Where a Councillor persistently makes requests for information which, in the General Manager's opinion, result in a significant and unreasonable diversion of staff time and resources, the Council may, on the advice of the General Manager, resolve to limit the number of requests the Councillor may make.
- 4.19. Councillor requests are state records and must be managed in accordance with the *State Records Act 1998*.

5. Access to Council Staff

- 5.1. Councillors may directly contact members of staff that are listed in Schedule 1 of this Policy. The General Manager may amend this list at any time and will advise Councillors promptly of any changes.
- 5.2. Councillors can contact the staff listed in Schedule 1 about matters that relate to the staff member's area of responsibility
- 5.3. Councillors should, as far as practicable, only contact staff during normal business hours.
- 5.4. If Councillors would like to contact a member of staff not listed in Schedule 1, they must receive permission from the General Manager.

- 5.5. If a Councillor is unsure which authorised staff member can help with their enquiry, they can contact the General Manager or the Executive Officer who will provide advice about which authorised staff member to contact.
- 5.6. The General Manager or a member of the Council's Executive Leadership Team may direct any staff member to contact Councillors to provide specific information or clarification relating to a specific matter.
- 5.7. A Councillor or member of staff must not take advantage of their official position to improperly influence other Councillors or members of staff in the performance of their civic or professional duties for the purposes of securing a private benefit for themselves or for another person. Such conduct should be immediately reported to the General Manager or Mayor in the first instance or alternatively to the Office of Local Government, NSW Ombudsman, or the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption.

6. Councillor access to Council buildings

- 6.1. Councillors are entitled to access the Council chamber, Mayor's Office (subject to availability), and public areas of Council's buildings during normal business hours for meetings. Councillors needing access to these facilities at other times must obtain approval from the General Manager.
- 6.2. Councillors must not enter staff-only areas of Council buildings without the approval of the General Manager.

7. Appropriate and inappropriate interactions

- 7.1. Examples of appropriate interactions between Councillors and staff include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Councillors and Council staff are courteous and display a positive and professional attitude towards one another
 - b. Council staff ensure that information necessary for Councillors to exercise their civic functions is made equally available to all Councillors, in accordance with this Policy and any other relevant Council policies
 - c. Council staff record the advice they give to Councillors in the same way they would if it was provided to members of the public
 - d. Council staff, including Council's Executive Leadership Team members, document Councillor requests
 - e. Council meetings and Councillor briefings are used to establish positive working relationships and help Councillors gain an understanding of the complex issues related to their civic duties
 - f. Councillors and Council staff feel supported when seeking and providing clarification about Council related business
 - g. Councillors forward requests through the Councillor requests system and staff respond in accordance with the timeframes stipulated in this Policy.
- 7.2. Examples of inappropriate interactions between Councillors and staff include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Councillors and Council staff conducting themselves in a manner which:
 - i. is contrary to their duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and their responsibilities under any policies or procedures adopted by the Council to ensure workplace health and safety

- ii. constitutes harassment and/or bullying within the meaning of the *Code of Conduct*, or is unlawfully discriminatory
 - b. Councillors approaching staff and staff organisations to discuss individual or operational staff matters, grievances, workplace investigations and disciplinary matters
 - c. staff approaching Councillors to discuss individual or operational staff matters, grievances, workplace investigations and disciplinary matters
 - d. subject to clause 5.12, staff refusing to give information that is available to other Councillors to a particular Councillor
 - e. Councillors who have lodged an application with the Council, discussing the matter with staff in staff-only areas of the Council
 - f. Councillors being overbearing or threatening to staff
 - g. staff being overbearing or threatening to Councillors
 - h. Councillors making personal attacks on staff or engaging in conduct towards staff that would be contrary to the general conduct provisions in Part 3 of the *Code of Conduct* in public forums, including social media
 - i. Councillors directing or pressuring staff in the performance of their work, or recommendations they should make
 - j. staff providing ad hoc advice to Councillors without recording or documenting the interaction as they would if the advice was provided to a member of the community.
- 7.3. Where a Councillor engages in conduct that, in the opinion of the General Manager, puts the health, safety or welfare of staff at risk, the General Manager may restrict the Councillor's access to staff.
- 7.4. Any concerns relating to the conduct of staff under this Policy should be raised with the General Manager.

8. Complaints

- 8.1. Complaints about a breach of this policy should be made to the General Manager (if the complaint is about a Councillor or member of Council staff), or the Mayor (if the complaint is about the General Manager).
- 8.2. Clause 8.1 does not operate to prevent matters being reported to OLG, the NSW Ombudsman, the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption or any other external agency.

9. Related Policy/Procedure

- 9.1. Code of Conduct.

History

Minute Number	Meeting Date	Description of Change

Schedule 1 – Authorised staff contacts for Councillors

1. Clause 5.1 of this Policy provides that Councillors may directly contact members of staff that are listed below. The General Manager may amend this list at any time.
2. Councillors can contact the staff listed below about matters related to the staff member’s area of responsibility.
3. Councillors should, as far as practicable, only contact staff during normal business hours.
4. If Councillors would like to contact a member of staff not listed below, they must receive permission from the General Manager or their delegate.
5. If a Councillor is unsure which authorised staff member can help with their enquiry, they can contact the General Manager or Executive Officer, who will provide advice about which authorised staff member to contact.
6. In some instances, the General Manager or a Council’s Executive Leadership Team member may direct a Council staff member to contact Councillors to provide specific information or clarification relating to a specific matter.

Position	Matters
General Manager (Megan Dixon)	All matters of strategic significance, particularly those that may be controversial, attract media attention or present an imminent risk to a person or property. Other matters for the GM include partnerships and contracts, unresolved customer complaints, and urgent out-of-hours contact.
Director Infrastructure and Compliance (Kazi Mahmud)	Roads, water, wastewater, waste, land use planning, regulatory compliance, and asset management.
Director People, Place and Liveability (Carisa Wells)	Libraries, community services, youth services, customer service, economic development, visitor economy, cemeteries, aerodromes, property (halls, showground, etc), pools and aquatic facilities, and public and recreational spaces.
Chief Financial Officer (Ernest Mhande)	Finance and fleet.
Executive Officer (Sherisse Fensom)	Administrative assistance. Scheduling time with General Manager.
Manager Governance and Integrity (Vacant)	Meeting procedures and practices and in their capacity as the Code of Conduct Complaints Coordinator or Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator

ITEM 11.15 COUNCILLOR EXPENSES AND FACILITIES REPORT

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Brown, Special Projects (Governance, Risk and HR)
PURPOSE	For decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council place the Draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, inviting submissions from the public, after which time the Policy shall be reported back to Council for adoption with a summary of submissions received.

Executive Summary

This report presents the draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy, a requirement under the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) (the Act) following a General Election.

The policy has been reviewed and updated to align with the Office of Local Government's (OLG) Model Policy and reflect current operational requirements. The draft policy outlines the entitlements for Councillor expenses and facilities, ensuring they can fulfil their civic duties effectively.

The policy is being recommended for public exhibition for 28 days, allowing for community and stakeholder feedback before final adoption by Council.

Background

This policy ensures that Councillors have access to reasonable and necessary expenses and facilities to effectively support their duties.

Pursuant to Section 252 of the Act, Councils are required to review their Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy within the first 12 months of each new Council term. The current Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities for Councillors was last reviewed by Council on 20 December 2022.

The draft policy has been developed using the OLG's model template and is aligned with both legislative requirements and best practice standards.

Current Situation

The draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy has been reviewed to align with the OLG Model Policy and ensure compliance with the Act. The last review of this policy was conducted in December 2022.

The draft policy sets out the limits for various expenses, including professional development, conferences, and travel, providing clearer guidelines for Councillor entitlements. These limits are based on the OLG's recommendations and ensure transparency and accountability in the allocation of expenses.

In accordance with statutory requirements, the draft policy will be placed on public exhibition for 28 days to allow for public submissions before it is presented to Council for final adoption.

The primary amendments in the draft policy, as compared to the currently adopted policy, are outlined below:

- **Approval Process:** The draft policy clarifies that a completed Expense Claim Form signed by the Councillor and General Manager must accompany reimbursement requests.
- **Private Motor Vehicle Use:** The draft policy requires Councillors to keep a logbook for private vehicle use.

- **Air Travel Class:** The draft policy sets a travel class for flights over three hours, while the existing policy does not restrict travel class.
- **Professional Development Pooling:** The draft policy permits Councillors to pool professional development funds for shared training sessions.
- **Legal Expenses Criteria:** The draft policy adds conditions for legal expense reimbursements, including Council's approval and rate limitations.
- **Accompanying Person Expenses:** The draft policy specifies that the Council will consider costs for accompanying persons outside the local area. The existing policy provides no guidance on this matter.
- **Mayor's Mobile Phone Use:** The draft policy offers the Mayor a reimbursement option if they prefer to use a personal phone, while the existing policy assumes a Council-provided phone only.
- **Mayor's Vehicle:** The draft policy outlines additional responsibilities for vehicle upkeep, such as keeping it clean and checking its roadworthiness. The existing policy does not specify these tasks.
- **Insurance Coverage:** The draft policy explicitly includes travel insurance for official trips, which was omitted from the existing policy.
- **Care Expenses Cap:** The draft policy caps care expenses at \$30 per hour, up to \$2,500 annually, while the existing policy does not include a defined cap.

Consultation

The draft policy has been prepared in alignment with the Office of Local Government's (OLG) Model Policy, ensuring it meets best practice standards and legislative requirements.

Public consultation will be carried out during the 28-day exhibition period, providing the community and stakeholders with an opportunity to review the draft policy and submit feedback. This process ensures transparency and allows Council to consider any community input before adopting the final version of the policy.

Financial and Resource Implications

The expenses contained with the Policy have been incorporated into the Annual Budget process.

Legislation and Policy Implications

The draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy complies with the Act and reflects the guidelines set out by the OLG. The policy ensures that Councillors have access to the necessary expenses and facilities while adhering to legislative requirements.

Legal and Risk Considerations

Endorsing the draft policy and proceeding with the public exhibition process ensures that Council meets its legislative obligations.

Failure to review and adopt this policy would result in non-compliance with the Act.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

G 3.2 Implement governance and financial management process that support the effective administration of Council

3.2.1 Develop processes that ensure that legislative and financial standards are actioned in a timely manner.

Alternative Options

Council could choose to amend the draft policy further or delay the public exhibition. However, the draft policy has been developed in line with the OLG’s Model Policy and legislative obligations, ensuring it is fit for purpose.

Conclusion

The Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy has been reviewed and updated to meet legislative requirements and the organisation's needs.

Public exhibition will allow for further consultation and ensure transparency in the policy’s adoption. In accordance with the Act, it is recommended that the draft policy be placed on public exhibition for 28 days. Following the exhibition period, a further report will be presented to Council.

Attachments

1. Draft - Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy



COUNCILLOR EXPENSES AND FACILITIES POLICY

Document Owner: Council
Responsible Department: Executive Services
Responsible Section: Governance and Integrity
Responsible Officer: Manager Governance and Integrity
Effective Date:

Policy Statement

Pursuant to section 252 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), Council must adopt a policy that guides the payment of expenses incurred or to be incurred and the provision of facilities to Councillors in relation to discharging the functions of Civic Office.

The Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy (the Policy) ensures accountability and transparency in the reimbursement of expenses incurred by the Mayor and Councillors. The Policy establishes a framework, based on the requirements of the Act, for the payment of expenses and provision of facilities to the Mayor and Councillors.

The Policy provides for adequate, fair, and equitable payment or reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities to the Mayor and Councillors to enable efficient discharge of the functions of Civic Office. The Policy applies to all Walgett Shire Council Councillors, including the Mayor.

Expenses and facilities provided by the Policy are in addition to fees paid to Councillors as outlined by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal pursuant to section 241 of the Act and as set through a resolution of Council.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Accompanying person	Means a spouse, partner or de facto or other person who has a close personal relationship with or provides carer support to a councillor
Appropriate meals and refreshments	Means food and beverages, excluding alcohol, provided by council to support councillors undertaking official business
Act	Means the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> (NSW)
Clause	Unless stated otherwise, a reference to a clause is a reference to a clause of this policy
Code of Conduct	Means the Code of Conduct adopted by Council.

Councillor	Means a person elected or appointed to civic office as a member of the governing body of Council who is not suspended, including the Mayor
General Manager	Means the General Manager of Council and includes their delegate or authorised representative
Incidental private use	Means use that is infrequent and brief and use that does not breach this policy or the Code of Conduct
Official Business	Means a Councillor's attendance at Council meetings, meetings of Committees or groups where they have been appointed to represent the Council, attendance at Council events where they have been officially invited in their capacity as a Councillor, or participation in any activity approved by Council resolution where they have been authorised to represent the Council.
Professional Development	Means a seminar, conference, training course or other development opportunity relevant to the role of a Councillor or the Mayor

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The provision of expenses and facilities enables councillors to fulfil their civic duties as the elected representatives of Walgett Shire Council.
- 1.2. The community is entitled to know the extent of expenses paid to councillors, as well as the facilities provided.
- 1.3. The purpose of this policy is to clearly state the facilities and support that are available to councillors to assist them in fulfilling their civic duties.
- 1.4. Council staff are empowered to question or refuse a request for payment from a councillor when it does not accord with this policy.

2. Policy Objectives

- 2.1. The objectives of this policy are to:
 - a. enable the reasonable and appropriate reimbursement of expenses incurred by councillors while undertaking their civic duties
 - b. enable facilities of a reasonable and appropriate standard to be provided to councillors to support them in undertaking their civic duties
 - c. ensure accountability and transparency in reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities to councillors
 - d. ensure facilities and expenses provided to councillors meet community expectations
 - e. support a diversity of representation
 - f. fulfil the council's statutory responsibilities.

3. Principles

- 3.1. Council commits to the following principles:

- a. Proper conduct: councillors and staff acting lawfully and honestly, exercising care and diligence in carrying out their functions
 - b. Reasonable expenses: providing for councillors to be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred as part of their role as councillor
 - c. Participation and access: enabling people from diverse backgrounds, underrepresented groups, those in carer roles and those with special needs to serve as a Councillor
 - d. Equity: there must be equitable access to expenses and facilities for all councillors
 - e. Appropriate use of resources: providing clear direction on the appropriate use of council resources in accordance with legal requirements and community expectations
 - f. Accountability and transparency: clearly stating and reporting on the expenses and facilities provided to councillors.
- 4. Private or political benefit**
- 4.1. Councillors must not obtain private or political benefit from any expense or facility provided under this policy.
 - 4.2. Private use of council equipment and facilities by councillors may occur from time to time. For example, telephoning home to advise that a council meeting will run later than expected.
 - 4.3. Such incidental private use does not require a compensatory payment back to council.
 - 4.4. Councillors should avoid obtaining any greater private benefit from Council than an incidental benefit. Where there are unavoidable circumstances and more substantial private use of council facilities does occur, councillors must reimburse the council.
 - 4.5. Campaigns for re-election are considered to be a political benefit. The following are examples of what is considered to be a political interest during a re-election campaign:
 - a. production of election material
 - b. use of council resources and equipment for campaigning
 - c. use of official council letterhead, publications, websites or services for political benefit
 - d. fundraising activities of political parties or individuals, including political fundraising events.
 - 4.6. Where it is appropriate for the Mayor or a Councillor to give a gift or benefit (for example, on a Council related business trip or when receiving visitors), these gifts and benefits should be of a value no greater than the quantum for acceptable gifts established by the Walgett Shire Council Code of Conduct.
 - 4.7. Where the Mayor or a Councillor gives a gift or benefit, they are to advise the General Manager in writing as soon as reasonably practicable afterwards. The gift or benefit must be recorded on Council's gifts and benefits register.
 - 4.8. Councillors will not be reimbursed for alcoholic beverages under any circumstances.

Chapter 2: Payment of Expenses

5. Approval of Expenses

- 5.1. No allowances or expenses other than those explicitly contained in the Policy are payable to the Mayor or Councillors.

5.2. Where possible, expenses should be paid via Council's procurement system. However, it is accepted that in some instances, this would not be possible or feasible. In such cases, the Mayor of Councillors may seek reimbursement of approved expenses.

5.3. Reimbursement Approval Process

- a. Reimbursement of expenses shall only be made upon the production of tax invoices and a completed Expense Claim Form signed by the claiming Councillor and the General Manager.
- b. A claim for reimbursement of expenses must be lodged within thirty (30) days of the end of the previous calendar month on an Expense Claim form.
- c. The General Manager will ensure that a Councillor is reimbursed within thirty (30) days of receiving a correctly completed Expense Claim Form with all relevant tax invoices attached.

6. Specific Expenses

6.1. Travel for official business.

- a. Travel for official business is an essential function of Councillors, enabling them to fulfil their roles effectively and represent the Council's interests.
- b. Council will bear the costs associated with travel to and from official business, provided that the journey is undertaken via the most direct and efficient route. Where road travel is deemed the most appropriate method of transportation, the use of a Council vehicle is strongly preferred, where such a vehicle is available and practical for the intended purpose.
- c. In cases where a Councillor is required to attend a meeting of a Committee or group to which they have been appointed as the Council representative and such a meeting is outside the Local Government Area, the Councillor must seek the Mayor and General Manager's approval before incurring any expenses associated with their attendance.
- d. Councillors seeking approval for any overseas travel must submit a case to and obtain the approval of a full council meeting prior to travel.
- e. Airfares must be booked and paid for by the General Manager prior to incurring any expenses.
- f. Economy class air travel is to be used for journeys by air of less than three hours.
- g. If available, premium economy may be the class of air travel for journeys by air of more than three hours. Otherwise, it is to be economy.
- h. When Councillors travel by air for official Council business, any accrued frequent flyer points shall be credited to the Walgett Shire Council's business account, where such an account exists. In the absence of a Council business account, Councillors are not permitted to accrue frequent flyer points or any other travel-related benefits for personal use.
- i. It is acknowledged that there may be occasions when Councillors are required to incur their own costs of travel for official business. Examples would include parking costs, tolls, taxi or ride-share costs. In such cases, these costs will be reimbursed in accordance with clause 5.3 of this policy.
- j. Reimbursement for using a private motor vehicle is calculated on a cents-per-kilometre basis at the rate contained in the *Local Government (State) Award*.

- k. Councillors should travel using the most direct route and the most practicable and economical mode of transport.
- l. Where possible, Councillors should carpool when more than one Councillor attends the same civic function.
- m. Councillors seeking to be reimbursed for use of a private vehicle must keep a logbook recording the date, distance and purpose of travel being claimed. Copies of the relevant logbook contents must be provided with the claim.
- n. Costs of traffic or parking fines incurred whilst travelling in a private or Council vehicle on Council-related business are the driver's responsibility and are not eligible for reimbursement.
- o. In circumstances where it would introduce undue risk for a Councillor to travel to or from official business in the late evening or early morning, reimbursement of costs for accommodation and meals on the night before or after the meeting may be approved by the general manager. This includes where a meeting or event finishes later than 9.00pm or starts earlier than 7.00am and the Councillor lives more than 50 kilometres from the location.

6.2. Attendance at Conferences and Seminars

- a. Councillors may nominate or be nominated by Council to attend conferences, seminars, or similar functions through a resolution passed in Open Council.
- b. If notice of a conference is brought to the attention of Council, where registration deadlines will not permit a Councillor(s) nomination to be presented in an open session of a Council Meeting, the Mayor and General Manager may approve the attendance of a Councillor to the nominated conference, seminar or similar function. If the Mayor is the nominated Councillor, then the Deputy Mayor and General Manager may approve the attendance of the Mayor to the nominated conference, seminar or similar function.
- c. If approval is given under the above-delegated authority, all Councillors will be notified that the authority has been exercised.
- d. The Mayor shall not be precluded from nominating a substitute attendee for functions on those occasions where the Mayor is unable to be in attendance.
- e. Where the Mayor or a Councillor has been authorised to attend a conference, seminar, or similar function, the Council will pay the following expenses:
 - i. All registration costs, including those relating to official luncheons, dinners, and tours relevant to the Council's interests
 - ii. Travel, per clause 6.1 of the Policy.
 - iii. Accommodation.
 - iv. Food expenses, including during travel to and from the conference, seminar or similar function.
 - v. The daily limits for accommodation and meal expenses within Australia are to be consistent with those set out in Part B Monetary Rates of the *NSW Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009*, as adjusted annually. Alternatively, reimbursement may be provided based on reasonableness as determined by the Mayor and the General Manager.

- vi. The daily limits for accommodation and meal expenses outside Australia are to be determined in advance by the Mayor and General Manager, being mindful of Clause 6.2(e)(v).
- vii. Reasonable and necessary out-of-pocket expenses.

6.3. Attendance at Dinners and Other Non-Council Functions

- a. Councillors may seek Council approval to attend dinners and other non-Council functions. Examples of such functions may include invitations from the Government, key community members, community groups, politicians, or relevant businesses or organisations.
- b. When approving such requests, Council will ensure that the function aligns with and is relevant to the Council's interests.
- c. If notice of a conference is brought to the attention of Council, where registration deadlines will not permit a Councillor(s) nomination to be presented in an open session of a Council Meeting, the Mayor and General Manager may approve the attendance of a Councillor to the nominated conference, seminar or similar function. If the Mayor is the nominated Councillor, then the Deputy Mayor and General Manager may approve the attendance of the Mayor to the nominated conference, seminar or similar function.
- d. If approval is given under the above-delegated authority, all Councillors will be notified that the authority has been exercised.
- e. Where the Mayor or a Councillor has been authorised to attend a dinner or other non-Council function, the Council will pay the following expenses:
 - i. All registration costs, including those relating to official luncheons, dinners, and tours relevant to the Council's interests
 - ii. Travel, per clause 6.1 of the Policy.
 - iii. Accommodation.
 - iv. Food expenses, including during travel to and from the conference, seminar or similar function.
 - v. The daily limits for accommodation and meal expenses within Australia are to be consistent with those set out in Part B Monetary Rates of the *NSW Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009*, as adjusted annually. Alternatively, reimbursement may be provided based on reasonableness as determined by the Mayor and the General Manager.
 - vi. The daily limits for accommodation and meal expenses outside Australia are to be determined in advance by the Mayor and General Manager, being mindful of Clause 6.2(e)(v).
 - vii. Reasonable and necessary out-of-pocket expenses.
- f. Council will not reimburse Councillors for any component of their attendance that is additional to the service cost of the function, such as a donation to a political party or candidate electoral fund or some other private benefit.
- g. The fundraising activities of political parties, including political fundraising events, are personal interests. Council will not pay expenses or provide facilities to Councillors in relation to supporting and/or attending such activities or events.

6.4. Attendance at Professional Development Opportunities

- a. Each year, Council will set aside an annual amount per Councillor in its budget to facilitate their professional development.
- b. Councillors, except the Mayor, may seek approval from the Mayor and General Manager to attend professional development opportunities that benefit the Council's operations, governance, or strategic objectives.
- c. The Mayor, may seek approval from the Deputy Mayor and General Manager to attend professional development opportunities that benefit the Council's operations, governance, or strategic objectives.
- d. Such opportunities may include workshops, training sessions, or courses that enhance a Councillor's skills, knowledge, or expertise relevant to their role.
- e. Approval for attendance will be based on the relevance and potential benefit of the professional development activity to the Council and must align with the Council's priorities and goals.
- f. If a Councillor exhausts their entire annual professional development allowance, no further approvals for additional expenses will be granted except by a resolution of the Council. Any increase in a Councillor's allowance through such a resolution must be matched by a corresponding decrease in the remaining budget allocated to other Councillors, ensuring that the overall budget for professional development is not exceeded.
- g. The budget allocation for each Councillor must cover all expenses incurred for professional development, including attendance fees, travel, accommodation, and food. Councillors have the option to self-fund any part of a professional development opportunity if they choose to do so. This allows Councillors to participate in opportunities that exceed their allocated budget by covering the additional costs themselves.
- h. Councillors may pool their allocated professional development funds to collectively participate in group training sessions or other shared development opportunities. This allows for collaborative learning experiences that can benefit multiple Councillors and enhance the overall effectiveness of the Council.

6.5. Reporting Requirements

- a. Councillors will report, in writing, in an open session of a Council Meeting on the outcome of any event they attend in accordance with clauses 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 of this Policy. The report will be submitted to the General Manager (or their delegate) within one (1) month of the Councillor's attendance at the event.
- b. If a number of Councillors attend the same event, a single report may be submitted on behalf of all Councillors that attended; however, the report must be signed by all Councillors that were in attendance.
- c. The report to Council will be in writing and include the following:
 - i. The purpose/subject matter of the event including their reason for attendance and how the event aligned to Council's objectives.
 - ii. The agenda of the event.
 - iii. Any items of interest to Council discussed at the event.
 - iv. Recommendations for further areas of action or investigation (if applicable).

6.4. Legal Expenses and Assistance

- a. Council may, if requested, indemnify, or reimburse the reasonable legal expenses of:
 - i. a Councillor defending an action arising from the performance in good faith of a function under the Local Government Act provided that the outcome of the legal proceedings is favourable to the Councillor
 - ii. a Councillor defending an action in defamation, provided the statements complained of were made in good faith in the course of exercising a function under the Act and the outcome of the legal proceedings is favourable to the Councillor
 - iii. a Councillor for proceedings before an appropriate investigative or review body, provided the subject of the proceedings arises from the performance in good faith of a function under the Act and the matter has proceeded past any initial assessment phase to a formal investigation or review and the investigative or review body makes a finding substantially favourable to the Councillor.
- b. In the case of a Code of Conduct complaint made against a Councillor, legal costs will only be made available where the General Manager has referred the matter to a conduct reviewer and the conduct reviewer has commenced a formal investigation of the matter and makes a finding substantially favourable to the Councillor
- c. Legal expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising out of the performance by a Councillor of his or her functions under the Act are distinguished from expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising merely from something that a Councillor has done during his or her term in office. For example, expenses arising from an investigation as to whether a Councillor acted corruptly would not be covered by this section.
 - i. Legal expenses that relate to expenses incurred in the event of any enquiry, investigation or hearing by any of the following shall not be reimbursed by Council:
 - ii. The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC);
 - iii. The Office of the Ombudsman;
 - iv. The Office of Local Government;.
 - v. The Police;
 - vi. The Director of Public Prosecutions;
 - vii. The Local Government Pecuniary Interest and Disciplinary Tribunal into the conduct of a Councillor;
 - viii. Any commission, tribunal, or Court constituted by the Commonwealth or a State or Territory Government of Australia;
 - ix. The Australia's Securities Commission; or
 - x. A combination of the above.
- d. Council will not meet the legal costs:
 - xi. Of legal proceedings initiated by a Councillor under any circumstances;
 - xii. Of a Councillor seeking advice in respect of possible defamation, or in seeking a non-litigious remedy for possible defamation; or

- xiii. For legal proceedings that do not involve a Councillor performing their role as a Councillor.
- d. Reimbursement of expenses for reasonable legal expenses must have Council approval by way of a resolution at a council meeting prior to costs being incurred, provided that the following criteria is met:
 - i. Approval of the General Manager, in writing, is sought and gained prior to any legal expense being incurred.
 - ii. The amount of such reimbursement shall be reduced by the amount of any monies that may be or are recouped by the Councillor on any basis.
 - iii. The Councillor's performance or exercise of the civic duty or function was in the opinion of Council bona fide and/or proper, and the Councillor acted in good faith as required under section 731 of the Act.
 - iv. The amount of such reimbursement shall be limited to the extent that only fees charged at a rate equivalent to the hourly rate then being charged by Council's Solicitors will be paid (for example, any portion of the expenses representing any hourly charge rate higher than the hourly charge rate of Council's Solicitor will not be reimbursed).
 - v. The Council is not the plaintiff in the action.
 - vi. Any reimbursement shall not include any action by one Councillor against another Councillor.
 - vii. The enquiry, investigation, hearing or proceeding results in a finding that is not substantially unfavourable to the Mayor or Councillor.

6.4. Care and Other Related Expenses

- a. Council will reimburse a Councillor's reasonable expenses to cover engagement of a babysitter or carer where required to enable the Councillor to attend any Council, official business.
- b. Other than where a carer is required by a Councillor themselves, Council will meet the reasonable expenses for the care (that is actually and necessarily incurred by a Councillor whilst attending Council and Committee Meetings, and Council workshops) of:
 - i. A child of the Councillor; or
 - ii. A dependent of the Councillor requiring full-time care.
- c. Council will not meet the reasonable expenses for the care of a child or a dependent of the Councillor if the care is provided by a relative of the Councillor.
- d. A Councillor is entitled to make a submission to the General Manager, in writing, for special consideration regarding care, for which a recommendation will be put to Council.
- e. In addition to the provisions above, the General Manager may authorise the provision of reasonable additional facilities and expenses in order to allow a Councillor with a disability to perform their civic duties.

6.5. Accompanying Person Expenses

- a. Where the Mayor or Councillor is required to attend a conference, seminar, professional development opportunity or similar function to undertake their civic duties, all costs for, or incurred by, the accompanying person, including travel,

breakfast, meals, registration and/or participation in any conference programs, are to be borne by the Councillor/accompanying person and not by the Council.

- b. Where the Mayor or a Councillor is accompanied at an official Council function within the local government area, all travel and subsistence costs for or incurred by the accompanying person will be met by the Council.
- c. Where the Mayor or a Councillor representing the Mayor is accompanied at an official Council function or carrying out an official ceremonial duty outside the local government area (but within the State) the payment of all travel and subsistence costs for, or incurred by, the accompanying person, will be considered by Council.

6.6. Insurances

- a. Pursuant to Section 382 of the Act, Council is insured against public liability and professional indemnity claims. Councillors are included as a named insured.
- b. Insurance protection is only provided if a claim arises out of or in connection with the Councillor's performance of his or her civic duties, or exercise of his or her functions as a Councillor. All insurances are subject to any limitations or conditions set out in the policies of insurance
- c. Council shall pay the insurance policy excess in respect of any claim accepted by council's insurers, whether defended or not.
- d. Appropriate travel insurances will be provided for any Councillors travelling on approved interstate and overseas travel on council business. Councillors while on Council related business shall receive the benefit of insurance cover for:
 - i. Personal Accident (including sickness and journey/travel).;
 - ii. Public Liability;
 - iii. Professional Indemnity; or
 - iv. Councillor and Officers Liability.

7. Provision of Facilities (and Equipment) for Councillors

- 7.1. All equipment provided to Councillors under the Policy shall remain the property of the Council and be returned in good condition to the Council upon the Mayor or Councillor ceasing to hold Civic Office.
- 7.2. Council will provide reasonable facilities and equipment to each Councillor to ensure that they can undertake their civic duties in an appropriate and efficient manner.
 - a. Reasonable facilities shall include those outlined in Clauses 7 and 8 of the Policy and any other aid to support the Mayor and the Councillors in undertaking their civic duties at the discretion of the General Manager in accordance with Council's policies and the Act.
- 7.3. Councillors will be issued with business cards (the amount to be determined at the discretion of the General Manager). Replacements will be provided upon written request.
- 7.4. Provision of appropriate meals and refreshments associated with Councillor attendance at Council and Committee Meetings and Councillor workshops or at any other time deemed appropriate by the Mayor or General Manager whilst on Council related business.
- 7.5. Councillors will be provided with portable devices connected to the internet to assist in undertaking civic duties.

- a. Facilities provided will consist of an iPad (or other portable computing device that is reasonably acceptable) with accessories (including carry case and keyboard).
- b. Computer facilities shall be dealt with in accordance with the relevant legislation and the Walgett Shire Council *Code of Conduct*.

8. Provision of Additional Facilities (and Equipment) for the Mayor

8.1. Mayoral Office

- a. Council will provide a furnished office at the Council Administration building located in Narrabri to enable the Mayor to undertake civic duties. The office furnishings will include:
 - v. Provision of a computer and associated software packages (with internet connection).
 - vi. Provision of a telephone (including all call costs).

8.2. Executive assistant support, from a suitably experienced and qualified resource, will be provided during normal office hours to aid and support to the Mayor in the conduct of their civic duties.

8.3. Council will provide the Mayor with Mayoral robes and the Chain of Office.

8.4. The Mayor will be provided with a mobile phone to enable them to undertake their civic duties effectively. The mobile phone is intended primarily for official Council business, and its use for private purposes must not exceed the limits set out in this Policy. Any private use beyond what is permitted will need to be reimbursed in accordance with Council's guidelines.

8.5. The Mayor may, at their discretion, opt to use their personal mobile phone and number in place of a Council-provided mobile phone. In such instances, the Council will reimburse the Mayor as specified in Schedule 1 of this Policy, subject to the conditions outlined in clause 5 of this Policy.

8.6. Provision of a Motor Vehicle

- a. Council will provide to the Mayor, at its cost, a registered, insured, maintained and fuelled vehicle for use by the Mayor on official duties and for private use.
- b. The vehicle is provided on the following basis:
 - i. The changeover of the vehicle is to occur in accordance with Council's Fleet Replacement Program.
 - ii. The Mayor is to be provided with a suitably equipped vehicle commensurate with the requirements of the Office of Mayor in accordance with Council's Fleet Policy and related Operational Protocols that are in place at the time of purchase.
 - iii. The Mayor is to enter into Council's standard agreement for the use of the vehicle, which is the subject of this Policy
- c. The vehicle is to be kept in a clean and tidy condition to ensure that a professional image of the Council is presented at all times, and to retain the capital value of the vehicle.
- d. The Mayor will ensure the general roadworthiness of the vehicle. This will include for example the checking of oil, fuel, coolant, brake fluid, lights, windscreen washers and wipers, water, battery and tyre tread and pressure, and taking corrective action where necessary as per vehicle specifications/manual

- e. The vehicle is to be serviced at required intervals through Council's Workshop and in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
- f. Smoking is not permitted under any circumstances in the vehicle, at any time, by any person.
- g. Animals are not permitted in the vehicle at any time, unless in the event of medical emergencies or natural disasters
- h. Wherever possible, the vehicle is to be garaged off-street.
- i. The Mayor and their nominated partner are entitled to drive the vehicle, provided that such a person is a fully licensed driver.
- j. If the Mayor is present in the vehicle, any competent and fully licenced driver may drive the vehicle. Under no circumstances is a person who does not hold a full license (such as a person who is unlicensed or holds a Learners or a Provisional Licence) is to drive the vehicle.
- k. The Mayor will be strictly responsible for all parking, traffic or other fines or infringements arising from the use of the vehicle whilst the vehicle is in their custody and possession, in accordance with Council's Fleet Policy and Operational Protocols.

9. Payment of Councillor fees

9.1. Pursuant to section 248 of the Act, Council shall, prior to 30 June each year, set by resolution, the annual fees to be paid to the Councillors for the following year commencing on 1 July provided that:

- a. Such fee shall be within the range for the Council determined annually by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal;
- b. Such payment shall be subject to clause 404 of the *Local Government Regulation 2021* and as resolved by Council pursuant to section 254A of the Act.

9.2. Councillors will be paid in accordance with the Act. Payments shall be:

- a. Broken down on a monthly basis;
- b. Include the amount of Superannuation as determined by the *Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992 (Cth)*; and
- c. Processed through Council's Payroll System.

10. Payment of Mayoral Fee

10.1. Pursuant to section 249 of the Act, Council shall, prior to 30 June each year, set by resolution, the annual fee to be paid to the Mayor for the following year commencing on 1 July provided that such fee shall be within the range for the Council determined annually by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal

10.2. The Mayor will be paid in accordance with the Act. Payments shall be:

- a. Broken down on a monthly basis;
- b. Include the amount of Superannuation as determined by the *Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992 (Cth)*; and
- c. Processed through Council's Payroll System.

11. Deductions

11.1. Unless otherwise provided, the payment of, or reimbursement of expenses and the facilities that may be provided under this Policy, shall be provided without reduction from

the annual fees payable to the Mayor and Councillors, as determined by the Council under sections 248 to 254 inclusive of the Act.

12. Dispute Resolution

- 12.1. Any dispute relating to the administration of the Policy must be made in writing to the General Manager detailing the grounds for the dispute. Any such disputes will be referred to the next scheduled Ordinary Meeting of Council for determination and resolution.

13. Breaches

- 13.1. Suspected breaches of this policy are to be reported to the General Manager.
- 13.2. Alleged breaches of this policy shall be dealt with by following the processes outlined for breaches of the Code of Conduct, as detailed in the Code and in the Procedures for the Administration of the Code.

14. Related Policy/Procedure

- 14.1. Code of Conduct.

History

Minute Number	Meeting Date	Description of Change

Schedule 1 – Summary of Expenses for Councillors

Expense Type	Refund Basis	Limit
Attendance at Conference, Seminar, or similar function - Registration	Actual	Nil
Accommodation and Food when on official business.	Actual	Consistent with those set out in Part B Monetary Rates of the <i>NSW Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009</i> , as adjusted annually.
Attendance at Dinners and other Non-Council Functions	Actual	Nil
Attendance at Professional Development Opportunities	Actual	Within the allocated budget and in accordance with the relevant clause of the Policy.
Travel - use of private motor vehicle	Rate per kilometre as determined in the Local Government (State) Award.	Nil
Travel – Air, Rail, Taxi, Bus, Parking or Tolls	Actual	Nil
Care and Other Related Expenses	Actual	\$30.00 per hour (up to \$2,500 per annum)
Accompanying Person Expenses - Official Council Functions Within Local Government Area (Travel and subsistence only)	Actual	Consistent with those set out in Part B Monetary Rates of the <i>NSW Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009</i> , as adjusted annually.
Accompanying Person Expenses - Official Council Functions Outside Local Government Area (Travel and subsistence only)	As determined by Council	As determined by Council
Mobile Phone and calls	Mayor Only	Up to a maximum of \$50.00 per month

ITEM 11.16 PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Brown, Special Projects (Governance, Risk and HR)
PURPOSE	For decision

RECOMMENDATION

That Council place the Draft Public Interest Disclosure Policy on public exhibition for a period of 28 days, inviting submissions from the public, after which time the Policy shall be reported back to Council for adoption with a summary of submissions received.

Executive Summary

Under the Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 (NSW), public agencies are required to adopt a Public Interest Disclosure Policy that contains certain elements that the Act prescribes. This report seeks Council's resolution to adopt that policy.

Background

Public Interest Disclosures are a vital bulwark against serious misconduct. They provide a framework under which public officials can report serious misconduct while protecting them from reprisals for doing so.

The Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 (NSW) (the Act) commenced on 1 October 2023. It is a requirement under the Act that public agencies have a policy that meets certain elements prescribed by the Act.

The existing policy, titled the Protected Disclosures Policy and Procedure, was adopted in 2020. However, it does not comply with the Act and does not align with the model policy recommended by the NSW Ombudsman's Office.

Current Situation

The NSW Ombudsman's Office has prepared and released a model PID Policy. This model policy has been amended to fit Walgett Shire Council's circumstances within the bounds of the Act and is presented to the Council for adoption.

Consultation

As this policy is a legislative requirement and given that it conforms to the established model policy prepared by the NSW Ombudsman's Office, no consultation has been undertaken in preparing this report. The policy's alignment with statutory obligations ensures that it meets the necessary legal standards without the need for additional stakeholder engagement at this stage.

Financial and Resource Implications

Nil

Legislation and Policy Implications

Section 42 of the Act requires agencies to implement a public interest disclosure policy. The attached policy has been developed to ensure Council fulfils its statutory obligations, with full alignment to the provisions of the current Act. The policy has been structured in accordance with the model policy to guarantee compliance.

Legal and Risk Considerations

Failure to adopt the proposed policy and repeal the former policy would result in Council not meeting its obligations under the Act. This could lead to significant risks, including the Council's inability to properly manage Public Interest Disclosures and protect informants, as required by law.

Non-compliance may expose Council to legal liabilities and undermine its capacity to safeguard the integrity

of the disclosure process.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

G 3.2 Implement governance and financial management process that support the effective administration of Council

3.2.1 Develop processes that ensure that legislative and financial standards are actioned in a timely manner

Alternative Options

Alternatives to the adoption of this policy are limited. Any alternative would be costly, as it would require Council to draft its own policy rather than utilising the model provided by the Ombudsman.

This approach would not only increase resource expenditure but also heighten the risk that a Council-drafted policy may fail to fully comply with the requirements of the Act, thereby exposing Council to potential legal and operational risks.

Conclusion

Adopting the Public Interest Disclosure Policy 2023 will ensure Council meets its obligations under the Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 (NSW) and provides a framework for managing disclosures while protecting informants.

Alternatives to adopting this policy are not viable, as they would be costly and increase the risk of non-compliance.

It is recommended that Council adopt the proposed policy and repeal the former Protected Disclosures Policy to maintain compliance with current legislation.

Attachments

1. Draft - Public Interest Disclosure Policy 2024



PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE POLICY

Document Owner:	Council
Responsible Department:	Executive Services
Responsible Section:	Governance and Integrity
Responsible Officer:	Manager Governance and Integrity
Effective Date:	

Purpose

All agencies in NSW are required to have a Public Interest Disclosure (PID) Policy under section 42 of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022* (PID Act).

At Walgett Shire Council we take reports of serious wrongdoing seriously. We are committed to building a 'speak up' culture where public officials are encouraged to report any conduct that they reasonably believe involves wrongdoing.

The integrity of our agency relies upon our staff, volunteers, contractors and subcontractors speaking up when they become aware of wrongdoing.

This policy sets out:

- how Walgett Shire Council will support and protect you if you come forward with a report of serious wrongdoing
- how we will deal with the report and our other responsibilities under the PID Act
- who to contact if you want to make a report
- how to make a report
- the protections which are available to you under the PID Act.

This policy also documents our commitment to building a speak up culture. Part of that speak up culture is having in place a framework that facilitates public interest reporting of wrongdoing by:

- protecting those who speak up from detrimental action
- imposing duties on agencies who receive reports of wrongdoing to take appropriate action to investigate or otherwise deal with them.

In NSW, that framework is the PID Act.

This policy should be read in conjunction with *The Code of Conduct* and other Council policies and directives.

Accessibility of this policy

This policy is available on Council's publicly available website.

A copy of the policy is available in all Council workplaces. A hard copy of the policy can be requested from Administration.

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to, and for the benefit of, all public officials in NSW. You are a public official if you are:

- a person employed in or by an agency or otherwise in the service of an agency
- a person having public official functions or acting in a public official capacity whose conduct or activities an integrity agency is authorised by another Act or law to investigate
- a Councillor
- an individual in the service of the Crown
- a statutory officer
- a person providing services or exercising functions on behalf of an agency, including a contractor, subcontractor or volunteer
- an employee, partner or officer of an entity that provides services, under contract, subcontract or other arrangement, on behalf of an agency or exercises functions of an agency, and are involved in providing those services or exercising those functions
- a judicial officer
- a Member of Parliament (MP), including a Minister
- a person employed under the *Members of Parliament Staff Act 2013*.

The General Manager, other nominated disclosure officers and managers within Walgett Shire Council have specific responsibilities under the PID Act. This policy also provides information on how people in these roles will fulfil their responsibilities. Other public officials who work in and for the public sector, but do not work for Walgett Shire Council may use this policy if they want information on who they can report wrongdoing to within Walgett Shire Council.

Who does this policy not apply to?

This policy does not apply to:

- people who have received services from an agency and want to make a complaint about those services
- people, such as contractors, who provide services to an agency. For example, employees of a company that sold computer software to an agency.

This means that if you are not a public official, this policy does not apply to your complaint (there are some circumstances where a complaint can be deemed to be a voluntary PID as outlined within this policy).

However, you can still make a complaint to Council. This can be done by following the procedure set out in the Complaints about Council Policy.

Compliance with the PID Act

What is contained in this policy?

This policy will provide you with information on the following:

- ways you can make a voluntary PID to Walgett Shire Council under the PID Act
- the names and contact details for the nominated disclosure officers in Walgett Shire Council
- the roles and responsibilities of people who hold particular roles under the PID Act and who are employees of Walgett Shire Council
- what information you will receive once you have made a voluntary PID
- protections available to people who make a report of serious wrongdoing under the PID Act and what we will do to protect you
- Walgett Shire Council procedures for dealing with disclosures
- Walgett Shire Council procedures for managing the risk of detrimental action and reporting detrimental action
- Walgett Shire Council record-keeping and reporting requirements
- how Walgett Shire Council will ensure it complies with the PID Act and this policy.

If you require further information about this policy, how public interest disclosures will be handled and the PID Act you can:

- confidentially contact a nominated disclosure officer within Walgett Shire Council
- contact the PID Advice Team within the NSW Ombudsman by phone: (02) 9286 1000 or email: pidadvice@ombo.nsw.gov.au, or
- access the NSW Ombudsman's PID guidelines which are available on its website.

If you require legal advice with respect to the PID Act or your obligations under the PID Act, you may need to seek independent legal advice.

How to make a report of serious wrongdoing

Reports, complaints and grievances

When a public official reports suspected or possible wrongdoing in the public sector, their report will be a PID if it has certain features which are set out in the PID Act.

Some internal complaints or internal grievances may also be PIDs, as long as they have the features of a PID. If an internal complaint or grievance is a report of serious wrongdoing, we will consider whether it is a PID. If it is a PID, we will deal with it as set out in this policy, but we will also make sure we follow our Code of Conduct and relevant industrial agreements.

It is important that we quickly recognise that we have received a PID. This is because once a PID is received, the person who has made the report is entitled to certain protections and we have certain decisions that we have to make on how we will deal with the PID and how we will protect and support the person who has made the report.

When will a report be a PID?

There are three types of PIDs in the PID Act. These are:

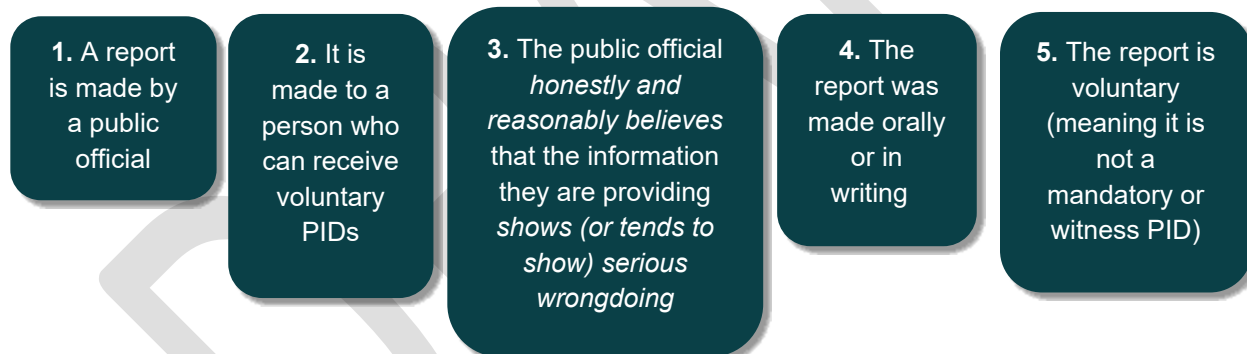
1. *Voluntary PID*: This is a PID where a report has been made by the public official because they decided, of their own accord, to come forward and disclose what they know.
2. *Mandatory PID*: This is a PID where the public official has made a report about serious wrongdoing because they have a legal obligation to make that report, or because making that report is an ordinary aspect of their role or function in an agency.
3. *Witness PID*: This is a PID where a person discloses information during an investigation of serious wrongdoing following a request or requirement of the investigator.

This policy mostly relates to making a voluntary PID and how we will deal with voluntary PIDs. People who make a mandatory PID or a witness PID are still entitled to protection. More information about protections is available in this policy.

You can find more information about mandatory and witness PIDs in the Ombudsman's guidelines 'Dealing with mandatory PIDs' and 'Dealing with witness PIDs'.

Voluntary PIDs are the kind of PIDs most people have in mind when they think about public interest reporting and 'whistleblowing'. They involve a public official making a report because they have information that they believe shows (or tends to show) serious wrongdoing, where they are not under a legal obligation to make that report and where it is not an ordinary part of their role to report such wrongdoing.

A report is a voluntary PID if it has the following five features, which are set out in sections 24 to 27 of the PID Act:



If the report has all five features, it is a voluntary PID.

You will not be expected to prove that what you reported actually happened or is serious wrongdoing. You *do* have to honestly believe, on reasonable grounds, that the information you are reporting shows or tends to show serious wrongdoing.

Even though you do not have to prove the serious wrongdoing happened or provide evidence, a mere allegation with no supporting information is unlikely to meet this test.

If we make an error and do not identify that you have made a voluntary PID, you will still be entitled to the protections under the PID Act.

If you make a report and believe we have made an error by not identifying that you have made a voluntary PID, you should raise this with a nominated disclosure officer or your contact officer for the report. If you are still not satisfied with this outcome, you can seek an internal review or we may seek to conciliate the matter. You may also contact the NSW Ombudsman. Further information on rights to internal review and conciliation is found in section 7 of this policy.

Who can make a voluntary PID?

Any public official can make a voluntary PID — see 'Who this policy applies to'. You are a public official if:

you are employed by Walgett Shire Council

- you are a contractor, subcontractor or volunteer who provides services, or exercises functions, on behalf of Walgett Shire Council, or
- you work for an entity (such as a non-government organisation) who is contracted by Walgett Shire Council to provide services or exercise functions on behalf of Walgett Shire Council — if you are involved in undertaking that contracted work.

A public official can make a PID about serious wrongdoing relating to *any* agency, not just the agency they are working for. This means that we may receive PIDs from public officials outside our agency. It also means that you can make a PID to any agency, including an integrity agency like the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) and the NSW Ombudsman. Annexure B of this policy has a list of integrity agencies.

What is serious wrongdoing?

Reports must be of one or more of the following categories of *serious wrongdoing* to be a voluntary PID (in addition to having the other features set out here). Serious wrongdoing is defined in the PID Act as:

- *corrupt conduct* — such as a public official accepting a bribe
- *serious maladministration* — such as an agency systemically failing to comply with proper recruitment processes when hiring staff
- *a government information contravention* — such as destroying, concealing or altering records to prevent them from being released under a Government Information Public Access application
- *a local government pecuniary interest contravention* — such as a senior council staff member recommending a family member for a council contract and not declaring the relationship
- *a privacy contravention* — such as unlawfully accessing a person's personal information on an agency's database
- *a serious and substantial waste of public money* — such as an agency not following a competitive tendering process when contracting with entities to undertake government work.

When you make your report, you do not need to state what category of serious wrongdoing you are reporting or that you are reporting serious wrongdoing.

Who can I make a voluntary PID to?

For a report to be a voluntary PID, it must be made to certain public officials.

Making a report to a public official who works for Walgett Shire Council

You can make a report inside Walgett Shire Council to:

- The General Manager
- a disclosure officer for Walgett Shire Council — a list of disclosure officers and their contact details can be found at Annexure A of this policy
- your manager — this is the person who directly, or indirectly, supervises you. It can also be the person who you directly, or indirectly, report to. You may have more than one manager. Your manager will make sure that the report is communicated to a disclosure officer on your behalf or may accompany you while you make the report to a disclosure officer.

Making a report to a recipient outside of Walgett Shire Council

You can also make your report to a public official in another agency (meaning an agency you do not work for) or an integrity agency. These include:

- the *head of another agency* — this means the head of any public service agency
- an *integrity agency* — a list of integrity agencies is located at Annexure B of this policy
- a *disclosure officer for another agency* — ways to contact disclosure officers for other agencies is located in an agency's PID policy which can be found on their public website
- a *Minister or a member of a Minister's staff* but the report *must be made in writing*.

If you choose to make a disclosure outside of Walgett Shire Council, it is possible that your disclosure will be referred back to Council so that appropriate action can be taken.

Making a report to a Member of Parliament or journalist

Disclosures to MPs or journalists are different to other reports. You can only disclose a report of wrongdoing as a voluntary PID to an MP or journalist in the following circumstances:

- You must have first made substantially the same disclosure (described here as a 'previous disclosure') to someone who can receive disclosures.
- The previous disclosure must be substantially true.
- You did not make the previous disclosure anonymously.
- You did not give a written waiver of your right to receive information relating to your previous disclosure.
- You did not receive the following from Walgett Shire Council:
 - notification that Council will not investigate the serious wrongdoing and will also not refer the previous disclosure to another agency, or
 - the following information at the end of the investigation period:
 - notice of Council's decision to investigate the serious wrongdoing
 - a description of the results of an investigation into the serious wrongdoing
 - details of proposed or recommended corrective action as a result of the previous disclosure or investigation.

Investigation period means:

- after six months from the previous disclosure being made, or

- after 12 months if you applied for an internal review of the agency's decision within six months of making the disclosure.

If all the above requirements are met, your disclosure to an MP or journalist may be a voluntary PID.

What form should a voluntary PID take?

You can make a voluntary PID:

- *in writing* — this could be an email or letter to a person who can receive voluntary PIDs.
- *orally* — have a private discussion with a person who can receive voluntary PIDs. This can be face-to-face, via telephone or virtually.
- *anonymously* — write an email or letter or call a person who can receive PIDs to make a report without providing your name or anything that might identify you as the maker of the report. A report will only be considered anonymous if there is no reasonable or practical way of communicating with the person making the report. Even if you choose to remain anonymous, you will still be protected under the PID Act. It may be difficult, however, for Walgett Shire Council to investigate the matter(s) you have disclosed if we cannot contact you for further information.

What should I include in my report?

You should provide as much information as possible so we can deal with the report effectively. The type of information you should include is:

- date, time and location of key events
- names of person(s) involved in the suspected wrongdoing, their role, title and how they are involved
- your relationship with the person(s) involved, such as whether you work closely with them
- your explanation of the matter you are reporting
- how you became aware of the matter you are reporting
- possible witnesses
- other information you have that supports your report.

What if I am not sure if my report is a PID?

You should report all wrongdoing you become aware of regardless of whether you think it is serious wrongdoing. It is important for us to understand what is or may be occurring.

We are then responsible for making sure your report is handled appropriately under the PID Act, or if it is not a PID, in line with our other procedures. Even if your report is not a PID, it may fall within another one of the agency's policies for dealing with reports, allegations or complaints.

Deeming that a report is a voluntary PID

The General Manager can, in certain circumstances, determine that a report is a voluntary PID even if the report does not otherwise have all the features of a voluntary PID. This is known as the 'deeming power'.

By deeming that a report is a voluntary PID, it ensures that reporters are provided with protections under the PID Act.

If you make a report that has not met all the requirements of a voluntary PID, you can refer your matter to the General Manager to request that they consider deeming your report to be a voluntary PID.

A decision to deem a report to be a voluntary PID is at the discretion of the General Manager. For more information about the deeming power, see the Ombudsman's guideline 'Deeming that a disclosure is a voluntary PID'.

Who can I talk to if I have questions or concerns?

If you have any questions or concerns or need some advice or help making a PID or understanding your rights, you can speak to the General Manager or any of the Council's disclosure officers. Council will maintain privacy and confidentiality of your questions or concerns, except where there is a requirement to disclose matters or issues.

Protections

How is the maker of a voluntary PID protected?

When you make a voluntary PID, you receive special protections under the PID Act.

We are committed to taking all reasonable steps to protect you from detriment as a result of having made a PID. We are also committed to maintaining your confidentiality as much as possible while the PID is being dealt with.

We will not tolerate any type of detrimental action being taken against you because you have made a report, might make a report or are believed to have made a report.

The maker of a voluntary PID is protected in the following ways:

- *Protection from detrimental action*
 - A person cannot take detrimental action against another person because they have made a voluntary PID or are considering making a PID. Detrimental action includes bullying, harassment, intimidation or dismissal.
 - Once we become aware that a voluntary PID by a person employed or otherwise associated with Walgett Shire Council that concerns serious wrongdoing relating to Council has been made, we will undertake a risk assessment and take steps to mitigate the risk of detrimental action occurring against the person who made the voluntary PID.
 - It is a criminal offence for someone to take detrimental action against a person because they have made or may make a voluntary PID. It is punishable by a maximum penalty of 200 penalty units or imprisonment for five years or both.

- A person may seek compensation where unlawful detrimental action has been taken against them.
- A person can apply for a court order (injunction) where detrimental action is threatened or has occurred (for example, an order to prevent dismissal or to require reinstatement).

Note that a person who makes a PID can still be subject to reasonable management action (such as ordinary performance reviews and performance management). Provided such action is not taken because of the PID, it is not detrimental action under the PID Act.

- *Immunity from civil and criminal liability*

Some public officials are often subject to a duty of confidentiality that prevents them disclosing certain information that they obtain or become aware of at work. Sometimes, in order to make a PID, public officials will need to breach or disregard such confidentiality duties. If that happens, a public official cannot be disciplined, sued or criminally charged for breaching confidentiality.

- *Confidentiality*

Public officials and agencies must not disclose information tending to identify a person as the maker of a voluntary PID unless doing so is permitted by the PID Act.

- *Protection from liability for own past conduct*

The Attorney General can give the maker an undertaking that a disclosure of their own past conduct will not be used against them if a person discloses their own wrongdoing or misconduct while making a report. This undertaking can only be given on application by an integrity agency to the Attorney General.

Protections for people who make mandatory and witness PIDs

Apart from PIDs that are made voluntarily by public officials, there are other types of reports that are recognised as PIDs under the PID Act:

- *A mandatory PID:* This is a PID where the public official has made the report about serious wrongdoing because they have a legal obligation to make that report, or because making that report is an ordinary aspect of their role or function in an agency.
- *A witness PID:* This is a PID where a person discloses information during an investigation of serious wrongdoing following a request or requirement of the investigator.

Protections for makers of mandatory and witness PIDs are detailed in the table below.

Protection	Mandatory PID	Witness PID
Detrimental action — It is an offence to take detrimental action against a person based on the suspicion, belief or awareness that a person has made, may have made or may make a PID.	✓	✓
Right to compensation — A person can initiate proceedings and seek compensation for injury, damage or loss suffered as a result of detrimental action being taken against them.	✓	✓

Ability to seek injunction — An injunction can be sought to prevent the commission or possible commission of a detrimental action offence against a person. For example, an order to prevent dismissal or to require reinstatement.	✓	✓
Immunity from civil and criminal liability — a person will not incur civil or criminal liability if the person breaches a duty of confidentiality while making a disclosure. This means that legal action cannot be taken against a person for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • breaching a duty of secrecy or confidentiality, or • breaching another restriction on disclosure. 	✓	✓

Reporting detrimental action

If you experience adverse treatment or detrimental action, such as bullying or harassment, you should report this immediately. You can report any experience of adverse treatment or detrimental action directly to us, or to an integrity agency. A list of integrity agencies is located at Annexure B of this policy.

General support

Roles and responsibilities of Walgett Shire Council employees

Certain people within Walgett Shire Council have responsibilities under the PID Act.

The General Manager

The General Manager is responsible for:

- fostering a workplace culture where reporting is encouraged
- receiving disclosures from public officials
- ensuring there is a system in place for assessing disclosures
- ensuring the Walgett Shire Council complies with this policy and the PID Act
- ensuring that the Walgett Shire Council has appropriate systems for:
 - overseeing internal compliance with the PID Act
 - supporting public officials who make voluntary PIDs, including by minimising the risk of detrimental action
 - implementing corrective action if serious wrongdoing is found to have occurred
 - complying with reporting obligations regarding allegations or findings of detrimental action
 - complying with yearly reporting obligations to the NSW Ombudsman.

Disclosure officers

Disclosure officers are responsible for:

- receiving reports from public officials
- receiving reports when they are passed on to them by managers
- ensuring reports are dealt with appropriately, including by referring the matter to the appropriate complaint unit (if relevant)
- ensuring that any oral reports that have been received are recorded in writing.

Managers

The responsibilities of managers include:

- receiving reports from persons that report to them or that they supervise
- passing on reports they receive to a disclosure officer.

All employees

All employees must:

- report suspected serious wrongdoing or other misconduct
- use their best endeavours to assist in an investigation of serious wrongdoing if asked to do so by a person dealing with a voluntary PID on behalf of Walgett Shire Council
- treat any person dealing with or investigating reports of serious wrongdoing with respect.

All employees must not take detrimental action against any person who has made, may in the future make, or is suspected of having made, a PID.

How we will deal with voluntary PIDs

How we will acknowledge that we have received a report and keep the person who made it informed

When a disclosure officer in Walgett Shire Council receives a report which is a voluntary PID, or looks like it may be a voluntary PID, the person who made the report will receive the following information:

- You will receive an acknowledgment that the report has been received. This acknowledgement will:
 - state that the report will be assessed to identify whether it is a PID
 - state that the PID Act applies to how Walgett Shire Council deals with the report
 - provide clear information on how you can access this PID policy
 - provide you with details of a contact person and available supports.
- If the report is a voluntary PID, we will inform you as soon as possible how we intend to deal with the report. This may include:
 - that we are investigating the serious wrongdoing
 - that we will refer the report to a different agency (if appropriate) to deal with the voluntary PID. If we do this, we will provide you with details of this referral

- If we decide to not investigate the report and to not refer it to another agency for it to be investigated, we will tell you the reasons for this decision. We will also notify the NSW Ombudsman of this decision.
- If we decide to investigate the serious wrongdoing, we will provide you with updates on the investigation at least every three months. During this time, if you would like more frequent updates, you should contact the contact person who was nominated when you made the report.
 - If we investigate the serious wrongdoing, we will provide you with the following information once the investigation is complete:
 - a description of the results of the investigation — that is, we will tell you whether we found that serious wrongdoing took place.
 - information about any corrective action as a result of the investigation/s — this means we will tell you what action we took in relation to the person who engaged in the serious wrongdoing or if the serious wrongdoing was by our agency, what we have put in place to address that serious wrongdoing.
 - Corrective action could include taking disciplinary action against someone or changing the practices, policies and procedures that we have in place which led to the serious wrongdoing.
- There may be some details about both the findings made as a result of the investigation and the corrective action taken that cannot be revealed to you. We will always balance the right of a person who makes a report to know the outcome of that report, with other legal obligations we have.
- If you have made an anonymous report, in many cases we may not be able to provide this information to you.

How we will deal with voluntary PIDs

Once a report that may be a voluntary PID is received Walgett Shire Council will look at the information contained in the report to see if it has the features of a voluntary PID. This assessment is undertaken to identify whether the report is a voluntary PID or another type of disclosure, and to make sure that the right steps are followed. If it is a voluntary PID, we will ensure that we comply with the requirements in the PID Act.

Report not a voluntary PID

Even if the report is not a voluntary PID, it will still need to be dealt with in a manner consistent with our Code of Conduct or through an alternate process.

If the report is not a voluntary PID, we will let you know that the PID Act does not apply to the report and how we will deal with the concerns raised in the report.

If you are not happy with this assessment or otherwise disagree with it, you can raise it with the person who has communicated the outcome with you or a disclosure officer, request an internal review or request that the matter be conciliated. Walgett Shire Council can, but do not have to, request the NSW Ombudsman to conciliate the matter.

Cease dealing with report as voluntary PID

Walgett Shire Council may stop dealing with a voluntary PID because it is not actually a voluntary PID (meaning it does not have all the features of a PID).

Where the report is a voluntary PID

If the report is a voluntary PID:

- In most cases we will conduct an investigation to make findings about whether the serious wrongdoing disclosed in the report occurred, who was involved, who was responsible, and whether the people involved, or the agency engaged, in serious wrongdoing. There may be circumstances where we believe an investigation is not warranted — for example, if the conduct has previously been investigated.
- There may also be circumstances where we decide that the report should be referred to another agency, such as an integrity agency. For example, reports concerning possible corrupt conduct may be required to be reported to the ICAC in accordance with section 11 of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988*.
- Before referring a matter, we will discuss the referral with the other agency, and we will provide you with details of the referral and a contact person within the other agency.
- If we decide not to investigate a report and to not refer the matter to another agency, we must let you know the reasons for this and notify the NSW Ombudsman.

How Walgett Shire Council will protect the confidentiality of the maker of a voluntary PID

We understand that people who make voluntary PIDs may want their identity and the fact that they have made a report to be confidential.

Under the PID Act, information tending to identify a person as the maker of a voluntary PID (known as identifying information) is not to be disclosed by a public official or an agency.

There are certain circumstances under the PID Act that allow for the disclosure of identifying information. These include:

- where the person consents in writing to the disclosure
- where it is generally known that the person is the maker of the voluntary PID because of their voluntary self-identification as the maker
- when the public official or [we/agency] reasonably considers it necessary to disclose the information to protect a person from detriment
- where it is necessary the information be disclosed to a person whose interests are affected by the disclosure
- where the information has previously been lawfully published
- when the information is disclosed to a medical practitioner or psychologist for the purposes of providing medical or psychiatric care, treatment or counselling to the individual disclosing the information
- when the information is disclosed for the purposes of proceedings before a court or tribunal
- when the disclosure of the information is necessary to deal with the disclosure effectively

- if it is otherwise in the public interest to disclose the identifying information.

We will not disclose identifying information unless it is necessary and authorised under the PID Act.

We will put in place steps to keep the identifying information of the maker and the fact that a report has been made confidential. It may not be possible for us to maintain complete confidentiality while we progress the investigation, but we will do all that we practically can to not unnecessarily disclose information from which the maker of the report can be identified. We will do this by one or more of the following:

- Limiting the number of people who are aware of the maker's identity or information that could identify them
- If we must disclose information that may identify the maker of the PID, we will still not disclose the actual identity of the maker of the PID without their consent
- Ensure that any person who does know the identity of the PID maker is reminded that they have a legal obligation to keep their identity confidential
- Consider the use of specific confidentiality undertakings, particularly in relation to the identity of the PID maker
- Ensure that only authorised persons have access to documents that contain information about the identity of the PID maker
- Undertake ongoing risk assessment to determine if anyone is aware of the PID maker's identity and if those persons have motive and/or means to cause detrimental action to be taken against the PID maker or impede the progress of the investigation
- Provide information to the PID maker about the importance of confidentiality, advising them how best to protect their identity

If confidentiality cannot be maintained or is unlikely to be maintained, Walgett Shire Council will:

- Advise the person whose identity may become known
- Update our risk assessment and risk management plan in relation to the matter
- Implement strategies to minimise the risk of detrimental action
- Provide additional supports to the person whose identity may become known
- Remind persons who become aware of identifying information of the consequences for failing to maintain confidentiality and that engaging in detrimental action is a criminal offence and potentially a disciplinary matter.

How Walgett Shire Council will assess and minimise the risk of detrimental action

Walgett Shire Council will not tolerate any detrimental action being taken by any person against a person who has made a PID, investigators, witnesses or the person the report is about.

Walgett Shire Council will assess and take steps to mitigate detrimental action from being taken against the maker of a voluntary PID, the person whose conduct is the subject of a PID, investigators and witnesses.

Walgett Shire Council will take steps to assess and minimise the risk of detrimental action by doing the following:

- Advise the person whose identity may become known

- Update our risk assessment and risk management plan in relation to the matter
- Implement strategies to minimise the risk of detrimental action
- Provide additional supports to the person whose identity may become known
- Remind persons who become aware of identifying information of the consequences for failing to maintain confidentiality and that engaging in detrimental action is a criminal offence and potentially a disciplinary matter.

Detrimental action against a person is an act or omission that causes, comprises, involves or encourages detriment to a person or a threat of detriment to a person (whether express or implied). Detriment to a person includes:

- injury, damage or loss
- property damage
- reputational damage
- intimidation, bullying or harassment
- unfavourable treatment in relation to another person's job
- discrimination, prejudice or adverse treatment
- disciplinary proceedings or disciplinary action, or
- any other type of disadvantage.

Detrimental action does not include:

- lawful action taken by a person or body to investigate serious wrongdoing or other misconduct
- the lawful reporting or publication of a finding of serious wrongdoing or other misconduct
- the lawful making of adverse comment, resulting from investigative action
- the prosecution of a person for a criminal offence
- reasonable management action taken by someone in relation to a person who made or may make a PID. For example, a reasonable appraisal of a PID maker's work performance.

How Walgett Shire Council will deal with allegations of a detrimental action offence

If Walgett Shire Council become(s) aware of an allegation that a detrimental action offence has occurred or may occur, Walgett Shire Council will:

- take all steps possible to stop the action and protect the person(s)
- take appropriate disciplinary action against anyone that has taken detrimental action
- refer any evidence of a detrimental action offence to the Commissioner of Police and the ICAC or the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission (whichever is applicable)
- notify the NSW Ombudsman about the allegation of a detrimental action offence being committed.

What Walgett Shire Council will do if an investigation finds that serious wrongdoing has occurred

If, after an investigation, it is found that serious wrongdoing or other misconduct has occurred, Walgett Shire Council will take the most appropriate action to address that wrongdoing or misconduct. This is also known as corrective action.

Corrective action can include:

- a formal apology
- improving internal policies to adequately prevent and respond to similar instances of wrongdoing
- providing additional education and training to staff where required
- taking employment action against persons involved in the wrongdoing (such as termination of employment, relocation, a caution or reprimand)
- payment of compensation to people who have been affected by serious wrongdoing or other misconduct.

Findings of an investigation will be provided to the General Manager or Mayor (if the matter is about the General Manager's conduct). The General Manager will assign corrective actions to the most appropriate officer or area within Council to implement them.

Where an officer or area within Council is assigned corrective actions, they are to prepare and submit to the General Manager a plan for the implementation of the corrective actions (a Corrective Action Implementation Plan). The CAIP must at a minimum include the following information:

- Steps to be taken to implement corrective actions
- Timeframes for each step
- Milestone and periodic reviews
- Criteria for determining that the corrective actions have been implemented and are working effectively

The General Manager will advise the PID maker in writing of the agreed corrective actions, including a timeframe for their implementation.

Review and dispute resolution

Internal review

People who make voluntary PIDs can seek internal review of the following decisions made by Walgett Shire Council:

- that Walgett Shire Council is not required to deal with the report as a voluntary PID
- to stop dealing with the report because Walgett Shire Council decided it was not a voluntary PID
- to not investigate the serious wrongdoing and not refer the report to another agency
- to cease investigating the serious wrongdoing without either completing the investigation or referring the report to another agency for investigation.

Walgett Shire Council will ensure internal reviews are conducted in compliance with the PID Act.

If you would like to make an application for an internal review, you must apply in writing within 28 days of being informed of our decision. The application should state the reasons why you consider Walgett Shire Council's decision should not have been made. You may also submit any other relevant material with your application.

Voluntary dispute resolution

If a dispute arises between us and a person who has made a report which is, or may be, a voluntary PID, we may request the NSW Ombudsman to conciliate the dispute. Conciliation is a voluntary process and will only be suitable for disputes where Walgett Shire Council and the maker of the report are willing to resolve the dispute.

Other agency obligations

Record-keeping requirements

Walgett Shire Council must keep full and accurate records with respect to all information received in connection with the PID Act. This ensures that Walgett Shire Council complies with its obligations under the *State Records Act 1998*.

Reporting of voluntary PIDs and Walgett Shire Council annual return to the Ombudsman

Each year Walgett Shire Council provide an annual return to the NSW Ombudsman which includes:

- information about voluntary PIDs received by Walgett Shire Council during each return period (yearly with the start date being 1 July)
- action taken by Walgett Shire Council to deal with voluntary PIDs during the return period
- how Walgett Shire Council promoted a culture in the workplace where PIDs are encouraged.

How Walgett Shire Council will ensure compliance with the PID Act and this policy

The General Manager will have oversight of compliance with the PID Act in concert.

The General Manager will delegate an appropriate staff member to conduct annual audits of PIDs and the handling of PID matters and report to the General Manager on compliance.

The audit will include:

- The number of PIDs received
- The number and outcome of internal review applications received
- A review of any investigations and their results to identify non-compliance with the Act
- A review of the progress of CAIPs

Where there is non-compliance, the General Manager will ensure that the causative factors of the non-compliance are investigated, and corrective actions are implemented as a result. This may include performance management or disciplinary action.

The General Manager will provide an annual report to the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee in relation to PID Act Compliance. The annual report will include report from the audit set out above.

DRAFT

Annexure A — Positions and contact details of disclosure officers for Walgett Shire Council

PID Act Role	Position	Email Contact
Agency Head	General Manager	gm@walgett.nsw.gov.au
Disclosure Officer	Director Infrastructure and Compliance Services	kmahmud@walgett.nsw.gov.au
Disclosure Officer	Director People, Place and Liveability	cwells@walgett.nsw.gov.au
Disclosure Officer	Chief Financial Officer	cfo@walgett.nsw.gov.au
Disclosure Officer	Manager Governance and Integrity	
Disclosure Officer	Manager Human Resources	jmckeown@walgett.nsw.gov.au
Disclosure Officer	Manager Finance	sdutt@walgett.nsw.gov.au
Disclosure Officer	Manager People & Public Spaces	ssmith@walgett.nsw.gov.au
Disclosure Officer	Manager Economic Development & Visitor Economy	adoyle@walgett.nsw.gov.au
Disclosure Officer	Manager Customer & Community Services	
Disclosure Officer	Manager Community Engagement & Communications	
Disclosure Officer	Manager Roads Infrastructure	bkerr@walgett.nsw.gov.au
Disclosure Officer	Manager Planning & Compliance	lsage@walgett.nsw.gov.au
Disclosure Officer	Manager Water, Sewer & Waste	tbaldwin@walgett.nsw.gov.au
Disclosure Officer	Manager Infrastructure Assets	

Annexure B — List of integrity agencies

Integrity agency	What they investigate	Contact information
The NSW Ombudsman	Most kinds of serious maladministration by most agencies and public officials (but not NSW Police, judicial officers or MPs)	<p>Telephone: 1800 451 524 between 9am to 3pm Monday to Friday</p> <p>Writing: Level 24, 580 George Street, Sydney NSW 2000</p> <p>Email: info@ombo.nsw.gov.au</p>
The Auditor-General	Serious and substantial waste of public money by auditable agencies	<p>Telephone: 02 9275 7100</p> <p>Writing: GPO Box 12, Sydney NSW 2001</p> <p>Email: governance@audit.nsw.gov.au</p>
Independent Commission Against Corruption	Corrupt conduct	<p>Telephone: 02 8281 5999 or toll free on 1800 463 909 (callers outside Sydney) between 9am and 3pm, Monday to Friday</p> <p>Writing: GPO Box 500, Sydney NSW 2001 or faxing 02 9264 5364</p> <p>Email: icac@icac.nsw.gov.au</p>
The Inspector of the Independent Commission Against Corruption	Serious maladministration by the ICAC or the ICAC officers	<p>Telephone: 02 9228 3023</p> <p>Writing: PO Box 5341, Sydney NSW 2001</p> <p>Email: oiicac_executive@oiicac.nsw.gov.au</p>
The Law Enforcement Conduct Commission	Serious maladministration by the NSW Police Force or the NSW Crime Commission	<p>Telephone: 02 9321 6700 or 1800 657 079</p> <p>Writing: GPO Box 3880, Sydney NSW 2001</p> <p>Email: contactus@lecc.nsw.gov.au</p>
The Inspector of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission	Serious maladministration by the LECC and LECC officers	<p>Telephone: 02 9228 3023</p> <p>Writing: GPO Box 5341, Sydney NSW 2001</p> <p>Email: oilc_executive@oilc.nsw.gov.au</p>
Office of the Local Government	Local government pecuniary interest contraventions	<p>Email: olg@olg.nsw.gov.au</p>
The Privacy Commissioner	Privacy contraventions	<p>Telephone: 1800 472 679</p> <p>Writing: GPO Box 7011, Sydney NSW 2001</p> <p>Email: ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au</p>
The Information Commissioner	Government information contraventions	<p>Telephone: 1800 472 679</p> <p>Writing: GPO Box 7011, Sydney NSW 2001</p> <p>Email: ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au</p>

Related Policy/Procedure

Code of Conduct.

History

Minute Number	Meeting Date	Description of Change

DRAFT

ITEM 11.17 SETTING OF COUNCILLOR FEES 2024/2025

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Brown, Special Projects (Governance, Risk and HR)
PURPOSE	Council must set Councillors Fees each year, based on a determination of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the maximum fee payable under the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal determination, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and as outlined in this report.

Executive Summary

Council must set Councillors Fees each year, based on a determination of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.

Background

In accordance with Chapter 9 Part 2 Division 4 of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) (the Act), the level of remuneration payable to councillors and mayors is reviewed annually by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. Such review sets the maximum and minimum amounts that councillors and mayors are to receive. Section 248 of the Act outlines that Council may fix the annual fee payable to Councillors. Section 249 (2) of the Act outlines that Council must pay an additional fee to the Mayor.

Current Situation

The Local Government Remuneration Tribunal determination for the 2024/2025 year was made on 29 April 2024 and appeared in the Government Gazette on 10 May 2024 (Gazette Number 2024-169). Council is classified in the Category – Rural. The maximum and minimum remunerations as prescribed within the Determination are:

	Minimum Annual Fee	Maximum Annual Fee
Councillor	\$10,220	\$13,520
Mayor	\$10,880	\$29,500
Total Mayor	\$21,100	\$43,020

Consultation

No consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of this report.

Financial and Resource Implications

Council has allocated a budget for the maximum allowable amount under the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal's determination.

Legislation and Policy Implications

In accordance with Chapter 9, Part 2, Division 4 of the Act, Council is required to set annual fees for Councillors and the Mayor within the range established by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal. Should Council fail to set these fees, the minimum remuneration will automatically apply by default.

Legal and Risk Considerations

If Council does not resolve to set a specific fee within the Tribunal's range, the minimum fee will be payable.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

G 3.2 Implement governance and financial management process that support the effective administration of Council

3.2.1 Develop processes that ensure that legislative and financial standards are actioned in a timely manner

Alternative Options

1. Set a Fee Within the Prescribed Range

Council has the option to select a fee anywhere within the range determined by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal, from the minimum to the maximum allowable amount.

2. Do Not Set a Fee

Alternatively, Council could opt not to set a fee, resulting in the minimum fee being applied by default.

Conclusion

To comply with the Act and the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal's annual determination, Council must resolve to set a fee for Councillors and the Mayor within the stipulated range. It is recommended that Council set the fee at the maximum allowable amount in recognition of the time and commitment required to fulfil the roles of Councillor and Mayor for the 2024/2025 financial year.

Attachments

None

ITEM 11.18 INVESTMENTS REPORT 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

DIRECTORATE	Finance
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Ernest Mhande, Chief Financial Officer
PURPOSE	For noting

RECOMMENDATION

That the Investment Report as of 30 September be received and noted.

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary and analysis of Council’s cash and investments for the period ending 30 September 2024.

Background

Financial Markets Overview

In September, risk markets maintained their positive momentum, bolstered by the US Federal Reserve's decision to initiate an easing cycle. Other developed central banks are expected to follow suit or continue along a similar path in the coming months.

In the deposit market, average rates offered by major banks in September decreased by approximately 5-10 basis points at the long end of the curve compared to August. The overall deposit curve remains significantly inverted, with rates peaking at the six-month term and then declining across the one- to five-year horizon. The lowest rates are found in the three-year tenor, which stands at around 4.30%. This decline reflects the market's anticipation of multiple rate cuts in 2025.

Walgett Shire Council is in the process of diversifying our investments by investing more in the 2–5-year fixed deposits, to attain rates above 5% per annum, where possible.

Asset Allocation

Most of the portfolio is directed to fixed rate term deposits (~62%). The remainder of the portfolio is held in various cash accounts with CBA and Macquarie (~38%).



Senior FRNs (floating rate note) remain relatively attractive as spreads have generally widened over the past 3 years. New issuances may be considered again on a case-by-case scenario. In the interim, staggering a mix of fixed deposits between 9-12 months to 2 years remains a more optimal strategy to maximise returns over a longer-term cycle. Should inflation be within the RBA’s target band of 2-3% over the longer-term, targeting yields close to or above 4½% p.a. should outperform benchmark. Fixed term deposits spread across 1–5-year horizons (staggered approach) would be suitable to address the potential for a lower rate environment in coming years.

The investments are compliant with the Relevant Reference Documents and Policies listed in this report.

Maturities Report

The portfolio is highly liquid, with approximately 80% of the total investments maturing within 12 months. This far exceeds the minimum requirement of 10% for both the 0-3 month and 3-12 month terms. Given ongoing liquidity needs, the council is in the process of allocating funds to attractive 1–2-year investments, specifically in medium-term fixed term deposits (see the respective sections below for more details).

Compliant	Horizon	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Min. Limit (%)	Max. Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✓	0 - 3 months	\$16,573,342	40.35%	10%	100%	\$24,500,000
✓	3 - 12 months	\$16,500,000	40.17%	10%	100%	\$24,573,342
✓	1 - 2 years	\$5,000,000	12.17%	0%	70%	\$23,751,340
✓	2 - 5 years	\$3,000,000	7.30%	0%	50%	\$17,536,671
✓	5 - 10 years	\$0	0.00%	0%	25%	\$10,268,336
		\$41,073,342	100.00%			

Counterparty Risk

As at the end of September, Council did not have an overweight position to any single ADI. Overall, the portfolio is well diversified across the entire credit spectrum.

Compliant	Issuer	Rating	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Max. Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✓	Commonwealth Bank	AA-	\$12,826,852	31.23%	50%	\$7,709,819
✓	NAB	AA-	\$8,000,000	19.48%	50%	\$12,536,671
✓	Westpac	AA-	\$4,500,000	10.96%	50%	\$16,036,671
✓	Macquarie Bank	A+	\$2,746,490	6.69%	40%	\$13,682,847
✓	ING Direct	A	\$2,000,000	4.87%	40%	\$14,429,337
✓	BOQ	A-	\$5,000,000	12.17%	40%	\$11,429,337
✓	AMP Bank	BBB+	\$1,000,000	2.43%	30%	\$11,322,003
✓	Australian Military	BBB+	\$1,000,000	2.43%	30%	\$11,322,003
✓	BankVIC	BBB+	\$2,000,000	4.87%	30%	\$10,322,003
✓	Judo Bank	BBB	\$1,000,000	2.43%	30%	\$11,322,003
✓	MyState Bank	BBB	\$1,000,000	2.43%	30%	\$11,322,003
			\$41,073,342	100%		

Current Situation

Council at month end held a total of \$41,073,342 in on-call bank accounts and interest-bearing term deposits with financial institutions in Australia. The investments are compliant with the Local Government Act (NSW), the associated Regulations and Ministerial Order and Council’s Investment Policy.

Consultation

Nil

Financial and Resource Implications

Council’s detailed investment portfolio is shown in Attachment 1.

Legislation and Policy Implications

- Local Government Act (NSW) 1993
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2021
- Ministerial Investment Order 5 January 2016
- Investment Policy (Revised and adopted in October 2023)

Legal and Risk Considerations

Certification – Responsible Accounting Officer

1. I hereby certify that the investments listed in the attached report have been made in accordance with Section 625 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, clause 212 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, the *Investment Order (of the Minister) 5th January 2016*.
2. I hereby certify that Council’s Cash Book and General Ledger have been reconciled to the bank statement as at the end of month.

Ernest Mhande CFO

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

Nil

Alternative Options

Not applicable

Conclusion

As at 30 September 2024, Walgett Shire Council’s cash and invested funds totalled \$41,073,342 and a reduction of \$1,337,128 from the previous month.

Attachments

1. Walgett_Monthly Report_September 2024



Monthly Investment Review

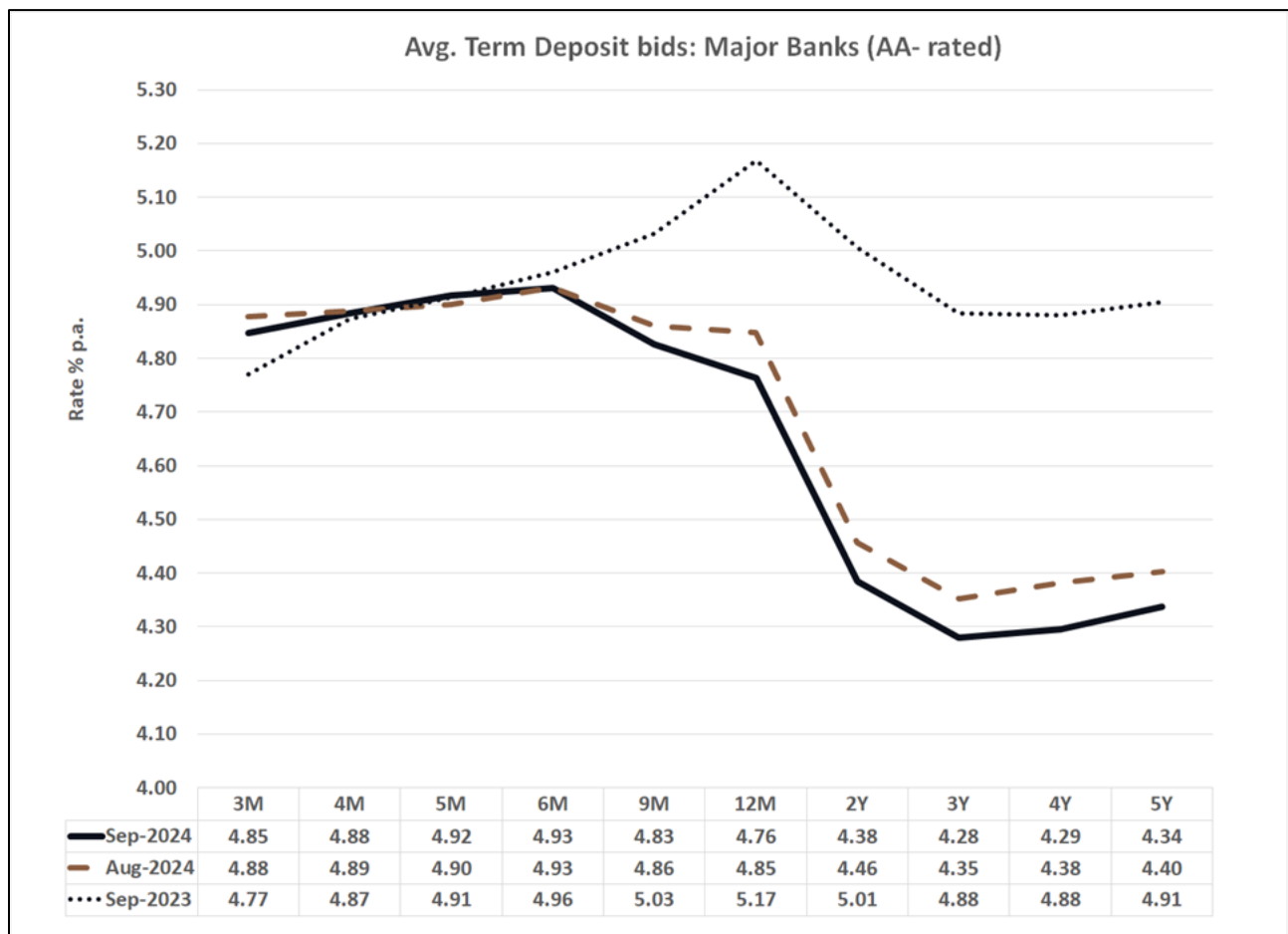


September 2024

Market Update Summary

In September, risk markets continued their positive momentum, welcoming the US Federal Reserve’s decision to commence their easing cycle. Other developed central banks are poised to follow or continue in the same path over coming months.

In the deposit market, over September, the average deposit rates offered by the major banks remained below where they were the previous month (August) by around 5-10bp at the long-end of the curve. The overall deposit curve remains significantly inverse with rates now peaking at the 6 month term and then dropping across 1-5 year horizon (with the lowest rates offered in the 3 year tenor at around 4.30%), as the market aggressively factors in multiple rate cuts in 2025.



Source: Imperium Markets

With a global economic downturn and multiple interest rate cuts being priced in 2025, investors should consider diversifying and taking an ‘insurance policy’ against a potentially lower rate environment by investing across 1-5 year fixed deposits, targeting rates close to or above 4½% p.a. (small allocation only).

Walgett Shire Council's Portfolio & Compliance

Asset Allocation

The majority of the portfolio is directed to fixed rate term deposits (~62%). The remainder of the portfolio is held in various cash accounts with CBA and Macquarie (~38%).



Senior FRNs remain relatively attractive as spreads have generally widened over the past 3 years. New issuances may be considered again on a case by case scenario. In the interim, staggering a mix of fixed deposits between 9–12 months to 2 years remains a more optimal strategy to maximise returns over a longer–term cycle.

Should inflation be within the RBA's target band of 2–3% over the longer–term, targeting yields close to or above 4½% p.a. should outperform benchmark. Fixed term deposits spread across 1–5 year horizons (staggered approach) would be suitable to address the potential for a lower rate environment in coming years.

Term to Maturity

The portfolio is sufficiently liquid with around 80% of the total investment portfolio maturing within 12 months, which is well above the minimum 10% limit required across 0–3 month and 3–12 month terms.

Where ongoing liquidity requirements permit Council to invest in attractive 1–2 year investments, we recommend this be allocated to medium–term fixed term deposits (refer to respective sections below).

Compliant	Horizon	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Min. Limit (%)	Max. Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✓	0 - 3 months	\$16,573,342	40.35%	10%	100%	\$24,500,000
✓	3 - 12 months	\$16,500,000	40.17%	10%	100%	\$24,573,342
✓	1 - 2 years	\$5,000,000	12.17%	0%	70%	\$23,751,340
✓	2 - 5 years	\$3,000,000	7.30%	0%	50%	\$17,536,671
✓	5 - 10 years	\$0	0.00%	0%	25%	\$10,268,336
		\$41,073,342	100.00%			

Counterparty

As at the end of September, Council did not have an overweight position to any single ADI. Overall, the portfolio is well diversified across the entire credit spectrum.

Compliant	Issuer	Rating	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Max. Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✓	Commonwealth Bank	AA-	\$12,826,852	31.23%	50%	\$7,709,819
✓	NAB	AA-	\$8,000,000	19.48%	50%	\$12,536,671
✓	Westpac	AA-	\$4,500,000	10.96%	50%	\$16,036,671
✓	Macquarie Bank	A+	\$2,746,490	6.69%	40%	\$13,682,847
✓	ING Direct	A	\$2,000,000	4.87%	40%	\$14,429,337
✓	BOQ	A-	\$5,000,000	12.17%	40%	\$11,429,337
✓	AMP Bank	BBB+	\$1,000,000	2.43%	30%	\$11,322,003
✓	Australian Military	BBB+	\$1,000,000	2.43%	30%	\$11,322,003
✓	BankVIC	BBB+	\$2,000,000	4.87%	30%	\$10,322,003
✓	Judo Bank	BBB	\$1,000,000	2.43%	30%	\$11,322,003
✓	MyState Bank	BBB	\$1,000,000	2.43%	30%	\$11,322,003
			\$41,073,342	100%		

On 31st July 2024, ANZ's takeover of Suncorp Bank was formalised, and ratings agency S&P upgraded Suncorp's long-term credit rating to that of its parent company immediately (now rated AA-). Investor's exposure to Suncorp is now reflected under the parent company being ANZ.

Credit Quality

The portfolio remains well diversified across the investment grade credit spectrum. All aggregate ratings categories are within the Policy limits.

There is now much higher capacity to invest with the "BBB" rated ADIs following the recent rating upgrade for BoQ (moved up from BBB to A category range).

Compliant	Credit Rating	Invested (\$)	Invested (%)	Max. Limit (%)	Available (\$)
✓	AA Category	\$25,326,852	61.66%	100%	\$15,746,490
✓	A Category	\$9,746,490	23.73%	80%	\$23,112,184
✓	BBB Category	\$6,000,000	14.61%	70%	\$22,751,340
✓	Unrated ADIs	\$0	0.00%	10%	\$4,107,334
		\$41,073,342	100.00%		

Performance

Council's performance for the month ending September 2024 is summarised as follows:

Performance (Actual)	1 month	3 months	6 months	FYTD	1 year
Official Cash Rate	0.35%	1.08%	2.16%	1.08%	4.34%
AusBond Bank Bill Index	0.36%	1.11%	2.21%	1.11%	4.41%
Council's T/D Portfolio [^]	0.38%	1.15%	2.29%	1.15%	4.57%
Outperformance	0.02%	0.04%	0.08%	0.04%	0.16%

[^]Total portfolio performance excludes Council's cash account holdings.

Performance (Annualised)	1 month	3 months	6 months	FYTD	1 year
Official Cash Rate	4.35%	4.35%	4.35%	4.35%	4.34%
AusBond Bank Bill Index	4.45%	4.50%	4.45%	4.50%	4.41%
Council's T/D Portfolio [^]	4.76%	4.65%	4.61%	4.65%	4.57%
Outperformance	0.31%	0.16%	0.16%	0.16%	0.16%

[^]Total portfolio performance excludes Council's cash account holdings.

For the month of September, the total portfolio (excluding cash) provided a solid return of +0.38% (actual) or +4.76% p.a. (annualised), outperforming the benchmark AusBond Bank Bill Index return of +0.36% (actual) or +4.45% p.a. (annualised). Over the past 12 months, the return of 4.57% p.a. remained above the benchmark – this is considered very strong given current economic circumstances.

We are pleased that Council remains amongst the best performing in the state of NSW where deposits are concerned. We have been pro-active in our advice about protecting interest income and encouraged to maintain a long duration position to optimise the portfolio. This is now reflected by the high performance of the investment portfolio.

Recommendations for Council

Term Deposits

Going forward, Council's ongoing strategy in placing across 12–24 months terms is likely to earn up to ¼–½% p.a. higher compared to shorter tenors in a normal market environment. There is growing belief that multiple rate cuts and a global economic downturn is imminent and so locking in rates close to or above 4½% p.a. across 1–3 year tenors (staggered approach) may provide some income protection against a lower rate environment.

As at the end of September 2024, Council's deposit portfolio was yielding 4.55% p.a. (down 8bp from the previous month), with a weighted average duration of around 425 days (~1.2 years). ***We recommend that Council maintains this duration to optimise returns in the long run, which can be achieved without compromising on liquidity.***

Please refer to the section below for further details on the Term Deposit market.

Securities

Primary (new) **FRNs** (with maturities between 3–5 years) continue to be appealing (particularly for those investors with portfolios skewed towards fixed assets) and should be considered on a case by case scenario.

Please refer to the section below for further details on the FRN market.

Term Deposit Market Review

Current Term Deposits Rates

As at the end of September, we see value in the following:

ADI	LT Credit Rating	Term	Rate % p.a.
Rabobank	A	5 years	4.70%
ING	A	5 years	4.51%
Westpac	AA-	5 years	4.50%
BoQ	A-	5 years	4.40%
Rabobank	A	4 years	4.55%
ING	A	4 years	4.42%
Westpac	AA-	4 years	4.40%
BoQ	A-	4 years	4.35%
Rabobank	A	3 years	4.40%
ING	A	3 years	4.36%
Westpac	AA-	3 years	4.35%
ING	A	2 years	4.43%
Westpac	AA-	2 years	4.42%
Hume Bank	BBB+	2 years	4.40%
NAB	AA-	2 years	4.35%
BoQ	A-	2 years	4.35%

The above deposits are suitable for investors looking to maintain diversification and lock-in a slight premium compared to purely investing short-term.

For terms under 12 months, we believe the strongest value is currently being offered by the following ADIs (*we stress that rates are indicative, dependent on daily funding requirements and different for industry segments*):

ADI	LT Credit Rating	Term	Rate % p.a.
Arab Bank	Unrated	12 months	5.00%
ICBC	A	12 months	4.92%
NAB	AA-	12 months	4.90%
Bank of Sydney	Unrated	12 months	4.90%
Westpac	AA-	12 months	4.82%
Hume Bank	BBB+	12 months	4.78%
Arab Bank	Unrated	9 months	5.05%
ICBC	A	9 months	4.98%
NAB	AA-	9 months	4.95%
BoQ	A-	9 months	4.90%
Arab Bank	Unrated	6 months	5.10%
Suncorp	AA-	6 months	5.06%
NAB	AA-	6 months	5.05%
ICBC	A	6 months	5.04%
BoQ	A-	6 months	5.01%
Arab Bank	Unrated	3 months	5.10%
NAB	AA-	3 months	4.95%
Westpac	AA-	3 months	4.93%

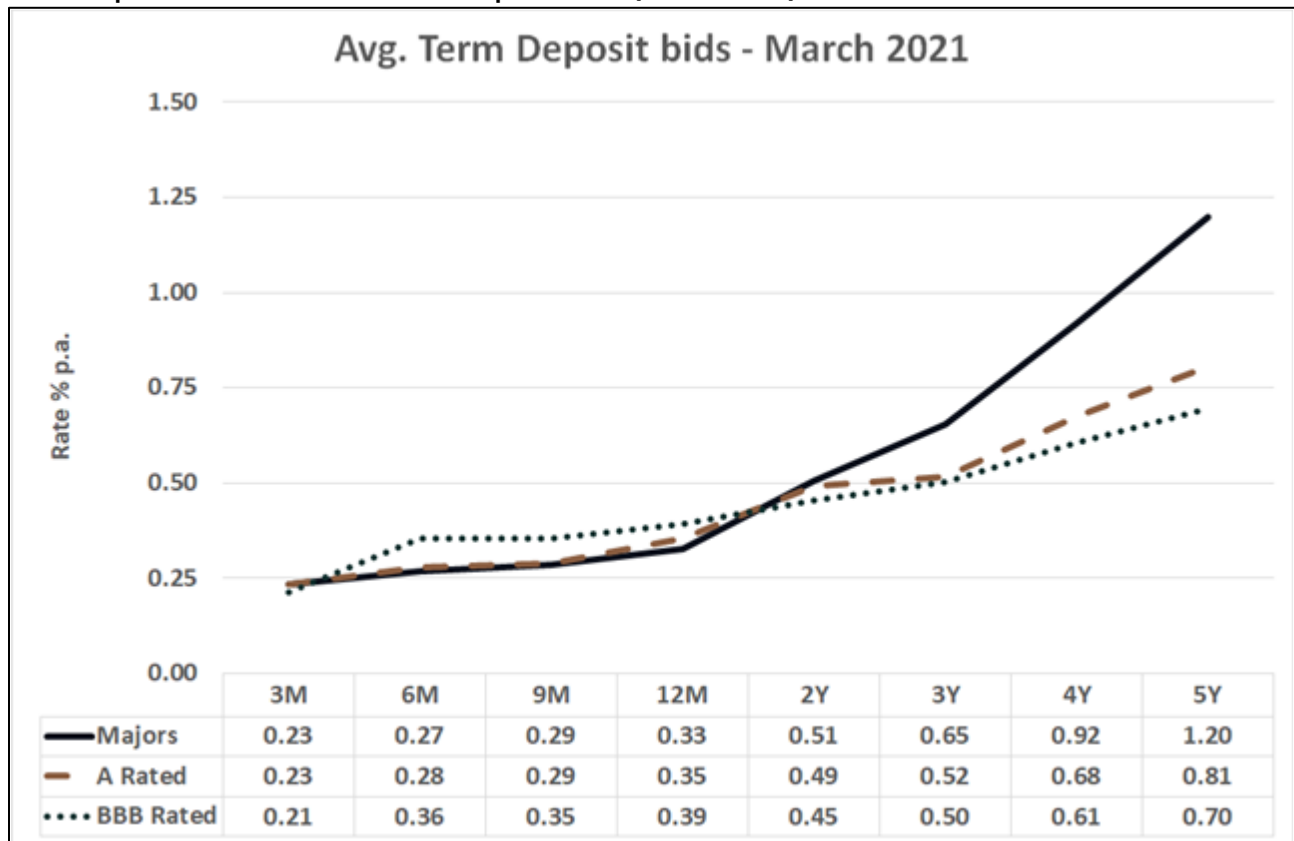
If Council does not require high levels of liquidity and can stagger a proportion of its investments across the longer term horizons (1-5 years), it will be rewarded over a longer-term cycle. Investing a spread of 12 months to 3 year horizons can likely yield up to, on average, an extra ¼-½% p.a. higher compared to those investors that entirely invest in short-dated deposits (under 6-9 months).

With a global economic slowdown and multiple interest rate cuts being priced over 2025, investors should strongly consider diversifying by allocating some longer term surplus funds and undertake an insurance policy by investing across 1-5 year fixed deposits and locking in rates above or close to 4½% p.a. This will provide some income protection with the RBA now potentially looking to cut rates in coming months.

Term Deposits Analysis

Pre-pandemic (March 2020), a 'normal' marketplace meant the lower rated ADIs (i.e. BBB category) were offering higher rates on term deposits compared to the higher rated ADIs (i.e. A or AA rated). But due to the cheap funding available provided by the RBA via their Term Funding Facility (TFF) during mid-2020, allowing the ADIs to borrow as low as 0.10% p.a. fixed for 3 years, those lower rated ADIs (BBB rated) did not require deposit funding from the wholesale deposit. Given the higher rated banks had more capacity to lend (as they have a greater pool of mortgage borrowers), they subsequently were offering higher deposit rates. In fact, some of the lower rated banks were not even offering deposit rates at all. As a result, most investors placed a higher proportion of their deposit investments with the higher rated (A or AA) ADIs over the past three years.

Term Deposit Rates – 12 months after pandemic (March 2021)

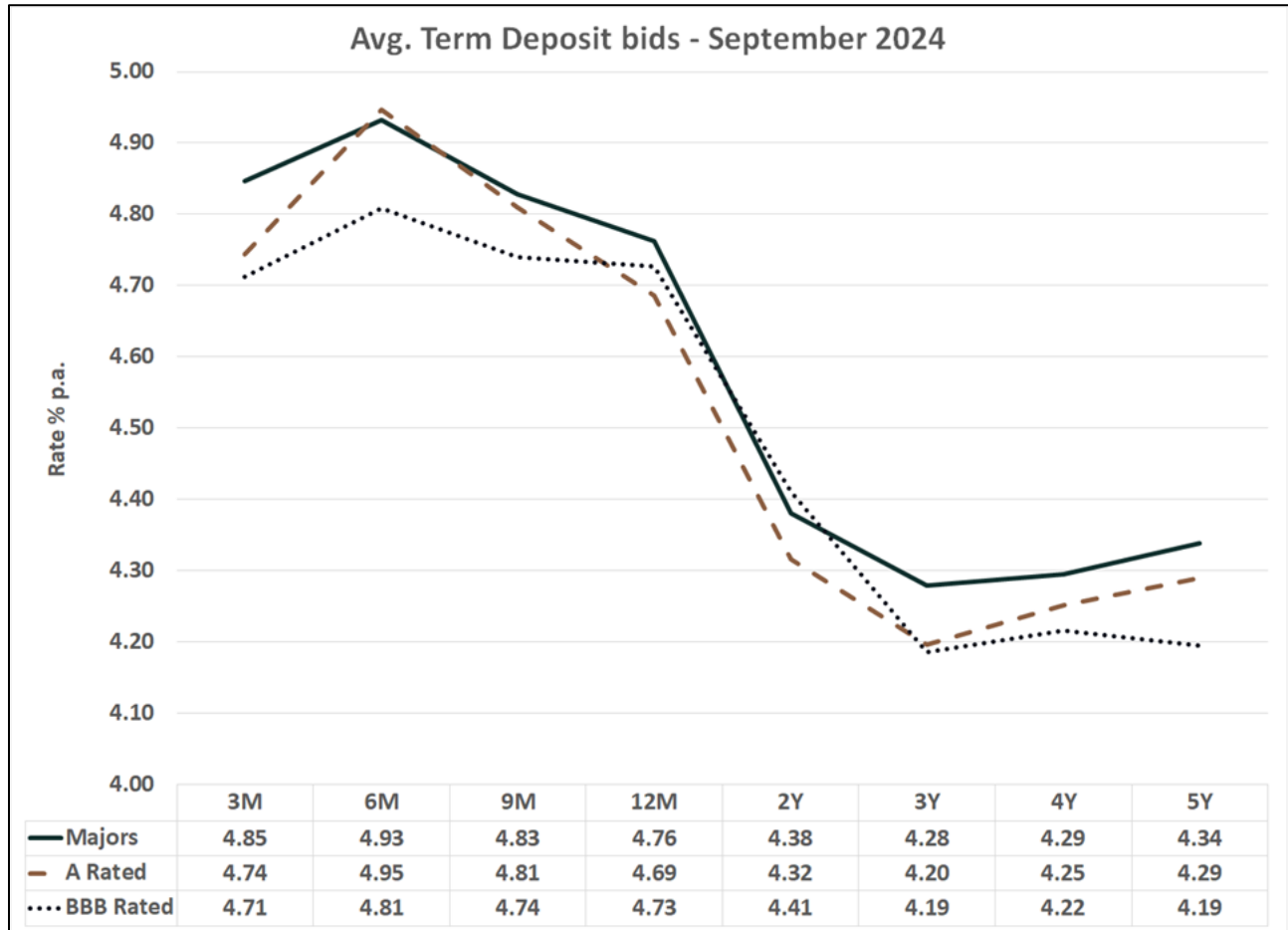


Source: Imperium Markets

The abnormal marketplace experienced during the pandemic is starting to reverse as the competition for deposits slowly increases, partially driven by the RBA's term funding facility coming to an end. In recent months, we have started to periodically see some of the lower rated ADIs ("A" and "BBB" rated) offering slightly higher rates compared to the domestic major banks ("AA" rated) on different parts of the curve (i.e. pre-pandemic environment). Some of this has been attributed to lags in adjusting their deposit rates as some banks (mainly the lower rated ADIs) simply set their rates for the week.

Going forward, Council should have a larger opportunity to invest a higher proportion of its funds with the lower rated institutions (up to Policy limits), from which the majority are not lending to the Fossil Fuel industry or considered 'ethical'. We are slowly seeing this trend emerge, although the major banks always seem to react more quickly than the rest of the market during periods of volatility:

Term Deposit Rates – Currently (September 2024)



Source: Imperium Markets

Regional & Unrated ADI Sector

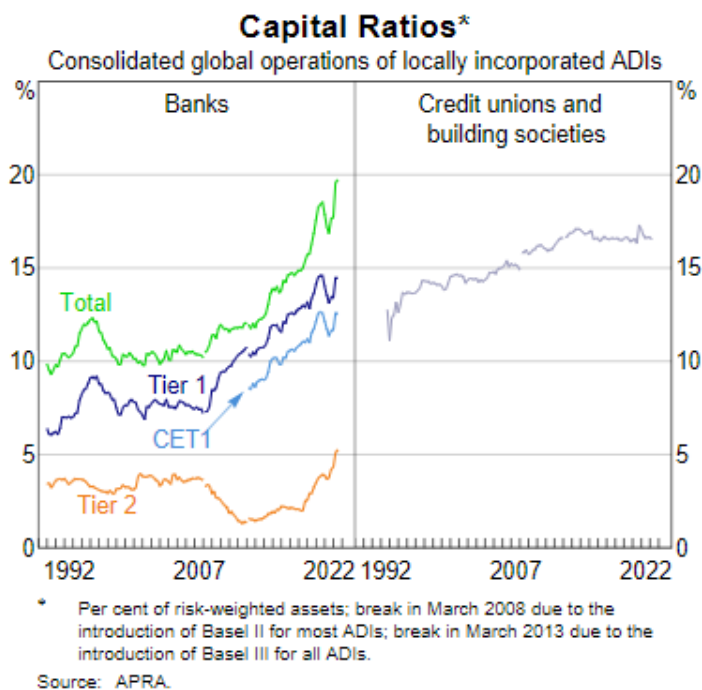
Ratings agency S&P has commented that *"mergers remain compelling for mutuals lenders"* in providing smaller lenders greater economies of scale and assisting them in being able to price competitively and will see *"the banking landscape will settle with a small number of larger mutual players"*. S&P expects that consolidation to continue over the next two years.

We remain supportive of the regional and unrated ADI sector (and have been even throughout the post-GFC period). They continue to remain solid, incorporate strong balance sheets, while exhibiting high levels of capital – typically, much higher compared to the higher rated ADIs. Some unrated ADIs have up to 25-40% more capital than the domestic major banks, and well above the Basel III requirements.

Overall, the lower rated ADIs (BBB and unrated) are generally now in a better financial position than they have been historically (see the Capital Ratio figure below). The financial regulator, APRA has noted that the Common Equity Tier 1 capital of Australian banks now exceeds a quarter of a trillion dollars. It has increased by \$110 billion, or more than 70%, over the past decade. Over the same time, banks' assets have grown by 44%. Some of the extra capital is supporting growth in the banking system itself but clearly, there has been a strengthening in overall resilience and leverage in the system is lower.

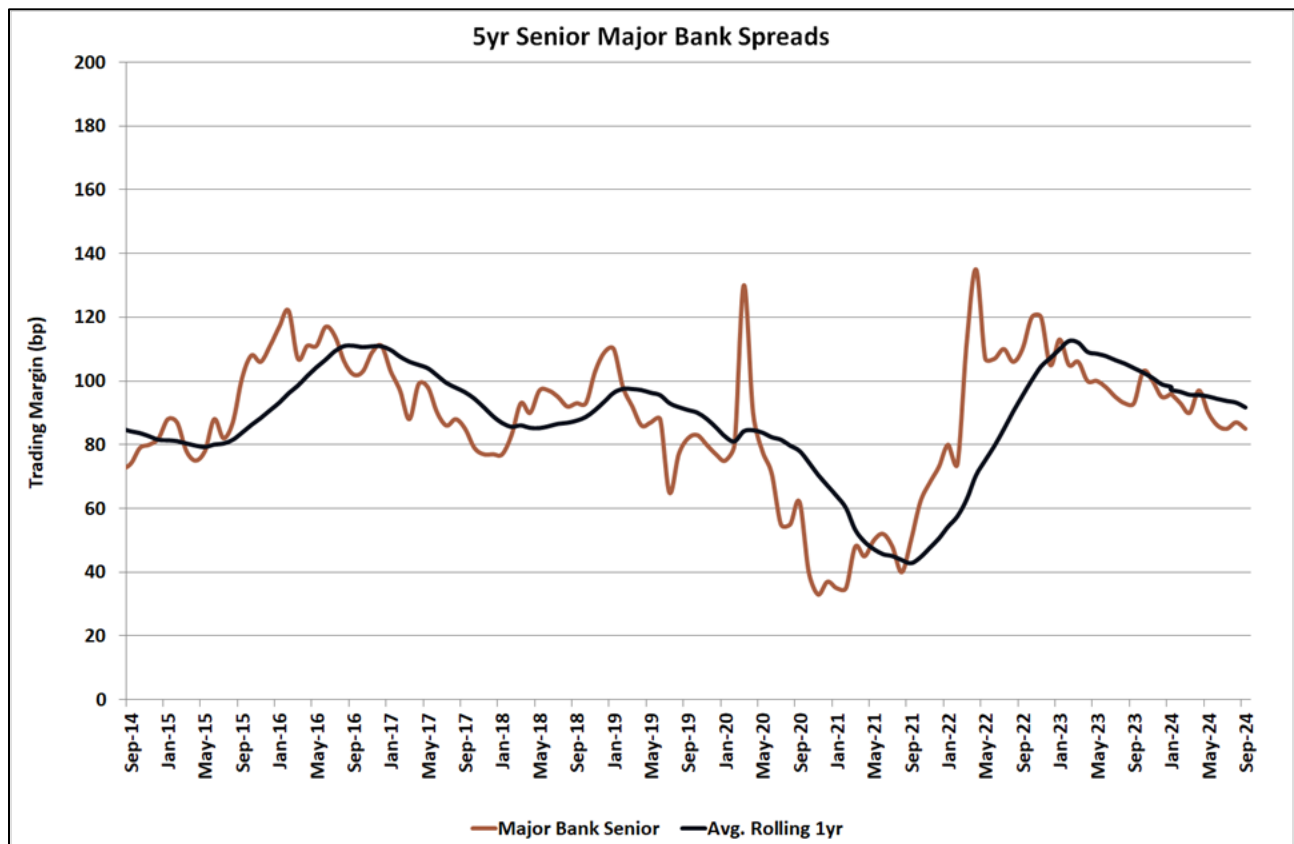
We believe that deposit investments with the lower rated ADIs should be considered going forward, particularly when they offer 'above market' specials. Not only would it diversify the investment portfolio and reduce credit risk, it would also improve the portfolio's overall returns. The lower rated entities are generally deemed to be the more 'ethical' ADIs compared to the higher rated ADIs.

In the current environment of high regulation and scrutiny, all domestic (and international) ADIs continue to carry high levels of capital. There is minimal (if any) probability of any ADI defaulting on their deposits going forward – this was stress tested during the GFC and the pandemic period. APRA's mandate is to "protect depositors" and provide "financial stability".



Senior FRNs Market Review

Over September, amongst the senior major bank FRNs, physical credit securities remained relatively flat at the long-end of the curve. During the month, WBC (AA-) issued a 5 year senior deal at +85b, whilst Suncorp (AA-) issued a dual 3 & 5 year senior FRN at +74bp and +92bp respectively. Major bank senior securities remain at fair value on a historical basis although looking fairly expensive if the 5yr margin tightens to +80bp in the near future.



Source: IBS Capital

There was minimal issuance again during the month apart from:

- Auswide (BBB) 3 year senior FRN at +133bp
- AMP (BBB+) 3 year senior FRN at +127bp

Amongst the "A" and "BBB" rated sector, the securities marginally tightened at the longer-end of the curve. Overall, credit securities are looking more attractive given the widening of spreads over the past 3 years. FRNs will continue to play a role in investors' portfolios mainly on the basis of their liquidity and the ability to roll down the curve and gross up returns over ensuing years (in a relatively stable credit environment), whilst also providing some diversification to those investors skewed towards fixed assets.

Senior FRNs (ADIs)	30/09/2024	30/08/2024
"AA" rated – 5yrs	+85bp	+87bp
"AA" rated – 3yrs	+66bp	+65bp
"A" rated – 5yrs	+102bp	+102bp
"A" rated – 3yrs	+82bp	+87bp
"BBB" rated – 3yrs	+127bp	+130bp

Source: IBS Capital

We now generally recommend switches ('benchmark' issues only) into new primary issues, out of the following senior FRNs that are maturing:

- On or before 2026 for the "AA" rated ADIs (domestic major banks);
- On or before 2025 for the "A" rated ADIs; and
- Within 6–9 months for the "BBB" rated ADIs (consider case by case).

Investors holding onto the above senior FRNs ('benchmark' issues only) in their last few years are now generally holding sub optimal investments and are not maximising returns by foregoing realised capital gains. In the current challenging economic environment, any boost in overall returns should be locked in when it is advantageous to do so, particularly as switch opportunities become available.

Senior Fixed Bonds – ADIs (Secondary Market)

With global inflation still high by historical standards, this has seen a significant lift in longer-term bond yields over the past 2–3 years (valuations have fallen) as markets have reacted sharply.

This has resulted in some opportunities in the secondary market. We currently see value in the following fixed bond lines, with the majority now being marked at a significant discount to par (please note supply in the secondary market may be limited on any day):

ISIN	Issuer	Rating	Capital Structure	Maturity Date	~Remain. Term (yrs)	Fixed Coupon	Indicative Yield
AU3CB0278174	UBS	A+	Senior	26/02/2026	1.41	1.1000%	4.35%
AU3CB0280030	BoQ	A-	Senior	06/05/2026	1.60	1.4000%	4.72%
AU3CB0299337	Bendigo	A-	Senior	15/05/2026	1.62	4.7000%	4.60%
AU3CB0296168	BoQ	A-	Senior	27/01/2027	2.33	4.7000%	4.64%
AU3CB0308955	BoQ	A-	Senior	30/04/2029	4.59	5.3580%	4.76%

Economic Commentary

International Market

In September, risk markets continued their positive momentum, welcoming the US Federal Reserve's decision to commence their easing cycle. Other developed central banks are poised to follow or continue in the same path over coming months.

Across equity markets, the S&P 500 Index rose +2.02% over the month, whilst the NASDAQ gained +2.68%. Europe's main indices were mixed, with positive returns in Germany's DAX (+2.21%) and France's CAC (+0.06%). UK's FTSE fell -1.67% for the month.

The US Fed opted for a 50bp rate cut, which was largely expected (and it's first cut since March 2020). Markets responded sharply, but then rowed back shortly afterwards as US Fed Chair Jerome Powell tried to downplay the significance of the move at the ensuing press conference, saying this was not a new pace, just a recalibration of policy.

The US economy added 142k jobs in August, slightly below the 163k forecast by economists. The unemployment rate was 4.2% in August, down from 4.3% in July.

US headline inflation rate was +0.2% m/m for August as expected, while core inflation came in slightly higher than expected at +0.3% m/m. The inflation rate was +2.5% y/y in August (down from +2.9% y/y in July), marking the slowest pace since February 2021.

The European Central Bank (ECB) cut rates by another 25bp to 3.50% as widely expected. An additional rate cut is expected in Q4.

The Bank of England (BoE) held rates steady at 5.00% as expected. Services inflation for August was up +0.4% to +5.6% y/y and core inflation was up +0.3% to +3.6% y/y.

Sweden's Riksbank cut rates by 25bp as expected. The statement said that *"if the outlook for inflation and economic activity remains unchanged, the policy rate may also be cut at the two remaining monetary policy meetings this year"*.

China consumer prices rose by +0.6% y/y in August, which was below expectations as transportation, home goods prices and rents declined. On a monthly basis, CPI grew +0.4% in August, slightly lower than the +0.5% recorded in July.

The MSCI World ex-Aus Index rose +1.64% for the month of September:

Index	1m	3m	1yr	3yr	5yr	10yr
S&P 500 Index	+2.02%	+5.53%	+34.38%	+10.19%	+14.12%	+11.32%
MSCI World ex-AUS	+1.64%	+5.94%	+30.56%	+7.46%	+11.44%	+8.32%
S&P ASX 200 Accum. Index	+2.97%	+7.79%	+21.77%	+8.45%	+8.38%	+8.93%

Source: S&P, MSCI

Domestic Market

The RBA kept rates on hold at 4.35% as expected. The post-Meeting Statement was broadly in line with the Governor's recent remarks where Ms Bullock again pushed back on market pricing for near-term cuts. The Statement also noted that *"headline inflation will decline for a time, [but] underlying inflation is more indicative of inflation momentum, and it remains too high"*.

The Monthly CPI Indicator fell to +2.7% y/y from +3.5% y/y as expected on fuel base effects and electricity subsidies. Services inflation remained elevated at +4.2% y/y, while goods and non-tradables inflation fell, also driven by electricity.

The unemployment rate remained at 4.2% (falling from 4.24% to 4.16% at the second decimal place). Employment growth was a strong +47k. With trend employment growth steady near +40k, the labour market has been ably absorbing strong supply growth amid high participation and elevated population growth.

GDP rose by +0.2% q/q (+1.0% y/y), which was in line with consensus. Consumption was weaker than expected, while the other components were largely in line with the partials – business and dwelling investment made no contribution while net exports and public demand were key supports.

Export values rose +0.8% to \$43.8bn in July, remaining comfortably higher than pre-pandemic peak of \$36 billion, but are now well below the peak of \$55bn in June 2022 that was driven by the short-lived surge in coal export values.

Dwelling approvals bounced +10.4% higher in June (consensus +3% m/m). That more than unwinds the 6.4% fall in June.

The Australian dollar gained another +1.85%, finishing the month at US69.32 cents (from US68.06 cents the previous month).

Credit Market

The global credit indices marginally widened in September. They remain at their levels in early 2022 (prior to the rate hike cycle from most central banks):

Index	September 2024	August 2024
CDX North American 5yr CDS	53bp	50bp
iTraxx Europe 5yr CDS	59bp	52bp
iTraxx Australia 5yr CDS	63bp	64bp

Source: Markit

Fixed Interest Review

Benchmark Index Returns

Index	September 2024	August 2024
Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index (0+YR)	+0.36%	+0.38%
Bloomberg AusBond Composite Bond Index (0+YR)	+0.31%	+1.21%
Bloomberg AusBond Credit FRN Index (0+YR)	+0.43%	+0.43%
Bloomberg AusBond Credit Index (0+YR)	+0.54%	+0.93%
Bloomberg AusBond Treasury Index (0+YR)	+0.24%	+1.16%
Bloomberg AusBond Inflation Gov't Index (0+YR)	+0.63%	+0.57%

Source: Bloomberg

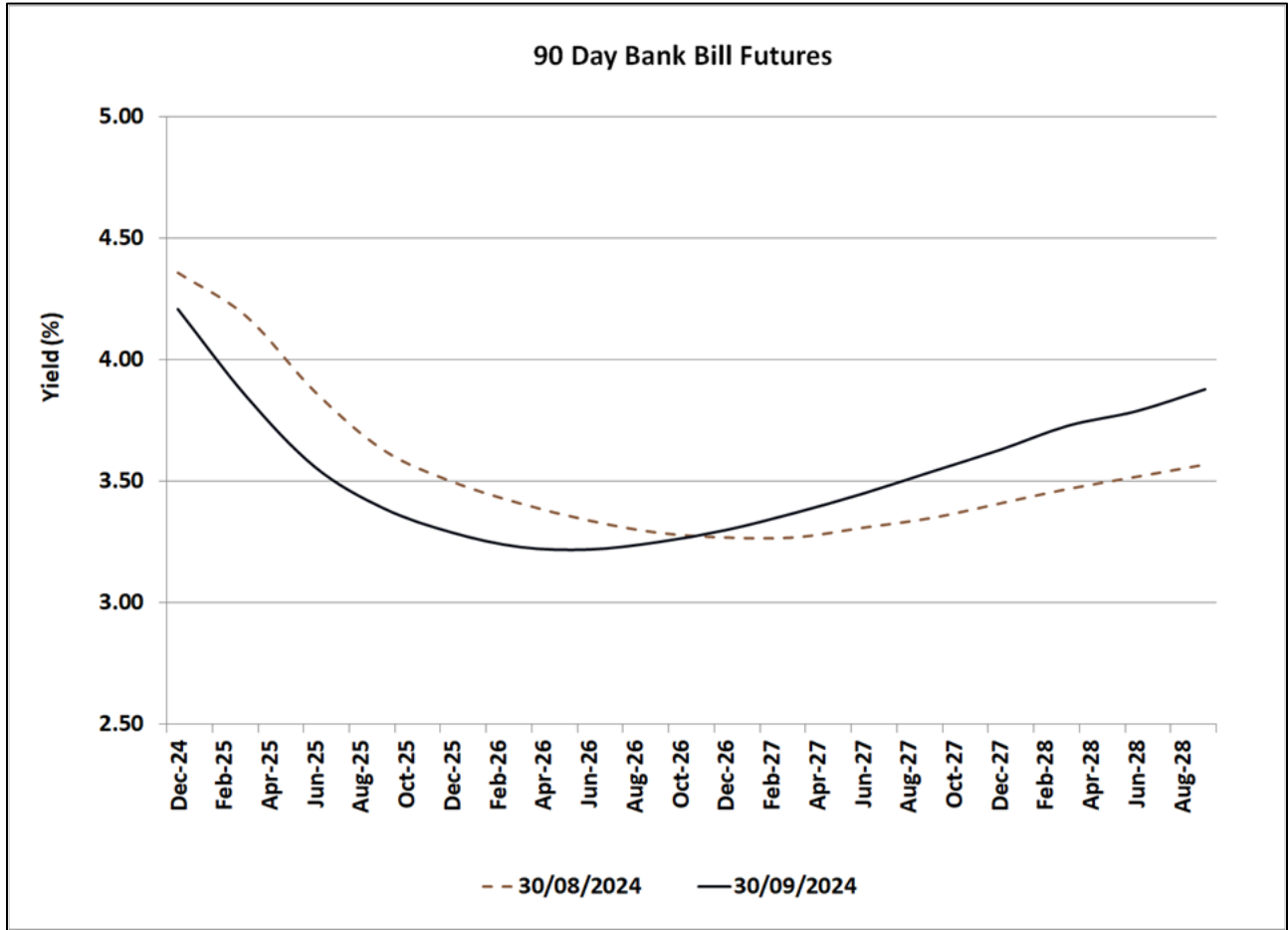
Other Key Rates

Index	September 2024	August 2024
RBA Official Cash Rate	4.35%	4.35%
90 Day (3 month) BBSW Rate	4.43%	4.39%
3yr Australian Government Bonds	3.53%	3.54%
10yr Australian Government Bonds	3.99%	3.93%
US Fed Funds Rate	4.75%-5.00%	5.25%-5.50%
2yr US Treasury Bonds	3.66%	3.91%
10yr US Treasury Bonds	3.81%	3.91%

Source: RBA, ASX, US Department of Treasury

90 Day Bill Futures

Bill futures fell at the short-end this month in response to expectations of impending interest rate cuts in early 2025.



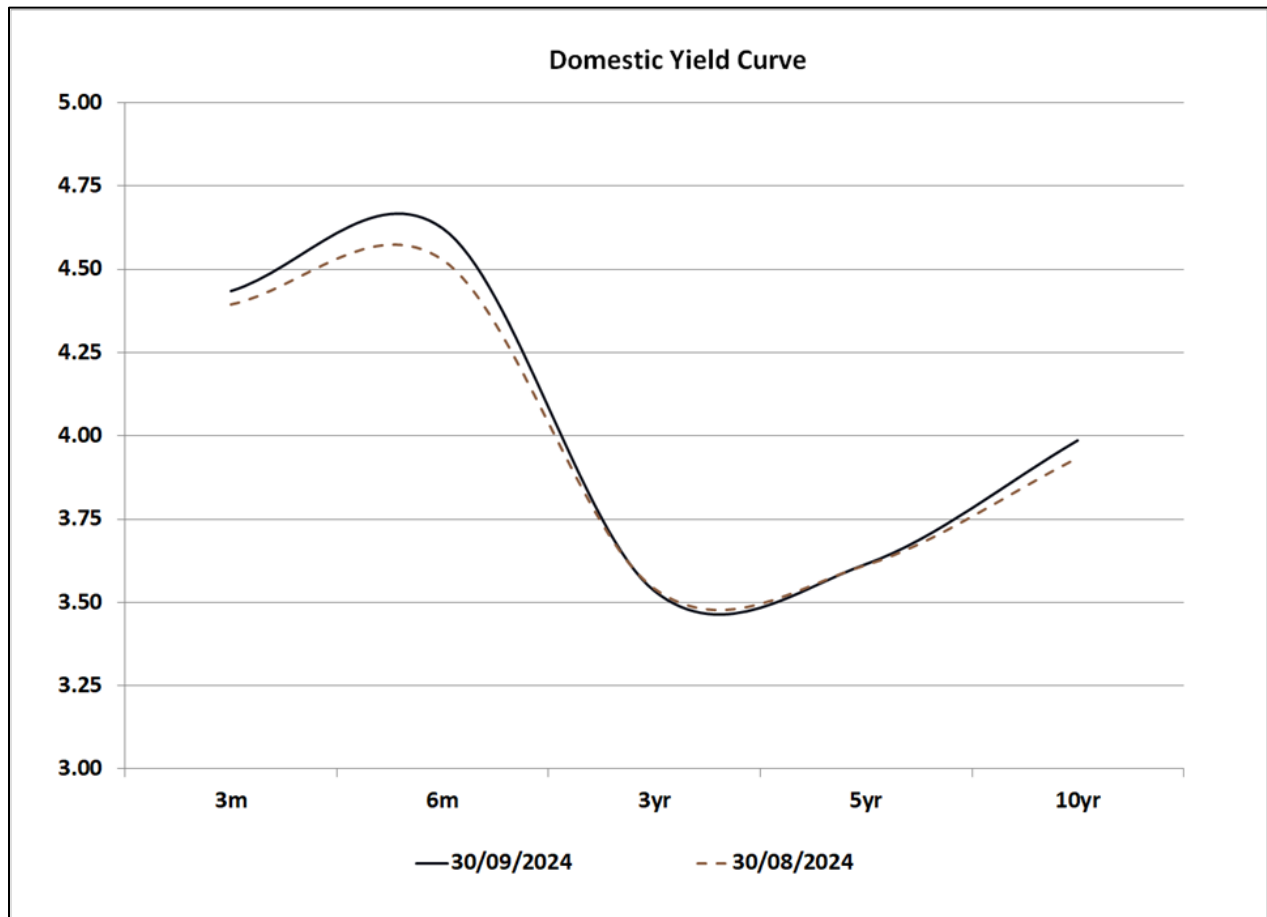
Source: ASX

Fixed Interest Outlook

The updated US Fed dot plot shows a median rate of 4.375% by the end of 2024, implying a further 50bp of cuts out of the remaining two meetings of the year. For 2025, the median dot is for a further 100bp of cuts (to 3.375%), then a further 50bp in 2026 (to 2.875%) in 2026. This 2.875% level is also now the new Fed estimate of the 'long run' or neutral rate.

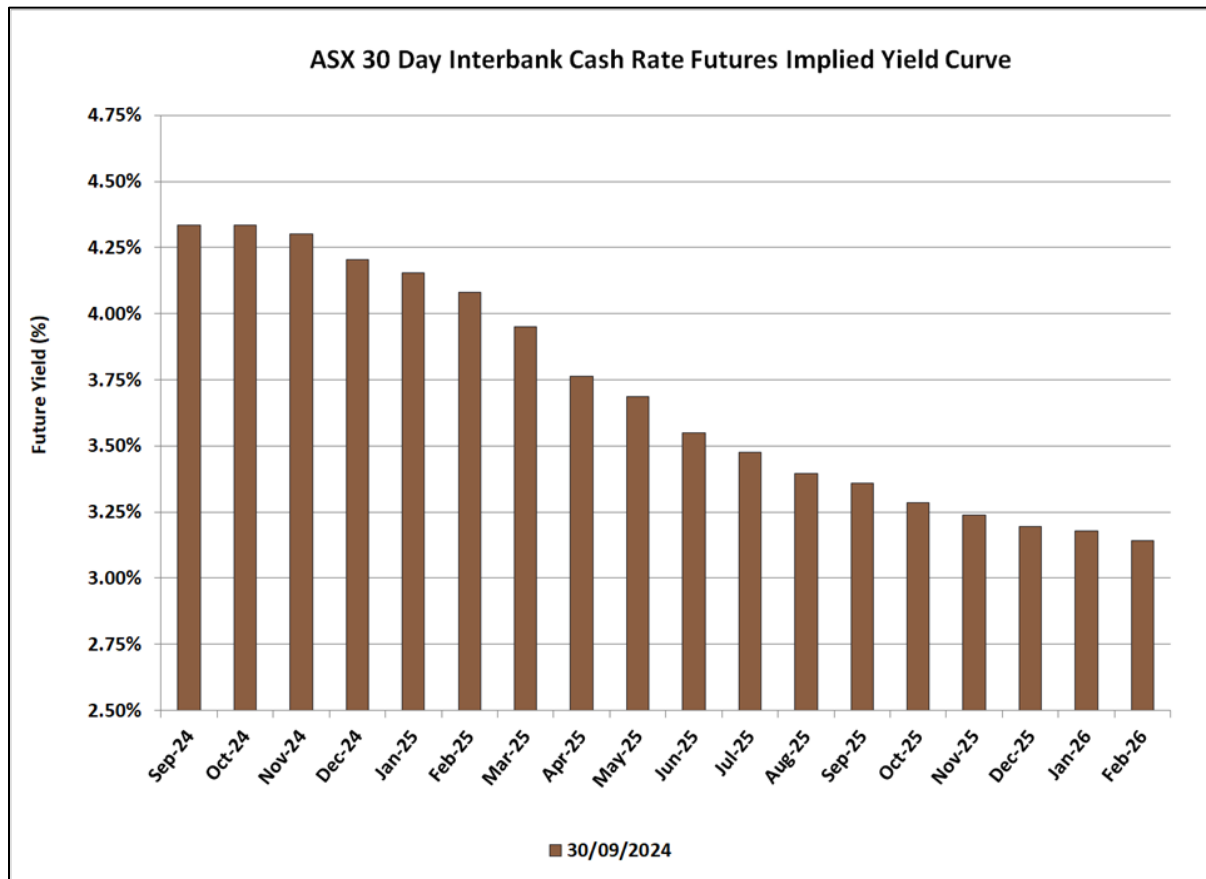
The RBA continues to push back on any immediate talks of rate cuts. Governor Bullock reiterated that official rates are not as restrictive in Australia as offshore: *"Most of those countries had official interest rates up around five or over 5% so in our judgment, we look at how restrictive some of those countries are relative to us...we're restrictive, but we think they're more restrictive than us"*.

Over the month, longer-term yields remained relatively flat at the very long end of the curve (but remains an inverse yield curve):



Source: ASX, RBA

Financial markets have pushed forward their expectations of rate cuts, with the first cut pencilled in by Q1 2025, with 100–125bp of cuts priced by the end of 2025.



Source: ASX

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ITEM 11.19 AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2025 AND BEYOND

DIRECTORATE	Finance
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Ernest Mhande, Chief Financial Officer
PURPOSE	For noting

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the re-appointment of Nexia to conduct the Financial Statement for the years 2025-2026 as advised by the Auditors General.

Executive Summary

The Auditor General has confirmed re-appointment of Nexia for the period 30 June 2025 and beyond

Background

The purpose of this report is to confirm compliance with statutory requirements in relation to the audit of the General Purpose Financial Statements and Special Purpose Financial Statements and Special Schedules. The Auditor General has confirmed re-appointment of Nexia for the period 30 June 2025 and beyond. The anticipated audit fees for next year will be \$82,500. The annual audit fee thereafter should increase by no more than the prevailing Consumer Price Index (Sydney) for the life of the arrangement with Nexia, provided there are no variations to the scope of the engagement.

Current Situation

As per section 422(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, requires that the Auditor-General to be the council auditor.

In addition, Sections 422(1) the *Local Government Act 1993*, provides as follows under section 422:

(2) The Auditor-General may appoint, in writing, a person (whether or not that person is employed in the Public Service) or a firm to be an auditor for the purposes of this Act.

(3) The costs confirmed in writing by the Auditor-General as having been incurred by the Auditor-General in auditing a council's financial reports (including any audit of a council entity) or in any other inspection or audit carried out by the Auditor-General under this Division (or at a council's request) must be paid by the council

Consultation

NSW Audit Office – Client Service Plan.

Financial and Resource Implications

The cost to undertake the audit are included in the budget and no additional costs are anticipated.

Legislation and Policy Implications

Local Government Act 1993 – Section 422

Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting – Update.

Legal and Risk Considerations

Not Applicable

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

G 3.2 Implement governance and financial management process that support the effective administration of Council

3.2.1 Develop processes that ensure that legislative and financial standards are actioned in a timely manner

Alternative Options

Not Applicable

Conclusion

The draft Financial Statement for 2023-2024 offers a preliminary view of the Council's financial performance and position. The auditors will review this draft, and any required adjustments will be made before issuing the final audited statement

Attachments

1. Audit Arrangements Letter



Ms Megan Dixon
General Manager
Walgett Shire Council
By email

Contact: Manuel Moncada
Phone no: 02 9275 7333
Our ref: R005-1395081361-20696

09/10/2024

Dear Ms Dixon

Audit arrangements for the year-ending 30 June 2025 and beyond

I am writing to advise that the Auditor-General for NSW has appointed Nexia Sydney Audit Pty Ltd (Nexia) to conduct the audit of Walgett Shire Council's financial statements for the years ending 30 June 2025 to 30 June 2027, with an option to extend for up to a further two years. The appointment of Nexia follows a competitive open tender process conducted by the Audit Office. I would like to thank Mr Ernest Mhande, Chief Financial Officer who reviewed and provided feedback on the tender submissions to our Tender Evaluation Committee as part of the tender evaluation process.

Nexia has been appointed as the Audit Office's Audit Service Provider (ASP) under section 422(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*. While Nexia has been appointed to conduct the audit, overall responsibility for the audit and the signing of the independent auditor's report remains with the Audit Office. I will be overseeing the conduct and the quality of the audit to ensure it complies with professional requirements.

As foreshadowed in my letter to you in June, our approach to the private sector for audit service providers has yielded fee quotes higher than this year's audit fee as some years have passed since we last went to market to appoint an audit service provider. Before agreeing to Nexia's fee, we carefully analysed it to be satisfied that it was reasonable and commensurate with professional requirements and factors unique to your audit, including risks, financial reporting maturity, systems and governance arrangements.

The Audit Office sets its fees to ensure the audit is conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. As an independent agency, our financial audits are conducted on a cost recovery basis. While we have not finalised the cost for overseeing the conduct of the audit, we anticipate the audit fee for next year will be \$82,500. The annual audit fee thereafter should increase by no more than the prevailing Consumer Price Index (Sydney) for the life of the arrangement with Nexia, provided there are no variations to the scope of the engagement.

Should you require any further information about the new arrangements, including the audit fee, please call me on 02 9275 7333 or via email at manuel.moncada@audit.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Manuel Moncada", written over a set of horizontal lines.

Manuel Moncada
Director, Financial Audit

ITEM 11.20 MONTHLY GRADING REPORT SEPTEMBER 2024

DIRECTORATE Infrastructure and Compliance
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER Director Infrastructure & Compliance
REPORT AUTHOR Bronte Kerr, Project Officer RMCC
PURPOSE For noting

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the monthly grading report.

Executive Summary

This report provides details of the grading works completed during the month of September 2024.

Background

Not applicable

Current Situation

Maintenance grading works completed during the month of September 2024. Works are funded through the Council's own funds and the Regional Emergency Road Repair Fund (RERRF).

Road No	Road Name	Kms Completed
SR 38	Wanourie Road	6.5
SR60	Marra Creek Road	17.5
SR40	Ginghet Road	47.6
SR112	Brewon Road	10
SR64	Wimbledon Road	8
SR47	Schmalkuche Road	14.4
SR102	Angledool Road	20
SR5	Cryon Road	12
SR90	Fairview Road	12.6
SR71	Rossmore Road	10.7
SR123	Camerons Road	15.2
SR16	Mercadool Road	8
SR121	Pian Creek Road	35
SR26	Hardys Lease Road	16
SR27	Colrose Road	20.6
SR28	Wingadee Road	11.8
SR72	Middle Route Road	9.6
SR83	Drilldool Road	5.1
SR17	Tareela Road	19.4
SR24	Marlbone Road	28.4
SR30	Nilma Road	37.8
RR7716	Come by Chance Road	30
RR426	Ridge/Sherman Way	30

Consultation

Not applicable

Financial and Resource Implications

The expenditure detailed below is recorded as of September 30, 2024. Please note that not all liabilities have been processed, as there may be delays in the Council receiving invoices from contractors, consequently, the cost of recently completed works are not reflected in the data below.

Ledger /Budget	Budget	Expenditure as at 30 th September 2024.
----------------	--------	---

11.03148.2506 Local Road Unsealed	\$612,519.00	\$100,617.25
11.0318.2617 Regional Unsealed	\$134,096.00	\$0.00
11.10000.0258 Regional Emergency Road Repair Fund (RERRF) <i>(Funding Timeframe: 1st January 2023 - 31st Oct 2027)</i>	\$11,157,453.18	\$4,688,152.36

Continuous monitoring and updates will be vital for ensuring transparency and adhering to budgetary parameters.

Legislation and Policy Implications

Not applicable

Legal and Risk Considerations

Not applicable

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

1.5.1 Provide and maintain an effective road network that meets the community needs and expectations

5.1.1 Manage the road network to respond to community needs, growth in the Shire, improving road safety and improving transport choices

5.1.2 Develop a strategy that addresses transport options for the local community.

Alternative Options

Not applicable

Conclusion

The recently completed works highlights Council's dedication to maintaining the road network and addressing the needs of the community.

Attachments

None

ITEM 11.21 UPDATE ON INFRASTRUCTURE REPORTS

DIRECTORATE	Infrastructure and Compliance
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Director Infrastructure & Compliance
REPORT AUTHOR	Keaton Rutherford, Project Officer Infrastructure
PURPOSE	For noting

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the update on infrastructure projects.

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the current status of infrastructure projects within the shire. Key projects include the Come by Chance Road reconstruction and seal, for which the Council has received funding approvals and plans to resume work in October 2024, having adjusted project scope to manage costs effectively. The reconstruction of Hare Street in Carinda and the Rowena drainage upgrade works have been completed.

Background

Not Applicable

Current Situation

The shire currently has the following major project in progress:

- **Come by Chance Road Reconstruction and Seal** – The Council has now received approval from both funding bodies (Restart NSW and HVSPF Federal Program) for our proposed change request. This change request included revision to items such as earthworks levels, regrading of open drains and increase of stabilisation rates. It also sought a reduction from 55km to 30km for the road upgrade to maintain project cost. The contractor is planning to recommence works in October 2024.
- **Rowena Drainage Upgrade Works**– The project has been completed. Funded by the Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF), these improvements enhance the township's capacity to manage water during rainfall events. The works included:
 1. Regrading of approximately 1500 lineal metres of table drains adjacent to the streets within the township.
 2. Installation of 6 new culverts at correct levels.
 3. Works were completed up to the existing culvert beneath the rail. Additional works are required west of the rail.
- **Hare Street, Carinda Reconstruction** - The project has been completed. Funded by Roads to Recovery program (RTR). The project involved reconstructing 80 meters of sealed road.

Consultation

Not Applicable

Financial and Resource Implications

Ongoing monitoring and updates will be crucial to maintain transparency and ensure successful project delivery.

Legislation and Policy Implications

Not Applicable

Legal and Risk Considerations

Not Applicable

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

15.1 Provide and maintain an effective road network that meets the community needs and expectations

5.1.1 Manage the road network to respond to community needs, growth in the Shire, improving road safety and improving transport choices

15.2 A Regional and State Road network that is appropriately supported and resourced by the Government

5.2.1 Ensure that the road network is maintained to a standard that is achievable within the resources available.

Alternative Options

Not Applicable

Conclusion

The infrastructure projects currently underway and recently completed demonstrate the Council's commitment to enhancing the shire's infrastructure and ensuring community needs are met. With funding approvals in place and effective project management, the Council is well-positioned to continue progressing these essential projects.

Attachments

1. Restart NSW Fund Letter
2. Rowena - Photos of Works

Ms Megan Dixon
General Manager
Walgett Shire Council
77 Fox Street
Walgett NSW 2832

Email: megan.dixon@walgett.nsw.gov.au; admin@walgett.nsw.gov.au

06/09/2024

Dear Ms Dixon

Restart NSW Fund: RNSW2134 Reconstruction and sealing of Come by Chance Road between Walgett and Pilliga – Walgett Shire Council

Further to our previous meetings and correspondence with the project team regarding the scope change request for this project, this letter provides the outcome of the review by Infrastructure NSW, in consultation with the funding program agency, Transport for NSW (TfNSW).

Summary

There have been several issues impacting the project budget and time, including:

- Inclement weather including flooding and ongoing site access issues and need to increase road levels and drainage in these inundated areas;
- Impact of black soil areas on pavement and base design requirements;
- Increases in market prices and material supply issues;
- Senior management and project staff changes.

This has resulted in Council submitting a formal project change request to address budget issues for the reconstruction and sealing of the Come by Chance Road between Walgett and Pilliga.

Project Outcome

- Reconstruction and sealing of Come by Chance Road between Walgett and Pilliga;
- 26 m HML access;
- Access to 7 axle Truck and Dog unrestricted vehicles.

Original Scope

Reconstruction and sealing of Come by Chance Road between Walgett and Pilliga; 54.9 km unsealed section including new causeways and table drains.

- REF, Geotechnical Investigation and Survey;
- Construction of 54.9 km unsealed side track;
- Reinstatement of causeways and culverts;

- Replacement of grids;
- Construction of 54.9 km bitumen sealed road.

Works completed to date

Construction commenced in April 2023, approximately 12% of project works have been completed.

Proposed Change Request

- Scope and Time.
- No change to cost.

The change request proposes the following:

- Extending the project completion date to 30 June 2025 (from 31 August 2024).
- Reducing the length of the road upgrade to 30 km (from 55 km)
- Increasing earthwork volumes, stabilisation rates, guard rail quantities, table drain excavation and culvert installation.

Assessment

A requirement of Restart NSW project funding is that a project's benefits must exceed the cost of its delivery, as demonstrated by having a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) greater than 1.0.

A key component of the change request assessment was the technical panel review undertaken by TfNSW including revised BCR assessment. The result of the panel review was confirmation that the BCR remains greater than 1.0, and that the intended project outcomes would still be achieved. The change request is supported by TfNSW.

INSW also took into consideration the advice that the Council had received approval from the Australian Government to vary the project.

Change Request Approval

INSW approves the project change request as detailed below:

Scope

- Reducing the length of the road upgrade to 30 km (from 55 km);
- Increasing earthwork volumes, stabilisation rates, guard rail quantities, table drain excavation and culvert installation.

Time

- Current approved completion date of 31 August 2024.
- Approved revised project completion date 30 June 2025.

Cost

No change to project cost. Changes to the project scope and time are approved at nil cost, including any potential delay costs.

Ongoing management, monitoring and reporting of the project contingency is a requirement of this change request approval.

The current Total Project Budget is \$13,300,000, consisting of:

- Restart NSW Grant funding capped at \$6,980,000. There is no additional funding required from Restart NSW.
- Australian Government funding of \$5,050,000 from the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity program (HVSPP).
- Walgett Shire Council funding of \$1,270,000 (Additional Council funds \$570,000 – Nov 2022).

Reporting Requirements (ongoing)

- Project status reports must be completed every month.
- Progress claims are submitted with the monthly reports and shall include supporting documents to verify the project expenditure in the progress claim.
- For projects with multiple funding sources, monthly progress claims against Restart NSW grant are calculated using pro-rata percentage to calculate value of Restart Funding and Co-contributor Funding components each month, reconciliation may be required prior to completion due to rounding.
- The cash flow is to be forecast using pro rata percentage to calculate values for Restart Funding and for Co-contributor Funding commencing at the start of the project through to project completion.
- A monthly project cash flow exclusive of contingency, is to be provided with the Deed and updated regularly over the life of the project.
- Contingency expenditure to be monitored and reported monthly. Project contingencies are proportioned on a pro rata basis.
- Note a 10% retention will be held until the Final Report is completed. Refer Agreement Particulars for timing details.

Council is now expected to deliver the approved amended scope of work within the timeframe approved above, and report progress monthly via the Restart NSW Reporting portal.

Any questions please contact the INSW Project Manager, Melissa Alt or myself.

Yours sincerely,



Julie Paton

Director, Performance Management

Restart PMO, Infrastructure NSW

Recipient Organisation	Walgett Shire Council
Project title	Flood Mitigation Works at Rowena Village
Project ID	PJ - 0000939



Figure 1 - Before photo of one of the table drains



Figure 2 - After photo of same table drain from previous photo.



Figure 3 - Works in progress



Figure 4 - Works in progress



Figure 5 - regraded/ re-excavated drains





Figure 6 - One of teh new driveway culverts installed.





Figure 7 - More of the driveway culverts installed.

ITEM 11.22 INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMPLAINE EXPENDITURE REPORT

DIRECTORATE Infrastructure and Compliance
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER Director Infrastructure & Compliance
REPORT AUTHOR Bronte Kerr, Project Officer RMCC
PURPOSE For noting

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Infrastructure and Compliance Expenditure Report.

Executive Summary

This report outlines the expenditures for the Infrastructure and Compliance Department as of September 30, 2024, with a total approved budget of \$54,245,727 for the 2024/2025 fiscal year. To date, 8% of the budget has been utilised, totalling \$4,323,667 across various service areas.

Background

Not applicable

Current Situation

Service Area	Budget	Expenditure as of 30/9/2024	%
Infrastructure and Compliance Services	\$48,035,633	\$3,950,696	8%
Water - Maintenance	\$3,554,186	\$255,651	7%
Water - Capital	\$1,162,284	\$4,820	0.4%
Sewer - Maintenance	\$1,093,624	\$8451	7%
Sewer - Capital	\$400,000	\$36,495	9%
Total	\$54,245,727	\$4,323,667	8%

Consultation

Not applicable

Financial and Resource Implications

Not applicable

Legislation and Policy Implications

Not applicable

Legal and Risk Considerations

There are minimal legal risks associated with the reported expenditures as they fall within the approved budgetary framework. However, the Council should remain vigilant regarding compliance with any legislative changes that may affect funding approvals to mitigate potential legal implications.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

Not applicable

Alternative Options

Not applicable

Conclusion

The Infrastructure and Compliance Department is managing its expenditures effectively within the approved budget.

Attachments

None

ITEM 11.23 STATE OF THE SHIRE 2021 TO 2024

DIRECTORATE	Executive Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Katherine Matts - A/Manager Communications and Engagement
PURPOSE	For noting

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the 2021/2022 State of the Shire Report, to be adopted as an attachment with the Annual Report at the November Ordinary Meeting of Council.

Executive Summary

The "State of the Shire" Report, formerly referred to as the "End of Term" Report, marks the final document in the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework for a Council term. It provides a summary of the Council's progress in implementing the Community Strategic Plan. This report is a requirement under the NSW Local Government Act 1993. The 2021/2024 State of the Shire Report is attached.

Background

The State of our Shire Report should be presented to the second meeting of a newly elected council for noting. The report will cover the 4-year term of the previous council and will objectively track council's progress against the Community Strategic Plan (CSP). The report will provide information that sets the scene for the new council and may include achievements to date and highlight future work to be undertaken. The report should assist the new council to undertake a review of the CSP, which is an essential component of IP&R cycle.

The State of our Shire Report focuses on how effective council has been in delivering social, environmental, economic and civic leadership objectives over the 4-year term of the previous council. It reports against the high-level strategies and priorities of the CSP and has a community focus, rather than a council one

Current Situation

Typically, this report is presented alongside the Annual Report at the second meeting of Council. However, as it has been finalised in time for the first Ordinary Meeting of Council, it is being submitted now for noting. This allows Councillors the opportunity to review the report ahead of the November meeting, reducing the volume of reading required at that time. as both the State of the Shire Report and the Annual Report will be presented.

Consultation

Internal Consultation with Executive and Management Teams.

Financial and Resource Implications

Nil

Legislation and Policy Implications

- *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW);
- *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* (NSW);
- *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (NSW)

Legal and Risk Considerations

This report is a legislative requirement, governed by established guidelines and standards that dictate the necessary content and information to be included.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

G 3.1 An accountable and representative Council

3.1.1 Provide clear direction for the community through the development of the community strategic plan, delivery program and operational plan

3.1.4 Undertake the civic duties of Council with the highest degree of professionalism and ethics

3.1.5 Councillors represent the interests of the whole of the Shire area

G 3.4 Deliver the goals and strategies of the Community Strategic Plan

3.4.1 Resource the organisation of Council adequately to provide the services and support functions required to deliver the goals and strategies detailed in this plan

3.4.2 Implement and maintain a performance management framework to enable clear reporting on progress in Councils strategic planning documents

Alternative Options

Council may decide to not adopt the report at the next meeting, doing so would result in non-compliance with legislative requirements and is therefore not a recommended course of action.

Conclusion

Council note the attached State of the Shire report.

Attachments

1. State of the Shire 2024



State of the Shire Report

2021-2024

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State of the Shire Report
2021-2024

04	WELCOME TO COUNTRY	17	UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY SATISFACTION
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09	MEET YOUR COUNCILORS	26	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES
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12	ABOUT WALGETT SHIRE	31	ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
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Acknowledgement of Country



Where we live. Where we work. Where we grow.

We sincerely acknowledge the first people, the Gamilaraay, Yuwaalaraay and Ngayimbaa nations, traditional custodians of the land and waterways, the spiritual and cultural connectors within our Local Government Area.

Over the last fifty or more years significant steps towards reconciliation have been undertaken, this journey is ongoing. We all have a role to play in building resilience and determination in maintaining the importance of our first peoples'.

The cultural connections, identity and traditions are vital in acknowledging and respecting the world's oldest living culture. We pay our respect to Elders both past, present and emerging.

About this Report

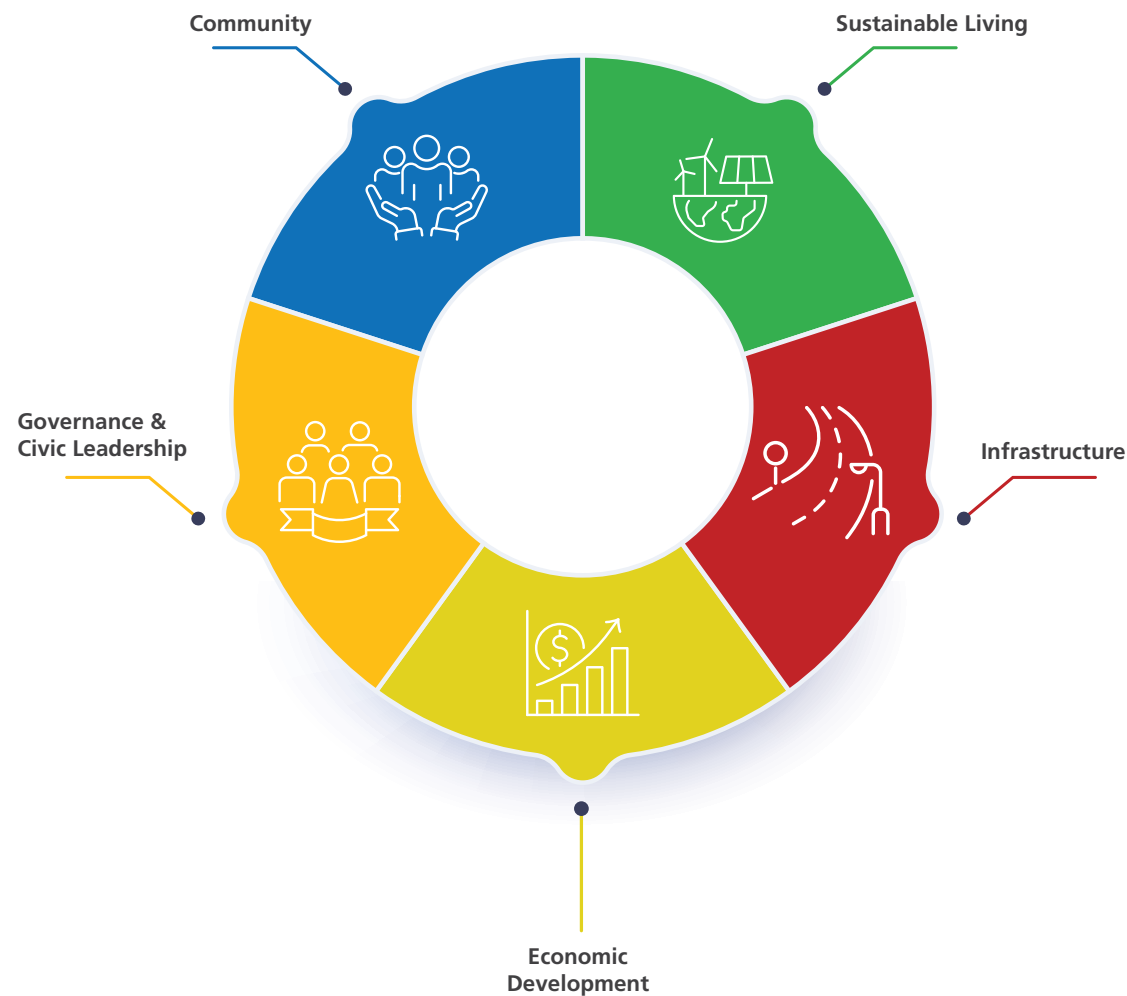
The Local Government Act 1993 and the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework require the Council to prepare a State of Our Shire report, formerly known as the End of Term (EoT) Report, detailing the Council's implementation and effectiveness of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) in achieving its social, environmental, economic, and civic leadership objectives over the past three years.

In 2017, the Council adopted its 2017-2027 Community Strategic Plan.

In accordance with NSW legislation on Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R), the Council must now prepare a State of the Shire report on the progress made in implementing the objectives of this plan during the term of the elected Council from 2021 to 2024.

The Walgett Shire Community Strategic Plan (CSP) captures the strengths and key issues facing the Shire and establishes strategies to provide the Council and the community with a focus and direction for achieving desired outcomes.

The CSP covers five key themes:



Each theme outlines where the community sees itself going, how we will get there, and what role the Council will play, whether through providing direct services and programs, partnering with other agencies, or lobbying other agencies for change.

This report sets out what the Council has done towards achieving these strategies.

Council Vision Statement



That the community utilise the opportunities that arise from our environment to improve their quality of life whilst embracing its ethnic and social diversity, for the benefit of all.

Mission Statement

Walgett Shire will:

- Provide focused and ethical leadership
- Deliver quality services and effective stewardship of all local infrastructure
- Remain environmentally sustainable, prosperous, and vibrant
- Promote the Shire as a great place to live, work and visit
- Lobby all levels of government to ensure that appropriate levels of support are provided for health, education, employment, and housing as well as infrastructure development and maintenance
- Co-operate with other bodies and areas in the sharing of specialist resources and facilities

Community Standards



Walgett Shire strives to deliver:

- Respect
- Integrity
- Ethical conduct
- Courage
- Honesty
- Accountability
- Responsibility

Meet Your Councillors



Jasen Ramien
Mayor



Colin Hundy
Deputy Mayor



Sue Currey
Councillor



Alf Seaton
Councillor



Ian Woodcock OAM
Councillor



Greg Rummery
Councillor



Daniel Walford
Councillor



Jane Keir OAM
Councillor



Michael Cooke
Councillor



Mayor's Message

It is with mixed emotion that I present the Walgett Shire Council 'State of our Shire Report, 2021-2024.'

Along with immense pride for everything we have achieved in the last three years, it is also tinged with sadness as the current Councilors come to the end of their respective terms.

I have enjoyed working with this Council and have chosen some highlights to speak about below.

As some of you would be aware, the Local Government elections originally scheduled for September 2020 were postponed until 2021 because of the Covid 19 Pandemic.

This means the normal four-year term was reduced to three years.

Although our tenure was short, I would like to think that our achievements made headway towards our community's priority of making Walgett Shire a great place to live, work and visit.

The Councillors and I were elected in 2021, and we were led by Councillor Jane Keir, OAM for the first two of those years, and our term has not been without its challenges.

Although it may seem a distant memory now, we had just come out of the COVID 19 pandemic when we were faced with the 2021/2022 floods, which saw our towns and villages cut-off, and our roads and infrastructure sustaining considerable damage.

No sooner had we started to rebuild from this weather event, we then had the Hudson Bushfires in 2023 which ravaged the villages of the Grawin and resulted in the loss of Captain Leo Fransen. We experienced all these challenges not just as a Council, but as a community, and I am proud of the way we got through it. Battle weary maybe, but we did survive. I would like to thank all those in our community who volunteer for frontline services, and those in retained positions, without whom we would be lost.

Despite these obvious challenges, there were some significant achievements made along the way.

In 2021 a Council delegation met with the NSW Minister for Water tabling a three-point funding strategy for further drought proofing of Walgett.

The initiatives included a new Barwon River offtake above the Walgett weir, a third artesian bore north of Walgett and an upgrade of the Walgett Sewer Treatment Plant to produce reuseable water for the environment.

In 2021 Walgett Shire Council, in conjunction with the Public Works Authority, successfully completed the long-awaited raising of the Walgett weir and construction of adjacent fish way.

The final cost of the project was \$8.8 million with the fish way being the major cost component. Raising the weir provides the Walgett community with an additional nine months' water storage.

Road infrastructure improvement is high on the communities, and therefore the Council's list of priorities.

We took a proactive approach by producing a strategic planning document, a feasibility study, highlighting the need to upgrade the 'Come-By- Chance' Road."

This approach paid off with the Council receiving a total of \$12.7 million towards the sealing of this important link.

Sealing of the missing link will allow for the reliable movement of agricultural products and livestock, improved road safety for motorists and access to Walgett for residents during wet weather events. This road services a vibrant agricultural community east of the shire, and the upgrade will also improve efficiency of farming operations, allow greater on-farm investment, and offer tourists a scenic route.

Council continues to lobby NSW Government for improved road funding, in particular the Walgett Shire Regional Road network that is deteriorating.

In 2021 a Council delegation met with the NSW Minister for Regional Transport and Roads and tabled a strategy for funding to reseal the Regional Road network every 15 years.

During the past year, the Council has lobbied both Commonwealth and NSW State Governments on issues from road funding, sustainable mining and tourism industries, and upgrade of telecommunications infrastructure.

The community service activity at a Local Government level is now firmly etched into the organisation's Delivery Program as a core functional expenditure area with a myriad of programs from youth and holiday centers, Local Government, Senior's, and Youth week programs.

These programs have made an enormous difference to the lives of so many people and the engagement strategy is setting a high bar for others.

Throughout our time in office the Community Services team has gone from strength to strength with the team winning five (5) consecutive Local Government week awards for outstanding attendance and events in the annual youth week celebrations.

In late 2018 the Council seized on the opportunity to expand its presence in the shire providing administration/customer services and Centrelink agency function by opening an office in Lightning Ridge.

The Agency has operated successfully for the past three years and transactions have increased 100% during this time.

The Collarenebri Postal Agency continues to be a go-to place for locals and visitors to the Shire. Agency turnover has also increased significantly with the introduction of retail lines and a 'shop local' campaign.

In closing, I would like to thank my fellow Councillors for their ongoing support and contribution over the past three years. To the management and staff, I congratulate you for your continuing commitment to service delivery aimed at making the Walgett Shire a sustainable and attractive place for residents and visitors alike.

**Clr Jasen Ramien,
Mayor of Walgett Shire Council**

About Walgett Shire

Walgett Shire is located in the Outback Region of NSW along the banks of the Barwon and Namoi Rivers.

The Shire comprises several towns and villages; Walgett, Lightning Ridge, Collarenebri, Burren Junction, Carinda, Rowena, Pokataroo, Cumborah, Cryon and Come-by-Chance, Grawin, Glengarry and Sheepyards and covers an area of approximately 22,000 square kilometers.



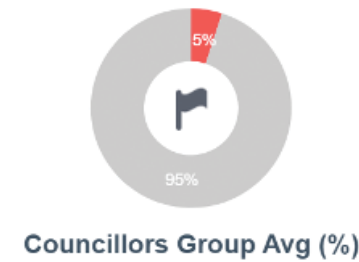
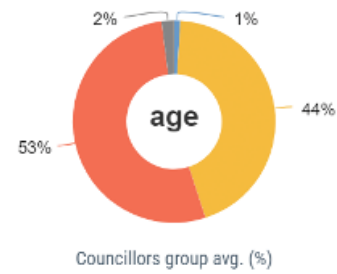
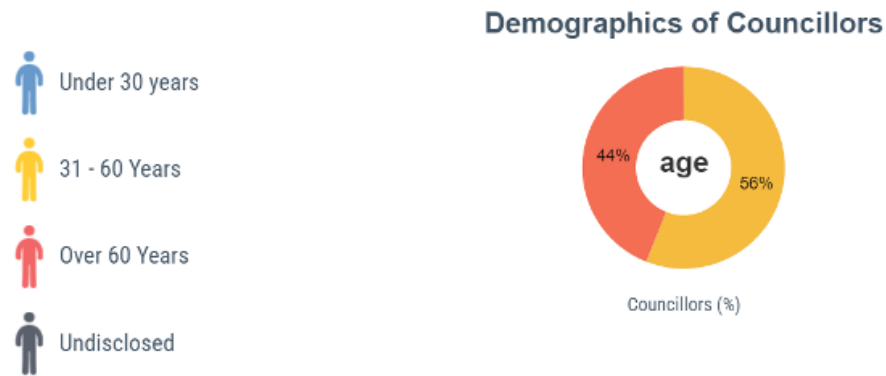
The land area provides a valuable resource for the Shire and the wider region.

This consists of:

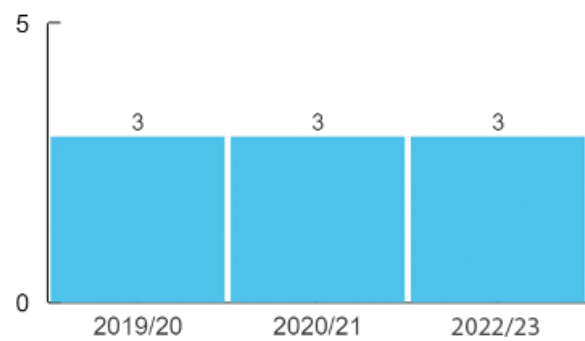
- Productive agriculture
- Rural landscapes
- Waterways
- Mineral Deposits
- Native vegetation Industry
- Community facilities and services
- Cultural heritage



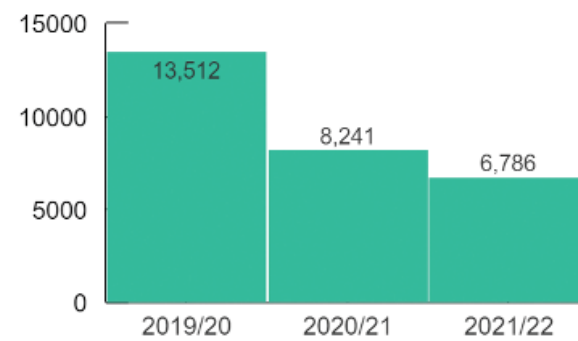
Council Composition



Number of Code of Conduct Complaints



Cost of Code of Conduct Complaints (\$)



Your Council's Community Leadership

	Result	Group Avg.
Number of Councillors	9	9
Population per councillor	621	835
Development Applications determined by councillors (%)	0	1.8
Audited Financial Reports submitted by due date (Y/N)	Y	Y
Code of Conduct Complaints (No.)	3	1
Complaints Investigated requiring action (No.)	1	1
Cost of dealing with Code of Conduct Complaints (\$)	6,786	557
Population per FTE Staff (No.)	49	65
Councillor expenses (\$)	32,000	38,348
Total mayoral and councillor fees (\$)	126,000	121,809
Mayoral and councillor Overseas travel (\$)	0	0
Mayoral and councillor conference expenses (\$)	2,560	10,039
Mayoral and councillor interstate travel (\$)	0	718
General manager remuneration (\$)	323,456	276,883

Understanding the Community Strategic Plan (CSP)

While Council has a custodial role in initiating, preparing and maintaining the CSP on behalf of the community, Council is not wholly responsible for the implementation of the plan.

Everyone who has an interest in the Walgett Shire is responsible for the delivery of the outcomes in this plan.

In other words, it is the collective expertise and actions of individuals, community groups, organisations, and all levels of government that transform goals into reality.

Council uses the CSP to develop its own Delivery Program and Operational Plan outlining what we are able to do to assist in achieving the outcomes and strategies. It is also envisaged other partners and stakeholders, such as federal and state agencies, NGOs and community groups will respond to the CSP by including in their planning processes how they will help deliver the outcomes and long-term strategies in the Walgett CSP.



Understanding Community Satisfaction





Council engaged community research company Micromex Research to undertake a survey to assess the community's overall satisfaction with Council's performance in terms of services and facilities.

The survey also identifies the highest priorities for residents and the most valued aspects of the area, and resident attitudes.

The phone survey is a way of collecting information from a sample, a cross-section of the community which represents the whole community's view.

Many Councils in NSW conduct annual satisfaction surveys to check their residents' satisfaction with Council's performance and identify which services need improvement. The survey helps Council compare year on year results and against the NSW regional average.

In summary results of the survey show:

-  Overall satisfaction 53% of residents are at least somewhat satisfied with the performance of Council over the last 12 months
-  Quality of life: 79% of residents rated their quality of life as "good" to "excellent"
-  Satisfaction with Contact: 65% of residents who had contact with Council are at least somewhat satisfied with the way their contact was handled
-  Support of Business Activities: 86% of residents at least somewhat supportive of Council's business activities for making non-rate income.

Community Survey

The Walgett Shire community's highest priorities were:

- Fixing/maintaining roads
- Better communication/management from Council
- Encouraging tourism
- Town maintenance/beautification

The most valued aspects of Walgett Shire were:

- Community feel/close to family/friends/friendly people
- Lifestyle eg. Rural, outback
- Atmosphere eg. Quiet, relaxed, peaceful
- Lived here all my life/good place to live/nice area

Importance:

The following services/facilities received the highest importance ratings:

- Mobile coverage
- Decisions are made in the interest of the community
- Health services
- Order and cleanliness
- Financial management
- Long-term planning for the Shire

Satisfaction:

The following services/facilities received the highest satisfaction ratings:

- Sports grounds
- Visitor Information Services
- Airports
- Cemeteries
- Aboriginal Services

Projects Started and/or Completed Since 2021

Communities have an expectation for Council to deliver major projects. Large projects take many years to complete and involve more than one council team to deliver them.

Large projects bring together many of the community's key outcomes across all five themes of the Community Strategic Plan.



Projects Started and/or Completed Since 2021 cont...



Michael Urquhart and Dugald Saunders MP with Walgett Shire Mayor Jane Keir and Deputy Mayor, Greg Rummery at the opening of the upgraded Colless Grandstand

Some projects completed this term:

- Jimmy Little Festival (Economic development)
- New toilet blocks at Alex Trevallion, Apex Park, and Lions Park in Lightning Ridge (Visitor economy)
- Collarenebri Artesian Pool (Liveability, sport and recreation, infrastructure, visitor economy)
- Fencing at Spider Brown Oval (Safety, compliance, recreational assets)
- Walgett Cemetery Work (Civic facilities/asset maintenance)
- Fencing at the Rowena Hall Completed (Village life, asset maintenance)
- New playground in Gray Park Walgett (Liveability, recreation)
- Dick Colless Grandstand upgrade (Infrastructure, liveability, recreation)



Opening of the Collarenebri Pool.

Infrastructure Renewal

Council's asset base has a net carrying amount (written down value) of \$340 million as at 30th June 2024, with assets classes consisting of roads, buildings, water and sewer networks, plant and equipment, stormwater drainage, land, and other structures.

Each year our assets depreciate or lose value over time because of wear and tear, construction date, type of asset, asset construction technique, and environmental conditions.

A crucial element of Local Governments charter is being the custodian and trustee of public assets

Council is responsible for effectively managing its assets. The development of appropriate asset management strategies is also essential for maintenance programs and asset renewal scheduling.

Grawin Bore	698,000	Lorne Road gravel re-sheeting	362,000
Blacks Bridge upgrade	845,000	Burren junction hall upgrade	338,000
Harris Bridge upgrade	631,000	Walgett showground toilets	149,000
Wanourie Bridge upgrade	1,051,000	Walgett weir	8,800,000
Walgett saleyards truck wash	589,000	Collarenebri Pump station	217,000
Walgett K&G renewal	769,000	Collarenebri new artesian bore	1,317,000
Walgett Levee upgrade	3,966,000	Shakespeare Street gravel	197,000
Come By Chance Rd upgrade	2,824,000	Lightning Ridge Main Street	379,000
Bugilbone Road upgrade	4,969,000	Walgett Wee Waa Sts footpath	336,000
Lightning Ridge airport upgrade	329,000	Collarenebri boat ramp	153,000
Gundabloui Road upgrade	3,287,000	Bill O'Brien Way reseal	422,000
Mercadool Road gravel re-sheet	542,000	Cumborah artesian bore	777,000
Wanourie Creek road upgrade	222,000	Opal Park upgrade	155,000
Collarenebri Showground sheds	153,000	Lightning Ridge Ovals centre	1,634,000
Cryon Road gravel re-sheeting	288,000	Walgett footpaths renewal	377,000
Lightning Ridge Footpaths	364,000	Walgett K&G Dundas Street	155,000
Lightning Ridge Fred Reece Way	263,000	Gundabloui Road upgrade	3,348,000
Walgett Depot Artesian bore	758,000	Housing additions	232,000



Sound Financial Management

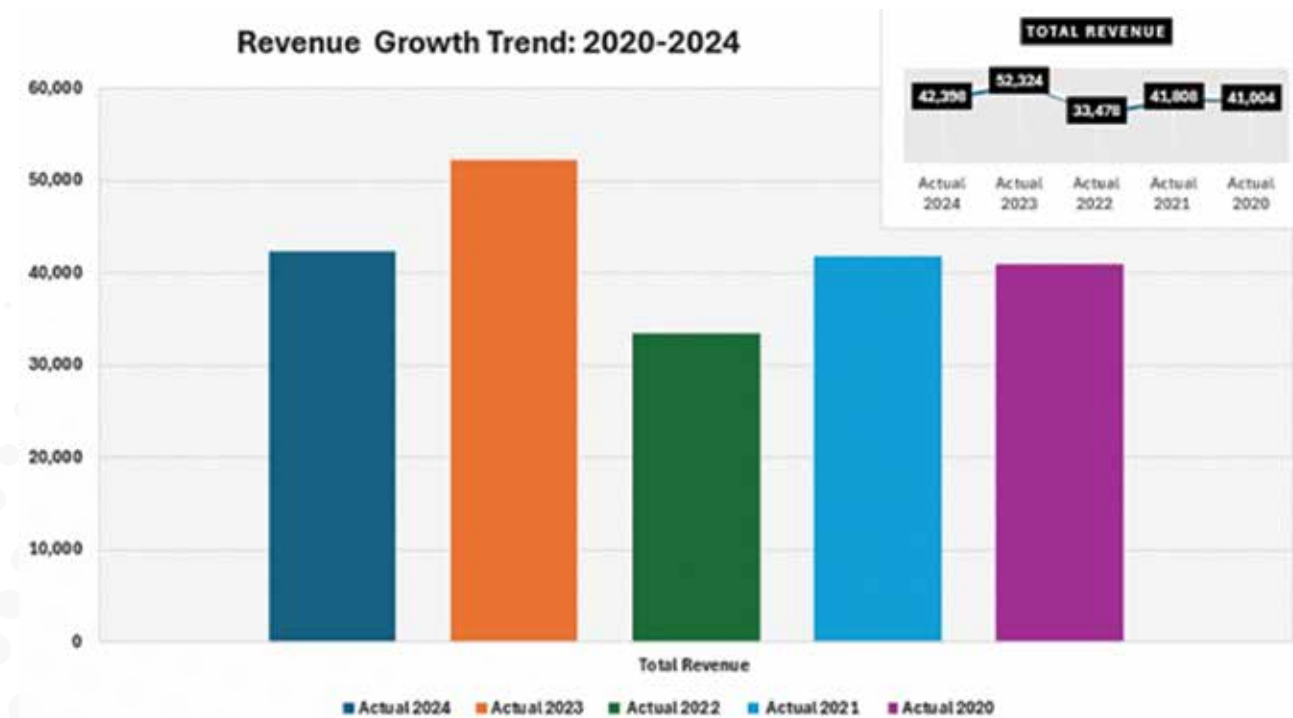
During the last three years Council has focused on consolidating the balance of working capital and reducing debt.

Working capital identifies Council's liquidity or capacity to fund the day-to-day general-purpose operations and delivery of services to the community in the short to medium term and consists of cash, inventories, and net creditors / debtors.

Council has maintained a strong financial position, underpinned by consistent revenue growth.

This achievement is particularly notable given the challenging economic climate.

By diligently managing both restricted and unrestricted funds, Council has been able to deliver essential services and invest in community infrastructure, ensuring a thriving and sustainable future for our region.

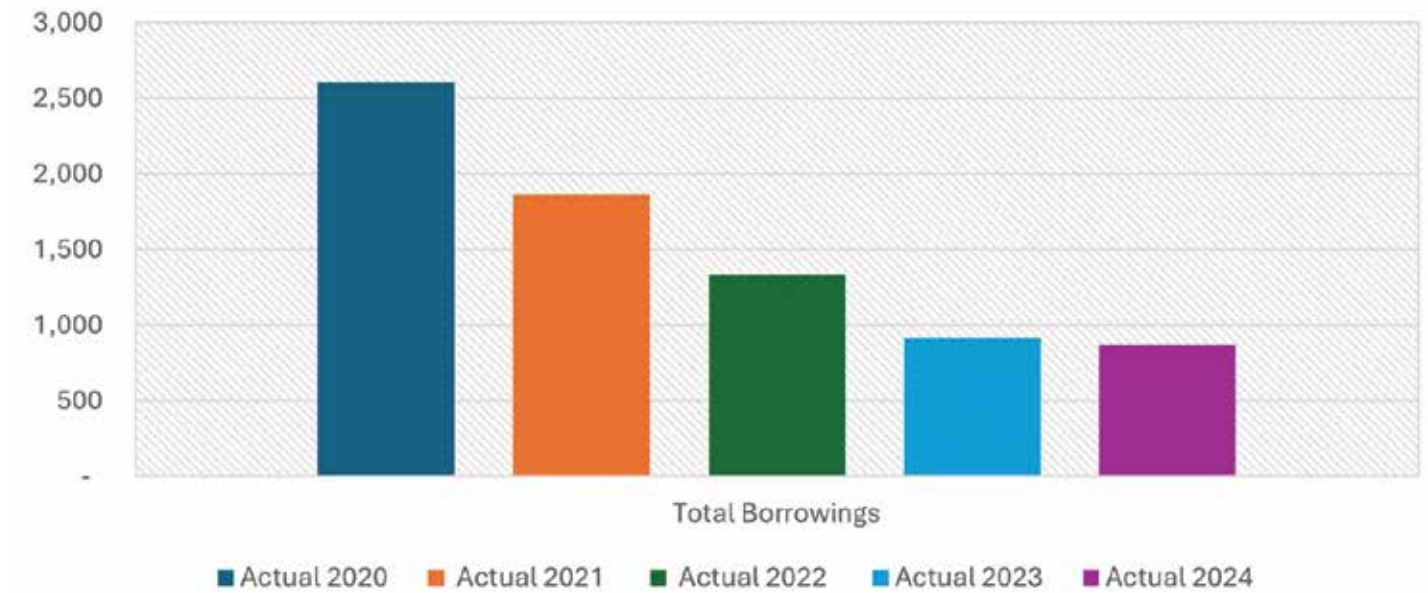


Debt levels have been significantly reduced in recent years, demonstrating a strong commitment to financial prudence. Most existing debt was incurred over a decade ago to fund critical infrastructure projects such as bridges, airports, and housing, which continue to serve our community.

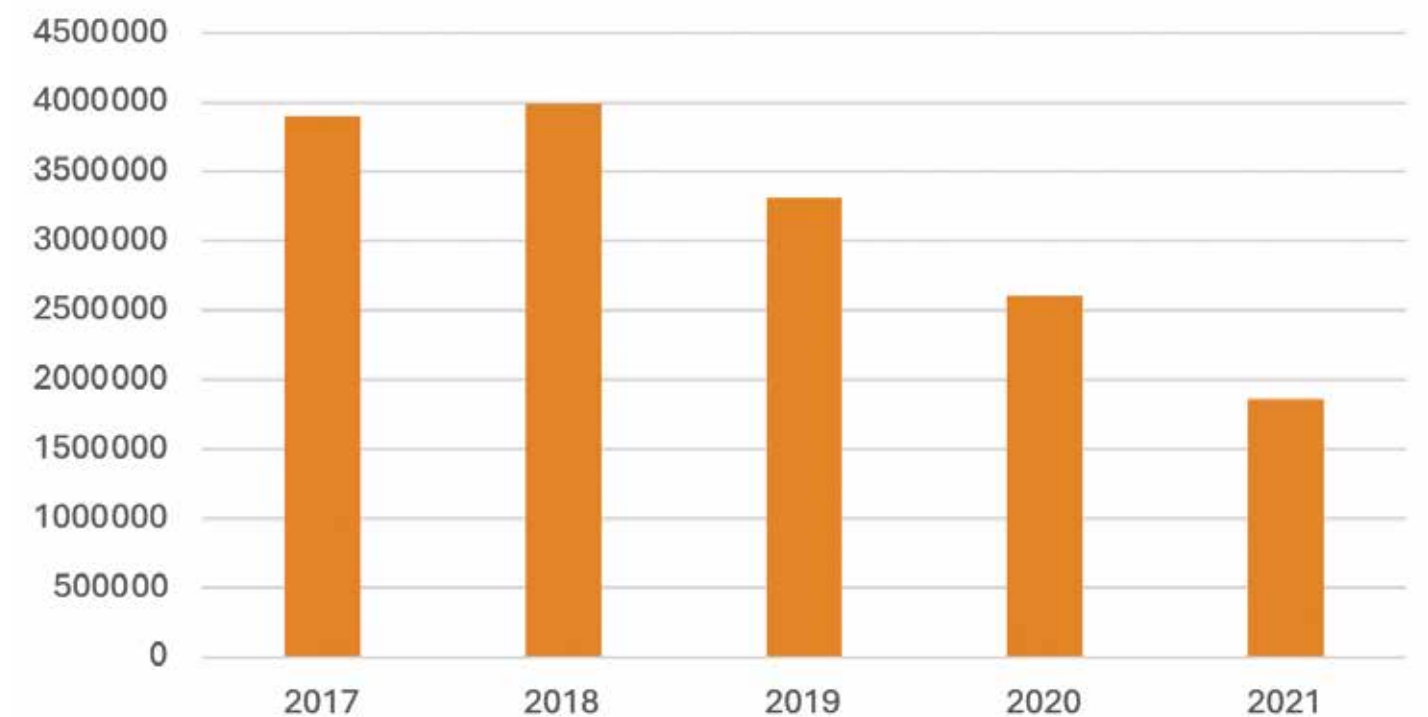
This strategic approach positions Council for long-term financial sustainability.

Council's debt level for outstanding loans has been steadily falling since 2018 as shown in the graph below. The existing loans were raised over the last 10 years or so to fund capital projects for bridges, airports, and housing.

Debt Management : 2020-2024



Loan Balances by Financial Year



Community Development and Services

Cultural, Linguistic, Programs and Promotions



Cultural Diversity and uniqueness are regarded as strengths of our Local Government Area. During the last term, Council has committed to sustaining the implementation of a strength-based approach to delivery and support of our residents and the needs of all people residing in our Local Government Area.

Community development staff work and promote relationships and collaboration with services, organisations, and agencies across our Shire to work to build positive outcomes and strengthen collaborations within our Local Government Area.

Programs and annual initiatives have been delivered to a broad cross section of residents, highlighting the need to connect with the community.

Programs and initiatives that align with our CSP and Operational Plans are consistently well attended and well supported by local and regional agencies and organisations that offer opportunities for residents to gain knowledge, learn a new skill, make new friends, or enjoy the social opportunities events and programs offer.

Celebrations of several community focused events enabled the community to come together and recognize the positive impact of social connections and the importance in the role in which Council plays in advocating, creating, and promoting the opportunities for this to take place.

Reconciliation Week acknowledgement and initiatives across the Shire urges the reconciliation movement towards braver and more impactful action in supporting and recognizing the struggles of our First Peoples.

The Council Youth and Community Development Team initiated and implemented a working group to maximize input and support from services and agencies within the community.

This model of planning and delivery creates provision for those involved to have input into decisions that affect them.

Council also plays the lead role in NAIDOC events, Harmony Day initiative and cultural focused programs across communities.

The message for Harmony week is Everyone Belongs, promoting and acknowledging the reality of racism and break the cycle of discrimination.

Council advocates for inclusion and works collaboratively with agencies and organisations to celebrate the diverse multi-cultural country we live in.

The participation of community members from all backgrounds, post COVID has demonstrated to us that our residents want to connect, want to be a part, or play a part in being actively involved in celebration and opportunities our teams deliver with supporting agencies.

Services to youth and young people- youth development

Council continues to demonstrate its commitment to youth as our future leaders within the LGA.

Our community and youth development teams advocate and promote community inclusivity and innovation regarding services to young people.

Our delivery model of engagement opportunities at afternoon youth centers and holiday programs across the three larger communities of Lightning Ridge, Walgett and Collarenebri remain well supported.

Keeping our young people engaged and safe in a supportive, friendly environment is essential to mental health and well-being.

- After school youth centers daily numbers:
- Walgett: 15-20 Lightning Ridge: 25-30 Collarenebri 15-20
- Daily patronage of School Holiday Programs:
- Walgett: 25-35 Lightning Ridge: 35-40 Collarenebri: 2

It is important to note that special stand-alone programs like Youth Week record higher participation numbers with the 2024 program recording over 2000 attendees with young people engaged in one of the 35 programs offered across a three-week period.

These programs align with **Council's Youth Strategy, Safety and Crime Prevention Plan** which are all under pinned by the Community Strategic Plan in delivering programs to our Shires youth and young people.

Council has been recognized for its delivery of **YOUTH WEEK PROGRAMS** for the past 18 years.

In top five Finalists in 2022-2023 Council made the top five finalists and in 2024 again made the top five finalists in three out of four categories, culminating in being awarded the NSW Local Government **'Best Local Youth Week Program 2024.'**

Council plays a lead role in the youth employment initiative Careers on Country Expo facilitated by NSW Department of Education.

We continue to promote these opportunities when they arise with presentations to schools.

Due to a break in meetings during flood, staff turnover at schools, and other unforeseen issues which have impacted on leadership programs, Council has been struggling to re-ignite its Youth Council in 2024 however are working to re-establish the peak body and voice for youth in our Shire when possible.

Our funding and partnerships with many organisations are vital to sustain our delivery of meaningful, accessible programs for youth and young people.

Community Development and Services

Health and Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing are paramount to our residents, and Council continues to show commitment to these areas of need.

We work with local and regional services, agencies and organisations supporting, partnering, and promoting the wellbeing of our residents.

Social connections are vital, and Council is a key player in many groups and events which place this connection first.

In 2024 we delivered events targeting Domestic Violence, Child Protection, Mental Health, youth employment, harmony programs and social inclusion initiatives.

Council also implemented dedicated events for International Womens Day, Youth Week Program, Children's Week, Grandparents Day, Seniors Weeks, Carers Week, Suicide Prevention and continues to sustain our support of the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Library Services and Information

Highlights of our Library programs across communities include:

- Kids knitting school holidays workshop with Senior knitting ladies
- Promoting intergenerational relationship- Author Talks with local Lightning Ridge Author Jacqueline Gaul
- Local artists workshops
- Community groups that gather and meet at our Libraries include;
 - Mums and Bubs
 - Seniors Art Classes
 - Story time Club
 - Book Club and Toddler Play Groups
- Utilisation of our libraries, our community hubs ensure community members have a place and space to connect, socialise, engage and build on our social capital within the Walgett Shire.

Access & Inclusion

Our Disability Inclusion Action Plan guides our work, and our areas of need as advised by the community. Our community team works alongside many services that support and work towards supporting marginalized groups across our Shire.

Council supported a range of initiatives to support access and inclusion for those people with a disability and their carers.

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Council will remain committed and recognizes the importance of providing all residents with equal access and equity opportunities and activities that meet residents' needs and expectations. Council's community services team are now recognized as a listening council and connected to its residents.



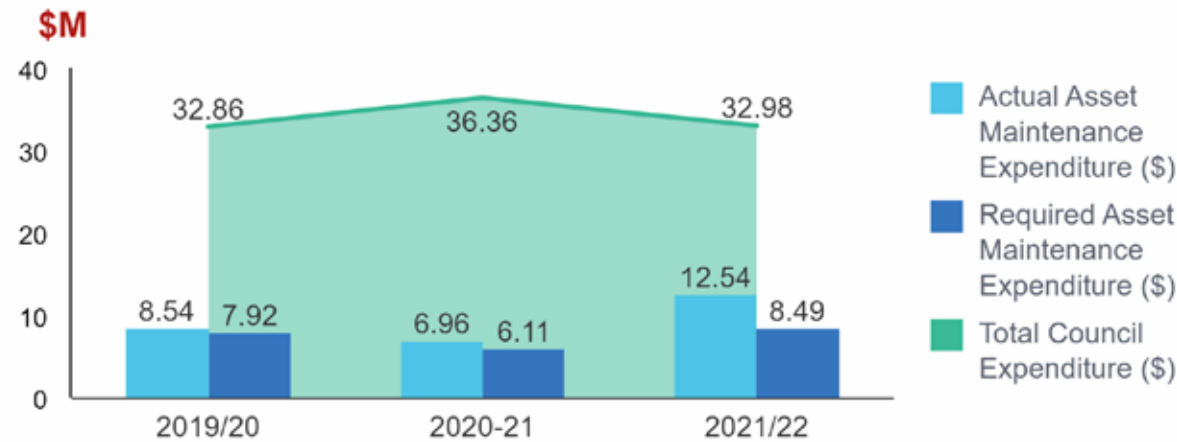
Engineering and Technical Services

Long-term plans for the operation, maintenance and renewal of Council's assets is to maintain a sustainable level of service to the Community.

To implement and maintain Asset Management Systems that meet legislated and government guidelines, provide an effective resource for strategic planning of asset replacement, identify future capital expenditure liabilities, and provide a systematic defense against public liability risks.

We have had several studies over the last few years from consulting engineers to enable us to improve our asset management system so we can improve and maintain Regional Roads & Bridges to provide safe, efficient, all-weather access on key transport routes within the Walgett Shire.

Council's Spending on Assets



We have a self-sufficient workshop to enable quick repairs to our plant and machinery, in the last budget year we have employed two Apprentice Fitters this fiscal year to enable progression in the future.

Your Council's Assets

	Result	Group Avg.
Roads, Bridges and Footpath expenditure per capita (\$)	1,446.33	1,228.04
Building & Infrastructure Renewal Ratio (%)	99.2	135.6
Infrastructure Backlog Ratio (%)	5.1	5.1
Road Length per capita (metre)	66.44	54.13
Asset Maintenance Ratio (%)	147.8	112.4

Environmental Services

Council undertakes a number of activities to minimise the current and future impacts on land within the Walgett Local Government Area:

- Strategic land use planning
- Development control
- Open space management
- Biodiversity management (eg weeds, pests, native plants & animals)
- Stormwater management (eg sediment & erosion control)
- Illegal dumping
- Contaminated Land
- Salinity
- Flooding management
- Bushfire management
- Community group support
- Heritage conservation

Council is currently reviewing the Local Environmental Plan (LEP). The Plan consists of a written document and a series of associated maps, including as follows:

- Land Application Map
- Land Reservation Acquisition Map
- Land Zoning Map
- Lot Size Map
- Heritage Map
- Natural Resource – Biodiversity Map
- Urban Release Area Map
- Natural Resource – Water Map, Natural Resource – Groundwater Vulnerability Map
- Flood Planning Map
- Land Reclassification (Part Lots) Map
- Additional Permitted Uses Map

Operational plan – Status

Community

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
1.1.1	Support and initiate a range of local activities and projects that build community connections for all age sectors	<p>Develop a community consultation framework</p> <p>Provide Sec 356 Donations and subsidies</p> <p>Develop projects in conjunction with community organisations</p>	MCD Complete	<p>Council supports a range of community activities including but not limited to, special/sporting events, cultural initiatives. Council has a productive relationship with agencies eg: WAMS (MOU).</p> <p>Funding provided by Council for various community events this is done annually.</p> <p>Council supports for a range of community activities including but not limited to, special/sporting events, cultural initiatives. Council seeks and advocates for collaboration from community groups on community based initiatives</p> <p>Funding provided by Council for various community events, youth ,disabilities, people/ groups from NESB ,Aboriginal and minority /vulnerable residents made annually.</p> <p>Council initiates and supports community health, social, emotional wellbeing programs annually and as required.</p>
1.1.2	Provide vibrant and welcoming town centres, streets and meeting places	Liaise with volunteers and other community groups to assist in maintenance of parks and gardens	DL/DTES ongoing	Council continues to support /implement initiatives across communities with involving residents in programs and initiatives of community beautification and community gardens.
1.1.3	Embellish our community with parks, paths, cycleways, facilities, and meeting places	Implement the active transport plan Progressively review and upgrade community halls and swimming pools	DE GM Ongoing	Underway with Stronger Country Communities grants and Council revenue funds. Funding for Walgett Splash Park secured. Hall renewal programs completed at Burren Junction, and Carinda.
1.1.4	Respect the heritage of the region and highlight and enhance our unique characteristics	Continue to implement the recommendations of Council's heritage advisor	DES Complete	Heritage Advisor engaged and inspections of local Council's LEP and Local Heritage items to ensure protection of Council's Heritage Buildings. Grant submissions lodged for Outback Heritage Drive. Each year grant allocation made.

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
1.1.5	Support, encourage and celebrate community participation and volunteerism	Creation and promotion of volunteer opportunities	MCS ongoing	Volunteers used as and when required. Council governed by employment legislation, the award, & WH&S and other requirements for volunteers. In accordance with volunteer policy. Council advocates for community participation. Volunteers very active in Lightning Ridge VIC and Gem Gardens.
1.1.6	Work with other agencies and service providers to deliver community programmes, services and facilities which complement and enhance Council's service provision	Identify gaps in service delivery	MEDVE	Continuing to work with communities for best outcomes Council- community relationships remain productive and positive. Shire Inter Agency Committees very active in all centres.

GOAL: A Safe, Active, and Healthy Shire

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
1.2.1	Partner with health agencies and community organisations in promoting healthy lifestyles and better health outcomes	Engage with local sporting associations and peak sporting bodies	CSM Complete	On-going sustained engagement / partnerships with local agencies and contribution to healthy programs, active lifestyles and engagement. Council supports exercise classes in parks and Just Run program.
1.2.2	Support agencies and local organisations to address the availability of emergency services, affordable housing, disability and aged services and employment for people with disabilities	Consultation process for engaging with marginalised sections of community developed Enhanced wellbeing options provided for disadvantaged and marginalised community members	CSM Complete	for broader community wellbeing/ safety and lifestyles. Council adopted Disability Action Plan.
1.2.3	Work with key partners and the community to lobby for adequate health services in our region	Identify gaps in service delivery	DES Complete	Promotion of development of health services within the shire. Communicating with community partners. Council in 2020/21 lobbied NSW Government for increased face to face medical services in Rural Remote NSW. Council made a submission to NSW Government Public Health Inquiry into regional Health Services.

Operational plan – Status

Community

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
1.2.4	Provide, maintain and develop children's play and recreational facilities that encourage active participation	Operate youth centres and vacation care programs	CSM Complete	Fully operational and functioning well. Sustained attendance numbers. New play spaces constructed in community / plans for future additions and improvements in recreational infrastructure & opportunities for residents. New Walgett youth Centre to be located in PCYC.
1.2.5	Provide, maintain and develop passive recreational facilities and parklands to encourage greater utilisation and active participation	Maintain all parks and gardens including playground equipment and progressively upgrade shade shelters	DETS Complete & On-going	New playground equipment for parks constructed/ further parks and equip in progress. New playgrounds in Walgett Gray Park, Opal Park Lightning Ridge, Collarenebri Denyer Park. Council was successful for another Mega park in Lightning Ridge constructed in 2022.
1.2.6	Partner with police, community organisations and the community to address crime, anti-social behaviour and maintain community safety. Provide effective regulatory, compliance and enforcement services for the community	Partner with all combat emergency services and emergency support services. Install and maintain cctv systems across the Shire	GM Complete	GM Chairs the LEMC with stakeholder representation from Police, SES Ambulance, Fire services & other agencies as required. Exercise are conducted to ensure readiness in emergency events including natural disasters eg; floods Council partnering with Agencies during Covid 19 pandemic. Regular meetings each year. Mobile CCTV operational across the shire. Able to relocate for specific events. CCTV installed in Walgett Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri depots.
1.2.7	Provide effective regulatory, compliance and enforcement services for the community	Carry out food premises inspections to ensure compliance with the Food Act Target number of premises audited for fire safety compliance Undertake impounding of animals and registrations Inspections of Swimming Pools for compliance Provide management and investigation of dog attacks and dangerous dog declarations Orders to be issued or served where necessary	DES Complete	Food Inspections in progress delayed due to COVID 19 requirements. Inspections re-commenced July 2021. Staff working with a number of high risk premises in relation to fire safety. Providing opportunities for businesses to learn about and upgrade their fire safety services delayed due to COVID19, Floods and geographic isolation Actively working with and caring for impounded animals as required. Thorough investigations of dog attacks and action taken as required. Orders issued as necessary and as appropriate and followed up to ensure compliance with Overgrown vegetation and repair of buildings. Swimming Pool Inspections carried out as required. Swimming Pool compliance program to be developed on appointment Director of Planning and Compliance Council educating owners of premises about compliance matters.

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
1.2.8	Provide and maintain accessible quality sport and recreation facilities that encourage participation	Maintain swimming pools and bore baths facilities and the surrounds	DETS Complete	Funding secured for Walgett Splashpark. Burren Junction bore baths were installed in 2021. Collarenebri Bore baths complete July, 2024

GOAL: A Diverse and Creative Culture

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
1.3.1	Provide enhanced and innovative library services that encourage lifelong learning	Continue yearly membership of Outback Arts. Support Arts Program. Increase use of library as a community space.	CSM Complete	Membership paid annually. Annual contribution - Complete Library programs delivered iNew memberships at both Libraries in place with increased numbers. Artist workshops held in Walgett library along with knitter sessions each week.
1.3.2	Work with the community and other agencies to develop major cultural and community events	Work with agencies to encourage events for the Shire Apply for grants for cultural events	MEDVE	Continuing & sustained supports / relationships for NAIDOC, YOUTH WEEK, R U OK DAY, RECONCILIATION WEEK, numerous Festivals and celebrations implemented and pre-programmed. Successful Festivals and NAIDOC grant submissions
1.3.3	Work in collaboration with agencies and community groups to address existing and emerging issues specific to the Aboriginal and ageing communities	Implement the Aboriginal Reconciliation Plan Undertake Aboriginal Projects Develop an ageing strategy	CSM Complete Complete In progress	WSC ARAP has been adopted and in place. Action Plan referred to in all relevant delivery of programs/ initiatives First peoples initiatives continued to be supported (NAIDOC/ S2W,/Reconciliation Wek, Sorry day,) Work in progress
1.3.4	Support the development of programs which offer alternative education programs and opportunities that meet the needs of specific community sectors	Establish programs for cadetships/ traineeships Advocate for the improvement of secondary school educational outcomes across the Shire	GM Complete GM In progress	Council has a strategy in place to support cadetships & traineeships. Council partnership with schools for annual placement of school children

Operational plan – Status

Economic Development

GOAL: An attractive environment for business, tourism and industry

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
2.1.1	Implement tools to simplify development processes and encourage quality commercial, industrial and residential development	Advocate for the development of the Australian Opal Centre Ensure that building certification and inspections are carried out as per National Construction and the requirements of the Building Professionals Board	GM Complete DES Complete	Advocacy a success with grants made available across a wide range of activities. Council allocated \$1.425 million from FNW JO tourism grant allocation and \$675,000 from Council funds. Building Surveyors continually act within the conditions of their Accreditation.
2.1.2	Develop the skills of businesses to maximize utilization of new technologies and the emerging broadband and telecommunications networks	Develop and implement an Economic Development Strategy Lobby for improved mobile phone coverage across the shire	GM MEDVE Underway	Application lodged with Black Spot program for upgrade of mobile phone towers Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Collarenebri. Incentive policy under development
2.1.3	Lobby the Government to address needed infrastructure and services to match business and industry development in the region (education, transport and health)	Continue to lobby the Government for funding for transport infrastructure	GM Complete	Significant transport grants received and projects undertaken. Major grants for CBC road, Lorne Road, and Burranbaa Road. Representation made to Minister Toole in June 2021.
2.1.4	Promote the Walgett Shire to business and industry and increase recognition of the area's strategic advantages	Develop business development prospects in collaboration with various government agencies	MEDVE Complete	Continuing. Economic initiative for Collarenebri underway. Orana RDA undertaking economic development program for Collarenebri.
2.1.5	Provision of caravan support facilities throughout the Shire	Maintain and expand facilities of the 'RV Friendly'	VIC In progress	Council investigating caravan park for Walgett. Also expansion of free camping ground in Walgett to be investigated.

GOAL: Employment opportunities that supports local industries

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
2.2.1	Identify partnerships and innovative funding approaches to provide for new and upgraded infrastructure for event hosting and tourism expansion	Continue to apply for grants for a new information centres for Lightning Ridge and Walgett	GM Complete	Application lodged for Lightning Ridge centre upgrade. DA approved. New grant application underway.
2.2.2	Provide land use planning that facilitates employment creation	Monitor and review Council's Local Environment Plan	DES Complete	LEP 2013 currently under review with a view to promote ease of use, simpler, more streamlined processes and promote more practices as development without consent. LSPS community plan. Housekeeping of the LEP. Progress delayed due to organisational transformation.
2.2.3	Support and encourage existing business and industry to develop and grow	Maintain a sufficient supply of residential, lifestyle, agriculture, commercial and industrial zoned land	DES Underway	LEP 2013 currently under review. Walgett Rural Residential Progress delayed due
2.2.4	Develop and implement an economic development strategy which identifies potential projects and/or industries that build on the Shire's attributes and/or natural resources	Provide consultation with potential new business operators and pre-development application assistance	MEDVE Underway	Council continues to support new business operators and Development Applications.
2.2.5	Encourage and support youth employment initiatives	Promote the school to work programme	MEDVE Complete	Challenging period re: Flood/fire Organisational transformation

Operational plan – Status

Economic Development

GOAL: An efficient network of arterial roads & supporting infrastructure; town streets & footpaths that are adequate & maintained

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
2.3.1	Provide an effective road network that balances asset conditions with available resources and asset utilisation	Undertake bitumen maintenance program in line with service levels	DETS Not complete	Ongoing resealing program each year funding from various revenue streams.
		Undertake maintenance grading program in line with service levels	DETS Not complete	Routine inspections of road network undertaken and road repairs undertaken on as needs basis. Maintenance grading has commenced and an asset management plan is being developed to support grading program each year.
2.3.2	Maintain, renew and replace Council bridges and culverts as required	Undertake annual inspections of all bridges and culverts and update the required maintenance and repair program	DETS Not complete	Regular inspections undertaken and routine maintenance undertaken as required. Renewal of Goangra bridge took place in 2022 along with Hollywood bridge.
2.3.3	Ensure road network supporting assets are maintained (signs, posts, guardrails etc.)	Renew and maintain Council's road network supporting assets in-line with the Asset Management Plan	DETS Not complete	Regular inspections undertaken and maintenance undertaken as required
2.3.4	Maintain existing footpaths in Shire towns and villages	Undertake annual inspections of all footpath and update the required maintenance and repair program	DETS No complete	Regular inspections undertaken and maintenance undertaken as required
2.3.5	Lobby the Government to provide needed funds to maintain regional networks	Continue to apply for grants for the reconstruction and sealing of unsealed Regional Roads and major Local Roads network Investigate using SRV(5-15%) to fund a major upgrade of Local Roads	DETS GM Complete	On-going lobbying of State Government Regional road grants received. Future road projects being developed. GM DETS and Cr Ramien met with Minister Ley and Roy Butler presentation of Council submission for additional funding for Regional Roads.

GOAL: Communities that are well serviced with essential infrastructure

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
2.4.1	Implement Council's strategic asset management plans and continue to develop asset systems	Implement an electronic asset management system for all Council assets	CFO Complete	Asset system 'Confirm" in place. Reconciliation between ledger and asset system to be finalised.
2.4.2	Ensure adequate public car parking and kerb and gutter infrastructure is provided and maintained	Inspect all kerb and gutter and undertake the required repair and replacement program	DETS Not complete	Works in progress and annual allocation of funds to renew K&G in all communities across the shire.
2.4.3	Provide the infrastructure to embellish public spaces and recreation areas	Undertake the maintenance program for Council's parks and gardens team	DETS complete	Regular inspections undertaken and maintenance undertaken as required. Parks and gardens maintained to a high standard and upgrades underway. New wetland and bird hide under investigation for Lightning Ridge.
2.4.4	Continue to lobby Government to provide incentives to appeal to airline companies to service the region	Partner with Brewarrina and Bourke to lobby the Government to subsidise airlines and the reintroduction of RPT services for Walgett and Bourke	GM Complete	FNWJO has airline service for Walgett & Lightning Ridge in operation. Commenced in 2020. Certificate of compliance from CASA received in July 2024

Operational plan – Status

Governance and Civic Leadership

GOAL: An accountable and representative Council

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
3.1.1	Provide clear direction for the community through the development of the community strategic plan, delivery program and operational plan	Implement, monitor and review the Delivery and Operational Plan	CFO Complete	Quarterly Operational Plan reports and six monthly delivery Program reports submitted to Council on time.
3.1.2	Engage with the community effectively and use community input to inform decision making	Deliver a Local Government week Program to engage the community and show case services provided by Council Distribute newsletters to residents	CFO Postponed DO On-hold/ under review	Council has conducted three Local government Week activities, Newsletter policy currently under review as part of the Communications Services audit
3.1.3	Provide strong representation for the community at regional, state and federal levels	Participate in and make visible contributions to regional forums such as OROC and Western Division Advocate the needs of the Shire to State and Federal Governments	GM Postponed GM Complete	No attendees at Western Division because of flooding in Walgett Shire. Presentations made to Met with The Hon Mark Coulton, MP Parkes at Council on 20.7.22. Met with Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC, Governor of NSW on 29.7.22 Met with the Hon Minister for Education, Sarah Mitchell on 4.8.22 Mayor & GM met the Minister for Planning & Homes, the Hon Anthony Roberts at Lightning Ridge, 1.9.22 met with Rose Jackson, State Minister for Water on 27.4.23 The Hon. Stephen Gingell LAWRENCE, MLC 15.04.2024 Minister for Regional Transport and Roads 23.07.2024 1st August 2024 - Murray Darling Basin Authority Tour of the Collarenebri Bore Baths

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
3.1.4	Undertake the civic duties of Council with the highest degree of professionalism and ethics	Ensure annual pecuniary interest declarations are completed Ensure Councillors comply with the Code of Conduct	GM Complete Complete	Tabled each year at the October Council meeting Compliance training undertaken in January 2022
3.1.5	Councillors represent the interests of the whole of the Shire area	Arrange seminars to ensure all Councillors appreciate their roles	GM Complete	Council has conducted three Local government Week activities, Newsletter policy currently under review as part of the Communications Services audit

GOAL: Implement governance and financial management process that support the effective administration of Council

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
3.2.1	Develop processes that ensure that legislative and financial standards are actioned in a timely manner	Provide financial reports to management and staff to assist in budget control and decision making Complete quarterly budget review statements in line with statutory requirements Review, revise and maintain Council's Long Term Financial Plan Oversight financial decision making process	CFO Complete CFO Complete FO GM Complete	Fortnightly reports issued Reports tabled on time This is conducted annually.

Operational plan – Status

Sustainable Living

GOAL: Operate an an urban waste management system that meets the community needs and environmental standards

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
4.1.1	Develop and implement a Shire Wide Waste Management strategy that includes recycling services	Develop and implement the Waste Management Strategy Effectively manage the domestic waste and landfill management contracts	DES Complete	Waste strategy finalised and new action plan for Walgett and Lightning Ridge landfills in operation. Strategies for the unmanned landfills are on-going to improve site management.
4.1.2	Implement initiatives to reduce illegal dumping and provide community education to prevent litter	Actively respond to complaints and issues identified to ensure appropriate outcomes for illegal development, dumping and other activities such as abandoned vehicles, noise pollution and odour. Develop and implement a waste education program	DES Complete DES Complete	Council has received monies from EPA Trust for cleanup project Council has dedicated budget monies for cleanup projects and will continue to target illegal dumping through RID ONLINE education and new processes.

GOAL: Provide potable and raw water supply systems that ensures enhanced water security and meets health standards

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
4.2.1	Improve and upgrade the water supply infrastructure through an asset management framework	Complete an annual water main replacement program Ensure water supply is provided and maintained in compliance with the Drinking Water Quality requirements	DETS Complete	Ongoing annual replacement program conducted. Regular weekly water testing undertaken in accordance with Drinking Water Management plan

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
4.2.2	Maintain and renew the sewerage network infrastructure to ensure the provision of efficient and environmentally-sound sewerage services	Operate the sewer treatment plants in an efficient manner	DETS Complete	Ongoing. Council made a submission to NSW Government for upgrade of Walgett STP. Issues in 2020 that were referred to EPA have been addressed successfully.
4.2.3	Ensure adequate stormwater and drainage infrastructure is provided, maintained and renewed	Maintain and renew the stormwater and drainage infrastructure	DETS Complete	Regular inspections undertaken and maintenance undertaken as required

GOAL: A sustainable environment that recognises our rivers, natural environment, ecological systems and biodiversity

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
4.3.1	Promote and raise community awareness of environmental and biodiversity issues	Undertake waste avoidance, waste reduction and recycling program	DES Complete	Council actively supports and works with Container Deposit Scheme for return and earn. Reducing, Reusing and Recycling of waste continuing to be a priority.
4.3.2	Protect and maintain a healthy catchments and waterways	Inspect Council's water networks and take samples when necessary	DETS Complete	Ongoing
4.3.3	Protect the Shire's historic buildings and sites recognising their value to the community	Implement the recommendations of Council's heritage advisor	DES Complete	Development and promotion of the Council Local Heritage Fund which operates annually.

GOAL: Maintain a healthy balance between development and the environment

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
4.4.1	Retain open space that are accessible to everyone	Monitor environmental protection measures for sensitive land	DES In progress	Review Biodiversity Laws and Walgett LEP and DCP 2013 & 2016.
4.4.2	Ensure that Walgett Shire is sufficiently prepared to deal with natural disasters	Provide annual contribution to the RFS, SES and NSW Fire and rescue	GM & LEMC Complete	Contributions made annually.
4.4.3	Educate the community about sustainable practices	Promote and provide adequate and user friendly pre-lodgment advice on all aspects of development	DES Complete	Actively providing pre-lodgment services and advice. Attend on-site inspections and provide advice on all aspects of development. Making staff available for questions and queries and working actively with clients.

Operational plan – Status

Infrastructure

GOAL: Provide and maintain an effective road network that meets the community needs and expectations

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
5.1.1	Manage the road network to respond to community needs, growth in the Shire, improving road safety and improving transport choices	Continually revise the works program for regional and local roads	DETS Not complete	On going
5.1.2	Develop a strategy that addresses transport options for the local community	Advocate for taxi services, air services and public transport	GM Complete	Air Services see 2.4.4
5.1.3	An effective complaints management process that effectively responds to residents issues regarding roads	Maintain complaints management process	DETS Complete	Complaints lodged and processed in a timely manner.
		Complaints actioned within 7 days through the CAR system	CFO Complete	Complaints processed within 14 days. O/S complaints followed up.

GOAL: Provide and maintain an effective road network that meets the community needs and expectations

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
5.2.1	Ensure that the road network is maintained to a standard that is achievable within the resources available	Continually revise the works program for regional and local roads	DETS Not complete	Regular inspections undertaken and maintenance undertaken as required. Regional road strategy developed by Peece Consulting for Regional roads.
5.2.2	Maintain an effective operational relationship with the Roads and Maritime Services	Submit progress reports in a timely manner	DETS Complete	Routine maintenance undertaken in accordance with contractual requirements

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
5.2.3	Lobby the Government to provide needed funds to maintain regional and state road networks	Continue to advocate for betterment and other funding through advocacy to state/federal Government CAR system	GM Ongoing	Continuing to lobby other levels of Government for additional funding. GM, DETS.

GOAL: Maintain and improve Council's property assets to an optimal level

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
5.3.1	Manage properties in accordance with Council Asset Management Plan	Carry out the property works program in line with the annual budget	DETS	Annual programs undertaken and refurbishment program underway

GOAL: Provision of facilities and communication services

CSP REF	STRATEGY	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	END OF TERM STATUS
5.4.1	Provide a range of recreational and community facilities	Maintain and upgrade Council's community halls and reserves	DETS/GM	On going
5.4.2	Represent the community about external services including energy, communication, water, waste management and resource recovery	Lobby service providers in response to identified community concerns including mobile phone services	GM Ongoing	Further applications to be lodged via Department of Regional NSW Regional Digital connectivity program. Advocate at a federal level
5.4.3	Advocate to utility and communication providers regarding the capacity and reliability of infrastructure across the Shire	Lobby service providers in response to identified community concerns	GM ongoing	On-going and service providers implementing improved services 3G network to be made obsolete in Oct 24



State of the Shire Report

2021-2024

ITEM 11.24 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION FOR VARIATION TO LEP & PLANNING PROPOSAL FOR 66 DUFF STREET, WALGETT

DIRECTORATE	Infrastructure and Compliance
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Manager Compliance
REPORT AUTHOR	Kimley Talbert - Certifier
PURPOSE	For decision

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council determine DA 2024-27 pursuant to section 4.16 of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* by granting consent subject to the conditions as outlined in Attachment 1 of this report.
2. That Council approve a variation to section 4.2 of the *Development Control Plan 2016* to allow for the construction of a large metal-framed shade structure on Lot 6 Section 11 Deposited Plan 758612 known as 66 Duff Street Walgett.

Executive Summary

A development application has been lodged on behalf of the Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service by Construction Dialogue Architects Studio Pty Ltd (the Applicant). The application is to construct a large metal shade structure with shade cloth covering for use as a Community Garden project located on 5.17 acres of land. The application seeks to formalise the status of the proposed community garden expansion.

The application seeks to expand the uses of the property where the existing buildings are located (see attached plan). The land is intended primarily for horticultural purposes, combining garden produce with opportunities to promote community exercise.

The main focus of this report is the size of the proposed structure, which has a floor area of 793m² and a height of 4.92 metres. Clause 4.2 in the *Development Control Plan 2016* aims to ensure compatibility of the development with the surrounding residential area, and this proposal is therefore subject to scrutiny given its location within a residential zone.

Background

The Development Control Plan (DCP) was adopted in 2016 to regulate construction within residential areas, including setting maximum allowable sizes for new developments.

The Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service has been operating a community garden on the site since before the adoption of both the 2016 DCP and the *Walgett Local Environment Plan 2013* (WLEP). The subject lot is serviced by power, water, and sewer infrastructure, with approved traffic access from Duff Street. Additionally, the NSW State Government owns the land adjoining the subject lot.

Current Situation

The application proposes the construction of a new shade structure to replace the existing ones on the site, which are no longer fit for purpose. The proposed layout of this new structure is illustrated in the plan provided in the Attachments. The placement has been carefully designed to complement the existing site features, making efficient use of the available space while supporting the community garden's horticultural and recreational activities.

The allotment boundaries have been selected to align with the current location of existing buildings on the land and to provide an appropriate curtilage around the shade structure.

Planning Issues

This design approach also takes into account the layout of existing fencing, creating a natural boundary that integrates the structure within the community garden setting. The new shade structure will improve

coverage and durability, ensuring a safer, more effective environment for community use and optimising accessibility while minimising any potential impact on neighbouring properties.

The following issues are relevant to consideration of the development application to vary changes to Council's Development Control Plan 2016 (DCP).

1. The development application is for the construction of a new outbuilding intended for use as a communal garden.
2. The application is referred to Council as construction is outside the approved parameters of the DCP.
3. WLEP Clause 4.2 – DCP Objectives: The proposal must ensure compatibility with surrounding developments, avoid adverse impacts on neighbouring properties, and provide adequate access to services.
4. Existing water, sewer, and stormwater services are not considered part of this application.
5. If required, details for approving any works on Council roads must be lodged separately.

Planning Context

Under the *Walgett Local Environmental Plan 2013*, the subject land parcels are zoned R1 Residential. The objectives of the R1 zone are:

- *To provide housing needs for the community.*
- *To provide for a variety of housing types and densities.*
- *To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day-to-day needs of the residents.*
- *To enable development that is compatible with the surrounding residential environment and that is unlikely to adversely affect the amenity of residential development on land in the zone.*

In this regard, the proposal is consistent with the objectives of the R1 zone, as the use of the premises aligns with the WLEP's definition of a community-based facility.

This definition includes places or buildings used by non-profit community-based organisations for the community's physical, social, cultural, or intellectual development or welfare.

An assessment of the development application against Section 4.15 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 indicates that the proposal is generally consistent with the requirements of the relevant State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs), the Far West Regional Plan, and applicable clauses of the DCP (except for sizing). Further details are provided in the attached development assessment report.

Development Control Plan

The applicant has submitted an application that generally complies with the Walgett Development Control Plan 2016, except for the proposed structure's size.

This report recommends that Council resolve to grant consent for the construction, noting both the existing use of the lot and that the proposed structure is consistent with the character of the surrounding area.

Infrastructure

The Development Application does not request any additional services beyond those currently available to the property.

Consultation

Internal consultation has been undertaken with Council's Engineers, who advise that the existing road reserve allocation is deemed adequate to support the proposed development. No additional modifications or extensions to the road reserve are required, as the current infrastructure sufficiently meets the site's anticipated access and service needs. The layout and design of the road reserve align with Council's standards, ensuring safe and efficient access for both vehicles and pedestrians to the property. This adequacy further supports the compatibility of the proposed development with the surrounding area and existing infrastructure.

Additionally, the development application was notified to the NSW State Government, the adjacent

landowner to the proposed structure's location, as part of the standard neighbour notification process. Given that the notification has been completed and no further submissions or concerns were raised, no additional community consultation is required. This ensures that appropriate and sufficient notification measures have been undertaken for this type of development.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no known financial implications for Council. Council may in the future consider a differential rating for the lots created.

Legislation and Policy Implications

The application complies with the WLEP and meets the requirements of the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act*. It is also generally consistent with the DCP.

While the DCP serves as an internally adopted policy of Council to guide development, it is intended to provide a framework rather than impose restrictions that could hinder beneficial projects. A flexible approach to the DCP allows Council to support quality developments that align with the broader objectives of community growth and amenity enhancement.

Legal and Risk Considerations

The application complies with the statutorily approved land use for the site, and existing land use rights are applicable given that the proposal seeks to replace an existing structure. While the DCP serves as a guiding document to inform development, it should be treated as guidance framework rather than a rigid constraint, particularly where the proposed development aligns with broader planning objectives.

A refusal to grant the application may result in the proponent seeking a judicial review with the Land and Environment Court, which could pose additional legal and financial risks to Council.

Alignment with Community Strategic Plan

SL 4.4 Maintain a healthy balance between development and the environment

E2.1 - An attractive environment for business, tourism and industry

Alternative Options

Council can refuse the submission. Council may choose to reject the application or opt to defer the decision to a future meeting. However, either of these actions would hinder the proponent's ability to proceed with the proposed works in a timely manner and could cause Council to exceed accepted timeframes for development decisions. For these reasons, neither option is recommended.

Conclusion

The proposed sizeable metal-framed shade structure will not impact the adjoining government-owned vacant land. The community-based garden provides an excellent opportunity for local residents to engage in outdoor activities, promotes access to fresh food, and encourages a healthy lifestyle. Additionally, this project makes a reasonable effort to align with Section 4.2 of the DCP, placing the property in a more favourable position for future compatible use.

Consequently, it is recommended that Council grant consent for the shade structure at 66 Duff Street, Walgett, in accordance with the Draft Conditions of Consent.

Attachments

1. Development Assessment Report and Statement of Environmental Effects

Development Assessment Report

DA Number: DA2024/27 **Council:** Walgett
Location: 66 Duff Street Walgett
Development Description: Detached metal roofed framed shade cloth shade structure outbuilding a max height of 4.92m.
Title Details: Lot 6 Section 11 DP 758612 Land Area 5.172 acres

Proposal Overview

Metal shed construction - storage with a max height of 3.0m.

Property Details/History

	Checked	Comments
File History	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Lodged: 11/09/2024 Submitted: 16/09/2024 Fees Paid: 14/10/2024 Neighbourhood Notification: Required only NSW Government owned land area.
Title Plan	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Lot 62 DP 820720 Property Name:
Check Ownership	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Consent granted 14/10/2024 WAMS Community Garden – Signed Director, Consent on the letter.

Is there any other issue that requires notation? Yes No

Application Type

Is this application an Integrated Development Application? Yes No
 Is this application a Designated Development Application? Yes No
 Is this application for State Significant Development? Yes No
 Is this application submitted by/on behalf of a Public Authority? Yes No
 Is this application a staged Development? Yes No
 Is this application a section 4.55 amendment? Yes No

Concurrence/Referral

Section 4.13 – EP & A Act

Does this application require concurrence referral? Yes No
 Does this application require courtesy comment? Yes No

Department	Checked	Response Received	Comments/Issues Raised
Rural Fire Service	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.
Fire & Rescue	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.
Planning	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.
Biodiversity	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.
Heritage	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.
Rail	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.
TfNSW	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.

DEHWA	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.
Aviation	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.
Crown	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.
Adjoining Council	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.
Council Committee	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.
Public Interest Group	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No comment is required.

Has this application been referred to a Development Assessment Unit? Yes No

Does this application require referral for decision by Council? Yes No

Is there any other issue that requires notation? Yes No

Local Environmental Plan

Section 4.15(1)(a)(i) and Section 4.15(a)(ii) – EP & A Act

This land is zoned: R1 Residential

Development as per Standard Definitions: This development is considered to be development to a dual occupancy dwellings. The dominant development on this land is a **community garden building**, which is defined as meaning a *building containing only one dwelling*.

List the relevant clause/clauses applicable under the LEP

Clause	Compliance	Comment
Land Use Table	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	This is permissible development.
Land Zone.	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	R1 – Residential. 1 Objectives of zone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide housing needs for the community. • To provide a variety of housing types and densities. • To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents. • To enable development that is compatible with the surrounding residential environment and that is unlikely to adversely affect the amenity of the residential development on land in the zone.. 3 Permitted with consent <i>Attached dwellings; Bed and Breakfast accommodation; Boarding houses; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Child care centres; Community facilities; Dwelling houses; Food and drink premises; Group homes; Home industries; Hostels; Kiosks; Multi dwelling housing; Neighbourhood shops; Places of public worship; Residential flat buildings; Respite day care centres; Semi-detached dwellings; Seniors housing; Services apartments; Shop top housing; Any other development not specified in item 2 and 4.</i>
4.1 Minimum Lot Size	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	700m2 Subdivision is not proposed.
4.3 Height of Buildings	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Maximum height permissible – 7m. Maximum height proposed – 3.97m.
6.1 Earthworks	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	A Soil & Erosions Control Plan has not been submitted, and is not relevant for this application.

6.2 Flood Planning	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The site is not mapped as being flood prone. No Flood Study can be found that includes the site. However, a flood report accompanies this application.
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Is there a draft LEP or draft LEP amendment which may affect this proposal? Yes No

Do 'existing use' provisions (Sections 4.65-4.70 of the EP&A Act) apply to this development? Yes No

Is there any other issue that requires notation? Yes No

Development Control Plan

Section 4.15(1)(a)(iii) & Section 4.15(3A) – EP & A Act

Is there a DCP which applies to this land/proposal? Yes No

<u>List the relevant clause/clauses under the applicable DCP</u>			
Chapter	Clause	Compliance	Comment
4.3. General Housing and Ancillary Structures	4.3.1. Building Setbacks The building setbacks are related to the zone in the Walgett Local Environmental Plan. They are set out in the following table: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not specified. 	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	standards are specified for detached garages in the R1 Zoning.
	4.3.11. Outbuildings and Detached Garages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not within building setback. Specified for Residential (R1) zone 	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	The proposed detached garage is setback appropriately from all boundaries.

Has a variation to the DCP been requested? Yes No

Is there a draft DCP which may affect this proposal? Yes No

Regional Environmental Plan

There is no REP applicable to this area.

State Environmental Planning Policy

Is this proposal affected by a SEPP? Yes No

Comment: Comments are made in the table below.

<u>List all relevant SEPPs</u>		
SEPP	Compliance	Comment
SEPP 19 — Bushland in Urban Areas	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The SEPP aims to protect and preserve bushland within the urban areas because of its value to the community as part of the natural heritage, its aesthetic value, and its value as a recreational, educational and scientific resource.</i>
SEPP 21 – Caravan Parks	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The SEPP ensures that where caravan parks or camping grounds are permitted under an environmental planning instrument, movable dwellings, as defined in the Local Government Act 1993, are also permitted.</i>
SEPP 33 — Hazardous and Offensive Development	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The SEPP provides considerations for consent for hazardous & offensive development.</i>
SEPP 36 – Manufactured Homes Estates	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The SEPP helps establish well-designed and properly serviced manufactured home estates in suitable locations.</i>

SEPP 44 — Koala Habitat Protection	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP applies to land across NSW that is greater than one (1) hectare and is not a National Park or Forestry Reserve. The SEPP encourages the conservation and management of natural vegetation areas that provide habitat for koalas to ensure permanent free-living populations will be maintained over their present range.</i>
Complies	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Comment Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	As the increase of the building footprint is minimal and an inspection of the sit revealed that there is no koala habitat nor potential habitat that will be affected by this development. Therefore, a Koala Plan of Management is not required. However as there is no identified koala habitat present onsite, nor is there potential habitat, a Koala Plan of Management is not required.
SEPP 47 – Moore Park Showground	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Applies to the land shown edged heavy black on the map marked “Moore Park Showground Amendment No 1.”</i>
SEPP 50 Canal Development	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP bans new canal estates from the date of gazettal, to ensure coastal and aquatic environments are not affected by these developments.</i>
SEPP 55 — Remediation of Land	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP applies to land across NSW and states that land must not be developed if it is unsuitable for a proposed use because of contamination.</i>
Complies	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Comment Only <input type="checkbox"/>	It is considered that there have been no prior contaminating land uses and the site is suitable for the proposed residential use. The property does not require an assessment for identification of contaminated sites, as the land-use would not significantly alter. The site has no history of use that would have involved chemical application or use.
SEPP 64 — Advertising and Signage	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The SEPP aims to ensure that outdoor advertising is compatible with the desired amenity and visual character of an area, provides effective communication in suitable locations and is of high-quality design and finish.</i>
SEPP 65 — Design Quality of Residential Flat Development	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The SEPP relates to residential flat development across the state through the application of a series of design principles. Provides for the establishment of Design Review Panels to provide independent expert advice to councils on the merit of residential flat development.</i>
SEPP 70 – Affordable Housing (Revised Schemes)	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP identifies that there is a need for affordable housing across the whole of the State and describes the kinds of households for which affordable housing may be provided and makes a requirement with respect to the imposition of conditions relating to the provision of affordable housing.</i>
Aboriginal Land 2019	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP provides for development delivery plans for areas of land owned by Local Aboriginal Land Councils to be considered when development applications are considered, and declares specified development carried out on land owned by Local Aboriginal Land Councils to be regionally significant development.</i>
Affordable Rental Housing 2009	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The SEPP provides for an increase in the supply and diversity of affordable rental and social housing in NSW.</i>
Building Sustainability Index: BASIX 2004	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The SEPP provides for the implementation of BASIX throughout the State.</i>

Coastal Management 2018	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP promotes an integrated and co-ordinated approach to land use planning in the coastal zone in a manner consistent with the objects of the Coastal Management Act 2016, including the management objectives for each coastal management area.</i>
Concurrences 2018	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP allows the Planning Secretary to act as a concurrence authority.</i>
Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities 2017	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP facilitates the effective delivery of educational establishments and early education and care facilities across the state.</i>
Exempt and Complying Development Codes 2008	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The SEPP provides exempt and complying development codes that have State-wide application, identifying, in the General Exempt Development Code, types of development that are of minimal environmental impact that may be carried out without the need for development consent; and, in the General Housing Code, types of complying development that may be carried out in accordance with a complying development certificate.</i>
Gosford City Centre 2018	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP applies to the Gosford City Centre.</i>
Housing for Seniors or People with a Disability 2004	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The SEPP aims to encourage provision of housing for seniors, including residential care facilities. The SEPP provides development standards.</i>
Infrastructure 2007	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The SEPP provides a consistent approach for infrastructure and the provision of services across NSW, and to support greater efficiency in the location of infrastructure and service facilities.</i>
Kosciuszko National Park – Alpine Resorts 2007	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP applies to part of Kosciuszko national park, and to Kosciuszko Road and the Alpine Way. The part of Kosciuszko Park to which the policy applies is the land described as the ski resort area in Part 8A of Schedule 6 to the Act.</i>
Kurnell Peninsula 1989	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP applies to land within the Shire of Sutherland, known as Kurnell Peninsula, and adjacent waterways.</i>
Mining, Petroleum Production & Extractive Industries 2007	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>The SEPP aims to provide proper management of mineral, petroleum and extractive material resources and ESD.</i>
Miscellaneous Consent Provisions 2007	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP provides for the erection of temporary structures and the use of places of public entertainment while protecting public safety and local amenity.</i>
Penrith Lakes Scheme 1989	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP applies to the land shown edged heavy black on the structure plan relating to Penrith Lakes.</i>
Primary Production and Rural Development 2019	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP facilitates the orderly economic use and development of lands for primary production; reduce land use conflict and sterilisation of rural land.</i>
Complies	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Comment Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>The development would meet the aims of this SEPP particularly (b) in that the site is located where there will be minimal land use conflict or sterilisation of primary production land.</i>
State and Regional Development 2011	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP identifies development that is State significant development or State significant infrastructure and critical State significant infrastructure and to confer functions on joint regional planning panels to determine development applications.</i>

State Significant Precincts 2005	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP facilitates the development, redevelopment or protection of important urban, coastal and regional sites of economic, environmental or social significance to the State so as to facilitate the orderly use, development or conservation of those State significant precincts for the benefit of the State, and facilitates service delivery outcomes for a range of public services and to provide for the development of major sites for a public purpose or redevelopment of major sites no longer appropriate or suitable for public purposes.</i>
Sydney Drinking Water Catchment 2011	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP provides for healthy water catchments that will deliver high quality water while permitting compatible development.</i>
Sydney Region Growth Centres 2006	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP co-ordinates the release of land for residential, employment and other urban development in the Orth West Growth Centre, the South West Growth Centre and the Wilton Growth Area.</i>
Three Ports 2013	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP provides a consistent planning regime for the development and delivery of infrastructure on land in Port Botany, Port Kembla and the Port of Newcastle</i>
Urban Renewal 2010	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP establishes the process for assessing and identifying sites as urban renewal precincts, and facilitates the orderly and economic development and redevelopment of sites in and around urban renewal precincts,</i>
Vegetation in Non-Rural Areas 2017	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP protects the biodiversity values of trees and other vegetation in non-rural areas of the State, and to preserves the amenity of non-rural areas of the State through the preservation of trees and other vegetation.</i>
Western Sydney Employment Area 2009	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP protects and enhances the land known as the Western Sydney Employment Area for employment purposes.</i>
Western Sydney Parklands 2009	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>This SEPP puts in place planning controls that will enable the Western Sydney Parklands Trust to develop the Western Parklands into a multi-use urban parkland for the region of western Sydney.</i>

List all relevant Draft SEPPs

SEPP	Compliance	Comment
SEPP 55 — Remediation of Land	Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>The proposed SEPP will provide a state-wide planning framework for the remediation of land; require consent authorities to consider the potential for land to be contaminated when determining development applications; clearly list the remediation works that require development consent; and introduce certification and operational requirements for remediation works that can be undertaken without development consent.</i>
Complies	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Comment Only <input type="checkbox"/>	See Comment above.
SEPP - Environment	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>This consolidated SEPP proposes to simplify the planning rules for a number of water catchments, waterways, urban bushland, and Willandra Lakes World Heritage Property. Changes proposed include consolidating the following seven existing SEPPs:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Environmental Planning Policy No. 19 – Bushland in Urban Areas

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Drinking Water Catchment) 2011 • State Environmental Planning Policy No. 50 – Canal Estate Development • Greater Metropolitan Regional Environmental Plan No. 2 – Georges River Catchment • Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No. 20 – Hawkesbury-Nepean River (No.2-1997) • Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (Sydney Harbour Catchment) 2005 • Willandra Lakes Regional Environmental Plan No. 1 – World Heritage Property.
SEPP – Housing Diversity	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<p><i>This SEPP aims to facilitate the delivery of diverse and affordable housing to meet the needs of the State's growing population and support the development of a build-to-rent sector. It introduces new definitions for build-to-rent housing, student housing and co-living;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amends some state-level planning provisions, particularly for boarding house and seniors housing development; • amends some state-level planning provisions to support social housing developments undertaken by the NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) on government-owned land; and • consolidates three housing-related SEPPs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ State Environmental Planning Policy (Affordable Rental Housing) 2009 ○ State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing for Seniors and People with a Disability) 2004 ○ State Environmental Planning Policy No 70 – Affordable Housing (Revised Schemes).
SEPP (State & Regional Development)	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<p><i>The proposed changes will:</i></p> <p><i>Remove the \$30 million capital investment value criteria for upgrades of water treatment facilities associated with an existing facility.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fast-track the approval process so drought related water treatment facility upgrades can be delivered quicker.</i> • <i>Allow Sydney Water to respond to future drought conditions.</i> <p><i>The proposed changes will allow facilities unlikely to have a significant environmental impact on the environment to be assessed by water supply public authorities, instead of a longer State Significant Infrastructure assessment process.</i></p> <p><i>Any new water treatment facilities will still be assessed as State Significant infrastructure. The proposed changes won't apply to desalination plants, new water treatment facilities or water storage facilities.</i></p>
SEPP (Infrastructure)	Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	<p><i>This amendment aims to clarify and streamline the planning assessment for the extension and maintenance of the Wild Dog Fence.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed amendment includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension: amend Clause 132 to allow an extension of the fence to be considered as State Significant Infrastructure (subject to a detailed assessment) replacing the need to seek multiple government approvals for different parts of the fence.

- **Maintenance:** include provisions under Clause 132 that permit routine maintenance of the fence to be carried out as exempt development.

Is there any other issue that requires notation?

Yes No

Planning Agreement

Section 4.15(1)(a)(iia) – EP & A Act

Is there a Planning Agreement in force under section 93F of the EP&A Act?

Yes No

Has a Planning Agreement been offered under this development?

Yes No

Local Strategic Planning Statement

Walgett Community Strategic Plan Alignment

Applicable

- | | | |
|--------|--|---|
| C 1.1 | Develop a connected, informed, resilient and inviting community. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| C 1.2 | A safe, active and healthy Shire. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| C 1.3 | A diverse and creative culture. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| E 2.1 | An attractive environment for business, tourism and industry. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| E 2.2 | Employment opportunities that supports local industries. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| E 2.3 | An efficient network of arterial roads and supporting infrastructure; town streets and footpaths that are adequate and maintained. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| E 2.4 | Communities that are well serviced with essential infrastructure. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| SL 4.1 | Operate an urban waste management system that meets the community needs and environmental standards. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| SL 4.2 | Provide potable and raw water supply systems that ensures enhanced water security and meets health standards. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| SL 4.3 | A sustainable environment that recognises our rivers, natural environment, ecological systems and biodiversity. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| SL 4.4 | Maintain a healthy balance between development and the environment. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I 5.1 | Provide and maintain an effective road network that meets the community needs and expectations. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| I 5.2 | A Regional and State Road network that is appropriately supported and resourced by Government. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| I 5.3 | Maintain and improve Council's property assets to an optimal level. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| I 5.4 | Provision of facilities and communication services. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Planning Priority

Applicable

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| PP1. | Promote development that contributes to the unique character of the towns and villages within Walgett Shire and meets the needs of a changing population. | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PP2. | Protect and respect Aboriginal Communities through promoting management and ownership of land of which they have a traditional association, or which can assist with their social, cultural and economic development. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| PP3. | Support sustainable economic development including agriculture and new industries based on the Shire's built and natural assets and locational advantages. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| PP4. | Promote preferred locations for industrial growth and development. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| PP5. | Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in employment or education, with an emphasis on workforce participation and opportunities. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| PP6. | Promote tourism as a significant component of the Shire's economy. | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

- PP7. Encourage sustainable management of the Shire's natural assets and environmental features. Yes No
- PP8. Protect and enhance the natural environment and improve biodiversity. Yes No
- PP9. Protect items, places, and areas of natural and cultural heritage. Yes No
- PP10. Ensure that future urban development is supported by adequate infrastructure and access to a range of social and community facilities sufficient to support the future population base of the community. Yes No

Far West Regional Plan Alignment	Applicable
Direction 1 - Grow the agribusiness sector, value-added manufacturing opportunities and supply chains.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 2 - Protect productive agricultural land and plan for greater land use compatibility.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 3 - Sustainably manage mineral resources.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 4 - Diversity energy supply through renewable energy generation.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 5 - Promote tourism opportunities.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 6 - Unlock economic potential through improved freight transport infrastructure.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 7 - Improve regional air connections.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 8 – Enhance access to telecommunicaitons.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 9 - Sustainably manage water resources for economic opportunities.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 10 - Enhance the economic self-determination of Aboriginal communities.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 11 - Support new planning and land management arrangements.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 12 - Enhance the productivity of employment lands.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 13 - Protect and manage environmental assets.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 14 - Manage and conserve water resources for the environment.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 15 - Manage land uses along key river corridors.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 16 - Increase resilience to climate change.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 17 - Manage natural hazard risks.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 18 - Respect and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage assets.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 19 - Conserve and adaptively re-use European heritage assets.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 20 - Manage change in settlements.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 21 - Strengthen communities of interest and cross-regional relationships.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 22 - Collaborate and partner with Aboriginal communities.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 23 - Improve access to local health services, aged care and senior' housing.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 24 - Enhance access to education and training.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 27 - Provide greater housing choice.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 28 - Deliver greater housing choice.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 29 - Manage rural residential development.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Direction 30 - Create healthy built environments.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Supporting Planning Assessment

Has the applicant submitted any supporting planning assessments? Yes No

Comment: No Report accompanies the application and has been included in the assessment.

Is there any other issue that requires notation? Yes No

Subdivision

Is this application for subdivision? Yes No

Environmental Impacts

Section 4.15(1)(b) – EP & A Act

Does this proposal have any potential impact on:

	Impact	Comment
Social	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Economical	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Siting & Configuration	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The closest boundary that the detached garage is to the East and is approximately 50m. The detached garage is within close proximity to the house. This is not considered to be a close distance, and therefore is appropriately sited.
Setbacks	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The closest boundary that the detached garage is to the East and is approximately 50m. This is not considered to be a close distance, and therefore is appropriately sited.
Privacy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Overshadowing	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Solar Access	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Visual	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The development is setback in excess of 200m from the front boundary, and therefore, there is no negative visual impact as a result of the development.
Significant Views	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Amenity	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Water	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Air	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Noise	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Land Degradation	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Tree Loss	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Flora	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Fauna	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.

Has a Threatened Species Impact Assessment been prepared? Yes No

Are there any species/communities listed under the TSC Act? Yes No

Does the proposed development require approval under the EPBC Act Yes No

Heritage	Impact	Comment
European	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No items of heritage value are identified on the site.
Aboriginal	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	An Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) search was not carried out for the land.

Is this land classified as containing an item of environmental heritage? Yes No

- Is there an impact on and adjoining or in close vicinity to an item of environmental heritage? Yes No
- Is this proposal in a heritage conservation Zone? Yes No
- Is this proposal in an adjoining or in close vicinity to a conservation zone? Yes No
- Has a Heritage Impact Statement been prepared for this proposal? Yes No
- Has an Archaeological Survey been prepared for this proposal? Yes No
- Is there any other issue that requires notation? Yes No

Flooding

Section 4.15(1)(b) – EP & A Act

- Is this property flood affected? Yes No
- Is there a flood study which includes this land? Yes No
- Has a Flood Impact Assessment been completed for this proposal? Yes No

Comment: .

Bush Fire Prone Land

Section 4.15(1)(b) – EP & A Act

- Is this property bush fire prone as per the Bush Fire Prone Map? Yes No

Category: Category1 Category2 Category 3 Buffer

Comment: According to the RFS Mapping the site is not mapped as being bushfire prone. IntraMaps shows that the site is Category 3 and a Vegetation Buffer. A Section Two Bushfire Assessment Report has been completed by the applicant.
A site visit showed that there is minimal vegetation on the site which will pose as a serious bushfire threat.

- Is this property bush fire prone as per any draft Bush Fire Prone Map? Yes No
- Has a Bush Fire Management Plan been Prepared? Yes No
- Has this plan been accepted by the NSW Rural Fire Service? Yes No

Comment: The report was not referred to NSW RFS for assessment, as it is considered minor by the development team.

- Does this development comply with Planning for Bushfire 2019? NA Yes No

Comment: There is minimal vegetation on the site, and the detached garage is not to be used for habitable purposes.

Contaminated Land

Section 4.15(1)(b) – EP & A Act

- Has this land been identified as being contaminated land by Council? Yes No
- Has a Contaminated Land Site Investigation been completed? Yes No
- Does this land require remediation? Yes No
- Is a referral required to NSW Environment Protection Authority? Yes No
- Has a Remediation Action Plan been completed for the land? Yes No
- Is it a possibility this land may be contaminated? Yes No
- Is this land in the close vicinity or adjoining a known contaminated site? Yes No

Infrastructure

Section 4.15(1)(b) – EP & A Act

- Is an engineering assessment required? Yes No

Has an engineering assessment been completed?

Yes No

Who completed the Engineering Assessment?

Engineering Department Assessing Officer Other

Comment: A discussion with from Kazi Mahmud, Dated 22.09.2024 – Walgett Shire Director, has assessed the site, and has stated that there is no impact or comment on any of the potential issues that would arise.

Does this proposal have any potential impact on:

	Impact	Comment
Sewer	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Water	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Drainage	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Access	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Kerb & Gutter	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Upgrade Existing Road	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Road Network	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Existing Easements	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Electricity	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Telecommunications	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Pedestrian Access	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Loading & Unloading	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Parking	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.
Energy Conservation	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No impact identified.

Does the development require any new easements?

Yes No

Has an Erosion and Soil Control Plan been submitted?

Yes No

Is there any outstanding issues requiring attention?

Yes No

Construction Assessment

Is a Construction Certificate Required?

Yes No

Was a construction certificate submitted with this application?

Yes No

Has Council been appointed as the Principle certifying Authority?

Yes No

Has a construction assessment been completed?

Yes No

Is an annual Fire Safety Measures certification required?

Yes No

Is a public defects liability agreement required?

Yes No

Is there any other issue that requires notation?

Yes No

Section 68 Assessment

Is a section 68 assessment required?

Yes No

Has a section 68 assessment been completed?

Yes No

- Was a section 68 application submitted with this application? Yes No
- What type of waste system is required?
- Does this system require connection to a Council maintained system? Yes No
- Is there any other issue/feature/impact that requires notation from the assessment? Yes No

Developer Contributions

- Does this proposal require any Developer Contribution? Yes No
- Is the contribution for a subdivision? Yes No
- Is the contribution for a special purpose relating only to this proposal? Yes No
- Is there any other issue that requires notation? Yes No

Signage

- Does this proposal require signage? Yes No
- Has this application included signage? Yes No
- If yes, does the signage comply? Yes No

Notification

- Does this application require notification/advertising? Yes No
- Is this application an advertised development application under the EP & A Act? Yes No
- Was this application notified/advertised as per the provisions of?
 EP& A Act LEP CPP Yes No
- Was this application notified/advertised for public interest purposes only? Yes No
- Is there any other issue that requires notation? Yes No

Section 88b Instrument

- Does Council require a Section 88b instrument to be prepared? Yes No

Public Interest

- Does this proposal have any construction or safety issues? Yes No
- Is there any public health issues? Yes No
- Are there any other public interest issues? Yes No

Site Suitability

Section 4.15(1)(c) – EP & A Act

- Is this a suitable site for this development? Yes No

Assessing Officer General Comment

Comment: There are no outstanding issues that cannot be dealt with by the use of appropriate conditioning.

Recommendation

This development application be approved subject to the following conditions:

RELEVANT PRESCRIBED CONDITIONS
(under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000)

Nil

Compliance with Building Code of Australia & insurance requirements under the Home Building Act 1989

Please Note: A reference to the Building Code of Australia is a reference to that Code as in force on the date the application is made for the relevant:

- a) development consent, in the case of a temporary structure that is an entertainment venue, or
- b) construction certificate, in every other case.

1. The work must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Building Code of Australia.

Erection of signs

Please Note: This does not apply in relation to:

- a) Building work, subdivision work or demolition work that is carried out inside an existing building, which does not affect the external walls of the building development consent, in the case of a temporary structure that is an entertainment venue, or
- b) Crown building work that is certified, in accordance with section 116G of the Act, to comply with the technical provisions of the State's building laws.
- c) A complying development certificate issued before 1 July 2004 only if the building work, subdivision work or demolition work involved had not been commenced by that date.

2. A sign must be erected in a prominent position on any site on which the building work is being carried out:
 - a) showing the name, address and telephone number of the principal certifying authority for the work, and
 - b) showing the name of the principal contractor (if any) for any building work and a telephone number on which that person may be contacted outside working hours, and
 - c) stating that unauthorised entry to the site is prohibited.
3. Any such sign is to be maintained while the building work, subdivision work or demolition work is being carried out, but must be removed when the work has been completed.

Please Note: Principal certifying authorities and principal contractors must also ensure that signs required by this clause are erected and maintained (see clause 227A which currently imposes a maximum penalty of \$1,100).

Shoring and adequacy of adjoining property

Please Note: This does not apply if the person having the benefit of the complying development certificate owns the adjoining land or the owner of the adjoining land has given consent in writing to that condition not applying.

4. If the development involves an excavation that extends below the level of the base of the footings of a building on adjoining land, the person having the benefit of the certificate must at the person's own expense:
 - a) protect and support the adjoining premises from possible damage from the excavation, and
 - b) where necessary, underpin the adjoining premises to prevent any such damage.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

5. The development shall be implemented in accordance with:
 - (a) All documentation and correspondence submitted by the applicant, or their agents, in support of the Development Application,
 - (b) the details set out on the plans approved and stamped by authorised officers of Council, except as amended by the conditions of this development consent.

Note: Any proposal to modify the terms or conditions of this consent, whilst still maintaining substantially the same development to that approved, will require the submission of a formal application under Section 4.55 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 for Council's consideration. If amendments to the design result in the development not remaining substantially the same as that approved by this consent, a new development Application will have to be submitted to Council.

6. A copy of all stamped approved plans, specifications and documents must be kept on site at all times so as to be readily available for perusal by any officer of Council or the Principal Certifying Authority.

Stamped Plans / Documents	Ref / Sheet No.	Prepared by	Dated
Statement of Environmental Effects	-	Nick Seeman	2/10/2024
Section Two Bushfire Assessment Report	-		-
Flood Report	-		
Foundation Plan & Member Layout	Croft Structure Sheet 1 to 16	Croft	31/07/2024
Sidewall & Endwall Elevations	Draw. No. R40_12A_S1 Rev. A	Croft	31/07/2024
Internal Frame Section	.	Croft	31/07/2024
Detail	1	Croft	31/07/2024
Detail	1	Croft	31/07/2024
Elevation, Section & Details	1	Croft	31/07/2024
Frame & Tilt Diagram	1	Croft	31/07/2024
Floor plan	1	Croft	31/07/2024
Compliance Certificate for Building Design	-	-	Note engineering drawings Not signed by registered Practising Structural Engineer
Site Plan		Nick Seeman	2/10/2024

7. All management recommendations contained within the Statement of Environmental Effects by Nick Seeman dated 2/10/2024 are to be complied with.
- 8.
- 9.

CONDITIONS TO BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION COMMENCING

10. A Construction Certificate approval must be obtained, in accordance the Environment Planning & Assessment Act Regulation 2021, before work commences.
11. Council is to be given written notice of the intention to commence works and the appointment of a Principal Certifying Authority (if the PCA is not Council) at least two days before the proposed date of commencement, in accordance with cl 103 and 104 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000. Such notice is given using the form enclosed with this consent. Should Council be appointed the Principal Certifying Authority, the applicant must give at least 2 days' notice to enable inspections to be undertaken.
12. Before construction commences on the site and throughout the construction phase of the development, erosion control measures are to be installed to prevent soil erosion, water pollution or the discharge of loose sediment on surrounding land, as follows:
- divert uncontaminated run-off around cleared or disturbed areas,
 - erect a silt fence to prevent debris escaping into drainage systems or waterways,
 - prevent tracking of sediment by vehicles onto roads,
 - stock pile topsoil, excavated material, construction and landscaping supplies and debris within the site.

Please Note: Failure to take effective action may render the developer liable to prosecution under the NSW Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997.

CONDITIONS TO BE COMPLETED DURING CONSTRUCTION

13. The owner of the property is to ensure that any building is constructed:
 - (a) to meet the setback requirements of the approved plans,
 - (b) to be located within the confines of the lot, and;
 - (c) so that it does not interfere with any easements or covenants upon the land.
14. Any building work must be carried out between 7.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday and 8.00am to 1.00pm Saturdays, excluding Sundays and public holidays. No audible construction is to take place outside these hours, to maintain the amenity of the locality.
15. Waste materials (including excavation, demolition and construction waste materials) must be managed on the site (and must not be burned on site) and then disposed of at a waste management facility, to protect the amenity of the area and avoid the potential of air pollution.
16. No material or equipment associated with the development is to be placed on public land without the written consent of the Council, and any activity located in close proximity to public areas is to be fenced to prevent damage to persons or property.
17. Any earthworks (including any structural support or other related structure for the purposes of the development):
 - a) must not cause a danger to life or property or damage to any adjoining building or structure on the lot or to any building or structure on any adjoining lot, and
 - b) must not redirect the flow of any surface or ground water or cause sediment to be transported onto an adjoining property, and
 - c) that is fill brought to the site—must contain only virgin excavated natural material (VENM) as defined in Part 3 of Schedule 1 to the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*, and
 - d) that is excavated soil to be removed from the site—must be disposed of in accordance with any requirements under the *Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Regulation 2005*.

Any excavation must be carried out in accordance with *Excavation Work: Code of Practice* (ISBN 978-0-642-785442), published in July 2012 by Safe Work Australia.
18. If, during the course of any activities conducted under this consent, the Applicant becomes aware of any heritage or archaeological sites not previously identified, all work likely to affect the site shall cease immediately. The Applicant shall then consult with relevant authorities and decide on an appropriate course of action prior to recommencement of work. The relevant authorities may include NSW Environment, Climate Change & Water and the relevant local Aboriginal community. Any necessary permits or consents shall be obtained and complied with prior to recommencement of work.

CONDITIONS TO BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO OCCUPATION/USE COMMENCING

19. At the completion of the works, the work site must be left clear of waste and debris.

CONDITIONS RELATING TO ONGOING OPERATIONS

20. A further application is to be made for any change, enlargement or intensification of the premises or land use, including the display / erection of any new structure such as signage, partition walls or building fit-out (unless the proposed work is exempt from the need for consent under *State Environmental Planning Policy (Codes SEPP) 2008*).
- 21.

COUNCIL ADVICE ONLY

22. Covenant/s: The applicant / owner has the responsibility of being aware of any covenant which may affect the proposal.
23. Dial Before You Dig: Underground assets may exist in the area that is subject to your application. In the interests of health and safety and in order to protect damage to third party assets please contact Dial Before You Dig at www.1100.com.au or telephone on 1100 before excavating or erecting structures (This is the law in NSW). If alterations are required to the configuration, size, form or design of the development upon contacting the Dial Before You Dig service, an amendment to the development consent (or a new development application) may be necessary. Individuals owe asset owners a duty of care that must be observed when working in the vicinity of plant or assets. It is the individual's responsibility to anticipate and request the nominal location of

plant or assets on the relevant property via contacting the Dial Before You Dig service in advance of any construction or planning activities.

24. Telecommunications Act 1997 (Commonwealth); Telstra (and its authorized contractors) are the only companies that are permitted to conduct works on Telstra's network and assets. Any person interfering with a facility or installation owned by Telstra is committing an offence under the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth) and is liable for prosecution. Furthermore, damage to Telstra's infrastructure may result in interruption to the provision of essential services and significant costs. If you are aware of any works or proposed works which may affect or impact on Telstra's assets in any way, you are required to contact: Telstra's Network Integrity Team on phone number 1800 810 443.

Reasons For Conditions

1. To confirm and clarify the terms of Council's approval.
2. To comply with all relevant legislation.
3. So that the impacts of any increase in the scale or duration of operations may be assessed and appropriately controlled. Section 19 (1) (b) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021*, as amended.
4. To minimise the potential for adverse impacts on the environment or public as a result of the development.
5. To ensure waste is disposed of in an appropriate manner.
6. To ensure that any National Construction Code issues are resolved prior to Construction Certificate assessment, including the peer review by an independent Accredited Certifier for alternate or performance solutions.

Conclusion

I confirm that I am familiar with the relevant heads of consideration under the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act and Local Government Act (if applicable) and have considered them in the assessment of this application.

I certify that I have no pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in this application.

Signed:

Kimley Talbert, Acting Manager Planning/Compliance

Date: 14/10/2024



STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

to accompany the Development Application for

**Euragai Goondi
Community Garden Shade Structure
Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service Limited
66-68 Duff Street
WALGETT NSW 2832**

Lot No 62, DP 820720

Prepared by Constructive Dialogue Architects

ISSUE	DATE	PURPOSE	CHECKED
A	02 October 2024	Development Application	NS

1 Introduction

This Statement of Environmental Effects (the **SEE**) has been prepared by Constructive Dialogue Architects (the **Applicant**) on behalf of Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service Limited (**WAMS**) to accompany a Development Application (**DA**) lodged to the Walgett Shire Council (**Council**) for the construction of a new steel shade structure with shade cloth roof over an existing community garden at the Euragai Goondi Community Facility (the **Community Facility**).

The SEE demonstrates that the proposed development is reasonable and acceptable, and achieves full compliance with relevant planning regulations, including:

- Walgett Shire Council Local Environmental Plan 2013;
- Walgett Shire Council Development Control Plan 2016; and
- The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

2 About WAMS (the Operator of the proposed development)

WAMS was established in circa June 1986 and has been a hub for the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It was established to provide appropriate and fit-for-purpose services to Aboriginal people but has maintained a commitment to servicing the whole community. WAMS face a unique set of challenges as a rural, not for profit, ACCHO, servicing the community's physical, social and mental health needs. WAMS was the first Aboriginal Medical Service in NSW to be accredited (April 2001) with the (National) Quality Improvement Council (QIC) / (State) Quality Management Service (QMS).

What WAMS Does

WAMS is committed to providing holistic, culturally responsive, and high-quality health and health-related services to community - through medical services, general practice, a range of specialist care, and outreach.

WAMS works in close partnership, collaboration and shared governance with Brewarrina Aboriginal Medical Service (BAMS) and uses the combined clinical capability to deliver high quality health services for the improved health outcomes of communities. BAMS operates as an outreach clinic of WAMS.

WAMS ensures its services foster and strengthen the development of Aboriginal culture and identity and delivers health promotion programs that address the health and cultural needs of community. Through the delivery of its services WAMS assists Aboriginal people to access and use health services.

WAMS Organisation Structure

The Board at WAMS is wholly Aboriginal: Chairperson - Mary Purse. Vice - Chairperson - Jenny Trindall. Secretary - Doreen Peters. Director - Iris Hall. Director - Carol Janissen.

This is representative of the strengths of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (**ACCHO**), with Aboriginal people leading Aboriginal services. Directors strengthen the governance of WAMS through their connection and culture, and expressions of strong Indigenous cultural governance.

Who Do We Provide Services To

WAMS provides comprehensive primary health care which includes medical services, general practice, a range of specialist care, and outreach to the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples of Walgett, Brewarrina and surrounding townships. WAMS serves all members of its community, with 60% of clients currently identifying as Aboriginal.

Our Target Landscape

WAMS strives to improve the health and wellbeing of the community. WAMS navigates its landscape of health and community rural needs, social environment, and droughts to provide services to community. WAMS has a responsibility to its community and are committed to increasing its suite of medical services to meet the health, social and cultural needs of community. WAMS has undertaken this process by adding facilities to provide dental services, specific support for people with chronic disease and a children's mobile service.

3 Proposed Works

WAMS is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) providing health, economic, social and well-being programs. WAMS manages a community garden and the associated Euragai Goondi building as a base for services run by WAMS and other community organisations. The vision is for Euragai Goondi to grow as a place as a culturally appropriate place for health and lifestyle programs, encourage social interaction, and lead to improvements physical and mental health.

The proposed work relates to a community garden adjacent the Community Facility that has become a vibrant meeting place through programs focused on the gardens, healthy eating, other social programs run in partnership with the Dharriwaa Elders Group. Revitalising of the site prompts the need for better shade to support health (reduction in exposure to skin cancer) and general usage (addressing the temperatures prevalent in Walgett). The current structure (see below) has provide a temporary measure, but has deteriorated since it was installed a few years ago and is inadequate to support the community activities.



Image A WAMS staff member who coordinates programs at the site.

4 Site Overview

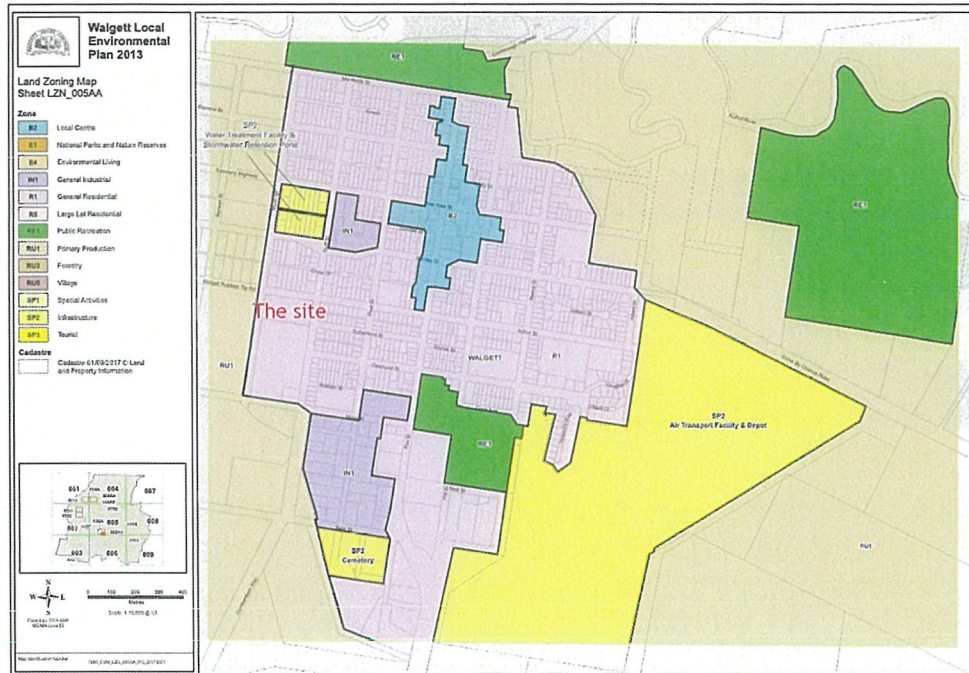
The site is a large piece of land (approx. 200 x 100m) containing a community facility and a community garden. Refer site plan below.



Image: Site plan identifying perimeter fence and existing shade structures

5 Walgett Shire Local Environment Plan 2013

The Walgett Shire Local Environment Plan 2013 (the LEP) defines permitted usage and zones the site as R1 General Residential. Refer Land Zoning Plan below.



The **objectives** of this zone include:

- To enable other land uses that provide facilities or services to meet the day to day needs of residents; and
- To enable development that is compatible with the surrounding residential environment and that is unlikely to adversely affect the amenity of residential development on land in the zone.

The Zone lists as **Permitted with Consent**:

Attached dwellings; Bed and breakfast accommodation; Boarding houses; Building identification signs; Business identification signs; Centre-based child care facilities; **Community facilities**; Dwelling houses; Food and drink premises; Group homes; Home industries; Hostels; Kiosks; Local distribution premises; Multi dwelling housing; Neighbourhood shops; Oyster aquaculture; Places of public worship; Pond-based aquaculture; Residential flat buildings; Respite day care centres; Semi-detached dwellings; Seniors housing; Serviced apartments; Shop top housing; Tank-based aquaculture; Any other development not specified in item 2 or 4

Building Definition

The proposed development best fits the definition of “Community Facilities” in the LEP which is listed as **Permitted with Consent**.

Community Facility is defined by the LEP as a building or place—

- (a) *owned or controlled by a public authority or non-profit community organisation, and*

(b) used for the physical, social, cultural or intellectual development or welfare of the community,

but does not include an educational establishment, hospital, retail premises, place of public worship or residential accommodation.

The proposed project meets the definition of “Community Facility” as

- (a) the site is owned by WAMS, a non-profit community organisation; and
- (b) the primary purpose is community programs that focus on physical health, social connection and cultural support.

Despite the garden focus of the structure and the size, this is a better definition fit than “agriculture,” which is defined in the LEP as:

extensive agriculture, meaning the production of crops or fodder (including irrigated pasture and fodder crops) for commercial purposes, or

intensive plant agriculture, meaning the cultivation of irrigated crops for commercial purposes (other than irrigated pasture or fodder crops).

As there is no commercial component to programs on the site, it does not fit the agriculture definition.

Development near zone boundaries

Clause 5.3 also addresses development near zone boundaries as follows:

The objective of this clause is to provide flexibility where the investigation of a site and its surroundings reveals that a use allowed on the other side of a zone boundary would enable a more logical and appropriate development of the site and be compatible with the planning objectives and land uses for the adjoining zone.

The clause determines that despite the provisions of the LEP relating to the purposes for which development may be carried out,

development consent may be granted to development of land to which this clause applies for any purpose that may be carried out in the adjoining zone, but only if the consent authority is satisfied that—

- (a) the development is not inconsistent with the objectives for development in both zones, and
- (b) the carrying out of the development is desirable due to compatible land use planning, infrastructure capacity and other planning principles relating to the efficient and timely development of land.

The site is on the edge of Walgett. There are no houses/domestic developments anywhere near the proposed development. The adjacent land is zoned RU1 Primary Production, which supports farming. In the event that there are any concerns about the size or nature of the development on a residential site, the adjacency to primary production zoning reconfirms the fit of the development as appropriate for the site.

The proposed design meets all of the requirements outlined by the LEP, specifically the proposed development is permitted within the site zoning.

6 Walgett Shire Council Development Control Plan 2016

Walgett Shire Council Development Control Plan 2016 (the DCP) outlines development standards across the Shire. It contains specific provisions for key Development types that are anticipated within the Shire, including the Housing, Subdivision, Industrial, Commercial, Intensive livestock, and Intensive Plant Agriculture. As noted above, none of these are relevant to a Community Facility. However, the items below show how setbacks and other development standards for housing are met by the proposed development.

Building Setbacks (DCP 4.3.1)

The table below from the DCP outlines the minimum setbacks

Zone	Street Frontage	Side / Rear Boundary	Outbuildings	
			Size	Cumulative Outbuildings
Primary Production (RU1)	20 m	10	Not specified	
Village (RU5)	6 m	BCA Requirements	150 m ²	200 m ²
General Residential (R1)	4.5 m, 5.5 m to garage	BCA Requirements	150 m ²	200 m ²

The plan below shows how each of these have been met.



A		02/10/24	Development Application	NS		Suite 4 462 Cleveland Street Saffy Hills NSW 2010 +61 2 9319 1709 constructive@dialogue.com.au Registered Architect - Nicholas Seemans (8731) ABN 33 105 167 066		Project EURAGAI GOONDI SHADE STRUCTURE 64-64 DUFF STREET, WALGETT 2832	Scale 1:750 Sheet Size A3		Drawing Title Site plan
Revision	Date	Issue Notes	Checked	Drawn EF							

Condition Met. The proposed shade structure is located in general alignment with existing outbuildings on the site. It is 70 m from the Duff Street frontage, 75m from the northern side boundary and 17m from the southern side boundary. These frontages far exceed the minimum requirements.

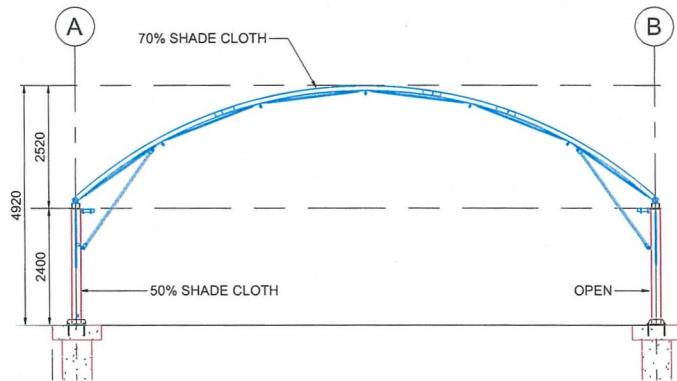
Design (Clause 4.3.2)

The design has been developed to ensure that the height is kept to a minimum, the sides are open to reduce visual impact, and the material is translucent, also to reduce visual impact.

Condition Met: This requires no windowless facades, but as the building sides are open, the clause is not relevant to the proposed Community Facility development.

Building Height (Clause 4.3.3)

The DCP sets a maximum building height of 10m for a structure. The section below demonstrates that the proposed development is below that limit.



Site Coverage (Clause 4.3.5)

The site coverage table below shows maximum coverage for different zones.

Zone	Cumulative site Coverage
Primary Production (RU1)	Not Specified
Village (RU5)	40%
General Residential (R1)	50%
Large Lot Residential (R5) 2 ha	25%
Large Lot Residential (R5) 40ha	25%
Lightning Ridge (SP2) Infrastructure zone	80%

Condition Met: The proposed development is far below any of these limits.

Access (Clause 4.3.9)

This requires all weather 2WD access in the zone.

Condition Met. The new structure will use the existing road and carport on site which are suitable for all weather 2WD access. Please refer to the attached site plan.

Outbuildings and Detached Garages (Clause 4.3.11)

This clause requires outbuildings to not be located within the building setback.

The proposed development is a stand alone structure to function as a community Facility, not an outbuilding. We are unable to find the definition that you are referencing for **Outbuildings** in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act or the Walgett Shire Council LEP or the Walgett Shire Council DCP. The National Construction Code explanatory notes refer to “Outbuildings” as enclosed spaces associated with dwellings, such as a sleepout, a detached entertainment room associated with a swimming pool, or a small toolshed used for trade-related hobbies.

The proposed structure is an open shade structure that is not considered to be an outbuilding to the existing Community Facility, but rather an independent **Community Facility** in its own right. Consequently, the maximum outbuilding size does not apply.

If there is any concern about the definition of the proposed development, the location adjacent the RU1 zone also permits Council to permit this development nonetheless, as noted above. Specifically, the adjacent land is zoned RU1 Primary Production, which supports farming. In the event that there are any concerns about the size or nature of the development on a residential site, the adjacency to primary production zoning reconfirms the fit of the development as appropriate for the site.

Most significantly, there are no houses/domestic developments anywhere near the proposed development, the proposed development does meet the requirements of the LEP zoning, and the impact of the proposal on neighbours is very small and in line with the objectives and standards within the DCP.

Condition Met Despite the note on definition above, the clause is met as the proposed development is not within building setback

Items covered under Chapter 5 **General Development Specifications** and Chapter 6 **Environmental Controls**, are also not relevant to the proposed development.

The proposed design meets all the design criteria outlined by the DCP.

7 Responding to Council Correspondence 24/09/21024

Council's request noted the following with regard to the type of development:

In relation to your response dated 19/09/2024 I offer you the following:
Definition of outbuilding defined under EPA 1979 includes greenhouse.
Therefore 4.3.1 outbuildings would exceed the cumulative maximum,
even though it seems to have the appropriate setback requirements.

Response: Refer above

Council's Request regarding

Design: Chapter 4.2 DCP 2016 Objectives to ensure that all development is compatible with surrounding development.

- To ensure that development does not adversely affect the surrounding development.
- To ensure that development has adequate access to services and utility infrastructure.

The design aspect and compatibility of the massively designed structure have not been addressed, for us to progress this application, I recommend that the listed matters need to be addressed, so as this application will need to be submitted as a report to the shire council addressing the variation to the LEP 2013 and DCP 2016.

Response: This has been addressed in the detail in this document.

Council's request regarding a site plan:

The other matter required is an accurate site plan drawn to a suitable scale of the proposed development.

Response: Site Plan attached, refer above.

8 Statutory Planning Considerations

In determining the DA, Council is required to consider the matters listed in *Part 4, Clause 4.15 Evaluation (cf previous s 79C) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the Act). Clause 4.15 (1) of the Act requires the consent authority to take into consideration:

- (a) the provisions of—
 - (i) any environmental planning instrument, and
 - (ii) any proposed instrument that is or has been the subject of public consultation under this Act and that has been notified to the consent authority (unless the Planning Secretary has notified the consent authority that the making of the proposed instrument has been deferred indefinitely or has not been approved), and
 - (iii) any development control plan, and
 - (iiia) any planning agreement that has been entered into under section 7.4, or any draft planning agreement that a developer has offered to enter into under section 7.4, and
 - (iv) the regulations (to the extent that they prescribe matters for the purposes of this paragraph), that apply to the land to which the development application relates,
- (b) the likely impacts of that development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality,
- (c) the suitability of the site for the development,
- (d) any submissions made in accordance with this Act or the regulations,
- (e) the public interest.

In relation to *Clause 4.15 (1)(a)* of the Act, compliance has been demonstrated that the proposed development:

- complies with Walgett Local Environmental Plan 2013 zoning and usage for a **Community Facility**;
- complies with relevant development standards within Walgett Shire Council Development Control Plan 2016;
- is suitable for this site; and
- is in the public interest.

The site is suitable for the proposed development and there are no likely negative impacts, including environmental impacts, on the natural and built environments or social and economic impacts in the locality.

Please contact me for more information,

Yours sincerely



Nick Seemann
Managing Director

ITEM 12.1 CLR KEARL - QUESTION ON NOTICE - NON-RESIDENTIAL ROLL 2024 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR Megan Dixon, General Manager
PURPOSE For information

RECOMMENDATION

That the information be noted.

Executive Summary

Response to Councilor's Notice of Motion

Background

The residential roll is maintained by the NSW Electoral Commission, not Council.

The non-residential rolls are prepared and certified by each council's General Manager, and the NSW Electoral Commissioner must confirm that the voters listed are eligible for enrolment on the non-residential roll for the purpose of each local government election (the non-residential roll is renewed before each Local Government election).

If established, as per section 299 (2) the roll of non-residential roll owners lapses after election for which it was prepared.

I advise that no non-residential ratepayers came forward to register for the election.

I also advise that any roll established by Council would not be made available to the public due to the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW) and the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Regulation 2019 (NSW).

The rolls for each Council are maintained by the NSW Electoral Commission and can be readily made available for an extraordinary vacancy or the next annual election.

Conclusion

Attachments

1. 241008-PK-Questions on Notice_1 (002)_Redacted

From: Pauline Kearl kearlpauline@gmail.com
Subject: Questions on Notice
Date: 8 October 2024 at 3:31 pm
To: [REDACTED]



General Manager
Megan Dixon
Walgett Shire Council

Dear Megan

I forgot to mention to you today that I am submitting questions on notice for the Ordinary Council Meeting on the 22nd October 2024.

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Was there a residential roll, a non-residential roll and a roll of occupiers and ratepaying lessees available to the public throughout the last term and will these rolls be established now for the next four years as per the Local Government Act 1993?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Thankyou Megan

Clr Pauline Kearl

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

ITEM 14.1 SECTION 713 SALE OF LAND FOR UNPAID RATES

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Chief Financial Officer
REPORT AUTHOR	Barry Thomas, Rates Clerk
PURPOSE	For decision

REASON FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

The discussion of a confidential report takes place in a closed session, with the media and public excluded. The closed session involves only as much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security. The grounds for closure of part of the meeting must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

This report has been classified confidential in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 as follows:

Section 10A(2)(b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer

PUBLIC INFORMATION SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with information about properties with unpaid rates, identified in accordance with Section 713 of the Local Government Act 1993. This section grants councils the authority to sell land to recover outstanding rates and charges. If the recommendation is approved, these properties will be publicly listed in the Government Gazette as part of the process to notify the public of the council's intention to proceed with the sale.

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

ITEM 14.2 CLR KEARL - QUESTION ON NOTICE - GENERAL MANAGER'S PERFORMANCE REVIEW

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Megan Dixon, General Manager
PURPOSE	For Information

REASON FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

The discussion of a confidential report takes place in a closed session, with the media and public excluded. The closed session involves only as much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security. The grounds for closure of part of the meeting must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

This report has been classified confidential in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 as follows:

Section 10A(2)(a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals

PUBLIC INFORMATION SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with a copy of the General Manager's Annual performance review which includes the mid-year review and comments, as well as the annual review and comments from Council's meeting in July 2024.

From: Pauline Kearl kearlpauline@gmail.com
Subject: Questions on Notice
Date: 8 October 2024 at 3:31 pm
To: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]@walgett.nsw.gov.au



General Manager
Megan Dixon
Walgett Shire Council

Dear Megan

I forgot to mention to you today that I am submitting questions on notice for the Ordinary Council Meeting on the 22nd October 2024.

[REDACTED]

QUESTION ON NOTICE

In closed session, please provide the results of the recent performance review of the General Manager.

[REDACTED]

Thankyou Megan

Clr Pauline Kearl

CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

ITEM 14.3 CLR KEARL - QUESTION ON NOTICE - REPORT ON THE ADOPTED RESTRUCTURE

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	General Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Megan Dixon, General Manager
PURPOSE	For information

REASON FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

The discussion of a confidential report takes place in a closed session, with the media and public excluded. The closed session involves only as much of the discussion as is necessary to preserve the relevant confidentiality, privilege or security. The grounds for closure of part of the meeting must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

This report has been classified confidential in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 as follows:

Section 10A(2)(a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals

PUBLIC INFORMATION SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with information in response to the Question on Notice regarding access organisational structure which was adopted in February 2024.

From: Pauline Kearl kearlpauline@gmail.com
Subject: Questions on Notice
Date: 8 October 2024 at 3:31 pm
To: megan.dixon@walgett.nsw.gov.au



General Manager
Megan Dixon
Walgett Shire Council

Dear Megan

I forgot to mention to you today that I am submitting questions on notice for the Ordinary Council Meeting on the 22nd October 2024.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

QUESTION ON NOTICE

In closed session, provide in writing a detailed report on the recent restructure including the roles and responsibilities of the new positions and remuneration package details.

Thankyou Megan

Clr Pauline Kearl