



## **2014/2015 ANNUAL REPORT**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2014/15 was a busy year, especially in regard to Local Government Reform. The Fit for Future Submissions were prepared and submitted by the end of the financial year. This process required considerable energy and resources to ensure that Council met all requirements including the internal review of Council's operation and the preparation of these reports.

This process also required a Public Consultation component and I thank all those who participated in the public meetings or provided feedback through surveys to give their thoughts on Council's current operations and future planning.

Councils operating result for the 2014/2015 financial year was \$2.045 million. Council's operating income of \$13.218 million comprised in the main of Rates and Annual Charges \$3.14 million (23.76%), User Charges and Fees \$2.591 million (19.60%) and Grants and Contributions of \$6.324 million (47.84%). Councils operating expenditure of \$11.173 million included major expenditures of \$3.696 million on Roads and Transport, \$358,000 on Community Aged Care, \$665,000 on Children's Services, \$712,000 on Parks, Gardens and Recreation facilities and \$1.968 million on other Economic Affairs including Allawah Lodge Aged Persons Hostel and Allawah Village.

Council invested \$4.121 million on the purchase of new assets, asset replacement and asset renewal. This figure is dominated by \$2.886 million being spent on Councils Roads and associated infrastructure.

Council's cash increased by \$2.090 million. Increases to external restrictions amounted to \$1.632 million due to increased bonds and loan licences related to Allawah Lodge and Allawah Village whilst internal and unrestricted funds increased by \$458,000.

As part of the Local Government Reform agenda, Council did undertake a review of its operations to highlight and determine if there were opportunities for Council to improve its services and viability. As a result Council commenced a full Asset Management Review to ensure that Council has the capabilities and resources to maintain its existing infrastructure. This will ensure that Council can continue to operate and remain as a viable organisation.

This review and ultimately the results of this report reinforced Council's position as a strong and robust entity capable of providing and maintaining infrastructure and services for its communities now and into the future.

Council welcomed this opportunity for review which reinforced the benefits of having a strong and stable Council body made up of both Staff and Elected Representatives working hard to provide for the communities of the Coolamon Shire Council.

Council will continue to support the communities that it represents.



John Seymour  
MAYOR



Tony Donoghue  
GENERAL MANAGER

## GENERAL INFORMATION

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### Council Headquarters:

Physical Address:	Shire Hall, 55 Cowabbie Street, Coolamon, 2701
Postal Address:	PO Box 101, Coolamon, 2701
Telephone:	(02) 6930 1800
Fax:	(02) 6927 3168
Email:	<a href="mailto:council@coolamon.nsw.gov.au">council@coolamon.nsw.gov.au</a>
Website:	<a href="http://www.coolamon.nsw.gov.au">www.coolamon.nsw.gov.au</a>

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### Office Hours:

General Business	8.30am to 5.00pm
Cashier	8.30am to 4.30pm

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### Elected Members:

<b>Mayor:</b>	Clr. John Seymour	0427 275 144
<b>Deputy Mayor:</b>	Clr Bruce Hutcheon	0427 273 439
<b>Councillors:</b>	Clr Grant Beard	0458 782 190
	Clr Dennis Brill	0427 278 266
	Clr Bec Huxtable	0428 267 353
	Clr Kerrilee Logan	0427 276 377
	Clr Kathy Maslin	0427 783 810
	Clr Dave McCann	0427 273 044
	Clr Alan White	0428 698 204

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### Senior Staff:

<b>General Manager:</b>	Mr Tony Donoghue	0427 273 694
<b>Executive Manager, Corporate &amp; Community Services:</b>	Mr Courtney Armstrong	0428 314 787
<b>Executive Manager, Engineering &amp; Technical Services:</b>	Mr Tony Kelly	0428 266 104

## **Meetings:**

Council conducts the majority of its business in an open forum, with the only exceptions being those matters pertaining to staff, litigation, and the private business of individuals where confidentiality has been requested. However, all such decisions are ratified in Open Council.

Ordinary Meetings of Council are held on the third Thursday of every month commencing at 2.00pm and generally conclude around 6.00pm. Ratepayers are welcome to attend.

Should there be any need to change the meeting date or call for a meeting due to special circumstances, then Council will comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act in this regard. This will include notification in the Council Newsletter where possible.

Agenda's are available at the office during business hours and in addition will be provided during the meeting. The Business Agenda for each meeting is prepared on the second Wednesday of each month, and any person wishing to bring a matter before Council should lodge it with the General Manager by that day.

Minutes of Council meetings are published in the week following the Council meeting and are available to the public at the Council Chambers or online on Council's website [www.coolamon.nsw.gov.au](http://www.coolamon.nsw.gov.au)

# REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF DELIVERY PROGRAM & OPERATIONAL PLAN

*Section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 requires that Council's prepare an annual report for that year reporting as to its achievements in implementing its delivery program and the effectiveness of the principal activities undertaken in achieving the objectives at which those principal activities are directed.*

Council's performance during the 2013/2014 year with respect to the Delivery Program Actions are detailed below

## **THEME 1 SUSTAINING "OUR CLOSE-KNIT SHIRE COMMUNITIES"**

*Objective 1.1: A maintenance of community values with any growth in population.*

### 1.1.1 Foster and build community partnerships and networks *Support local community organisations.*

Progress Report:

Council continued to actively support local community organisations, including Council's Section 355 Committees during the 2014/2015 year.

Donations were made to all Schools throughout the Shire towards their annual prize giving celebrations.

Council continued to administer the Coolamon Shire Community Benefit fund providing financial assistance to Shire residents affected by emergency situations.

Council supported the Ardlethan Kelpie Bark, Ganmain Guardian and the Coolamon Lions Club in the production of their monthly newsletters.

Council continued to administer the bookings of Raffles and Street Stalls on behalf of the communities of Coolamon and Ganmain

Council's inaugural Event Funding Program was introduced providing financial assistance to the Ganmain Show Society and Ardlethan Country Music Festival for marketing of their events.

1.1.2 Encourage volunteerism within all age groups for social support, recreational pursuits and community services and activities.

*Volunteer base to be maintained and expanded.*

Progress Report:

Volunteerism has continued to be encouraged by Council in it's monthly newsletter and as part of Council's Local Government Week Celebrations, where Council volunteers were personally thanked for their efforts by Councillors at an afternoon tea.

Council continues to provide training to it's volunteers to ensure that they are adequately equipped to pursue their passion of serving their communities. Various events were held throughout the year to thank volunteers for their service including during Volunteers Week.

Council continued to support the Coolamon Lions Club with their recycling program with provision of premises and by subsidising the transportation of the recyclable materials.

Council maintained participation in the REROCC Take Charge & Volunteer program that aims to link community organisations with young people who wish to make a contribution to their community. This program will continue into the future with the hope of developing a new generation of community volunteers.

1.1.3 Develop and implement initiatives to welcome new residents and make them aware of the Shire's opportunities.

*Provide information and resources to shire communities so that new residents can be welcomed and informed.*

Progress Report:

Council's websites, Resident's Guide and monthly newsletters continue to inform old and new residents of the various services available, both Council and Community.

Council has continued to market Allawah Lodge, Allawah Retirement Village and Coolamon Early Childhood Centre so that prospective residents can consider the Coolamon Shire as an alternate place to reside with the employment and service possibilities that these assets bring to the Shire.

*Objective 1.2: A high standard of services, facilities and infrastructure for all age groups.*

1.2.1 Provide access to facilities, services and information to support families, youth and seniors including the provision of child care facilities and respite services.

*To provide childcare services that meets the needs of the Community.*

*To provide a full range of Community Services to the frail, aged and disabled persons within the community within the constraints of Grants provided by State and Federal Governments.*

*To promote services and access to services for people with diverse cultural, socially isolated and linguistic backgrounds where a need has been identified.*

*To ensure that the needs of young people in the Coolamon Shire are identified and met within financial constraints.*

*That Council continue to provide accommodation for those persons with particular needs which will ensure that they continue to reside within those communities.*

*To assist frail aged and disabled persons to continue to reside with dignity in their local Communities.*

Progress Report:

Council continues to meet department licensing requirements relating to the operations of the Ardlethan Preschool and Coolamon Early Childhood Centre.

Provision of premises for the operation of the Coolamon and Ganmain Preschools continued in accordance with the established lease arrangements between the individual committees and Council.

Council continued to provide services to frail aged and disabled persons from Allawah Community Care including meals, transport, home maintenance & modifications and home care packages.

Successful Holiday Programs have been implemented from the Coolamon Shire Library as well as various special projects

Council's operation of its 33 bed residential aged care facility, Allawah Lodge, 24 Unit Retirement Village, together with the provision of an additional 22 units for aged people across the shire ensures that people of varying financial and health capacity have residential options within their own communities as they age.

NSW Housing and Council sold one Community Housing property during the year with the remaining three to be auctioned early in 2015/2016.

1.2.2 Provide protection from crime, fire, anti-social activities and other threats to community safety.

*To provide professional, effective and cost efficient responses to all emergency incidents within the Shire in accordance with Service Level Agreement between Council and RFS.*

*To provide efficient and effective measures for the prevention and mitigation of fire impact on the local Community through effective planning initiatives, fuel management strategies, fire trail maintenance, and the continual assessment of bushfire risk across the District.*

*To provide support to the Local State Emergency Services Group and ensuring they are capable of responding in an adequate manner to all emergency situations.*

*To minimise and control the public nuisance effect of straying stock and animals.*

*To develop and implement projects that address local road safety issues.*

*Lobby for adequate local police working presence.*

*The preservation and enhancement of public health by regulating and inspecting all premises and vehicles used for the preparation, storage, delivery and sale of food and refreshments.*

*Address social standards and values in particular growing issues of alcohol abuse and vandalism*

*Provide support for NSW Fire Brigades*

Progress Report:

Council continued to support emergency services through the payment of levies to support the State Emergency Service, Fire & Rescue NSW and the NSW Rural Fire Service. Council continued to provide premises for the local State Emergency Services and NSW Rural Fire Service.

Ongoing discussion with the NSW Rural Fire Service - Riverina Zone regarding budgeting and service levels have continued in conjunction with the other member councils.

Council's ranger has continued to take the necessary action in relation to straying stock and animals to ensure the risk is minimised within Council's service standard when reports were received.

Council continues to ensure that the Companion Animals Act is followed in regard to registration and take any necessary action in relation to noise complaints and dangerous dogs.

Council maintained representation at meetings with the NSW Police Force and the lines of communication between local police and Council have been retained. Council continues to make representations to have an increased permanent and operating policing presence in the rural areas of the Shire.

Council continued to lobby the relevant bodies and members of parliament in relation to the establishment of an Ambulance Service in the township of Coolamon. Council's efforts continue to recognise the importance of the Ambulance Service that already services Ardlethan and surrounds.

1.2.3 Provide and maintain safe and serviceable public facilities and infrastructure including roads, footpaths, and stormwater drains.

*To ensure that all land and buildings owned and controlled by Council are maintained in an appropriate manner and utilised for their designated and appropriate community purpose.*

*Ensure that all aspects of Council's Cemetery operations are carried out in an appropriate and dignified manner with due respect and accuracy.*

*To continue to maintain the existing public conveniences in a clean and tidy manner.*

*To provide an overall system of management that allows Community Committees to control their own Halls in accordance with their needs and requirements.*

*To ensure all urban roads within all communities are sealed or where unsealed are maintained via a system of programmed management.*

*To ensure that a quality sealed rural road system is in existence throughout the Shire.*

*To provide a quality unsealed rural road network throughout the Shire.*

*The provision and maintenance of a safe and adequate footpath system in close proximity to the commercial areas and public facilities of all communities.*

*To provision and maintenance of a suitable stormwater system inclusive of an adequate kerb and gutter network.*

*The provision of an adequate system of Street Lighting to all developed commercial and residential areas of the towns and villages.*

Progress Report:

Council's Asset and Risk Inspections of land and buildings has continued during the reporting year. Maintenance has been carried out subject to financial constraints. Annual fire inspections of Council's designated buildings were undertaken with the appropriate report and certification provided by the contractor.

Council's maintenance staff continued the program of maintenance at the various cemeteries and all burials and plaque requests were completed within the designated time frames.

Council's existing public conveniences were cleaned in accordance with the cleaning schedule as agreed to with Council contractors. Public conveniences located in Lions Park, Coolamon, continue to be closed to the public after daylight hours.

Council continued its support of the local community hall committees in their operations of control and maintenance of their halls.

The maintenance of Council's sealed and un-sealed roads continued over the past twelve months.

Road inspections continue to be carried out on a regular basis. This together with Council's road hierarchical plan which has been considered by Council during this reporting period provides Council with direction for the maintenance upkeep of its road infrastructure.

Council continues to liaise with Essential Energy to ensure that the street lighting system is adequately maintained throughout the villages and towns of the Shire.

1.2.4 Provide and maintain efficient sewerage systems that allow for required expansion.

*To provide, maintain and operate a sewage disposal system and treatment works that meets the needs of the Coolamon and Ganmain Communities and to continue monitoring the developing areas in respect of the need for sewerage extensions.*

Progress Report:

Council has continued to meet all of its licensing requirements in relation to the Coolamon and Ganmain sewerage systems.

1.2.5 Investigate implementation of new cost effective sewerage systems where required by environmental pressures and/or by community desire.

*To continue to investigate the most appropriate means of constructing and financing a sewerage scheme in the township of Ardlethan.*

Progress Report:

Council has not been successful in receiving funding from either the Federal or State Governments with respect to the construction of a sewerage scheme for Ardlethan. The situation in relation to construction of a Sewerage Scheme in Ardlethan will continue to be monitored with applications made to various funding opportunities when they become available.

1.2.6 Investigate provision of improved, more integrated public and community transport within the Shire.

*Support the provision of improved public transport within the Shire.*

Progress Report:

The majority of public transport is administered and controlled by State Government Agencies. The tyranny of distance and cost means limited access to the communities of the Coolamon Shire. Council will continue to lobby State Government to gain greater access in rural areas.

Council has attempted to encourage people to use the community bus through the Community Transport Organisation. To date its attempts in this area have met with limited success. Council continues to run the Community Transport Programme providing assistance to the frail, aged, disabled and disadvantaged.

1.2.7 Support appropriate healthcare providers within the Shire and greater region.

*Support the provision of adequate health services to the whole Shire.*

Progress Report:

Council continued to provide professional accommodation in Coolamon and Ganmain for the local Medical Practitioner together with accommodation for other health related practitioners.

Council in conjunction with Murrumbidgee Medicare Local set up a Healthy Project Officer for the Coolamon Shire with Council helping in the accommodation of the Officer at the Allawah Community Centre and being involved in the advisory committee.

1.2.8 Improve physical access to shops and other buildings for the elderly and disabled.

*Support local businesses with improvements to the access to their premises.*

Progress Report:

Council provides appropriate advice to businesses on access requirements to their premises when so requested.

Council continues to work through access issues identified in the Active Transport Study that has ongoing works completed.

1.2.9 Develop and implement an education strategy.

*Ensure the maintenance and enhancement of existing educational facilities within the Shire.*

Progress Report:

Residents of the Shire have secondary education to Higher School Certificate level in Ardlethan and Coolamon and there is easy access to the Wagga Campus of TAFE and Charles Sturt University via Council's Road Network. No action has been taken by Council to contact education providers with regards to the development and/or implementation of an education strategy.

1.2.10 Extend improved access to telecommunication and broadband services.

*Support the provision of equitable telecommunication and broadband services for all residents of the Shire.*

Progress Report:

Council has continued to pursue opportunities for increasing the mobile coverage for all areas within the Shire.

Council continued to be in negotiation with the National Broadband Network (NBN) as part of their roll out across the nation. Several towers have been built within the Shire to increase access to the Network, as well as the location of infrastructure on the existing tower in Coolamon owned by Council.

1.2.11 Continue to explore opportunities to provide a reliable water supply for our sporting fields.

*Provide effluent reuse water to the benefit of sporting organisations.*

Progress Report:

Recycled water being delivered to users when required.

Potable water supplies to the Towns and Villages of the Shire are provided by Goldenfields Water County Council that implements the necessary upgrades to ensure a reliable and constant supply of water.

Numerous water saving programmes have been put in place to reduce the reliance on potable water including the use of recycled water on a number of Council parks, gardens and reserves.

*Objective 1.3: A lifestyle with diverse entertainment, recreation and cultural opportunities.*

1.3.1 Create opportunities to participate in active and healthy recreational activities.

*Support sporting organisations with the retention of their assets.*

Progress Report:

Council continued to manage a number of facilities as trustee including showgrounds, community reserves and walking tracks.

Council Staff have continued to monitor the use of the Coolamon Skate Park.

The use of recycled water on the sporting fields of Kindra Park, the Coolamon Touch fields and the Coolamon Golf Course is continuing, allowing residents to participate in the various sporting activities, with extension to the scheme to various parks, gardens and reserves within the township of Coolamon.

Council in partnership with Coolamon Rotary began investigation into the establishment of a mountain bike track located in Kindra State Forest.

1.3.2 Provide innovative and enhanced library services that encourage lifelong learning.

*To continue to provide a Mobile Library Service, in order to satisfy the information, cultural, educational and recreational needs of residents.*

*Continued operation of static library in Coolamon.*

Progress Report:

The Riverina Regional Library's Mobile Library continues to service the north of the Shire whilst the static library provided in Coolamon, services the southern region.

Council has received no complaints about the operations of either its mobile library or static library services.

School Holiday Programmes together with fortnightly Story Time sessions are also held at the Library for the respective School age students.

1.3.3 Support and promote arts, artists and cultural development within the local community.

*Implement initiatives that will develop and maintain a vibrant and creative community, involved in cultural activities*

*Provide appropriate guidance for community organisations in identifying funding sources for cultural events.*

*Council acknowledge Aboriginal culture*

Progress Report:

The Up-to-Date Cultural Centre has been used for art exhibitions, antique auctions and continues to be utilised for library operations.

Council continues to sponsor the Up-2-Date Art Exhibition with awarding of the “Coolamon Shire Council Acquisition Prize”. This is awarded to eligible local Artists who reside in the Coolamon Shire Council Local Government Area. Council also supports the Coolamon Shire Photographic Competition – “Capture Coolamon”.

Letters of support have been provided to community organisations when seeking grant funding.

Displays of aboriginal culture are implemented when materials are provided, during the reporting period no materials or displays have been held.

Council continued it’s membership of the Eastern Riverina Arts Programme, with Council’s Community Development Officer establishing a working relationship with the organisation.

1.3.4 Provide attractive, accessible and safe parks, recreational and other public places.

*To provide a safe and secure swimming pool facility in the towns of Ardlethan, Coolamon and Ganmain.*

*To provide parks and gardens that are aesthetically attractive and are available for passive recreational pursuits.*

*To implement an Urban Tree Management Plan and Tree Removal Programme that is both aesthetically attractive and ensures that Council's civil infrastructure is not damaged by such plantings. Furthermore, that the assets of Essential Energy are given consideration during the implementation of the programme.*

Progress Report:

Throughout the swimming season all pools operated satisfactorily with water standards being adhered to.

Funding opportunities are continuing to be sourced for the upgrade of the Ganmain Swimming Pool filtration plant and for the Ganmain and Ardlethan Pool amenities building.

Training has been provided to the pool licensees.

Council has received no complaints about the standard of its parks and gardens.

Inspections have been carried out on the playground equipment.

Staff have continued with tree planting throughout the urban areas of the Shire. Incorporated in with this tree planting has been a tree lopping/maintenance program.

1.3.5 Preserve and promote local history and heritage.

*To enhance & promote local cultural heritage within the Shire to create benefit for the community*

Progress Report:

Funding has continued for the employment of a heritage consultant to act as Council's Advisor.

The local heritage funding program allocations have been made.

Council continues to check funding opportunities to ensure that the local history and heritage can be promoted and preserved in the most appropriate manner.

1.3.6 Encourage activities that promote community spirit.

*To promote the celebration & awareness of Australia Day  
Support local community activities*

Progress Report:

The Beckom Community hosted the 2015 Australia Day Celebrations with Debbie Watson OAM, Water Polo Olympian participating as ambassador.

The "Coolamon New Year Eve Party" was again successfully held.

The community has access to Council venues for arranged community activities.

1.3.7 Provide appropriate guidance for sports clubs in writing grant applications

*Provide appropriate guidance for sports clubs in identifying funding sources.*

Progress Report:

Letters of support have been provided to sporting clubs when seeking grant funding.

Council provides support to the running of Grant Writing Programmes.

1.3.8 Encourage cycling and walking, through developing tracks and paths

*Establish "need-based" tracks and paths within the Shire*

Progress Report:

Council's engagement of consultants to review it's existing Active Transport Plan (PAMPS & Cycleways) has resulted in a draft plan that Council is yet to adopt.

1.3.9 Identify an appropriate annual or periodic event that could attract visitors to the Shire and encourage community leaders to plan and deliver the event.

*Support local communities with endeavours to hold events that attract visitors.*

Progress Report:

Council continued to support annual events held within the shire with promotional assistance provided by Tilma Management as part of their engagement as Council's Business & Tourism Managers. Council continued to sponsor the Shire's Australia Day Celebrations. Distribution of seasonal events brochures and Council's involvement in the My AppVenture help to promote events held throughout the Shire.

Council distributed funds for the first time under the Event Funding Programme to assist local events with marketing.

## THEME 2 SUSTAINING THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITIES OF THE SHIRE

*Objective 2.1: Adaptation to climate variability.*

2.1.1 Monitor and strategically manage environmental risks and impacts of climate variability.  
*Adapt to climate variability through development of a climate variability strategy*

Progress Report:

Council has previously completed a Climate Change Strategy in conjunction with Statewide Mutual and considers these outcomes in its strategic planning.

2.1.2 Develop community leadership on becoming leaders in resource use, reuse and recycling.  
*Develop leadership on becoming energy efficient including carbon capture, water recycling and solar efficiency*  
*Secure sustainable, affordable supplies of water and use our water even more wisely.*  
*Encourage efficient water usage by Shire communities.*  
*Encourage solar energy usage by Shire communities.*

Progress Report:

Council now has solar panels installed at 7 facilities with the onsite production of electricity helping to offset Council's use of grid power. Investigations continue to determine the use of panels at other Council sites.

Effluent re-use water continued to be distributed to sporting organizations and parks, gardens and reserves in the township of Coolamon. This distribution is after adequate and appropriate dosing of the water to meet Public Health guidelines.

Council has power saving kits available at the Coolamon Library to enable residents to identify potential energy savings within their homes, thus helping the environment.

Council continued to source funding to further enhance its domestic waste management services. Following public consultation the implementation of Organics Recycling Collection for Ganmain will commence in 2015/2016.

Council staff continued to source and investigate energy saving technologies and make changes to energy use practices.

*Objective 2.2: Our rich heritage and natural environment character conserved.*

2.2.1 Protect natural landscapes and systems in particular our native vegetation, biodiversity and Murrumbidgee River catchment through sharing regional responsibilities.

*To protect the local environment or assist in maximising productivity of prime agricultural land by the removal of infestation of noxious plants.*

*To ensure all septic tanks throughout the Shire are operating in accordance with the minimum requirements of the Local Government Regulations, Public Health guidelines and industry standards.*

*To develop an environment that is sustainable for future generations in terms of visual attractiveness and pollution free.*

*To operate the quarrying service to Council's programmes in an environmentally sensitive manner.*

*To ensure the protection of natural vegetation on Council controlled land.*

Progress Report:

Council continues to maintain the service agreement in conjunction with the Temora and Junee Shire for the control of noxious weeds.

The ongoing spraying of noxious weeds has been carried out on the various areas identified with infestations.

There has been no environmental damage reported from construction sites in the area.

Council continues to maintain its appropriate licenses for its mining operations.

Council has in place two voluntary conservation agreements for the preservation of native vegetation. Council continues to comply with these agreements.

Council continues to monitor the tree corridors that were planted in conjunction with the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority.

2.2.2 Encourage and ensure high quality planning and urban design outcomes.

*To provide a Planning Instrument that ensures all land within the Shire is developed in an appropriate manner and reflects the rural nature of the communities.*

*Ensure that all building activity within the Coolamon Shire meets the requirements of the EP&A Act and the Local Government Act 1993.*

Progress Report:

The ongoing preparation of a comprehensive Development Control Plan to supplement the new Local Environmental Plan continued with the plan on public exhibition at the end of the reporting period.

Council has received no complaints in relation to building activity carried out within the area.

Inspections are carried out and the assessment and approval time is meeting expectations.

2.2.3 Protect local heritage and residential amenity, including protection of significant architecture, Indigenous heritage and the natural environment.

*Identify, protect, enhance and celebrate all significant Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage sites*

*Maintain our heritage through ensuring that development and restoration of shops and buildings is compatible with the heritage value of the surrounding area(s)*

Progress Report:

Council continues to allocate funding under the local heritage program for restoration and improvements to heritage assets in the towns and villages of the Shire.

Part of the assessment process of all Development Applications within identified areas of heritage significance ensures compliance with any heritage issues.

Grant funding has been received for the continued employment of a Heritage Advisor.

2.2.4 Reduce our waste to landfill through effective waste management & recycling.

*The effective collection of all household garbage from within the defined scavenging areas in a regular and clean manner.*

*Minimise landfill disposal methods whilst still maintaining effective garbage depots within the Shire that are safe, environmentally friendly and effectively managed.*

Progress Report:

Council continues to collect household garbage from within all defined areas of the towns and villages of the Shire. No complaints of a substantial nature in respect of this service have been received.

Licensing conditions are being complied with at Council's landfill sites. Recycling at the landfill sites has been extended with waste being deposited in the designated areas. Landfill sites are manned when operating.

Council undertook public consultation relating to the implementation of Organics Recycling Collection for the town of Ganmain, with the service to commence in the 2015/2016 financial year.

Council is a member of the REROC Waste Forum and Council's General Manager, Tony Donoghue is chairman. The group formed in 1997 and has expanded from dealing solely with waste management to encompass a wide variety of environmental issues. The forum aims to undertake projects to improve community awareness and behaviour and undertake projects to identify and implement solutions in resource and infrastructure management. Council has continued its involvement in the Metal Waste Collections, Used Oil Collections, Organics Recycling following a cluster trial, E-waste collections, Household Hazardous Waste, Woodsmoke.

## THEME 3 SUSTAINING OUR STRONG RURAL BASED ECONOMY

*Objective 3.1: A sustainable economy amid a changing regional, national and global environment.*

3.1.1 Promote and support existing and new business investment within the Shire to take advantage of the Shire's access to Wagga Wagga, the Bomen Industrial Estate, Junee, and Temora.

*Council support the promotion of businesses within the Shire.*

*Provide high quality infrastructure to support the investment by businesses within the Shire*

*Encourage the development or relocation of employment generating industries within the Shire.*

Progress Report:

The preparation of a comprehensive Development Control Plan culminated in it being on public exhibition during the reporting period with the final plan to be adopted by Council early in 2015/2016.

Infrastructure is in place to service the establishment of business within the Shire. No complaints have been received about the adequacy of Council's infrastructure.

Council has a land bank available for development of subdivisions to encourage people to relocate to the area.

Engagement Tilma Management as Council's Tourism and Business Development Manager has seen the ongoing maintenance of a dedicated Tourism and Business website.

3.1.2 Foster and build partnerships with tertiary institutions (TAFE and CSU) to increase access to knowledge and skills within the Shire and the region to benefit shire businesses.

*To advertise training available throughout the Shire.*

Progress Report:

Training brochures are available at Shire offices and training opportunities are advised in the monthly Newsletter where appropriate.

Council makes available facilities to training providers when requested.

Traineeships have been offered in various positions within Council's workforce including aged care, child care and works.

### 3.1.3 Develop and implement initiatives to promote the local and regional economy.

*Refer Strategy 3.1.1*

#### Progress Report:

The REROC Regional Freight Transport Plan identifies constraints on the freight transport networks with weighted factors used to assess the overall impact of the constraint. The measures required to alleviate the constraints were then identified and costed. The participating Council's will then use the plan to lobby the state and federal governments for funding on a regional basis. Coolamon Shire Council contributes to this plan as the lead council and was fortunate, along with other member Council's to be successful in obtaining Fixing Country Roads funding using the Regional Freight Transport Plan as evidence.

Council continued to support Riverina Regional Tourism and participate in their advertising and promotional programs.

### 3.1.4 Focus development within the Shire to avoid unnecessary duplication of public services and facilities.

*Emphasis the importance of consolidating Council's resources to defined focal points  
To provide fully serviced residential land at a reasonable purchase price from Council's land bank.*

#### Progress Report:

Council continues to focus on maintaining Coolamon as the Shire headquarters and Ardlethan as the northern entry point to the Shire. Council's long-term strategy is to provide residential subdivisions on the northern side of Coolamon Township, with plans underway to complete construction work in 2015/2016.

*Objective 3.2: Increased awareness within prospective businesses, tourists and residents of the appeal of the Coolamon Shire.*

3.2.1 Develop a Coolamon Shire image focusing on the unique identity of the Shire and its towns and villages.

*Promote the Coolamon Shire as a place to work and live.*

*Proactively communicate the community and council's achievements and events to the wider community*

Progress Report:

Council continues to advertise the benefits of the Allawah Retirement Village and the Coolamon Early Childhood Centre together with other promotions of the Coolamon Shire.

Continued contact with media outlets such as newspapers, radio and television has been maintained during this reporting period.

Council's dedicated Tourism and Business website aids in the promotion of the Shire as a place to work, live and visit. Council signage board at the Coolamon Railway Station advising people of all activities within the Coolamon Shire.

The "Capture Coolamon" Photographic competition once again focused on capturing photographic images that were taken in the Coolamon Shire. These photographs will form a database from which Council can choose images to help promote and advertise the Coolamon Shire as an alternative place to live and a great place to visit.

3.2.2 Develop and implement initiatives to attract tourists.

*To encourage visitation and generally promote the area.*

*To provide a Caravan Park in Ardlethan and Coolamon that constitutes a basic level of service/short term accommodation to the travelling community.*

*Improve the signage throughout our towns and villages*

Progress Report:

Membership with the Riverina Tourism Association has continued.

The ongoing update of the Coolamon Shire Residents Guide continues.

The Short Stay Caravan Park in Ardlethan for 1 to 3 day stopovers has continued to prove very popular and receives good patronage.

Council was successful in receiving funding for upgrades to the Coolamon Caravan Park. The relocation of the tennis courts took longer than anticipated and the upgrade is now planned to commence in 2015/2016.

Council's seasonal events brochures and Council's involvement in the My AppVenture help to encourage day and longer term visitation to the Shire as well as promoting the area generally.

*Objective 3.3: Sustained viability of our farming land.*

3.3.1 Identify opportunities, programs and funding to maintain and or enhance farming productivity and support the retention of farming population.

*Identify opportunities, programs and funding available for maintaining farming productivity.  
Investigate alternative farming initiatives suitable to the area and climate.*

Progress Report:

The Rural Financial Counselling Service has been servicing the Coolamon Shire Local Government Area from the Rural Transaction Centre in Ganmain. Council has provided administration support for the North Eastern Riverina Rural Counselling Service which also operates from the Ganmain Rural Transaction Centre.

3.3.2 Determine the green economic opportunities available for farms to enter carbon offsets market.

*Encourage farmers to investigate and undertake "green" economic opportunities.*

Progress Report:

Council has not undertaken any action with regards to this action during the reporting period.

## THEME 4 WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE THE “OUR COMMUNITIES 2030” VISION

*Objective 4.1: Opportunities identified for diversified community leadership, inter-generational leadership and transition of youth into leadership roles*

### 4.1.1 Encourage community leadership

*Provide development programs to grow capability in our current and prospective leaders.  
Encourage involvement of respected community representatives in providing mentoring to youth.*

Progress Report:

Council’s Community Development Officer has implemented successful holiday programmes throughout the year.

As part of Local Government Week, School Leaders were invited to a morning tea with the Mayor and Senior Staff. The Mayor also held an afternoon tea for community volunteers to thank them for their continued work for their respective communities.

Youth Week activities were conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Youth Week Grant which was received by Council. These activities were well supported and provided an outlet for the youth of the Shire to experience many social interactions between various groups.

*Objective 4.2: Council as an organisation be consultative, participatory, encouraging and well managed.*

### 4.2.1 Maintain two-way communication with the community and increase awareness of Council’s activities

*Involve the community in Council’s planning processes  
Continue communication between Council and the Community.*

Progress Report:

Council continues to produce a monthly newsletter which is distributed to all residents of the Shire.

Bus Tours were held in February 2015 for both Community Groups and Councillors to discuss issues associated with each Community and the Shire as a whole.

Council’s website is updated on a regular basis, it provides information to all members of the public on Council activities and events.

Council Community Section 355 Committees continue to act as a conduit between Council and the communities that they represent in relation to the strategic direction of those communities and Council.

#### 4.2.2 Work in partnership with the Shire's community in planning the future of the Shire.

*Development of long-term resourcing strategy, including long-term financial planning, workforce planning and asset planning to achieve the objectives of the Community Strategic Plan*

*To provide an effective staffing structure that is capable of carrying out Council's objectives in an efficient manner.*

*The continued maintenance of a realistic Delivery Program and Operational Plan.*

#### Progress Report:

During the reporting period Council's Long term Financial Plan was updated. Council has identified the importance of Asset Management planning with the engagement of a dedicated Asset Manager. Investigations have been made into the purchase of an Asset Management system that will integrate both engineering and financial components with the chosen solution to be implemented early in the next financial year. Work Staff Performance Reviews are carried out in August/September each year. The appraisals were completed within the designated timeframe.

Training programs implemented and training provided as required.

Staff appraisals have been carried out in the various operational areas including Administration, Allawah Lodge Aged Persons Hostel and the Coolamon Early Childhood Centre together with the Allawah Community Care.

#### 4.2.3 Build and foster relationships and strategic networks to the benefit of the Coolamon Shire.

*Participate with other councils in resource sharing projects to reduce operational costs*

#### Progress Report:

Council continues to retain its membership of REROC, ERAP, ERNWAG, NSW Rural Fire Service Riverina Zone, Riverina Regional Tourism and the membership of these organisations will continue to be monitored.

The REROC Strategic Transport Plan has been widely applauded as an example of Council's thinking beyond their own individual boundaries and has become a powerful tool that REROC and its member Councils can use when lobbying the government in relation to transport routes. Member Council's used the plan to leverage funding opportunities with Coolamon Shire Council successfully receiving funding under the Fixing Country Roads programme.

The Coolamon Shire Council remains a member of an Internal Audit Alliance with a number of other Councils that implement an Internal Audit Programme that is chaired by neighbouring General Managers to ensure that the audit process is carried out in a clear and transparent manner.

#### 4.2.4 Maintain Council's strong financial position.

*To ensure that Council's finances are managed in an effective and timely manner.*

Progress Report:

Investments are reviewed on a weekly basis and reported to Council monthly.

Various Financial Reports have been completed within the statutory time-frame and submitted to respective Government Departments.

As part of Council's Fit for the Future review and submission, Council's financial estimates for the next ten years were scrutinised to ensure that the demonstrated sustainability and efficiency.

#### 4.2.5 Deliver high quality services that meet customer expectations.

*Develop and implement Customer Service policies and procedures that are customer focused.*

Progress Report:

Council staff continue to comply with its Customer Service policy and the statement of business ethics is being adhered to.

No complaints have been received about the service Council has been providing.

#### 4.2.6 Minimise risk for Council and the community.

*Develop and implement a Risk Management System suitable for Council operations.*

*Develop and implement suitable Internal audit process for Council operations.*

*To ensure consultation with respect to OH&S is carried out on a systematic basis.*

*To ensure that training, instruction and performance evaluation of relevant parties is carried out.*

*To ensure that Council's Accident/Injury/Public Liability Claims Management are administered in a competent manner.*

*To ensure that documentation & records management provide a framework for easy retrieval and reference.*

#### Progress Report:

Senior Manager's Meetings continue to receive a monthly report presenting and reviewing all Work, Health and Safety.

Council continues to undertake an Internal Audit managed by an external Consultant that looks into procedures and processes of the Council. During the previous Annual Reporting period Council investigated Insurable Risk, Contract Management and External Reporting Requirements.

Council's Safety Committee meets 3 monthly when agenda items arise with copies of these minutes being presented to Council.

Council's Risk Operations Committee encompassing all of Council's operations continues to meet to ensure there is a clear and identifiable link between staff and Senior Management decisions with respect to Council's overall Risk Management System.

All staff are provided with Council's Induction Booklet upon appointment and regular Tool-Box and Staff meetings are scheduled.

Training in the various areas is provided for work staff and staff within the other spheres of Council operations on a needs basis.

Council has in place an incident reporting system which is operating satisfactorily.

Council staff continue to carry out asset inspections, assessing both risk and asset function with the necessary remedial action being performed where risks are identified.

Records management systems including general records are controlled by Council's Executive Assistants.

Property records are controlled by Planning and Environmental Staff and are meeting Council's requirements.

4.2.7 Continuously monitor, review and publicly evaluate progress, including periodic community satisfaction surveys, of the Community Strategic Plan to ensure priority areas are being acted upon.

*Report to the community on the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan  
Undertake community satisfaction surveys to gauge the community's response to the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan.*

Progress Report:

This Annual Report, in addition to the six monthly Delivery Plan Reviews are available to the community for review in relation to the implementation of the Community Strategic Plan.

As part of Council's Fit for the Future submission, meetings were held in the communities of Marrar, Coolamon, Ganmain and Ardlethan and a survey was developed to gain the views of the community with relation to Council's services and facilities.

The next community survey will be undertaken at the end of the current Councillor term with the results to be used by the new Council in the review of the Community Strategic Plan and the development of the Delivery Program for the next four years.

4.2.8 Strongly advocate our local interests with the State and Federal Government on issues such as planning and development, and the provision of services and facilities.

*Strongly advocate our local interests with the State and Federal Governments.*

Progress Report:

Council delegates have continued to lobby both State and Federal Politicians on issues that affect the local community during the reporting period.

Representations have been made on policing, residential aged care, swimming pool regulations, "red tape" review, NSW Local Government Reform, volunteers, ambulance services and the Rural Fire Service.

*Objective 4.3: Working together to sustain civic pride in our towns and villages.*

4.3.1 Encourage vibrant and vital towns and villages displaying our civic pride.

*To provide and maintain a clean and pleasant streetscape.*

Progress Report:

Council finalised the upgrade of Aria Street, Ardlethan with the application of an asphalt overlay.

Council continues to clean streets in the central business district of the towns in accordance with contract requirements. Rubbish has been collected and disposed of in accordance with designated practices and frequency.

## FINANCIAL REPORTS

*Section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 requires that the annual report must contain a copy of the council's audited financial reports prepared in accordance with the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.*

Councils Financial Reports detail Council's financial performance and position for the year ended 30 June 2015.

See [Coolamon Shire Council 2014/2015 Financial Reports](#)

# ADDITIONAL STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

## OVERSEAS VISITS

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a)*

During the 2014/2015 Financial Year no overseas visits were undertaken during the year by Councillors, Council Staff or other persons while representing Council.

## COUNCILLORS EXPENSES & PROVISION OF FACILITIES

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a1)*

During the 2014/2015 Financial year, Council paid Councillor fees, inclusive of the Mayoral fee, totalling \$84,679.97.

The total cost incurred by Council during the year relating to the payment of expenses of, and the provision of facilities to, Councillors in relation to their civic functions was \$4,390.26 and can be summarized as follows:

i.	Office Equipment	Nil
ii.	Telephone	Nil
iii.	Attendance at conferences and seminars	Conference/Delegates: Nil Travel: \$ 4,390.26
iv.	Training	Nil
v.	Interstate visits	Nil
vi.	Overseas visits	Nil
vii.	Spouse, Partner or Other Person in the Accompaniment of a Councillor	Nil
viii.	Provision of Care for a Child or Other Immediate Family Member	Nil

## CONTRACTS

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a2)*

During 2014/2015 Council awarded the following contracts:

<b>CONTRACTOR</b>	<b>CONTRACT</b>	<b>CONTRACT AMOUNT</b>
Stabilised Pavements Australia	2014/03 – Insitu Pavement Stabilisation	Unit rate contract
Downer EDI Works Pty Ltd	2014/01 – Sprayed Bituminous Surfacing	Unit rate contract

## LEGAL EXPENSES

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a3)*

In 2014/2015 Council incurred legal expenses totalling \$29,622.56. These expenses were incurred in the following areas:

<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Rates & Debt Recovery (inc. court fees)	13,987.26
Planning & Development	2,295.30
Employment Contracts & Issues	825.00
Property Sales & Acquisitions/Contract development	12,515.00
Professional Development	0.00

## SUBSIDIZED WORK

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a4)*

Council did not pass any resolutions under 67 of the Local Government Act 1993 concerning work carried out on private land which was fully or partly subsidized by Council during this financial year.

## COUNCIL CONTRIBUTIONS

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a5)*

The total amount contributed or otherwise granted by Council under Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 was \$8,185.47 which included contributions to:

- Eastern Riverina Arts Programme
- Coolamon Shire Art Acquisition Prize
- Southern Sports Academy
- Coolamon Lions
- Prize donations to the various Schools throughout the Shire
- Assistance to the various Committees and Historical Societies within the Shire

## EXTERNAL BODIES

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a6)*

During the year the following external bodies exercised functions delegated by Council:

- Advance Ardlethan Committee
- Advance Ganmain Committee
- Advance Marrar Committee
- Advance Beckom Hall & Community Committee
- Coolamon Shire Community Benefit Fund Committee
- Coolamon Showground Management Committee
- Friends of the Up to Date Cultural Precinct
- Local Heritage Fund Committee
- Rannock Community Centre - Reserve No. 89397
- Voluntary Workers
- Coolamon Shire Events Committee
- Coolamon Shire Community Drug Action Team

## CONTROLLING INTERESTS

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a7)*

Council did not hold a controlling interest in any corporations, partnerships, trusts, joint ventures, syndicates or other bodies (whether or not incorporated during the year).

## JOINT VENTURES/PARTNERSHIPS

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a8)*

Council was a party to the following joint ventures throughout 2014/2015

- 1) Statewide - New South Wales Local Government
- 2) Riverina Regional Library Service
- 3) Riverina Eastern Region of Councils
- 4) NSW Rural Fire Service-Riverina Zone (Fire Control Agreement between the Councils of Wagga Wagga City, Coolamon, Junee, Lockhart and Urana Shires.
- 5) Noxious Weeds Agreement between Coolamon Shire, Junee Shire and Temora Shire Councils

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(a9)*

Council continues to place great emphasis on its Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan to ascertain its relevance in relation to Council's operations.

The strategies under the Management Plan are listed below:

- STRATEGY 1: Communication and Awareness Raising
- STRATEGY 2: Consultation
- STRATEGY 3: Recruitment and Selection
- STRATEGY 3.1: Preparation and Questioning in Interviews
- STRATEGY 4: Appointment, Promotion and Transfer
- STRATEGY 4.1: Appointment, Promotion and Transfer – Higher Grades
- STRATEGY 4.2: Appointment, Promotion and Transfer - Disabilities
- STRATEGY 4.3: Appointment, Promotion and Transfer - Career Paths
- STRATEGY 4.4: Appointment, Promotion and Transfer – Part Time
- STRATEGY 4.5: Appointment, Promotion and Transfer – Under 21 years
- STRATEGY 5: Training and Development
- STRATEGY 6: Conditions of Service
- STRATEGY 7: Grievance Procedures
- STRATEGY 8: Evaluation and Review of EEO Management Plan

Throughout the year Council continued to monitor its EEO Policies. In the 2014/2015 period, 14 new employees (casual and permanent) were appointed to Council's Staff. All employees in their induction procedures were provided with a copy of Council's EEO Management Plan to enable them to be fully aware of the principles and guidelines that Council has adopted.

## REMUNERATION PACKAGES

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(b) & Clause 217 (1)(c)*

The total value of the General Manager's Remuneration Package was \$186,242.54 which included the employer's superannuation contribution, the amount payable by Council by way of fringe benefits tax, there were no bonus payments for performance or any other payments made to the General Manager that did not form part of the salary component. There were no non cash benefits paid under the package.

As there were no other designated Senior Staff Managers employed by Council throughout 2014/2015 and therefore no other amounts are required to be reported.

## STORMWATER CHARGES

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(e)*

Coolamon Shire Council adopted Stormwater Management Charges for the first time in 2014/2015. For residential properties the charge is \$25.00 and for business properties it was set at \$25.00 for each 350 square metres (or part) thereafter, subject to a maximum of \$300.00 per assessment.

This charging structure generated revenue of \$44,124.22

An ongoing program of drainage improvement has been developed and the income raised from the Stormwater Management Charges will be applied to this program.

## COASTAL PROTECTION CHARGES

*Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(e1)*

Council did not levy any charge for coastal protection services during the year.

## COMPANION ANIMALS ACT AND REGULATIONS

### *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 – Clause 217 (1)(f)*

In 2014/2015 Council seized a total of 11 dogs. Of this total 4 were returned to the owner and 7 were transferred to Council's pound facility. All 7 of these animals were euthanized as they were unable to be rehoused. This information has been provided to the Office on Council's Return of Seizures of Cats and Dogs for the 2014/2015 financial year.

During its normal twelve months operation Council produces and distributes a monthly Newsletter. At various times throughout the year information is provided on the Companions Animals Legislation and the owners responsibilities for the control and care of their dogs. This Newsletter is distributed to every property within the Shire, published online and is available upon request.

Various brochures and pamphlets are available at Council's offices and various publications on Council's website outline the responsibilities of owners of companion animals.

In order to assist the public with de-sexing of either their cat or dog, Council has procedures in place where these people are referred to various veterinary services. In an attempt to reduce the amount of euthanasia for unclaimed animals, Council in the past has made contact with local pet shops in Wagga Wagga to ascertain whether they would be willing to accept unclaimed animals from this area and with local Rescue Groups who then rehouse the animals. On occasions this contact has proved successful.

Council provides an off leash area for the exercising of animals in the township of Coolamon. Further investigation is continuing about the possibility of extending this off lease area into other communities and villages of the Shire.

### Financial Information – Companion Animals

During the 2014/2015 Financial Year Council received \$131.00 in impounding fees and \$2,161.00 in fines and costs. The expenditure that Council incurred amounted to \$11,830.75 which comprised of wages, plant hire and the provision of miscellaneous supplies and activities.

During the past financial year there were 4 dog attacks in the Coolamon Shire which was reported to the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government, Department of Premier & Cabinet.

## RATES AND CHARGES ABANDONED

### *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 - Clause 132*

During the 2014/2015 Financial Year rates and charges (exclusive of Pensioner) amounting to \$84.95 were written off.

Council provided rate relief to Pensioners during the Financial Year in the sum of \$124,775.36 Council did however, receive \$67,732.84 pensioner's concession subsidy from the NSW State Government.

## GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) ACT

*Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2009 - Clause 7a and Schedule 2*

Council lodged its Government Information (Public Access) Act Annual Report online. A copy of the report can be accessed from Council's website.

[2014/2015 Government Information \(Public Access\) Act Annual Report](#)