



2015/2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Annual Report as presented for the 2015/2016 period is a reflection of the financial position and community expectations of the Coolamon Shire Council.

Council has continued on the path of responsible financial management identified in last year's Fit for the Future Reforms. The goals and objectives mapped out in Council's response to the benchmarks identified by the State Government in assessing Council's fitness are still at the core of how Council operates. This fiscal sustainability and capacity to deliver services and infrastructure underpins last year's results.

This was reflected and endorsed by the announcements from the State Government in December 2015 that determined Coolamon Shire Council would remain a Stand Alone Local Government Area. This was viewed as acknowledgement and confirmation of the Council's strong financial management that incorporates the viability and sustainability of its current assets and also the capacity to deliver services to the community.

This robust position is reflected in the \$3.188 Million Operating Result for the 2015/16 Financial Year. Council's Operating Income of \$14.402 Million comprised in the main of Rates and Annual Charges \$3.250 Million (22.6%), User Charges and Fees \$2.609 Million (18.1%), and Grants and Contributions of \$7.281 Million (50.6%).

Council's Operating Expenditure of \$11.214 Million included Major Expenditure of \$3.546 Million on Transport and Communication, \$1.236 Million on Community Services and Education, \$1.1 Million on Recreation and Culture (including Parks and Gardens), and \$2.204 on other Economic Affairs including the Allawah Lodge Aged Persons Hostel and the Allawah Retirement Village.

Council is a body that represents its constituents to provide Assets and Services that are important to their existing needs and future prosperity. Coolamon Shire is acutely aware of the aspirations of our Communities via regular engagement and consultation through the various Section 355 Committees. As always this is tempered with the realistic fiscal responsibility of ensuring the ongoing need to maintain the existing services and assets that are under the care and control of Council.

In an environment of Local Government Reform, cost shifting and low interest rates, Coolamon Shire continues to meet the goals and objectives of both the State Government and the Community it represents.

This was achieved through the support of the community and the teamwork of the Elected Representatives together with Council Staff. Council would like to thank all involved and appreciates the confidence shown in the management operations and achievements of Coolamon Shire Council.



John Seymour
MAYOR



Tony Donoghue
GENERAL MANAGER

GENERAL INFORMATION

Council Headquarters:

Physical Address:	Shire Hall, 55 Cowabbie Street, Coolamon, 2701
Postal Address:	PO Box 101, Coolamon, 2701
Telephone:	(02) 6930 1800
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Website:	www.coolamon.nsw.gov.au

Office Hours:

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

Elected Members:

Mayor:	Clr. John Seymour	0427 275 144
Deputy Mayor:	Clr Bruce Hutcheon	0427 273 439
Councillors:	Clr Jeremy Crocker	0428 273 361
	Clr Steve Jones	0487 782 269
	Clr Kerrilee Logan	0427 276 377
	Clr Kathy Maslin	0427 783 810
	Clr Dave McCann	0427 273 044
	Clr Colin McKinnon	0427 279 123
	Clr Alan White	0428 698 204

Senior Staff:

General Manager:	Mr Tony Donoghue	0427 273 694
Executive Manager, Corporate & Community Services:	Mrs Courtney Armstrong	0428 314 787
Executive Manager, Engineering & Technical Services:	Mr Tony Kelly	0428 266 104
Executive Manager, Development & Environmental Services:	Mr Colby Farmer	0437 663 673

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. The general public 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

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 2015/2016 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 2015/2016 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 Event Funding Program was provided financial assistance to the Ganmain Show Society and Ardlethan Country Music Festival for marketing of their events.

Council support the Coolamon Lions Club with the provision of premises and subsidised transport to aid their recycling activities.

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 its 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 its 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 REROC 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. Council has worked with Murrumbidgee Medicare Local in relation to the employment of a Healthy Shires Officer including co-ordinating a steering committee and providing office accommodation.

Council continues to address the needs of young people within the Shire by the ongoing employment of Council's Community Development Officer. Various activities have been organised as part of the School Holiday Program and Council staff have participated in youth forums arranged by REROC. Council continued to deliver the "Links to Learning" Program in conjunction with the Coolamon Central School, developing and supporting school aged people who are disengaged from learning and/or at risk of leaving school so that they can remain engaged in education or training.

Council's operation of its 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. Council continued planning for the construction of new aged care units in Ganmain (Construction is subject to the sale of existing properties in Ganmain).

NSW Housing and Council sold the remaining Community Housing properties during the year.

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.

Council remained a member of the Riverina Zone of the Rural Fire Service over the past year. Ongoing monitoring of service level and fire plans ensures that Council is happy with the service that is provided by the Zone to the communities of the Coolamon Shire. Council provides administrative services to the Riverina Zone of the Rural Fire Service at a fee. Council continued to make representations to the State Government regarding the engagement of Local Government in the financial management of the NSW Rural Fire Service.

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 staff continue to monitor and enforce where necessary all public health regulations including annual Food Shop inspections.

Council's established Alcohol Free Zones expire in 2019. Council continues to monitor incidence of vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Council continued to support of the Coolamon Shire Community Drug Action Team.

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 continued work on the priorities identified in its Asset Management Plan and with support of Goldenfields Water County Council through the employment of a trainee in Asset Management/GIS. Installation of fire sprinklers at the Aitken Logan Wing of Allawah Lodge was completed as required by the State Government.

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 various Section 355 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.

Regular inspections of Council's stormwater network are being undertaken. Income raised via Stormwater Management Annual Charges will be utilized to support maintenance and asset management of the stormwater management network.

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. Council through RERO is participating in a Street Lighting Review and Options Study to determine the most appropriate and cost effective management structure for street lighting.

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 submitted an Expression of Interest under the NSW Government Water Security for Regions program and then were requested to submit a detailed application. Additional Funding was also sought under the National Stronger Regions Fund. 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 continued to support the Murrumbidgee Medicare Local with the Healthy Project Officer for the Coolamon Shire by providing accommodation of the Officer at the Allawah Community Centre and being involved in the advisory committee.

Ongoing discussions with the NSW Ambulance Service and representations to the State Government have been undertaken with regards to the establishment of a service centred in Coolamon and an upgrade to Ardlethan.

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.

Council in conjunction with the Coolamon Central School delivered the "Links to Learning" program to develop and support school aged people who are disengaged from learning and/or risk of leaving school so that they can remain engaged in education or training.

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 finalised the establishment of a multi-purpose trail 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 ensuring that Library services can be accessible to all residents.

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 were held but planning was well underway for the Gillangalong for the Aboriginal Art Display for NAIDOC Week.

Council continued its 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. Pool lessees were trained in Pool Supervisors Course prior to the commencement of the swimming season. Grant funds were utilized in construction of additional shade structures at the Coolamon Swimming Pool complex.

Council has submitted application for funding towards the upgrade of the filtration at the Ganmain Swimming Pool and funding opportunities are continuing to be sourced for the upgrade of the Ganmain and Ardlethan Pool amenities building.

Council has received no complaints about the standard of its parks and gardens with ongoing maintenance and management undertaken in accordance with Council's Parks, Gardens & Reserves Management Plan

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:

Council continued to receive funding for the engagement of a Heritage Advisor and for the Local Heritage Fund. Council continued negotiations with the RSL regarding transfer of the Coolamon RSL building to Council.

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 Marrarr Community hosted the 2016 Australia Day Celebrations with the 2017 event to be held in Rannock.

Council's Tourism and Business Development Manager supported a number of local community organisations/individuals in preparing for and conducting events including the production of seasonal marketing campaigns and the management of the events marketing fund.

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 through 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 its existing Active Transport Plan (PAMPS & Cycleways) has resulted in a draft plan that Council is yet to adopt. Active Transport works undertaken were completed as per the funding requirements and approvals of Roads and Maritime Services. Application under the "Active Transport" funding program have been made for future projects.

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 SeeRiverina App help to promote events held throughout the Shire.

Council continued to distribute funds under the Event Funding Programme to assist local events with marketing.

Council Events Management Strategy and event manual are available as a reference guide for event co-ordinators. Council has also provided support where necessary in relation to Risk Management.

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 commenced 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 staff continue to investigate potential sites for future quarrying activities. Council staff have undertaken a review of its quarries in an effort to determine the potential rehabilitation requirements.

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:

Council adopted a comprehensive Development Control Plan to supplement its Local Environmental Plan.

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, with all building inspection staff maintaining accreditation with the Building Professional Board.

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.

Following public consultation relating to the implementation of Organics Recycling Collection for the town of Ganmain, the service to commenced 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 it's 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:

A comprehensive Development Control Plan was 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 mechanic.

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

Refer Strategy 3.1.1

Progress Report:

The RERO 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. Council's applications under the Fixing Country Roads program citing the RERO Regional Freight Transport Plan resulted in funding being received over a two-three year period.

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. Development of the "Hornby" subdivision commenced on the northern side of Coolamon with marketing commencing and interested parties able to enter into a contract for the purchase of allotments prior to registration.

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, Allawah Lodge 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 and used its website and Facebook to communicate events and achievements.

Council's dedicated Tourism and Business website aids in the promotion of the Shire as a place to work, live and visit. A Visitors Information Centre has been housed in the Fire Station Museum at the top of Cowabbie Street that provides an opportunity for visitors to find out about all attractions both within the Shire and greater region.

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 to site a caretaker's residence and further staged works planned.

Council's seasonal events brochures and Council's involvement in the SeeRiverina App 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.

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 2016 for 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 ongoing engagement of a dedicated trainee GIS/Asset Manager. Council purchased an Asset Management system that will integrate both engineering and financial components. 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, Eastern Riverina Arts, Noxious Weeds Authority, NSW Rural Fire Service Riverina Zone, Riverina Regional Tourism and the membership of these organisations will continue to be monitored.

Council is working in conjunction with Goldenfields Water County Council to employ a Trainee Asset Manager. Council as part of the Pilot Riverina JO worked diligently in determining what this region believes that a Joint Organisation should be and do.

The REROC Strategic Transport Plan continues to be 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:

Council staff continually review and report in relation to the adopted Risk Management System. Senior Management receive a report regarding Risk Management activities at Senior Management Meetings. Council's Risk Operations Committee continued to meet during the reporting period encompassing membership from Council's Works Staff, Allawah Lodge, Allawah Community Care and Coolamon Early Childhood Centre.

Council continues to undertake an Internal Audit managed by an external Consultant that looks into procedures and processes of the Council.

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.

The field work for Council's community satisfaction survey was undertaken during the reporting period, with the results to be incorporated into the end of term report and 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.

As a member of REROC, Advocacy of Council's issues at a regional level are identified and representation made on behalf of the region. This included input into the Riverina Murray Regional Plan, CDL, Crown Lands Review and numerous other reviews that directly affect Coolamon Shire Council and the Region.

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 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.

REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Section 428 of the Local Government Act 1993 requires that the annual report in the year in which an ordinary election of councillors is held, must also report as to the council's achievements in implementing the community strategic plan over the previous 4 years.

Council's End of Term Report detail Council's achievements in implementing the "Our Communities 2030" Coolamon Shire Community Strategic Plan over the 2012-2016 period.

See [Coolamon Shire Council End of Term Report 2016](#)

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 2016.

See [Coolamon Shire Council 2015/2016 Financial Reports](#)

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Section 428A of the Local Government Act 1993 requires that the Annual Report of a Council in the year in which an ordinary election of councillors is to be held must include a report as to the State of the Environment in the local government area in relation to such environmental issues as may be relevant to the objectives for the environment established by the community strategic plan.

Through different tiers of Government there are currently a myriad of Environmental Reports that relate to this region. The Federal Government produce the National State of the Environment (SOE) Report, with the latest document being the 2011 SOE www.environment.gov.au/science/soc/2011. It should be noted that the upcoming 2016 report is currently being prepared.

In addition, the NSW SOE Report is prepared every 3 years by the EPA under Section 10 of the Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991. The most recent iteration of this report is 2015 and can be found on www.epa.nsw.gov.au/soe/soe2015/index.htm.

Underneath this sit the State of the Catchments (SOC) Reports. The Murrumbidgee Region report was compiled in 2010 and it can be found on www.environment.nsw.gov.au/soc/murrumbidgee.htm.

As can be seen the overarching environmental factors relating to Biodiversity, water, land and community from a macro perspective have been considered and reported on. In addition, a draft Riverina-Murray Regional Plan has been developed that identifies future strategies for the sustainability of natural resources. It can be found at www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plans-for-your-area/Regional-Plans/Riverina-Murray/Resources.

From a local perspective, Coolamon Shire Council are required to provide a report on the Environmental factors identified in the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) to be included with the Annual Council Report. A more comprehensive report must be produced every four years to coincide with the start of a new Council period.

The result is that a lot of information relating to the Environment and the current pressures and responses become repeated and regurgitated and therefore located in many various locations and different formats.

The first State of the Environment Report prepared by Council, identified the significant impacts the process of settlement and pioneering in this region had on the environment. This process created the rich and productive agricultural district that exists today.

The process also resulted in the displacement of indigenous cultures and the removal of native vegetation. As the farming districts grew and prospered, infrastructure followed that supported this. This road and rail infrastructure provided the opportunities for communities to spring up throughout the region that supported the rural based economy.

As mentioned, this current base layer associated with the biological environment was laid down by the 1930's and 40's. Whilst there has been numerous improvements in technology, farming practices, attitudes etc., the land use has remained predominately the same.

The main impacts on this land use now are associated with Political, Technological, and Social changes.

- **Political**

Policy decisions by government authorities impact on how individual landowners or managers and therefore farming communities manage their land. For example, a move to free trade has required large scale machinery and production techniques to compete on a world market against other markets with lower labour costs. The result means aggregation of not only individual farms, but larger paddocks focussed on monocultural productivity.

This sees the removal of vegetated fence lines, individual paddock trees and a resulting lowering of biodiversity.

- **Technology**

Technological advancements together with the requirement to meet political policy, has seen huge increases and changes in how farmland is managed. Larger, faster machinery with the ability to reduce farm labour lead to a reduction in the rural population base and placed pressure on the communities that support agricultural production.

- **Social**

Whilst the population of Coolamon Shire is growing marginally, there is a shift from living on the family farm to moving into the towns and villages. This creates a localised impact on the environment through the expansion of these towns in both footprint and infrastructure needs. The increasing access to information and social awareness around environmental issues and biodiversity, has brought an awareness within communities about how the environment is managed and impacts associated with man's interaction with the environment they live in.

As a result, the changes to the State of the Environment since the last comprehensive report in 2012 have been incremental.

Responsibility for oversight on this matter is shared between the three sectors of government, depending on the status of land, licensing requirements for activities, consent to operate and breaches of environmental responsibility.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

As a requirement of the Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP&R) Legislation, Council is required to address issues raised within the Community Strategic Plan. Whilst this Plan relates to numerous concerns and activities about expectations of and within the Shire there were also issues raised that relate specifically to the environment. The Community identified two objectives with a total of four strategies associated with the environment.

As part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting process, Council provides 6 monthly reports to Council indicating how it is meeting the targets and strategies set out in the CSP and any progress on meeting the objectives. This process ensures that Council and the community are not only regularly informed of the actions undertaken, but also ensures that actions undertaken by Council are identified and relate to the objectives as identified.

- **OBJECTIVE 2.1 – ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE VARIABILITY**

- **Strategy 2.1.1 – Monitor and strategically manage environmental risk impacts of climate variability**

Council has previously been involved with Statewide Mutual to develop a study titled “Climate Change Risk Assessment – Adaption Report”. The key findings associated with the environmental impacts that may result in climate variability specific to this region are an increase in rainfall intensity and an increase in hotter days being experienced. This is not an issue specific to Coolamon Shire Local Government Area and will require a wider whole of government approach towards this issue. Whilst Council can and has focussed on the micro effects of this change, the larger global and regional trends need to be identified and responses collaboratively created to address them.

As a note the regional records indicate a wide range of weather related impacts that have occurred in this region over the history of European settlement. Regardless of the climate debate, this has produced a resilient community that prides itself on adapting to the weather conditions presented and being innovative and resilient to continue the land management associated with agricultural production.

- **Strategy 2.1.2 – Develop community leadership on becoming leaders in resource use reuse and recycling**

The community identified themselves as being responsible for aspiring to this objective, however, Coolamon Shire Council in partnership with the community attempt to lead this process by creating efficiencies and improvements. As a result, a small Rural Council with a population of 4,350 people spread over six towns and villages provides a waste and recycling kerbside collections. In addition, the communities of Ganmain and Coolamon are provided with a 240 litre organics collection service.

Council also provides free e-waste collections and has invested in the construction of Community Recycling Centres (CRC) through EPA funding. Coolamon Shire Council is a member of the REROC Waste Forum and continually undertakes projects that are innovative and lead recycling and reuse of waste products. These include such additional items as waste oil, Drummuster, metal recycling, batteries etc. This is undertaken through Council initiatives or supporting local Service Clubs.

- **OBJECTIVE 2.2 – HERITAGE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARACTER CONSERVED**

- **Strategy 2.2.1 – Protect Natural Landscape and Systems in particular our native vegetation, biodiversity and Murrumbidgee River Catchment through sharing a Regional responsibility.**

The Coolamon Shire sits along the northern edge of the Murrumbidgee Catchment without any direct river frontage. As a result the landform is gently sloping in the east with intermittent creek beds crossing through the country as it gently flattens out to the west. The major water courses are the Mirrool and Bygoo creeks in the north and the Boggy and Redbank creeks in the south. As such the LGA has no irrigation and relies solely on dry land cropping and animal production.

In relation to pressures and impacts that occur within the Coolamon Shire Council, the majority occur in relation to agricultural production and current farm practices. Examples of these are chemical spray, stubble burning, clearing and minor landform changes. Whilst the impacts of these practices are accepted and minimal from an individual farm perspective, the cumulative effects may impact across the region as a whole. For example, the Riverina Region has high asthma numbers with research connecting it to the annual stubble burning window.

The major impact across the globe at the moment relate generally to population increase and the infrastructure required to house this population. As mentioned previously, the Coolamon LGA has only a marginal increase in population annually.

Population growth is being focussed in the towns and villages along the southern border, predominantly in Coolamon. This creates micro pressures around the increase in services and infrastructure required to meet population increases. Vegetation removal for power and water improvements are offset by Native Vegetation plantings undertaken by Council or developers.

In regard to environmental impacts in towns and villages, these are considered to be occurring less frequently due to land use planning legislation, monitoring and regulatory requirements of Council, in addition to the increasing social and environmental awareness of the community.

- **Strategy 2.2.2 – Encourage and ensure high quality Planning and Urban Design outcomes**

Any major development projects now require significant Environmental Impact Assessment with even smaller common developments requiring the provision of Statement of Environmental Effects with any application. This not only allows for improved assessments by Council but also brings to the attention of developers and the general public the impact that any activity can have on its surrounding environment and ensures appropriate mitigation measures are put in place.

There are legacy issues and Council maintains a Contaminated Land Register that identifies and provides a statutory process for rehabilitation and management of contaminated sites. In addition, Council are required to maintain registers associated with pollution incidents and breaches of Licence Agreements.

This strategy, that encourages high quality planning and urban design overlaps with strategy 2.2.3 that seeks to protect areas and items of high importance, are about making our communities attractive places to live, work and play that reflect not only what we deem important about our past but also what we want our future to include.

➤ **Strategy 2.2.3 – Protect Local Heritage and Residential Amenity, including Protection of significant Architecture, Indigenous Heritage and the Natural Environment**

Coolamon Shire Council have adopted the Local Environmental Plan 2011 and developed and endorsed the Development Control Plan (DCP) in 2015. These legislative controls identify areas of environmental, biodiversity and ecologically sensitive land and put in place legislative triggers to ensure that a full and proper assessment is undertaken when any activity occurs within proximity to this land.

Coolamon Shire Council undertakes its role in environmental management in accordance with the regulatory and social obligations it has.

➤ **Strategy 2.1.4 – Reduce our Waste Landfill through effective Waste Management and Recycling**

As mentioned in Strategy 2.1.2, Council has undertaken numerous projects that focus on re-use and recycling. The end result of this work is a marked reduction in waste entering the Landfill Sites.

CONCLUSION

Whilst the pressure on the environment still exist, Council together with the community's response to these matters are ongoing. In relative terms there has been minimal and incremental change since the last full SOE Report.

As mentioned in this report, Council continues to monitor and react to breaches of any environmental damage or degradation and also is pro-active in planning for the changes that are associated with population and social changes.

The water and soil resources are critical to the productivity of the region and ultimately the future of the Coolamon Shire, therefore existing farm management practices by the current custodians need to ensure that these valuable resources are looked after.

Farm aggregation does pose a risk to loss of biodiversity, however, this is offset by Council's programme of road corridor improvements and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of Environment and Heritage in regard to the protection of two significant stands of White box Woodland Remnant Vegetation.

Coolamon Shire Council continues to take its role monitoring and protecting the environment seriously. This will continue to be undertaken in conjunction with the other tiers of government. This role is at the closest level to the individual or community, therefore one of the quickest to react to immediate change in conditions or environmental events.

ADDITIONAL STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

OVERSEAS VISITS

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

During the 2015/2016 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 2015/2016 financial year, Council paid Councillor fees, inclusive of the Mayoral fee, totalling \$86,848.11

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 \$6,076.16 and can be summarized as follows:

i.	Office Equipment	Nil
ii.	Telephone	Nil
iii.	Attendance at conferences and seminars	Conference/Delegates: Nil Travel: \$ 6,076.16
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 2015/2016 Council awarded the following contracts:

CONTRACTOR	CONTRACT	CONTRACT AMOUNT
Stabilised Pavements Australia	RFQ 2014/03 Stabilisation - 12 month extension	Unit rate contract
Downer EDI Works Pty Ltd	RFQ 2015/07 Sprayed Bituminous Surfacing	Unit rate contract

LEGAL EXPENSES

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

In 2015/2016 Council incurred legal expenses totalling \$36,773.33. These expenses were incurred in the following areas:

Description	Amount
Rates & Debt Recovery (inc. court fees)	\$20,063.61
Employment Contracts & Issues	\$1,930.00
Property Sales & Acquisitions/Contract development	\$14,779.72

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 \$7,054.21 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
- Beckom Hall & Community Committee
- Ambulance Establishment Committee
- Coolamon Shire Community Benefit Fund Committee
- Coolamon Shire Community Drug Action Team
- Coolamon Shire Photographic Competition Committee
- Coolamon Showground Management Committee
- Friends of the Up to Date Cultural Precinct
- Local Heritage Fund Committee
- Multi-Purpose Trails (MPT) Management Committee
- Rannock Community Centre - Reserve No. 89397
- Volunteer Workers

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 2015/2016

- 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
- 6) Internal Audit Alliance between Coolamon Shire, Junee Shire, Temora Shire and the now amalgamated Gundagai Shire Council

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 2015/2016 period, 10 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 \$193,035 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 2015/2016 and therefore no other amounts are required to be reported.

STORMWATER CHARGES

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

Coolamon Shire Council once again adopted Stormwater Management Charges in 2015/2016. 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 \$44,296.84.

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 2015/2016 Council seized a total of 28 dogs. Of this total 16 were returned to the owner and 12 were transferred to Council's pound facility. All 12 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 2015/2016 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 2015/2016 Financial Year Council received \$180.00 in impounding fees and \$4,643.71 in fines and costs. The expenditure that Council incurred amounted to \$19,352.85 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 2015/2016 Financial Year rates and charges (exclusive of Pensioner) amounting to \$123.29 were written off.

Council provided rate relief to Pensioners during the Financial Year in the sum of \$124,030.68. Council did however, receive \$71,187.39 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.

[2015/2016 Government Information \(Public Access\) Act Annual Report](#)