

Annual Report

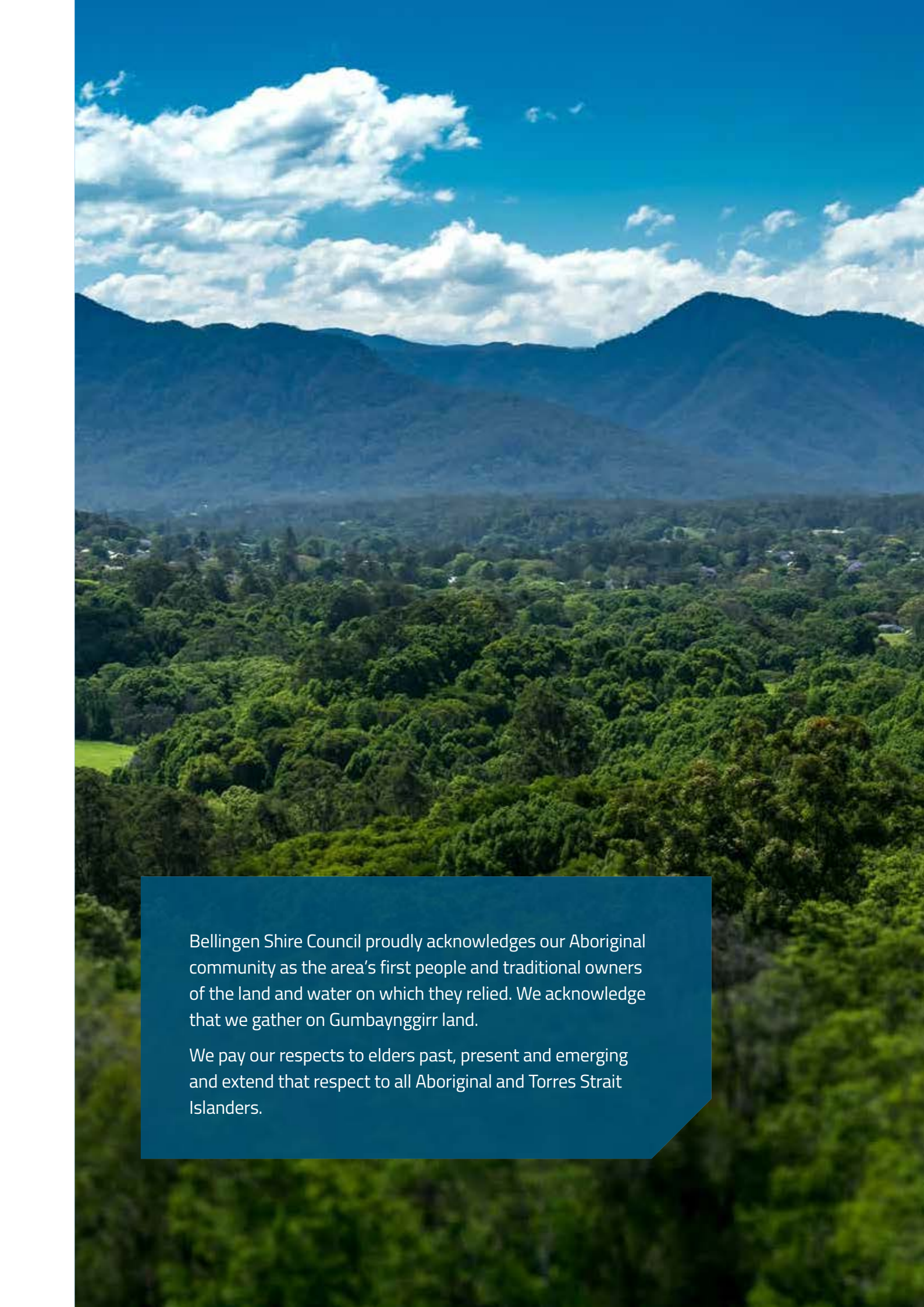
2017-2018





Contents

Message from the Mayor and General Manager	7
The Annual Report in Context	8
Structure of the Annual Report	9
Our profile	10
Our Council	11
A - Achievements in implementing the delivery program	12
Meeting your aspirations: Resilient Economy	14
Meeting your aspirations: Community Wellbeing	16
Meeting your aspirations: Places for People	19
Living Environment	23
Civic Leadership	26
BELLINGEN: The Little Council that Could	30
B - Statutory and Other Information	32
Special Variations in General Income	34
Overseas Visits	35
Elected Members' Expenses	35
Major Contracts (Greater than \$150,000) Awarded	35
Legal Proceedings	35
Works Subsidised On Private Land	35
Donations and Contributions	36
Functions Delegated by Council	37
Corporations, Partnerships, Joint Ventures or Other Bodies in which Council Held a Controlling Interest	38
Corporations, Partnerships, Joint Ventures or Other Bodies in Which the Council Participated	38
Implementation of Workplace Equity and Diversity Plan	38
General Manager and Senior Staff Remuneration	38
Companion Animals Act - Compliance	38
Companion Animal Community Education Programs	39
Strategies to promote and assist the de-sexing of dogs and cats	39
Rates and Charges Written Off	40
Planning Agreements	40
Public's Right to Access Government Information	40
Review of Proactive Release Program - Clause 7(a)	40
Number of Access Applications Received - Clause 7(b)	42
Number of Refused applications for Schedule 1 Information - Clause 7(c)	42
Statistical information about access applications - Clause 7(d) and Schedule 2	42
Code of Conduct Reporting	45
Public Interest Disclosures Reporting	45
Commentary on PID Obligations	45
Compliance with the Carers (Recognition) Act 2010	45
C - Financial Statements	46



Bellinghen Shire Council proudly acknowledges our Aboriginal community as the area's first people and traditional owners of the land and water on which they relied. We acknowledge that we gather on Gumbaynggirr land.

We pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.





Message from the Mayor and General Manager

- Bellingen Shire Council is a key player in supporting the community to achieve its aspirations, as set out in the Shire of Bellingen 2027 Community Vision. This report covers the second year of activities towards meeting the goals the Council has set for its term.



Cr Dominic King, Mayor



Liz Jeremy, General Manager

Council provides 31 diverse services. Building on work in previous years, this year we have focused on reviewing how these services are provided, undertaking independent service reviews to identify where we are operating well and where we can improve. This has provided some early results with greater benefits anticipated in future years as those reviews are finalised and implemented.

As a council, we are now seeing the benefits of the past year's hard work to fix the underlying financial deficits. The Council must be sustainable to support the community into the future. Achieving our second consecutive year of positive operating results is allowing us to ensure we are not burdening those who will come after us.

We are also seeing positive results in key areas such as work health and safety. Reducing the impact of injuries has improved the wellbeing of our staff and contributed to our insurance premiums dropping 70% since 2010.

Our road and bridge networks are our largest assets and affect all of us every day. With 28% of urban roads and 41% of rural roads in a poor condition, addressing this problem is a priority. The implementation of a resealing program means Council has

been able to fix 15% of the roads identified as needing urgent reseals. Council also improved 7 of our bridges, addressing their ability to carry the required loads.

Council secured a fantastic outcome for our community in ensuring that NBN Co. would provide fibre to the curb across a greater area, ensuring our community continues to benefit from technology. Investment in solar energy for our main buildings has moved us further along the path to being a sustainable organisation.

In addition to the range of initiatives outlined here, and elsewhere in this report, Council provides a broad range of works and services every day, and councilors and staff aim to ensure we deliver your community's aspirations in an efficient and effective manner.

Cr Dominic King
Mayor

Liz Jeremy
General Manager



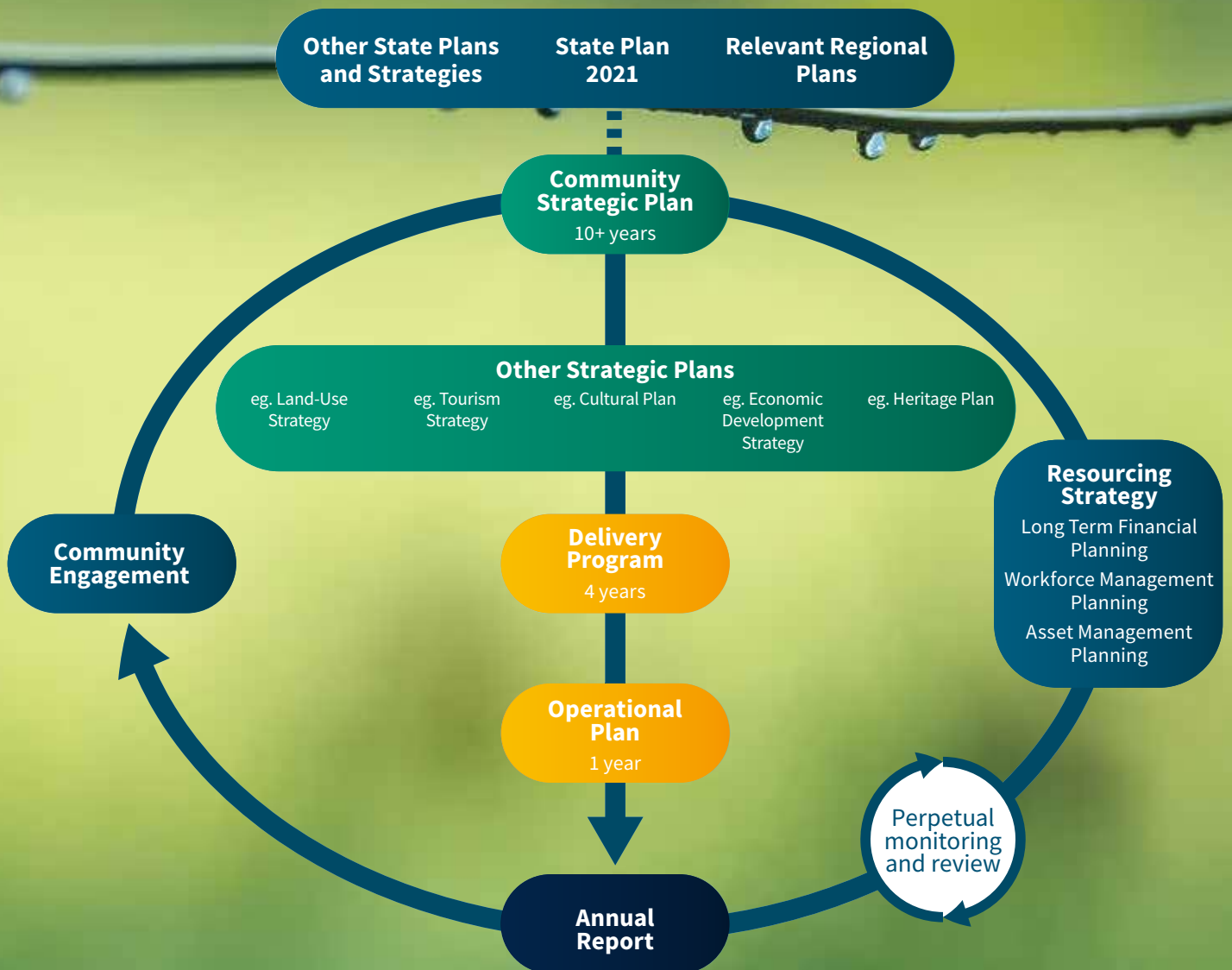
We have achieved our second consecutive year of positive operating results

This allows us to ensure we are not burdening those who will come after us.

The Annual Report in Context

The Annual Report is a component of Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework and outlines Council's achievements during the financial year in implementing its Delivery Program. It also provides the information that the Council is required to disclose.

The IP&R framework is shown below:





Structure of the Annual Report

- The Annual Report is one of the key components of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. The report helps Council to keep our community informed about outcomes and achievements in the previous financial year.

Part A- Achievements in Implementing the Delivery Program

Reports on the achievements in implementing the Delivery Program and measures the effectiveness of the principal activities undertaken in achieving the objectives in the Community Strategic Plan.

Part B – Statutory Information

Council is required to publicly report on the legislated obligations Council must meet each year as well as other information the NSW Government believes should be provided to the community.

Part C – Financial Statements

The full, audited Financial Statements of Council can be found in this section.



Our profile

■ The Bellingen Shire is currently home to 12,946 people (ABS Estimated Resident Population 2017), who come from many different countries and are involved in diverse occupational, cultural, and social activities.

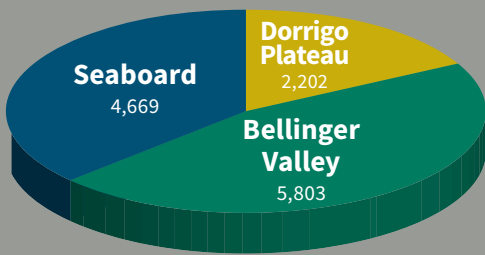
Our Shire has three distinct geographical areas – ocean, river, and mountains incorporating the communities of Mylestom, Repton, and Urunga on the coast, Bellingen nestled in the river valley, and Dorrigo on the plateau. Each is a vibrant and rich community with its own characteristics.

Our Local Government Area is made up of many beachside and inland localities, villages, towns and suburbs. These are Urunga, Raleigh, Repton, Mylestom, Fernmount, Bellingen, Gleniffer, Kalang, Darkwood, Orama, Brinerville, Thora, Bostobrick, North Dorrigo, Dorrigo, Cascade, Megan, Brierfield, and Deer Vale. Situated about half way between Sydney and Brisbane, with a total area of 160,205 hectares, our Shire is a lifestyle region with an emphasis on cultural activities and social cohesion. Agricultural practices have diversified over the years and are now a mix of traditional and non-traditional farming methods.

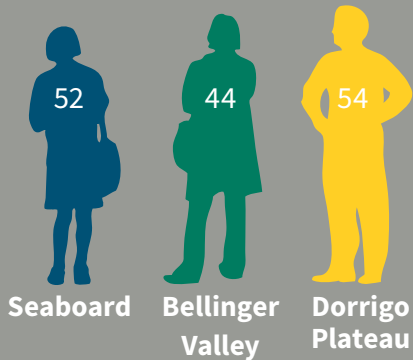
Many of today’s residents operate small to medium-size enterprises in creative industries involving artists, crafts people, writers, musicians, and horticulturists.

Bellingen Shire has an abundance of natural assets. Some 57% of the Shire is State Forest (21.26%), National Parks (32.36%) and Crown land. This and our cultural attractions have created a thriving tourism industry with 210,000 visitors coming to our Shire each year spending a total of \$58.9 million. Numerous festivals, ranging from jazz, classical and world music, to environmental, food and wine events, attract distinct audiences, enhancing the social and economic fabric of the region.

Population



Median age



Employment





Our Council

■ As a local government organisation, Bellingen Shire Council is charged with the responsibility for the delivery of a diverse range of services each and every day.

Council has 149 approved positions (as at 30 June 2018).

The elected Council comprises 7 councillors who represent the entire Local Government Area. The Mayor is elected by popular vote once every four years and the Deputy Mayor is nominated and elected annually by fellow Councillors.

Image above: (l to r) : Cr Jennie Fenton, Cr Steve Jenkins, Cr Garry Carter, Cr Steve Klipin (Deputy Mayor), Cr Dominic King (Mayor), Cr Toni Wright-turner, Cr Desmae Harrison

Bellingen Council has a broad portfolio of community infrastructure and assets as follows:

Community Facilities



475 ha of Land



53 Sporting and Recreation Facilities



9 Halls



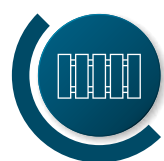
3 Libraries



3 Swimming Pools



2 Surf Clubs



1 Saleyards

Transport



98km Roads



135 Bridges



29km Shared Pathways



4 Car Parks

Services



170km Water Supply Mains



101km Sewage Collection Mains



39km Stormwater Drains



9 Reservoirs



5 Sewer Treatment Plants



A

Achievements in
implementing the
delivery program



Meeting your aspirations: Resilient Economy

We have meaningful work and vibrant businesses within our community.

This year saw the development of the Coffs Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy. The Strategy is designed to guide growth over the next four years. Its vision is to create a region of well-connected, inclusive and prosperous communities with the capacity to attract new residents and visitors through its balance of lifestyle, environment and opportunity underpinned by a diverse economy driven by tourism, agriculture, health, aged care, professional and creative industries. This Strategy highlights

the value of the Bellingen Memorial Hall as a venue to support the development of a strong creative arts industry. The report also highlighted the importance of ensuring a pure water supply remain available to support economic growth.

As well as supporting local business and the Chambers of Commerce, the Council undertakes a range of activities to help build a resilient economy. A number of development workshops and forums have been conducted as a way of keeping the local business community abreast of opportunities, changes and events including facilitation by key industry speakers. Council will continue to work with its

counterparts to ensure the sustainability of small business across the region. Council also provides a support service to local business, advising the Chambers of Commerce, and their members, information on grant opportunities that arise. This helps our community gain a better share of the funds available and helps businesses find opportunities to develop.

Council secured funding of \$36k, in partnership with Coffs Harbour City Council and Nambucca Shire Council, to develop a Google Ad Words Campaign. This initiative aims to attract investment to our region.

We have balanced, sustainable tourism.

Council developed and adopted the Gleniffer Reserves Masterplan. A key objective of the Plan is to reduce visitor impacts on the environment through education, information, infrastructure and regulation. This year, Council commissioned and adopted the Gleniffer Reserves Plan of Management (PoM). The PoM will inform and guide future activity at the reserves.

Instream works at Arthur Keough Reserve was identified as a key priority in the Master Plan. This year Council undertook major instream works to reduce riverbank erosion, remove noxious weeds and install barriers to invigorate water flow. This work included the removal of a gravel bench which has been built up from many years of vehicles accessing the river bank. While in the reserve, Council also put in place changes to better manage vehicle movements in the park.

Council was successful in securing \$50k in funding from Destination NSW to install interpretive signage at the reserves. Once installed, the signage will educate and inform visitors to the reserves on the value of our local natural environment. The signage will also provide information on alternative swimming areas across the Shire to encourage dispersion of visitors.

During this reporting period, Council was also successful in securing close to \$10k in funding to deliver Inclusive Tourism Workshops across the Coffs Coast. This funding allowed Council to significantly subsidise the cost of training. Workshops on Inclusive Tourism were held in Dorrigo, Bellingen and Urunga. Additional training on Disability Awareness was held in Urunga. This training will allow our businesses to tap into more markets as well as ensuring that our natural beauty is available to a wide range of people. Having accessible tourism opens up our valley to a broader market, which also benefits our economy.

This year also saw a payoff from earlier work undertaken in promoting our Shire as a bike tourism destination. The number of bike tourism events continues to grow across the Shire and generate strong tourism revenue. For example, a group of 20 visitors brought around \$40,000 into the economy as a result of the partnership between Council and CycleLifeHQ.

A cultural tourism event was held at Dorrigo to help boost our creative industries. This event highlighted the importance of cultural tourism and brings creative people and tourism operators together. The program included a panel discussion featuring representatives from Screenwave International Film Festival, Camp Creative, Bello Winter Music Festival and Urunga Chamber of Commerce. A new campaign showcasing Waterfall Way as a tourism route was developed providing more enticements to attract people to the region.

We have a sustainable local farming sector that provides us with healthy, fresh food.

Council has continued to work on the development of the 'Coffs Coast Harvest' brand as part of the Coffs Coast Food Collective. An industry group has been developed to allow business to network and develop regional marketing under a common brand. A Facebook site has been developed to promote the region's producers and assist in developing both local and broader demand for our products.



Meeting your aspirations: Community Wellbeing



The Bello Youth Hub

Our children, youth and seniors are valued, involved and supported.

Housing

From this year, new housing will meet the 'Silver' level within the Liveable Housing Design Guidelines. This means more comfortable and easier to access homes for everybody, everyday, at all stages of life. Introducing this standard supports children and seniors, as the houses are designed to be easy to navigate around, such as moving prams around, and easier to adapt, such as framing provisions to support handrails in showers at a later date.

Traineeship

Council engaged a trainee in customer ser-

vices giving an opportunity for one of our local young people to get real world experience and skills. In addition, we engaged a university student who completed work placement within our engineering team.

Given Council's ongoing focus on financial sustainability over the past 7 years, our workforce has not been growing and this can impact upon the opportunities for local young people to obtain work with Council. A key focus of the service reviews carried out during the year saw Council explore opportunities for young people via trainee, apprenticeship and cadetship options.

Bello Youth Hub

The Bello Youth Hub continues to provide strong support to young people in our

community. With over 2,000 events held and 130 groups using the facility, it is estimated this has provided activities and services to around 27,000 people. This facility is driven by the community with Council support and resourcing. A readers and writers festival was held and youth mentorship around the Bellingen Winter Music Festival has also provided creative outlets for young people. Regular programs, including driver supervision programs, youth clinic, PoP (Paint our Poles) Art program, boulder wall and the informal drop-in sessions have all seen steady attendance. After four years of strong growth, the Bello Youth Hub moved into a new phase this year. This year has been a year of consolidation, allowing the centre to focus on settling in and reviewing its range of services.

Libraries

Grant funding was gained to provide online training to 60 seniors at Bellingen and Dorrigo libraries, helping seniors access and gain benefits from technology.

Social Services

Our provision of domestic assistance provided at Dorrigo was three times the planned amount and the social support provided was 60% higher than planned, with 8,823 hours of support provided. The services at Dorrigo also helped the seniors develop their sense of creativity, developing an underwater dreaming mural as the centrepiece of a range of creative activities.

The Bello Youth Hub



Held 2,000 events



Have 130 groups using the facility



Provided around 27,000 instances of support

Cultural and artistic opportunities have been supported through the provision of Council grants.

We are a learning and creative community.

Council has organised guest speakers and distributed information to educate seniors on a range of topics, including healthy eating, emergency preparedness and driver safety.

Cultural and artistic opportunities have been supported through the provision of Council grants including:

- Arts Mid North Coast/Screen wave's Rec Ya Shorts Youth Film Festival
- Readers and Writers festival 2018
- Bellingen River Agricultural Society (EJ Mantova Art Prize)

Council has run some interesting arts programs including a Paint Our Pole project where the community is engaged in painting the towns power poles and youth art classes. Council also supports the Urunga Art Space.

We value, honour and actively acknowledge our Gumbaynggirr culture and heritage.

Council supported a learn to swim scheme for Aboriginal children in partnership with the YMCA at the Bellingen Swim School in January 2018. We also continue to work with Gumbaynggirr Elders to promote language on signage. During the year, consultation with elders was undertaken to include the Gumbaynggirr naming of flora and fauna on the interpretive signage which is part of the Gleniffer Masterplan.



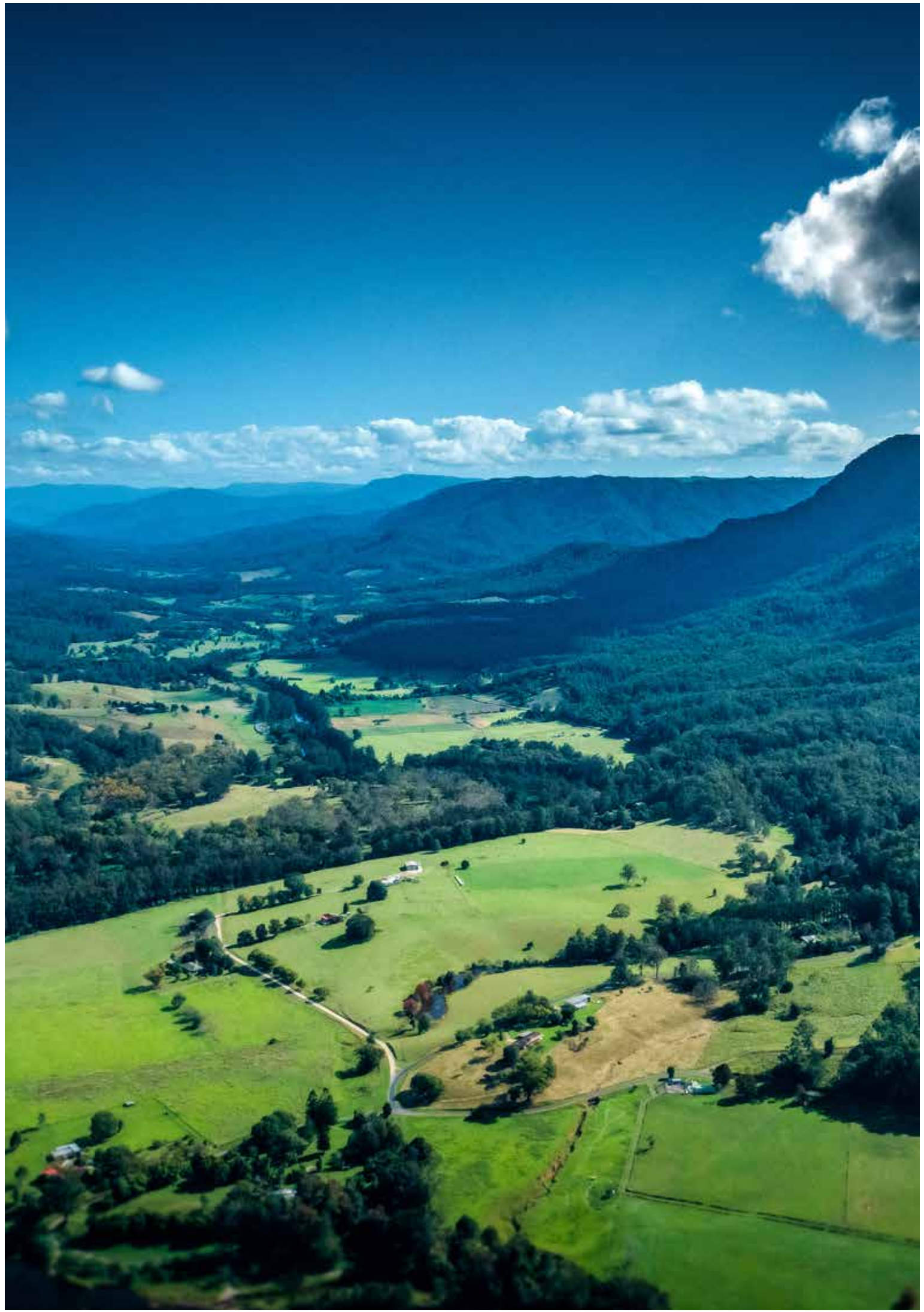
We are connected, safe and healthy with a strong sense of community.

Council arranged or supported a range of community events to recognise important activities, initiatives, groups and individuals within our community. These events bring us together and celebrate things we value.

A snapshot of our Community celebration activities includes:

- NAIDOC Week celebration – July 2017
- Children's Book Week – August 2017
- Mental Health Month BBQ Dorrigo – October 2017
- Citizenship ceremonies were held in the Council chambers for new citizens, their families and guests in October 2017, January 2018 and May 2018.
- Australia Day awards and community celebrations – January 2018
- Library Lovers Day – February 2018
- National Youth Week – April 2018
- Seniors Week Festival activities – April 2018
- Anzac Day recognition with library display/educational presentation – April 2018
- National Volunteer Week afternoon tea – May 2018

Libraries are continuing to evolve from being a place for books into a community hub. Being available to the public for over 4,000 hours during this reporting period, our libraries welcomed 106,000 people through their doors. Library members have borrowed over 70,000 items and downloaded 11,500 electronic resources. In addition, 484 events attracted 4,459 people. People used the Wi-Fi provided nearly 23,000 times.



Meeting your aspirations: Places for People

We have a diversity of beautiful spaces that foster community happiness and wellbeing.

In the context of Council's focus on the renewal and maintenance of infrastructure, \$1.8million has been invested in the Bellingen town centre. At the Oak Street and Waterfall Way intersection, a refresh of the area around the memorial allowed for improved pedestrian access-

We have a mixture of affordable sustainable housing options for all in our community.

Council supported the hosting of a successful Affordable Housing Local Solutions Forum. This event, and the subsequent work by the Affordable Housing Action Group, provided a strong base for the work Council had planned for this year.

The process of amending our Growth Management Strategy also commenced this year with the exhibition of the foundational "Homes for our Future" document. The Growth Management Strategy aims to guide sensitive and sensible land use into the future. To ensure that people from all parts of the community would be aware of the options and contribute their views, our staff went to markets, the Land Council, schools and other venues. We obtained over 250 ideas and submissions which, with the information from the forums, has helped us start to shape a document that will suit our community. This strategy will help the community meet its goals of providing affordable housing and retaining the sense of community and place that makes the Bellingen Shire the place it is today.

Initiatives have also been put into place to address the shortfall in one and two bedroom housing stock. This is the

sibility. The Bridge Street/Waterfall Way intersection was changed to incorporate two lanes, creating safer and more efficient traffic movements. A drop off zone outside the Memorial Hall has improved accessibility. The pedestrian facilities were improved to provide accessibility and safer crossing points. In addition, Council has secured \$885,000 funding for the café precinct in Church Street with work programmed for the 2018/19 financial year.

area where there is a shortage. This type of housing is also more affordable. Development Control Plans have been changed to reduce the quantity of private open space. The Council also expanded the concession, which previously only applied to one bedroom residences, to include two bedrooms. This has resulted in an upturn in development which is seen as a result of making such development more viable and thus bringing more affordable housing options into the market.

Concessions have also been reaffirmed for secondary dwelling developments. This has the potential to create more affordable housing as in many cases it allows existing capacity of infrastructure to be used. This results in lower cost development and thus lower cost housing.

During the year we reviewed 185 ideas for developments. With each of these developments we have to find the balance between the desires of the owner and the impacts on the neighbours and community. Sometimes this is easy. Where it is not, we have tried to work with those wanting to undertake development to bring them through the process and get a good outcome so that everyone continues to have a good living environment.



We are connected and able to move around in a safe, accessible, affordable, healthy and environmentally friendly way.

As part of Council's focus on financial sustainability, management of our asset base, and in particular our road network, is a key priority. Finalisation of asset management planning has allowed for a strategy based around the road condition and impact on people allowing Council to invest in its transport infrastructure.

Our strategy focuses on the renewal of our sealed road network and timber bridges. This has resulted in the resurfacing of an additional 16km of poor condition sealed roads. This has reduced the worst condition rural sealed roads from the 109km that existed in 2016 to 67km. Council also reconstructed 3.5km of road that was in too poor a condition to reseal. These efforts have reduced the level of roads in poor condition by 15%, enabled by the Special Rate Variations that Council has adopted.

Maintaining road surfaces which are past their useful life has required significant investment in both resources and funds. In this reporting period, Council repaired over 14,000 potholes. This is one of the larger costs of our road network. We also fixed 1.2kilometres of broken road edges, filled 3,400 m2 of surface cracks and repaired 3,400 m2 of other damage on the sealed roads network. The sealed road resurfacing program and reconstruction program will, over time, reduce these maintenance cost, resulting in an overall improvement to the sealed road network.

Safety and functionality is the key objective in terms of maintaining our unsealed road network. In this reporting period, Council graded 80km of the network and gravel re-sheeted 7.8km of unsealed roads.

Council has completed its assessment of its timber bridge assets and, with this information, developed a timber bridge rehabilitation and renewal program. This work has established an investment

program of \$29M over the next 11 years representing Council's most significant infrastructure investment to date. In addition, the bridge condition data has provided the Council with the necessary information to support applications for grant funding.

The initial focus will be to renew or rehabilitate the 22 load limited bridges to provide essential access for residents, emergency services, Council's maintenance teams and continue to support the Shire's growing agricultural industry.

The final Stage of the Urunga to Hungry Head cycleway was completed during the year, adding an additional 1.4km of shared pathway. This completes the first milestone in the delivery of Council's Pedestrian and Access Mobility Plan (PAMP) and Bike Plan, seeking to build connectivity throughout the Bellingen Shire.



ROAD IMPROVEMENTS IN 2017/18

ROAD NAME	AMOUNT
Ballards Road #	3,756
Beaumonts Road #	12,614
Bellingham Main St	1,832,199
Bowraville Road	54,756
Brutons Road	8,625
Coramba Road *#	169,421
Cresecent Street	9,076
Darkwood Road *#	82,160
Deervale Road *#	92,916
Flood repairs	4,368,767
Gleniffer Road	15,714
Gordonville Road	2,435
Horseshoe Road #	5,283
Hydes Creek Road *	43,056
Johnsons Road #	10,878
Kalang Road *#	186,822
Keevers Drive *	65,276
Majors Road #	22,709
McIndoes Road #	37,012
Moonpar Road #	8,806
Muldiva Road #	5,805
Mylestom Drive	1,414
North Bank Road *	40,951
Old Brierfield Road #	7,153
Old Coast Road *	49,225
Old Coramba Road *	39,630
Promised Land Loop Road #	52,172
Rocky Creek Road #	19,876

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS 2017/18

Rosedale Road	87,646
Shephards Road #	12,924
Smiths Lane	242
South Arm Road	544,954
Summervilles Road	20,273
Timboon Road	14,754
Tyringham Rd *#	96,258
Urunga to Hungry Head Pathway	375,643
Valery Road #	49,148
Vernon Close	4,328
Whiskey Creek Road	1,142
Yellow Rock Road	207,087
Minor Works	65,063
TOTAL	8,727,968

BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS IN 2017/18

BRIDGE NAME	AMOUNT
Cooks Bridge on Kalang Road	6,121
Hobarts Bridge	2,492
Johnsens Bridge	9,148
McFadyens Bridge	33,008
Pickett Hill No.2 Bridge	42,880
Reids Creek Bridge	359,728
Richardsons Bridge	19,542
Minor Works	106,795
TOTAL	579,714

* SRV 17 funding used # SRV 15 funding used



We have the facilities and services needed to be a healthy and active community.

This year saw the development of a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan. This will guide the activities of councils and government agencies over the next four years. This identified a range of improvements to playgrounds, parking and footpaths. It also identified a range of programs to increase awareness and understanding within the Council and the community.

An example of this is the acquisition by Council of DAISY Plextor devices. These clever devices allow people with a visual impairment or print disability to have a better reading experience with more of the flexibility a printed book offers. Council visited a range of business premises, including the Urunga Chamber of Commerce, to discuss issues around missed opportunities from not being an inclusive business. Council also provided disability awareness training and have information in the staff induction process to address inclusiveness.

Public swimming pools are valuable assets for meeting the community's need to be healthy and active. Across the three facilities, over 52,000 people came in for a swim.

Significant investment in these important community facilities included replacement of the filtration system at Dorrigo and amenity improvements at Bellingen. The work at Dorrigo necessitated removal of the roof in order to take out the old system. It has now been replaced by a more efficient system, reducing the energy costs of the pool. New

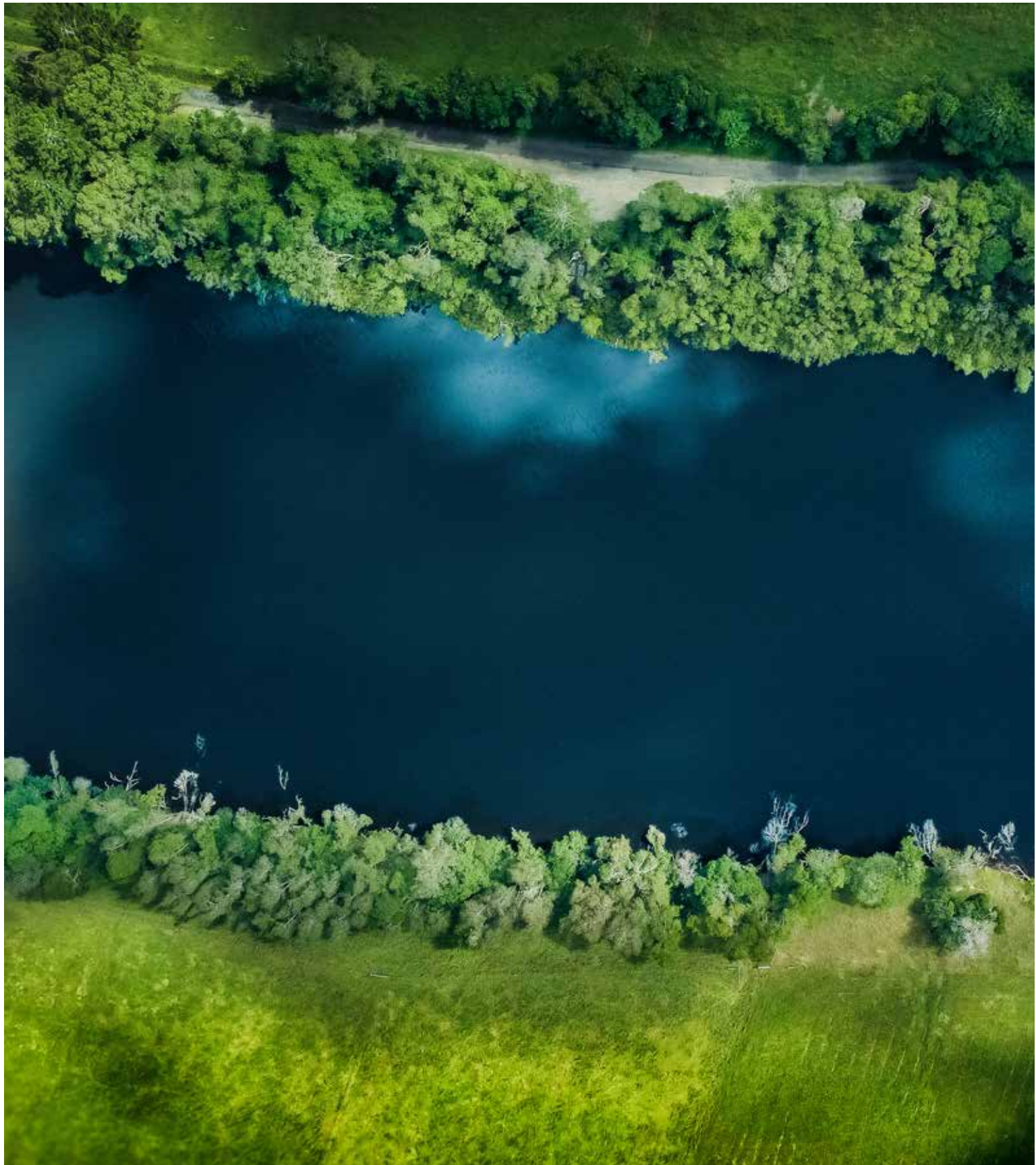
fencing was also put into place, making the facility safer for users.

At Bellingen, the pool was given a repaint and refresh. This work not only improves the amenity of our facilities, but also helps ensure the pool has a longer life.

Following lots of background work including studies, advocacy and grant applications over many years, funding was secured to redevelop the tidal swimming facility at Urunga. Our Urunga community has made it clear that this facility was of key importance. In addition to phase one, which involved dredging, Council also partnered with Reflections Holiday Parks to secure additional funding for affiliated infrastructure including boardwalks, shade structures, diving platforms and disability access. This partnership also allowed us to extend the areas that the beach accessible wheelchair could be used.

As part of Council's ongoing support of community safety, and our local surf clubs and their wonderful volunteers, Council engaged lifeguard services at North Beach at Mylestom and Hungry Head Beach at Urunga. This year we provided 1,180 hours of supervision, including nearly 300 volunteer hours.

In partnership with NSW Health, Council inspected 92% of the food providers as part of the scores on doors program which is aimed at ensuring suitable hygiene and food preparation safeguards are in place.



Living Environment

We have clean water which is protected and used sustainably.

During the year, 1,168 megalitres of water was supplied to 4,100 premises across our community. We collected 563 megalitres of wastewater from these homes and businesses, treating it to ensure our waste does not impact on the environment.

To ensure that we don't lose water, Council regularly upgrades the mains with 1.2 kilometres of water mains replaced this year.



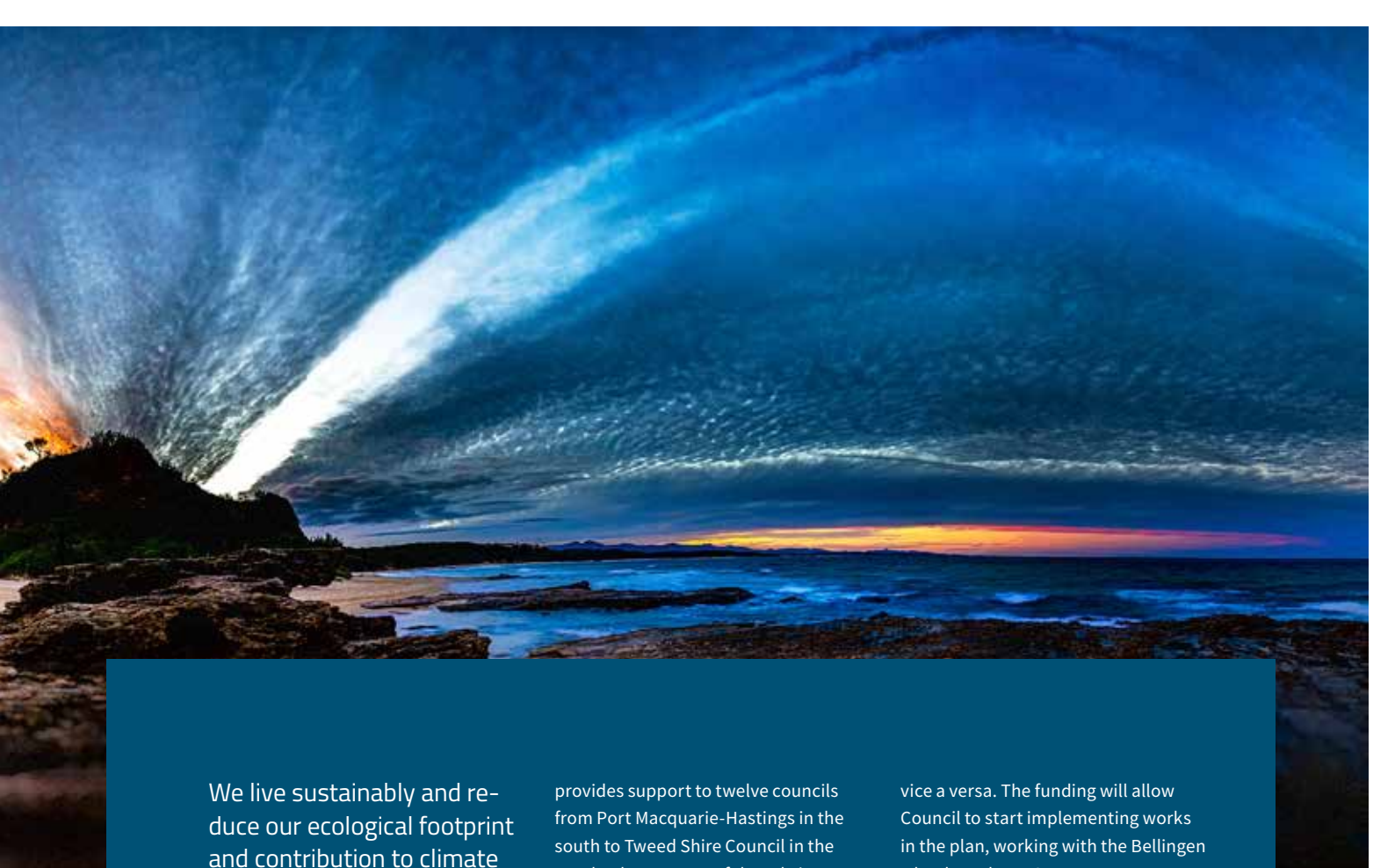
■ We reduce, reuse recycle.

Council's waste collection services picked up and emptied 572,000 bins. From these, we have collected 4,500 tonnes of waste (a reduction of 566 tonnes) and, through a range of efforts, diverted 78.9% of that waste away from landfill. Our community once again demonstrated its commitment to achieving the highest possible diversion of waste from landfill.

Supporting this achievement with aspirations for further improvement, the range of plastics that can be recycled through our services has been increased. Previously only types 1 to 5 could be recycled. This was expanded to include type 6, polystyrene, and type 7, a range of other plastics not otherwise included. This gives the community the opportunity to further reduce the waste to landfill.

The Community Recycling Centre at Raleigh was opened to allow our community to drop off a range of problem waste items, such as paints, oils and batteries. These types of waste contain harmful chemicals but can be recycled if collected. By providing the option to avoid these items going into landfill, Council has reduced the environmental impact our community creates from these items. Significant works have been completed at the Bellingen Transfer Station including concreting, re-asphalting, line marking and the installation of new compactor bins. The most significant work was a new awning that covers the new bin hoppers. The new awning allows multiple vehicles to pull up under the awning and unload waste concurrently increasing the number of residents able to use the facility and minimising waiting time. Work also continued at Dorriggo, rehabilitating the site and reconfiguring it to improve its operations.

Five creative upcycling workshops at the Bowerhouse engaged over 100 people combining creativity with waste awareness resulting in the creation of art from unwanted stuff.



We live sustainably and reduce our ecological footprint and contribution to climate change.

This year, Council joined the Cities Power Partnership and made pledges to switch to renewable energy. An action from this pledge has been the installation of solar panels on two Council buildings. The focus has been on the main Council buildings resulting in a direct reduction of our energy footprint by 86.8 megawatts per annum - down from our previous usage of 243 megawatts of power at those places. As the power is being generated where it is being used, this also means we are saving the transmission loss and avoiding the environmental impacts of power generation from non-renewable sources.

We protect and enhance our biodiversity.

From February 2018, Bellingen Shire Council has hosted the Local Government Support Officer (Biodiversity Reforms) for the North Coast region. A partnership with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and Office of Local Government, this role

provides support to twelve councils from Port Macquarie-Hastings in the south to Tweed Shire Council in the North. The purpose of the role is to support councils to implement the new biodiversity assessment and approvals framework associated with the biodiversity reforms, which changed the legislation for land management and biodiversity conservation. The role provides a help desk support service, guidance documents, liaison between councils in the North Coast region and training. Through this position, councils can access guidance and support to ensure their planning frameworks and processes meet new legislative requirements to adequately conserve biodiversity values and avoid, minimise and offset biodiversity impacts.

Bellingen Island is home to a healthy flying fox community. To ensure that this continues, the Council gained funding and commenced the development of a management plan for the colony.

It was considered important to have a management plan to ensure that any threats to the community are well understood and can be proactively managed, as well as looking at processes and techniques that limit the negative impacts of us on the flying foxes and

vice versa. The funding will allow Council to start implementing works in the plan, working with the Bellingen Island Landcare Group.

We work together to protect and enhance our environment.

One of the large threats to both our biodiversity and our economy are noxious weeds. Invasive species can compete with many natives, leading to loss of biodiversity. During the year, we inspected 1,400 hectares of land, targeting high risk areas. 570 hectares of weed control was undertaken. This year Madeira vine and Groundsel bush were targeted through aerial inspections of around 250 properties.

The Council is also responsible for companion animal regulation. Part of this involves taking care of straying, unwanted or uncared for animals. Council works towards rehousing as many of these animals as possible. The number of unreturned or rehoused animals has dropped by 33% this year. This is a great outcome for the animals. Council appreciates the support of people who have made the effort to adopt them.

Civic Leadership

■ Council is an organisation that embraces business excellence.

Restoring and maintaining financial stability has been a strong focus in previous years and has continued this year. Increased revenue and the containment of expenses, has seen the Council again record a positive operating result before capital grants.

Council undertakes work on behalf of the Roads and Maritime Services. This year, Council attracted an increase in works than in previous years, earning substantially more revenue. Carrying out these works is beneficial as more of the proceeds stay within our economy. The economies of scale also provides benefits to Council in doing our other works.

More income was gained from a range of grants sources allowing Council to provide more to the community. The Financial Assistance Grant increased by \$170,000. This grant assists Council in its ability to provide core services to our community. Other costs have also been contained through a range of actions. Overall, the cost of salaries and wages saw no increase. The savings to insurance premiums offset wages growth. Materials costs increased. This was driven primarily by the increase in materials required to undertake the Roads and Maritime Services additional works. The impact of the new banking contract signed up in the previous year saw a saving of \$20,000. The ongoing work to reduce printing and postage saw costs reduce by a further 13% over the previous savings, freeing up \$19,000. Council's cost of street lighting increased by 18%. In response, the Council has entered into a 'contract for actions', such as changing to LED street lighting to bring these costs back down. This action will avoid \$76,000 in future costs.

Council is focused on preventing harm and improving the overall health and wellbeing of its workers. A sustained approach to safety at Council has seen a reduction in insurance premiums. Proactively managing safety, along with finding opportunities for people to come back to work following an incident, has seen our premiums decrease by approximately 70% since 2010. Council reported 100% of

personal injuries sustained in the workplace within in the legislated timeframe during the 12 month reporting period. This is an integral part of compliance to regulatory requirements. Health and wellbeing programs, along with access to an Employee Assistance Program, encouraged staff to maintain a healthy work life balance.

Council has continued its focus on refining and improving its recruitment process. Like any business, Council has people come and go and recruiting new people has its cost. Council is continuing to manage all recruitment processes in-house. The use of online recruitment processes enabled hiring to 48 positions whilst achieving an average "time to hire" (i.e. from application closing date to job offer) of 3.2 weeks. This has been a considerable change from previous years with more than a 50% decrease in the time it takes to hire. This has been due to using available online tools to manage the recruitment process and a concerted effort by the Organisational Development team and the hiring managers to limit the time positions are left vacant. It should also be noted that the recruitment budget has decreased by more than 50% since 2012.

A continued focus on the development of staff has ensured that they are skilled appropriately to provide the best level of service to the community. Staff training is regularly completed, particularly in the areas of compliance, to ensure staff retain up to date competencies required to perform their roles. Leadership development programs and access to educational assistance programs provides opportunity for additional professional development. As part of Council's ongoing focus on financial sustainability and customer service, service reviews being undertaken this year were well advanced. The following service areas were reviewed:

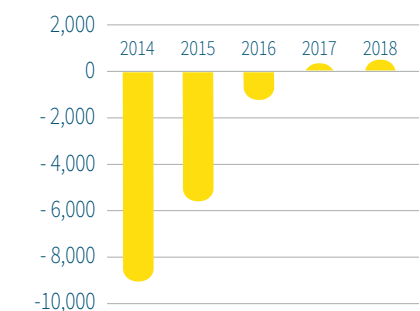
- information technology
- human resources sections
- procurement
- stores and
- operations.

It is anticipated that these reviews will identify improvements that will allow Council to continue to provide the best value from the resources available.

A completed service review of the water and wastewater function has provided opportunities to cross train staff in this area and employ a full time electrician without an increase in staff numbers. With the employment of the electrician, significant savings for use in other services of Council have been made.

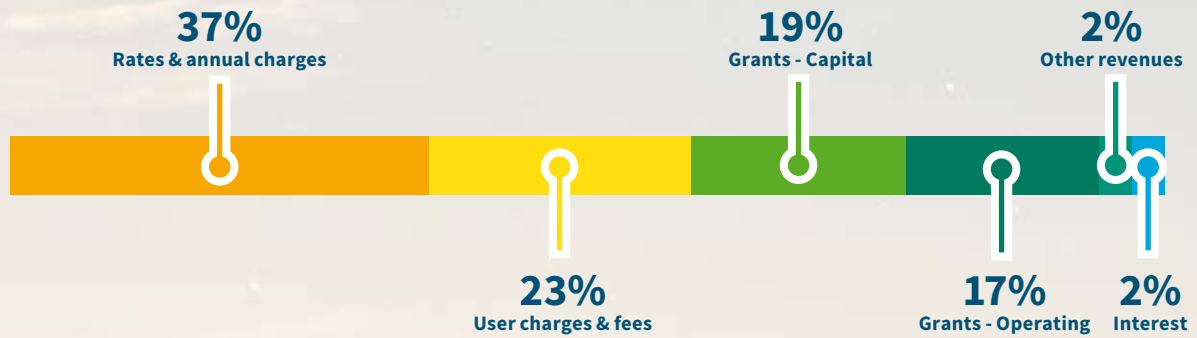
In addition, it has been recognised that, in order to continue to improve service levels for the community, a review of internal systems, specifically IT hardware and software, should be conducted. This has led to a review of solutions that offer improved functionality, greater access to information and more streamlined application processes for the community. As the implementation of these systems progress, the community will see noticeable positive change in how they interact with Council.

Operating Result (Excluding Capital Income)
(\$ thousands)



Where do the funds come from

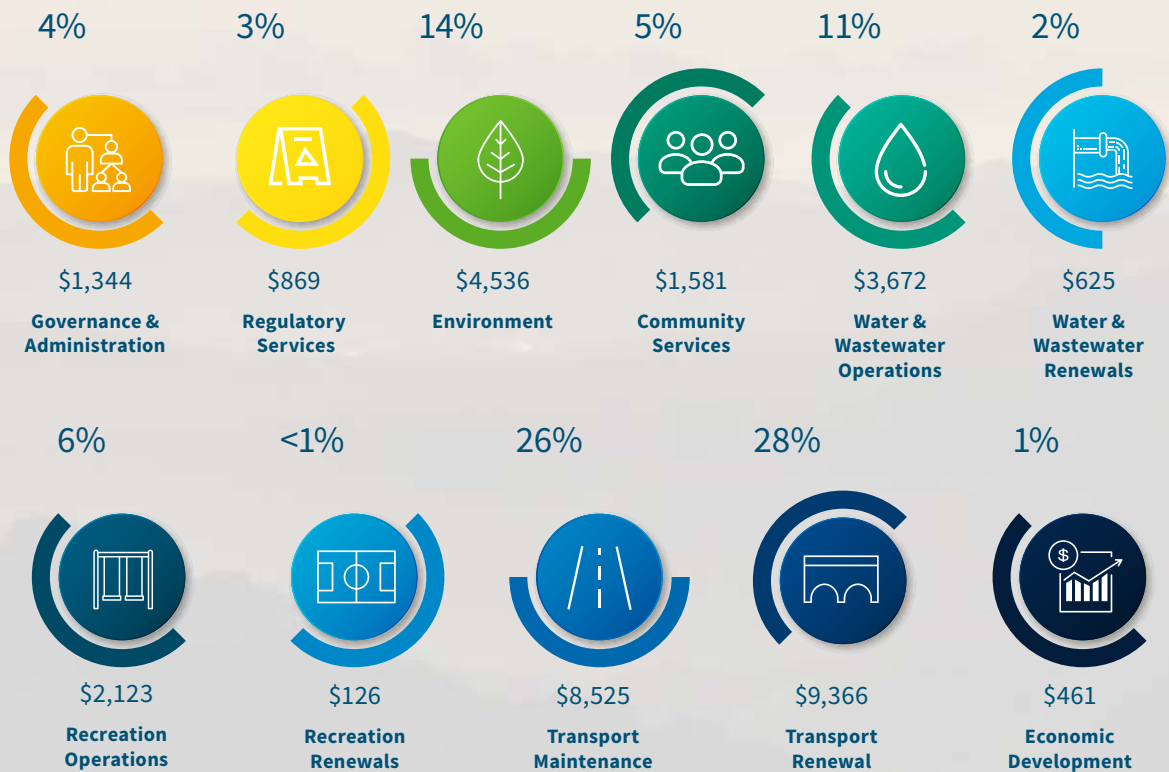
The Council raised \$37.6million from various sources.



Where the funds go

Council spent \$33.2 million on maintaining and renewing assets and providing services.

(\$ thousands)



Our community is engaged with a strong sense of civic leadership.

Council is committed to engaging with the community and working together to shape the future of our Shire. Council uses a wide range of mechanisms to inform and gain information from the community. This included paid advertising, distribution of 170 media releases to media outlets and community groups, letterbox drops, radio interviews and quarterly newsletters.

Late last year Council introduced a new communications/engagement tool called Create. This is an online communications website specifically designed to allow the community to have input into decisions and conversations around projects, plans and activities.

Create was used to inform the community about 26 projects and undertake 35 surveys on issues big and small. From this, 5,800 visits were made to the site and 707 submissions were received from 398 people. The greatest level of contributions was on the topic of 'how do you use the Bellinghen town centre?'

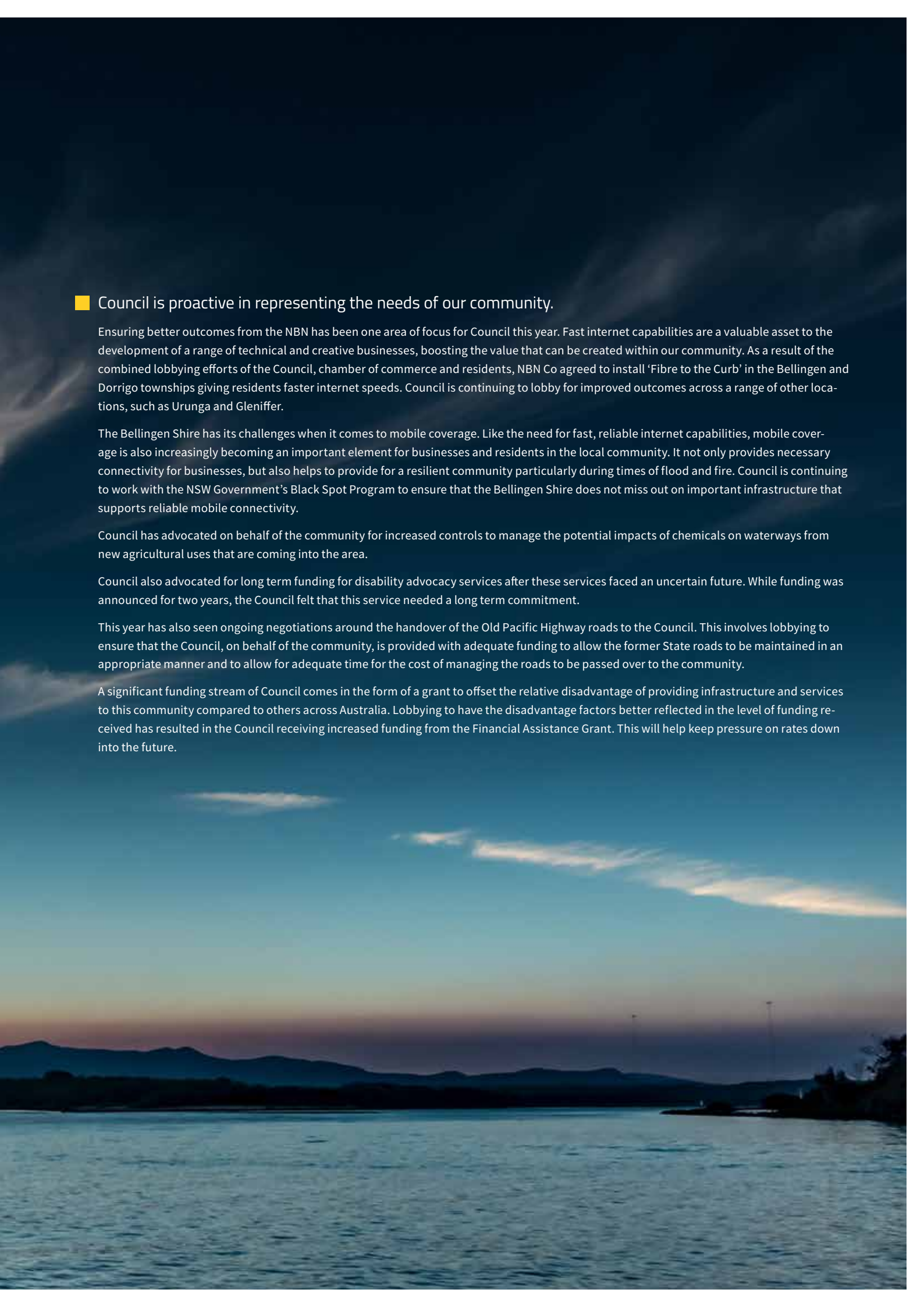
Our newsfeeds on the site attracted 1,160 visits with the virtual tour of the Bellinghen town centre gaining the highest level of visitations. Adoption of this tool has given the Council another way of informing and engaging with the community resulting in more people gaining information and having a say than ever before.

Items the Council used this tool to communicate and engage with the community on included:

- Heritage Strategy
- Your Ideas on Saving Water
- Uncontaminated lands
- Bellinghen Town Centre Beautification
- Liquid Trade Waste Policy
- Low Pressure Sewer Policy
- Rural Lands Policy
- Bike Tourism
- Town Centre Car Parking
- Homes For Our Future

This year Council introduced a system using tablets that allows people visiting the main Council offices to leave feedback. These devices allow Council to gain feedback on how well we are meeting the needs of the community we interact with.





■ Council is proactive in representing the needs of our community.

Ensuring better outcomes from the NBN has been one area of focus for Council this year. Fast internet capabilities are a valuable asset to the development of a range of technical and creative businesses, boosting the value that can be created within our community. As a result of the combined lobbying efforts of the Council, chamber of commerce and residents, NBN Co agreed to install 'Fibre to the Curb' in the Bellingen and Dorrigo townships giving residents faster internet speeds. Council is continuing to lobby for improved outcomes across a range of other locations, such as Urunga and Gleniffer.

The Bellingen Shire has its challenges when it comes to mobile coverage. Like the need for fast, reliable internet capabilities, mobile coverage is also increasingly becoming an important element for businesses and residents in the local community. It not only provides necessary connectivity for businesses, but also helps to provide for a resilient community particularly during times of flood and fire. Council is continuing to work with the NSW Government's Black Spot Program to ensure that the Bellingen Shire does not miss out on important infrastructure that supports reliable mobile connectivity.

Council has advocated on behalf of the community for increased controls to manage the potential impacts of chemicals on waterways from new agricultural uses that are coming into the area.

Council also advocated for long term funding for disability advocacy services after these services faced an uncertain future. While funding was announced for two years, the Council felt that this service needed a long term commitment.

This year has also seen ongoing negotiations around the handover of the Old Pacific Highway roads to the Council. This involves lobbying to ensure that the Council, on behalf of the community, is provided with adequate funding to allow the former State roads to be maintained in an appropriate manner and to allow for adequate time for the cost of managing the roads to be passed over to the community.

A significant funding stream of Council comes in the form of a grant to offset the relative disadvantage of providing infrastructure and services to this community compared to others across Australia. Lobbying to have the disadvantage factors better reflected in the level of funding received has resulted in the Council receiving increased funding from the Financial Assistance Grant. This will help keep pressure on rates down into the future.

BELLINGEN: The Little Council that Could

Author: Greg White – Coffs Coast Advocate – 18th May 2018

THERE is one small but very significant line tucked away in the document setting out reasons why Bellingen Shire Council (BSC) was granted a special rate variation for the next three years.

“We found that the impact of these increases on ratepayers will be substantial but reasonable,” it reads on page three of the 26-page document released by the Independent Pricing Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

After lodging a case in February, Bellingen was this week granted the full freight of six per cent for the next three years, starting July 1.

Tax increases or rate hikes are never, ever popular, no matter how much effort goes into demonstrating the necessity for charging extra “for the public good.”

But should Bellingen Shire Council and other similar sized local government bodies be granted a little more credit for the way they manage resources and limited income streams?

Particularly when state and federal governments who could once be relied upon for outrageous pork barrelling are now handing more financial responsibility to local government in a little understood process called ‘cost shifting’ or the better known term of ‘user pays’?

It’s unlikely there will be little sympathy from 101 good Bellingen Shire burghers who made written objections to the rate variation (with zero statements in favour).

Even the Bellinger Valley-Dorrigo Magpies haven’t been flogged by a 101-0 scoreline lately but with those numbers there had to be good reasoning why IPART chose to approve a rise a little under three times the regulation increase of 2.3 per cent set for NSW in 2018-19.

The report maintains the BSC application met all the criteria necessary to establish a financial need and even more importantly, communicated the reasoning to the public.

It describes how the council went through the gruelling Fit For The Future process in 2014 which showed ... well, let’s be blunt here ... the council was all but broke and had no way of getting its books anywhere near balanced if things stayed the way they were.

So, that led to belt tightening and cost cutting until something approaching equilibrium was established and while there’s a long, dark tunnel ahead, IPART felt justified to approve a rate rise.

In return, extra money raised may only be spent on infrastructure.

Yes, common, garden variety items such as fixing bridges and resealing roads, for which each ratepayers will asked to stump up the princely sum of around \$1.25 extra, each week.

Bellingen Shire has an infrastructure backlog of around \$32.6 million.

Over the three year period of the special variation it has budgeted to spend \$7.4 million on roads and bridges which as anybody can see is still way behind the actual need.

There’s a sting in the tail that stops Council sitting by for the next three years while ratepayers grumble about all that lovely loot supposedly rolling in.

IPART will continue to check BSC is still working towards a better bottom line, so it’s all hands to the pumps.

It means continuing a process that has earned this little country council the respect of much bigger councils far and wide.

Somebody within that organisation seems to have the magic touch when it comes to putting the touch on state and federal government with spare money to throw about.

It’s amazing how much they know about how and when to tap into grants and funds to help improve the region without the place falling into ruin.

Income from the rate variation is earmarked for road resealing and bridge renewals. Picture: Leigh Jensen/Coffs Coast Advocate





B

Statutory and
Other Information





Special Variations in General Income

Special Rate Variation 2014-2015

The SRV generated \$611,845 in additional revenue this year, which was allocated in the following way:

- \$524,122 to repay the loan.
- \$87,723 additional expenditure on capital works program.

Special Rate Variation 2017-2018

The SRV generated \$310,000 in additional revenue this year, which was allocated in the following way:

- Heavy patching and resealing roads \$249,986
- Reserved for future years roadworks \$60,014

A full listing of the roads is included on page 21 of the Annual Report.

Bellingher Shire Council Environmental Levy Projects 2017-2018

In 2017-18 \$235,013 was raised through the environmental levy.

These funds were used as follows:

PROJECT	FUNDING
Weeds Action Program	\$52,413
River & Biodiversity Community support and assistance	\$25,000
The Jaliigirr Biodiversity, Dangar Falls, Rock Fillets and Bellingher Island Project Maintenance	\$32,000
Bellingher Riverwatch 'Our River, Our Future'	\$15,600
Sustainability & Climate Change Projects	\$25,000
Bellingher Island Flying-fox Camp Management Plan implementation and improvement works	\$25,000
Win Win – habitat and recreational enhancements to Yellow Rock, Back Creek and Lower Bellingher Estuary	\$40,000
Dangar Falls Pathway Upgrade Stage 3	\$20,000
Environmental Levy Community Fund Projects	\$15,450

Overseas Visits

There were no overseas visits undertaken by Councillors, Council Staff or other persons representing the Council during the period 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018.

Elected Members' Expenses

Mayor and Councillor Fees

The total fees paid to the Mayor and Councillors in 2017-18 was \$183,138 compared to \$182,242 in 2016-17.

Councillor Support and Expenses

EXPENSES	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Councillor support and provision of facilities (including provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to councillors and telephone calls made by councillors)	11,739	10,345	8,205
Attendance at conferences and seminars	8,181	11,144	8,672
Training of councillors and provision of skill development	4,025	5,748	6,234
Interstate visits undertaken during the year by councillors while representing the council, including the cost of transport, the cost of accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses	0	4,515	0
Overseas visits by councillors while representing the council, including the cost of transport, the cost of accommodation and other out of pocket travelling expenses	0	0	0
Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanied a councillor in the performance of his or her civic functions	0	0	0
Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child or an immediate family member of a councillor	0	0	0
Fees paid to Mayor and Councillors	96,084	99,812	105,290
Motor Vehicle Allowances	14,797	9,777	6,575
Mayoral vehicle operational costs and depreciation	16,103	9,588	9,624
Insurance costs for Councillors and Officers liability	30,759	31,313	32,095
TOTAL COSTS FOR THE YEAR	181,688	182,242	176,695

Major Contracts (Greater than \$150,000) Awarded

GOODS OR SERVICES	ESTIMATED ANNUAL VALUE \$,000	TOTAL CONTRACT VALUE \$,000	SUPPLIERS
Ready Mixed Concrete	100	300	RPI Panel
Traffic Control Services	733	2,200	RPI Panel
Pilot Street Sewer Pump Station Up -grade	N/A	1,000	Precision Civil Infrastructure Pty Ltd
Bellingen WTP Switchboard	N/A	200	T-18-01
Retail Supply of electricity and Green Power to NSW Government and Eligible Buyers (Small Sites)	N/A	300	Origin Energy
Bulk Fuel & Oils	220	440	Park Pty Ltd
Ready Mix Concrete	100	300	RPI Panel
Electricity for large sites & street lighting large sites	172	345	ERM Power
Leans Creek Bridge Construction		360	Bellwether Pty Ltd

Legal Proceedings

Council was not formally involved in any legal proceedings in the 2017/18 financial year, other than undertakings regarding recovering rates which are reported in the financial statements.

MATTER	ISSUE	STATUS/RESULT	EXPENSES	RECEIVED
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Works Subsidised On Private Land

No resolutions were made during this period concerning work subsidised by Council and carried out on private land.

Donations and Contributions

Council's commitments with respect to Donations and Contributions are detailed as follows:

Community Event Sponsorship Fund

ORGANISATION	EVENT	CONTRIBUTION
Arts Mid North Coast/Screenwave	Screenwave International Film Festival	\$5,000
Dorrigo Folk & Bluegrass Festival Inc.	Dorrigo Folk & Bluegrass Festival	\$4,000
Bellingen Community Arts Council Inc.	Bellingen Fine Music Festival	\$2,500
Readers and Writers Festival	Readers and Writers Festival 2018	\$3,000
Arts Mid North Coast/Screenwave	Rec Ya Shorts Youth Film Festival	\$3,000
Bellingen Neighbourhood Centre Inc.	Affordable Housing Forum	\$3,000
Bellinger River Agricultural Society	EJ Mantova Art Exhibition	\$1,200

Community Support Fund

ORGANISATION	ACTIVITY	CONTRIBUTION
Bellingen Big Band	Training and practice sessions for 12 months	\$500
2bbb	Lighting upgrade	\$2,722
Bellingen Dorriggo Rugby League Club	Club house improvements	\$2,000
Centre for Ecological Learning	Bellingen Community Kitchen	\$2,000
Dorrigo Visual Arts Group	Dorrigo Agricultural Show – Art exhibition	\$1,000
Mylestom Combined Pensioners & Superannuants Association	Annual hall hire costs	\$650
Arts Council of the Dorriggo	Instruments for musical performance program	\$1,500
Dorrigo Girl Guides	Building improvements	\$1,078
Bellingen Youth Orchestra	Schools concert series – 6 events	\$5,000
North Dorriggo Horse and Pony Club	Arena fencing	\$4,000
Dorrigo Dramatic Club	Rates Remission	\$2,000
Arts Council of the Dorriggo Inc.	Youth Arts Workshops	\$1,200
Camp Creative	Scholarships	\$726
CHADRAC	Annual radio licensing fee	\$159
Arts Council of the Dorriggo Inc.	Creative Mountain Arts Exhibition – hall fees	\$750
Bellingen Neighbourhood Centre Inc.	Film production	\$3,000

Creative Placemaking Fund

ORGANISATION	EVENT	CONTRIBUTION
Arts Network Bellingen	Open Up To Art (OUTA) event	\$1,946
Bellingen Mentor Group	Bello pole paint project	\$3,000
Arts Network Bellingen	Pulp – community arts project	\$2,000
Dorrigo Plateau Music School	Dorrigo markets performances	\$3,000

Heritage Fund

PROJECT NAME	LOCATION	GRANT
Replace roof and front awning	Tyringham Road, North Dorrigo	\$2,000
Restoration of 5 sash windows in dining room	Cudgery Street, Dorrigo	\$2,000
Clean mould and render front boundary wall/ fence	Hyde Street, Bellingen	\$2,000
Re-roofing of old building	Hyde Street, Bellingen	\$2,000
Re-stumping of former public school building	Tyringham Road, North Dorrigo	\$2,000
Conservation works to dwelling including roof gutter and fascia replacement	Valery Road, Valery	\$2,887

The total actual amount contributed or otherwise granted by Council under Section 356 of the Act for 2017-18 was \$72,818.

Functions Delegated by Council

External bodies that exercised functions delegated by Council during the period were:

BODY	FUNCTION
<i>EXTERNAL BODIES</i>	
Clarence Regional Library Committee	Library Services
NSW Rural Fire Service	Rural Fire Services
<i>COMMUNITY COMMITTEES (SECTION 355 NSW LGA 1993)</i>	
Audit Committee	Monitor, review and advise Council on matters of accountability and internal control
Australia Day Committee	Australia Day Activities
Bellingen Citizens Centre Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Centre
Bellingen Island Reserve Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Reserve
Bellingen Memorial Hall Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall
Bellingen Shire Visitor Information Centre	Care, Control and Management of the Centre
Bellingen Shire Youth Centre	Care, Control and Management of the Bellingen Shire Youth Hub
Bellingen/Connell Park Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Parks
Bellinger Valley Historical Society Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Bellingen and Urunga Museums
Brierfield Hall Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall
Burdett Park Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Park
Deervale Hall and Recreation Reserve Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall and Reserve
Dorrigo Public Hall Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Centre
Dorrigo Recreation Grounds Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Reserve
Dorrigo Saleyards Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Saleyards
Hickory House and Neighbourhood Bus Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Centre
Megan Hall and Recreation Reserve Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall and Reserve
Mylestom Hall Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall
North Bellingen Children's Centre Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Centre
North Dorrigo Recreation Reserve Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Reserve
Raleigh Hall and Recreation Reserve Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall and Reserve
Thora Community Hall Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Hall
Urunga Literary Institute and Senior Citizens Centre Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Centre and the Literary Institute Hall
Urunga Recreation Reserve Management Committee	Care, Control and Management of the Reserve

Corporations, Partnerships, Joint Ventures or Other Bodies in which Council Held a Controlling Interest

Council did not participate in any corporations, partnerships, joint ventures or other bodies in which it held a controlling interest.

Corporations, Partnerships, Joint Ventures or Other Bodies in which the Council Participated

Council participated in the following organisations:

ORGANISATION	ROLE
Southern Phone Company Limited	Shareholder
Arts Mid North Coast	Board Member
Mid North Coast Weight of Loads Group	Member
Hunter Councils Inc - Regional Procurement Initiative	Partner
Statewide Mutual Limited	Member, Board Member
Statecover Mutual Limited	Member
Mid North Coast Regional Organisation of Councils	Member
Mid North Coast Joint Organisation	Member

Implementation of Workplace Equity and Diversity Plan

Council has worked towards addressing a number of action items contained in the Workplace Equity and Diversity Plan 2014-2018. Council is committed to being an inclusive organisation and continues to hold strong relationships with the local aboriginal, aged care, disability and youth services community members. Council has facilitated and participated in NAIDOC Week events, school holiday programs at the libraries, community events such as the Queens Baton Relay and continues to facilitate citizenship ceremonies. Staff of Council have been offered opportunities to participate in Disability Awareness training, Mental Health First Aid and R U OK? wellbeing programs.

A number of youth have been hired into the workforce with three staff commencing in the last 12 months that fall within the 15 – 24 year age bracket. One of these was a targeted trainee position within the Customer and Business Services team. In addition to the trainee, Council has also facilitated work placement for university students within our Engineering team.

Council already has a number of women in non-traditional roles, particularly in the Sustainable Environment and Waste team. In addition to these, Council has recruited a female in the Parks and Gardens team and another in the Environmental Programs Officer role.

General Manager and Senior Staff Remuneration

Senior Staff Salaries

There are three positions within Council designated as Senior Staff as at 30 June 2018. These include the General Manager, Deputy General Manager, Operations and Deputy General Manager, Corporate and Community. The total remuneration package of \$262,235 was payable to the General Manager included salary, FBT costs associated with the provision of a Council owned motor vehicle and superannuation costs.

The combined total remuneration package cost of \$409,705 was payable to the two Deputy General Managers included salary, additional leave, FBT costs associated with the provision of a Council owned motor vehicle under leaseback arrangement and superannuation.

Companion Animals Act - Compliance

Pound Data

- Fifty one dogs were seized, surrendered or found roaming free during the 2017/2018 year. Twenty three of these dogs were returned to their owners prior to being impounded and nineteen of these dogs were transferred to Council's animal shelter. Two dogs remained in the shelter from the previous year and two dogs remained in the shelter at the end of the year.
- Eight cats were seized or found abandoned or stray. Three of these cats were transferred to the animal shelter. Five of these cats were feral and had been trapped and were euthanised.
- Recently implemented processes and one on one education has seen a significant increase in compliance and a decrease in the number of dogs that have been seized. Euthanasia rates of dogs have decreased by 33% over the past year and 86% since 2014 - 2015 year – see table.

FINANCIAL YEAR - DOGS	SEIZED OR SURRENDERED	IMPOUNDED	EUTHANISED	RECEIVED
2014 - 2015	141	94	30	Nil
2015 - 2016	62	32	15	
2016 - 2017	59	28	6	
2017 - 2018	51	28	4	

Statement on activities relating to enforcing and ensuring compliance with Companion Animals Act and Regulation:

- Council’s Customer and Business Services Team, in conjunction with Ranger Services interrogate the Companion Animals Register on a monthly basis and send notices to owners of all unregistered dogs in the Shire. Three notices are sent with intervals of 14 days, 7 days and a final notice after 7 days. If after the final notice the animal is still not registered, a Penalty Infringement Notice (PIN) is issued for non-compliance. If after 3 months the animal has still not been registered, the processes starts again.
- A barking dog process has been implemented to deal with dog noise.
- Regular patrols are conducted and one on one education and warnings are issued to offenders in the first instance. PIN’s are issued for subsequent breaches and for serial offenders, Nuisance Orders are issued.
- Two Dangerous Dog Orders, five Menacing Dog Orders and twelve Nuisance Dog Orders were issued. Nil Nuisance Cat Orders were issued.

Dog Attack data

- Twenty one dog attacks were investigated and lodged with the Office of Local Government

COMPANION ANIMAL MANAGEMENT FUNDING	
Registration commissions	20,586
Impounding fees, charges	2,373
Fines	12,980
TOTAL INCOME	35,939

This represents an 18.6% increase over the previous year’s total income. While there has been an increase in all areas of revenue, this increase is mainly due to the process now used to follow up on unregistered companion animals and an increase in registration fees.

Companion animals – Activity 2017/18 FY

ACTIVITY	DOGS	CATS
IN		
Seized	42	5
Abandoned/stray	7	3
Surrendered	2	0
OUT		
Returned to owner	23	0
Sold	2	1
Released to owner	16	1
Released to organisation for rehoming	6	1
Escaped pound	0	0
EUTHANISED		
Dangerous dog	0	NA
Owner request	2	0
Illness/disease/injury	0	0
Unable to rehome	0	0
Feral/infant	0	5
Unsuitable for rehoming	2	0
IN POUND AT END OF YEAR		
	2	0

Companion Animal Community Education Programs

Council undertakes one-on-one compliance education with owners who have been found to be in breach of the Companion Animals Act.

Strategies to promote and assist the de-sexing of dogs and cats

Council has a Companion Animals Management Plan. This and other information on companion animals can be found on Council’s web-site.

Rates and Charges Written Off

The total value of rates and charges written off for the year 2017 /2018 was \$241,803.88 as follows:

RATES AND CHARGES WRITTEN OFF		2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
		\$	\$	\$
PENSION REBATES				
General Rates-Residential	A100	103,414.61	101,766.66	101,403.77
General Rates-Farmland	A101	4,922.36	4,387.63	4,275.30
General Rates-Business	A102	583.21	591.81	579.32
Water Annual Charges	A110	44,247.56	43,672.50	43,824.77
Water Usage Charges	A115	-	34,720.81	-
Sewer Annual Charges	A120	34,893.07	101,766.66	34,637.09
DWM Charges	A130	51,914.56	52,280.77	51,360.91
		239,975.37	237,420.17	236,081.15
RATES-Residential	A100	4,681.32	2,160.61	2,286.88
RATES-Business	A102	-	-	-
DWM	A130	0.01	-	-
Non DWM	A135	700.00	0.37	692.35
WATER-ANNUAL CHARGES	A110	-	0.14	-
WATER-USAGE CHARGES	A115	6,979.71	9,879.94	2,351.15
SEWER-ANNUAL CHARGES	A120	-	0.53	0.01
SEWER-USAGE CHARGES	A123	-	-	9.27
LIQUID TRADE WASTE ANNUAL CHARGES	A145	-	-	-
LIQUID TRADE WASTE USAGE CHARGES	A146	-	-	-
INTEREST-RATES	A150	1,199.80	620.90	285.24
INTEREST-WATER	A156	65.21	280.48	97.83
LEGAL FEES/COSTS	A155	1,116.21	-	-
Sub totals		14,742.26	12,942.97	5,722.73
GRAND TOTALS		254,717.6	250,363.14	241,803.88

Planning Agreements

Council did not enter into any planning agreements during 2017/18.

Public's Right to Access Government Information

The Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act) came into effect on 1 July 2010 and replaced the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) and Section 12 of the NSW Local Government Act 1993.

The aim of the GIPA Act is to provide an open, accountable, fair and effective government. This means that all government agencies in NSW are required to make more information freely available and more processes and documents of government will be available following an application process.

In 2017/18 one (1) formal valid application for access to information was received.

Review of Proactive Release Program - Clause 7(a)

Under section 7 of the GIPA Act, agencies must review their programs for the release of government information to identify the kinds of information that can be made publicly available. This review must be undertaken at least once every 12 months.

Council's program for the proactive release of information involves updating Council's Agency Information Guide and Privacy Management Procedures and Plan to ensure that staff are provided with clear guidance as to what information should and should not be proactively released.

During the reporting period, we reviewed this program by analysing the types of requests made to Council and what proportion could be answered through open access means.

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

Yes

As a result of this review, we released the following information proactively through Councils interactive community engagement portal "Create":

Via Website www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au

Mid North Coast Joint Organisation of Council (MNC JO) – Agendas and Minutes of new MNC JO

Online Maps: available on ARCGIS:

- Bellingen Shire Load Limited Bridges
- Bellingen Shire Road Work Activities
- Complying Development Land Based Exclusions
- Koala Habitat
- Sewer Network
- Stormwater Network
- Water Network

Via "Create" Community Engagement Hub:

<https://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au>

Stage 3 Bellingen Main Street Beautification & Accessibility Project

- 76-L05.01 Bridge Street Landscape Plan-Issue 6
- 76-L05.02 Bridge Street Landscape Plan-Issue 6
- 76-L09.01 Bridge Street Soft Landscape Plan-Issue 6
- 76-L09.02 Bridge Street Soft Landscape Plan-Issue 6
- Proposed Landscape Plan - Bridge/Hyde Street Intersection
- Proposed Landscape Plan & Existing View - Bridge/Hyde Street Intersection Engineering Plans - May 2018
- 20180504 Bellingen Bridge Street Landscape Plan - Issue D

Stage 2 – Bellingen Main Street Beautification - Church Street North Café Precinct

- Options 2 and 3 Church Street North Cafe Precinct
- Existing Overall Church Street Layout
- Proposed Overall Church Street Landscape Plan

Bellingen Shire Timber Bridge Load Limits

- Layout - Load Limit Bridges
- Bridge List
- Layout - Load Limit Bridges 20171025
- Timber Bridge Prioritisation - 10 Year Renewal Program

Bellingen Town Centre Beautification

- 76-SK-Bellingen Playground Concept
- 76-L107 Church Street NW Soft Landscape Plan Issue 5
- 76-L06 Church Street Soft Landscape Plan-Issue 5
- 76-L09 Bridge Street Soft Landscape Plan-Issue 5
- 76-L08 Oak Street Soft Landscape Plan-Issue 5
- Final Tree Selection for Bellingen Town Centre
- Oak Street Parking Restrictions - 27/07/17 - 11/08/17
- Parking Restrictions in Oak Street 13/7/17 - 29/07/17
- Section 1B - Oak/Hyde Street Intersection - Kerb & Footpath Demolition
- Section 1a - Oak/Hyde Street Intersection - Kerb & Footpath Demolition
- List of Proposed Tree Species for Bellingen Town Centre Beautification
- Briefing Note on the options considered in removing camphor laurel trees in Church Street
- Bellingen Main Street Plan - Landscape Design April 2017
- Adopted Bellingen Main Street Plan - May 2015
- Main Street Upgrade Design
- Bellingen Main Street Plan 2015 - Church Street Intersection Upgrade
- Mayor Dominic King talking with BBB's Leo Bradney-George - 14-03-17
- Church Street - Arborists Recommendations 2010
- Church Street North Street Revitalisation 2010
- Bellingen CBD Study - Pam Fletcher 2002
- Bellingen Main St Plan J Mongard

Yes

- Bellingen Main Street Plan submission
- Bellingen Shire Council - Mainstreet Pedestrian Improvements Stage 1
- Bellingen Shire Council - Mainstreet Pedestrian Improvements Stage 2
- Bellingen Shire Council - Mainstreet Pedestrian Improvements Stage 3
- Bellingen Shire Council - Mainstreet Pedestrian Improvements Stage 4
- BellingenMainStreetPlan_OrderOfCosts_RevD_190815
- Concept Plan - Bellingen 40kph Ped Zone
- Concept Plan - Hyde & Bridge Street including crossings
- Concept Plan - Hyde & Church Streets
- Concept Plan - Hyde & Oak Street
- Detail of Replacement Tree Submitted for Approval
- Works Management Plan - Church St Bellingen Tree Removal 2011
- File Note from Development Planner confirming compliance with Conditions 3, 4, & 10.
- Confirmation from Director EH&P all relevant conditions complied with O'Meara Woods & Associates Structural Engineers Report.
- 76-L10 Typ Gateway Plan Soft Landscape Schedule Details-Issue 5
- Heritage Advisor Comments on Church Street Revitalisation Project
- RMS Main St Funding

Gleniffer Reserves Riverbank and Public Infrastructure Works

- Gleniffer Reserves Master Plan 2016
- Gleniffer Reserves Consultation Report

Special Rate Variation

- Bellingen Shire Council SRV Application
- Special Variation Community Brochure
- Special Variation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)
- 2017-18 Rates Calculator
- Timber Bridge - Priority Listing
- Rural resurfacing - Priority roads list
- General Fund Capital Works - SRV
- LTFP 2017-2027 for SRV

Rural Lands Policy

- FAQ - Blueberry Regulation in the Bellingen Shire
- FAQ - Multiple Occupancy Regulation in the Bellingen Shire
- FAQ - E4 Environmental Living Zone in the Bellingen Shire
- Attachment 1: Location of E4 Zones
- Attachment 2: Extract from 2007 Council Report Justifying E4 Zones
- Attachment 3: Location of Existing Multiple Occupancies
- Attachment 4: Blueberry Industry FAQ
- Attachment 5: Soil & Water Management Practices for Blueberry Growing
- Attachment 6: Definitions relevant to agriculture

Homes for Our Future – Growth Management Strategy

- Location Factsheets - Population & Housing
- Dorrigo & Plateau Factsheet 1.1 Population
- Dorrigo & Plateau Factsheet 1.2 Housing
- Urunga & Seaboard Factsheet 2.1 Population
- Urunga & Seaboard Factsheet 2.2 Housing
- Bellingen & Valley Factsheet 3.1 Population
- Bellingen & Valley Factsheet 3.2 Housing

Presentations

- Affordable Housing Solutions Forum Presentation BSC
- Homes for Our Future Discussion Paper Summary

Number of Access Applications Received - Clause 7(b)

During the reporting period, our agency received one formal and valid access application (including withdrawn applications but not invalid applications).

Clause 7(b): The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year (including withdrawn applications but not including invalid applications).

TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

1

Number of Refused applications for Schedule 1 Information - Clause 7(c)

Clause 7C: The total number of access applications received by the agency during the reporting year that the agency refused either wholly or partly, because the application was for the disclosure of information referred to in Schedule 1 to the Act (information for which there is conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure).

NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS REFUSED	WHOLLY	PARTLY	TOTAL
	0	0	0
% OF TOTAL	0%	0%	

Statistical information about access applications - Clause 7(d) and Schedule 2

Table A: Number of applications by type of applicant and outcome*

	Access Granted in Full	Access Granted in Part	Access Refused in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/ Deny whether information is held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Media	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of Parliament	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Private sector business	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Not for profit organisations or community groups	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of the public (by legal representative)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Members of the public (other)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100%
TOTAL	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
% OF TOTAL	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		

* More than one decision can be made in respect of a particular access application. If so, a recording must be made in relation to each such decision. This also applies to Table B.

Table B: Number of applications by type of application and outcome*

	Access Granted in Full	Access Granted in Part	Access Refused in Full	Information not Held	Information Already Available	Refuse to Deal with Application	Refuse to Confirm/Deny whether information is held	Application Withdrawn	Total	% of Total
Personal information applications*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Access applications (other than personal information applications)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	100%
Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
TOTAL	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
% OF TOTAL	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%		

* A personal information application is an access application for personal information (as defined in clause 4 of Schedule 4 to the Act) about the applicant (the applicant being an individual).

Table C: Invalid applications

REASON FOR INVALIDITY	NO OF APPLICATIONS	% OF TOTAL
Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)	0	0%
Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act)	0	0%
Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)	0	0%
Total number of invalid applications received	0	0%
Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications	0	0%

Table D: Conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure: matters listed in Schedule 1 of Act

	NUMBER OF TIMES CONSIDERATION USED*	% OF TOTAL
Overriding secrecy laws	0	0%
Cabinet information	0	0%
Executive Council information	0	0%
Contempt	0	0%
Legal professional privilege	0	0%
Excluded information	0	0%
Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety	0	0%
Transport safety	0	0%
Adoption	0	0%
Care and protection of children	0	0%
Ministerial code of conduct	0	0%
Aboriginal and environmental heritage	0	0%
TOTAL	0	

*More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application). This also applies in relation to Table E.

Table E: Other public interest considerations against disclosure: matters listed in table to section 14 of Act

	NUMBER OF TIMES CONSIDERATION USED*	% OF TOTAL
Responsible and effective government	0	0%
Law enforcement and security	0	0%
Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice	0	100%
Business interests of agencies and other persons	0	0%
Environment, culture, economy and general matters	0	0%
Secrecy provisions	0	0%
Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation	0	0%
TOTAL	0	

Table F: Timeliness

	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS*	% OF TOTAL
Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions)	1	100%
Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)	0	0%
Not decided within time (deemed refusal)	0	0%
TOTAL	1	

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

	DECISION VARIED	DECISION UPHELD	TOTAL	% OF TOTAL
Internal review	0	0	0	0%
Review by Information Commissioner*	0	0	0	0%
Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act	0	0	0	0%
Review by NCAT	0	0	0	0%
TOTAL	0	0	0	
% OF TOTAL	0%	0%		

*The Information Commissioner does not have the authority to vary decisions, but can make recommendations to the original decision-maker.

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

	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW	% OF TOTAL
Applications by access applicants	0	0%
Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act)	0	0%
TOTAL	0	

Table I: Applications transferred to other agencies

	NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS TRANSFERRED	% OF TOTAL
Agency-Initiated Transfers	0	0%
Applicant - Initiated Transfers	0	0%
TOTAL	0	

Code of Conduct Reporting

1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018

NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS AND ASSOCIATED COSTS		
1a	the total number of code of conduct complaints made about councillors and the general manager under the code of conduct in the year to September	1
b	the number of code of conduct complaints referred to a conduct reviewer	0
c	the number of code of conduct complaints finalised by a conduct reviewer at the preliminary assessment stage and the outcome of those complaints	0
	<i>No further action pursuant to clause 6.10(a) of the Procedures</i>	
d	the number of code of conduct complaints investigated by a conduct reviewer	0
e	the number of code of conduct complaints investigated by a conduct review committee	0
f	without identifying particular matters, the outcome of code of conduct complaints investigated by a conduct reviewer or conduct review committee under these procedures	n/a
g	the number of matters reviewed by the Division and, without identifying particular matters, the outcome of the reviews. <i>The matter was reviewed as not warranting further actions under the misconduct provisions.</i>	1
h	the total cost of dealing with code of conduct complaints made about councillors and the general manager including staff costs	\$2511.00

Public Interest Disclosures Reporting

The Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011 outlines what information public authorities are to record and include in both the six month report to the NSW Ombudsman and the public authority's annual report:

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON PIDS	MADE BY PUBLIC OFFICIALS PERFORMING THEIR DAY TO DAY FUNCTIONS	UNDER A STATUTORY OR OTHER LEGAL OBLIGATION	ALL OTHER PIDS
Number of public officials who made PIDs	0	0	0
Number of PIDs received	0	0	0
Of PIDs received, number primarily about:			
Corrupt conduct	0	0	0
Maladministration	0	0	0
Serious and substantial waste	0	0	0
Government information contravention	0	0	0
Local government pecuniary interest contravention	0	0	0
Number of PIDs finalised	0	0	0

Note: The number of PIDs finalised only refers to PIDs that have been received since the commencement of the relevant period.

Commentary on PID Obligations

Council has established an internal reporting policy. The policy was adopted by Council on 24 September 2014 and is available on Council's website.

Council's General Manager has taken action to make staff aware of their obligations through provision of relevant information on Council's Intranet, both as a reminder on the "News" section and as a static page containing:

- a policy extract,
- a link to Council's internal reporting policy,
- a link to Council's Public Interest Disclosures Guidelines and Procedures, and
- a link to the NSW Ombudsman's PID e-News

Posters encouraging internal reporting and hard copies of Council's Public Interest Disclosures Guidelines and Procedures have also been placed at all of Council's principal work locations.

Compliance with the Carers (Recognition) Act 2010

Council has actively acknowledged and recognised the role of carers in the Bellingen Shire community through its services provided in the Dorrigo Support Centre and through participating in broader area programs to support carers such as a Carers Wellbeing Day during (October) and Mental Health Month. The NSW Carers Charter is displayed at the Dorrigo Support Centre and staff are aware of and practice its principles. In addition, the Support Centre is a provider of services to carers under the Carers Together program. All carers and indeed clients are treated with the respect and dignity as defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



33 Hyde Street, Bellingen

p: (02) 6655 7300

f: (02) 6655 2310

w: bellingen.nsw.gov.au

e: council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au