



# Annual Report 2011 / 2012

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## Our Vision

“A caring community with a friendly safe country lifestyle with opportunities for growth and development.”

## Our Mission

“To represent and assist the community and stakeholders of the Wentworth Shire in meeting their needs at an affordable cost.”

## We Value

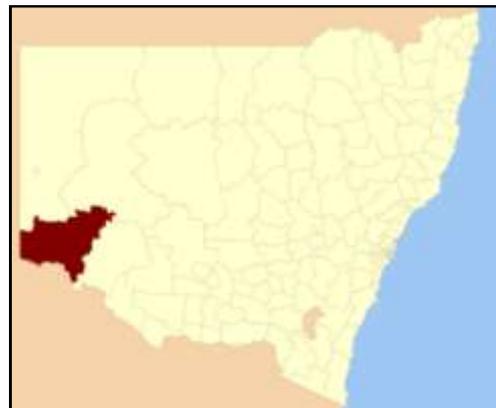
- ~ Honesty and Integrity
  - ~ Accountability and Transparency
  - ~ Respect
  - ~ Quality
  - ~ Commitment



Wentworth is considered the gateway to Outback NSW, and is situated on the junction of the Murray and Darling Rivers in south western New South Wales. Mildura, situated on the Victorian side of the Murray, is the nearest commercial centre of any size. Mildura and **Wentworth are also marketed under the banner of "Murray Outback" and "Sunraysia"**.

Wentworth Shire is a region of great diversity and it offers you the opportunity to experience an introduction to Outback Australia.

The area can be a harsh and arid landscape or a landscape that is soft and serene in solitude. It is a land of rivers, creeks and lagoons, windmills, bores and waterholes. There are thousands of kilometres of saltbush, acacia, Casuarina and Mallee scrub, wide flat plains, drifting desert sands, red roads and cobalt blue skies.



Magnificent ancient eucalyptus trees that are regal, gnarled and twisted, plentiful wildflowers, kangaroos of grey, blue and red, eagles, hawks, parrots, and the beautiful little azure blue finches all make up the unique landscape of this exciting region.

Wentworth Shire covers an area of 2, 616, 926 hectares (26,000 square kilometres) and has a population of approximately 7,500 people. The southern boundary (along the Murray River) has the greatest population density in the townships of Wentworth, Dareton, Buronga and Gol Gol. Wentworth is situated 1,075km from Sydney, 585km from Melbourne and 420km from Adelaide and is located within New South Wales, on the border of Victoria and South Australia.



**Wentworth's climate is semi-temperate.** Highest maximum temperature officially recorded was 48°C on January 10, 1939. Lowest minimum was -5°C in June 1907. Summer average is 31°C and Winter average is 16.7°C.

Tourism is strong within the Mildura / Wentworth region. Each year there are more than **300,000 visitors to the junction of Australia's two greatest rivers.** More than 50 hotels, in excess of 30 caravan parks and over 100 houseboats provide the visitor with many different accommodation options. The quality of the clubs and sporting facilities is a reflection of the contribution the gambling tourist has made.

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Margaret Thomson  
Mayor



Bill Brook  
Deputy Mayor



Bill Wheeldon  
Councillor



Brian Wakefield  
Councillor



Don McKinnon  
Councillor



Mark King  
Councillor



Brad Clarke  
Councillor



Melisa Hederics  
Councillor



Ian Whitfield  
Councillor



It is with pleasure I present my report to Council for the past year.

The Mayoral role has been both challenging and rewarding. There has been many functions to attend including a number as guest speaker, but mostly aimed at keeping Wentworth Shire Council in the forefront in this region. I thank the Deputy Mayor Bill Brook for his great support during the year. I also thank those Councillors who attended functions on my behalf.

There has been a need to focus on attending meetings outside the Shire due to the challenges that have arisen from the Draft Murray Darling Basin Plan and a raft of Inquiries into various sectors by the State Government. I spoke at meetings in Mildura, Hay and Balranald arranged by the Murray Darling Basin Commission on the Basin Plan and believe the community has been very strong in putting their point of view. I have also spoken to Katrina Hodgekinson on the State's perspective.

The General Manager and I travelled to Broken Hill for panel hearings in relation to local government reform and Aboriginal Justice. The Western Division Conference was also held in Broken Hill this year, attended by myself the GM and Councillors Clarke and Brook. It is possible this may be the last Western Division Conference.

Minister for Roads and Ports Duncan Gay travelled to Wentworth after the conference for discussions with Council on the Arumpo Road and also regarding PS Ruby issues.

Although the Wentworth Local Environmental Plan was finally made in December 2011 it has continued to raise issues resulting in the Planning Minister Brad Hazzard coming to Wentworth for discussions. I met with the Director General of Planning in Sydney and whilst at the Shires Conference in June had an impromptu meeting with the Minister, the Director General and a senior planning officer to find a speedy way forward with Planning Proposal Amendment No. 1 to the LEP. Unfortunately the current LEP is subject to a legal challenge and it is hoped this can be dealt with expeditiously with minimal cost.

A meeting was also held with Minister Duncan Gay and I was delighted to hear that funding will be made available for an engineering feasibility study of the Arumpo Road.

I attended the Shires Conference along with Councillors King, McKinnon and Wheeldon as well as the General Manager. This will probably be the last conference as an amalgamation with the Local Government Association appears imminent.

The General Manager, Councillor Brook and I attended the National General Assembly in Canberra and whilst there took the opportunity to speak with Simon Crean's senior staff on future funding of Arumpo Road upgrade.

Councillor Brook and I attended the Murray River Group of Councils conference in Moama which focused on the future of the River Communities.

Councillor Wheeldon attended the Floodplain Management Conference earlier this year at Batemans Bay and Councillors Clarke and King recently attended the Water Conference in Wagga Wagga.

I believe it is important for all Councillors to attend at least one conference a year to keep up to date with issues and in touch with other councils.

The Ulysses AGM and car rally was very successful earlier this year and I look forward to the upcoming Heritage Paddle Steamer Gathering and Antiques Appraisal Event. Major events are important for the community and I encourage Council to continue to support the development of future events.

It is important to note that the Internal Audit and Risk Committee has met on a number of occasions this year. It is vital that this Committee assumes an even greater role in monitoring Council's performance in the future.

*From page 6...*

During the process of compiling the Community Strategic Plan Council engaged Peter Kenyon for a week of further community consultation sessions in most parts of the Shire which were very well attended with great participation by all.

I think the community can now feel a real sense of ownership of their Plan for the next 10 years and I would like to acknowledge the Manager of Governance and Corporate Planning Paula Mastrippolito and her team for their efforts in bringing the Plan to fruition.

It was with regret we received the resignation of Director of Sustainable Organisation Terri Maguire in April. Terri and her staff played a big part in completing the Long Term Financial Plan as well as the Delivery and Operational plans. All the best Terri. Simon Rule very capably kept that Department on track awaiting the new Director. Thanks Simon.

We welcome Joy Hentschke as the new Director. Joy comes with a wealth of knowledge and we hope she enjoys her time at the Wentworth Shire.

The Director of Sustainable Development Ken Ross finally has his new managers and the whole Department appears to be working well. Simon Pradhan has already made a big difference on delivering services, particularly roads. Dan Beyer is busy setting up the Water & Sewer systems for the future. We are also fortunate to have Nabin Shrestha working on Council's asset management strategy and associated plans.

Greg Johnston joined us at a busy time with the Wentworth Local Environmental Plan 2011 being finalized, subsequent development of a planning proposal and now dealing with the Land and Environment Court hearing with other staff regarding the Wentworth 2011 LEP.

James King Park Masterplan was completed and I am looking forward to seeing the various aspects of the Plan completed in the future. It will really highlight that great stretch of River and community space.

Junction Links development is another significant project Council has been working through for many years, from a protracted process of acquiring the land through to a develop application ready project. The incoming Council will be briefed on the work to date and will consider how to proceed with the project.

The General Manager Peter Kozlowski should be acknowledged for his vision of a Management Structure that is not staying in the past but will enable Council to deliver improved services in the future. It has not been easy for all involved to see the benefits and I thank Peter for his efforts. I also thank Peter for his guidance and support in my role as Mayor.

I also wish to thank my husband Col for his support during my time on Council, especially since I have been Mayor.

I am confident that we have the staff dedicated to meet the challenges and deliver excellent service in the coming year to all residents in the Wentworth Shire.

I have enjoyed my 13 years on Council and look forward to seeing a new Council that has great vision and enthusiasm for the future and who will work as a strong team in partnership with staff and the community. Jill Davidson, who assists me, the Councillors and the General Manager deserves a big thank you for her willingness and dedication to provide high level support. Her sense of humour makes the job much easier. Thanks Jill.

Margaret Thomson



*Ambulance signing of Agreement July 2011*



2011/2012 saw the start of the local government reform agenda initiated by the Division of Local Government NSW and during the year Council continued to increase its capacity to face possible changes post 2013.

Local councils have been subjected to a wide range of reviews covering legislation, financial sustainability, road maintenance contracts and planning responsibilities as a result of the ongoing reform agenda.

Whilst the reform agenda continued this Council was preparing for an election, monitoring the final stages of the development of the Murray Darling Basin Plan and increasingly finding it challenging to attract grant funds from both State and Federal Governments as competition from populated regional centres was strong.

The year saw Council continue implement its grants, donations and contribution policy returning to the community approximately \$130,000. A range of strategic plans required by legislation were delivered after significant consultation with the community, including the finalization of the Community Basins Project where this Council was project manager in behalf of three councils, including Hay and Balranald.

Whilst it is an achievement to have these plans in place our immediate challenge is to make these plans meaningful for the community and relevant for each resident.

**From a financial point of view Council's main indicators were favourable, reflecting healthy cash reserves and a good financial position.** However, the rates and annual charges outstanding ratio is high because of one significant debtor. This Council, as with many others, face significant challenges in future years to be able to fund maintenance and capital requirements to maintain infrastructure at a satisfactory level.

Council continued to move on with the Junction Links project (to the DA stage) before deciding on which direction the project should take. Council completed the Wentworth Wharf rehabilitation, upgraded power at the George Gordon Oval, Buronga Caravan Park, and Wentworth Showgrounds sites, installed internal toilets at the Wentworth Town Hall, continued to implement a multi-million dollar roads program and upgraded the Dareton Town Square.

Significant progress was made on the planning of the ambulance station in Wentworth (joint venture funded by volunteers, Bendigo Bank and land provided by Council), the George Gordon Oval project, and a number of water and waste water upgrades.

Two prominent events occurred during the year being the Wentworth Tractor Rally sponsored by the Council and PS Ruby 105 year celebrations. Both events were quite successful and continue to demonstrate the capacity of our communities to run such events.

The year saw Council partnering with Mildura Council in an attempt to bring forward the NBN rollout earlier in the Sunraysia Region and a decision to commence working with the community in setting the priorities for the James King Park Master Plan.

The rural renumbering scheme was finalized and Council released its libraries digital audio books for the first time.

*From page 8...*

The long awaited Local Environmental Plan was made in December 2011. Whilst this did not quite deliver all of the outcomes sought due to limitations imposed, Council has committed to seek an amendment, supported by a rural land use study, in an attempt to address some of the issues of concern.

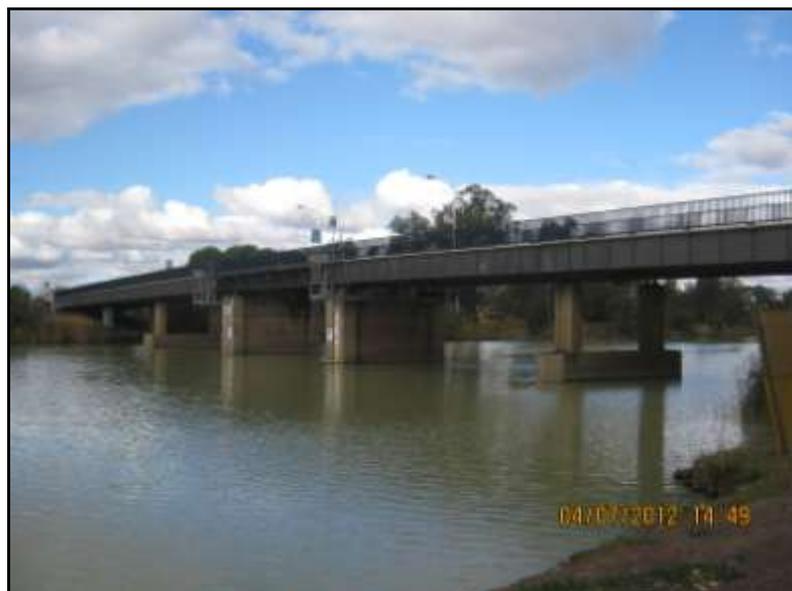
It was disappointing not to be able to complete the Pooncarie Weir and Fish Ladder project due to high rivers.

In relation to the workforce Council expanded its effective fulltime staff number to 106.6, primarily in the outdoor area, to be able to provide adequate resources to attract ongoing funding from Roads and Maritime Services (RMS). RMS has been looking into improved efficiency, including the option of contestability when issuing contracts on road works into the future.

Significant management changes also occurred in the organization structure. Three engineering managers commenced during the year, the Director of Sustainable Organisation took up a position with another Council, and one manager went on maternity leave.

I would like to thank Councillors, staff and the community for their assistance during the year.

Peter Kozlowski



*Wentworth Bridge July 2012*

## Human Resources Activities s428(2)(m)

The Customer Relations Unit of Council is responsible for a number of key activities which include Human Resources, Work Health and Safety, Customer Service and Records Management.

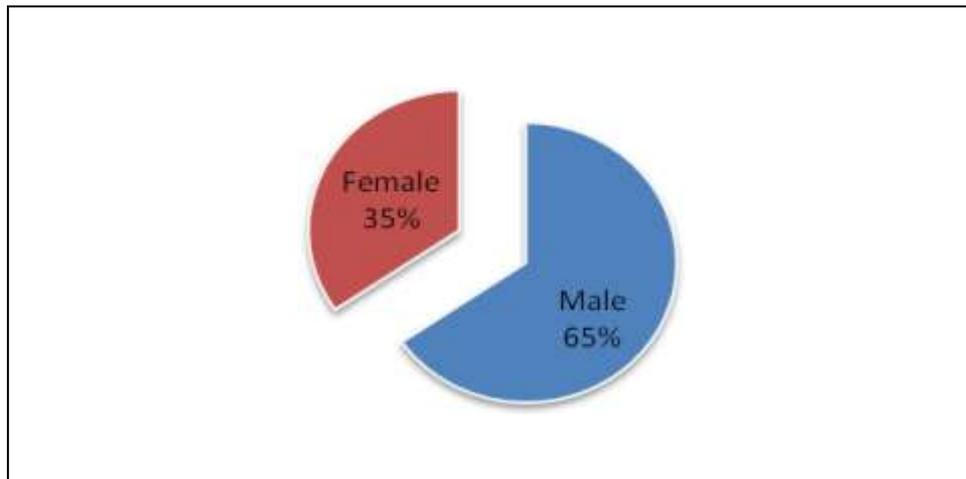
The aim of the Customer Relations Unit is to promote a culture that develops the Council into an organisation that

- Attracts and retains the right people for the right jobs
- Develops employees to excel in their role
- Provides a safe workplace for all employees
- Enables people to perform and contribute to the success of their team
- Has quality, relevant, and utilised Human Resource practices and advice.

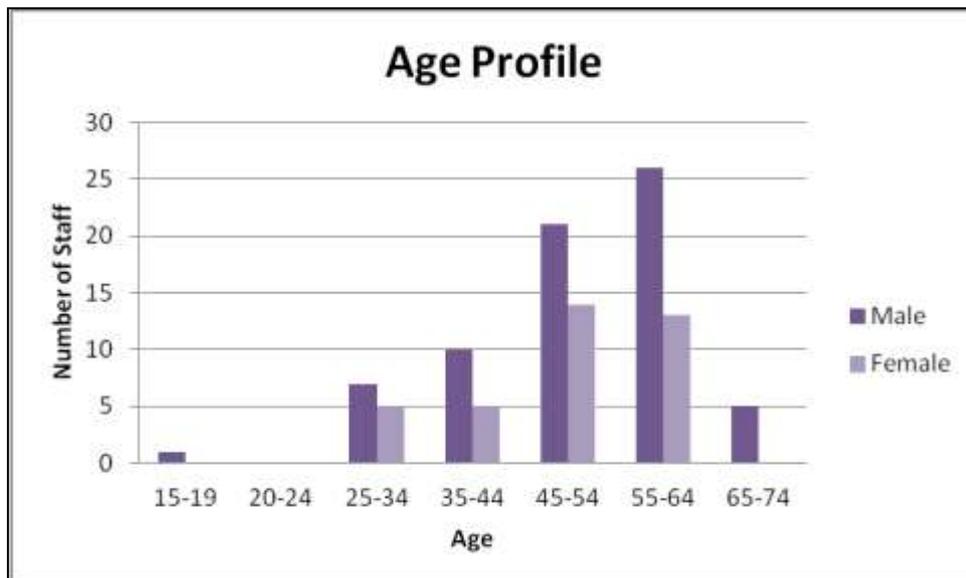
### Council's Workforce

Council employs a total of 119 employees including permanent, part-time, temporary and casual positions. This equates to 106.6 full time equivalent staff.

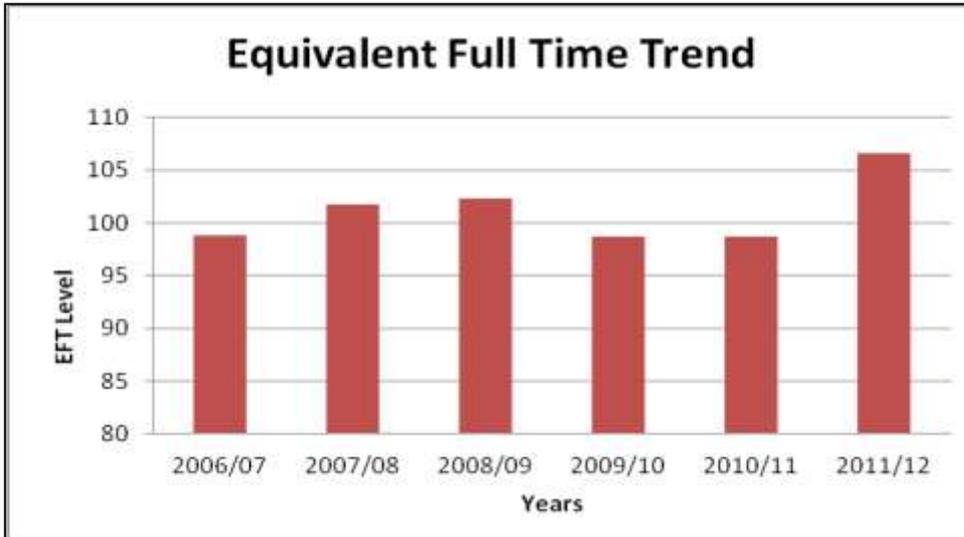
### Staff Profile



### Age Profile



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## TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development and training of staff continues to be addressed by Council with staff attending conferences, seminars, workshops and training on various topics. Council continues to train some of its own staff as a way of dealing with skills shortages. Training records are kept on all employees.

Wentworth Shire Council believes that training and professional development opportunities are vital to maintain and attract a skilled and competent workforce. Each year staff have the opportunity to attend various forms of training such as formal qualifications including Certificate and Diploma accredited courses, acquiring licences, conferences, regional networking meetings, workshops and informal in-house training.

### s428(2)(n) Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

The Wentworth Shire's Equal Employment Policy ensures that Human Resources policies and practices, which include recruitment, selection, promotion and training, are based on the merit principle which means selecting and rewarding the best person in each situation.

All employees or potential employees are assessed on the basis of their skills, qualifications, abilities, work performance and aptitudes.

## STATE COVER WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

As part of its service to members, StateCover provides Councils with an annual WHS self-audit to assist in the evaluation and monitoring of their WHS management System. This comprehensive audit explores a range of issues that are critical to the effective implementation of a WHS management systems and the resulting reduction of worker injuries and illnesses.

The audit consists of two main sections, the first being WHS Management System which examines the 14 key elements of a WHS management system including questions on the availability of WHS documentation and the effective implementation of WHS procedures. Wentworth Shire scored 76.5% in this section. The second section examines how well our council manages 21 common types of hazards that can lead to injury or illness and in this we scored 79.5% .



Peter Kozlowski  
General Manager

- ◆ Governance & Corporate Development
- ◆ Economic Development
- ◆ Community Development



Terri Maguire  
Director Sustainable Organisation

- ◆ Long Term Financial Plan
- ◆ Asset Management
- ◆ Workforce Plan
- ◆ Operational Plan
- ◆ Financial, Rating and Accounting
- ◆ Information Systems
- ◆ Records Management
- ◆ Commercial Activities Management
- ◆ Library Services
- ◆ Payroll
- ◆ Risk Management Services
- ◆ Occupational Health & Safety
- ◆ Human Resources
- ◆ Insurance

s428(2)(g)	Number Senior Staff Members employed by Council during the year	1
cl 217(1)(b)	Total Remuneration	\$188,883
cl 217(1)(b)(i)	Salary	\$165,804
cl 217(1)(b)(ii)	Vehicle Allowance	\$8,000
cl 217(1)(b)(iii)	Superannuation	\$15,079
cl217 (1)(b)(iv)	Non cash	Nil
cl 217(1)(b)(v)	Reportable FBT	Nil



Ken Ross  
Director Sustainable Development

- ◆ Infrastructure Assets
- ◆ Infrastructure Construction
- ◆ Civil Infrastructure Maintenance & Repair
- ◆ Civil Infrastructure Traffic Management
- ◆ Car Parking
- ◆ Street Lighting
- ◆ Water Supply and Sewerage
- ◆ Waste Management
- ◆ Asset Management
- ◆ Depots
- ◆ Trade Waste
- ◆ Design Services
- ◆ Cemetery Services
- ◆ Swimming Pools
- ◆ Bushfire Services
- ◆ Aerodrome Services
- ◆ Community Halls and Facilities
- ◆ Noxious Weeds
- ◆ Emergency Services
- ◆ Town Planning
- ◆ Development Services
- ◆ Building Services
- ◆ Environmental Health
- ◆ Environmental Advisory Services
- ◆ Regulatory Services
- ◆ Custodian of Built and Natural Environment of the Shire

s428(2)(e) Legal Proceedings	
30 June 2012	Summary of Legal Proceedings
Legal Proceedings	Outstanding Rate Collections
Total Expenditure	\$97,165.23

s428(2)(f) Mayoral & Council Fees	
Fee	Amount
Mayoral	\$22,550.04
Councillor	\$89,731.80



*Pictured left: The Mayor Margaret Thomson conducted a citizenship ceremony for Mr Ramesh Thapa on 16 November 2011 in the Council Chambers.*

Councillor Margaret Thomson was elected to the role of Mayor being assisted by Councillor Bill Brook as the Deputy Mayor.

The Shire hosted and supported many civic receptions and events, and conducted a number of information sessions including:

- ◆ A visit by Andrew Heslop Council's 2012 Australia Day Ambassador.
- ◆ Citizenship ceremony for Ramesh Thapa in November 2011
- ◆ Various Country Music Week activities again provided entertainment in October to Shire residents and visitors.
- ◆ Council also supports the Azai Coomealla Student Exchange Program as part of their Sister City relationship.

s428(2)(r) cl217(1)(a1) Councillors Facilities & Expenses	Amount
(i) Provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to Councillors	\$256.36
(ii) Telephone calls made by Councillors	\$3,047.98
(iii) Attendance of Councillors at conferences & seminars	\$14,748.01
(iv) Training of Councillors & provision of skill development	Nil
(v) Interstate visits by Councillors	Nil
(vi) Overseas visits by Councillors	Nil
(vii) Expenses of any spouse or partner	Nil
(viii) Carer expenses	Nil

## SUMMARY OF 2011/2012

Sustainable Organisation has the responsibility of efficiently and effectively managing all of the financial components of Council's operations. Activities in this area are controlled by the Local Government Act , Accounting Standards and Council Policies.

The three broad functions of Sustainable Organisation are:-

- Ensuring that Council has sufficient income to meet its annual expenditure obligations. The annual rates levy and bi-annual water accounts, together with Government Grants and Private Works income provide Council's main source of income.
- Ensuring all aspects of Council's expenditure is processed, monitored, controlled and reported on a timely basis through the Accounting staff in this area and that the appropriate controls are in place to mitigate risk.
- Ensuring that all statutory requirements and internal reporting obligations summarising Council activities are met. This includes quarterly budget and performance reviews presented to Council.

The Financial Statements and Auditor's Reports provide a clear indication that Council has maintained its strong financial position as at 30 June 2012. The net assets of Council (total assets less total liabilities) have increased by \$12,573 million during the 2011/2012 financial year. Total current assets have increased by \$4,310 million overall with cash and investments increasing by \$3,632 million and receivables increasing by \$0.541 million.

Council's overall cash and investments have increased during 2011/2012 from \$15,304 million to \$18,936 million . The amount of unrestricted cash and investments has decreased from \$6,496 million to \$ 6,320 million. The challenges facing Council (as reported in 2011) remain with major infrastructure funding required to maintain assets at an acceptable level is significant and will impact on unrestricted funds in future years.

Council continued to secure good interest rates which resulted in interest and investment revenue of \$ 1,073,000 compared to \$971,000 in 2010/2011.

Council's total loans reduced from \$1,200,000 to \$962,000 in 2011/2012 as budgeted. Loans are paid out at every opportunity when they become due for renewal.

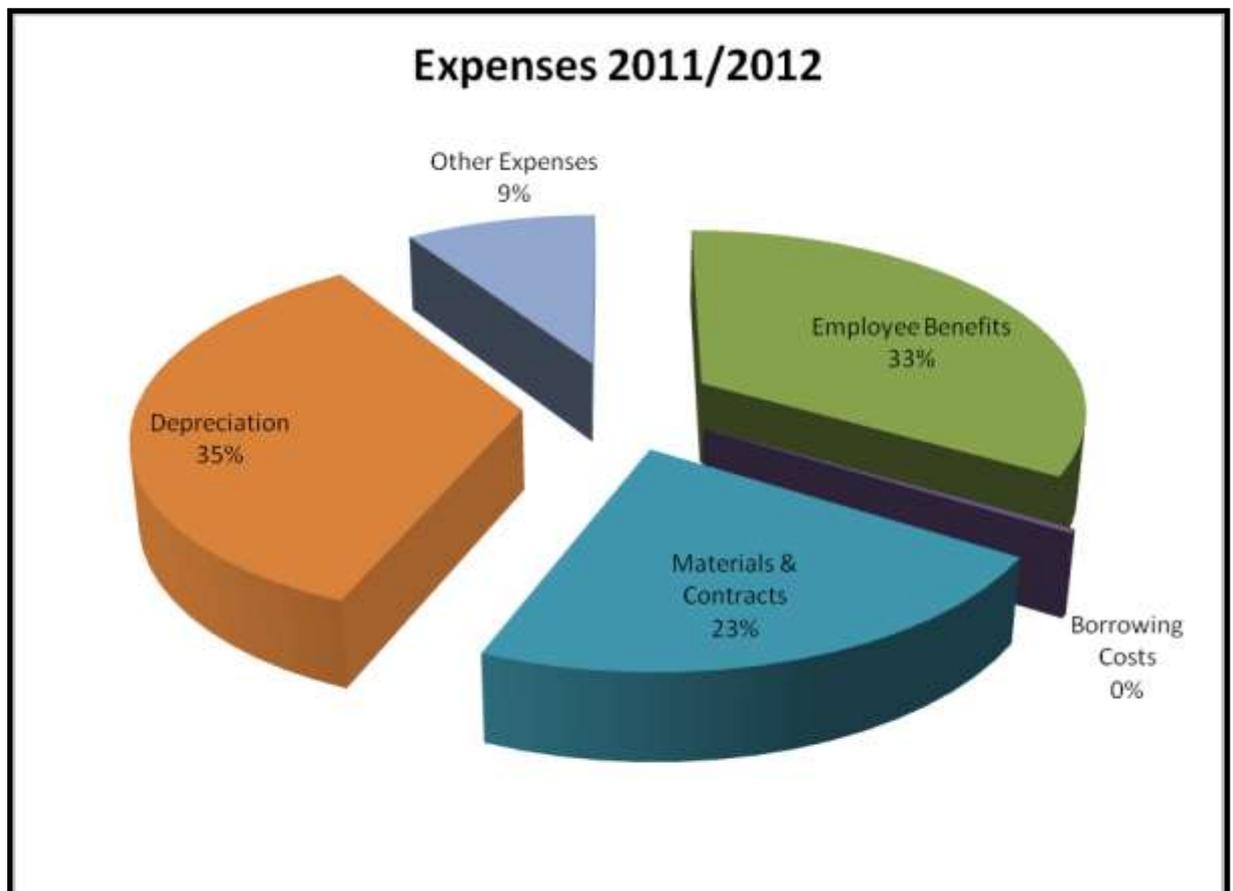
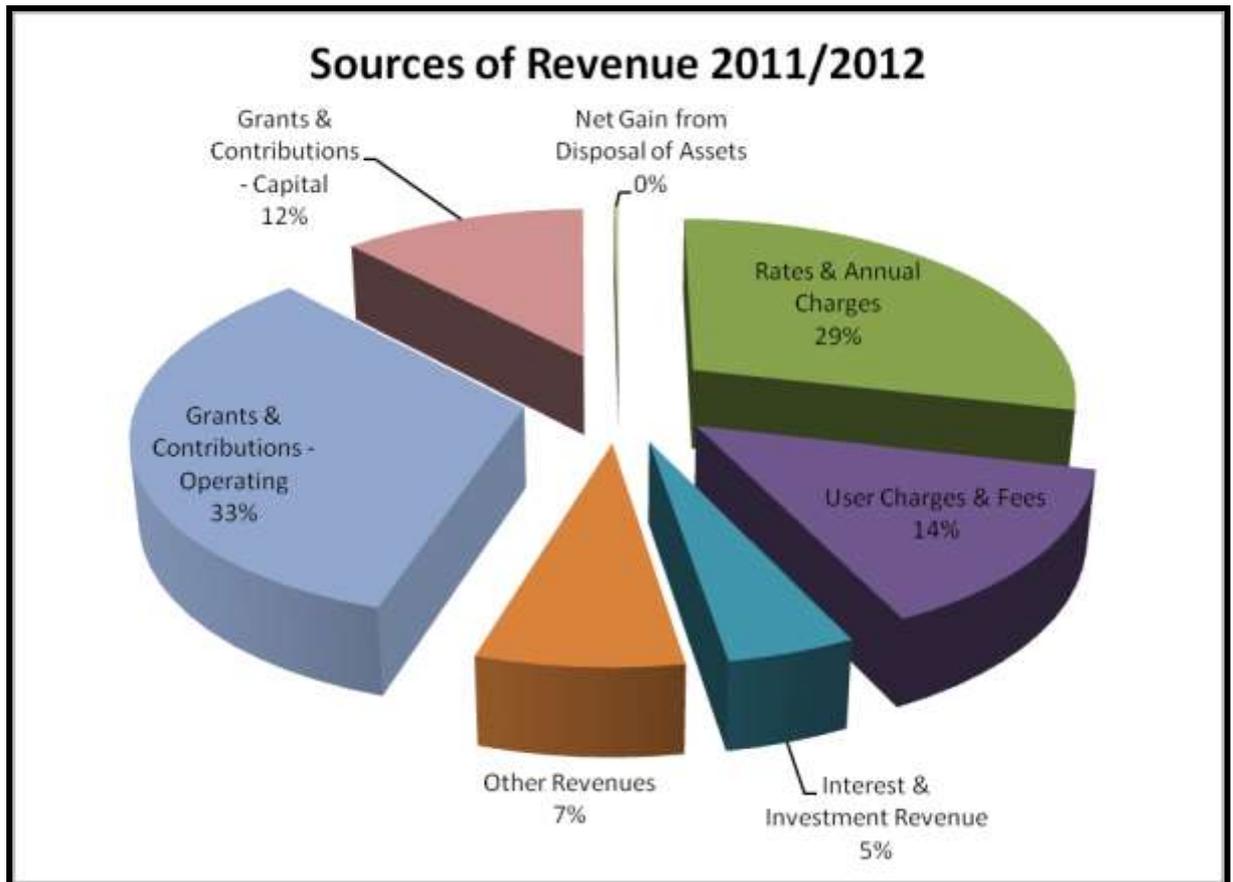
The available cash fluctuates from \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000 and is considered adequate to manage the day to day operational requirements and provides Council with the capacity to respond to any unforeseen event or opportunity.

Council was required to revalue its Water and Sewer assets at 30 June and this lead to an increase of \$10,582 million.

*Continued on page 15...*

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Sources of Revenue 2011/2012



Sustainable Organisation

s428(2)(b) Corporate Services	
Performance	Assessment
The ability of staff to be able to perform allocated functions.	The Financial Services area has an on-going need to train and develop employees due to the frequent changes in legislation and reporting requirements and other needs of Council. Staff have attended training sessions and workshops on Payroll, Occupational Health & Safety, GST, FBT, GIPA and Asset Management. Staff also attended the Finance Professionals Conference and a payroll seminar. <b>All staff in the area received extensive training in Council's Records Management System, TRIM.</b>
The number of Complaints acknowledged within 7 days and resolved where possible within 28 days.	The TRIM Records Management System implemented on July 1 2008 has facilitated better reporting processes of all documentation for Council. All customer requests and complaints are captured electronically allowing for more efficient reporting. There were 9 complaints received and resolved. There were 725 customer requests received in 2011/2012 with nil outstanding or in the process of being resolved.
The number of timely reports to Council.	<b>Council's Grants Commission Report, Australian Bureau of Statistics Report and the Comparative Information Report</b> have all been completed within the specified timeframe. All other financial and statistical reports have been delivered on a timely basis. The 2011/2012 budget was prepared and adopted prior to the end of June with quarterly reports on the Management Plan presented to Council within the statutory timeframe.
The frequency of financial and statistical reports to Council and other external bodies.	Council reports have been presented to Council within an acceptable time frame and all Statutory reports have met the requirements as set out in the Local Government Act 1993.
Annual Financial Statements are prepared and audited within the target time.	The Annual Statements were prepared, audited and were presented <b>to Council in November. Council's Financial Statements were</b> lodged with the Division of Local Government within the statutory timeframe.
Annual Report is prepared within target time and is <b>informative of Council's</b> overall operations.	The Annual Report was prepared within the statutory timeframe and lodged with the Division of Local Government
The number of press releases and information and newsletters provided.	Press releases, information and newsletters released and distributed after Council meetings and as authorised either by the Mayor or General Manager.
Meeting of targets within Management Plan.	All targets met as required.

## PPIP Act s33 Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act 1998

The Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 introduced a set of privacy standards for the public sector in NSW. These standards direct the way public sector agencies deal with personal information.

From 1 July 2000, Council was required to meet the privacy standards by applying the Information Protection Principles outlined in the Privacy Act to all the personal information held by Council. The Council adopted a Privacy Management Plan as required under s33 of the (PPIPA) which explains how the Council complies with the Act and establishes procedures to deal **with requests and complaints about the Council's dealings with personal information.**

The twelve Information Protection Principles deal with the collection, storage, access, use and disclosure of personal information. They are designed to reduce the risk of misuse of personal information. They also allow individuals a reasonable degree of control over what happens to their personal information.

The Disclosure provisions of the Information Protection Principles allow Council to disclose personal information only for a purpose directly related to the purpose for which it was collected or where disclosure is necessary to lessen a threat to someone's life or health.

Exemptions provided in the Act mean that in certain circumstances Council does not have to comply with one or more of the Information Protection Principles. The Local Government **Privacy Code of Practice sets out Council's exemptions from the Act which includes an exemption to personal information contained in Public Registers.**

The Local Government Privacy Code of Practice allows people to access personal information about another person which is contained in a Public Register as long as it is to be used for a purpose directly related to the purpose for which it was collected. If the personal information is not contained in a Public Register, the personal information should be applied for under the Government Information (Public Access) 2009 (GIPA) Act. This requires Council to consult with the person to whom the personal information relates for permission to disclose the information.

It is the policy of the Council to make information accessible to the public wherever possible, whilst complying with the associated relevant privacy legislation contained in the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act (PPIPA) 1998, and the Government Information (Public Access) 2009 (GIPA) Act.

If a person is not satisfied with the way the Council has dealt, is dealing or intends to deal with their personal information, they should not hesitate to complain. If a complaint is made about a breach of the Information Protection Principles or Privacy Code of Practice, the Council must conduct a formal review of the conduct complained about. A complaint must be lodged in writing within 6 months of the time a person first became aware of the conduct complained about. The Council must notify the NSW Privacy Commissioner about the review, its progress and its outcome.

Privacy complaints about the Council can also be made directly to the NSW Privacy Commissioner, who, in consultation with the complainant, could direct the complaint elsewhere for investigation.

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All applications under either the Government Information (Public Access) 2009 (GIPA) Act and Personal Information Protection Act should be addressed to: The General Manager, PO Box 81, Wentworth NSW 2648.

Preliminary telephone enquiries may be directed to the Public Officer by telephoning (03) 5027 5027, by faxing (03) 5027 5000 or by email at [council@wentworth.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@wentworth.nsw.gov.au).

During 2011/2012 no reviews under Section 12 of the Local Government Act or PPIPA were conducted by or on behalf of the Wentworth Shire Council.

### **s428(4)(a) Copy of Council's Audited Financial Reports**

See Appendix A: Audited Financial Statements 2011/2012

cl 132 Rates & Charges written off during the 2011/2012 period = \$759.90  
Debtors Charges written off during 2011/2012 period = \$8,505.87

### **s428(2)(h) Wentworth Shire Council Awarded Contracts 2011/12**

Contractor	Goods / Service Provided	Amount of Contract
Tasco Inland	Fuel Supply	\$657,068.84
Transpacific Cleanaway	Waste Collection	\$356,301.80
Express Engineers	Wentworth Wharf	\$356,663.70
Primal Surfacing	Bitumen Resealing	\$1,219,014.53
Twin City Asphalting	Bitumen Resealing	\$255,864.18
William Adams	Front End Loader	\$387,200

### **s68 cl 10 Government Information (Public Access) 2009 (GIPA) Act**

Council received one application under the Government Information (Public Access) 2009 (GIPA) Act. **Applications must be made in writing using Council's Application form which can be downloaded from the website.** There is a \$30 (GST exempt) application fee applicable to all GIPA requests, which relate to 1 hour of processing time, additional hours can be charged at \$30 per hour unless of a personal nature. Applications of a personal nature are entitled to 20 hours of processing time after which a \$30 per hour fee will apply. Processing time is the time taken to locate information, determine the application and undertake any required consultation and photocopying.

There were no contraventions by Council of an information protection principle or of a privacy code of practice, or disclosure of personal information kept in a public register under Part 5 Section 33.

*Note: The Government Information (Public Access) 2009 (GIPA) Act supersedes the Freedom of Information Act*

s428(2)(j) Details of programs to promote services and access for people with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds consistent with principles of multiculturalism.

At the 2006 Census, Wentworth's population was 7079 with 419 (or 6%) of the population born overseas including English speaking countries. As there is a limited number of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) in the Shire, there was no identified need arising through the Community consultation process. Books in languages other than English are available through the Shire library service with the service being appreciated by the minority group. SBS television services are also available locally. The Northern Mallee Migrant Services offer a range of settlement services for migrants and operate in Mildura as a support service. Council continues to direct enquires to organisations that are appropriately resourced to handle the service requirements of a very small number of people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Council eagerly awaits the release of 2011 Census data so that population figures can be updated.

Council have adopted an Arts and Cultural Plan as well as an Engagement Strategy which recognises the principles of multiculturalism and also the social justice principles.

A Diverse Community Policy has also been adopted by Council and is due for review once new ABS data is released.

Justification

Provide a readily available information service and ensure equity of access to information for all residents.

Act / General Regulation	Performance	Assessment
s428(2)(o)	Statement of external bodies that exercised functions delegated by Council.	S355 Committees - Ruby
s428(2)(p)	Statement of all companies in which Council held a controlling interest.	Nil
s428(2)(q)	Statement of partnerships, co-operatives and other joint ventures.	Council is the administrative body for the Rural fire Service and provides management services for the Balranald Shire Council.
		Council is a member of Riverina and Murray Regional Organisation of Councils (RAMROC). RAMROC represents 18 Member Councils to enhance economic, social and environmental capabilities of communities
s428(2)(r) cl217(1)(c)	Details of activities to develop and promote services and programs that provide for the needs of children.	See Appendix E: Ongoing as listed in Target Group Strategies 1 and 3 of the Wentworth Shire Council Social Plan 2009/2014.
s428(2)(l)	Financially Assist Others Under Section 356.	\$113,161 provided to various recipients
s428(2)(r) cl217(1)(d)(i)	<b>Report on the Council's performance in relation to access and equity activities to meet residents' needs outlined in Council's management plan.</b>	See Appendix D: Principal Activities Performance for year ending 30 June 2012.

## Special Variation Expenditure

Report on the special variation expenditure if required to do so by the instrument made by the Minister.

In June 2004, Council was granted approval by the Minister for Local Government to increase its general income to 7.18% from ordinary rates for periods 2004/2005 to 2023/2024 to assist with funding the payments on a loan raised to construct a levee bank around Wentworth.

The project cost was in excess of \$4 million with \$1 million to be repaid by the ratepayers. A Loan was taken out through Local Government Financial Services for the amount of \$1 million with the balance as at 30 June 2012 being \$541,032.

The approval was subject to the following conditions:

The Council will raise \$80,373 by additional rates for funding the principal and interest payments on a loan raised to construct a levee bank around the town of Wentworth.

The Council will reduce its general income for the 2024/2025 rating year by \$80,373 plus the equivalent cumulative proportion of this increase from any general variation increases or any special variation increases approved for the 2005/2006 to 2023/2024 rating years inclusive.

A Tourism special rate of \$10 per assessment was approved by the Minister for the operation of the Visitor Information Centre.

The council clearly reports outcomes and expenditures in its annual report for the term of the variation.

### S508A

Council has no special variation under S508A.

*Pictured Right:  
Playground equipment at Tapio Park Dareton*



*Pictured left:  
Playground equipment at Police Park Buronga*

## NOXIOUS WEEDS

2012 has been a very busy year both work and funding wise, with additional funds allocated through I&I for our Boneseed project totalling \$23000 over two years, year one is completed. The Shire has Boneseed infestations over 6 known patches totalling some 867 Ha, Council has controlled 2 of the patches and will continue to work on the rest. A condition of the additional funding requires the involvement of Aboriginal workers so Council has been able to have a work team for two days from the Barkindji Maraura Elders Environmental Team. 8 workers were allocated to assist the Pest Control Officer to walk two of the patches where approximately 2000 plants were hand-pulled. Council has been allocated extra funding for 4 more days with this work team and this will greatly assist the Pest Control Officer as some of the patches are in very dense scrub at the back of Dareton.



The Roadside Weed Control program has progressed very well with the use of new weedicide called Trimac which boasts up to 9 months of weed free roadsides with positive results to date. There were extra inspection runs earlier in the year along Council's waterways after the high water events at the start of the year. Council is responsible for about 800 kms of waterways in the Shire. The high waters also caused extra travel with regard to Western Riverina Noxious Weeds Action Group meetings that are usually held at Hay, but had to be moved to Darlington Point as Hay was inundated. Roads which are listed as High Risk pathway for the Shire have been inspected, some twice a month, these are Sturt and Silver City highways, Arumpo, Renmark, Pooncarie and Pinecamp – Springwood roads. These roads are listed as they may provide entry of weeds that we do not yet have. Post 30 June this year, Council was able to provide live samples of Boneseed and Coolatai grass for display at the DPI tent at the Wentworth show, both are listed as Weeds of National Significance.

## FOOD PREMISES

Council has 63 food businesses in its area. Of these 50 are considered high risk food businesses and 10 are medium risk food businesses. All food premises were required to have a nominated food safety supervisor by 31 October 2011. Of the 63 premises in Council's area 60 are required to have a food safety supervisor. To date the majority of food premises operating in the Shire were found to be complying with this requirement at the time of inspection. Those properties that had not completed had commenced work to meeting this requirement. Council continues to work with these premises to ensure these requirements are satisfied.

In addition to food inspection services Council has provided value-added services including technical advice and provision of information including leaflets, hand-outs, fact sheets, links to websites for food businesses. Council also provided some supervision for food handlers seeking accreditation.

s428(2)(b)Health	
Performance	Assessment
Children's Health Centre Building maintained to acceptable standards	Council has one childcare facility within its area that has been inspected. This was found to be maintained in a satisfactory condition.
To inspect all food premises annually	Council completed a primary inspection of all premises in its area during the year. Of these 38 required re-inspection with the range of items requiring attention being from very minor to more significant upgrades of premises and issues relating to food hygiene, handling and temperature control practices and foreign matter in food. Re-inspections generally resulted in a high level of compliance.

## cl 217(1)(f) Statement of Companion Animals Act and Regulations

Council provides holding facilities for dogs and cats at the Buronga Animal Shelter (pound). The program of ongoing improvements saw an after hours drop-off facility built at the Buronga Shelter during 2011/12. This provides an additional service for the public to deal with unwanted or stray animals in a responsible manner.

Council maintains a database register of companion animals impounded. Over the 2011/12 financial year a total of 256 animals were impounded. This included 177 dogs and 79 cats. Of these only 12 dogs and 48 cats were destroyed, with the remainder either returned to their owner or rehomed. Council works closely with volunteers from Victorian Dog Rescue, Rural Rescue and Sunraysia Animal Rescue to rehome companion animals. All animals that are to be rehomed are desexed, microchipped and registered as part of the rehoming process. Details of impounded animals are posted on Council's website.

**Council's staff are trained in the microchipping of animals. All companion animals over the age of six (6) months are required to be microchipped and registered. Council also encourages people to have their companion animals desexed.**

Council will soon be recommencing its survey of townships within the Shire to look at what companion animals are kept within the townships and to educate residents on their responsibilities under the Companion Animals Act.



*Pictured above:  
Signing the MoU with Local Ambulance Service & Ambulance Service of NSW and Wentworth Shire Council on 6 July 2011*

Public Order & Safety

s428(2)(b) Public Order and Safety	
Performance	Assessment
Maintain an acceptable standard of trained personnel	Council has now engaged two full time <b>Rangers to service this area of Council's</b> functions. These staff are trained or completing training.
Standard operating procedures carried out in accordance with current legislation , Council policies and procedures	Maintained. <b>A review of Council's Companion Animals</b> Management Plan including consideration of a suitable off leash area(s) is required.
Reporting of companion animal microchipping and registration.	Maintained.

In relation to Council's Public Order & Safety function, Council provides services to the community which protects community members and promotes confidence in their personal safety and quality of life.



*Pictured above: Drop off cages at Buronga pound*

## s428(2)(i1) Fire Protection and Equipment

To say that we were lucky would be an understatement. The season had the potential to be very busy, significant rains across the zone from December 2010, allowed vegetation growth which had not been seen in the west of the state for many years. Leading into the 2011/2012 BFD, the new growth visible in areas that had been barren for 12 years, was more than a sight for sore eyes, it was a relief for the agricultural sector in all forms.

While this was a welcome change in fortunes, it also increased the level of risk of bushfires within the zone. Lightning was the common factor in the ignition of all fires listed below.

### WENTWORTH

- Springwood 25/12/2011 15 Ha
- Camborn 23/01/2012 200 Ha
- Tarcoola 26/01/2012 4 Ha

Early detection and rapid response by brigades was the reason none of these fires escalated to their full potential. For this I am thankful to every person who assisted in the suppression effort.

It is also reassuring to see that land holders are prepared to protect their assets with the fire break maintenance being carried out on property boundaries. Communities across the zone have heeded the warnings of the possibility of bushfire threat and moved to protect themselves.

Feedback was extremely positive with reference to the "Farm Wise" brochure initiated by the RFS and distributed to all land holder by the Wentworth Shire last spring.

RFS funding initiatives saw the Wentworth Shire Council receive \$72,947.00 in 2011 2012 for Road Side vegetation Management.

Funding received for slashing and follow up chemical treatment of roadside vegetation to 3 metres on both side of roads:

Sturt Highway, Gol Gol to the Shire Boundary.

- 110 kms x 3 metres Slashing.
- 110 kms x 3 metres, Chemical Treatment.

River Road, Dareton to Buronga.

- 31 kms x 3 metres Slashing.
- 31 kms x 3 metres, Chemical Treatment.

Pooncarie Road, Wentworth to the Shire Boundary.

- 338 kms x 3 metres Slashing.
- 338 kms x 3 metres, Chemical Treatment.

Silver City Highway, Wentworth to the Shire Boundary.

- 307 kms x 3 metres Slashing.
- 307 kms x 3 metres, Chemical Treatment.



Further hazard reduction works will continue as planned.

Investment into the future was realised with the purchase of a state of the art Category 1 tanker for the Gol Gol Brigade.

The replacement program allows for the existing 10 year old tanker to be moved to Ellerslie to enhance the brigades capacity in this area.

The WSC & RFS continue to work together to support the volunteers of the Shire.

*Continued on page 25...*

s428(2)(i1) Fire Protection and Equipment (continued)

Community Safety Report

The Lower Western Zone RFS now has a dedicated RFS Community Safety Officer and as a result there has been a significant increase in community engagement activities. Several schools in the Wentworth shire have already had a visit from their local Rural Fire Brigade with visits to the remaining schools already scheduled. This year a number of local brigades will be holding open days to further educate the community on being prepared in case of fire. Due to the overwhelming success of the Fire Wise days held in the area last year the RFS is planning to run those again in the coming year.



*Pictured above: Flame thrower was utilised at Scotia during September 2011*



*Pictured above: Medal recipients at presentation held at the Coomealla Club*

**"Access for all at the Wentworth Town Hall"** project was sponsored by the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs



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s428(2)(b) Housing & Community Amenities	
Performance	Assessment
Current standard of streets maintained.	Council allocates an appropriate budget to maintain a pleasant amenity within the townships throughout the shire.
Provide efficient collection service for the refuse.	Street bins and skips are provided and emptied on a regular basis to address this matter.
All maintenance works completed as required to prevent flood damage.	Council inspects and maintains the Wentworth Levee Bank in line with the Department of Public Works audit standards.
Provide adequate service as required for internment of deceased persons.	Council delivers on this matter by way of the maintenance of the Pooncarie, Wentworth, Coomealla and Gol Gol cemeteries.
Cemetery maintained in a clean and tidy condition.	This standard is achieved through the resources of the Parks and Gardens staff.
All maintenance work completed as required on public amenities.	Council allocates appropriate budget and resources to deliver on this matter.
Toilets maintained in a clean and tidy condition.	Council allocates appropriate budget and resources to deliver on this matter.

s93G(5) Information about planning agreements  
Wentworth Shire Council has not entered into any planning agreements for the reporting period.

Council has approved 176 development applications and 17 s96 applications for amendment of development applications during the reporting period during the 2011-12 reporting period.

s428(2)(b) Town Planning	
Performance	Assessment
Undertake statutory work within the legislated timeframes	The time frame for the majority of applications has been reduced significantly so that the majority of applications are dealt with in less than the statutory time periods. Council has a number of development applications that are on hold. Some of these are relatively large sub-division applications that are pending a strategic stormwater drainage strategy. Once this is completed this will provide a very long pipeline of allotments for future residential development in the Buronga Gol Gol area. Council has a number of applications from one developer that are well outside the statutory time frames. Council has appointed an additional planner whose primary responsibility has been to try and finalise the determination of these applications.
Implement new Local Environmental Plan	The Wentworth Local Environmental Plan 2011 was gazetted on 16 December 2011. Council was part way through amendment No. 1 to Wentworth LEP 2011 by the end of June, 2012. As at 31/8/12 Council had received the final Parliamentary Counsel opinion for the making of this amendment.

Council has approved 49 construction certificates and 14 complying development certificates during the 2011/12 reporting period. In addition there were 30 construction certificates and 11 complying development certificates issued by private certifiers operating within the Wentworth Shire area during 2011-12.  
These approvals included 16 new houses.  
There have been a total of 58 occupation certificates issued for work completed during the 2011-12 reporting period.

s428(2)(b) Building Control	
Performance	Assessment
Issue approvals within legislated time frame.	These approvals have generally been issued within close to the statutory timeframe. 27

Council provides a 240 litre wheelie bin kerb side collection service through a contract. This consists of 2842 services conducted through the residential and commercial sector of the community. For the reporting period the cost of this was \$ 346,000.

The disposal of waste is also managed by contractors. Council has landfill sites at Pooncarie, Ellerslie, Pomona and Buronga. Dareton and Wentworth are serviced by way of transfer stations with the waste being landfilled at Buronga.

s428(2)(b) Domestic Waste, Recycling & Hard Waste Management	
Performance	Assessment
Provision of effective collection service.	Council continues to provide a reliable 240 litre mobile garbage service throughout the local government area.
Provision of effective disposal facilities.	Currently Council has facilities for the disposal of waste by way of landfill at Buronga, Pomona, Ellerslie and Pooncarie. Transfer stations are situated at Wentworth and Dareton.

<b>Recycle Waste Bin</b> (blue with yellow lid)	<b>Organic Waste Bin</b> (green with lime green lid)	<b>General Waste Bin</b> (all green)
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Glass bottles &amp; jars</li> <li>✓Rigid plastic</li> <li>✓Paper</li> <li>✓Cardboard</li> <li>✓Newspapers</li> <li>✓Magazines</li> <li>✓Aluminium</li> <li>✓Steel</li> <li>✓Aerosols</li> <li>✓Foil containers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓Food scraps</li> <li>✓Garden waste</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓All other household wastes</li> </ul>

s428(2)(b) Roads & Bridges / Engineering Operations	
Performance	Assessment
Routine maintenance and other rehabilitation works carried out on time and within budget.	All work completed within allocated timeframe and budget limits.
All grant funds fully expended.	Target completed.
Additional funding opportunities pursued with RTA by way of proposals and submissions.	Additional funding to the value of \$904,404 was obtained and work completed.
Sealed and unsealed carriageways maintenance by Council and Contractors.	Maintenance has been undertaken as required and conditions allow:-  Expenditure on SH14 and SH22 to end June 2011- \$914,586  Expenditure on regional roads to end June 2011- \$1,378,589
Bituminous seals / re-seals and gravel resheeting carried out by Contractors.	Local Roads Urban – Resealing - \$201,725.26  Local Roads –Rural – Resealing - \$207,143.33  Regional Roads – Resealing - \$413,269.97
Main street and gutters cleaned at least weekly.	This target has been achieved.
Tree conditions kept at a minimum hazard and median strips maintained regularly.	This target has been achieved.

INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS

The planned works program for the reporting period was delayed in the delivery due to unprecedented rain events causing many road closures throughout the Shire.

The major road works for the year were shoulder widening on Silver City Highway, construction of a section of the Pooncarie Menindee Road, reshaping and re-sheeting of sections of the Arumpo Rd and completion of repairs caused by storm and flood damage.

The civil works team has undertaken work on shared ways, footpaths, kerb and gutter drainage, boat ramp facilities and signage. The Fotherby Park upgrade was successfully completed.

The parks and gardens group has maintained the open space areas and the cemeteries to an acceptable standard. Significant landscaping improvements to Rest Areas along the state highways have also been completed

The construction and landscaping of the Wentworth Wharf Project has been successfully completed.

s428(2)(k) Works on Private Land	
Sundry Projects < \$10,000	Road Works
\$13,200—RMS—Mallee Fowl Rest Area	N/A

s428(2)(d)(i) Public Works Report , see Appendix A: Annual Financial Statements (schedule 7)
s428(2)(d)(ii) Public Works Report, see Appendix A: Annual Financial Statements (schedule 7)
s428(2)(d)(iii) Public Works Maintenance, see Appendix A: Annual Financial Statements (schedule 7)



*Pictured left:  
Pooncarie cemetery taken  
February 2012*

s428(2)(b) Recreation & Culture	
Performance	Assessment
Maintain at least 2010/2011 membership level for library services.	Library memberships were less than 2010/2011 levels with registered members decreasing from 3210 to 3072. This has been due to library staff continuing to remove inactive memberships. 234 new memberships were recorded during the year.
All maintenance works completed as required on our heritage sites.	Target is being achieved.
Provide financial contribution for cultural events.	Council has supported the Country Music Festival, the Mainstreet Music Market, Sweatbox Art, the Mildura and Wentworth Arts Festival and hosted a number of receptions.
Provide and maintain safe public swimming pools.	Target achieved.
Maintain appropriate facilities.	All recreation and community facilities are regularly maintained.
Provide acceptable standard of recreation facilities.	Target achieved.

s428(2)(b) Community Services	
Performance	Assessment
Review levels of support and ensure that all Community facilities remain equitable and fair.	Council provided approximately \$130,000 to community groups and organisations through its donations, contributions and grants program.
Implementation of Crime Prevention Plan.	Council works closely with the key community service agencies and groups to support the implementation of diversionary programs and other offender programs for young people and other identified high risk target groups.

## LIBRARY SERVICES

- Library memberships, at 30 June 2012, were recorded at 3,072. Much work is continuing to clear out inactive memberships and update member information, which is a continuous process.
- Library resources have dropped in number, with a total of 23,248 items. A reasonable amount of the non-fiction and reference collections have not been upgraded due to the preference for online information sources.
- 2012 is the National Year of Reading, and the library service has been making every effort to promote reading to the community. Local special project funding was spent on badging and marketing material for NYR, and with the addition of a Public Libraries Australia grant, Baby Book Packs were formulated and distributed to parents and carers of small children. The packs include information about using books and stories with children from birth. In an effort to reach as many people as possible with the NYR message and the baby packs, the library staff volunteered to provide a tent at the Gol Gol School Fair, promoting the library, reading, and providing a continuous storytelling roster. Events such as this will be continued until the end of the National Year of Reading.
- The South West Zone digital library is now up and running, and was launched during Library and Information Week in May. We held launches and information sessions in each branch library, and the audio downloads have proven to be popular. In addition last year's library development grant of \$26,000 for talking books has resulted in an additional 200 titles. This has been reflected in the increase of loans of audio material to 1,123 from last year's total of 788.
- Total loans of materials were slightly down from last year, with an increase at Buronga library. Buronga library also counted more visitors through the doors. Loans of non-book materials showed an overall increase.
- The usage of the public access computers in the libraries continues at a high level, with Wentworth library showing increased usage. Wifi bookings have increased at all branches, with a total of 72 tickets sold, twice the number of the previous year.
- Library staff members fielded more information enquiries than last year, although use of the library's online databases has decreased. The library also supplied more inter-library loans to other libraries than in previous years.
- 469 various programmes were offered to a wide range of community members, with the total attendances reaching 2,626. Programs and events included Library and Information Week with various programs; Library Lovers' Week; Children's book Week; National Simultaneous Storytime; Summer Reading Club; the library walking group; 3 very active book clubs; various local and family history events with the help of the Wentworth Historical Society; and the popular storytimes, school holiday activities, and visits from preschools and primary schools continued throughout the year. The Friends of the Library volunteered many hours to help with the huge library book sale, held in Wentworth Town Hall in March.
- New shelving and furniture installed in the Dareton library to reflect the change in usage patterns have resulted in a more open, flexible arrangement which suits the high use of computers and technology by local young people. Buronga library's increased usage, in a small temporary premises, brings home the need to seriously consider alternative housing for this area. The high use of the local studies area, and the rapidly increasing historical collection and its maintenance is also an issue that will need to be addressed.



*Pictured left: Mayor Margaret Thomson unveils the digital library front page at Wentworth Library on Monday 21 May 2012*

*Pictured right: The library team ready for action at the National Year of Reading tent at the Gol Gol Fair*



TOURISM

Accredited Visitor Information Centre

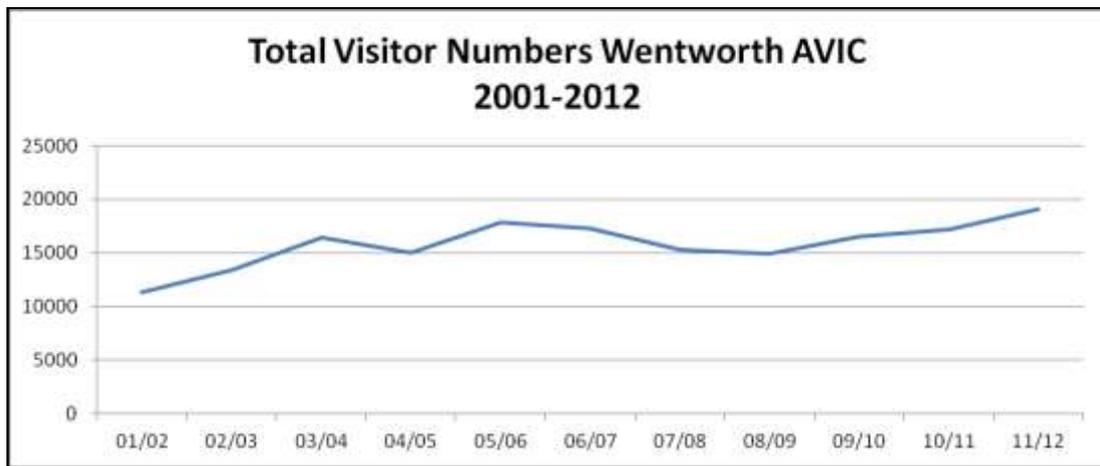
Council continues to provide a significant investment into tourism through the continued operation of its Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) in Wentworth.

The Wentworth Visitors Information Centre is a level 2 accredited centre, which operates 363 days of the year and is open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, and 9am to 1pm on weekends and public holidays. To accommodate these opening hours, the centre is staffed by a combination of full-time, part-time staff and casual holiday staff.

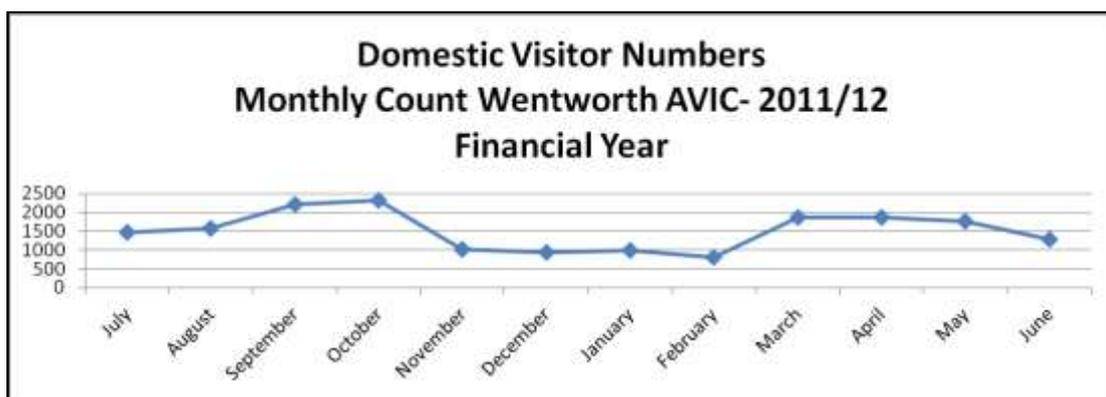
Visitor Statistics

A total of 19,094 people visited the AVIC in the 2011/2012, 1706 more than in 2010/2011 financial year. The majority of visitors to the AVIC (18,137) are domestic travellers, with 957 visitors being international travellers.

The graph below shows the annual count of visitors (domestic and International) who have accessed the services of the AVIC during the past 11 years.



The graph below demonstrates the domestic visitation peaks which occur annually in the months of March/April/May and September/October. These peaks in visitation are influenced by seasonal holiday periods and the Autumn and Spring movement of domestic travellers from the southern to north eastern States.



Event Tourism

Event tourism in the Wentworth Shire and wider region continues to drive focussed domestic visitation both in and out of peak seasons.

Wentworth Shire townships experienced increase in visitation during the 2012 Ulysses Annual General Meeting which was held in Mildura in April 2012 and attracted over 5000 visitors to the region. Council provides funding and support to staging events in the Shire as a key driver of first time visitation and repeat visitation to the region.

*Continued on page 34...*

*From page 33...*

Event Tourism

Key events supported by Council and the AVIC during the past 12 months were:-

- Australian Mounted Games
- Junction Junk
- Shitbox Rally
- Tri-ennial Great Wentworth Tractor Rally
- Sweatbox and Agri Art Exhibition
- Wentworth Mainstreet Music Market and Music on the Darling in association with the Mildura Country Music Festival
- Annual Operation Pelican – Rowathon
- Pooncarie Race Day and Street Party
- Wentworth Big Day Out and Melbourne Cup Race Day
- And numerous local festivals and community focussed activities.



*Photo : Local resident Ron Kerridge with his tractor 'Ruby 2' at the Main Street Muster - Wentworth and District Community Bank Great Wentworth Tractor Rally July 2012.*

*Photo Courtesy J Hope.*

Marketing activities

Local regional tourism

Wentworth Regional Tourism Inc (WRTI) the locally based tourism organisation has recently completed a project funded by Wentworth Shire Council to provide visitor information in 6 tourist bays. Advertising sales on this signage will provide WRTI with a revenue stream to improve the capacity and sustainability of this organisation.

National and International Marketing

With limited resources for marketing activities, Wentworth Shire Council takes advantage of the marketing activities of key local and regional tourism organisations which have mature national and international marketing campaigns encouraging inbound regional tourism.

Wentworth Shire Council has continued its strategic alliance with Mildura Tourism and has joined the newly formed Murray Regional Tourism Inc to continue leveraging visitation from the national and international campaigns these two organisations have developed for the region.

While Mildura continues to be the primary destination for national and international visitors, iconic tourism attractions of Mungo National Park and the Junction of the Murray and Darling Rivers and several award winning restaurants and hotels are within the Wentworth Shire.

s428(2)(b) Business Undertakings	
Performance	Assessment
Working relationships established with Development Organisations with relevant Government Departments.	Council has established good working relationships with Mildura Tourism, NSW Council of Tourism Association, Mildura / Wentworth Arts Festival, Wentworth Regional Tourism Inc., Tourism NSW, Outback Regional Tourism Organisation, Australian Inland Botanic Gardens, AURORA Practical Solutions (accreditation and running of Visitor Information Centre) and Murray Darling Basin as a Link Partner.
Website and promotional material developed and maintained.	The web site is continuously improved and updated. Council minutes, Council newsletters, Media Releases, Events, <b>Information on the Ruby, Council's Heritage conservation</b> efforts, information for planning and development, hall hire and charges, position descriptions for vacant positions, tenders, water rates and charges, tip charges and other relevant information are updated on a regular basis.



*Rose garden at the Inland Botanical Gardens*

## Competitive Neutrality cl 217(1)(d)(vi)(v)

In accordance with the framework set out in the June 1996 NSW Government Policy Statement "Application of National Competition Policy to Local Government" and other guidelines and documentation in relation to this matter, Council has declared that the following are to be considered as Business Units:

Category 1 Business Activities s428(2)(r) cl217(1)(d)(ii), (iv), viii)

**"Category 1" Business Units have total annual operating revenues that exceed \$2 million.**

Council has no Category 1 Business Units.

Category 2 Business Activities s428(2)(p) cl217(1)(d)(iii)

**"Category 2" Business Units have total annual operating revenues that do not exceed \$2 million.**

Council has two Category 2 Business Units:-

Wentworth Shire Council Waste Water Operations

Comprising the whole of the operations and assets of the waste water reticulation and treatment systems servicing Wentworth, Dareton and Buronga/Gol Gol.

Wentworth Shire Council Water Operations

Comprising the whole of the operations and assets of water treatment systems servicing Wentworth, Dareton, Buronga/Gol Gol and Pooncarie.

The Division of Local Government's July 1997, guidelines "Pricing and Costing for Council Businesses: A Guide to Competitive Neutrality" outline the process for identifying and allocating costs to activities and provide a standard of disclosure requirements. These disclosures are reflected in Council's pricing and/or financial reporting systems and include taxation equivalents.

The Department of Energy, Utilities and Sustainability's May 2004, guidelines "Best-Practice Management of Water Supply and Sewerage" include specific requirements relating to the calculation and payment of "dividends" by water supply and sewerage business units. Council is currently subsidising the Waste Water Fund and there have been no dividends paid to Council based on rate of return on investments.

Financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2012 for each of Councils declared Business Activities are displayed in the Special Purpose Financial Reports.

## Competitive Neutrality cl217(1)(d)(vii), (ix)

**Council's complaints procedure provides for management of competitive neutrality complaints. Council Policy is available on Council's website.**

No complaints were received by the Wentworth Shire Council for the period ending June 2012.

## WATER SUPPLIES

Council is responsible for ensuring the quality of water delivered to residents in townships throughout the Shire complies with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines. To monitor and achieve this compliance Council has a water monitoring program in place and the following results were recorded for the 2011/2012 reporting period.

### Gol Gol Buronga Dareton System:

398 water samples taken with 11 exceptions.

1 for high aluminium, 6 for high pH, 1 for high turbidity, 3 for total coliforms.

### Pooncarie System:

110 water samples taken with 3 exceptions.

1 for high aluminium, 2 for total coliforms.

### Wentworth System:

127 water samples taken with 1 exception.

1 for high pH.

s428(2)(b) Water Supply	
Performance	Assessment
Australian Drinking Water Guideline Standards met.	Council has met this target.
Routine maintenance and other rehabilitation works to provide potable and raw water were carried out on time and within budget.	Council has allocated appropriate resources to achieve this.
To provide and maintain a safe, healthy and high quality potable water supply and an attractive living environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adequate service provided.</li> <li>- Maintain aesthetic appearance of towns.</li> <li>- Filtered water for Wentworth, Dareton, Buronga, Gol Gol and Pooncarie.</li> <li>- Raw water for Wentworth, Dareton, Buronga, Gol Gol and Pooncarie.</li> </ul>	This target has been met.
Construction of Pooncarie Weir.	This was not achieved based on the fact that the site not being accessible due to high flows in the Darling River.

## SEWER SYSTEMS

The sewer systems and waste water treatment plants are operating satisfactorily. Council supervises the maintenance contract for the Namatjira settlement on behalf of the NSW Office of Water. Council has commenced a project for replacement of the Wentworth waste water treatment plant.

s428(2)(b) Wastewater	
Performance	Assessment
Wastewater Mains repaired by contractor and Council.	Required maintenance achieved in line with budget allocation.
To provide and maintain a safe, healthy and high quality waste water disposal system.	Adequate service provided

CI217(1)(e) Stormwater management	
Performance	Assessment
Replaced gate valves through levee banks in Shire by Council	Program continuing
Wetlands operation, maintenance of pump system, maintain evaporation ponds in Gol Gol and Buronga by Council	Ongoing operational activity
Wentworth levee banks – clean and maintain drainage outlets work carried out by Council	Achieved outcome target



*Just cruising on the PS Ruby!*