



Wentworth Shire Council **Annual Report** 2013-2014

Recording our Progress



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WENTWORTH SHIRE COUNCIL

The Mayor and Councillors



Cr. Don McKinnon
Mayor

A message from the Mayor

It gives me great pleasure to provide to my constituents the Annual Report for 2013/14.

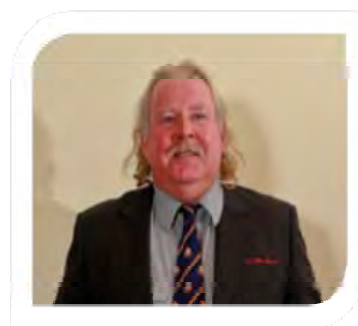
In the lead up to the September 2012 Council elections my fellow Councillors and I each had a very clear vision of why we wanted to be elected to Council. The 2013 – 2017 Delivery Program provides us, as your elected representatives, the opportunity to document precisely what we want to achieve during our term of office. This therefore is the first annual report in which I am able to report on the progress that this Council is making on the activities that it wishes to deliver to assist the community achieve what is set out in the Community Strategic Plan.

There have been many external factors that have contributed to making this one of the most challenging years I have ever experienced in local government. Yet, despite the challenges and increased demands we have still managed to deliver the majority of tasks committed to for the financial year.

Both individually and collectively my fellow councillors and I have continued to stay in touch with our constituents to ensure that we continue to represent the needs of our community, and I am very appreciative of the support shown to me by all of my Councillors, and in particular my Deputy Mayor. I would also like to congratulate the General Manager, Peter Kozlowski, and his staff for the wonderful dedication and commitment that they have shown during these difficult and challenging times.

Thankyou.

Councillor Don McKinnon
Mayor, Wentworth Shire Council



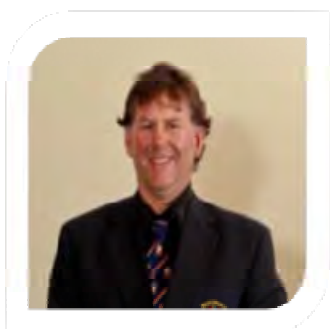
Cr. Paul Cohrs
Deputy Mayor



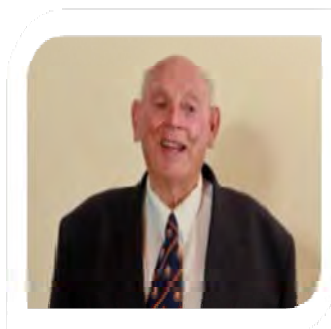
Cr. Bob Wheeldon



Cr. Brad Clarke



Cr. Ian Whitfield



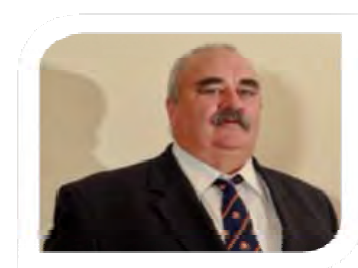
Cr. Bill Wheeldon



Cr. Brian Wakefield



Cr. Melisa Hederics



Cr. Peter Nunan

Integrated Planning and Reporting

Community Strategic Planning

In June 2012, after an intense period of community consultation, the Wentworth Shire Council endorsed, on behalf of the community, the first version of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP). Entitled *Footsteps to our future*, the Wentworth Region Community Strategic Plan outlines 11 community based objectives to be achieved over a 10 year period.

Following the Council elections in September 2012, the newly elected Council reviewed the CSP and endorsed the Community Strategic Plan for the next 10 year period being 2013/2023.

The Delivery Program

Under the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework Council's 4 year Delivery Program establishes how during its Term of Office, Council will assist the community to achieve the objectives of the CSP. So, whilst Council is the custodian of the CSP, Council is not solely responsible for delivering all aspects of the Community vision.

In June 2013, Council adopted its 4 year Delivery Program which was framed around 5 key areas being:-

- Civic Leadership
- Growth & Development
- Service Provision
- Community Life
- Environmental Performance

The Annual Report

The Annual Report combines the audited financial statements and other important statutory information with an update on the progress being made on the commitments made by Council in the Delivery Program.

This year's Annual Report highlights just some of the activities completed within each of the 5 key areas set by Council. Additionally, when combined with the audited financial statements, the Annual Report provides a complete review of the 2013/2014 financial year.

Status Update

There were 113 Delivery Program Initiatives originally scheduled to be delivered during the 2013/14 Financial Year. Of the 113 tasks scheduled for this financial year:-

- 61% (69 tasks) were completed
- 26% (29 tasks) were deferred
- 12% (14 tasks) were still in progress
- 1 project was cancelled.

A full listing of tasks for the 2013/14 year can be found later in the Annual Report.





Footsteps to our future - Wentworth Region Community Strategic Plan

CSP Vision 1 - We want to be a vibrant, growing and thriving community

1. Increased economic development and growth
2. Improved population growth and residential expansion
3. Expanded employment and training opportunities and improved educational outcomes
4. The strengthening of the community and addressing of disadvantage

CSP Vision 2 - We want to strengthen the natural and built environment

5. Improve our built urban environment
6. Improve our road and transport network
7. Improve community infrastructure
8. Protect our natural environment

CSP Vision 3 - We want enhanced community and civic leadership

9. Support an effective and efficiently managed Council that provides leadership to its community within its available means
10. Broader civic and community leadership
11. Increased youth participation and leadership

Wentworth Shire Council Delivery Program

CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Aim: to be the best council we can be

- 1.1 Improve Council's financial position
- 1.2 Abide by all compliance requirements
- 1.3 Be the best employer we can be
- 1.4 Facilitate collaborative, fair and equitable decision making

GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

Aim: to facilitate the growth of business, industry and population

- 2.1 Maximize the productive use of land
- 2.2 Encourage the diversification and expansion of business and industry
- 2.3 Encourage land development and housing construction

SERVICE PROVISION

Aim: to responsibly provide and maintain council services

- 3.1 Provide for the upgrade, replacement or renewal of assets in line with agreed service levels
- 3.2 Improve the service delivery capabilities within Council

COMMUNITY LIFE

Aim: to encourage a safe, inclusive and connected community

- 4.1 Oversee public health and safety
- 4.2 Continue to provide services that contribute to Community Life

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

Aim: to improve council's environmental performance

- 5.1 Engage in prudent waste, energy and water management activities
- 5.2 Implement sound environmental practices within Council activities

Civic Leadership

Objectives

- I.1 Improve Council's Financial Position.
- I.2 Collaborative, fair and equitable decision making.
- I.3 Abide by all compliance requirements.
- I.4 Be the Best employer we can be.

Civic Leadership

CSP Linkages

Vision 3, Objective 9

Support an effective and efficiently managed council that provides leadership to its community within its available means.

Vision 3, Objective 10

Broader civic and community leadership.

Financial Sustainability of Council

In April 2013, just 6 months after Council commenced its term of office, the NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp) delivered its financial assessment of all 152 Councils in New South Wales. The assessment provided a Financial Sustainability Rating (FSR) and a long term outlook for each Council and Wentworth was one of 34 Councils (22.4%) assessed as having a "Weak" FSR and one of 73 Councils (or 48%) assessed as having a "Negative" outlook.

In all, only 3 Councils were assessed as being in a "Very Strong" or "Strong" position.

The financial assessment was just one of the reports commissioned by the Independent Local Government Review Panel as a part of a State Government initiative to strengthen local government.

During 2013/2014, Council provided robust submissions to the Independent Local Government Review Panel, the Local Government Act Taskforce,

the Crown Lands Review and made numerous representations to a variety of MP's. Each submission and representation was clearly focused on addressing systemic issues that impede growth and development in the Shire.

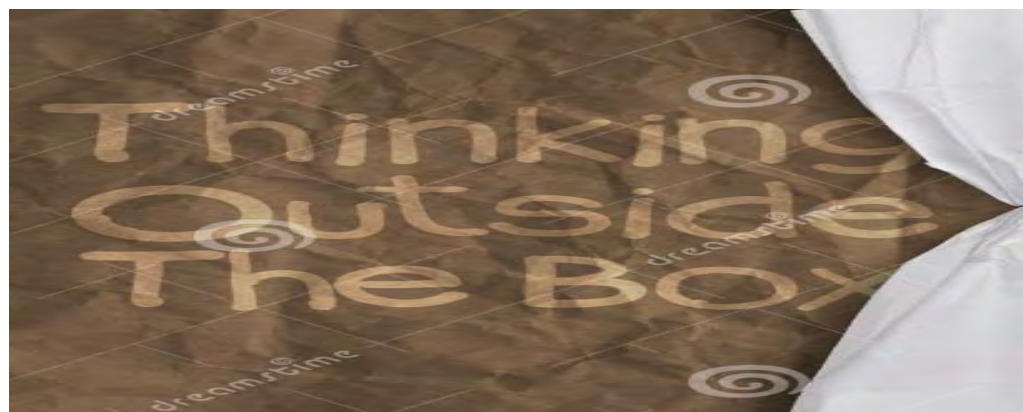
A local government will be financially sustainable over the long term when it is able to generate sufficient funds to provide the levels of service and infrastructure agreed with its community.

(NSW Treasury Corp. April 2013)

Efficiency Review

During its preliminary review of the organisational structure between October 2012 and June 2013, Council resolved to appoint a third Director, building an operational model around the three Divisions of Roads and Engineering, Health and Planning and Finance and Policy.

Council continued to refine the structure during 2013/2014 and as at 30 June 2014 the approved number of equivalent full time employees (EFT's) was 98.45, down from 106.6 (or 7.6%) at the end of the previous financial year.



Civic Leadership

Our Aim: to be the best Council we can be



Promoting Better Practice Review

Through the Promoting Better Practice (PBP) Program the Office of Local Government (OLG) undertook its review of Council in April 2014.

The review consisted of a self-assessment audit and a 2 day site visit by representatives of the OLG. The resulting confidential draft report from the OLG (which is not a public document) noted ten improvement suggestions, 3 of which were considered a high priority as they focused on financial performance and asset management.

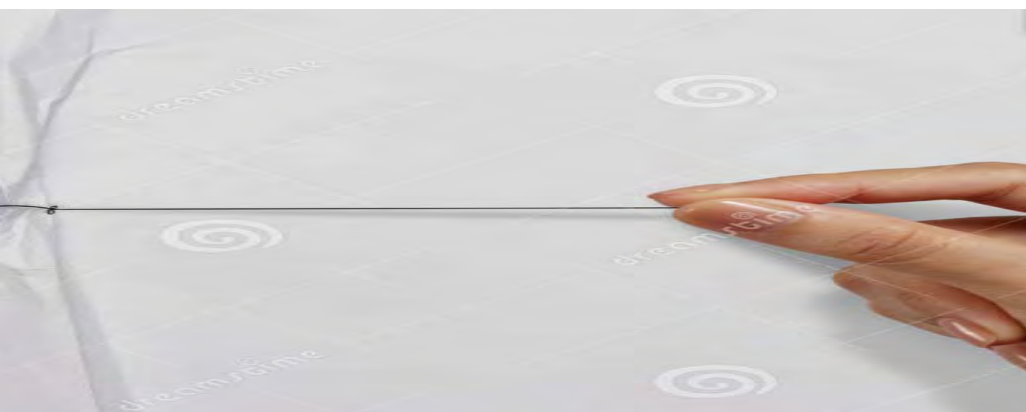
The final report will be produced and published by the OLG in due course.

Asset Management

Asset Management Planning is one of the central planks of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework and is designed to ensure that each Council has a comprehensive approach to managing and maintaining its assets.

With over \$400M in assets it is vitally important that Council prudently manages the asset base on behalf of the community. Since adopting its first comprehensive Asset Management Plan in 2012, Council has been working on completing a comprehensive data management system based on the benefit, cost and risk of all assets.

| ASSET CLASS | FAIR VALUE (\$'000) |
|---|---------------------|
| Plant & Equipment | \$13,090 |
| Office Equipment | \$2,201 |
| Furniture & Fittings | \$305 |
| Land: | |
| • Operational Land | \$135 |
| • Community Land | \$7,154 |
| Depreciable Land Improvements | \$6,781 |
| Buildings: | |
| • Non Specialised | \$2,067 |
| • Specialised | \$41,190 |
| • Other Structures | \$9,342 |
| Infrastructure: | |
| • Roads | \$270,703 |
| • Footpaths | \$130 |
| • Stormwater Drainage | \$4,731 |
| • Water Supply Network | \$39,550 |
| • Sewerage Network | \$36,944 |
| • Swimming Pools | \$2,027 |
| • Other Open Space/ Recreational Assets | \$609 |
| Other Assets: | |
| • Library Books | \$1,399 |
| TOTAL | \$438,358 |



WENTWORTH SHIRE COUNCIL



Rates and charges

In accordance with Clause 132 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, details of rates and charges written off during the 2013 – 2014 rating year are provided below. These rates and charges have been written off in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 and Regulations.

| Rates and charges written off 2013/14 | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Rates and Charges | \$7,589 |
| Debtor Charges | \$0 |
| Total | \$7,589 |

Payment of expenses and provision of facilities

In accordance with clause 217 of the Local Government Act (General) Regulation 2005, details of the payment of expenses of and the provision of facilities to, councillors in relation to their civic functions are provided.

| Payment of expenses and provision of facilities to councillors | |
|---|------------------|
| Mayor Fees | \$22,870 |
| Councillor Fees | \$94,321 |
| Provision of dedicated office equipment | NIL |
| Telephone calls made by Councillors | \$5,874 |
| Attendance of Councillors at conferences and seminars | \$17,387 |
| Training of Councillors & provision of skill development | \$2,331 |
| Interstate visits by Councillors | NIL |
| Overseas visits by Councillors | NIL |
| Expenses of any spouse or partner | NIL |
| Carer expenses | NIL |
| Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits | NIL |
| Total | \$142,783 |

Financial assistance provided

In accordance with Clause 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Council advises the amount contributed or otherwise granted under section 356 was \$150,998 for the 2013/14 financial year.

Special Rate Variation

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.

Civic Leadership

Our Aim: to be the best Council we can be



A loan was taken out through Local Government Financial Services for the amount of \$1 million with the balance as at 30 June 2014 being \$389,985. 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.

Senior staff remuneration

In accordance with clause 217 of the Local Government Act (General) Regulation 2005, details of the total remuneration packages of all senior staff members are shown in the below table and are expressed as the

total (not of the individual members). The senior staff members are designated to be the General Manager and the three Directors.

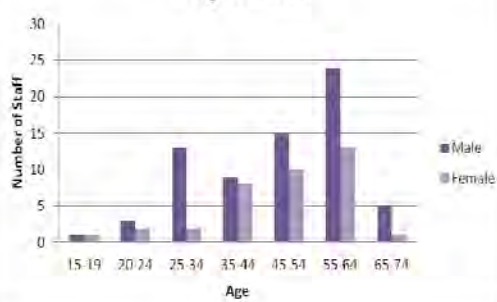
| Senior Staff Remuneration - General Manager | |
|--|------------------|
| Total value of the salary component of the package | \$178,879 |
| Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of the salary component | NIL |
| Total amount payable by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which the general manager may be a contributor. | \$16,546 |
| Total value of any non-cash benefits for which the general manager may elect under the package. | \$8,000 |
| Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits | \$4,890 |
| Total | \$208,315 |

| Senior Staff Remuneration - Directors | |
|--|------------------|
| Total value of salary components of their packages | \$520,268 |
| Total amount of any bonus, performance or other payments that do not form part of salary components of their packages | NIL |
| Total amount payable by council by way of the employer's contribution or salary sacrifice to any superannuation scheme to which any of them may be contributor | \$58,495 |
| Total value of any non-cash benefits for which any of them may elect under the package | NIL |
| Total amount payable by way of fringe benefits tax for any such non-cash benefits. | \$1,070 |
| Total | \$579,833 |

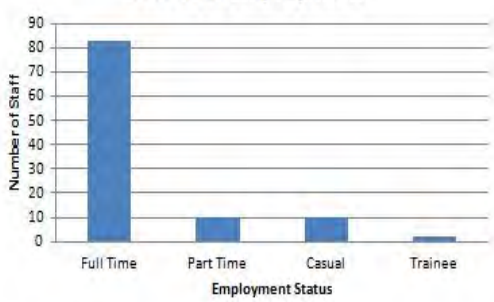
WENTWORTH SHIRE COUNCIL



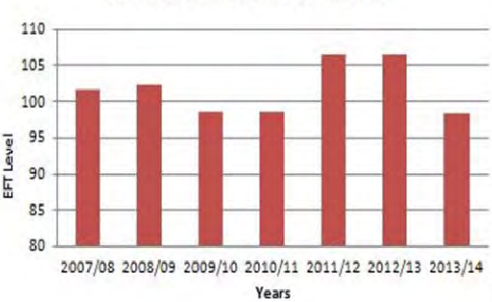
Age Profile



Status of Employment



Equivalent Full Time Trend



Civic Leadership

Our Aim: to be the best Council we can be



Workforce Management Plan

As a consequence of the organisational review undertaken by Council during the 2013/2014 financial year several of the workforce management plan objectives have been deferred. Whilst some of the items are listed as being deferred they are still being undertaken, all-be-it on a smaller scale than was originally planned.

The Promoting Better Practice Review that was undertaken by the Office of Local Government during in April 2014 highlighted the need to further align the Workforce Management Plan with the 4 year Delivery Program and 1 year Operational Plan. To this end, staff will be critiquing the Workforce Management Plan during 2014/2015 and reviewing the linkages to ensure that the plans are fully integrated.

Workforce Management Plan Status Update

| Workforce Management Plan Objectives 2013/2014 | Status |
|---|----------|
| Review of recruitment policy and practices | Deferred |
| Review of performance appraisal system | Deferred |
| Monitor and manage workplace health and safety | Complete |
| Explore flexible workplace arrangements | Deferred |
| Develop a Workforce Management Database | Complete |
| Annual report of equity & diversity outcomes | Complete |
| Review the development of the training program | Deferred |
| Increase knowledge throughout | Deferred |
| Link operational plan responsibilities to staff performance | Deferred |

EEO Management Plan

In 2013 Council adopted its Workforce Management Plan in accordance with the Local Government Act.

The Workforce Management Plan incorporates the EEO Management Plan with all actions being embedded into the 4 year Delivery Program and the 1 year Operational Plan.

The workforce profile shows that:-

- Female employees account for 35% of the workforce.
- The majority of the workforce are over the age of 45.
- The majority of employees are full time.

WENTWORTH SHIRE COUNCIL



Growth and Development

Our Aim: to facilitate the growth of business, industry and population



Objectives

- 2.1 Maximise the productive use of land.
- 2.2 Encourage the diversification and expansion of business and industry.
- 2.3 Encourage land development and housing construction.

CSP Linkages

Vision 1, Objective 2

Improved population growth and residential expansion.

Vision 1, Objective 3

Expanded employment and training opportunities and improved educational outcomes.

Vision 2, Objective 5

Improve our built urban environment.

Development Applications

From 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 there was a total of 203 Development Applications (DA's) determined.

Of the 203 DA's, 48 were for new dwellings, and 17 were for new subdivisions creating an additional 203 allotments throughout the Shire.

Commercial Developments

Included in the total DA's determined for the year are a number of commercial developments including:-

- 10 ensuites and 1 cabin approved for the Wentworth Caravan Park
- A 24 hour unmanned diesel refuelling station
- A car museum
- The creation of 4 new shops in Wentworth
- A telecommunications facility
- Upgrades to a Bed and Breakfast facility in Wentworth.



| Month | Count of DA's Determined |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| Jul 2013 | 10 |
| Aug 2013 | 14 |
| Sept 2013 | 30 |
| Oct 2013 | 18 |
| Nov 2013 | 12 |
| Dec 2013 | 19 |
| Jan 2014 | 20 |
| Feb 2014 | 21 |
| Mar 2014 | 21 |
| Apr 2014 | 14 |
| May 2014 | 11 |
| Jun 2014 | 13 |
| TOTAL | 203 |



Private Works

In accordance with Section 67 of the Local Government Act and Clause 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Council advises that no subsidised work was carried out by Council on Private Land.

Service Provision

Objectives

- 3.1 Provide for the upgrade, replacement or renewal of assets in line with agreed service levels.
- 3.2 Improve the service delivery capabilities in council.

Contracts awarded in the 2013/2014 financial year

In accordance with Clause 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, details of each contract awarded for amounts greater than \$150,000 are provided in table 3, which lists the name of each contractor, the nature of goods or services supplied and the total amount payable under the contract.

| Table 3 Awarded Contracts greater than \$150,000 2013/14 | |
|--|-----------|
| William Adams Pty Ltd Caterpillar 12M Motor Grader | \$409,200 |
| William Adams Pty Ltd Caterpillar 120M Motor Grader | \$380,050 |
| McElligott Partners Pty Ltd Repainting of the Internal Surfaces for Midway Water Reservoir | \$395,960 |
| Schwarze Industries Australia Pty Ltd Schwarze Suction Street Sweeper | \$345,526 |

Service Provision

CSP Linkages

Vision 1, Objective 2

Improved population growth and residential expansion.

Vision 1, Objective 4

The strengthening of the community and addressing of disadvantage.

Vision 2, Objective 5

Improve our built urban environment.



Service Provision

Our Aim: to responsibly provide and maintain council services.



CSP Linkages

Vision 2, Objective 6

Improve our built urban environment.

Vision 2, Objective 7

Improve community infrastructure.

Vision 2, Objective 8

Protect our natural environment.



Ongoing RMS Contract Works

Council is contracted to deliver ordered works on behalf of the Roads and Maritime Services (RMS). This year, in addition to Council's regular maintenance contract with RMS, Council was also contracted to undertake a culvert extension for the Twin Wells Shoulder widening program.

Asbestos Removal Program

As a part of Council's ongoing asbestos removal program Council removed an old shed at the Dareton Fire Control Office and replaced it with a new 3 bay shed.



Redeveloping the Gol Gol Riverfront

The extension of John Street Gol Gol was completed during 2013/2014 as a part of the ongoing works along the riverfront at Gol Gol.

The project was one of many ear-marked as a priority from the James King Park Master Plan which was prepared in 2012.



Community Life

Objectives

- 4.1 Oversee public health and safety.
- 4.2 Continue to provide services that contribute to community life.

Companion Animals Act 1998 and Regulation 2005

Council maintains a database register of companion animals impounded and the number of dog attacks which occur within the Shire. This information is also uploaded onto the NSW Companion Animals website survey of Council's seizure activity for dogs and cats. Recently, Council introduced a process for the regular updating of this survey to enable this data to be captured in a more efficient manner.

Investigations

Council investigated all complaints relating to animal management within the local government area in the 2013/14 financial year. During this time period a total of 429 animals were impounded. This figure includes 119 cats and 310 dogs and of these animals, 8 cats and 16 dogs were euthanized with the remainder either returned to their owners or re-homed. Council has developed excellent working relationships with volunteers from Victorian Dog Rescue, Rural Rescue, Second Chance Animal Rescue and Starting Over Dog

Rescue in an effort to re-home companion animals rather than euthanizing. The number of dog attacks investigated and reported in the 2013/14 financial year to the Division of Local Government was 9.

Funding for companion animal activities

The total amount of salaries and expenses associated with Council's companion animal management and activities was \$195,457 of which \$23,870 was the total animal pound and veterinary services and \$149,483 in salaries for two Council Rangers, as well as \$17,423 in vehicle costs, \$1,168 in uniforms and \$3,512 for other miscellaneous expenses associated with companion animal management and activities.

Companion Animal Community Education Programs

Council is committed to educate pet owners within the local government area about their ongoing responsibilities to their companion animals. However due to a lack of staff resources

during the 2013/14 period Council did not have the ability to undertake any specific education programs. Council will consider further education opportunities for the community in the next reporting period.

Strategies for desexing

It is a requirement under the provisions of the Companion Animals Act 1998 that all companion animals must be permanently identified at 12 weeks of age and microchipped and registered by 6 months of age. This requirement is essential as it helps Council to reunite companion animals with their owners if they are picked up by Council Rangers.

All animals that are to be rehomed are desexed, microchipped and registered as part of the rehoming process. Further desexing strategies are to

CSP Linkages

Vision 1, Objective 2

Improved population growth and residential expansion.

Vision 1, Objective 4

The strengthening of the community and addressing of disadvantage.

Vision 2, Objective 5

Improve our built urban environment.



Community Life

Our Aim: to encourage a safe, inclusive and connected community.



CSP Linkages

Vision 2, Objective 9

Support an effective and efficiently managed council that provides leadership to its community within its available means.



Section 64 requirements

Any dogs picked up by Council Rangers that are not permanently identified, or where the owner cannot be contacted, are transferred and kennelled at the Buronga Animal Shelter where they are held for two weeks.

After this period expires, the animals are put up for sale or rescued by animal rescue groups. Unfortunately in cases where animals cannot be re-homed, they are euthanized.

During 2013/14 Council placed images of unchipped stray impounded animals on the Lost Animal Register on Council's website to help owners claim lost pets and to encourage adoption.

Off-leash areas

A review of Council's Companion Animals Management Plan including consideration of a suitable off leash areas is required.

| SEIZED, ABANDONED OR STRAY AND SURRENDERED | | | |
|---|------|------|-------|
| Cats | Dogs | | Total |
| 119 | 310 | | 429 |
| RETURNED TO OWNER | | | |
| Cats | Dogs | | Total |
| 3 | 50 | | 53 |
| TRANSFERRED TO COUNCIL’S FACILITY | | | |
| Cats | Dogs | | Total |
| 83 | 143 | | 226 |
| RELEASED TO OWNER, SOLD, OR RELEASED TO ORGANISATION FOR REHOMING | | | |
| | Cats | Dogs | Total |
| Sold | 9 | 18 | 27 |
| Released | 3 | 86 | 89 |
| Re-homed | 21 | 139 | 160 |
| Euthanized | 84 | 16 | 100 |



WENTWORTH SHIRE COUNCIL



Tourism, events & marketing - important components of community life

The state of tourism in our Shire is on a positive roll. The Manager of the Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) and two Councillors regularly attend a number of local and Mildura Tourism Board meetings which are creating great results; for example the Wentworth Tourism Expo, the Wentworth Official Visitor Guide and the Ted Hurley Memorial Classic Ski-Race event.

TV Commercials

We have assisted with Council in the co-ordination of producing Tourism and Economic Development focused commercials, titled "We have a Vision".

In addition, commercials focusing on tourism in our region were produced, which showcased our popular outback attractions. The Perry Sandhills, World Heritage Mungo National Park, B&Bs along the Darling River, the township of Pooncarie and both

the Murray and Darlings Rivers, which are famous for fishing and an array of water sports, were all featured in the advertisements. There will be a 30 second commercial produced featuring Gol Gol and Buronga, which will promote their top attractions and the third commercial will showcase Wentworth and Dareton. These commercials are currently screening on local television channels, in order to capture our prime target audience of both locals and visitors. We aim to encourage locals to spend time on our side of the river.

Tourism Branding

AVIC Staff have conducted research for and supported Council's decision to have a focused brand and logo dedicated to tourism for our region, with the vision of maintaining a consistent marketing theme into the future.

Tourism Website

We are currently assisting with the design and product content of

a refreshed and modernised website aimed at tourism that will be mobile friendly and incorporate facebook, twitter and a QR code. They will be 6m wide x 2.4m high. The signs will have images of iconic tourism locations with the aim to give the visitor a visual and instant welcome.

Radio Campaigns

The AVIC has engaged in two radio marketing campaigns. Old Gold 1611am with Mark Eckel has promoted the monthly "What's On" with specific attention to special events and has also interviewed local tourism operators. Mark also promotes the PS Ruby and conducts interviews to promote overnight scheduled cruises.

Regional SA broadcasters, co-ordinated by 5RM Renmark, has produced a series of 30 second advertisements covering the Shire, to be aired over 8 months. Telephone interviews have been conducted with AVIC Staff on specific events; eg The Ted Hurley Classic Ski Race.

Community Life

Our Aim: to encourage a safe, inclusive and connected community.



TV Flat Screens

TV Flat Screens have been installed into prime locations across our Shire at Buronga IGA, Fishers Wentworth and also the Pooncarie Hotel. This was a Council initiative and actioned from the Visitor Information Centre. These screens have rolling and still imagery showcasing our attractions and events in the hope that the passing visitor will be encouraged to stay longer or make a return visit to our Region. These screens have their own hard drives enabling us to add and update further commercials and still shots as they become available.

Wentworth Official Visitor Guide

This was an initiative of Wentworth Regional Tourism Inc and is their second edition. Council supplied part funding and AVIC staff provided content, editing and proof reading of the project.

Events

AVIC Staff support, market and help co-ordinate local events; for example the annual Country Music Festival with the overflow of camping at the Showgrounds, Christmas Eve Mainstreet Party and Easter Sunday Junction Junk. These local events have great economic benefits to our region. This year's Junction Junk recorded its highest number of sites, which were registered through the Visitor Centre and the sum amount of sales from all the sites totalled \$12,000. This is an economic injection into the private sector of the local community. The influx of shoppers also benefited the business industry.

The Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) Staff have enjoyed the opportunity of expanding their resources this year to better promote the Wentworth Shire Region as a holiday destination. Council's focus on Economic Development and Tourism has resulted in various marketing projects.

RV Friendly

We are currently reviewing the application processes for Pooncarie and Wentworth to become RV Friendly Towns. Locations have been discussed. The CMCA - Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia Rally was held in Robinvale early April. Wentworth AVIC staff teamed up with Mildura VIC staff and shared a stand promoting our region.

Staff development

Several staff members attended the Powerfully Productive Programme for professional development in Mildura. This session instructed staff in time management in order to be able to better organise their workday.

WENTWORTH SHIRE COUNCIL

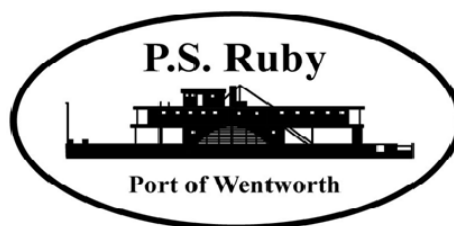


Networking

The Visitor Information Centre staff organised and attended a Community Guest Speakers and Networking Information evenings held at the Coomealla Memorial Sporting Club. The evenings gave community groups an opportunity to inform locals and industries about their organisation. Later in the year AVIC Staff organised an Industry Guest Speakers and Networking Information evening which was also held at the Coomealla Memorial Sporting Club.

PS Ruby Promotions

AVIC staff have made promoting river cruises for PS Ruby a priority and have given considerable attention to updating many websites and media outlets that offer free content. We have produced flyers, tickets, booking policies and provided ticket sales and customer service to a vast number of enquiries.



Wentworth Shire Library Library Membership

Library membership has continued to grow, with the current total standing at 3,492. The number of visitors to the libraries has remained much the same, with an increase recorded at the Wentworth Library. This increase can be attributed to the large number of overseas visitors to the library, taking advantage of the wifi connections, public access computers and the chargebar. Wifi usage has increased to 3,597, which trebles last year's total. In addition, use of the public access computers has also increased, with 3,458 bookings through the year.

"The Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) Staff have enjoyed the opportunity of expanding their resources this year to better promote the Wentworth Shire Region as a holiday destination. Council's focus on Economic Development and Tourism has resulted in various marketing projects".

Karen Arnold
Manager Tourism



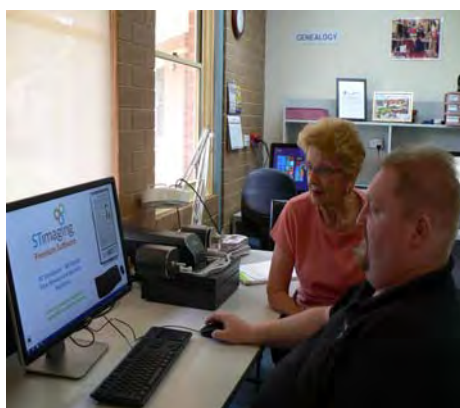
Community Life

Our Aim: to encourage a safe, inclusive and connected community.



New Microfilm Reader

The microfilm reader and scanner, purchased during the year from Country Libraries funding, has been installed and is almost constantly in use by library staff, Historical Society members, and researchers.



Wentworth Historical Society

A MOU with the Wentworth Historical Society has been signed, and the Society and the library continue to work together to ensure preservation, digitisation and access of local historical information.



Usage Statistics

Usage statistics show that loans of library materials has increased to 27,870 from last year's total of 23,971. This increase indicates the popularity of the digital library, which recorded a loan figure of 6,142.

The downloading of digital magazines through the Zinio interface was responsible for the majority of the digital loans, with eAudio showing more popularity than eBooks. In the print based loans, adult fiction was by far the most popular category, followed by junior picture books, non-fiction and serials.

eProgrammes

The library service has registered for the eSmart programme, designed to provide high quality services aimed at online safety. A local committee is to be formed prior to commencement of training.

Library staff participated in the State Library of NSW's eLending kit training programme. This has equipped staff with the skills to aid customers in the use of tablets, eReaders and other technology.





Objectives

- 5.1 Engage in prudent waste, energy and water management activities.
- 5.2 Implement sound environmental practices within council activities.



CSP Linkages

Vision 1, Objective 4

The strengthening of the community and addressing of disadvantage.

Vision 2, Objective 5

Improve our built urban environment.

Vision 2, Objective 7

Improve community infrastructure.

Pooncarie Weir and Fish Ladder

The Pooncarie Weir Ladder was finally completed in the 2013/2014 financial year. The \$1.4 million project was jointly funded by the Lower Murray Darling CMA, the NSW Department of Infrastructure and the Wentworth Shire Council. The weir was designed to secure the water supply for the Pooncarie township and a fish ladder was also included in the design of the weir. NSW Fisheries are now beginning to monitor fish movements in the Lower Darling River, which is much needed research to improve the long term health of the river and associated environs.

Our Footpath Repair Programme

Council completed all planned footpath repairs during the 2013-2014 financial year. Dareton received new footpaths in Neilpo Street and Millie Streets

Repairing Storm Damage in Bilbarker Park Pooncarie

The Major Construction and Civil Works teams combined to complete repair works in Bilbarker Park Pooncarie.

The park had suffered considerable erosion as a consequence of storm damage in 2010 and the repair works that were undertaken were designed to reinstate the park to its former glory.

Polia Road Crossing

During the financial year Council allocated approx \$80,000 to upgrade the culvert under Polia Road, repair storm damage, reconstruct the road and install new guard railing



Environmental Performance

Our Aim: to improve Council's environmental performance.



CSP Linkages

Vision 2, Objective 8

Protect our natural environment.



WENTWORTH SHIRE COUNCIL

| Delivery Program Initiatives | Links to | Status 30/06/14 |
|---|----------|-----------------|
| Provide adequate funding to address infrastructure backlog issues identified through asset management condition assessments | 1.1 | Completed |
| Streamline the organisational structure, focussing on improved delivery of Council's core services | 1.1 | Completed |
| Actively explore resource sharing opportunities to either reduce expenditure or increase own source revenue | 1.1 | Completed |
| Address risk issues at the Buronga Depot Office by delivering upgrades to the depot lunchroom | 1.2 | Completed |
| Streamline the number of Council policies, simplify the review process and ensure all policies are current and relevant. | 1.2 | Completed |
| Utilize the Promoting Better Practices Program to monitor compliance across Council | 1.2 | Deferred |
| Actively manage WHS(Risk Management) compliance | 1.2 | Completed |
| Undertake all Integrated Planning & Reporting requirements | 1.2 | Completed |
| Undertake required drainage works to the apron and taxiways at the Wentworth Airport as per CASA audit requirements | 1.2 | Deferred |
| Implement asbestos action plan tasks | 1.2 | Completed |
| Ensure that aerodromes comply with all CASA standards | 1.2 | Completed |
| Within the continuous improvement program, undertake a review of the performance appraisal system & make improvement recommendations to council | 1.3 | Deferred |
| Provide 24/7 access for staff to the employee assistance program | 1.3 | Completed |
| Redesign & implement an annual staff satisfaction survey | 1.3 | Deferred |
| Review & implement changes to corporate training & development program and incorporate into the Workforce Management Plan | 1.3 | Completed |
| Undertake annual training activities in line with workforce management plan | 1.3 | Completed |

| Delivery Program Initiatives | Links to | Status 30/06/14 |
|--|----------|-----------------|
| Develop KPI & Performance Management tools | 1.3 | Deferred |
| Continue to deliver the DC&G program, simplify the process and rebadged as the Community Assistance Program | 1.4 | Completed |
| Review the membership, role and function of all Council committees | 1.4 | Completed |
| In conjunction with the advisory body, undertake the re-development of the Gol Gol riverfront | 1.4 | Completed |
| Enable the Council to undertake its civic duties and responsibilities | 1.4 | Completed |
| Undertake a floodplain management study that will inform the LEP | 2.1 | Deferred |
| Develop engineering designs for Junction Links Housing development | 2.3 | Deferred |
| Complete the rural land use study, using findings to inform the updating of the LEP | 2.1 | In Progress |
| Introduce promotion of the Shire as a conference & event destination | 2.2 | Deferred |
| Continue with tourism industry familiarisation tours throughout the year | 2.2 | Completed |
| Develop & distribute a list of investment opportunities within the Shire | 2.2 | Deferred |
| Identify and target new industries & businesses who could relocate to the Shire | 2.2 | Deferred |
| Develop a concept plan for the Buronga Peninsula which will result in a plan of management for the area - Land Tenure Program | 2.2 | Deferred |
| Oversee the restoration and maintenance of the Paddle steamer Ruby | 2.2 | Completed |
| Provide new and replacement tourism signs | 2.2 | In Progress |
| Re-invest Reserve Trust income into agreed maintenance works at the Buronga and Wentworth Caravan Parks and the Old Wentworth Goal | 2.2 | Completed |
| Continue to provide Visitor Information services across the Shire | 2.2 | Completed |
| Continue to oversee the Land Tenure Program | 2.2 | Completed |

Delivery Program Status Update

| Delivery Program Initiatives | Links to | Status 30/06/14 |
|--|----------|-----------------|
| Acquire land and create an easement for the Pooncarie Weir | 3.1 | In Progress |
| Address risk issues by replacing the irrigation pump at McLeod Oval | 3.1 | Deferred |
| Complete landscaping works at the Dareton Wharf | 3.1 | Completed |
| Construct a storage shed at the Coomealla Memorial Gardens | 3.1 | Completed |
| Provide an new transformer at George Gordon Oval | 3.1 | Cancelled |
| Develop and implement a plan to reduce the number of public toilets within the Shire, but improve the quality of toilets provided | 3.1 | In Progress |
| Complete the levy bank easements project | 3.1 | In Progress |
| Continue to strengthen Wentworth's heritage appeal through the heritage program | 3.1 | Completed |
| Plan for the upgrading of Arumpo Road to cater for all-weather access | 3.1 | In Progress |
| Complete a Plan of Management for each reserve that Council manages, with data informing the Asset Management Improvement Plan | 3.1 | In Progress |
| Undertake required water infrastructure upgrades, as per the Asset Management Plan | 3.1 | Completed |
| Undertake all planning requirements as defined in Water Supply & Sewerage Asset Management Guidelines (Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan) | 3.1 | Deferred |
| Deliver scheduled computer replacements | 3.1 | Completed |
| Deliver scheduled replacement of office furniture | 3.1 | Completed |
| Complete the installation of the new Integrated Management System within Council | 3.1 | Deferred |
| Complete the delivery of the new Website Content Management System for Council | 3.1 | Deferred |
| Provide capital plant replacement items as per annual schedule | 3.1 | Completed |
| Renew stormwater drainage in line with Asset Management Plan | 3.1 | Completed |
| Provide minor upgrades to library buildings | 3.1 | Completed |

| Delivery Program Initiatives | Links to | Status 30/06/14 |
|--|----------|-----------------|
| Complete the George Gordon Oval major improvements | 3.1 | Completed |
| Contribute to ongoing upgrades of the George Gordon Oval | 3.1 | Completed |
| Provide for capital upgrades for the Wentworth Showgrounds, as per the WW showgrounds masterplan | 3.1 | Deferred |
| Undertake the redevelopment of the Midway Centre | 3.1 | Deferred |
| Deliver the Roads to Recovery program | 3.1 | Completed |
| Deliver the Roads repair program | 3.1 | Completed |
| Deliver the 3x3 Roads Program | 3.1 | Completed |
| Deliver the local roads repair program | 3.1 | Completed |
| Deliver the RRSU Asset Inspection program | 3.1 | Deferred |
| Deliver the RMCC contractual works | 3.1 | Completed |
| Deliver the Regional Roads Rural unsealed repair program | 3.1 | Completed |
| Deliver the bridges, footpaths and shared ways programs | 3.1 | Completed |
| Maintain (and renew where required) bus shelters; tourist bays; wharves, jetties & boat ramps | 3.1 | Completed |
| Undertake the kerb & gutter extension program | 3.1 | Completed |
| Undertake the shared ways program | 3.1 | Completed |
| Complete the Pooncarie Weir Project | 3.1 | Completed |
| Complete the internal painting of the Midway Water Tower | 3.1 | In Progress |
| Provide waste water infrastructure upgrades | 3.1 | Completed |
| Provide an options paper for the replacement of old trickling filter sewer infrastructure | 3.1 | Completed |
| Install Microfilm scanner at the library (a grant funded project) | 3.1 | Completed |
| Deliver the continuous improvement program | 3.1 | Deferred |
| Deliver the Big Air Wireless internet access project | 3.1 | Deferred |
| Enter into arrangements with RFS and Essential energy to install comm's equipment on their towers at various points around the shire | 3.1 | Deferred |

Delivery Program Status Update

| Delivery Program Initiatives | Links to | Status 30/06/14 |
|---|----------|-----------------|
| Research funding opportunities and available technology, and develop a business case for the roll out of tourism touch screens across the Shire | 3.1 | Deferred |
| Provide new and replacement library resources | 3.1 | Completed |
| Complete the delivery of the Library Local Special Project | 3.1 | Completed |
| Continue to service pumping stations, water treatment plants and water mains | 3.1 | Completed |
| Continue to service water treatment plants, waste water mains and waste water pumping stations | 3.1 | Completed |
| Provide minor upgrades to public halls | 3.1 | Completed |
| Provide signs at the Coomealla Memorial Gardens describing segregated areas | 4.1 | In Progress |
| Complete an inventory of all trees within the Shire | 4.1 | In Progress |
| Provide education, monitor and inspect retail food premises | 4.1 | Completed |
| Continue to enforce requirements under the Companion Animals Act | 4.1 | Completed |
| Seek funding for the Closing the Gap strategy and other crime prevention strategies | 4.1 | Deferred |
| Coordinate meetings between agencies involved in the CPP | 4.1 | Deferred |
| Displan Update | 4.1 | Deferred |
| Purchase graveyard safety fencing | 4.1 | Completed |
| Install new playground equipment | 4.1 | Completed |
| Install new playground equipment | 4.1 | In Progress |
| Install new park benches | 4.1 | Completed |
| Maintain trees under powerlines | 4.1 | Completed |
| Undertake the painting of the Wentworth Swimming Pool | 4.1 | Completed |
| Maintain (& renew where required) street lighting and welcome signs | 4.1 | Completed |
| Continue to provide limited financial assistance to community groups, youth, aged care & senior citizens | 4.2 | Completed |
| Continue to manage and maintain cemeteries within the Shire | 4.2 | Completed |
| Continue to maintain public conveniences across the Shire | 4.2 | Completed |

| Delivery Program Initiatives | Links to | Status 30/06/14 |
|--|----------|-----------------|
| Continue to maintain recreation facilities to existing standards across the shire | 4.2 | Completed |
| Provide support services for Rural Fire Services and other emergency services | 4.2 | Completed |
| Convert the Pooncarie and Ellerslie Tips to transfer stations | 5.1 | Deferred |
| Convert manual irrigation systems to drip irrigation systems | 5.1 | In Progress |
| Undertake periodic collection of hard-waste within the Shire | 5.1 | Completed |
| Acquire new EPA licence for the Buronga landfill | 5.1 | In Progress |
| Undertake routine maintenance of the levee banks | 5.2 | Completed |
| Monitor and control blue green alga | 5.2 | Completed |
| Deliver environmental initiatives | 5.2 | Completed |
| Complete the river access study | 5.2 | Deferred |
| Complete an Environmental Efficiency Master Plan for Water and Waste Water Plants | 5.2 | In Progress |
| Lobby the State Government to enable the conversion of Crown Land to Residential Land | 2.3 | Completed |
| Pursue funding options for the sealing of the main runway at the Wentworth Aerodrome | 2.3 | Deferred |
| Enlist the Roads Committee to develop a Shire Wide footpath strategy, the result of which will inform the relevant Asset Management Plan | 3.1 | Deferred |

Legend:

Completed means that the activities to be undertaken within the financial year were delivered as planned.

In Progress means that the activities to be undertaken within the financial year were commenced, but not completed in the financial year.

Deferred means that the planned activity to be undertaken within the financial year were reallocated to a future year.

Cancelled means that the planned activity has been completely cancelled.

Yet to start means that the planned activity is scheduled for delivery in the financial year but has not yet commenced.



Sundry Statutory Information

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

Council has not entered into any planning agreements during the 2013/14 financial year period.

Stormwater Management Services

Council is not required to provide a report in relation to stormwater management services as it does not levy a charge for such services.

Coastal protection services

Council is not required to provide a report in relation to coastal protection services as it does not levy a charge for such services

State of the Environment

In accordance with advice received from the Division of Local Government, a State of the Environment report from Council is not required until after the next Ordinary Council election in 2016.

Council has not entered into any environmental upgrade agreement in accordance with any requirements imposed under s406 in the 2013/14 financial year period.

Legal Proceedings

In accordance with Clause 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 a summary of the amounts incurred by the Council in relation to legal proceedings is shown in the table below, which details the amounts, costs and expenses paid or received and a summary of the state of progress of each legal proceeding and (if it has been finalised) result.

| Legal Proceedings 2013/14 | |
|--|------------------|
| Outstanding rate collections (Ongoing) | \$280,811 |
| Planning Matters (Finalised) | \$15,363 |
| Waste Management Matters (Ongoing) | \$50,197 |
| Lease Matters (Finalised) | \$6,716. |
| Native Title Matters | \$560 |
| Total | \$353,647 |

Public Interest Disclosure Act 1994 and Regulation

Nil

Carers Recognition Act 2010

Nil

External Bodies with delegated functions

In accordance with Clause 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Council advises that the PS Ruby Committee has delegated functions as a section 355 Committee of Council.

Corporations in which Council participated

In accordance with Clause 217 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Council advises that it entered into an agreement between Destination NSW and Tourism Victoria and Murray River Regional Tourism Limited which was established to grow and promote the development of the tourism industry in the Murray Region in the long term.

Report on Capital Works

Council has not undertaken any projects which fall under the requirements of the Capital Expenditure Guidelines.



Public Access to Information

In accordance with section 125 of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and regulation, the number of GIPA requests for the year are reported in Table 8.

GIPA applications must be made in writing using the 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.

| GIPA report 2013/14 | |
|--|-----|
| No. of GIPA requests received | 8 |
| No of 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 | NIL |

