

Richmond  
Valley  
Council



# Richmond Valley Council Annual Report 2016/2017

**Richmond Valley Council recognises the people of the Bundjalung Nations as Custodians and Traditional Owners of this land and we value and appreciate the continuing cultural connection to lands, their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region in the past, present and future.**

## **Richmond Valley Council**

### **Casino Office:**

Cnr Walker Street and Graham Place  
(Locked Bag 10)  
Casino NSW 2470

**Phone:** (02) 6660 0300

**Fax:** (02) 6660 1300

### **Evans Head Office:**

Cnr Woodburn Street and School Lane  
Evans Head NSW 2473

**Phone:** (02) 6660 0365

**Fax:** (02) 6682 4252

**Email:** [council@richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au)

**Web:** [www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au](http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au)



## Contents

Message from the Mayor and General Manager .....	4
The year at a glance .....	6
About the Richmond Valley .....	7
Brief Statistics for 2016/2017 .....	8
Our Vision and Values .....	9
Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework .....	10
Highlights of our Signature Projects.....	11
Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange .....	11
The Casino Drill Hall .....	12
Northern Rivers Rail Trail.....	12
The Woodburn Riverside Precinct .....	12
Our Community .....	13
Casino Beef Week .....	13
Greyhound Racing Industry .....	13
New Italy Mountain Bike Park .....	14
Shark alarm, nets and drones .....	14
New base station to improve mobile coverage .....	14
Our People .....	15
YES program.....	15
Our Business.....	16
Guide to Economic Development .....	16
Tourism Development Plan.....	16
Insurance Savings.....	17
Response to flood .....	17
Casino Library Upgrade .....	17
Section 1 – Delivery Program Progress .....	18
Focus Area 1 - Natural Environment.....	19
Focus Area 2 - Local Economy.....	20
Focus Area 3 - Community & Culture .....	21
Focus Area 4 - Recreation & Open Spaces.....	23
Focus Area 5 - Rural & Urban Developments.....	24
Focus Area 6 - Transport & Infrastructure .....	25
Focus Area 7 - Governance & Process .....	27
Section 2 – Financial & Asset Reporting.....	29
Income Statement .....	29
Indicators.....	29
Balance Sheet.....	31
Assets Held .....	31
Section 3 – Statutory Reporting .....	32
Overseas Visits by Councillors, Council Staff or other persons representing Council .....	32
Councillor Fees, Expenses & Facilities.....	32
Private Works.....	32
Legal Proceedings .....	33
Contracts Awarded by Council.....	33
Financial Assistance .....	34
External Partnerships .....	34
Richmond-Upper Clarence Regional Library .....	34
North East Weight of Loads Group .....	34
Northern Rivers Regional Organisations of Council .....	35
North East Waste .....	35
Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan .....	35
General Manager and Senior Staff Remuneration .....	35
Stormwater Management Service Charge.....	36
Companion Animals .....	36
Rates and Charges Written Off .....	38
Swimming Pool Inspections .....	38
Special Variations to General Income.....	38
Section 4 – Appendices .....	40

## Message from the Mayor and General Manager

The community-focussed budget for 2016-2017 resulted in Council investing in more critical infrastructure and facilities which will benefit not only the residents of today, but also those in the future.

The good news is that through sound financial management, Council has positioned itself to deliver on the community's priorities outlined in the Community Strategic Plan. Key findings from a recent review by the Audit Office of NSW include:

- Richmond Valley Council continues to meet the industry benchmarks for the operating performance ratio and own-source operating revenue ratio, demonstrating it is not overly reliant on external funding sources.
- The unrestricted current ratio, which represents Council's ability to meet its short-term obligations as they fall due, continues to be well above the industry benchmark, as does the debt service cover ratio.
- There was a reduction in the level of Council expenditure on building and infrastructure renewals, however, the sewer fund achieved an asset renewal ratio above the industry benchmark.
- Council's operating result from continuing operations for the 2016-2017 year was positive with revenue increasing significantly from \$49,353,000 to \$56,458,000 with increased user charges and grant funding key factors.

### **2016-2017 highlights**

There have been many highlights throughout the year, including:

- adoption of the Community Strategic Plan and associated documents
- RVC continues to work and partner with Aboriginal organisations to support and promote programs, events and goals in line with the new Community Strategic Plan.
- producing the Guide to Economic Development and delivering on the priorities
- adoption of the Richmond Valley Tourism Development Plan
- adoption of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- adoption of master plans for the Woodburn Riverside Precinct and Casino Drill Hall site
- Richmond Upper Clarence Regional Library won a Centre of Excellence Award

- RVC was one of three finalists in the 2016 NSW Training Awards for Large Employer of the Year
- saving more than \$300,000 per annum by withdrawing from Statewide Mutual and testing the market for insurance brokerage services, with the result that AON Pty Ltd is now Council's insurance broker.
- Aboriginal Interagency meetings have continued with a focus on aged and disability sector funding reforms, and constant advocacy for strong, culturally appropriate service provision across the land of the Bundjalung nation.
- Reconciliation Week Black and White Ball held in May and NAIDOC Week celebrations held at Colley Park in July.

Council also made progress on key projects, including:

- construction of stage one of the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange upgrade
- reconstruction and rehabilitation works to High Street, First Avenue and Alcock Lane Casino; Boggy Creek Road, Fogwells Road, Myall Creek Road, New Italy-Moonem Road, Old Dyraba Road, Old Tenterfield Road, Upper Stratheden Road and Wyan Road
- renewal of community facilities throughout the Council area, including playgrounds and amenities for Albert Park, Crawford Square, Queen Elizabeth Park, Webb Park and the Showground in Casino; Stan Payne Oval, Paddon Park and Razorback Lookout Evans Head; Coraki riverfront, Woodburn Oval, the New Italy Mountain Bike Forest, the Evans Head Aquatic Centre, as well as the Casino, Evans Head and Woodburn skate parks
- construction of a new Casino Men's Shed and new Coraki SES building
- Casino Library redesign project
- landscape improvements to town entrances, median strips and garden beds throughout the Council area

### **Communication and community engagement**

Council is committed to fostering a culture of community engagement, providing residents and businesses with opportunities to be part of the decision-making process. This is important as everything Council does impacts on the local community it serves. Councillors and staff held community workshops in Evans Head, Broadwater, Woodburn, Casino, Coraki and Rappville on two occasions during the development of the Community Strategic Plan.



The Plan includes priority projects for all towns and villages.

### **Community health and wellbeing**

Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan provides a framework for the provision of services, facilities and opportunities which encourage healthy and active communities. People with disability, their families and carers have the same rights as all people to access services and facilities. Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan was developed with these principles in mind, addressing the four key areas of:

1. Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours
2. Creating liveable communities
3. Supporting access to meaningful employment
4. Improving access to services through better systems and processes

### **Sustainability**

Council is committed to ensuring a healthy and sustainable natural and built environment. We are consistently investigating ways to keep our rivers and beaches clean, reduce waste, and generally operate in an environmentally friendly way. During 2016-2017, Council's Water-Sewer team was busy undertaking necessary maintenance on the Mid Richmond waste water treatment plants in Evans Head, Rileys Hill and Coraki. Treatment plants are major Council assets and critical infrastructure. Public recycling bins were also introduced across the Valley, to make it easier for people out walking, or shopping, or enjoying the parks, to do the right thing and place their recyclable items into the yellow-stickered bin.

### **Looking ahead**

One of Council's largest-ever capital works programs will see the completion of the \$14million upgrade of the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange which commenced in the 2016-2017 year. With NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian visiting in July to announce a \$7 million contribution to enable the full upgrade of the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange, a new era for livestock sales is coming with the creation of a nationally-significant saleyard complex which will be modern, comfortable, efficient and safe. Efficiencies created through the upgrade will give livestock agents an opportunity to present cattle to a very high standard, and will ensure better animal welfare and management and better safety for both people and animals.

Recent announcements that two companies are looking at Casino to establish world-class facilities has boosted morale across the Richmond Valley. The first involves a proposal put forward by Canadian company PUF Ventures Inc via its majority-owned subsidiary PUF Ventures Australia, to construct a 9.3ha greenhouse operation for the cultivation, production and manufacture of medical cannabis and associated products in Casino.

The second features plans to build the country's first crowd-funded biohub adjacent to the Casino sewage treatment plant. The project will see the biohub facility transform organic waste and waste water into energy, clean water and other bio-products.

Council continues to work closely with potential investors for key projects in Evans Head, Woodburn and Broadwater, as we rise to the challenge of supporting the construction of the Pacific Motorway and preparing our towns and villages for life after the highway has by-passed our towns.

### **Thank You**

Thank you to the Councillors for their support and commitment to the Richmond Valley local government area over the past year, as well as Council staff. Our area is full of potential and it is an honour to be part of a team which continues to work towards a better tomorrow for future generations.

It is timely to recognise the contribution of two former mayors of Richmond Valley Council, Col Sullivan OAM and Ernie Bennett, who both retired from office at the 2016 election.

We extend a sincere thank you to the residents, community groups, local businesses and volunteers of the Richmond Valley local government area. Your contribution to our quality of life is very much appreciated, and by working together we all help to make it a wonderful place in which to live, work and play.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Mustow'.

Cr Robert Mustow  
**Richmond Valley Mayor**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vaughan Macdonald'.

Vaughan Macdonald  
**General Manager**



## The year at a glance

**1,084**

Kilometres of roads maintained (graded, patched, resurfaced and painted) throughout the Richmond Valley

**22,309**

Tonnes of waste were collected/received by Council including 48 tonnes of E-Waste. 7,706 tonnes were able to be diverted to reuse or recycle.

**13,600**

Hectares of grass mowed in public reserves in the Richmond Valley area

**263**

Development Applications assessed

**30,506**

Calls received by the Contact Centre. An increase of 5.6% from 2015/2016

**5,822**

Customer Requests (CRM's) lodged. An increase of 26.5% from 2015/2016

**2,311 million**

Litres of water treated at Richmond Valley water and sewer treatment plants

**244**

Lost or abandoned dogs and cats rehoused by Casino Pound. 1,063 incidents were reported involving dogs and cats

**119,572**

Grown cattle traded through the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange

## About the Richmond Valley

The Richmond Valley has a population of more than 23,000 people. The area has a steady economy but has seen some changes in recent years stemming from a population spike with tree and sea changers beginning to move to the area.

While the economy is a net exporter of significant levels of value-added products, it has a low-socio economic base through a range of measures, including a higher rate of unemployment than its neighbours. In fact, the Richmond Valley Local Government Area (LGA) was ranked the seventh most disadvantaged area within NSW, on the SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage in 2012, making it the most disadvantaged local government area on the Northern Rivers.

Despite this, there are some significant opportunities for the economy with existing rail access and proposed rail freight terminal. These projects hold the key for securing future investments by establishing a strong competitive advantage for businesses locating to the Richmond Valley in particular, manufacturing businesses with markets beyond the local economy.

The LGA has a large number of natural assets including beaches, significant rivers, creeks and hinterland areas. This natural beauty and the relaxed and friendly atmosphere of the community has been a major draw card for sea changers and tree changers in recent years. The LGA also sits within a highly attractive region.



For a number of years, Council has sought to lay out the way forward to address the low socio-economic base by securing the future prosperity of the LGA while maintaining the sense of place, which is highly valued by residents. It has been providing leadership in developing partnerships between all spheres of government, business and stakeholders to develop strategies in economic planning and development to pursue investment and employment growth opportunities. Specific challenges for Richmond Valley Council include:

- maintaining the current economic base with its strong reliance on processing of primary production whilst simultaneously securing its competitive advantage as an investment location for new businesses;
- retaining the friendly, relaxed atmosphere in its towns and villages while ensuring adequate amenities are developed;

- fostering appropriate investment and development to create the jobs needed now and into the future for locals to service the projected population growth whilst retaining the natural assets of the LGA;
- meeting competing infrastructure demands generated by increased population and visitation levels.

Council and the community understand their roles in the challenges which lie ahead and how the Valley can position itself to develop specific strengths within the economies of the future and not slip further down the socio-economic scale.

The traditional custodians of the land surrounding the Richmond River are the Aboriginal people of the Githabul. One of the annual rituals of the Githabul people was the movement from the mountain ranges to the coast during the winter months, when the mullet were plentiful.

The Githabul Nation encompasses some of Australia's most scenic country and extends across a number of national parks and state forest reserves in north-eastern NSW, including some world heritage-listed areas.

The Bundjalung Nation has become a general term for the whole language area stretching the far north east coast of NSW and the southern eastern coast of Queensland. It extends from Grafton on the Clarence River in the south to the Logan River in the north and inland as far as the Great Dividing Range at Tenterfield and Warwick.

At the time of first European contact in the 1800s there were up to 20 dialects in the Bundjalung Nation including: Wahlubal; Yugambah; Birrihn; Bandjalang; Wudjebal; Wiyabal; Wuhyabal; Minyangbal; Ngaraakwal; Ngarrahngbal; Nyangbal; Barryugil; Gidhabal; Galibal; and Githabul.

The Richmond Valley area has experienced substantial changes. During the 19th Century the driving force in production and employment, throughout the area, was primary production. During the 20th Century, the area effectively divided into two: a relatively urbanised coastal strip, and an inland zone which retains more of the area's rural origins.

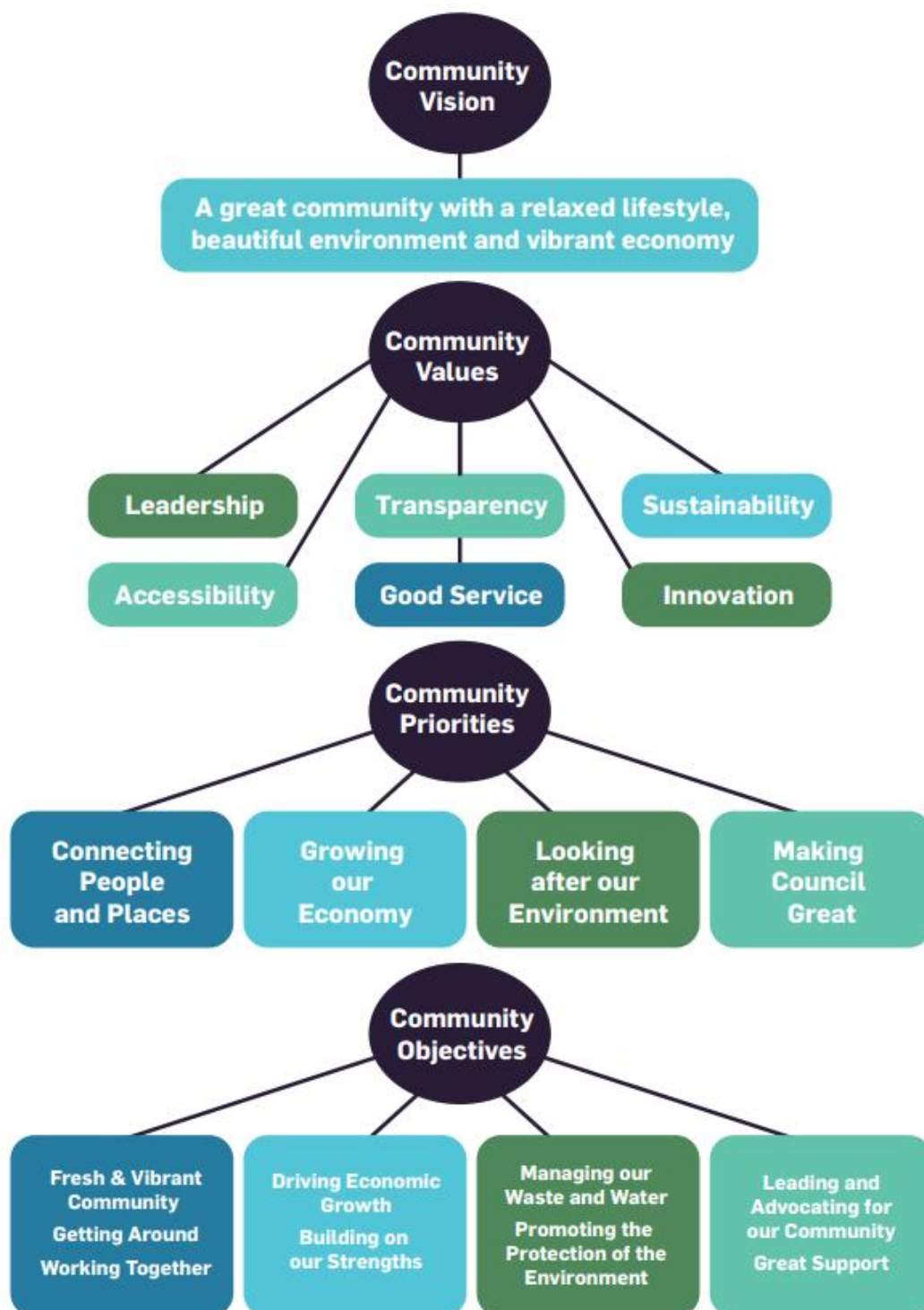
### *Brief Statistics for 2016/2017*

Total population	23,164
Families	5,912
Council area (km <sup>2</sup> )	3,050
Number of Council staff (full-time equivalent)	253
GDP	\$1.025 billion
Tourism output	\$63.33 million
Tourism Employment (number of jobs)	323

*Source: ABS 2016 Census Quick Stats*



## Our Vision and Values



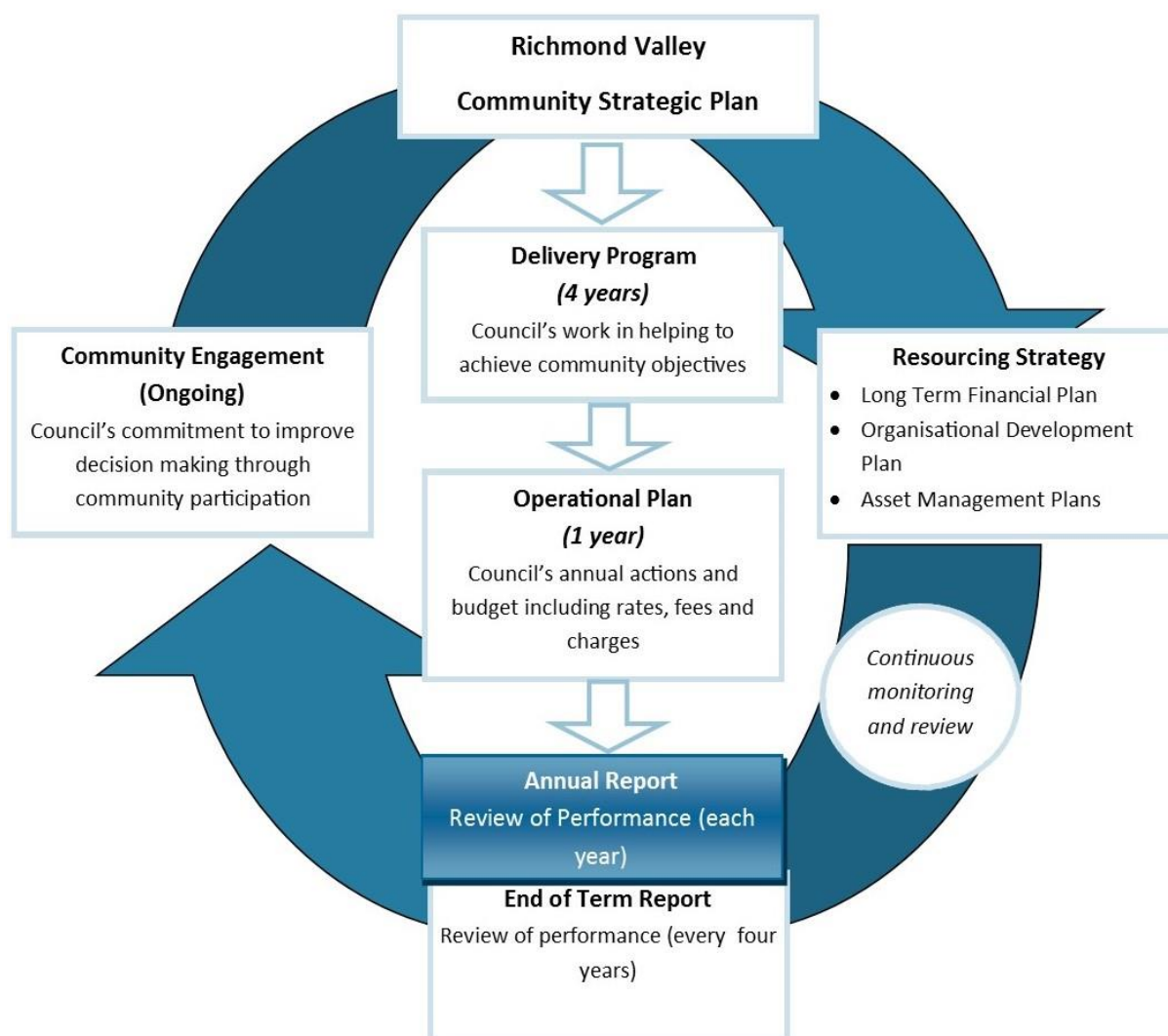
## Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

All councils in NSW are required to operate within the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework. The framework encourages councils to draw all their various plans together, to understand how they interact and to get maximum leverage through a holistic approach to planning for the future.

The framework consists of a hierarchy of documents which ultimately aim to provide greater accountability and transparency in local government, by strengthening councils' strategic focus, streamlining reporting processes and making it easier for the community to understand and track councils' progress on achieving its objectives.

The framework consists of the following documents:

- A 10-year Community Strategic Plan, which outlines our broad vision for the future;
- A four-year Delivery Plan, accompanied by a full budget, which details exactly what we will do to implement the Community Strategic Plan;
- An Operational Plan, which will record the planned activity and expenditure for each year; and
- An Annual Report, which provides the community with a detailed account of what we have achieved each year and the progress made towards the implementation of the Delivery Program and Community Strategic Plan



The preparation of this 2016/17 Annual Report is for the final year of Council's previous Community Strategic Plan, Richmond Valley Towards 2025 and fulfils the requirements of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

## Highlights of our Signature Projects

### Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange

#### ***Tender Process***

Wiley & Co Pty Ltd, a national design and construction company were the successful tenderers for the \$7 million Stage 1 upgrade of the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange. Wiley provided Council with the necessary design and construction experience and the best value for money proposal with the capability to include further innovative options that will maximise the outcomes for the funding Council has available. Wiley's provided a detailed methodology featuring a management plan for minimal disruption to normal selling operations during construction. Another feature was their management of stakeholder consultation which has been useful for deciding on a final design and achieving buy in from users of the facility.

#### ***Upgrade of the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange***

The NRLX upgrade is proceeding in full, thanks to a further \$7 million investment from the NSW Government. Along with Federal Government funding of \$3.5 million and Council committing \$3.5 million for the completion of Stage 1, the additional State Government funding will see the whole of the project completed.

The \$14 million project will modernise the NRLX, improving animal welfare, environmental management, and workplace health and safety, along with increasing cattle throughput. The project involves a new roof structure, gate and pen upgrades, walkways, storm water management, electrical upgrades, perimeter fencing, security, and soft flooring.

It's estimated the full upgrade will deliver a \$50 million boost to the local economy. The industry is already one of the largest employers in the region and this investment from the NSW Government will ensure it continues to grow and prosper.



Phase one of the first stage is well underway with the roof almost completed, and work on the flooring and yards already started. Phase two of Stage 1 involves the upgrading of the current selling pens. The full stage one upgrade is expected to be completed in February 2018.

#### ***Truck Wash Upgrade***

Council was successful under the Fixing Country Truck Washes program to upgrade the existing facility at the NRLX. The \$358,076 grant (as well as an additional \$60,000 from Council) will help increase truck throughput and accessibility. The current facility does not have a specific B-double wash bay, which increases the time taken for drivers to wash down their trucks. The project involves:

- upgrading the current truck wash to enable 24-hour access to the amenities;
- adding an additional truck wash bay to facilitate B-double trucks and trailers;
- the new bay to have both recycled and town water wash options for either cabins or trailers;
- installing LED lighting;
- installation of a new water meter; and
- upgraded Avdata technology to improve measurement and invoicing.

The additional bay will decrease wait and wash times, allowing drivers more time transporting cattle. 24-hour access to the amenities will also improve work conditions and increase drivers' health and well-being as they do not have to utilise offsite services on completion of the job.



## The Casino Drill Hall

Council engaged architects Chris Pritchett and Associates to prepare a draft master plan for the Drill Hall site, which was created using the information compiled from community meetings and feedback. The aim of the project was to create an iconic public space in Casino which utilised the existing Drill Hall, incorporating an amphitheatre performance space and encouraged tourist visitation to the region.

Recently, State Member, Chris Gulaptis announced \$252,000 to boost the refurbishment of the Drill Hall site, including a new visitor information centre.



## Northern Rivers Rail Trail

Council is represented on the Northern Rivers Rail Trail Link which supported the crowd funding campaign which raised \$75,000. Richmond Valley and Lismore City councils have both committed \$50,000 each in support of the development of a business case to enable the project to attract public funding. The Rail Trail, once fully realised, will be available for use by the local community for getting to school, work and sport, shopping and recreation and by visitors seeking either a new way to experience the region's scenery, food and culture or a more adventurous experience.

## The Woodburn Riverside Precinct

Federal Member for Page Kevin Hogan announced a contribution under the Building Better Regions Fund of \$700,000 along with Council's \$700,000 contribution. The modern foreshore precinct in Woodburn is set to become a reality with funding secured under the first round of the Australian Government's new Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF). The new function centre, jetty and pontoon will allow for the expansion of river based sporting and recreational opportunities, including new regional, state and higher level water skiing competitions.

In what is a major boost for the regional economy, this project will create 58 ongoing jobs, three of which will be Aboriginal identified jobs.

Architects Locale Consulting prepared the Draft Master Plan, using information compiled from community meetings and feedback. The project will consolidate the existing facilities in the park into one modern facility, create an adventure playground and update the waterfront reserve to encourage events both at a local and regional level.



## Our Community

### Casino Beef Week

Federal Member for Page Kevin Hogan announced the Federal Government will deliver on the 2016 election promise to provide \$1 million of funding for Casino Beef Week (\$250,000 per year over the next four years) which will ensure the future and improvement of the important community festival for many years to come.



### Greyhound Racing Industry

Richmond Valley Council's advocacy to support the many people in the Richmond Valley community who participate and love the greyhound racing industry, contributed to the NSW Government's decision to overturn the ban on greyhound racing that was to take effect from 1 July 2017.

Richmond Valley Council's Economic and Social Impact Assessment Report identified that the ban would impact the Richmond Valley through:

- a loss of \$10.54 million to the local economy
- the loss of 49 jobs
- a loss of \$2.45 million in salaries
- significant impacts on supporting industries and serious mental health and social welfare issues for those who would no longer be able to sustain a greyhound training and racing operation which includes looking after retired greyhounds.

The report also included case studies of the impacts the ban would have on local trainers, pet supplies shops and veterinarians and the importance this industry has in the broader community.





## New Italy Mountain Bike Park

The Northern Rivers' first major mountain bike park was unveiled at the Doubleduke State Forest, Tabbimoble. A team of volunteers from the Northern Rivers Dirty Wheels Mountain Bike Club had spent six months hard work creating an 18-kilometre single track trail through the State forest.

The project received grant funding from Council, Federal Member for Page Kevin Hogan and in-kind support from the Forestry Corporation of NSW who granted a permit for the park.



## Shark alarm, nets and drones

Drone trials took place along Richmond Valley's coastline as part of the NSW Government's \$16 million Shark Management Strategy. The trials are testing the effectiveness of drone technology in reducing shark attacks by feeding images back to the operator in real time using GPS coordinates. Flights at Evans Head are conducted every Thursday, Friday and Sunday for a one-hour timeframe in the morning. Evans Head resident Mark Flaherty was contracted by NSW Department Primary Industries to undertake the local trial.



Council now monitors the quality of the link for the shark alarm at the Evans Head Surf Lifesaving Club. It was discovered there was connectivity issues and once a radio link from the Club to the Evans Head Office was installed, Council can monitor the quality of that link at all times rather than only having an issue flagged during a potential emergency.

## New base station to improve mobile coverage



As announced in the 2016 Federal election, a new mobile base station is to be set up near Bundocks Road, north of the Nammoona Waste and Resource Recovery Facility and NRLX. This is good news for saleyard users as it will provide a much-needed boost to mobile coverage, as well as enhancing the attractiveness of setting up a business at the industrial precinct. It is hoped that construction will commence prior to the end of the year however, this is subject to planning and local development negotiations by the mobile carrier.

## Our People

### YES program

Our YES program continues to go from strength to strength with a further 15 new recruits in 2016. Council was recognised again being one of three finalists in the 2016 NSW Training Awards for Large Employer of the Year. Two of our young staff were nominated as finalists at the NSW TAFE Training Awards although they weren't awarded the top honour, it is a privilege to be nominated in such a high calibre of nominees.



Hearty congratulations to Stephen O'Neill (photo left) on being awarded the 2016 Richmond Valley Business & Industry Excellence Awards Apprentice of the Year. Stephen is one of RVC's school-based apprentices and has been working with the Parks and Gardens team. In this time, he has received high praise from his peers, supervisors and teachers. Stephen effortlessly juggles one day of work per week, one day of TAFE and three days at school completing Year 11. Special mention must also go to Stephen's mentor Kirsten Allen for her guidance and sound advice. Great effort! It is great to be able to tell the RVC story of how our young people are now an integral part of our progressive organisation.

We have continued the successful development of our staff by providing various training and secondment opportunities throughout the year. One opportunity provided was attended by over 80 staff to improve and develop leadership at all levels of administration and operational staff throughout Council.

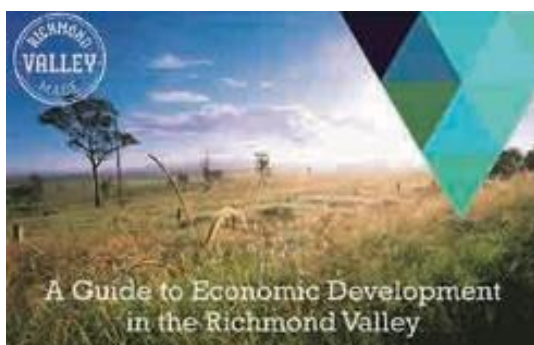


We also have five scholars completing Bachelor of Business, Bachelor Civil Engineering, Bachelor Urban and Regional Planning and Advanced Diploma Building Surveying. All are achieving outstanding results and are considered high performers in the workplace.



## Our Business

### Guide to Economic Development



Council welcomes and appreciates new, existing and prospective businesses that want to commence or expand here. This guide aims to whet the appetite of your business and demonstrate the Richmond Valley's rich natural attributes, logistical advantage and robust economic development strategy to you. The area welcomes new business to leverage off already established and successful industries, bring something old that is new; or of course is a leader in new manufacturing or technology. Whatever the case, we are ready to listen, and assist. With a beach and bush lifestyle together with very affordable real estate,

there is every chance of securing the winning formula you seek. However, this guide will never replace a phone call or the personal touch! Richmond Valley Council is staffed by professionals who not only want to help; they have the business acumen and local knowledge along with a philosophy of 'how can we make it happen'.

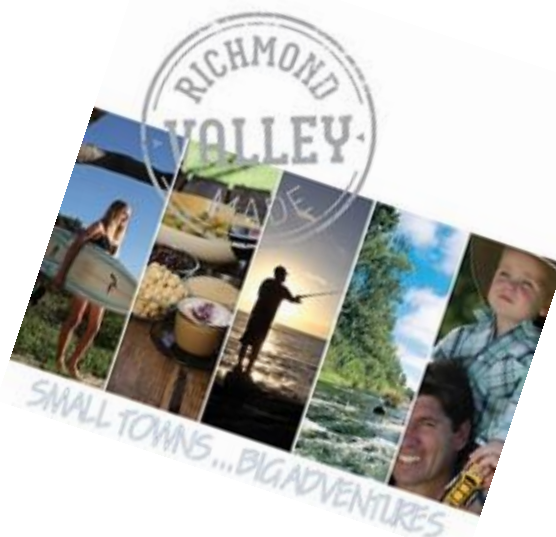
### Tourism Development Plan

Tourism is one of the most important contributors to the growth and character of the Richmond Valley. The annual economic contribution of tourism to the region is valued at around \$76 million. Over a period of four years, the Richmond Valley region attracted an average of 119,000 overnight domestic visitors, 180,000 domestic day visitors, and 3,000 overnight international visitors per year. Around 292 people are directly employed in the tourism sector.

Given the significance of tourism to the Richmond Valley economy, and the competitiveness of tourism in regional Australia, it is important tourism is not only maintained and strengthened as an economic driver, but also planned and managed in a sustainable way to enhance and conserve the natural environment, protect the wellbeing of residents and attract visitors with shared values.

From a destination management perspective, Richmond Valley Council provides an important leadership and coordination role for tourism through its communications, economic development and events teams, which are responsible for the coordination of destination marketing activities and visitor information services. The need to develop a Richmond Valley Tourism Development Plan was identified as an important priority by Richmond Valley Council following the establishment of a renewed strategic focus on the management of tourism for towns and villages across the Richmond Valley region. The Plan identifies important approaches to move forward, such as:

- The establishment of working groups to assist with industry development and engagement, accommodation development, and development of a new agri-based tourism strategy.
- Development of strategies for product development, the Pacific Highway bypass, visitor road signage, Richmond Valley events, Richmond Valley Visitor Information Services, as well as annual marketing plans.
- Continuing to work with Richmond Valley Council's Assets team to determine the feasibility of new infrastructure, such as Casino Drill Hall site and the Woodburn Riverside Precinct, as well as the enhancement of existing infrastructure, like the Casino Civic Hall.





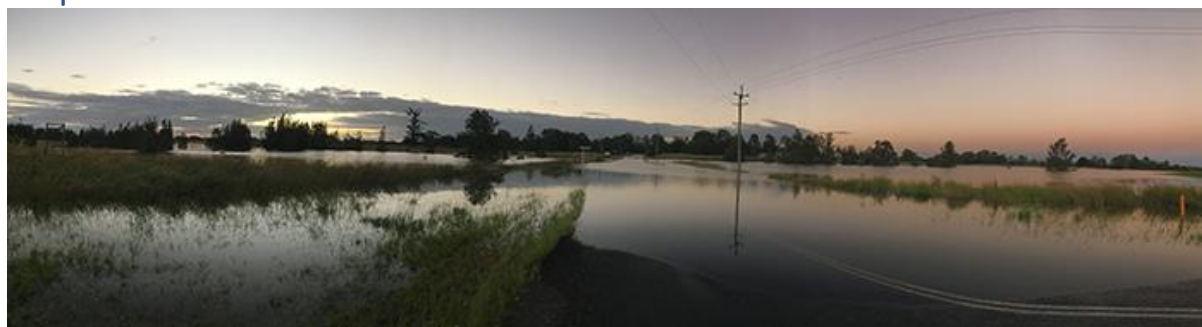
- Supporting operators to develop new products which focus on distinctive experiences related to leisure, nature-based, regional food, and arts and culture.
- Establish a Richmond Valley Destination Research Program to regularly monitor visitor markets, profiles and satisfaction.

## Insurance Savings

As part of a review of procurement practices Council undertook a review of its then current insurance provider, Statewide Mutual, which had not tendered for brokerage services since its establishment in 1993. Statewide are the insurers for approximately 120 Councils in NSW. Council took part in a collaborative joint tender project with a group of ten Regional NSW Councils for the tender of brokerage services and insurance coverage to test the market for savings and efficiencies in managing its insurance program.

As a result of the tender process, Council appointed AON Pty Ltd in February 2017 under a three-year contract, ending its 24-year relationship with Statewide Mutual. Council realised savings of \$330,824 or 43.30% on the cost of premiums and risk management services for its renewal program for 2017/2018.

## Response to flood



Council staff estimated up to \$10 million worth of damage to roads and drainage occurred during the two flooding events at the start of 2017. The worst affected areas, 50 of Council's unsealed roads and 21 sealed rural roads, were inundated with water or suffered significant scouring on steep sections along shoulders and road edges equating to more than 53 kilometres of Council's road network. Repairs have commenced and thanks to the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Natural Disaster Relief & Recovery arrangements (NDRRA) the following has been approved and funded:

- Crown Roads \$113,030
- Regional Roads \$54,669
- Rural Sealed Roads \$434,840
- Local Roads \$3,336,960

## Casino Library Upgrade

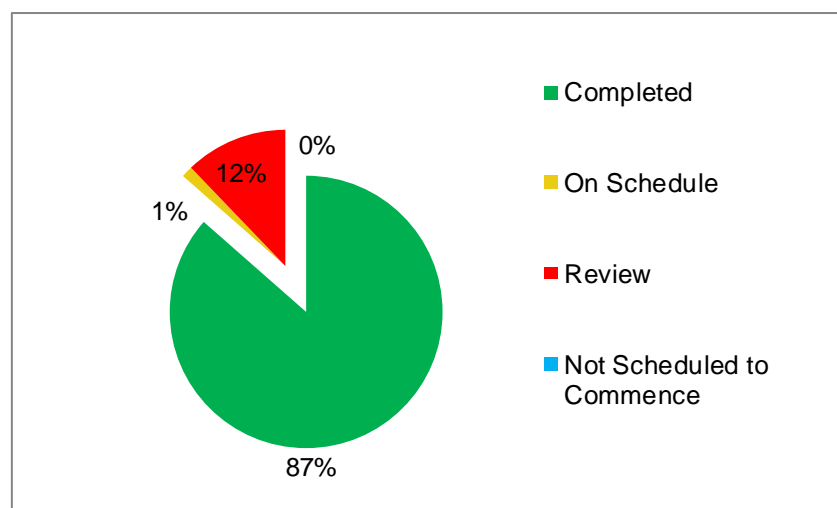
A fit out of the Casino Library involved new shelving and furniture giving the Library a modernised look thanks to a Public Library Infrastructure Grant of \$177,230.

A fabulous new circulation desk is the focal point for members and visitors along with new furniture and updated shelving.



## Section 1 – Delivery Program Progress

Annual reporting for all local government organisations requires a progress report of activities and projects identified in the Delivery Program. The 2016/2017 financial year is the final year in a four-year cycle (2013 to 2017), as planned in the Delivery Program. The chart below is a dashboard of Council's overall performance in achieving the outcomes identified in the Delivery Program for the period 2013 to 2017.



The following pages summarise the highlights in delivering on agreed outcomes and detail those activities and achievements in 2016/2017 for each focus area.

The focus areas in our Community Strategic Plan are as follows:

1. Natural Environment,
2. Local Economy,
3. Community and Culture,
4. Recreation and Open Spaces,
5. Rural and Urban Developments,
6. Transport and Infrastructure, and
7. Governance and Process.

The full progress report is detailed in the Delivery Program Progress Report (period ending 30 June 2017) and can be found at

[http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your\\_Council/Governance/Integrated\\_Planning\\_and\\_Reporting/Delivery\\_Program\\_Progress\\_Reports/](http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your_Council/Governance/Integrated_Planning_and_Reporting/Delivery_Program_Progress_Reports/)

To view the full four-year Delivery Program, the one-year Operational Plan and the Community Strategic Plan, visit the Integrated Planning and Reporting page at

[http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your\\_Council/Governance/Integrated\\_Planning\\_and\\_Reporting/](http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your_Council/Governance/Integrated_Planning_and_Reporting/)



## Focus Area 1 - Natural Environment

### 1.1 Preservation of Waterways

*Clean up and preserve the health of our rivers, eradicate pests (flora and fauna) and repair local riparian zones.*

#### What we have done:

- Grant Funding was obtained and program commenced for illegal dumping, including appointment of a part-time Education Officer. Waste and Resource Recovery section is providing community education through Council's Waste and Education Officer and other State and Regional Programs.
- Illegal Dumping Waste Officer engaged via grant program with North East Waste to implement an education and enforcement program for illegally dumped waste, in conjunction with Council Rangers.
- Liquid trade waste inspections and environmental audits are being conducted in conjunction to ensure discharges to stormwater and rivers are protected
- Council participated in a program assessing the eco health of the Richmond River and identifying actions and 'hot spots'. Council is continuing to liaise with the Rous County Council regarding priority sites to have work carried out.

### 1.2 Respond to Climate Change

*Develop a climate change strategy to address our physical response to potential climate change impacts (rising sea levels, increased storm intensity and duration, coastal erosion, increased flood risk, higher flood velocities). Develop strategies to address our carbon footprint, for example the impact of our activities.*

#### What we have done:

- Negotiations with Office of Environment & Heritage regarding Councils' draft Evans Head Coastal Zone Management Plan with plans to have it endorsed by the Minister prior to the commencement of the Coastal Management Act.
- Updating of flood model is being coordinated by Rous County Council.
- Ongoing participation in and support for regional street lighting group.
- Council has adopted Flood Planning levels into amended Local Environmental Plans and Development Control Plans.

### 1.3 Environmental Protection

*Improve Council and community practices and programs for environmental protection.*

#### What we have done:

- Attend Casino Wild Dog meetings and continue to provide traps to community for Indian Myna Birds as required.
- Funding and support provided for Evans Head Landcare group for weed management and revegetation adjoining Evans Head beach access.
- Discounted the fees for community and charitable organisations to dispose of waste at the Landfill.

## Focus Area 2 - Local Economy

### 2.1 Business, Industry & Agriculture

*Council will have a proactive philosophy to develop, promote and support all business, industry and agriculture sectors with a view to providing local employment opportunities.*

#### What we have done:

- Bio Hub at the Casino Sewerage Treatment Plant is now a live project with Utilitas and discussions are underway regarding further waste to energy projects.
- Upgrade of the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange commenced with Phase 1 due for completion in January 2018.
- Public Art Strategy adopted by Council and is currently under review to complement the Tourism Development Plan.
- Petersons Quarry has been leased to increase quarry product sales and increase revenue.
- Investigation into mobile connectivity and submissions have been completed and submitted to the Federal Government for the Mobile Black Spot Program. Telstra will be erecting a mobile phone tower (4G) at Rappville as well as Nammoona.
- Installation of CBD Wi-Fi in Evans Head, Woodburn, Coraki and Casino has been completed.
- A record throughput of 119,572 head of cattle at the NRLX reaching over \$100 million in sales.

### 2.2 Employment Opportunities

*Increase quantity and diversity of local employment and training.*

#### What we have done:

- Youth Employment Strategy continued and 15 new starters employed (including 4 Aboriginal Trainees) in 2016.
- Invested more than \$283,240 on training and developing our people (an increase of 35.9% from previous year).
- Economic Development Strategy was adopted by Council.
- YES program careers evening delivered in August 2016 which was well attended by local students. \$167,000 State funded part-qualification training secured and delivered by TAFE.

### 2.3 Tourism and Promotion

*Increase tourism in Richmond Valley.*

#### What we have done:

- Creation of the Richmond Valley Tourism Development Plan.
- Event strategy has been completed and under review. Focus is to identify new events and strengthen existing ones while promoting the agricultural sectors in our region.
- The Communications, Events and Tourism team travelled to Sydney to be part of a two-day Regional Living Expo.
- Council's tourism operators attended a three-day Local Government NSW Tourism Conference in Taree.

## Focus Area 3 - Community & Culture

### 3.1 Support a safer community

*Facilitate increased community safety in local towns.*

#### What we have done:

- Continual improvements to pedestrian and mobility access throughout the Richmond Valley including construction of footpath at Colley Park, Casino and Evans Head Surf Club.
- Ongoing attendance and support at Liquor Accord and Regional Community Network meetings.
- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design provisions are contained in the Development Control Plan and are up to date.

### 3.2 Events, Art and Culture –

*Ensure our regional art and cultural activities remain a strong component of Richmond Valley life.*

#### What we have done:

- Successful, well attended events schedule throughout last financial year including (but not limited to) Great Eastern Fly In, Australia Day Celebrations at Evans Head, Craig Shepherd Memorial Ski Race, Casino & District Kennel Club Dog Show, Relay for Life, Carnivale Italiano, Beef Week Festival, Primex, Casino Truck Show, Fishing Classic, Bentley Art Prize, Carp Muster, Casino Drags, Evans Head Malibu Classic, Woodburn Riverside Festival, Coraki Assault Ski Race, Christmas Street Party.
- Provided Signature Event Funding or Support Scheme/In Kind Support for numerous events.
- Section 68 Form has been updated to make it more user friendly. Updating of other forms including the park booking form will follow.
- Social Media Marketing workshops have been conducted.
- Marketing Manual has been developed to support event organisers in the capacity to promote events while encouraging the promotion of the Richmond Valley Made Brand and Richmond Valley awareness.

### 3.3 Community Health and Wellbeing and Social Inclusion

*Instil a strong sense of community wellbeing, social justice, connectedness and social inclusion which enables community members to live and work together.*

#### What we have done:

- In 2016/17 Council was successful with 13 of the 37 grant applications at a success rate of 35.14%.
- Library use above State Average with a 25% increase of use of Internet and Wi-Fi.
- Casino Library internal fit-out and Evans Head Library underwent an internal refurbish.
- There were 8 successful applications by community organisations under the Community Building Partnerships with Council.
- Continually working with Assets and Events teams to identify community groups and grants to address social inequality and disadvantage. Programs being implemented at the Casino Indoor Sports Stadium to support engagement of youth and disadvantaged community members.
- Coraki Health One facility has been completed and being utilised by the community

### **3.4 Civic Pride**

*Provide for a well-serviced and tidy local government area, which encourages a vibrant CBDs and business centre.*

#### **What we have done:**

- Free Wi-Fi rollout in Casino, Woodburn and Evans Head CBD's.
- Town Entry Tree Plantings.
- Continued support for Clean Up Australia Day.
- Coraki Healing Stones restoration completed.
- Public Art Reference Group has been established.
- Street cleaning program developed.
- Continued improvements to town landscapes & garden beds, brining colour to our streets.

## Focus Area 4 - Recreation & Open Spaces

### 4.1 Improved Sporting Facilities

*Maximise opportunities to improve existing sporting facilities in partnership with local sporting organisations to facilitate greater participation in sporting activities.*

#### What we have done:

- Construction of Casino Men's Shed and Camp Draft Facility at Casino Showground completed with capital improvements completed.
- Casino Indoor Sports Stadium managed with a schedule of events and sports regularly updated. Casino's first Wellness and Fitness Expo was recently held with a good attendance.
- Evans Head Skatepark and surrounds completed.
- Footpath constructed on the surrounds of Crawford Square to allow for ease of access to the facility.
- Initiation of Capital Improvement Plan for the development of Crawford square as a Regional Park.

### 4.2 Improved Recreational Use and Opportunities

*The improvement of recreational use and opportunities.*

#### What we have done:

- Woodburn Riverfront Masterplan completed with \$700,000 funding received from Federal Member for Page, Kevin Hogan along with Council's \$700,000 contribution.
- Maintenance of Evans Head Main Beach conducted with the refurbishment of a 'Wasp Beach Cleaner' to 'clean' the sand of debris.

### 4.3 Manage public land and resources for the community benefit.

*Management practices must ensure facilities are developed and maintained to an agreed level of service in partnership with the community.*

#### What we have done:

- Asset Management Plans were reviewed and amended during the Fit For the Future process. Plans were approved by Council and the re-evaluations were completed.
- Extension to off-leash area at Airforce Beach, Evans Head was finalised.
- Lease with new Manager of Evans Head Surf Life Saving Clubhouse.
- Work for the Dole project implemented with two projects covering 26 weeks completed.
- Ongoing review of Council's Volunteer Training Manual.



## Focus Area 5 - Rural & Urban Developments

### 5.1 Land Use Development

*Land use development should be appropriate for the retention of a country atmosphere and village lifestyle.*

#### What we have done:

- Future Urban Growth Boundary Maps were adopted by Council in 2015 to add additional growth areas to the existing urban settlement strategies. Council continues to negotiate with interested parties to identify new land releases.
- Local Growth Management Strategy has been identified as a priority and Council will partner with the State Government to meet the objectives of the North Coast Regional Plan.
- Future Urban Growth Boundary Maps were adopted by Council to add additional growth areas.
- Industrial Land Development identified as a priority in the Guide to Economic Development in the Richmond Valley.
- Council continues to participate and advocate for Affordable Housing within our area through LEP and DCP provisions and secondary dwelling incentives.
- Pre-lodgement meetings are being used to provide better interaction between Council and developers to facilitate discussions of further urban development.

### 5.2 Improve Development Processes

*Establish simpler, easier development processes.*

#### What we have done:

- Development Concierge position created to assist applicants in making Development Applications.
- Customer Service is continually monitored and improvements are made as necessary. Representatives attend the Customer Service Team Meetings to clarify any issue that may be experienced.
- Major developments are given priority access to staff and full assistance from Council.
- Development Assessment Panel used to encourage outcome focused and consistent assessment of Development Applications.
- Continual improvement of e-Planning.

## Focus Area 6 - Transport & Infrastructure

### 6.1 Roads

*Improve and maintain roads and associated infrastructure to acceptable standards in accordance with financial capability.*

#### What we have done:

- Regional Transport Plan completed with the development of Local Transport Plan programmed.
- Ongoing annual rehabilitation program of sealed pavement and re-sheeting program of unsealed pavements.
- Council's spend for capital works program was \$16,276,665.
- Development of a 10-year pedestrian and bicycle program identified as a priority to be developed in conjunction with budget estimates and Long Term Financial Planning.
- Weekly updating of MyRoadInfo completed as well as continual updating during weather/emergency events.
- Local Emergency Management Committee meetings are now combined and called the Northern Rivers LEMC to improve efficiencies and resource sharing (involving Kyogle, Lismore City and Richmond Valley Councils).

### 6.2 Public transport services

*A viable public transport system servicing the needs of the region.*

#### What we have done:

- Council established the Accessibility, Liveability and Aged Advisory Committee as a forum for addressing transport issues in the RVC.
- Council is represented on the Northern Rivers Rail Trail Link, supported the Crowd Funding Campaign which raised \$75,000. Council has committed \$50,000 to support development of a project business case in conjunction with Lismore City Council.

### 6.3 Community facilities including aerodromes, cemeteries and halls

*Continued maintenance of community facilities, including local airfields in accordance with the community's agreed service levels.*

#### What we have done:

- Continued 100% occupation of long term tenants at the Casino Community and Culture Centre. Customer Service staff are rostered to work on site to better manage workload and the use of volunteers.
- Relocation of Coraki SES Unit completed.
- Accessibility and mobility requirements are considered with all upgrade or renewal works of Community Assets.
- Cemetery Improvements including first stage of the memorial gardens completed (Rose / Camellia & Magnolia), new recycled seating installed to replace older wooden seats, new water line installed to assist visitors wanting to top up flower placements, new Columbarium Wall constructed, new concrete strips for head stones constructed, infrastructure improvements including furniture and regulatory signs at Casino Cemetery and new regulatory signs with further denomination signs planned for West Street Cemetery.
- New concrete strip for head stones placements, new bollards along roadside and, reconstruction of unsealed road at Coraki Cemetery.
- New denomination signs and new recycled seat for the infant burial centre at Evans Head Cemetery.

#### **6.4 Water and Sewerage**

*Provide sustainable, reliable and safe water supply and sewerage services.*

##### **What we have done:**

- Repairs to Reservoirs to ensure longevity of water supplies and reduction in water loss.
- Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA) Renewal.
- Programmed renewal works completed.
- Sewer Mains renewals completed.
- Upgrades to Casino, Coraki, Woodburn and Evans Head Sewer Pump Stations.
- Upgrade of Casino Sewer Treatment Plant Inlet Works.
- CCTV Inspection Program.

## Focus Area 7 - Governance & Process

### 7.1 Generate Revenue

*Generate Revenue to Fund the Operations of Council.*

#### What we have done:

- Council's operating result from continuing operations increased to a surplus of \$7,507,000 (compared to \$1,727,000 in 2015/2016).
- Council's revenue increased significantly from \$49,353,000 (in 2015/2016) to \$56,458,000 in 2016/2017.
- Council secured \$3.5m Federal and \$7m State funding (along with Council's \$3.5m contribution) to allow for the full upgrades of the NRLX to be completed. The first stage is expected to be completed in January 2018.
- \$252,000 State funding received for the refurbishment of the Casino Drill Hall building.
- \$700,000 Federal funding contribution for the Woodburn Riverside Precinct.

### 7.2 Efficiency and Effectiveness

*Drive efficiency and effectiveness throughout the operations of Council.*

#### What we have done:

- Council's framework of key performance indicators and benchmarks are regularly reviewed by the Performance Management Office.
- NOROC Regional Procurement Group is led by Council's Chief Financial Officer which meets bi-monthly to discuss and coordinate resource sharing and cost benefits of conducting procurement on a regional basis.
- Risk Register as part of the Internal Audit developed to minimise risk and create efficiencies.
- Roads Review completed which identified areas for improvement and efficiency savings.

### 7.3 Communication

*A focus on meaningful, proactive and effective communications with Richmond Valley residents and customers.*

#### What we have done:

- Fortnightly community e-newsletter sent to 5,800 subscribers.
- Social Media presence expanded to include three Facebook pages (Richmond Valley Council, Companion Animals and YES) designed for target groups and a RichmondValleyMade Instagram account.
- Hard copy of Community Newsletter delivered to every letterbox in the LGA every quarter.
- Draft Communications Plan will compliment Community Engagement Strategy and IT Strategy.
- Style Guide for communicating with the community completed.

### 7.4 Civic Leadership and Corporate Planning

*Council will provide effective leadership through policy formulation, open and transparent processes, appropriate community engagement and open lines of communication.*

#### What we have done:

- Implementation of the Richmond Valley Made 2030 Community Strategic Plan.
- Staff Leadership program commenced.
- Implementation of a new Annual Review system to improve processes and efficiencies.
- 2016 finalist in the NSW Training Awards Large Employer of the Year.

- Free public Wi-Fi rolled out to Casino, Evans Head and Woodburn CBDs.
- Continuation of the YES Program with Careers evening held, attendance at careers events at Schools with the recruitment of 15 school leavers in 2016.

### **7.5 Sound Governance and Legislative Practices**

*As an employer and government entity Council is required to comply with a myriad of legislative and statutory acts and associated regulations; Council has to manage the risk associated with same to ensure optimal performance and to have the right personnel at the right time performing the right roles.*

#### **What we have done:**

- Free microchipping of Companion Animals provided at significant events within the Richmond Valley.
- Council is also continuing to work with owners of unregistered animals to ensure compliance with extensive media releases including public notices and social media rolled out to encourage and promote microchipping and registration.
- 24-hour response service provided for “stock on road” complaints and/or notifications received.
- Fraud management review undertaken as part of the Internal Audit program.
- Testing of Business Continuity Plan undertaken by consultants. Improvement Plan has been provided and recommendations for improvement to be implemented as part of the review process.
- Council's Long Term Financial Plans developed in line with Council's Asset Management Plans. Council's backlog ratio meets the benchmark.

### **7.6 Safer Work Environment**

*Provide a healthy and safe working environment for all workers and visitors on Council controlled premises and worksites.*

#### **What we have done:**

- Continued successful Return to Work program resulting in further reduction in lost time injuries.
- Further reduced Workers Compensation Premiums.
- New Safehold system implemented and hazard notification and action plans implemented. Hazard inspections being conducted routinely in accordance with annual scheduled hazard inspection matrix.
- All new staff undertake comprehensive induction program including Corporate Induction. Induction process is continually reviewed and refined.

### **7.7 Customer Service**

*Council will strive to understand and exceed the expectations of its customers.*

#### **What we have done:**

- Customer Service Framework being developed.
- More than 80% first point of contact resolution regularly achieved.
- E-service stations available in Casino Office and options for Evans Head are being investigated.
- Electronic communications are available and reliable. Improvements to online forms completed and migration to NSW state based development application tools, etc. conducted.
- Rates and Water Notices have the ability to be received by BPay Bill and email.
- Service Levels have been developed.

## Section 2 – Financial & Asset Reporting

During 2016/2017 Council continued to provide services and facilities to the community in accordance with the adopted estimates (as amended each quarter).

The audited financial statements for Richmond Valley Council for 2016/2017 are available as a separate document in the Annual Report and Financial Statements section of Council's website <http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au>.

### Income Statement

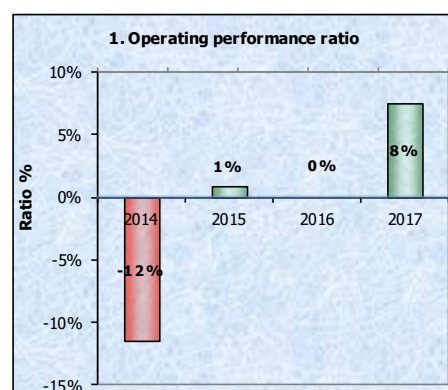
Function	Income \$'000	Expenditure \$'000	Net Cost \$'000
Governance	0	2,039	-2,039
Administration	779	0	779
Public Order & Safety	2,051	2,244	-193
Health	217	604	-387
Environment	5,189	6,673	-1,484
Housing and Community Amenities	1,326	3,009	-1,683
Water Supplies	5,801	5,399	402
Sewerage Services	9,110	7,394	1,716
Recreation and Culture	1,461	4,809	-3,348
Mining, Manufacturing and Construction	1,460	189	1,271
Transport and Communication	8,280	15,130	-6,850
Economic Affairs	3,635	2,549	1,086
Total Functions and Activities	39,309	50,039	-10,730
<b>General Purpose Income</b>	<b>18,237</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18,237</b>

### Indicators

#### Operating Performance Ratio

Council's Operating Performance Ratio is above the benchmark of 0%. This is partially due to the Federal Government bringing forward the first two instalments of the 2017/18 financial assistance grant, increasing revenue by \$2.369m. Council is also in its third year of a special rate variation approved over a 5-year period. This has allowed Council to take steps towards addressing this ratio.

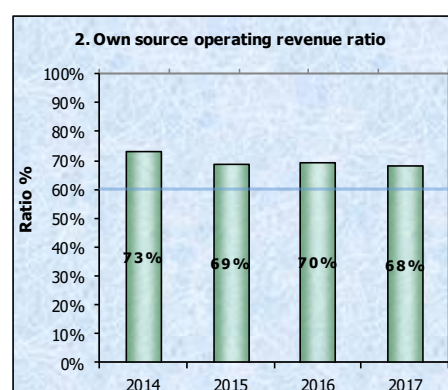
**Benchmark:** — Minimum  $\geq 0.00\%$



#### Own Source Operating Revenue Ratio

Council's Own Source Operating Revenue is above the benchmark of 60% and remains relatively consistent at around 70%. This trends towards less reliance on grants and contributions and Council's special rate variation should lead to further improvements in this ratio.

**Benchmark:** — Minimum  $\geq 60.00\%$

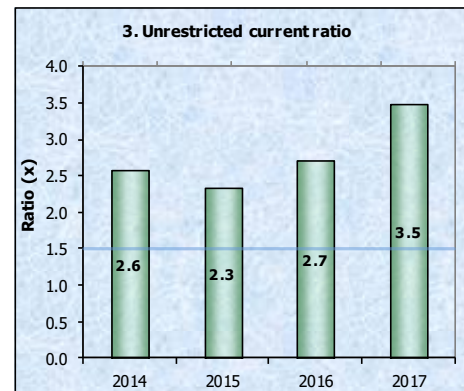




### Unrestricted Current Ratio

The Unrestricted Current Ratio has continued to improve and remains above the benchmark of 1.5. The improvement has been due to a proportionate increase in cash and receivables over current liabilities.

Benchmark: — Minimum  $\geq 1.50$



### Debt Service Cover Ratio

Council's Debt Service Ratio has improved to 5.0 and is well above the benchmark of 2.0. This is due to an improved operating result meaning there was more cash available to service the repayment of debt.

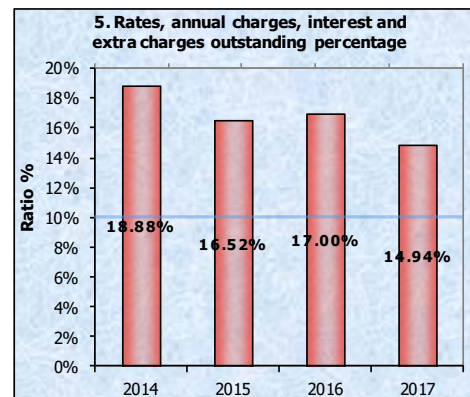
Benchmark: — Minimum  $\geq 2.00$



### Rates, Annual Charges, Interest & Extra Charges Outstanding Ratio

There has been an improvement in Council's Rates, annual charges, interest and extra charges outstanding ratio, reducing from 17.00% to 14.94%. Council will continue to monitor and pursue outstanding amounts through its debt recovery practices. In comparing this ratio to the benchmark, it is impacted by the fact that Council levies its water and sewerage annual charges in arrears.

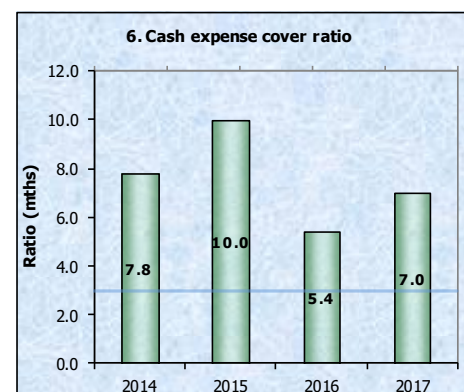
Benchmark: — Maximum  $< 10.00\%$



### Cash Expense Cover Ratio

Council's Cash Expense Cover Ratio is well above the benchmark of 3.0. This ratio excludes managed funds which are liquid assets that can be redeemed within 5 days.

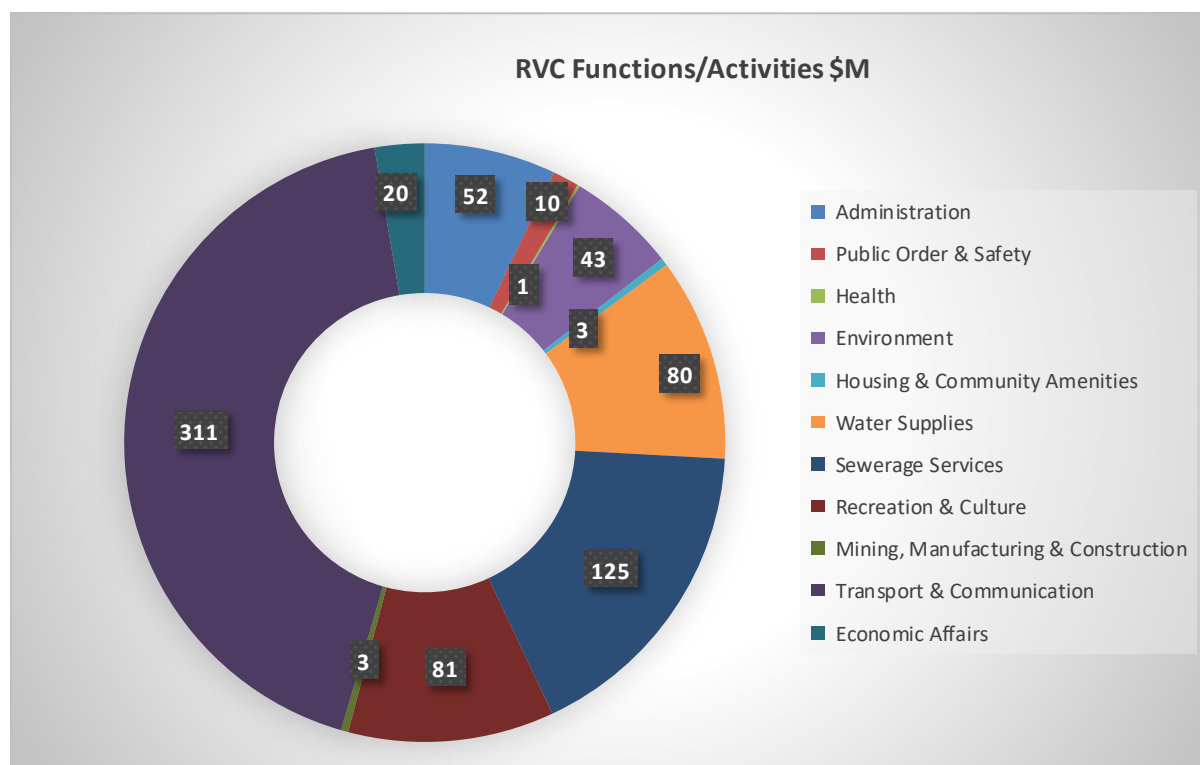
Benchmark: — Minimum  $\geq 3.00$



## Balance Sheet

\$'000	Actual 2017	Actual 2016
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	12,934	12,066
Investments	25,711	20,310
Receivables	9,867	7,936
Inventories	1,092	1,102
Other	369	366
Non-current assets classified as "held for sale"	0	0
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>49,973</b>	<b>41,780</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>		
Investments	0	0
Receivables	2,208	2,166
Inventories	1,297	1,543
Infrastructure, property, plant and equipment	673,629	662,822
Investments accounted for using the equity method	0	0
Investment property	0	0
Intangible assets	0	0
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<b>677,134</b>	<b>666,531</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>727,107</b>	<b>708,311</b>

## Assets Held



## Section 3 – Statutory Reporting

### Overseas Visits by Councillors, Council Staff or other persons representing Council

There were no overseas visits by Councillors, Council staff or other persons representing Council during the financial year.

### Councillor Fees, Expenses & Facilities

Council's Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors Policy sets out acceptable expenses to be paid for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors in the carriage of their civic office duties. The policy allows for the provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to Councillors on a personal basis such as laptop computers, mobile phones, iPads, telephones and facsimile machines and internet installed in the Councillors' homes. In addition, the policy makes provision for payment of travelling costs and costs relating to seminar, conference and training attendance.

A copy of the policy is available on Council's website – <http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au>

The table below is a summary of the expenses incurred by Councillors during the financial year.

Expense Type	
Expense Type	\$ (exc GST)
Mayoral Fee	24,260.00
Councillor Fees	76,807.80
<b><u>Mayoral Expenses:</u></b>	
Communication expenses	316.42
Conferences, seminars and training attendance	3,262.73
Interstate Travel	923.15
Intrastate Travel	1,334.67
Mayoral vehicle expenses	15,938.71
Other expenses	1,594.67
<b><u>Councillor Expenses</u></b>	
Communication expenses	660.00
Conferences, seminars and training attendance	0.00
Interstate Travel	0.00
Intrastate Travel	4,062.32
Other expenses	6,477.95
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>135,638.42</b>

### Private Works

Council did not subsidise any private works during 2016/2017 in accordance with Section 67 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

## Legal Proceedings

During 2016/2017, Council was involved in a number of legal proceedings, a summary of which is available below:

Service Area	\$ (Excl. GST)
<b>Planning &amp; Development</b>	
- Development assessment	1,140.00
- Development prosecutions	18,704.33
<b>Debt Recovery</b>	
- Rates, charges and other debtors	68,357.34
<b>Health &amp; Regulatory Control</b>	
- Health administration ongoing	2,147.25
<b>Infrastructure &amp; Environment</b>	
- Lease preparation	1,339.00
<b>Real Estate Development</b>	
- Property Matters	17,005.19
<b>Corporate Services</b>	
- Public Liability	14,367.50
- Other	18,866.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>141,927.15</b>

## Contracts Awarded by Council

During 2016/2017 the following contracts for amounts greater than \$150,000 were awarded by Council, as defined by the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Nature of goods and Services Supplied	Name	Total amount payable under the contract (inc GST)
Crushing of aggregates, Road base and Flood blend at Woodview Quarry (RVC-749195)	Smith Plant	\$578,050.00
Design and stage 1 Construction for renewal of NRLX (RVC-340.16)	Wiley & Co Pty Ltd	\$5,101,656.00
Transport & Disposal of Construction & Demolition Waste and/or mixed Putrescible Waste (RVC-336.16)	Ti Tree Bioenergy PTY LTD	At tendered unit rates
Casino Library internal fit out (RVC-339.16)	Quantum Libraries	\$178,220.90
Provision of legal services (RVC-735629)	Panel Tender	At tendered unit rates
Trade Services (RVC-756697)	Panel Tender	At tendered unit rates
Design & Construct tennis courts at Evans head (RVC313.15)	Summerland Tennis	\$282,700.00



## Financial Assistance

During the year, Council resolved to make contributions/grants totalling \$70,135.95. These were allocated to the following organisations:

Organisation	Amount (\$)	Organisation	Amount (\$)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Casino Scout Group	2,171.70	Half Tide Boardriders Club Inc.	1,000.00
Broadwater Rileys Hill Community Hall	907.00	Keep our Freedom Youth Indigenous Corporation	4,300.00
Casino & District Historical Society Inc.	3,485.00	Mid Richmond Neighbourhood Centre Inc.	1,400.00
Casino Community Men's Shed Inc.	1,500.00	Northern Rivers Dirty Wheels Mountain Bike Club Inc.	3,671.25
Casino Environment Centre	1,078.00	Norther Rivers Drag Racing Association	1,800.00
Casino Lions Club	4,000.00	Northern Rivers Life Education Action Group	5,000.00
Casino Little Athletics Inc.	1,700.00	Our Two Hands	2,000.00
Casino Miniature Railway & Museum	1,800.00	Richmond Valley Swim Club	1,000.00
Casino Poultry Club Inc.	1,000.00	Rileys Hill War Memorial Reserve Trust	3,200.00
Casino RSM Junior Cricket Club	2,097.00	Rotary Club Casino	1,900.00
Casino's Own Wireless Association Inc.	4,500.00	Uniting Care Casino Transport Team	6,800.00
Community Radio Coraki Association Inc.	3,356.00	Windara Communities Ltd	1,000.00
Dirawong Reserve Trust	1,450.00	Woodburn Amateur Boxing Club Inc.	1,000.00
Ellangowan Public Hall Trust	3,000.00	Woodview Piora Community Hall	1,500.00
Evans Head Pre-School Association Inc.	2,520.00	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70,135.95</b>

## External Partnerships

### Richmond-Upper Clarence Regional Library

Richmond Valley Council has an agreement with Kyogle Council to operate a regional library service known as the Richmond-Upper Clarence Regional Library.

Richmond Valley Council is the Executive Council for the Regional Library service and all financial reporting for Richmond-Upper Clarence Regional Library is consolidated into Council's financial statements.

In the event Council withdrew from the Regional Library service, its share of Regional Library assets and liabilities would be determined by the NSW State Library.

Both Councils signed a new library agreement in June 2017 for a further five-year term so that the business model to operate the Regional Library is contemporary and meets the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993* and *Library Act 1939*.

The Regional Library Annual Report can be found at the following link:

[http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your\\_Council/Governance/Integrated\\_Planning\\_and\\_Reporting/Annual\\_Report/](http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your_Council/Governance/Integrated_Planning_and_Reporting/Annual_Report/)

### North East Weight of Loads Group

Richmond Valley Council, in conjunction with Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Lismore, Tenterfield and Tweed Councils, is a member of the North East Weight of Loads Group (NEWLOG).

NEWLOG operates to advance the aims of reducing damage to classified roads and the promotion of road safety by policing vehicle weights as prescribed in the pertinent Act and Regulations.

NEWLOG's equity at 30 June 2017 was \$150,000.

The NEWLOG Annual Report can be found at the following link:

[http://www.ballina.nsw.gov.au/cp\\_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-ACW-64-58-20](http://www.ballina.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-ACW-64-58-20)

## Northern Rivers Regional Organisations of Council

Richmond Valley Council, in conjunction with Ballina Shire, Byron Shire, Kyogle, Lismore City and Tweed Shire Councils, is a member of the Northern Rivers Regional Organisation of Councils (NOROC). NOROC's priorities are to work towards regional cooperation.

The NOROC Annual Report can be found at the following link:

<http://noroc.com.au/about-noroc/annual-reports-submissions/>

## North East Waste

Richmond Valley Council, in conjunction with Ballina Shire, Byron Shire, Clarence Valley, Lismore City, Kyogle and Tweed Shire Councils, is a member of North East Waste, a group of Councils working together towards cost-effective waste management solutions.

The North East Waste Annual Report can be found at the following link:

<http://www.newaste.org.au/reports.html>

## Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan

Council celebrates diversity and social inclusion and is committed to maintaining Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) practices.

Council has continued to take a leadership role in addressing local youth unemployment by directly recruiting local school leavers into traineeships, apprenticeships and scholarships. Council's Youth Employment Strategy allocates a proportion of its workforce opportunities to local youth each year and the success of the program has been recognised at the NSW Training Awards in 2016 (finalist in the Large Employer of the Year category). During 2016/2017 Council recruited an additional 15 young trainees, including 4 Aboriginal trainees.

More broadly Council continues to partner with local Aboriginal and disability support agencies to support opportunity and inclusion. Our Aboriginal Liaison Officer, an employee of 27 years, works closely with community partners and mentors indigenous employees to support their continual development. Other successful initiatives include the Richmond Valley Council Work for the Dole Program with 15% of participants identified as indigenous and Torres Strait Islander descent.

Our workforce profile continues to reflect diversity of gender, age and culture. During the reporting period 28% of our workforce was female and 33% of employees at manager level and above were female. Aboriginal employees totalled 17 or 6.36% of the workforce. Gen Y employee numbers have continued to increase over the past four years to address youth unemployment and an ageing workforce.

## General Manager and Senior Staff Remuneration

The General Manager's remuneration package consists of:

1. Salary component,
2. Employer's contribution and/or salary sacrifice to a superannuation scheme,
3. Non-cash benefits (motor vehicle), and
4. Amount payable by Council by way of Fringe Benefit Tax for non-cash benefits.

The remuneration paid to the General Manager during 2016/2017 was \$258,648.

Council had two senior staff positions (as defined by the *Local Government Act 1993*). At 30 June 2017, these positions were the Chief Operating Officer and Director Infrastructure and Environment.

The remuneration packages of the senior staff consist of:

1. Salary component,
2. Employer's contribution and/or salary sacrifice to a superannuation scheme,
3. Non-cash benefits (motor vehicle), and
4. Amount payable by Council by way of Fringe Benefit Tax for non-cash benefits.

The total of the remuneration paid to senior staff was \$363,899.

## Stormwater Management Service Charge

Contained in the Operational Plan applicable for 2016/2017 was provision for Council to undertake various urban stormwater drainage works and services estimated to cost \$200,000. These works included the following items:

Works	Cost planned in Operational Plan	Actual Works	Actual Expenditure
<b>Casino</b>			
Sheppard Street GPT Improvements	\$5,000	Sheppard Street GPT Improvements	\$0
Casino Drainage Improvements	\$10,000	Casino Drainage Improvements	\$12,983
72 Hickey Street Casino - replace concrete pipes	\$25,000	72 Hickey Street Casino - replace concrete pipes	\$0
48 Johnston Street Casino - replace concrete pipes	\$25,000	48 Johnston Street Casino - replace concrete pipes	\$0
Eagle Drive Sedimentation Pond	\$0	Eagle Drive Sedimentation Pond	\$4,545
Convent Parade Concrete Dish Drain	\$0	Convent Parade Concrete Dish Drain	\$16,505
<b>Coraki</b>			
Drainage Strategy Works Stage 4	\$0	Drainage Strategy Works Stage 4	\$6,126
<b>Evans Head</b>			
Cell 2 drainage design	\$10,000	Cell 2 drainage design	\$0
Park Lane Drainage works	\$65,000	Park Lane Drainage works	\$32,670
Waratah Lane Drainage works	\$60,000	Waratah Lane Drainage works	\$0
Ocean Drive Culvert*	\$0	Ocean Drive Culvert	\$43,170
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$200,000</b>		<b>\$116,001</b>

\* Note: Ocean Drive is part of a Natural Disaster funded project

## Companion Animals

Managing companion animals in our LGA is an important component of Council's business and generates the biggest workload of all duties carried out by Council's Rangers.

Two fulltime Rangers are employed by Council whose duties largely involve administering the requirements of the *Companion Animals Act* and *Impounding Act*. However, Rangers also carry out a number of other duties such as investigating garbage dumping, littering and minor pollution incidents, abandoned vehicles, parking enforcement, straying stock and illegal camping.

There are currently 10,682 dogs and 1,793 cats registered and/or micro-chipped in the LGA. This is a total of 12,475 companion animals. Rangers estimate that approximately 20% of dogs and as many as 60% of cats are not micro-chipped and registered so the number of dogs and cats in our LGA is likely to be much higher. We estimate that there may be as many as 12,500 dogs to manage.

In 2016/2017 Council received 1,063 complaints about companion animals, the majority of which were for dogs. These varied from issues relating to barking dogs, straying dogs, nuisance dogs, dog attacks and injured dogs. Our Rangers' primary focus when dealing with people while investigating a complaint is to educate them to get a positive outcome. Taking the time to stop and engage people and discuss their issue and the legal requirements often results in a better outcome than enforcement. Rangers also utilise a variety of educational pamphlets and handouts covering issues from registration through to barking problems.

The table below provides companion animal enquiries and complaints received by Rangers and the type of issue or category of concern.

<b>Enquiry/Complaint</b>	<b>Number</b>
Barking Dogs	122
Attacks	111
Nuisance	90
Roaming	288
Found	205
Lost	174
Stray	60
Dog waste bags	5
Injured	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1063</b>

Council runs an animal shelter for dogs and cats and actively pursues re-housing of companion animals that come into our care. Rangers liaise regularly with a number of animal welfare groups and other contacts on the Northern Rivers in an attempt to re-house the dogs and cats that come into our care.

The majority of animals from Councils' impounding facility that have not been claimed by owners and/or rehoused by Council are taken by these groups for re-housing. Council does, and still needs to, continue to euthanise some animals, however this is generally due to the animals being completely unsuitable for re-housing due to previous poor treatment, being aggressive or the animals being of poor health or injured.

We also prioritise the wellbeing of the animals in our care. The dogs get daily walks, thanks to the combined efforts of a volunteer who comes to the pound four mornings a week to help, and of course our Rangers.

Council continues to promote and offer its "Vet Desex Pack", with the cooperation of local Veterinary Clinics. This is for dogs released from Council's impounding facility ensuring the animals are micro-chipped, registered and desexed at a discounted rate for people wishing to rehouse animals from the impounding facility. Animals are both registered and micro-chipped in accordance with the requirements of the *Impounding Act* and also desexed which will ensure that problems such as unwanted breeding and litters do not continue to present in the area.

<b>Pound Statistics</b>	<b>Number</b>
Impounds (Total)	244
Dogs Euthanised	21
Cats Euthanised	51

The statistics identify in the table above that 29% of dogs and cats impounded at Council's Animal Shelter were euthanised. In regard to the dogs, it is important to note that nine of these were dangerous dogs, three dogs could not be re-housed due to behavioural issues and a further eight dogs were euthanised due to injuries. Of the 51 cats euthanised, 35 were feral and could not be re-housed and 16 were sick or injured.

Rangers continue to work an on-call arrangement where one Ranger is available afterhours to investigate instances related to dog attacks or stock on roads.

In May 2016, Council revised and adopted its Companion Animals Management Plan. The revised Plan recognises both the social benefits of companion animals and the problems caused by poorly controlled animals, and sets out an action plan to deliver a balanced and common sense approach to companion animal management and helps achieve a harmonious co-existence between pet owners and the broader community.



## Rates and Charges Written Off

In accordance with Section 132 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005*, Council reports that the following general rates and water/sewer charges have been written off during 2016/2017:

Write-off type	\$
General Rates	629.67
Water/Sewer Rates	23,347.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,977.65</b>

## Swimming Pool Inspections

Legislation in relation to swimming pool fencing requirements has been strengthened in recent years in response to concerns about children drowning in swimming pools. Inadequate pool fencing is a major contributing factor in the rate of drowning among children less than five years of age. Part of the Legislation introduced to protect children under the age of five around backyard swimming pools included a requirement that from 29 April 2016 anyone who is selling, buying or leasing a property with a pool must have a certificate of compliance, a relevant occupation certificate or a certificate of non-compliance.

Councils are responsible for implementing requirements of the Legislation. In addition to the above, Councils must also have a swimming pool fence audit program requiring that backyard swimming pool fences are inspected at least once every five years and properties with swimming pools categorised as being high risk (such as properties with more than two lots and a shared pool i.e. units in strata complexes or community schemes, motels, etc.) are required to be inspected annually.

There are over 1,000 swimming pools in the LGA. Council has a Compliance Officer whose role includes administering the NSW Swimming Pools Act and Regulation and ensuring swimming pool fencing complies with the legislation.

In 2016/2017 the following were carried out as part of the program:

- 97 Compliance Certificate applications received,
- 87 Compliance Certificates issued,
- 8 Compliance Certificates being finalised, and 2 remain outstanding,
- 60 High risk premises audited.

## Special Variations to General Income

Council has one reportable special variation of general income approved by the Minister for Local Government under Section 508A of the *Local Government Act 1993*. Part of the approval process by Ministerial Order is a requirement of Council to report each year in its Annual Report on outcomes associated with the Special Variation to General Income.

Specific details of the Special Variation to General Income are as follows:

Year of approval 2014/2015		
Purpose	\$3.4m of extra operating expenditure, \$9.1m of capital expenditure, \$15.9m for reduction of operating deficits and \$6.9m for reserve transfers, loan repayments and further deficit reductions	
Amount of approval as a % of income (inclusive of rate peg of 2.3%)		5.50%
Amount of approval in monetary terms (2016/2017)		\$1,542,707
Amount unexpended as at 30 June 2016		\$221,085
Total for 2016/2017 to expend from the special variation of general income		\$1,763,792
\$943,221 being as follows:		
<b>Renewals:</b>		
Gravel Road Resheeting		\$48,611
Sealed Road Rehabilitation		\$51,815
Public Toilet refurbishment		\$0
Playground Replacement		\$0
Council Parks & Facilities		\$71,223
<b>Additional Service:</b>		
Casino Riverbank Presentation		\$48,190
Sealing of Unsealed Roads		\$13,000
Cultural and Art Facilities		\$1,780
<b>Capital Improvements:</b>		
Woodburn Riverside Precinct		\$42,000
Evans Head Pool Heat Pumps		\$30,000
Casino Showground Upgrades		\$52,674
Colley Park Upgrades		\$3,594
Crawford Square Upgrades		\$21,505
Broadwater Youth Space		\$1,760
<b>Improved Maintenance:</b>		
Playground Maintenance		\$12,416
Toilet Cleaning Maintenance		\$10,474
Rural Road Drain Maintenance		\$28,908
Additional Road Maintenance		\$94,299
<b>Increased Capacity:</b>		
IT Upgrades		\$19,003
Public Wi-Fi in Casino CBD, Woodburn & Evans Head		\$50,000
Event Funding		\$40,000
<b>Loan Borrowing Program Funding:</b>		
Principal & Interest Repayments		\$301,969
Amount unexpended as at 30 June 2017		\$820,571

## Section 4 – Appendices

The following reports support the activities of Richmond Valley Council and are required by legislation to be made available as appendices to this annual report. The names and locations of these reports on Council's website are listed below:

**Appendix 1: Delivery Program Progress Report**

[http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your\\_Council/Governance/Integrated\\_Planning\\_and\\_Reporting/Delivery\\_Program\\_Progress\\_Reports/](http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your_Council/Governance/Integrated_Planning_and_Reporting/Delivery_Program_Progress_Reports/)

**Appendix 2: Audited Financial Statements**

[http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your\\_Council/Governance/Financial\\_Statements/](http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your_Council/Governance/Financial_Statements/)

**Appendix 3: Government Information (Public Access Act 2009) Annual Report**

[http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your\\_Council/Governance/Integrated\\_Planning\\_and\\_Reporting/Annual\\_Report/](http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your_Council/Governance/Integrated_Planning_and_Reporting/Annual_Report/)

**Appendix 4: Public Disclosure Annual Report**

[http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your\\_Council/Governance/Integrated\\_Planning\\_and\\_Reporting/Annual\\_Report/](http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your_Council/Governance/Integrated_Planning_and_Reporting/Annual_Report/)

**Appendix 5: Library Annual Report**

[http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your\\_Council/Governance/Integrated\\_Planning\\_and\\_Reporting/Annual\\_Report/](http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your_Council/Governance/Integrated_Planning_and_Reporting/Annual_Report/)

**Appendix 6: End of Term Report**

[http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your\\_Council/Governance/Integrated\\_Planning\\_and\\_Reporting/Council\\_Term\\_Reports/](http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Your_Council/Governance/Integrated_Planning_and_Reporting/Council_Term_Reports/)

**Appendix 7: State of the Environment Report**

[http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Environment/State\\_of\\_the\\_Environment/](http://www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/page/Environment/State_of_the_Environment/)