



Agency Information Guide

*Government
Information
(Public Access)
Act 2009
(GIPA Act)*

Approved by the
General Manager

March 2020

Richmond Valley Council

Casino Office:
10 Graham Place
(Locked Bag 10)
Casino NSW 2470
Ph: 02 6660 0300
Fax: 02 6660 1300

Evans Head Office:
Corner Woodburn Street and School Lane
Evans Head NSW 2473
Ph: 02 6660 0365
Fax: 02 6682 4252

council@richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au
www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au

Table of Contents	Page
Overview	4
Structure and functions of Richmond Valley Council	5
- Our Council Representatives	
- Our Council Structure	
Principles	7
Vision and values	7
Roles and functions	8
Functions of Council	9
Integrated Planning and Reporting	11
Public Participation	12
Council Committees	13
Information available from Council	15
Access to documents	19

1. Overview

This Agency Information Guide has been prepared and published in accordance with the requirements of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*. It describes the structure and functions of Council; the various types of information Council holds and how the public can access the information.

Council is committed to the principles of open, accountable, fair and effective government and recognises the right of the public to access Council information. Council holds a wide range of information concerning both the Richmond Valley Local Government Area and the operation of the Council. Much of this information is available on Council's website.

This publication provides members of the public, community organisations, the media, government agencies and staff with information about:

- Council's vision, values, principles and our commitment to the community;
- The structure and functions of Council;
- The ways in which the functions of Council (in particular, the decision-making functions) affect members of public;
- The avenues available to the public to participate in the formulation of Council policies and the exercise of its functions;
- The kinds of information held by Council and in particular, the information Council makes publicly available;
- The manner in which Council makes information publicly available; and
- The kind of information that is free of charge and that for which a charge is imposed.

2. Structure and functions of Richmond Valley Council

Richmond Valley Council is a duly constituted body under the Australian Constitution Act 1902, the Local Government Act 1993 and associated acts. This legislation provides the legal framework for an effective, efficient, environmentally responsible and open system of local government.

Our Council Representatives

At the Richmond Valley Council Local Government Election held on 10 September 2016, the following seven Councillors were elected to represent the Richmond Valley for the council term which will conclude in September 2020.



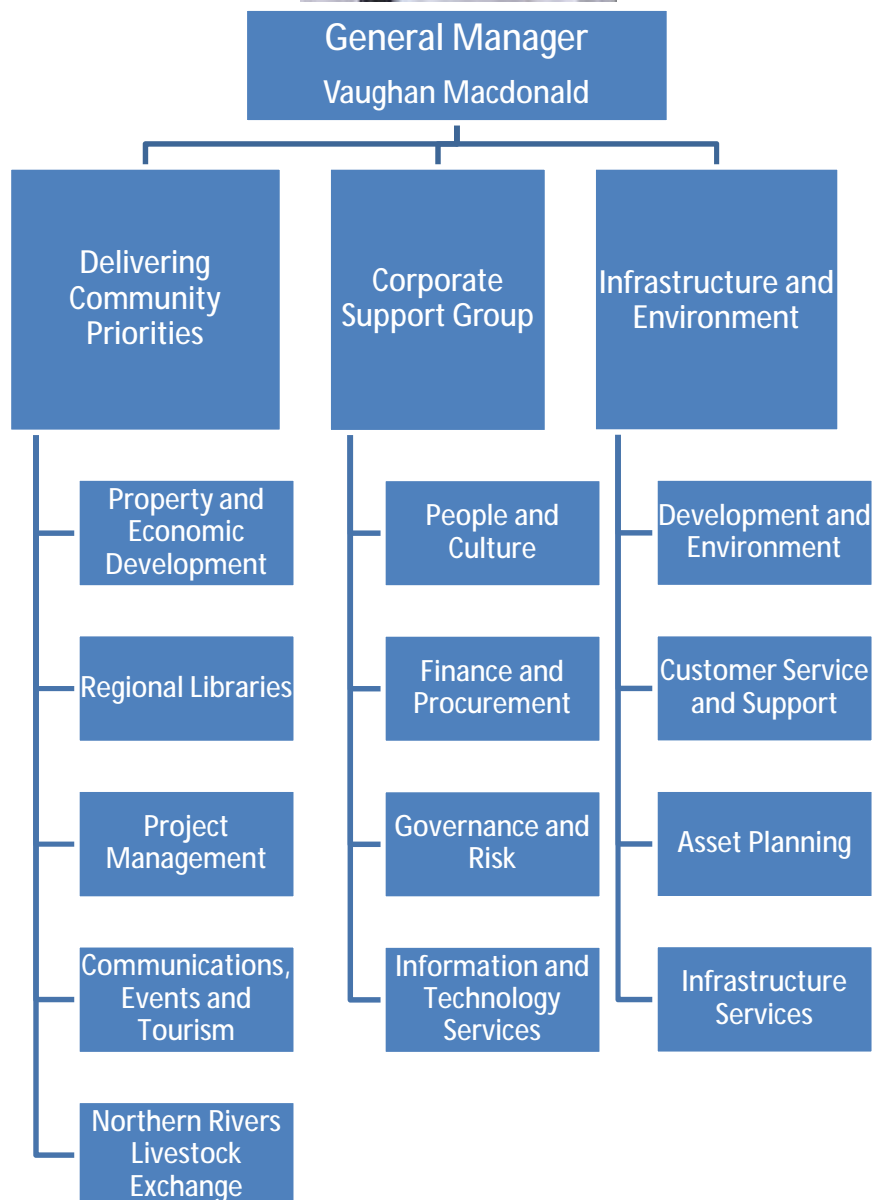
Standing (L to R):
Cr Sam Cornish, Cr Stephen Morrissey
(Deputy Mayor), Cr Robert Hayes,
Cr Daniel Simpson.
Seated (L to R):
Cr Jill Lyons, Cr Robert Mustow (Mayor),
Cr Sandra Humphrys.

The elected Council is responsible for the direction and control of Council's affairs in accordance with the NSW Local Government Act and associated legislation.

Councillors represent the interests of our residents and ratepayers. They provide leadership and guidance to the community; and facilitate communication between the community while maintaining the broader vision, needs and aspirations of the wider Richmond Valley.

Our Council Structure

Council adopts an organisational structure that will support the position of General Manager in implementing the actions identified in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. The structure and functions of Council are determined by the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993, Chapter 6.



3. Principles

The following guiding principles (which are regarded as essential elements for good local government) are to be utilised as part of the everyday decision-making processes, actions and management of Richmond Valley Council:

- Good governance - delivers good performance, minimises risks, ensures transparency and accountability and promotes efficiency and effectiveness
- Representative democracy and community support - Council's direction and activities are to broadly reflect its community demographics and to have community support
- Sound policy - clear direction via a policy and planning framework
- Sufficient resources - human and financial resources to implement its decisions and to fulfil statutory obligations
- Meaningful planning - a process to translate community needs and aspirations into Council services; to be meaningful, plans must result in actions and outcomes for the community
- Connectedness - high level of connectivity across all of the community
- Strong leadership - effective local government and outcomes can only be achieved via strong community leadership through councillors and staff.

4. Vision and values



5. Roles and functions

Mayor

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* section 226, the role of the mayor is to exercise the policy-making functions of the governing body of the council between meetings of the council (in cases of necessity), to exercise other functions of the council as the council determines, to preside at meetings of the council and to carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of the mayoral office.

Councillors

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* section 232, the role of councillors includes:

- to provide a civic leadership role in guiding the development of the community strategic plan;
- monitor the implementation of the council's delivery program;
- to direct and control the affairs of the council;
- to participate in the optimum allocation of the council's resources for the benefit of the local government area;
- to play a role in the creation and review of council's policies and objectives relating to the exercise of council's regulatory functions; and
- to review the performance of the council and its delivery of its services.

Senior Staff

The General Manager, and by delegation, the senior staff, are responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the Council's organisation and for ensuring the implementation, without undue delay, of decisions of council. Richmond Valley Council's senior staff include:

Vaughan Macdonald	General Manager
Angela Jones	Director Infrastructure and Environment
Ryan Gaiter	Chief Financial Officer/ Manager Mid-Richmond

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* section 335, the functions of the general manager include:

- to assist the council in connection with the development and implementation of the community strategic plan, resourcing strategy, delivery program and operational plan, together with the preparation of its annual report and state of the environment report;
- the day-to-day management of the council;
- to exercise such functions as delegated by the council;
- to appoint staff in accordance with the organisational structure and resources approved by the council; and
- to implement the council's equal employment opportunity management plan.

Functions of Council

Local Government Act 1993 (Chapter 5) confers the following functions upon Council:

- Service functions (Chapter 6)
- Regulatory functions (Chapter 7)
- Ancillary functions (Chapter 8)
- Revenue functions (Chapter 15)
- Administrative functions (Chapters 11, 12 and 13), and
- Enforcement functions (Chapters 16 and 17).

Council's priorities and services provided are outlined below:

Priorities	Objectives	Services
Connecting People & Places	PP1 Fresh and Vibrant Community	Festivals & Events Sports Grounds, Parks & Facilities Swimming Pools Cemeteries Libraries Community Centres & Halls Emergency Management
	PP2 Getting Around	Roads - building & maintenance
	PP3 Working Together	Community Engagement, Consultation & Communication Community Programs & Grants
Growing our Economy	EC1 Driving Economic Growth	Economic Development Tourism Town Planning & Development Services
	EC2 Building on our Strengths	Quarries Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange (NRLX) Private Works Real Estate Development
Looking after our Environment	EH1 Managing our Waste & Water	Waste Management Stormwater Management Water Supplies Sewerage Services
	EH2 Promoting & Facilitating the Protection of the Environment	Environmental Health Environmental Management
Making Council Great	CS1 Leading and Advocating for our Community	Governance & Advocacy
	CS2 Great Support	Customer Service Information Technology Services People & Culture Work, Health & Safety Financial Services Fleet Management Engineering Support & Asset Management

In addition to the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council has a range of functions under other legislation, including but not limited to:

- Building Professionals Act 2005
- Civil Liability Act 2002
- Community Land Development Act 1989
- Companion Animals Act 1998
- Contaminated Land Management Act 1997
- Conveyancing Act 1919
- Crown Land Management Act 2016
- Crown Lands Act 1996
- Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979
- Food Act 2003
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009
- Impounding Act 1993
- Library Act 1939
- Local Land Services Act 2013
- National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974
- Noxious Weeds Act 1993
- Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998
- Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997
- Public Health Act 2010
- Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994
- Recreation Vehicles Act 1983
- Road Transport Act 2013
- Roads Act 1993
- State Emergency & Rescue Management Act 1989
- State Emergency Service Act 1989
- State Records Act 1998
- Strata Schemes Development Act 2015
- Strata Schemes Management Act 2015
- Swimming Pools Act 1992
- Unclaimed Money Act 1995
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998
- Workplace Surveillance Act 2005

6. Integrated Planning and Reporting

Councils in NSW are required to develop an Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) framework under legislative requirements prescribed in the NSW Local Government Act. This framework has been put in place to encourage councils, the community and other organisations to work together to plan for the future in an efficient and collaborative manner. The IPR has five main components:

- Community Strategic Plan
- Delivery Program and Operational Plan
- Resourcing Strategy
- Annual Report
- End of Term Report

Community Strategic Plan

Council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 'Richmond Valley Made 2030' was initially adopted in June 2017. The CSP identifies the community's main priorities and aspirations for the future and establishes broad strategies for goals. In order to plan and monitor these goals, council has an established IPR framework consisting of a Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plan. In order to facilitate community involvement in the ongoing planning processes, council has adopted a Community Engagement Strategy.

Delivery Program and Operational Plan

The Delivery Program is council's commitment to its community over four years; the length of council's term and addresses the major areas council will focus on to address the strategies and actions that will be undertaken to address the four-year program. The Operational Plan is a one-year plan that outlines that actions council will undertake in the financial year to implement the Delivery Program and allocates the resources necessary to achieve the actions over the twelve-month period.

Resourcing Strategy

The Resourcing Strategy consists of the Long-Term Financial Plan, Organisational Development Strategy and Asset Management Plans. They contain information on the time, money, assets and people required by council to progress the projects within the Delivery Program and move towards achieving our community outcomes.

Annual Report

The Annual Report focuses on council's implementation of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. The report includes information prescribed by the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005. The Annual Report assists the community in understanding how council has performed over the financial year.

End of Term Report

Councils are required every four years to produce an End of Term Report on the progress of implementing the CSP. The report covers the term of office for an elected council.

7. Public Participation

Council encourages and provides community members with opportunities to supply input into decision-making processes and participate in the formulation of its policies in the following ways:

- Standing for election as a councillor - the next local government election is due in September 2020;
- Talking to your councillors - for current contact information please refer to Council's website www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au;
- Attendance at Council Meetings - Ordinary Meetings of Council are usually held on the third Tuesday of each month, commencing at 5.00pm in the Richmond Valley Council Chambers, corner of Walker Street and Graham Place, Casino (entrance in Graham Place);
- Viewing Business Papers for Council Meetings - these are published on Council's website as well as being available at Council's Casino and Evans Head offices;
- Addressing Council on an agenda item during the Public Access Session at the commencement of Ordinary Council meetings;
- Asking questions on items of interest to the community during Question Time Session at the commencement of Ordinary Council meetings;
- Writing to Council on any matter - all correspondence should be addressed to:
General Manager
Richmond Valley Council
Locked Bag 10
CASINO NSW 2470
or emailed to council@richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au
If the matter is outside the policies or delegations on which staff or the General Manager can make a decision, the matter will be referred to the next appropriate Council meeting.
- Submissions to Community Strategic Plans, Operational Plans, Delivery Program, codes and policies on exhibition;
- Submissions to advertised or notified Development or Subdivision Applications;
- Community surveys; and
- Community Advisory Committees and Section 355 Committees for some functions of Council.

8. Council Committees

Reserve Trust Committee

The Reserve Trust has a function of determining improvement and policy issues in relation to Crown Reserves of which Council is appointed as Trustee under the *Crown Lands Act 1989*.

Internal Audit Committee

The function of the Internal Audit Committee is to facilitate the internal audit function of Council. The Internal Audit Committee reports to the full Council. Membership consists of all members of Council. The chairman of the Internal Audit Committee is Cr Daniel Simpson (appointed by the committee).

Richmond Valley Council Local Traffic Committee

The Richmond Valley Council Local Traffic Committee is a statutory committee with operating arrangements covered by the Roads Act 1993 and the Roads and Traffic Authority Engineering Manual. The function of the committee is to advise Council on traffic related matters referred to it by Council. The committee acts as an advisory body only.

Memberships consists of one councillor (Cr Sam Cornish), Director Infrastructure and Environment, one representative each from the Police Traffic Branch and the Roads and Maritime Services, the Member for Lismore and the Member for Clarence.

Section 355 Committees

The function of the following Section 355 Committees is care, control and management of Council halls or sporting facilities:

- Broadwater – Riley’s Hill Community Centre
- Coraki Youth Hall
- Evans Head Recreation Hall
- Fairy Hill Hall
- Leeville Public Hall
- Rappville Hall
- Rappville Sporting Facilities
- Riley’s Hill Community Involvement Centre
- Stan Payne Memorial Oval
- Woodburn Memorial Hall
- Woodview/Piora Hall

Staff Committees

Internal committees include the Health and Safety Committee (promotion of the safety and welfare of workers) and the Consultative Committee (a forum of communication between the employer and its employees).

Delegates to External Organisations and Committees

Organisation	Delegate/Member
Rous County Council	Cr Robert Mustow (Mayor) Cr Sandra Humphrys
Arts Northern Rivers	Cr Jill Lyons
Joint Regional Planning Panel	Cr Robert Hayes Cr Daniel Simpson (alternate)
Evans Head and District Workspace Committee	Chief Financial Officer/Manager Mid-Richmond
Legume to Woodenbong Road Alliance	Cr Robert Mustow (Mayor) Council Officer
Local Government NSW (Annual Conference)	Mayor (or nominee)
Northern Rivers Regional Organisation of Councils (NOROC)	Mayor General Manager
Northern Rivers Bush Fire Management Committee	Cr Jill Lyons General Manager (or nominee)
Northern Rivers Zone Liaison Committee	Cr Robert Mustow (Mayor) General Manager (or nominee)

9. Information available from Council

Council holds a wide range of information that is available for inspection at Council's Administration Office in Casino. This Agency Information Guide describes the information which members of the public can inspect for free. Reasonable photocopying charges will be charged in accordance with Council's Revenue Policy.

Information may be made available by mandatory open access proactive release, informal release and formal application. Access to information may be subject to an overriding public interest test against disclosure under certain circumstances in accordance with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

Policy Documents

Policy documents are available for members of the public to access free of charge from Council's website:

<https://richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/council/access-to-council-information/policy-documents/>

- Access to Council Records by the Public and Privacy Management Plan
- Asbestos Policy
- Banking Services
- Bitumen Sealing Adjacent to Residences on Unsealed Roads
- Business Ethics Policy
- Change of Name - Water and Sewer
- Code of Conduct - Councillors and Personnel (including Model Code of Conduct)
- Code of Meeting Practice
- Community Engagement
- Community Financial Assistance Program
- Complaints Management
- Concealed Water Leaks - Granting of Allowance for Customers
- Conference Attendance
- Contributions for Kerb and Guttering and Footpath Paving
- Council Website
- Councillor Access to Information
- Councillor Induction and Professional Development Policy
- Dealing with Difficult People
- Debt Recovery and Provision of Credit
- Development Assessment Panel (DAP) - Role, Constitution and Operation
- Discharge of Liquid Trade Waste to the Sewerage System
- Effluent Reuse (Evans Head)
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Event Support
- Financial Assistance - On-Site Sewerage and Wastewater Management
- Financial Hardship & Financial Hardship – Natural Disaster
- Fraud Prevention
- Gathering Information
- Gifts and Benefits
- Heritage Incentives
- Installation of Street Lights
- Internal Reporting
- Investment Policy
- Kerbside Dining
- Management of Contaminated Land

- Managing Council's Community Facilities
- Media
- Naming of Public Parks, Reserves, Sporting Fields and Council Facilities
- Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors
- Pressure Sewerage
- Private Works - Charges for Works Under Section 67, Local Government Act 1993
- Public Gates and Bypasses (Cattle Grids)
- Purchase Order - Standard Terms and Conditions
- Purchasing
- Recognition of Milestones
- Related Party Disclosure
- Risk Management
- Revenue Policy
- Road Management
- Roadside and Reserve Memorials
- Signature Event
- Signs as Remote Supervision
- Stormwater Management Charge Discount and Exemption
- Use of Council Aerodromes
- Volunteer
- Water and Sewerage Charges - Application of S552 of the Local Government Act
- Welcome to Country
- Write-Off of Debtors
- Write-Off of Rates and Charges

Members of the public wishing to obtain a copy will be charged reasonable photocopying charges in accordance with Council's Revenue Policy in force as at the date of the request.

Integrated Planning and Reporting

- Annual Reports
- Community Strategic Plan
- Delivery Program and Operational Plan
- Asset Management Plans
- Asset Management Strategy
- Revenue Policy
- Resourcing Strategy
- End of Term Report
- State of the Environment Report
- Annual Reports of bodies exercising delegated Council functions

Council Meetings

Agendas, Minutes and Business Papers of Council Meetings (excluding items conducted under closed meeting conditions) are available on Council's website.

Financial Information

- Quarterly Budget Review Statements
- Financial Estimates
- Awarded Contracts Register
- Annual Financial Statements (including independent Auditor's Reports)

Registers

- Land Register
- Register of Investments
- Returns of the Interests of Councillors, Designated Persons and Delegates
- Disclosures of Political Donations (section 328A *Local Government Act 1993*)
- Delegations Register
- Councillor Voting on Planning Matters (section 375A *Local Government Act 1993*)
- Register of Graffiti Removal Work kept in accordance with section 13 of the *Graffiti Control Act 2008*

Planning documents

- Development Applications (within the meaning of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*) and associated documents
- Local policies adopted by the Council concerning approvals and orders
- Records of approvals granted, any variation from local policies with reasons for the variation, and decisions made on appeals concerning approvals
- Records of Building Certificates under *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979*
- Plans of land proposed to be compulsorily acquired by the Council
- Leases and licences for use of public land classified as Community Land
- Plans of Management for Community Land
- Bushfire Prone Land Mapping
- Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan 2012
- Richmond Valley Development Control Plan 2015
- Section 94A Contributions Plan
- Casino Urban Settlement Strategy
- Evans Head Urban Settlement Strategy
- Richmond Valley Heritage Study 2007
- Richmond Valley Flood Mapping
- Stormwater Drainage Asset Management Plan

Other documents

- Office of Local Government Representative Reports presented at a meeting of the Council in accordance with Section 433 of the *Local Government Act 1993*
- Richmond Valley Thematic History (Brett Stubbs) published by Richmond Valley Council 2007

Members of the public who wish to be provided with a copy of any of the above information may be charged reasonable photocopying charges in accordance with the Council's Revenue Policy current as at the time of the request.

Many of the above documents may also be viewed on Council's website www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au.

Publications available for purchase

The following publications are available for purchase from Council and will be charged in accordance with Council's Revenue Policy current at the time of the request:

- Richmond Valley LEP (Comprehensive LEP) *
- Richmond Valley LEP Maps – A3 print size *
- Richmond Valley LEP Maps – A1 print size
- Richmond Valley Development Control Plan 2015 *
- Section 94A Contributions Plan *
- Section 94 Heavy Haulage Contributions Plan
- State of the Environment Report *
- Casino Urban Settlement Strategy *
- Evans Head Urban Settlement Strategy *
- Richmond River Rural Residential Development Strategy *
- Richmond Valley Heritage Study 2007
- Stormwater Management Plans
- Bush Fire Prone Land Maps *
- On-site Sewage Management Strategy (OSMS) *
- Northern Rivers Local Government Development Design and Construction Manual
- Thematic History of Richmond Valley Local Government Area, Brett J. Stubbs, published by Richmond Valley Council 2007
- Section 64 Water and Sewerage Development Servicing Plans

*Note: Electronic copies of publications marked * are available to download free of charge via Council's website www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au.*

10. Access to documents

Council is committed to the objectives of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* and will strive to achieve the development, maintenance and advancement of a system of responsible and representative democratic government that is open, accountable, fair and effective. The objective of this Act is to open government information to the public by:

- (a) authorising and encouraging the proactive public release of government information by agencies,
- (b) giving members of the public an enforceable right to access government information, and
- (c) providing that access to government information is restricted only when there is an over-riding public interest against disclosure.

Council Policy No. 1.3.2 - Access to Council Records by the Public, guides the processing of requests/applications to access or amend information, in accordance with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, the *State Records Act 1998*, and the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*.

Members of the public can access Council information for free from Council's website www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au.

Members of the public will be able to make informal requests for access to information, and they may also make formal applications by completing the relevant application forms, describing the records or information which is the subject of their application, and the legislation under which they make the application, and they may be charged a fee in accordance with the relevant legislation.

Enquiries concerning inspecting or purchasing Council documents and records can be made to by visiting our friendly Customer Service staff or contacting Council on 6660 0300 or email council@richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au. Customer Service staff will assist members of the public with enquiries and completion of applications for access to Council information.

Casino Office Opening Hours	Monday to Friday 8:30am - 5:00pm
Evans Head Opening Hours	Monday to Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm Saturday 9:30am - 12:00pm

Complex applications requiring further assistance will be referred to:

The Public Officer and Right to Information Officer
Richmond Valley Council
Locked Bag 10
CASINO NSW 2470

All applications for access to, or amendment of, Council's records must be made in writing to:

The General Manager
Richmond Valley Council
Locked Bag 10
CASINO NSW 2470

This is the most recent Agency Information Guide published by Richmond Valley Council and was approved by the General Manager on 17 March 2020. This document can be obtained from Council's Website www.richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au or by contacting Council's Public Officer.

Further information is also available by contacting the Information and Privacy Commission NSW:

Phone: 1800 472 679
Email: ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.ipc.nsw.gov.au