

Richmond  
Valley  
Council



# **ATTACHMENTS**

**Tuesday, 21 July 2020**

**UNDER SEPARATE COVER**

**Ordinary Council Meeting**



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# **MINUTES**

## **Ordinary Council Meeting 23 June 2020**



## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

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## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**MINUTES OF RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL  
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 10 GRAHAM PLACE, CASINO  
ON TUESDAY, 23 JUNE 2020 AT 5.00PM**

*Please note: these minutes are subject to confirmation at the next Council Meeting. Decisions recorded in the draft minutes are subject to the Council's Code of Meeting Practice in relation to rescinding decisions.*

**PRESENT:** Cr Robert Mustow (Mayor), Cr Stephen Morrissey (Deputy Mayor), Cr Sam Cornish, Cr Robert Hayes, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Jill Lyons, Cr Daniel Simpson

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Vaughan Macdonald (General Manager), Angela Jones (Director Infrastructure & Environment), Ryan Gaiter (Chief Financial Officer/Manager Mid-Richmond), Jenna Hazelwood (Strategy Manager), Scott Walters (Manager Information Technology Services), Julie Clark (Personal Assistant to the General Manager and Mayor) and Kate Alder-Conn (Governance Officer).

## **1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

The Mayor provided an Acknowledgement of Country by reading the following statement on behalf of Council:

*"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."*

## **2 PRAYER**

The meeting opened with a prayer by the General Manager.

## **3 PUBLIC ACCESS AND QUESTION TIME**

Nil

## **4 APOLOGIES**

Nil

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**5 MAYORAL MINUTES****5.1 MAYORAL MINUTE - THE FUTURE OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS ACROSS REGIONAL NSW****RESOLUTION 230620/1**

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Council write to:

- 1) State member Chris Gulaptis MP,
- 2) Deputy Premier John Barilaro MP and
- 3) Federal Member Kevin Hogan MP

seeking support for funding programs to assist in the establishment of a new weekly print newspaper for our communities.

**CARRIED****6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES****6.1 MINUTES ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2020****RESOLUTION 230620/2**

Moved: Cr Sandra Humphrys

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council confirms the Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 19 May 2020.

**CARRIED****7 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES**

Nil

**8 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Nil

**9 PETITIONS**

Nil

**10 NOTICE OF MOTION**

Nil

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## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**11 MAYOR'S REPORT****11.1 MAYOR ATTENDANCES 12 MAY - 15 JUNE 2020****RESOLUTION 230620/3**

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council receive and note the Mayor's attendance report 12 May – 15 June 2020.

**CARRIED****12 DELEGATE'S REPORTS**

Nil

**13 MATTERS DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE****13.1 MATTERS TO BE DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE****RESOLUTION 230620/4**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That items 15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 17.2, 17.3, 17.4, 17.5 identified be determined without debate.

**CARRIED**

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**14 GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORTS****14.1 MAYORAL ALLOWANCE/COUNCILLOR FEES 2020/2021****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Each financial year, the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal determines the minimum and maximum remuneration payable to Mayors and Councillors for carrying out their duties. The determination by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal is pursuant to Sections 239 and 241 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Council has received notification that the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal has determined that the Mayoral and Councillor Fees are not to increase for the 2020/2021 financial year. The tribunal stated in its determination report that although it could have increased the minimum and maximum fees by up to 2.5%, when considering the current economic and social circumstances it decided to leave the fees the same as this current financial year.

The current fees adopted last year which will apply in 2020/21 are as follows:

	<b>Current Fee</b>
Councillor Annual Fee	\$20,280
Mayoral Additional Annual Fee	\$44,250

**RESOLUTION 230620/5**

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Recommended that:

1. Council note there will be no increase in the Mayoral and Councillor fees for 2020/2021.
2. Council set the Mayoral Allowance for the 2020/2021 financial year effective from 1 July 2020 at \$44,250 per annum or \$3,687.50 per month.
3. Council set the Councillor Fee for the 2020/2021 financial year effective from 1 July 2020 at \$20,280 per annum or \$1,690.00 per month.

**CARRIED**

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**14.2 NORTHERN RIVERS LIVESTOCK EXCHANGE PROPOSED FEE STRUCTURE 2020/2021****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report outlines a proposed fee structure for the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange (NRLX). The proposed structure has been incorporated into the 2020-21 Draft Revenue Policy, for Council's consideration.

NRLX conducted a detailed email survey in relation to stakeholder information, fees and online bidding and streaming of sales for a proposed period of three years. The results of the survey were substantial with 205 responses received.

The NRLX has operated under a simple fee structure for Yard Fees for a prolonged period, and there are differing views amongst stakeholders regarding the existing fee structure. Some stakeholders believe that the certainty and simplicity attached to having one fixed price for all livestock types is a positive, while others view this as an unfair system. There are concerns that the current model provides limited flexibility and does not represent the best interests of NRLX or its vendors. NRLX needs to be commercially competitive in the local market to retain existing clients but also to win new business from neighbouring facilities and direct consignments.

The 2018 Operational Review found that all stakeholders, with the exception of agents, agreed that agent fees should be levied as a percentage of gross revenue. The existing Agent Fees are currently calculated as per head charges. Percentage-based Agent fee structures that are reflective of market conditions and pricing are becoming more common within the marketplace and in the long term NRLX should endeavour to commence this system with an approximate fee of 0.2% of gross sales. Based on the current financial year of 2019/20 and the fees levied to agents under the current agreement it equates to approximately 0.13% against gross sales values. The 2018 Operational Review had recommended that a longer-term plan would be to work towards reaching 0.3% of gross sales. This option provides for increased revenue when a season is strong and the NRLX would also see small financial benefits with this system. When the market is down however we are also tied to the decrease in revenue and experience similar decreases to the agents. It is noted that agents currently charge vendors on a percentage of gross sale value. However, it is proposed that the existing agent fee structure of per head charges should remain for the 20/21 Revenue Policy at the rate set out in the draft Revenue Policy.

There were no consistent responses in the 2018 review when it came to vendor charges and many different models exist in the market place. NRLX has now considered some options including consideration of a price-based vendor fee structure as a basis for driving increased throughput and subsequently increased operating revenue. The Operational Review indicated a percentage of gross revenue model would be an appropriate way to charge vendors, however there are many complications in applying this process via a third party such as an agent.

The 2020 survey conducted found that in response to the two fee options proposed there were five available responses and the table below identifies these responses. Option 2 received the majority of votes at 34.31%, above option 1 at 28.92%. Combining the total of the two identified structures results in Option 2 receiving 47.55%, Option 1, 35.78%, with an alternative fee structure option receiving 16.67%.

Available responses	Individual result	Combined result
An alternative fee structure.	16.67%	16.67%
Option 1	28.92%	
Option 1 with different rates.	6.86%	35.78%
Option 2	34.31%	
Option 2 with different rates.	13.24%	47.55%

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## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

The Casino Auctioneers Association Incorporated has indicated that it is in favour of retaining the existing vendor yard fee charges model of a singular price category for a number of reasons. The CAAI's concerns with the Option 2 fee structure are

- Lack of clarity relating to a vendor's sale price on the day
- The new fee system will involve operational changes and software changes to their businesses in billing their clients
- The higher priced livestock are at increased risk of moving to direct consignment due to attracting a higher yard fee
- Higher value livestock vendors choosing other facilities over NRLX due to the higher fee associated with higher value stock

NRLX's main challenge while offering far greater facilities and services over neighbouring yards is that these alternative locations have much lower yard fees than both options proposed for the NRLX fee structure. While the CAAI's concerns are understandable, it should be noted that they do not align with the majority of responses received in the survey.

Having considered the views of stakeholders, a modification of the Option 2 fee structure is proposed.

Price Bracket	Per head Charges
\$0.01 - \$600.00	\$9.00
\$600.01 - \$900.00	\$11.15
\$900.01 and above	\$13.50
Bulls (Non-Stud)	\$15.50

Online bidding and streaming of sales has been part of the long-term vision of NRLX to become a modern and premier livestock exchange while future proofing the business by staying at the forefront of technology and innovation. Richmond Valley Council included infrastructure upgrades for online bidding and streaming into the Stage One redevelopment. It should be noted that the 2017-2018 Operational Review commissioned by Richmond Valley Council included the following scope;

*Ascertain the suitability of the Software and Technology currently being used at the NRLX.*

*Comment:*

*The current software (Livestock Exchange), has been used at the NRLX for a number of years, with the NRLX making itself available to run trials on upgrades to the software during this period. Council believes it is time to determine whether the current software is suitable for a modern state of the art facility, and if it is, are there functionalities within the software that the NRLX is not utilising. Additionally, Council wishes to investigate how other technology could be incorporated into the upgraded modern facility, especially the potential for live streaming of sales and online buying platforms that could run in conjunction with the traditional selling and buying methods. The review should include a recommendation on software that could/should be used, and an examination on any technology that could potentially benefit the NRLX.*

In response to the scope the reviewer Kattle Gear Australia noted in 2018;

*An important aspect of this part of the review's scope is the reference to 'potential for live streaming' and the ability for bidders to be real time involved in the selling process . . . The process has been utilised successfully in the facilities at RLX, Carcoar, Barnawartha and others and there appear to be no impediments to its use in the upgraded NRLX environment. An API sits between the auction software and the saleyard software to facilitate the process. It is understood the costs involved are not specifically defined and subject to many variables, but an order of magnitude cost of \$1 per head has been suggested.*



## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

The support from stakeholders for the use of live streaming, live offsite bidding on lots, was unanimous in stakeholder consultations, providing there was no degradation in the speed of the auction. The justification for support included increase in competition and a system which reduces collusion.

Richmond Valley Council has continued with infrastructure upgrades for online bidding. Streaming infrastructure was incorporated and further improvements were added during Stage Two.

The 2020 NRLX survey responses in relation to online streaming and bidding was overwhelming in its support for these services to continue with a combined total of 73.68%. Only 26.32% of responses did not wish for online bidding and streaming to continue. Online services, technology and innovation will play a strong part in the future of NRLX and the saleyard industry at a national level, it is critical for the long-term sustainability of operations to evolve and adapt to remain at the forefront of the industry. The results from the survey were:

- 64.66% of respondents were in favour of streaming for weekly prime sales
- 69.17% of respondents were in favour of streaming for Friday Store sales
- 76.69% of respondents were in favour of streaming for Special Stud sales
- 41.35% of respondents said that \$2 per head for streaming was a fair price they were willing to pay
- 32.33% of respondents indicated that \$2 per head for streaming was too high but would like online streaming and bidding to continue
- The combination of respondents in favour for online streaming and bidding to continue equates to 73.68%
- 26.32% of respondents did not wish for online bidding and streaming to continue

**RESOLUTION 230620/6**

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Daniel Simpson

That Council receive and note the following fees for Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange, which are included in the Draft Revenue Policy and following adoption, are to commence as at 1 August 2020 and be in place until 30 June 2023.

	Price Bracket	Charges	
Vendor Usage Fee	\$0.01 - \$600.00	\$9.00	per head
Vendor Usage Fee	\$600.01 - \$900.00	\$11.15	per head
Vendor Usage Fee	\$900.01 and above	\$13.50	per head
Vendor Usage Fee	Bulls (Non-Stud)	\$15.50	per head
Capital Works Levy	All livestock yarded	\$2.05	per head
Agent Business Usage Fee	All livestock yarded	\$1.00	per head
Agent Annual Permit Fee		\$10,500.00	per annum
Stocklive Online Streaming	All livestock yarded	\$1.50	per head
Stocklive Stud Sales		\$1,650.00	per sale

**CARRIED**

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**14.3 DRAFT REVISED DELIVERY PROGRAM 2017/2021, DRAFT OPERATIONAL PLAN 2020/2021 (INCLUDING DRAFT FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2020/2024) AND DRAFT REVENUE POLICY 2020/2021****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

At its Ordinary Meeting held 19 May 2020, Council resolved to place the Draft Delivery Program, Draft Operational Plan (including Financial Estimates), Draft Revenue Policy (including Draft Quarry Product Prices) and Draft Long-Term Financial Plan on public exhibition.

This report provides information regarding public submissions received by Council during the exhibition period, details minor amendments that have been made to the Draft Financial Estimates and recommends that Council adopt the documents.

**RESOLUTION 230620/7**

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That

1. Council adopt the Revised Delivery Program 2017/2021, Operational Plan 2020/2021 (including Financial Estimates 2020/2024), Revenue Policy 2020/2021 (including Quarry Product Prices) and Long-Term Financial Plan 2020/2030.
2. In respect to the general land rates contained in the 2020/2021 Draft Revenue Policy, Council in accordance with Sections 535 and 537 of the *Local Government Act 1993* make the following General Rates for the 2020/2021 financial year:

Rating Category	Base Amount	% Yield from Base Amount	Rate in Dollar (Ad Valorem)
Residential	\$310.00	28.67%	\$0.00512
Rural Residential (sub-category)	\$275.00	29.07%	\$0.00357
Business	\$360.00	11.22%	\$0.01431
Farmland	\$360.00	20.18%	\$0.00385

3. That in relation to interest on overdue rates and charges, Council make and impose the maximum charge for interest, as determined by the Minister for Local Government and in accordance with Section 566 (3) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, as follows:
  - (i) for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020; 0.0% per annum
  - (ii) for the period 1 January 2021 to 30 June 2021; 7.0% per annum
4. In respect of annual charges and user charges for Waste Management, Water, Sewerage and Stormwater Management Service Charges, in accordance with Section 535 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council make these charges as detailed in the 2020/2021 Draft Revenue Policy to apply to the 2020/2021 financial year.

**CARRIED**

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**15 FINANCIAL REPORTS****15.1 FINANCIAL ANALYSIS REPORT - MAY 2020****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council on the status and performance of its investment portfolio in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* (Section 625), *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* (Clause 212), Australian Accounting Standard (AASB 9) and Council's Investment Policy.

The value of Council's Investment Portfolio as at 31 May 2020 including General Bank Accounts and Trust Funds is shown below.

Investment Portfolio	General Bank Accounts	Trust Funds	Total
\$53,068,243	\$761,262	\$87,050	\$53,916,555

The weighted average rate of return on Council's investments for May 2020 was 4.59% which was above the 90 Day Bank Bill Index for May of 0.095%.

**RESOLUTION 230620/8**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council adopt the Financial Analysis Report detailing investment performance for the month of May 2020.

**CARRIED**

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**15.2 MONTHLY BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS REPORT - MAY 2020****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report details the proposed budget adjustments for the month of May 2020. The main adjustment includes the addition of a new project for the relining of the Evans Head Low Zone Water Reservoir which has had a minor leak for several years. This proposed project will offer a long-term solution to the problem and will be completed over two financial years, with \$81,265 being estimated for each year. Further adjustments include the transfer of \$91,748 back to water reserves from projects that have been completed under budget as well as numerous reallocations of funds between projects for waste and cemetery projects.

The proposed changes see Council's expenses from continuing operations decrease by \$17,294 and capital works increase by \$19,334 to a projected total of \$19,971,084. Council's projected surplus of \$122,219 for 2019/2020 remains unchanged as all proposed changes are fully funded from reserves or reallocations from other project budgets. The report provides further details of the proposed changes as well as the revised budget position as at 31 May 2020.

**RESOLUTION 230620/9**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council:

1. Approve the proposed budget adjustments for the month of May 2020.
2. Note the revised budget position for 2019/2020 as at 31 May 2020.

**CARRIED****15.3 CASINO INDOOR SPORTS STADIUM INSURANCE CLAIM****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Casino Indoor Sports Stadium was closed for a period of four weeks over the December 2017/ January 2018 Christmas period. During this time, torrential rain led to water entering the stadium through side vents and damaging the flooring. Despite various attempts to dry out and repair the floor, it could not be brought back to a suitable condition and full replacement was required. As the cost of the replacement work was substantial, an insurance claim was lodged with Council's insurer in February 2020. The insurance claim provided for most of the replacement cost. There is a shortfall of some \$60,000 to be funded by Council.

**RESOLUTION 230620/10**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council approve the funding shortfall for floor replacement at the Casino Indoor Sports Stadium of \$60,013 to be funded from Council's Real Estate Reserve.

**CARRIED**

**15.4 NORTHERN RIVERS LIVESTOCK EXCHANGE STATISTICS AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AS AT 31 MARCH 2020****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides an update on the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange (NRLX) financial performance as at 31 March 2020, as well as monthly throughput information from 2012/2013 to 2019/2020 YTD. Comparatives of averages for periods prior to 19/20 and the adjusted averages including 19/20.

NRLX throughput at 31 March was at the highest levels seen since 2005/06 where 96,662 were accumulated compared to 95,502 this year. It is clear there have been a number of significant influencing factors such as the prolonged drought conditions compounded by the significant fire impacts across the region. 37,617 head were processed for the March quarter compared to 57,885 head for the first half of the financial year.

With widespread rain through February the market kicked which sustained the high throughput for the first quarter. The March quarter saw significant increases in price across the board for all categories and this is demonstrated by the quarterly throughput value of \$38,772,658 exceeding the half yearly value of \$36,465,756.59.

Income from user charges and fees at 31 March was \$1,177,056 and 85.35% of the previously revised projected yearly budget. The original NRLX budget forecast annual revenue of \$1,277,183 from user charges and fees. Operating expenditure is \$1,034,563 exclusive of depreciation showing a cash profit of \$242,620 before depreciation. The depreciation YTD is \$345,858 which delivers an Operating loss of \$128,325 as at 31 March 2020. Again, the budget had been revised at 31 December to reflect the higher throughput and a new forecast of 105,000 head throughput, expense and associated on costs to support the increased throughput. A budget adjustment for \$160,000 in expenses for a Bio-solids project was also included lifting forecast expenditure to \$1,893,335.

It is important to note that the recent successes of NRLX have been from a number of contributing factors and personnel over a period of time. The upgrades of Stage One and Stage Two have been significant influences to the attraction and reputation of NRLX which has positioned the facility as a genuine and well established competitor. The positive and efficient press releases issued by RVC regarding the NRLX operations have garnered widespread attention and positive focus that has no doubt significantly contributed to the ongoing success of the business. This media coverage presents NRLX as a modern, successful and value adding operation that has enabled the facility to attract new vendors and buyers.

The Bio-solids project has continued, and expenses were incurred during the March quarter however delays were encountered due to the significant rainfall in February and March. The increased demands of the record-breaking March compounded with the NRLX staffing restructure contributed to an over extension of resources and an inability to further progress this project. It is anticipated that some product will be delivered in late June however the bulk of the anticipated income will not occur until the first quarter of the new financial year

Covid-19 requirements had significantly impacted operations for sale days with requirements for the facility to be completely closed and access via one entry gate by a registered buyers list. Covid-19 declaration forms for every attendee have been completed and meat processors have been very strict on social distancing requirements, with restriction of entry to vendors and non-essential personnel.

**RESOLUTION 230620/11**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council receive and note the performance of the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange as at 31 March 2020.

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**CARRIED****16 TENDER REPORTS**

Nil

**17 GENERAL BUSINESS****17.1 CROWN ROAD TRANSFER TO COUNCIL - MURPHYS ROAD, YORKLEA****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

At the Ordinary Council Meeting of November 2016, Council resolved to have two Crown Road Reserves in the Greenridge area transferred to Council's control. This was to ensure local residents had access to public road reserves which could be used as part of a link between Endries Lane Greenridge and Murphys Road Yorklea, especially during a flood event. A subsequent Crown Road Closure application has been lodged with Department of Planning, Industry & Environment (DPIE) - Crown Lands in May 2020, covering another section of Crown road used as part of this connection.

The purpose of this report is to obtain approval to transfer the remaining sections of Crown Road between Endries Lane Greenridge and Murphys Road Yorklea to Council's control.

**RESOLUTION 230620/12**

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Robert Hayes

That:

1. Council apply to Department of Planning, Industry & Environment – Crown Lands to transfer the Crown Road Reserves between Endries Lane and Murphys Road Yorklea, as shown in the attached diagram, to Council's control.
2. Any improvements or modifications to the road reserve (including fencing) be at the expense of the person(s) seeking the improvements. Council will not be taking on maintenance of this road.
3. Any gates proposed to be installed across the road reserve comply with Council's existing Public Gates and Bypasses (Cattle Grids) Procedure.
4. Council records in its asset database the limits of the road to be maintained.

**.CARRIED**

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**17.2 RENAMING OF ROAD - COOK STREET, BROADWATER****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

At the Ordinary Council Meeting in March 2020, Council endorsed the renaming of the east/west section of Cook St, Broadwater to Maloney Street, or Henry Street, if Maloney Street was rejected. The renaming was necessary to resolve confusion over street addressing. Both endorsed names were subsequently rejected by the Geographic Names Board.

This report recommends Council endorse a new road name – Duncan Street - which has been accepted by the Geographic Names Board.

**RESOLUTION 230620/13**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council endorse the renaming of the east/west section of Cook Street, Broadwater to Duncan Street

**CARRIED****17.3 INSTALLATION OF STREET LIGHTS POLICY****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council has reviewed its Installation of Street Lights Policy to provide clearer information and guidance for staff and the community.

**RESOLUTION 230620/14**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council adopt the amended Installation of Street Lights Policy.

**CARRIED**

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**17.4 CEMETERIES AND BURIAL POLICY****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council has developed a draft Cemeteries and Burial Policy to encourage best practice in the overall management of cemetery infrastructure and interments. The policy will help to ensure Council complies with relevant Acts, Regulations and Codes of Practice relating to interment services and interment rights in NSW cemeteries. It will also provide guidance to council officers, the community and funeral directors on providing appropriate interment services to meet the needs of the families of the deceased.

The '*Specifications for Approved Headstones, Plaques & Fittings Casino, Coraki & Evans Head Lawn Cemeteries Memorial Gardens and Niche Walls*' is an accompanying document to the policy and provides technical information pertaining to the cemetery infrastructure associated with an individual grave site or memorial.

While the draft policy is based on Council's past management practices for cemeteries, it may be appropriate to invite community comment on these matters before endorsing the document, to ensure the draft policy reflects current community expectations.

**RESOLUTION 230620/15**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council places the draft Cemeteries and Burial Policy on public exhibition for a period of 28 days to consider community feedback.

**CARRIED****17.5 EXTENSION TO KERBSIDE COLLECTION - WEST CORAKI****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council carried out an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to assess the viability to extend our kerbside waste collection services to a number of properties in West Coraki. The assessment of the EOI supports an opportunity to extend kerbside collection to a total of six properties on parts of Springville Road and Coraki-Ellangowan Road. Given the current economic circumstances, Council may wish to consider waiving the Waste Service Availability charge for the 2020/21 financial year for any of the six properties not taking up the full service.

**RESOLUTION 230620/16**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council waive the \$125 waste service availability charge for the 2020/2021 financial year to any of the six properties not taking up the full service as identified within the Springville Road and Coraki-Ellangowan Road collection area.

**CARRIED**



## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**18 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION****RESOLUTION 230620/17**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

Recommended that the following reports submitted for information be received and noted.

**CARRIED****18.1 IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) ON THE NORTHERN RIVERS****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

It expected that impacts arising from the COVID-19 Public Health Orders will have a significant effect on the Richmond Valley economy both in the short and long terms.

The summary report attached shows the current headline forecasts for the Richmond Valley and Northern Rivers councils. Comparison against data released in May shows a decrease in the forecasted impacts across the board.

Programs under the COVID-19 Community and Economic Development Resilience Package continue to be implemented and are receiving positive engagement and responses from participants and the community.

**RESOLUTION 230620/18**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council receives and notes the information provided on the economic impacts of COVID-19.

**CARRIED**

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**18.2 APPRECIATION FOR LOCAL CONTRACTORS FOLLOWING THE 2019 NORTHERN RIVERS BUSHFIRES****RESOLUTION 230620/19**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council formally acknowledges the work local contractors undertook in support of Council's operations and its residents following the Northern Rivers bushfires which commenced in October 2019.

**CARRIED****18.3 GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION REPORT - MAY 2020****RESOLUTION 230620/20**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council receives and notes the Grant Application Information Report for the month of May 2020.

**CARRIED****18.4 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT FOR THE PERIOD 1 MAY TO 31 MAY 2020****RESOLUTION 230620/21**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council receives and notes the Development Application report for the period 1 May to 31 May 2020.

**CARRIED****18.5 REVIEW OF FRAUD PREVENTION POLICY****RESOLUTION 230620/22**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council receives and notes the updated Fraud Prevention Policy.

**CARRIED**

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**18.6 RAPPVILLE COMMON PROJECT - LAND ACQUISITION****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In the immediate days following the Busby's Flat Road fire which burned through the Rappville township destroying 11 homes and other structures, work began on the clean-up and recovery. The primary focus was to restore access, electricity and water supply to the affected area. Council has played a vital role in the coordination of both the emergency response and the continued recovery efforts.

A key feature of this recovery was the adoption of "Rebuilding the Richmond Valley – Community Revitalisation Plan from 2019 Bushfires." This plan is a locally-led approach to recovery and will be delivered in accordance with three recognised lines being Economic, Community and Social and Infrastructure and Environment.

A feature of the plan is the rebuild of the Rappville Hall, which would form part of a greater Rappville Common, a community hub central to the recovery of the Rappville Community. To realise this vision, Council is exploring the acquisition of two land parcels to facilitate the Rappville Common construction.

**RESOLUTION 230620/23**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council receives and notes the information contained in the Rappville Common Project – Land Acquisition report.

**CARRIED****18.7 CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO TARGET STORE CASINO CLOSURE****RESOLUTION 230620/24**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council receive and note the correspondence regarding the proposed closure of the Target store in Casino.

**CARRIED****19 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Nil

**20 QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING (IN WRITING)**

Nil

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**21 MATTERS REFERRED TO CLOSED COUNCIL****21.1 Rappville Common Project Land Acquisition - Closed Council**

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - (c) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.

The General Manager reported that no written representations had been received in respect to the item listed for consideration in Closed Council.

The Chair called for verbal representations from the gallery.

There were no representations from the gallery.

The Chair advised under section 10A of the Local Government Act 1993, the media and public are to be excluded from the meeting on the basis that the business to be considered is classified confidential under the provisions of section 10A(2) as outlined above.

**CARRIED**

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**RESOLUTION 230620/25**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Jill Lyons

That:

1. Council resolved to enter Closed Council to consider the business identified in Item 21.1, together with any late reports tabled at the meeting.
2. Pursuant to Section 10A(2) - (c) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the media and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that the business to be considered is classified confidential under the provisions of section 10A(2) as outlined above.
3. The correspondence and reports relevant to the subject business be withheld from access to the media and public as required by section 11(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Council closed its meeting at 5.25pm. The public left the Chamber.

**CARRIED**

The Open Council Meeting resumed at 5.27pm.

**22 RESOLUTIONS OF CLOSED COUNCIL**

The following resolutions of Council, passed while the meeting was closed to the public, were read to the Open Council Meeting by the Chair.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In the immediate days following the Busby's Flat Road fire which burned through the Rappville township destroying 11 homes and other structures, work began on the clean-up and recovery. The primary focus was to restore access, electricity and water supply to the affected area. Council has played a vital role in the coordination of both the emergency response and the continued recovery efforts.

A key feature of this recovery was the adoption of "Rebuilding the Richmond Valley – Community Revitalisation Plan from 2019 Bushfires." This plan is a locally-led approach to recovery and will be delivered in accordance with three recognised lines being Economic, Community and Social and Infrastructure and Environment.

A feature of the plan is the rebuild of the Rappville Hall, which would form part of a greater Rappville Common, a community hub central to the recovery of the Rappville Community. To realise this vision, Council is exploring the acquisition of two land parcels to facilitate the Rappville Common construction.

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

23 JUNE 2020

**21.1 Rappville Common Project Land Acquisition - Closed Council**

That Council:

1. Authorise the General Manager to negotiate and complete the sale of the two properties in Rappville as described in this report.
2. Authorise the General Manager to sign and endorse relevant documents, including affixing the seal of Council where appropriate, generally in accordance with the details considered by Council.

The Meeting closed at 5.28pm.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 21 July 2020.

.....  
**CHAIRPERSON**

# STRATEGY FOR RESOURCE RECOVERY AND WASTE MANAGEMENT 2020 - 2030



Richmond  
Valley  
Council



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Richmond Valley Council recognises the people of the Bundjalung Nations as Custodians and traditional Owners of the land upon which we live and work. Council values and appreciates their continuing cultural connection to land and pay respect to Elders past and present as well as to young indigenous leaders of tomorrow.

### Richmond Valley Council

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## STRATEGY FOR RESOURCE RECOVERY & WASTE MANAGEMENT – July 2020 to June 2024

*Draft 16 – 8 July 2020*

### 1. Executive Summary



This strategy sets out Council's strategic direction for resource recovery and waste management for the period July 2020 to 2030. The strategic directions within this document have been designed to link with federal, state and regional frameworks and with Council's own Community Strategic Plan.

The Strategy for Resource Recovery & Waste (The Strategy) places a high priority on the Waste Hierarchy and a Circular economy, the latter identified as a priority by both federal and state governments.

The New South Wales Government's Issues Paper for its 20 Year Waste Strategy identifies four Key Directions namely: Generate Less Waste; Improve Collection & Sorting; Plan for Future Infrastructure, Create End Markets. Council's Strategy adopts four key guiding principles that broadly align with these key directions, and also account for the responsibilities and challenges of local government. Council's guiding principles are:

1. We strive to provide sustainable, safe and reliable resource recovery and waste management services for our community
2. We are committed to avoiding and reducing waste wherever we can
3. We see "waste" as a resource and our waste management solutions will focus on opportunities to reuse, repurpose and recycle materials
4. We will undertake waste management activities at the most appropriate scale for viable resource recovery

Beneath these guiding principles Council's strategies fall into three themes:

- i. Manage resource recovery & waste responsibly
- ii. Improve collection & sorting at the kerbside and at Council's facilities
- iii. Plan for future facilities and services

Within these themes various strategies have been identified (18 in total) involving aspects such as waste avoidance, optimising kerbside collection, developing existing facilities and planning new ones, securing markets for recovered resources, ensuring adequate funds to meet future needs, strategic planning, regulatory compliance and advocacy. Supporting each strategy are strategic actions that will guide the activities of Council's Resource Recovery & Waste business. A generic representation is shown in Figure 1. To help guide where to prioritise resources the strategic actions have been prioritised into four categories: critical, very high, high and moderate.

The Strategy does not contain an exhaustive list of detailed actions. These details are developed as part of Council's Resource Recovery & Waste Business (Operating/Improvement) Plan which supports the Strategy.



Figure 1. Generic Representation of the Relationship of Themes, Strategies and Strategic Actions

An assessment of Council's data and other existing reports identified that Council has facilitated an improvement in diversion from landfill in recent years but there are still considerable opportunities for improvement. The organics content of residual wastes and contamination levels of collected recyclables remain as challenges for the future.

Lack of landfill capacity is a major issue for council, creating the need to consider construction of a new cell at the Nammoona Waste & Resource Recovery Facility as a short to medium term solution, and also consider Alternative Waste Treatments (AWT) such as Energy from Waste (EfW). The planned North Coast Region Waste Investment Report will provide a stocktake of waste types and volumes along with an options analysis of various circular economy options and AWT technologies including EfW.

Investigation of options for processing Food Organics & Garden Organics (FOGO) is important as FOGO has great potential for producing products of value. Council hopes to attract support from the NSW Government to establish a FOGO processing facility and/or an AWT facility in our local government area.



The external factors in the waste industry that impacted on Council in recent years continue to place enormous pressure on Council's resources and budgets. The strategies contained within this document seek to mitigate the risks of these pressures going forward.

## 2. Introduction



### 2.1. Purpose

The Resource Recovery & Waste Strategy (The Strategy) has been developed to encompass the period July 2020 to 2030. It sets some guiding principles for resource recovery and waste management ensuring that they are consistent with federal, state and regional frameworks, and also consistent with Council's own Community Strategic Plan.

Beneath these guiding principles is a set of strategies which represent Council's vision on what is to be achieved in coming years. Beneath each strategy is a set of strategic actions that explain what Council will do towards delivering each strategy.

The Strategy does not contain an exhaustive list of detailed actions. These actions are contained in a Resource Recovery & Waste Business Operating Plan which supports the Strategy.

The Strategy will help to ensure that the activities of the Resource Recovery & Waste Team are aligned with the expectations and strategic priorities of Council.

The Strategy serves as a reference document against which any initiatives or proposals are checked to ensure that they are consistent with the strategic direction of Council. This document is fluid and should be reviewed regularly (nominally annually) to ensure that it remains current and reflective of the complex and dynamic nature of waste management and the waste industry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## 3. Federal & State Strategic Frameworks



### 3.1. Federal Initiatives

While state governments in Australia generally regulate resource recovery and waste management within our borders, the federal government has responsibility for regulating movements into and out of Australia. Given the reliance in recent decades on other countries to reprocess resources recovered in Australia - and other countries' recent resistance to receiving these resources - the federal government has a key role in helping manage some of the current issues impacting on local councils and the Australian waste management industry more broadly.

In 2018 the Australian government developed its National Waste Policy: Less Waste, More Resources. The policy highlights the importance of the circular economy for waste and recovered resources, and provides five overarching principles including:

- Avoid waste
- Improve resource recovery
- Increase use of recycled material and build demand & markets for recycled products
- Better manage material flows to benefit human health, the environment and the economy
- Improve information to support innovation, guide investment and enable informed consumer decisions

In 2019 the National Action Plan was released to implement the 2018 National Waste Policy. The Plan included the following targets and actions to complement and support the plans of state and territory governments, local government, business and industry:

- ban the export of waste plastic, paper, glass and tyres, commencing in the second half of 2020
- reduce total waste generated in Australia by 10% per person by 2030
- 80% average recovery rate from all waste streams by 2030
- significantly increase the use of recycled content by governments and industry
- phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics by 2025
- halve the amount of organic waste sent to landfill by 2030
- make comprehensive, economy-wide and timely data publicly available to support better consumer, investment and policy decisions.



Figure 2. National Export Ban Timetable

The first of the above (export bans) is critical as it has the potential to drastically alter markets for recovered resources and change the value of resources that local councils recover. Through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) a timetable has been agreed to for phasing out exports, as shown in Figure 2.



### 3.2. NSW Waste Avoidance & Resource Recovery Strategy 2014-2021

Council's Resource Recovery and Waste Strategy has been developed with some key State Government objectives in mind. These are described in the NSW Waste Avoidance & Resource Recovery Strategy 2014 – 2021 which specifies the following targets to be achieved through to 2021/2022:

- avoiding and reducing the amount of waste generated per person in NSW
- increasing recycling rates to:
  - 70% for municipal solid waste
  - 70% for commercial and industrial waste
  - 80% for construction and demolition waste
- increasing waste diverted from landfill to 75%
- managing problem wastes better, establishing 86 drop-off facilities and services across NSW

One of the key principles applied in the NSW Waste Avoidance & Resource Recovery Strategy 2014 – 2021 is the Waste Hierarchy (Figure 3) which provides an order of preference for approaches to achieve efficient use of resources.

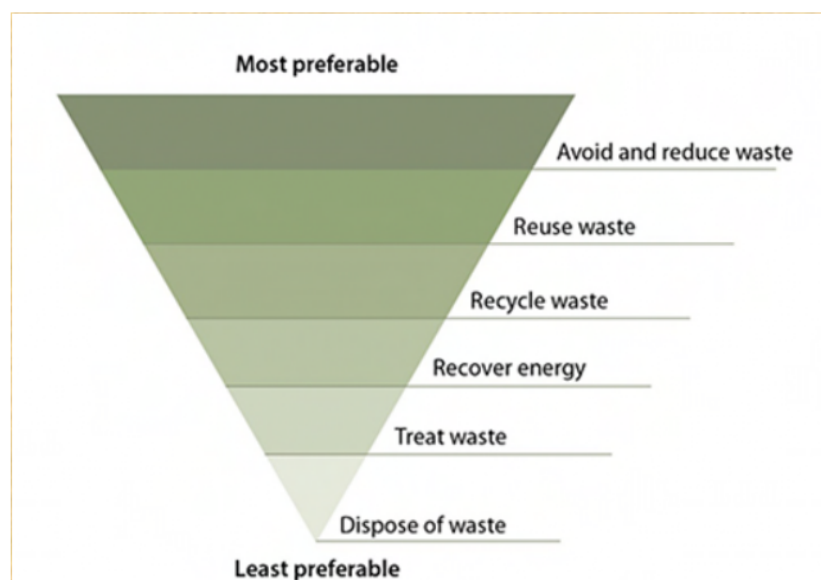


Figure 3. The Waste Hierarchy

The Waste Hierarchy has been given high priority in Council's Resource Recovery & Waste Management Strategy. While Avoidance is the most preferable approach it is also the approach over which local government has the least influence. Local government typically has more direct control over the lower part of the waste hierarchy with state and/or federal governments having more control over the upper portion. Local councils will need to advocate to higher levels of government if they wish to increase waste avoidance measures.

### 3.3. The NSW 20 Year Waste Strategy and Issues Paper

The New South Wales government is developing a 20-year waste strategy and recently consulted the community via an Issues Paper titled *Cleaning Up Our Act – The Future for Waste & Resource Recovery*. The Issues Paper evolved out of concerns for:

- a. Waste generation being predicted to increase from 21 million to 31 million tonnes by 2040
- b. Landfills expecting to reach capacity in the next 10 to 15 years
- c. A lack of processing capacity to recycle the 240,000 tonnes of waste that had been exported
- d. The future of the \$1.5 billion waste management sector in NSW, which employs over 10,000 people

The Issues Paper is premised on a circular economy approach with four directions to be focussed on within the 20 Year Waste Strategy:

- i. Generate less waste – e.g. avoidance, designing out waste
- ii. Improve collection & sorting – e.g. improving methods, lowering costs
- iii. Plan for future infrastructure – e.g. providing infrastructure in a timely & efficient way
- iv. Create end markets – e.g. growing sustainable markets for recycled materials

In the Issues Paper the circular economy approach allows for Energy from Waste (EfW). EfW is considered a legitimate option for recovering value from wastes, although it is lower in the Waste Hierarchy than other forms of recovery.

The Strategy adopts four key guiding principles that broadly align with the State directions but also account for the responsibilities and challenges of local government.

### 3.4. The NSW Government Commitment to Regional NSW

In addition to developing a 20-year waste strategy the NSW government also recognises the potential for regional New South Wales as a place to invest in waste and resource recovery. The NSW Government document *Waste Investment Opportunities in Regional NSW* identifies regional NSW as rich in resources, talented labour and successful businesses, with lower costs than major cities.

The document advocates the waste hierarchy and applying it through a circular economy. The document highlights 'Waste and Circular Economy' as a sector where investment opportunities exist and indicates the NSW government will support regional investment in this sector through its waste and recycling funding program (using the Waste Levy as a source of funding) and the \$1.6 billion Regional Growth Fund. The document also mentions the desire to create 'special activation precincts' in regional NSW designed to fuel economic development, attract businesses and investors and create jobs.

The document identifies opportunities for regional development at local, regional and larger scales. Included under Large Scale opportunities are multi-purpose resource recovery hubs which can combine:

- MRFs to sort recyclables and maximise recovery

- Processing and remanufacturing of recyclables
- Energy recovery of residual waste

MRFs are common and regarded as low risk in terms of technology but generally require at least 100,000 tonne/year of recyclables throughput to be considered viable. Similarly, FOGO digestors are low risk technologically but generally require more than 50,000 tonnes/year of feedstock. Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) requires between 150,000 and 250,000 tonnes/year of feedstock while EfW generally requires more than 300,000 to 400,000 tonnes/year of residual waste feedstock.

Separated waste streams are considered as opportunities for investment and the document focusses on the potential of plastics, glass, timber, paper & cardboard, concrete bricks & tiles, sand soil & rubble, organics and metals.

### 3.5. NSW Legislation

Local councils in NSW are regulated by the *Local Government Act 1993* (The Act) which includes the following guiding principles for councils:

- a) Provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making.
- b) Carry out functions in a way that provides the best possible value for residents and ratepayers
- c) Plan strategically, using the integrated planning and reporting framework, for the provision of effective and efficient services and regulation to meet the diverse needs of the local community
- d) Apply the integrated planning and reporting framework in carrying out their functions so as to achieve desired outcomes and continuous improvements
- e) Work co-operatively with other councils and the State government to achieve desired outcomes for the local community
- f) Manage lands and other assets so that current and future local community needs can be met in an affordable way
- g) Work with others to secure appropriate services for local community needs
- h) Act fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the local community
- i) Be responsible employers and provide a consultative and supportive working environment for staff

All nine principles can in some way be applied to The Strategy in matters such as advocacy, planning strategically, collaborating with other councils, managing waste facilities, providing community services, and staffing those facilities and services.

Chapter 6 of the Act requires councils to provide goods, services and facilities to meet the current and future needs of the community, subject to regulations.

Chapter 12 of the Act allows for the formation of Joint Organisations of Councils as legal entities with the principal functions of providing regional leadership and advocacy, establishing regional priorities and strategies and plans for delivering those priorities.

## 4. Regional Strategic Frameworks



### 4.1. Northern Rivers Joint Organisation (NRJO) of Councils

The NRJO, established in 2018, represents the six Local Government Areas (LGAs) comprising the Northern Rivers; Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, Lismore, Richmond Valley and Tweed LGAs. The NRJO includes representation of the mayors and general managers of member councils and has the aim of facilitating and leading advocacy, political representation and a co-operative approach to matters of regional significance.

The NRJO focusses on five regional priorities:

- Thriving, healthy & biodiverse natural environments
- Improved community wellbeing now & into the future
- A physically & digitally connected region
- A diversified, prosperous & sustainable regional economy
- Innovative & sustainable energy, water & waste

The latter priority relates directly to resource recovery & waste and is relevant to The Strategy. Additionally, some of the work being done in Council's resource recovery and waste business crosses over with some of the other four priority areas, such as helping develop the regional economy (e.g. investigating an Energy from Waste Facility) and healthy environments (e.g. resource recovery from waste to reduce landfilling and greenhouse emissions).

NRJO's Strategic Regional Priorities 2019 – 2022 contains a series of strategic actions. Those related to resource recovery and waste include (paraphrasing):

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| SA8.1  | Champion and promote the increased use of renewable energy.  |
| SA10.1 | Update the North East Waste Regional Waste Management Strategy.  |
| SA10.2 | Identify opportunities for pilot/demonstration projects to establish the Northern Rivers as a centre of excellence for innovative waste processing/waste to energy (WtE).  |
| SA10.3 | Advocate for reviewing waste regulations to focus on global best practice, enhancing viability of innovative approaches, WtE, streamlining the regulatory framework, and reviewing the waste levy to make funding available for local initiatives. |

In line with the NSW government frameworks the NRJO has a focus on adopting innovative alternative waste treatment technologies (AWT) including Energy from Waste (EfW) which the NRJO refers to as WtE.

The NRJO also recognises the North East Waste Regional Waste Group (NEWaste). Council's resource recovery and waste staff actively participate in this group.



#### 4.2. North East Waste Regional Waste Group

NEWaste is one of several Regional Waste Groups that have been established across NSW on a voluntary basis to support collaboration of regional and rural councils within their regions. NEWaste was formed in 1997 and aims to support collaboration, sharing of information, community education and access to grant funding related to waste management and resource recovery.

Council membership of NEWaste comprises the six member councils under the NRJO with the addition of Clarence Valley Council. NEWaste is funded by the NSW Government using funds from the NSW Waste Levy. Councils also provide differing levels of funding based on their respective populations.

NEWaste's activities are guided by a Regional Waste Management Strategy (The RWMS, currently covering 2013 to 2021) which aims to set the strategic direction of waste management in the region. The RWMS identifies six key result areas to focus on:

- Regional cooperation & communication – regular meetings, leverage economies of scale
- Waste generation – minimisation & avoidance of waste
- Resource Recovery – increasing recovery & recycling
- Landfill Diversion – landfill diversion through individual or shared options
- Problem Wastes – reduce tonnages to landfill, safe handling of asbestos wastes
- Illegal Dumping & Litter – increase awareness, reduce incidences

Activities within the six key areas are implemented through an action plan within the RWMS. Through this action plan NEWaste has been instrumental in assisting member Councils to establish Community Recycling Centres (CRCs) and implement kerbside FOGO collection. NEWaste has also been a pivotal resource in helping to establish community programs such as Bin Trim, Waste Warriors and Second Hand Saturday. By facilitating meetings of member councils' waste managers (and specialist staff) several times per year, NEWaste has helped maintain relationships between councils and promoted their cooperation and collaboration on many issues related to waste and resource recovery.



## 5. Richmond Valley Community Strategic Plan



### 5.1. Council's Strategic Goal for Resource Recovery & Waste

Council's Community Strategic Plan 2030, adopted on 27 June 2017, considers resource recovery and waste services by including the following strategic goal along with corresponding strategies, targets and key projects;

**Strategic Goal:** Provide sustainable, reliable and safe water, sewer, waste and recycling services

#### Strategies Waste Management

- Provide environmentally sustainable kerbside collection, disposal and resource recovery services
- Investigate a Food Organics Program for commercial and retail businesses

#### Targets

- Increase Landfill diversion rate
- The waste business operating to full potential

#### Key Projects

- Construction of a new landfill cell at the Nammoona Resource Recovery and Waste Facility
- Complete cell capping at Bora Ridge
- Upgrade the Bora Ridge Transfer Station

The Strategy has been developed to be consistent with the above as much as possible. However, where circumstances may warrant some re-thinking, the Strategy is open to alternative approaches. The dynamic nature of the waste industry in recent years has seen considerable resources directed at addressing some major industry developments (refer to Section 6) and has changed the priorities with regard to some of the key projects.

While a key project 'Complete Cell Capping at Bora Ridge' will be completed by the time The Strategy comes into effect, the key project 'Upgrade Bora Ridge Transfer Station' requires some consideration due to the financial impact of operating the facility. The construction of the new Nammoona landfill cell remains a strategic priority.

### 5.2. Richmond Valley Community Values

In developing The Strategy, consideration has been given to the Community Values outlined in Council's Community Strategic Plan 2030 and shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4 Richmond Valley Community Values

## 6. The 'Perfect Storm' & Associated Challenges



Recent years have seen many significant changes in waste management within the region, across NSW, nationally and internationally creating a 'perfect storm'. As a result, the dynamics of resource recovery and waste management have shifted substantially and left local councils in a state of great uncertainty about the future directions of the industry. Richmond Valley Council has not been immune to these changes. The most significant recent changes impacting on Richmond Valley Council are discussed in the following sections.

### 6.1. NSW Container Deposit Scheme

In December 2017 the NSW government introduced a Container Deposit Scheme (CDS)



marketed to the state's general public as 'Return & Earn'. This allows a range of drinking containers to be 'cashed in' for 10 cents per container and has placed a greater value on these eligible containers than prior to the introduction of the CDS. This has inevitably reduced the number of these containers in kerbside recycling bins and altered the value of the contents of the bins and the contents of self-hauled recyclables. This has presented a challenge for Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) in terms of their business

models, drastically altering the economics of accepting the bin contents from local councils. This has tended to result in increased costs for councils in managing kerbside recycling. The gate-fee charged to Richmond Valley Council increased by 36% within 6 months of the introduction of CDS.

Another consequence of the CDS was a reduction in the weight of mixed recyclables that Council receives. With the community providing CDS eligible containers directly to collection points and reverse vending machines these containers are effectively bypassing Council's facilities. This has had a negative effect on Council's diversion rate driving up the ratio of landfilled materials to recyclables.

## **6.2. The 'China Sword' Policy**

In 2018 the Chinese government announced that it would no longer accept mixed recyclables previously exported to China in very large quantities, instead only allowing 'clean' recyclables separated from each other. This appeared to catch the waste industry by surprise and significantly reduced the demand for collected recyclables particularly along the eastern seaboard of Australia which was heavily reliant on exporting recyclables to China. This further reduced the value of collected recyclables and placed upward pressure on the costs for councils in managing collected recyclables. The gate-fee charged to Richmond Valley Council increased by 27% around this time.

## **6.3. Fire at Lismore's Materials Recovery Facility**

In mid-2019 Lismore City Council's composting operation caught fire and spread to the MRF, resulting in severe damage. Overnight the MRF became unavailable and left RVC having to search for an alternative MRF to accept its collected mixed recyclables. An alternative MRF prepared to accept those recyclables was eventually found but at a significantly increased distance from the Richmond Valley LGA and with a higher gate fee.

Once all three price increases are taken into account (CDS, China Sword & Alternate Facility) the gate-fee increase was 196%, over a period of less than three years.

## **6.4. Queensland Waste Levy Introduced**

In July 2019 the Queensland Government introduced a waste levy on an area covering 90% of the population of the state including the south-east where Richmond Valley Council directs the majority of residual waste collected throughout the LGA. At present the QLD levy is \$75/tonne and is expected to increase by \$5/tonne in July each year. While Council continues to send wastes to south-east Queensland the levy will have an increasing impact on Council's waste management costs.

## **6.5. Future Challenges**

The major changes discussed above are still having significant impacts on Council's resource recovery & waste business. The NSW CDS and QLD Waste Levy remain in place permanently and there appears to be no prospect of a retraction of the China Sword Policy in the short to medium term. Council cannot wait for these problems to be resolved and needs to take action now to mitigate the associated risks.

Furthermore, in July 2020 the Australian Government plans to begin its phasing out of exporting recyclables that have not been processed into value-added materials, subject to the current public consultation process.



The bans are discussed in Section 3.1 and are intended to promote markets for recycled products within Australia. However, if those markets are not realised, local councils may not be able to find destinations for mixed recyclables. If those markets are only partially realised, supply will outstrip demand and market forces may drive up the price that some councils pay to pass on their mixed recyclables.

With the effects of the 'Perfect Storm' still at play and such uncertainty within the industry there will continue to be difficulties in establishing long term contracts with waste and resource recovery companies as they struggle to forecast future revenues. Councils will have to accept short-term contracts that typically have higher costs than longer term contracts for prices paid by Council to dispose of collected wastes and recyclables.

The cost, complexity and risk of councils establishing their own facilities is likely to increase with more onerous legislative requirements (e.g. environmental) and more work involved in obtaining regulatory approvals. While grant funding is available to assist some of these projects, this funding only addresses part of the capital cost of the facility, with councils responsible for the ongoing operational, maintenance and asset replacement costs.

For Council the ongoing contamination in mixed recyclables, and FOGO to a lesser extent, represents a real risk and results in additional pre-sorting costs to ensure materials are accepted by MRFs. Educating the community on source separation needs to be a high priority going forward.

## **6.6. Regional Landfill Capacity**

As the legislative complexity and costs increase for establishing and operating landfills, some councils in the region are avoiding developing new landfills. Ballina and Byron councils are examples, neither having room for additional landfill cells and the latter taking a position of becoming landfill free based on a principle of environmental sustainability.

Meanwhile several existing landfills have closed in the region recently, including Richmond Valley's Bora Ridge landfill. While the larger councils at the northern and southern extents of the Northern Rivers (Tweed and Clarence Valley respectively) continue to operate large landfills and open new cells, the middle of the region is tackling the prospect of a shortage of landfilling capacity (airspace).

Richmond Valley Council has been presented with some challenges in the design of a new cell (Cell 6) at its Nammoona site. Council has received cost estimates for various types of interfaces with the existing landfill cells and how much useable airspace each type could provide. The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has expressed some concern with the designs favoured by Council and negotiations are still in progress to decide on an option that is viable and acceptable. One of the complications has been the western face of the existing cells being steep and challenging to place a liner on.

Cell 6 has potential to provide over a decade's worth of airspace if the design gains the approval of the regulatory authorities and it is financially feasible to construct. This remains an important challenge for Council.

At present the ability to affordably transport waste to South East Queensland is assisting councils to manage the lack of airspace. If the South East Queensland option becomes unavailable or extremely costly then councils in the region will be faced with an enormous challenge unless they have a contingency plan in place.

### **6.7. Alternative Waste Treatments (AWT) & Energy from Waste (EfW)**

To address the lack of landfill capacity Council has been investigating the feasibility of an Energy from Waste (EfW) facility in the region, potentially in the Richmond Valley LGA. International interest from within the EfW industry highlights the need for economies of scale. In collaboration with the NSW Government, Richmond Valley Council is investigating waste investment options for the North Coast Region which highlight the investment opportunities in the 13 local government areas (LGAs) and will result in the production of the North Coast Region Waste Investment Report.

The report will compare existing waste management practices within the 13 LGAs and identify opportunities that present from a regional collaborative response to waste management. The report will be presented in two streams, the Waste Stocktake and then based on this stock take outcomes, the Options Analysis.

Initial stocktake results identify that there were 347,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste generated in the North Coast in 2018/2019 with a predicted increase to 374,000 tonnes by 2040 under a business-as-normal scenario. Of this 374,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste, the residual waste (after recoverable streams are removed) suitable for EfW feedstock is almost 148,000 tonnes which is potentially enough to allow EfW to be viable in a regional setting particularly if co-located with suitable industry(ies) and with a recovery option for the residual ash product. Additional commercial & industrial (C&I) and construction & demolition (C&D) waste would increase the amount of feedstock available for EfW. Having an EfW facility or another AWT facility in the Richmond Valley would provide employment and economic growth and Council has identified two potential sites for further investigation. The completion of the North Coast Region Waste Investment Report is expected in mid-2020.

### **6.8. Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO)**

The North Coast Region Waste Investment Report should also inform decisions on how best to manage FOGO. A range of options exist for processing FOGO including aerobic processes, such as composting, and anaerobic processes such as digestors that collect the gases to use as fuel. The viability of the various technologies is dependent on local conditions (such as local markets). However, in general composting can be economically viable at low feed rates (less than 10,000 tonnes/year) whereas anaerobic digestors generally have more capital expense associated with them which sees them viable at higher throughputs (over 50,000 to 100,000 tonnes per year).

## **7. The Richmond Valley LGA**



### **7.1. Location**

The Richmond Valley Local Government Area (LGA) located in the Northern Rivers, covers approximately 3050 square kilometres. Figure 5 shows the LGA outlined in black.



Figure 5 The Richmond Valley LGA

## 7.2. Population and Demographics

The LGA has a population of over 23,000\* and approximately 10,300\* private dwellings with an expected population growth rate of 0.4% per year\*. The predicted growth suggests a very minor growth in population to 23,641 in 2025, an increase of 2.0% on the population in 2020. The population in 2030 is expected to be 24,118, an increase of 4.1% on the population in 2020. Table 1 summarises the predicted population growth based on the 2016 ABS census data.



Year	Population (estimated)	% Increase from 2020
2016	22807	
2017	22898	
2018	22990	
2019	23082	
2020	23174	
2021	23267	0.4
2022	23360	0.8
2023	23453	1.2
2024	23547	1.6
2025	23641	2.0
2026	23736	2.4
2027	23831	2.8
2028	23926	3.2
2029	24022	3.7
2030	24118	4.1

Table 1 Richmond Valley Population Predictions to 2030

This relatively slow growth restricts the Richmond Valley reaching the scales of economy that other more populous LGAs have achieved, but has the advantage of limiting the growth of waste generation and extending the life of existing infrastructure.

The Richmond Valley has a proportionally higher rate of socio-economic disadvantage, and these communities are limited in their capacity to absorb the increasing costs of waste management.

## 8. Council's Infrastructure & Services



### 8.1. Council's Resource Recovery & Waste Section

The Resource Recovery & Waste Section is managed under the Infrastructure & Environment Department and is led by the Coordinator Waste & Resource Recovery. The Coordinator is responsible for approximately 21 staff members. The majority of the staff are based in Casino, some in Evans Head while others can work in both locations. In this way the team ensures that all areas of the LGA are well resourced to meet customers' needs.

### 8.2 Current Infrastructure and Facilities

Council's Resource Recovery & Waste team manages five facilities dedicated to Resource Recovery and Waste Management. In order of scale of throughput these are:

- i. *Nammoona Resource Recovery & Waste Facility*  
Including an operational Landfill, a Front-end Resource Recovery Facility (FERRC), a Community Recycling Centre (CRC) and a Tip Shop. The landfill's existing cells are approaching their maximum capacity with a remaining useable airspace of 29,772 m<sup>3</sup> of which 6723 m<sup>3</sup> is allocated for constructing and filling a



cell for asbestos wastes and animal carcasses. These wastes are currently the only wastes landfilled in significant quantities while the majority of Council's residual waste is sent to south-east Queensland for landfilling.

- ii. *Evans Head Waste Transfer Station*  
Including a Front-end Resource Recovery Facility (FERRC) and a Tip Shop. It also includes a closed landfill which no longer receives waste but requires ongoing monitoring and after-care.
- iii. *Bora Ridge Waste Transfer Station*  
An outpost Transfer Station that has been closed since mid-2019 to allow capping and revegetation works to be conducted on the on-site landfill. The landfill itself has been closed since 2016 due to the low usage of the facility combined with potential environmental risks associated with older style landfills.
- iv. *Rappville Waste Transfer Station*  
A small outpost Transfer Station generally coordinated and resourced by the Nammoona facility.
- v. *Broadwater Closed Landfill*  
Completely closed to the public and only in a 'monitoring & after-care' regime.

### 8.3 Current Plant

Council's Resource Recovery & Waste team operates a fleet of Waste Management vehicles the most significant of which are:

- One excavator
- Three loaders
- Five robotic side arm collection trucks
- One water truck
- One hook-lift truck
- Two rear load street bin collection trucks
- One waste compactor (30 tonne)
- Three utility vehicles
- One out-front mower



### 8.4 Current Services to the Community

In addition to the Resource Recovery & Waste facilities detailed in Section 8.2, Council conducts kerbside collections across the LGA primarily in and around the townships of Casino, Coraki, Woodburn, Evans Head and Broadwater. These collections have existed for several decades with some occasional expansions occurring.

Council has not contracted out its kerbside collections since the amalgamation in 2000 of the Casino Municipal Council and Richmond River Shire Council, the former having

contracted collections prior to the amalgamation. There has been no recent assessment of the option of contracting kerbside services.

Council does not operate bulky goods kerbside collection services and has not done so in recent history. Council has no plans to operate such a program in the future, recognising that it could result in WH&S issues and extra costs for ratepayers.

Council does not operate a 'Tip Voucher' scheme. Other councils in the region operate schemes where residents are provided with vouchers each year entitling them to drop off wastes at a council facility without a gate fee being charged. Historically Council has not operated such a scheme and there are no plans to do so in the future, recognising that tip vouchers are not 'free' and are ultimately funded from council revenue.

Council also provides education programs to inform the community about Council's services and optimal methods for resource recovery and waste disposal. Council's Waste Education Officer helped to ensure the smooth introduction of FOGO collections in the Richmond Valley in 2016.

## **8.5 Financial Overview of the Resource Recovery & Waste Business**

### **8.5.1 Resource Recovery & Waste Revenue**

Council's Resource Recovery & Waste business has a revenue base (excluding capital) in the order of \$7 million per year. The largest revenue stream is Domestic Kerbside Service Charges as shown in Figure 6. These charges account for approximately 58% of revenue, as shown in Figure 7, which also shows that the relative proportions of the contributors to revenue have remained fairly consistent over the two years, with other major revenue streams being:

• Facility Gate Fees to the public	16 - 17%
• Non-Domestic Kerbside Service Charges	10%
• Waste Infrastructure Charge	5 - 6%
• Facility Gate Fees to internal departments	2.2 – 3%
• Operating Grants	2.2 – 3%
• Sale of Recyclables (including CDS)	2 – 5%

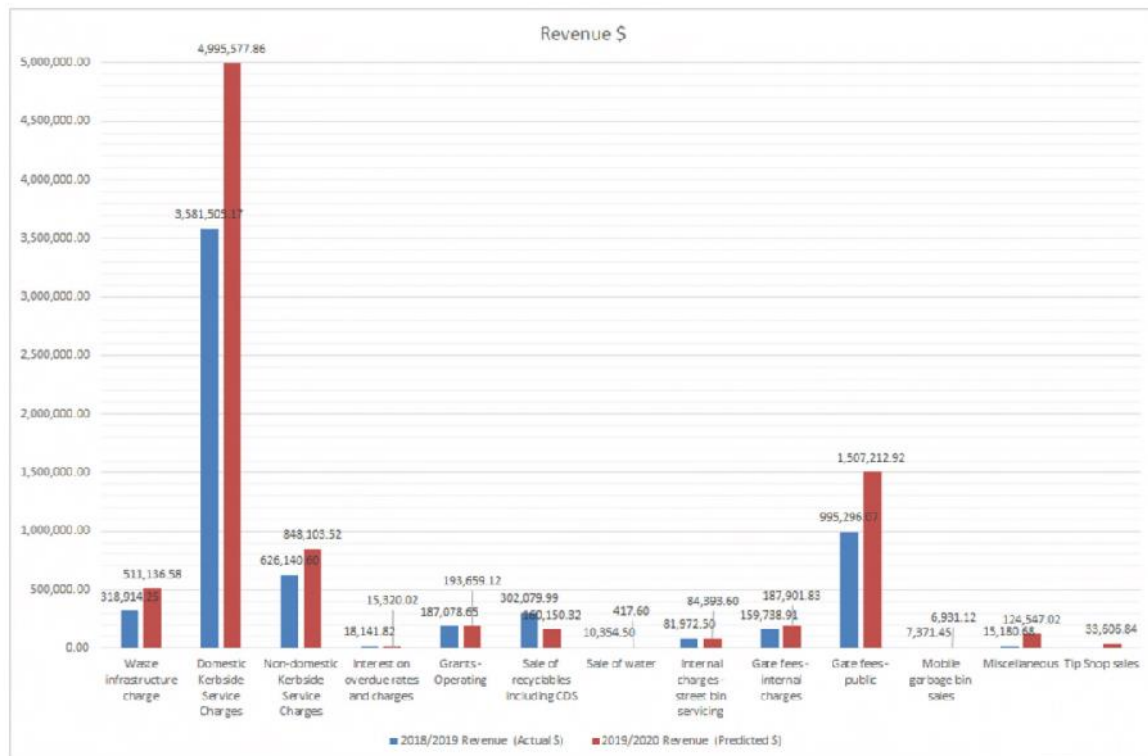


Figure 6 Operating Revenue Contributions in Dollars

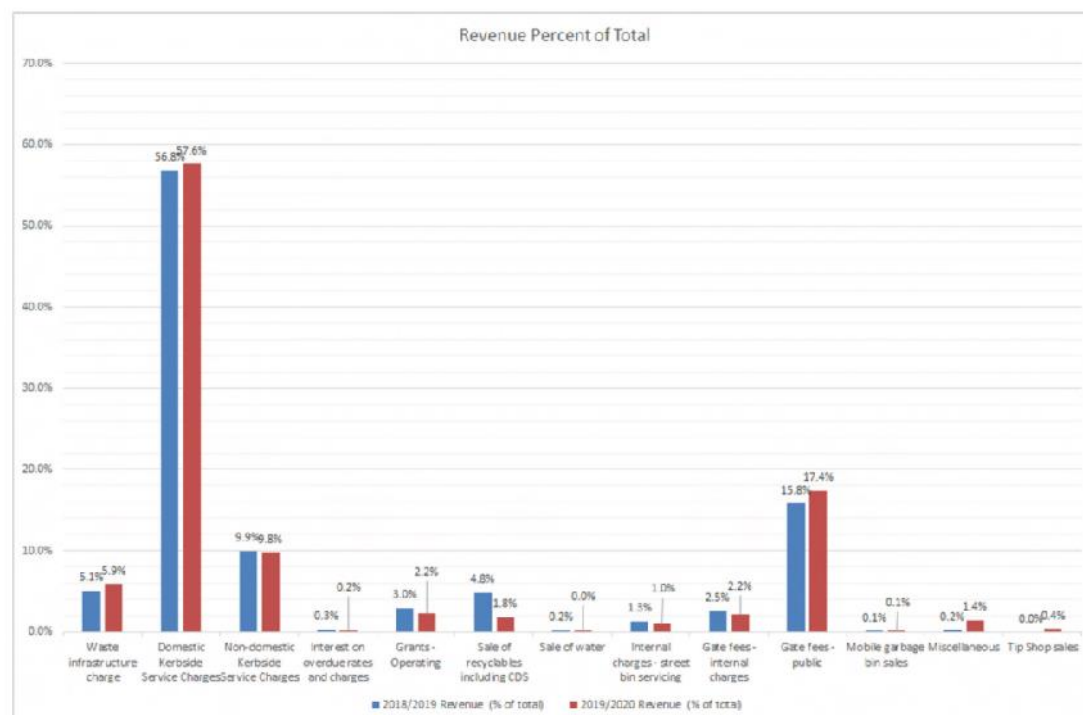


Figure 7 Operating Revenue Contributions as Percentage of Total

Capital related revenues are generally more variable from year to year depending on asset sales and capital grant payments occurring each year. In 2018/2019 capital income was \$46,518 from plant sales, with no grant income. In 2019/2020 YTD capital income is \$109,773 with an additional \$52,273 budgeted for asset sales.

### 8.5.2 Resource Recovery & Waste Expenditure

Operating expenditure in 2018/2019 was \$5,831,257 with the break-down of costs shown in Figure 8. In 2019/2020 this expenditure is expected to be similar with the YTD to April at \$5,050,154 with the break-down of costs shown in Figures 8 and 9.

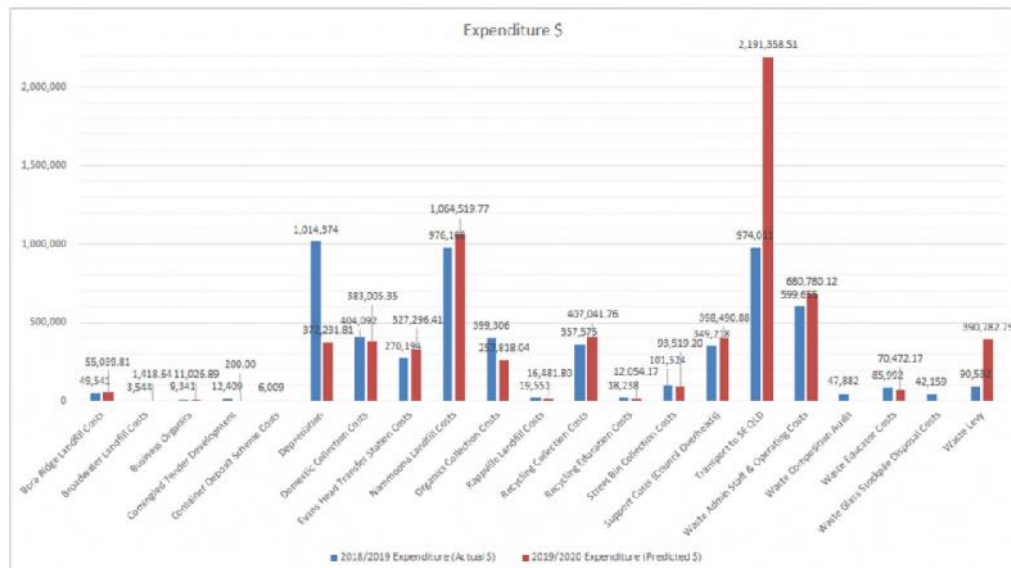


Figure 8 Operating Expenditure Contributions in Dollars

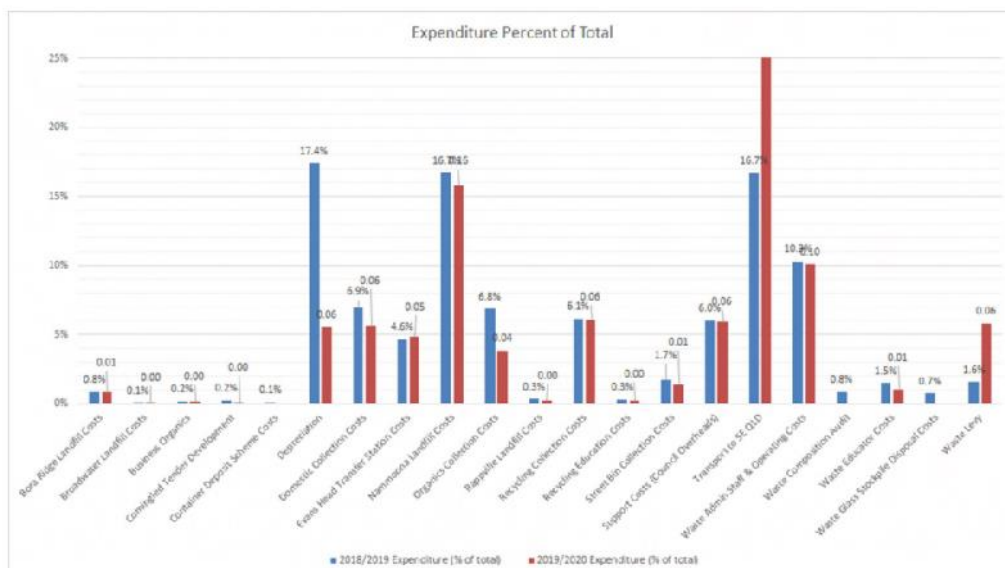


Figure 9 Operating Expenditure Contributions as Percentage of Total

By far the most significant change between 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 YTD is the substantial increase in costs to transport waste to South East Queensland from \$974,011 over 12 months to \$1,643,519 over only 10 months, an increase from 16.7% of total expenditure to 32.5%. This increase is due to increased costs of disposal including introduction of the QLD Waste Levy and sending kerbside FOGO to QLD since the Lismore Facility closed in mid-2019.

The next most significant relative increase between 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 YTD is the NSW Waste Levy from 1.6% of expenditure to 5.8%. The extra levy cost in 19/20 is due to some of the materials used to cap Bora Ridge Landfill incurring a levy liability which will be claimed back in 2020/2021.

Substantially offsetting the above increases are decreases from 2018/2019 to 2019/2020 YTD in:

- depreciation from \$1,014,374 (17.4% of expenditure) down to \$279,174 (5.5% of expenditure) due to provision for a doubling of costs to cap Bora Ridge Landfill which incurred the entire depreciation amount in the one year (2018/2019).
- organics collection costs from \$399,306 (6.8% of expenditure) down to \$193,364 (3.8% of expenditure).
- Some expenses in 2018/2019 not existing in 2019/2020, including Glass Stockpile Disposal, Waste Composition Audit and CDS Costs – the three of which accounted for 1.6% of expenditure in 2018/2019.

## 9. Council's Resource Recovery & Waste Data



### 9.1. Resource Recovery & Waste Totals

A summary of the wastes and recyclables received by Council at all waste and resource recovery sites in recent years is provided in Table 2 which shows:

- Municipal waste is the largest of the three categories (municipal, C&I, C&D) contributing to the total waste received each year, with municipal substantially exceeding the sum of the other two categories.
- The total tonnages received have decreased throughout the period 2016/2017 to 2018/2019 but will possibly rise by the end of 2019/2020.

Received by Council	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
Municipal Waste	11952.5	12009.8	11570.5	12297.2
Commercial & Industrial	2757.4	3064.5	2593.5	3029.7
Construction & Demolition	5007.3	2080.1	1590.2	1428.6
Total Waste & Recovered Resources Received	19717.2	17154.5	15754.2	16755.5

Table 2 Wastes & Recyclables Received by Council in Recent Years



## 9.2. Kerbside Collections

### 9.2.1. Kerbside Tonnage

Table 3 provides data on the respective tonnages of organics, co-mingled recycling (hard recyclables) and residual wastes (landfill) collected from kerbside customers in recent years. The data shows that:

- Tonnages of waste in kerbside residual waste bins (landfill) have decreased over the last four years from 3604 tonnes in 15/16 to 3041 tonnes in 18/19.
- There was a marked decrease in residual waste (landfill) and an increase in organics between 15/16 and 16/17, corresponding to the introduction of FOGO (Food Organics Garden Organics collection) to domestic properties.
- In 18/19 the tonnages in all three categories were down from the previous two years.

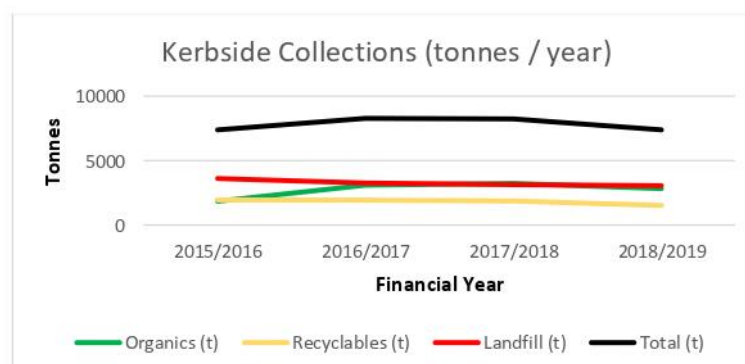


Year	Organics (T)	Recyclables (T)	Landfill (T)	Total (T)
2015/2016	1849	1936	3604	7389
2016/2017	3085	1927	3261	8273
2017/2018	3236	1858	3134	8228
2018/2019	2828	1503	3041	7372
2019/2020	2868	1395	3517	7780

Table 3 Kerbside Collection Tonnages in Recent Years

*Note: Tonnages are primarily from domestic properties but do include a small amount of commercial property collections.*

Figure 10 shows the data in graphical format.



### 9.2.2. Kerbside Presentation Rates & Contamination Rates

The assessment of how kerbside bins are being used in the LGA can be best quantified by assessing presentation rates in conjunction with contamination rates. Contamination rates have been assessed by reviewing the most recent Household Kerbside Bin System Audit conducted over 2 weeks in November 2018 (ECSustainable report, January 2019). The audit included 225 households located across the LGA with the audit process generally conforming to the EPA Guidelines for household kerbside audits. It is important to identify the date (or at least the month) that any audit is conducted as the contents of bins can vary depending on the season (e.g. more garden organics in summer compared to winter). In a similar manner the season can also influence presentation rates.

Presentation rate refers to the number of properties leaving a kerbside bin on the kerb for collection and is expressed as a percentage of the total number of properties that have kerbside services. The presentation rate can be different for each bin (FOGO, recycling or general waste).

Table 4 provides data from the 2018 Household Kerbside Bin System Audit and indicates that:

- The average contamination rate in kerbside recycling bins was high with 14.1% of the weight in the bins being contaminants (high compared to the NSW EPA audit benchmark of 7.3% #)
- The major single type of contaminant identified in Recycling bins was compostables (3.1%) including food, garden waste and wood
- Kerbside FOGO bins had contamination (average of <1% by weight) which is much less than the contamination in recycling bins
- Kerbside waste bins (landfill bins) had major contamination (>60%) comprised of compostables (35%), recyclables (22%) and hazardous materials (2.7%)
- On average, recycling bins were 71.7% full when left at the kerb for collection
- On average the other bins left at the kerb for collection were not as full, generally being around half full (48.1% for FOGO bins, 53.6% for waste bins)

	Recycle Bins	FOGO Bins	Waste Bins
Number of bins presented	188	153	169
Average volume of bin filled at kerbside (% full)	71.7	48.1	53.6
Average weight of bin contents (kg/hh/wk)	4.2	13.54	4.9
Average weight of bin contamination (kg/hh/wk)	0.59	0.13	-
Average bin contamination rate (%)	14.1	0.96	> 60
Major Contributors to contamination rate (%)			
Compostables (e.g. food, garden, wood)	3.1	na	35
Recyclables	na	minimal	22
Hazardous (fluoro tubes, batteries, Electricals, chemicals)	minor	minimal	2.7
Other	11	minimal	na
TOTAL	14.1		

Table 4 Data From 2018 Household Kerbside Audit

kg/hh/wk = kilograms per household per week.

# ECSustainable Report, January 2019.

Although the 2018 Household Kerbside Audit provides data on presentation rates this data is not included in the above table as the data only relates to the 2 weeks of the audit whereas Council monitors presentation rates on an ongoing basis. Council's data for July 2019 to December 2019 is considered to be more relevant as it is more recent than 2018 and covers a spread of months ranging from winter through spring and into summer.

Figure 11 shows the average number of each bin type presented for collection across the LGA during July to December 2019, expressed as a percentage of the number of households with kerbside collection services. The data indicates that the presentation rate for FOGO bins is much lower (45%) than for Waste bins (85%) and Recycling bins (82%).

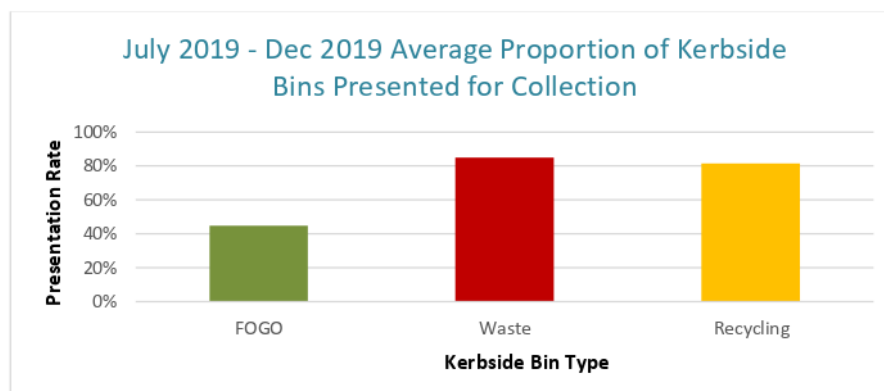


Figure 11 Average Presentation Rates for RVC July to December 2019

The data in Table 4 is based on a single fortnightly audit limited to only one collection of each type of bin from each household. Although the data does provide some information, it would be useful to have more bin composition audits conducted during various periods of the year. Further auditing is a recommendation of the ECSustainable audit report.

### 9.2.3. Kerbside Collection Rejections

The term 'rejections' refers to the refusal to accept loads arriving at their proposed destination resource recovery facility (e.g. a MRF or organics processing facility). The rejection rates of Council's mixed recyclables and FOGO have been low. However, this is not necessarily indicative of low contamination rates, particularly for recyclables (where contamination rates are known to be high – refer Table 4). The low rejection rates are likely due to the pre-sorting at Council's facilities where much of the contamination is removed prior to transport to the MRF. For this reason, rejection data has not been included in this document because it is not considered reliable.



### 9.3. Self Hauled Wastes

Table 5 provides data on the respective tonnages of organics (garden organics), recyclables and residual waste (landfill) self-hauled by customers to Council's waste and resource recovery facilities, along with other council wastes delivered to those same facilities. The data shows that:

- Tonnages of garden organics have reduced consistently over the last 4 years from 1240 tonnes in 15/16 to 710 tonnes in 18/19
- There was a marked increase in mixed recyclables tonnages from 150 tonnes in 15/16 to 406 tonnes in 16/17, corresponding to the year that the Nammoona CRC was commissioned
- Since 16/17 the tonnages of mixed recyclables have reduced to 212 tonnes and 172 tonnes respectively in 16/17 and 17/18

Year	Garden Organics (t)	Mixed Recyclables (t)	Landfill (t)	Other Council (t)	Total (t)
2015/2016	1240	150	2042	1102	4534
2016/2017	1018	406	1921	493	3838
2017/2018	948	212	2411	1654	5225
2018/2019	710	172	2421	1344	4647
2019/2020	582	Not available	2827	808	Not available

Table 5 Self Haul Tonnages in Recent Years

*Note: 'Other Council' includes street sweepings, street bins, open space bins and special events.*

The drought throughout 2019 reduced the amount of garden organics generated and this inevitably contributed to the low tonnage in 2018/2019.

Figure 12 shows the self-haul data graphically.

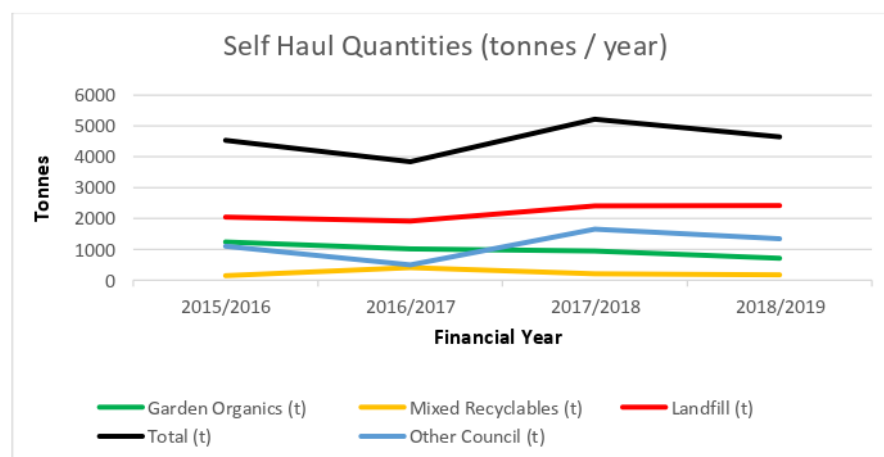


Figure 12 Self Haul Quantities in Recent Years

#### 9.4. Commercial & Industrial Waste (C&I)

Figure 13 shows the historical tonnages of C&I waste received by Council during the years 2015/2016 to 2018/2019. While there is some variation the tonnages are all in the range of 2500 to 3200 tonnes per year.

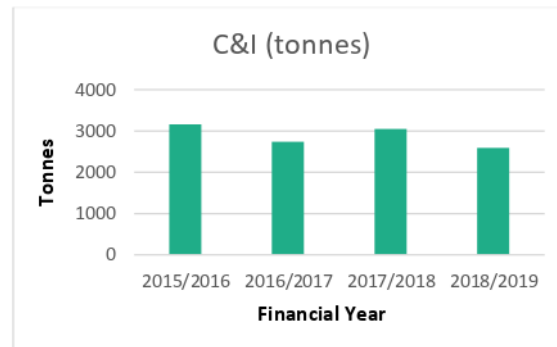


Figure 13: Historical C&I Tonnages in Recent Years

#### 9.5. Construction & Demolition Waste (C&D)

Figure 14 shows the historical tonnages of C&D waste received by Council during the years 2015/2016 to 2018/2019. Tonnages were high in 2016/2017 due to abnormally high tonnages of concrete waste being received and Council requiring high tonnages of Virgin Excavated Natural Materials (VENM) for its landfilling operations.

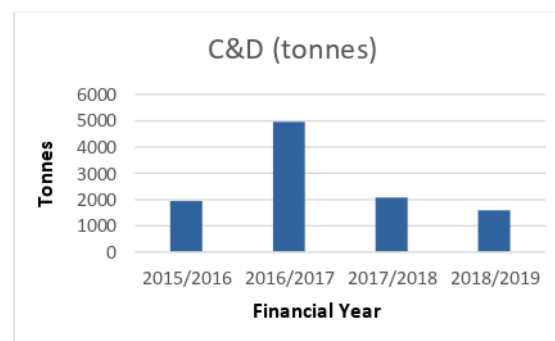


Figure 14: Historical C&D Tonnages in Recent Years

#### 9.6. Landfill Diversion Rates

Figure 15 shows the historical diversion rate and landfill rate for kerbside collections. Key observations are:

- An improvement in the diversion rate from 48.9% in 2015/16 to 60.6% in 2016/17, largely due to the introduction of FOGO services to domestic kerbside customers.

- Diversion rate was consistent at approximately 60% throughout 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19.
- A reduction in the diversion rate to 33.4% in 2019/20, primarily due to a period following the fire at Lismore Council's waste facility where Council experienced challenges in locating an alternative facility to accept FOGO.

*Note: Data for 2019-2020 is year to date until April 2020.*

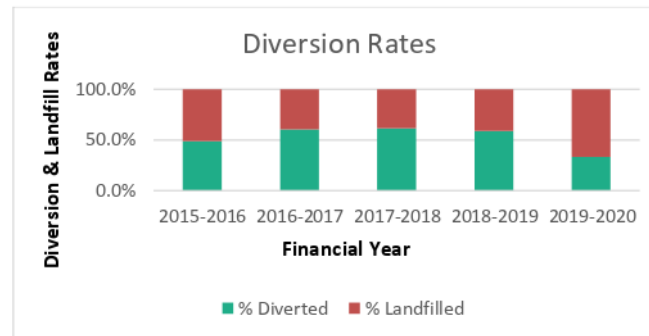


Figure 15 Diversion Rates & Landfill Rates in Recent Years

## 10. SWOT Analysis



Analysis of issues and opportunities that currently exist and those that could potentially occur in coming years was conducted using a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), a common analysis tool used in business to identify which aspects to devote resources to in order to improve the business.

The analysis was conducted with consideration of the federal and state frameworks (see Section 3) regional frameworks (Section 4), the relevant strategies in Council's Community Strategic Plan (Section 5), the challenges posed by the recent changes in the industry (Section 6), and any other aspects that the waste team considered to be relevant at present or potentially in the future.

By applying scoring criteria the more important aspects were identified and corresponding strategic actions developed. The more significant aspects related to lack of landfill capacity, limited markets for recovered resources and the high costs of accessing those markets, the uncertain and dynamic nature of the waste industry, changing government regulations having impacts on council's waste business, challenges associated with contamination in recovered resource streams, and potential benefits from regional councils collaborating more effectively than at present.

## 11. Key Guiding Principles & Themes



The New South Wales Government's Issues Paper for its 20 Year Waste Strategy identifies four key directions namely: Generate Less Waste; Improve Collection & Sorting; Plan for Future Infrastructure; Create End Markets. Council's Strategy adopts four key guiding principles that broadly align with these four key directions but also consider the responsibilities and challenges of local government. Council's guiding principles for its Resource Recovery & Waste business are:

1. RVC strives to provide sustainable, safe and reliable resource recovery and waste management services for our community
2. We are committed to avoiding and reducing waste wherever we can
3. We see "waste" as a resource and our waste management solutions will focus on opportunities to reuse, repurpose and recycle materials
4. We will undertake waste management activities at the most appropriate scale for viable resource recovery

These principles, particularly the first, directly link to the Community Strategic Plan strategy *Provide environmentally sustainable kerbside collection, disposal and resource recovery services*. These principles also link with the community values of Sustainability and Good Service while also encompassing the community value of Accessibility under the term 'reliable'.

Based on these guiding principles Council has developed strategies that fall into three themes:

- i. Manage resource recovery & waste responsibly
- ii. Improve collection & sorting at the kerbside and at Council's facilities
- iii. Plan for future facilities and services

## 12. Strategies



Based on the adopted guiding principles and themes and the outcome of the SWOT analysis, a set of strategies has been developed (18 in total) to address current issues and plan ahead for future challenges. The strategies adopted are shown in Table 6 on the following page.

<b>1. MANAGE RESOURCE RECOVERY &amp; WASTE RESPONSIBLY</b>	
1.1	Plan strategic long-term, sustainable approaches for council's waste services and facilities
1.2	Promote a culture of waste avoidance in the community
1.3	Explore opportunities for regional collaboration and shared waste management services/facilities
1.4	Comply with regulatory requirements related to waste management services and facilities
1.5	Adequately resource waste management and resource recovery activities
1.6	Provide efficient, value for money services
1.7	Actively support the use of recycled products/resources in Council's activities
<b>2. IMPROVE COLLECTION &amp; SORTING AT THE KERBSIDE &amp; COUNCIL'S FACILITIES</b>	
2.1	Focus on reducing contamination rates in kerbside collections and at Council's waste & resource recovery facilities
2.2	Target illegal disposal and illegal dumping in our community
2.3	Explore options for improved service models for delivering kerbside collection services
2.4	Enhance resource recovery to promote diversion from landfill, encouraging local re-use and reprocessing facilities
2.5	Investigate opportunities to recover more CDS containers from waste streams received by Council
<b>3. PLAN FOR FUTURE FACILITIES &amp; SERVICES</b>	
3.1	Identify and develop waste processing sites/facilities/services to meet community needs
3.2	Plan appropriately for existing and future difficult-to-manage/hazardous wastes
3.3	Continue the upgrade of Nammoona waste management facility consistent with the site Masterplan
3.4	Explore options for introducing alternative waste technologies in or around the Richmond Valley
3.5	Establish sustainable management of Richmond Valley's organic wastes
3.6	Establish sustainable recycling services for Richmond Valley wastes and recovered resources

### 13. Strategic Action Plan

Consistent with the strategies outlined in Table 6 a set of strategic actions has been developed as shown in Table 7. This strategic action plan will guide the activities of Council's Resource Recovery & Waste business and form the basis for a Resource Recovery & Waste Business (Operating/Improvement) Plan which is to be implemented at an operational level.

To help guide where to prioritise resources the strategic actions have been prioritised into four categories: Critical, Very High, High and Moderate. Those with a Critical rating are considered as requiring attention with haste, while a Very High rating indicates that work should begin on those actions within the first year. The High rating suggests beginning work within the first two to three years while a Moderate rating suggests implementation as time and resources permit.

Table 7 Strategic Action Plan

RVC waste management strategy 2020-2030			
Guiding Principles			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RVC strives to provide sustainable, affordable, safe and reliable resource recovery and waste management services for our community</li> <li>We are committed to avoiding and reducing waste wherever we can</li> <li>We see “waste” as a resource and our waste management solutions will focus on opportunities to reuse, repurpose and recycle materials</li> <li>We will undertake waste management activities at the most appropriate scale for viable resource recovery</li> </ul>			
Theme	Strategy	Actions	Priority
<b>1. Manage resource recovery and waste responsibly</b>	<b>1.1</b> Plan strategic long-term, sustainable approaches for council's waste services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Align waste management planning with IP&amp;R timeframes</li> <li>Consider waste management solutions within a regional context, promoting collaboration with other councils to seek mutual economic benefit</li> <li>Assess waste management solutions against the triple bottom line</li> <li>Maintain links with industry associations/peers and policy makers and continue to monitor emerging issues/technologies in resource recovery &amp; waste management</li> <li>Instigate a Change Management protocol within Resource Recovery &amp; Waste</li> <li>Consider the benefits of building strategic capacity within Resource Recovery &amp; Waste</li> </ul>	High Very High  High High  Very High High
	<b>1.2</b> Promote a culture of waste avoidance in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide community education on avoiding waste</li> <li>Lobby State and Federal regulators to adopt policies that promote waste avoidance</li> <li>Encourage local businesses to avoid and reduce waste</li> </ul>	Very High Very High  High



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and implement council's Construction Waste Minimisation program</li> </ul>	Moderate
	<b>1.3</b> Explore opportunities for regional collaboration and shared waste management services/facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Northern Rivers JO to develop and implement regional waste management strategies and services</li> <li>Work with regional waste management groups, such as NEWaste, to provide cost-effective shared programs</li> </ul>	Very High Very High
	<b>1.4</b> Comply with regulatory requirements related to waste management services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regularly review licensing and regulatory compliance for existing facilities</li> <li>Ensure regulatory approvals &amp; documentation for waste management facilities are regularly reviewed and updated</li> <li>Consider regulatory requirements/constraints when assessing proposed new facilities and services</li> <li>Continue appropriate monitoring of waste management services, sites and facilities to ensure compliance and appropriate risk management</li> </ul>	Very High Very High Very High Very High
	<b>1.5</b> Adequately resource Ensure waste management and resource recovery activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider whole of asset life costs when determining waste management resources, fees and charges</li> <li>Ensure adequate resourcing levels in Waste Reserves to meet long-term commitments</li> <li>Review in-house arrangements for utilising revenue from Waste &amp; Resource Recovery</li> <li>Ensure council has access to adequate waste &amp; resource recovery data, knowledge and expertise</li> </ul>	Very High Critical Critical Very High
	<b>1.6</b> Provide efficient, value for money services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake regular service reviews of council's waste management activities</li> <li>Explore options for shared procurement of plant, equipment and services with neighbouring councils.</li> <li>Explore the benefits of forming a waste company.</li> <li>Explore options for additional commercial services such as plant hire and new options for Commercial &amp; Industrial premises</li> </ul>	High Very High High High

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure capital works are delivered cost efficiently, through optimal project scoping, design and management</li> <li>• Explore new technologies for improving service delivery/efficiency of services and sites</li> </ul>	<p>Critical</p> <p>High</p>
	1.7 Actively support the use of recycled products/resources in Council's activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with LGNSW to encourage greater uptake of recycled content in local government procurement</li> <li>• Lobby State and Federal regulators to adopt viable policies that promote recycled content</li> <li>• Review the need for a policy on council's use/procurement of recycled products/content</li> <li>• Explore options with regional councils for collaborative procurement of products made from recyclables</li> </ul>	<p>Moderate</p> <p>Moderate</p> <p>Moderate</p> <p>Very High</p>
<b>2. Improve collection and sorting at the kerbside and at Council's facilities</b>	<b>2.1</b> Focus on reducing contamination rates in kerbside collections and at Council's waste and resource recovery facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a community education campaign to improve community understanding of source separation and the 3 bin system</li> <li>• Develop and implement a contamination management program to manage incorrect use council's kerbside collections system</li> </ul>	<p>Very High</p> <p>Very High</p>
	<b>2.2</b> Target illegal disposal and illegal dumping in our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate opportunities to discourage illegal practices</li> </ul>	Moderate
	<b>2.3</b> Explore options for improved service models for delivering kerbside collection services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate the feasibility of contracting kerbside collection.</li> </ul>	Very High
	<b>2.4</b> Enhance resource recovery to promote diversion from landfill, encouraging local re-use and reprocessing facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to operate council's Tip Shops</li> <li>• Investigate opportunities to promote more resource recovery in local construction and demolition activities</li> <li>• Actively support the establishment of private beneficial, responsible re-use/repurposing facilities in the LGA</li> </ul>	<p>Moderate</p> <p>Moderate</p> <p>Very High</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and promote responsible social media-based re-use/repurpose websites</li> </ul>	High
	<b>2.5</b> Investigate opportunities to recover more CDS containers from waste streams received by Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the viability of increasing CDS recovery from council's waste and resource recovery facilities</li> <li>Consider CDS recovery options when planning community events</li> <li>Consider options for enhancing Council's ability to viably direct recovered CDS containers for recycling.</li> </ul>	Moderate Moderate Moderate
<b>3. Plan for future facilities and services</b>	<b>3.1</b> Identify and develop waste processing sites/facilities/services to meet community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and assess greenfield sites within the Richmond Valley LGA that may have potential for waste management facilities and/or Biobanking</li> <li>Plan for the needs of existing and emerging growth areas in the LGA.</li> <li>Prepare a Master Plan for the Evans Head Waste Transfer Station</li> <li>Review the suitability/viability of the Bora Ridge Closed Landfill site for future resource recovery /reprocessing activities.</li> </ul>	Critical  High High High
	<b>3.2</b> Plan appropriately for existing and future difficult-to-manage/hazardous wastes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore options for viable management of asbestos and animal carcass wastes</li> <li>Consult within the industry on existing and future expected challenges with difficult/hazardous wastes and collaborate to develop solutions</li> </ul>	Very High  High
	<b>3.3</b> Continue the upgrade of Nammoona waste management facility consistent with the site Masterplan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the construction of Cell 6</li> <li>Implement staged capping of the existing landfill cells</li> </ul>	Critical Very High
	<b>3.4</b> Explore options for introducing alternative waste technologies (AWT) in or around the Richmond Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to liaise with proponents of the existing local bio-digestion proposal(s) to investigate opportunities for Council to collaborate.</li> </ul>	Very High

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess options identified in the future North Coast Region Waste Investment Report &amp; if viable continue to work with potential investors, regulators &amp; regional councils on the viability of AWT options such as EfW</li> <li>Seek government funding to progress a feasibility study on options deemed viable from the Report.</li> </ul>	<p>Very High</p> <p>Very High</p>
	<b>3.5</b> Establish sustainable management of Richmond Valley's organic wastes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review council's current contractual arrangements for FOGO in terms of efficiency, cost/benefit and environmental outcomes.</li> <li>Undertake a cost benefit analysis of outsourcing organics processing vs providing a local or regional facility, over a 10-year timeframe.</li> <li>Continue to support opportunities where viable for establishing private organics processing micro-industries, such as vermiculture and composting, in the LGA</li> </ul>	<p>Critical</p> <p>Very High</p> <p>High</p>
	<b>3.6</b> Establish sustainable recycling services for Richmond Valley wastes and recovered resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review council's current contractual arrangements for recycled materials in terms of efficiency, cost/benefit and environmental outcomes.</li> <li>Explore options for regional scale recycling facilities for recyclables such as plastics, glass, paper/cardboard in consultation with neighbouring councils</li> <li>Support the Northern Rivers JO feasibility study into local micro-industries and consider joint council procurement options to provide markets.</li> <li>Explore options to deal directly with recyclables markets where potential benefits are identified</li> </ul>	<p>Critical</p> <p>Very High</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p>

## 14. Conclusion



This strategy sets out Council's strategic direction for resource recovery and waste management for the period July 2020 to 2030. It provides Council's 57 Strategic Actions for resource recovery and waste management, placing a high priority on the waste hierarchy and a circular economy. The strategic actions broadly align with the New South Wales Government's four key directions identified for its 20 Year Waste Strategy.

Although Council has facilitated improvements in recent years, including an improvement in diversion from landfill, there are still considerable opportunities to improve the business. In particular the contamination levels of mixed recyclables and the organics content of landfill wastes remain challenges for the future with the latter having potential for recovery and composting into a value-added product.

Important areas of focus will be reviewing current arrangements for supplying Council's recovered recyclables and FOGO streams to re-processors, completing the construction of Cell 6 and beyond that, providing for the community's future landfilling and resource recovery needs which requires work to identify what greenfield sites in the LGA are suitable for potential future development. The North Coast Region Waste Investment Report will be crucial to understanding the benefits of establishing a FOGO processing facility in the region and the potential of alternative waste treatment options such as Energy from Waste.

Important aspects to support the above focus areas will be: Enhancing collaboration with other councils and private entities to leverage greater economies of scale and take a regional approach to planning future development; ensuring Council has good data and information to enable good decision making, and ensuring that Council's Resource Recovery and Waste business is sufficiently resourced to cater for future needs.

Richmond Valley Council's Resource Recovery & Waste business has a very challenging time ahead particularly with the external factors in the waste industry that have impacted on Council in recent years and which continue to place enormous pressure on Council's resources and budgets. The strategic action plan contained within this document seeks to mitigate the risks of these pressures going forward.



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Our Ref: PR/NS: 2044/19 (53999)

2 July 2020

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Dear Vaughan

**Rous County Council's proposed *Future Water Project 2060* endorsed for public exhibition**

I am pleased to inform you that Rous County Councillors unanimously endorsed the release of the proposed *Future Water Project (FWP) 2060* for public exhibition.

As I mentioned previously, the project sets out Rous County Council's \$245 million preferred option for future-proofing the region's precious drinking water supplies.

It involves upgrading the existing Marom Creek Water Treatment Plant near Wollongbar, utilising the Alstonville underground aquifer's existing groundwater infrastructure and – ultimately – constructing the new Dunoon Dam (downstream of Rocky Creek Dam).

The proposed *FWP 2060* was placed on public exhibition from 1 July 2020, for six weeks.

The purpose of the public exhibition period is threefold:

- Update the community on the outcome of new water source investigations we have undertaken since the Future Water Strategy was adopted in 2014;
- Advise the community of the proposed project and our preferred option for augmenting the bulk water supply; and
- Invite written submissions in relation to the proposed project.

Before deciding whether to officially adopt the *Future Water Project 2060*, councillors will consider a report on the public exhibition period's outcomes at their meeting scheduled for 21 October 2020.

***Rous County Council's Chairperson Keith Williams and I would welcome the opportunity to provide you with a personal briefing on the project during the upcoming exhibition period.***

Water sustainability remains an issue of utmost importance for our region's community. Plus, given the unprecedented strain the past year has put on the region, our community is now more than ever looking to its local councils to deliver initiatives of lasting value.

The proposed *Future Water Project 2060* has the potential to not only deliver a resilient, long-term water supply but also provide the investment, employment and other economic opportunities so desperately needed.



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Securing your support will undoubtedly be invaluable to the project's success. If you would like to take up our offer of a personal briefing, please do not hesitate to contact me directly so that we can organise a suitable time and place.

Further information regarding the Future Water Project and public submission details can be found on our website: <https://www.rous.nsw.gov.au/futurewater>

It would be appreciated if a copy of the attached Future Water Project 2060 brochure and details of the public submission be provided to your councillors and appropriate staff, for their information.

We look forward to working closely with you to make a real, lasting contribution to the wellbeing and prosperity of our region's community and economy.





## FUTURE WATER PROJECT 2060

Information for the community about the preferred options for securing the region's water supply.



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# WHAT IS THE FUTURE WATER PROJECT 2060?



**The Future Water Project 2060 is Rous County Council's plan to secure the community's precious drinking water supplies over the next 40 years and beyond.**

The project identifies the new water sources needed to ensure long-term water security for major parts of the Northern Rivers region. It builds on extensive investigations undertaken by Rous County Council (RCC) over the last few decades to find a viable solution for permanently increasing our water supply. It has been specifically developed through the outcomes of research and technical studies undertaken as part of the Future Water Strategy's 2014 key actions. RCC has adopted, and has commenced implementing an enhanced [Demand Management Plan](#). Water conservation and demand management is a long-term program and will be part of the solution, regardless of the option eventually chosen. Investigations into groundwater, water reuse and desalination, along with the consideration of previously explored options such as the Dunoon Dam underpins the Future Water Project 2060's proposal.

At the heart of this proposal is a two-step action plan. The first step of the plan is to maximise the benefit of the existing Ballina Shire Council owned Marom Creek Water Treatment Plant and better utilise the existing groundwater resources on the Alstonville plateau. This would provide an increase in the capacity of the region's water supply. While these short-to-medium-term demand needs are being met through groundwater sources, the planned second step, the Dunoon Dam project, will be progressed through further detailed investigations to determine its prospects for approval.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

**Rous County Council**  
Cr Keith Williams  
Ballina Shire Council

July 2020

Rous County Council plays an important role in our region. Supplying a sustainable and safe bulk water supply to our constituent councils is a job which requires strategic planning for our region's future. We need a reliable water plan that ensures the community can continue to thrive and prosper and the Future Water Project 2060 does this. The project is based on many years of investigation and developed out of an agenda set by the community. It has been developed through extensive technical studies and explorative works which were assessed on the criteria of Healthy, Reliability, Sustainability, Acceptability, Compatibility and Achievability.

The unprecedented drought in our region, bundled with the effects of continual population growth in this beautiful area, means water security must be at the forefront of our minds.

While there are still elements of the plan that need work, the Future Water Project 2060 has considered all feasible options and will continue to be refined as it is implemented.

We are pleased to present the Future Water Project 2060 to our community. We want to provide you with an exhibit of the work that has been done to date and provide all stakeholders the opportunity to comment on the plan and inform the final decision making.

**Cr Keith Williams**  
**Rous County Council Chairperson**





BACKGROUND

In 2014, the Future Water Strategy identified three key actions to be taken in developing a delivery plan for water security. The key actions evolved through two detailed consultation processes with the community and constituent councils to determine what stakeholders’ preferences were for water security options.

Through these consultations the Future Water Strategy identified that there needed to be investigations into groundwater, water reuse and the effects of water efficiency prior to a plan being made. In addition, it was identified that a decision was required as to whether the Dunoon Dam project should remain an option. These investigations have occurred and the Future Water Project 2060 is the resultant proposed plan to deliver our region’s water security.



WHAT IS ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL’S ROLE?

RCC is a multi-purpose county council constituted under the Local Government Act 1993 to deliver bulk water, weed biosecurity and flood mitigation services to its constituent councils. It is the regional water supply authority, providing water in bulk from its principal supply source at Rocky Creek Dam. RCC provides this bulk water directly to the Ballina Shire, Byron Shire, Lismore City and Richmond Valley councils. We are responsible for providing safe and secure drinking water to over 110,000 people in an area of 3000 km².

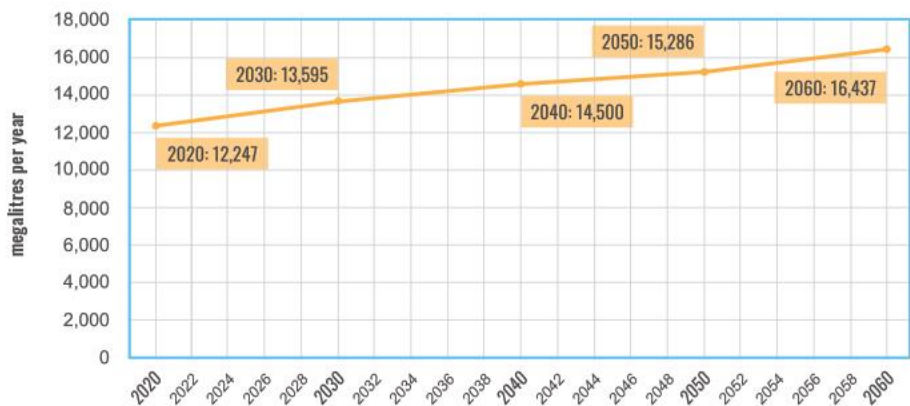
With this important role as bulk water supplier, RCC must ensure our community has a safe, sustainable and secure bulk water supply not only now, but also into the future. A changing climate means less reliable rainfall and hotter weather. At the same time, water use is forecast to increase as the population grows.

RCC’s Future Water Project 2060 delivers water security for our region.

WATER SECURITY ISSUES AND DEMAND

Demonstrated by the recent drought, water security is an issue all Australian communities must consider. Demand for water in our region is predicted to rise to correlate with population growth. The forecast water supply demand graph below has been compiled using data from our constituent councils and projected out to 2060. Based on this analysis, demand is expected to exceed reliable supply by 5630 million litres per year by 2060.

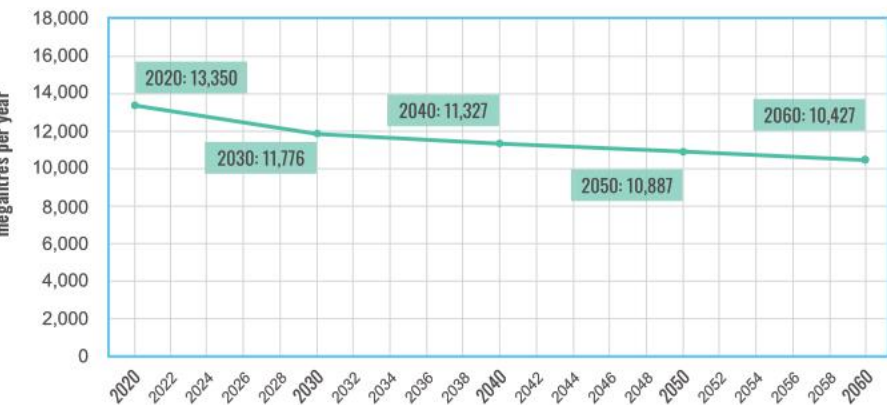
FORECAST WATER SUPPLY DEMAND



WATER SECURITY

Our water security refers to the certainty that our region’s water needs can be met by a reliable supply without the community facing undue water restrictions.

The graph below shows the decrease in our reliable supply we can expect due to the effects of climate variability. Our water security is expected to decline by 22%.







## FUTURE WATER STRATEGY 2014 OUTCOMES

### KEY ACTION 1 - WATER EFFICIENCY

Demand management has been an integral part of our water supply asset planning and ongoing supply management in the region since 1995 and these initiatives have been successful in reducing water demand. RCC continues to prioritise investment in water efficiency activities that provide the best outcome. Although further reduction in per connection demand is likely to be more difficult to achieve in the future, we maximised the potential from our existing resources through the development of an enhanced demand management plan. The plan includes:

- Monitoring, evaluation and reporting
- Water loss management
- Sustainable water partner program (businesses and community groups)
- Smart metering
- Recycled water
- Rainwater tank residential rebate program
- Community engagement/education – households, schools and high residential water users

TOTAL INVESTMENT: \$1.77M since 2014

OUTCOME: The community and councils have been provided the tools to deliver increased water efficiency. Through this plan it is estimated the region would save up to 1800 million litres per year. Demand management measures will not achieve the water savings needed to defer water augmentation options.

### KEY ACTION 2 - GROUNDWATER

The groundwater augmentation option was selected as a priority, based on initial thoughts that the abundance and quality of water within the region's aquifers was high. Over 5 years RCC extended their investigations using electromagnetic imaging to determine soil geology and did test drilling for water sampling and assessment. Research improvements from the initial groundwater report provided much more in-depth analysis of groundwater as an augmentation option.

- 4 detailed working papers completed
- 5 investigation areas drilled and assessed - including surface geophysical assessments
- 2 desktop assessments completed

TOTAL INVESTMENT: \$1.96M

OUTCOME: Despite initial thoughts that a groundwater scheme was a viable and cost-effective option, the previous 5 years of extensive investigations have determined limitations to the groundwater option. The water quality of most aquifer locations was determined to be poor with high salinity. This means increased costs to treat the water and less water availability. The groundwater scheme would not provide a sufficient volume of water to meet demand in 2060.

### KEY ACTION 3 - WATER REUSE

Investigations have been undertaken in relation to the water recycling option known as indirect potable reuse (IPR) of wastewater. It involves taking treated effluent from a wastewater treatment plant, putting it through an advanced water treatment process and then releasing it either upstream of an existing water supply (such as a dam) or into a groundwater aquifer.

- Investigated whether potable water reuse is potentially viable
- Assessed the additional contribution to our existing sources

TOTAL INVESTMENT: \$0.1M

OUTCOME: This source option is not currently in use in NSW but is being used in other parts of Australia. Whilst there is a national framework that considers the efficacy of an IPR scheme, given the unique operating environment of our system these key framework criteria cannot be easily achieved. This adds considerable uncertainty about the ability a scheme to obtain approval.

This means that IPR is not viable as a key water source to meet demand as part of this project. RCC will continue to support further investigations into water reuse initiatives as a method of minimising ecological impact of effluent discharge into the environment, but not as a bulk potable water source at this stage.



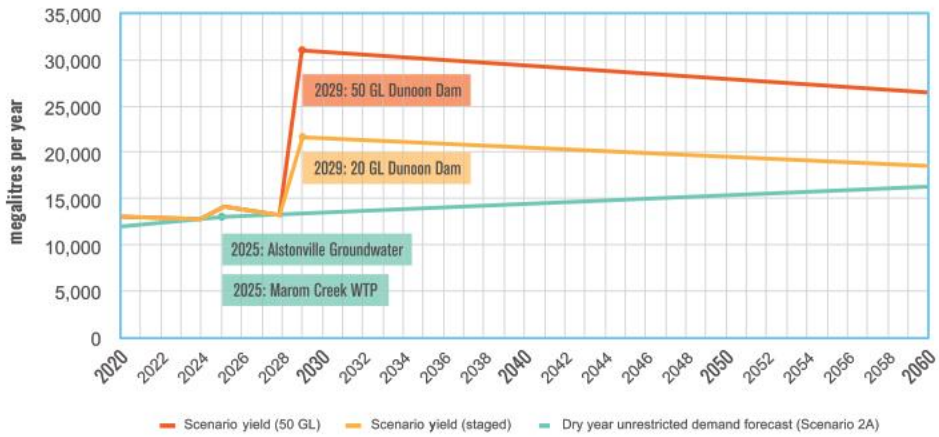
THE FUTURE WATER PROJECT 2060



We have considered all water augmentation scenarios to set out the most viable plan for permanently boosting Council’s bulk water supply. The Future Water Project 2060 plan will ensure a secure and resilient water supply in the face of changing climate conditions and allow for continued regional growth for at least the next 40 years. It will also make sure Council does not need to burden the community with excessive water restrictions.

THE FUTURE WATER PROJECT 2060

The below graph shows the amount of water security provided by the Future Water Project 2060.



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KEY ACTION 1 - AUGMENTATION TO MEET SHORT-TO-MEDIUM-TERM DEMAND NEEDS:  
Marom Creek Water Treatment Plant and Alstonville Groundwater Aquifer

The first step will be to maximise the benefit of the existing Ballina Shire Council owned Marom Creek water treatment plant and better utilise the existing groundwater resources on the Alstonville plateau. This would provide an increase in the capacity to supply water for our region. This will involve RCC:

- securing the utilisation of Marom Creek Water Treatment Plant as a regional source option;
- completing plant upgrade works to ensure it can meet the demands for water within the supply area;
- redeveloping groundwater bores to allow optimised use of the Marom Creek Water Treatment Plant and provide drought resiliency; and
- undertaking ongoing monitoring to ensure environmental impacts are minimised.

If by December 2020 the Marom Creek Water Treatment Plant option is not able to be secured, the development of the Woodburn coastal sands groundwater scheme will progress.

KEY ACTION 2 - AUGMENTATION TO MEET LONG-TERM DEMAND NEEDS:  
New 50 Gigalitre (GL) Dunoon Dam

The Dunoon Dam option has been identified as the lowest cost scenario while providing water security to 2060 and beyond. As the short-to-medium-term demand needs are being met through groundwater sources, the 50GL Dunoon Dam project will be progressed. The development of the short-to-medium-term augmentation options will provide time for RCC to continue to develop parts of the Dunoon Dam project that need further investigation prior to project approval. These investigations include:

- Cultural Heritage investigations and consultation
- Landholder consultation
- Determining ecological offset requirements
- State and Federal funding assistance options
- Geotechnical assessments

RCC possesses an enviable reputation as a natural resource manager with a proven track record in managing impacts from infrastructure projects. This is evident by the regeneration and management of the much-loved Rocky Creek Dam site and recreational area. We have an ongoing commitment to sustainable business practices and a history of strong traditional custodian and community relationships. RCC is committed to offsetting all impacts to an acceptable standard within our region, focusing on the Dunoon Dam water catchment area as we continue our reliable delivery of quality drinking water across the region.





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## FUTURE WATER PROJECT 2060 TIMELINE


The project timelines below identify key actions that are needed in the development of the Future Water Project 2060.

### DUNOON DAM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

ITEM	PHASE*	ACTION NAME	DURATION YEARS	START	2020				2021				2022				2023				2024				2025				2026				2027				2028				2029				2030			
					1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th								
1	1st phase	Community engagement	Project duration	2020																																												
2	1st phase	Further develop engineering designs	1	2021																																												
3	1st phase	Cultural heritage surveys	1.5	2021																																												
4	1st phase	Low impact geotechnical investigations and ecological surveys	1	2021																																												
5	2nd phase	Environmental impact statement	3	2022																																												
6	3rd phase	Geotechnical investigation and survey	1	2023																																												
7	3rd phase	Land purchases	2	2024																																												
8	Final phase	Early construction works	1.5	2026																																												
9	Final phase	Engineering design	1	2027																																												
10	Final phase	Dam construction	2	2028																																												
11	Final phase	Pipeline construction	1	2029																																												
12	Final phase	Dam recreational facilities	1	2030																																												

\*Phases represent groups of key actions required to be undertaken concurrently

11



### MAROM WATER TREATMENT PLANT AND ALSTONVILLE GROUNDWATER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

ITEM	PHASE*	ACTION NAME	DURATION YEARS	START	2020				2021				2022				2023				2024																
					1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th																	
1	1st phase	Liaise with Ballina Shire Council	0.5	2020																																	
2	1st phase	Secure the Marom Creek WTP as a regional water source	-	-																																	
If not obtained by the due date commence with the development of the Woodburn coastal sands groundwater scheme as the next key action																																					
3	1st phase	Finalise water scheme design	0.5	2021																																	
4	2nd phase	Marom WTP upgrades	1.5	2021																																	
5	2nd phase	Environmental impact assessment	0.5	2021																																	
6	2nd phase	Geotechnical investigations and drilling	0.5	2022																																	
7	3rd phase	Update licence details	1.5	2022																																	
8	Final phase	Pipeline construction	0.5	2024																																	

\*Phases represent groups of key actions required to be undertaken concurrently

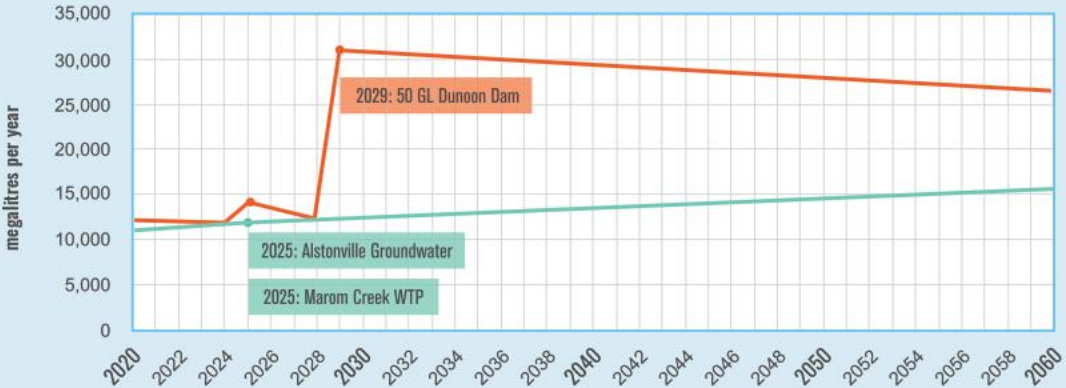
Long-term development process

Ongoing engagement activity

Short-term development processes

Key decision by this date

### DEMAND VS. YIELD




megalitres per year

Scenario yield (50 GL)

2025: Alstonville Groundwater

2025: Marom Creek WTP

Dry year unrestricted demand forecast (Scenario 2A)



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### KEY NEXT STEPS

1A

Secure Marom Creek Water Treatment Plant as a short-to-medium-term regional water system augmentation source.


or

1B

Construct Woodburn coastal sands groundwater scheme as a short-to-medium-term regional water system augmentation source.

2

Commence with the early planning process for the 50GL Dunoon Dam project to secure water for 2060.



Item 18.5 - Attachment 1

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- The Traditional Custodians of current and future catchments, sits on Widjabal/ Wi-abal country of the Bundjalung nation. RCC acknowledges the Widjabal/ Wi-abal people's deep relationship with the land and water, and strongly values their traditional laws, knowledge and lessons about places and sustainability.

RCC is committed to the reconciliation process. For RCC, reconciliation means recognising the importance of working with the Traditional Custodians of current and future catchment and natural resource areas managed by Rous County Council.

- The NSW Government strongly encourages best practice management by water utilities throughout regional NSW, which includes Integrated Water Cycle Management planning. The NSW Government is proudly supporting this important planning work being done by RCC with co-funding of \$151,000 provided by the Safe and Secure Water Program.
- RCC's constituent councils of Ballina Shire Council, Byron Shire Council, Lismore City Council and Richmond Valley Council for their ongoing support.



## CONTACT US

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