

Richmond  
Valley  
Council



# **ATTACHMENTS**

**Tuesday, 21 March 2023**

**UNDER SEPARATE COVER**

**Ordinary Council Meeting**



## Table of Contents

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6.1	Minutes Ordinary Meeting held 21 February 2023	
	Attachment 1 Unconfirmed Minutes 21 February 2023.....	4
15.1	Managing Conflicts of Interest for Council-related Development Policy	
	Attachment 1 CPOL15.22 Managing conflicts of interest for council-related development.....	24
15.3	Sustainable Communities Strategy	
	Attachment 1 Sustainable Communities Strategy.....	34
17.1	Financial Analysis Report - February 2023	
	Attachment 1 RVC Investment Pack - February 2023 .....	61
17.2	Review of Related Party Disclosure Policy	
	Attachment 1 Reviewed Related Party Disclosure Policy .....	71

Richmond  
Valley  
Council



# MINUTES

**Ordinary Council Meeting  
21 February 2023**

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

<b>1</b>	<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>PRAYER</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>PUBLIC ACCESS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>APOLOGIES</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>MAYORAL MINUTES</b> .....	<b>4</b>
	Nil	
<b>6</b>	<b>CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES</b> .....	<b>5</b>
	6.1 Minutes Ordinary Meeting held 20 December 2022.....	5
<b>7</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>PETITIONS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
	Nil	
<b>10</b>	<b>NOTICE OF MOTION</b> .....	<b>5</b>
	Nil	
<b>11</b>	<b>MAYOR'S REPORT</b> .....	<b>5</b>
	11.1 Mayoral Attendance Report 13 December 2022 - 13 February 2023.....	5
<b>12</b>	<b>DELEGATES' REPORTS</b> .....	<b>5</b>
	Nil	
<b>13</b>	<b>MATTERS DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE</b> .....	<b>5</b>
	13.1 Matters to be Determined Without Debate.....	6
<b>14</b>	<b>GENERAL MANAGER</b> .....	<b>6</b>
	14.1 Election of Deputy Mayor and Committee Representative.....	6
	14.2 Council's Strategic Priorities for 2023.....	7
	14.3 Rebuilding the Richmond Valley Delivery Program Progress Report.....	8
<b>15</b>	<b>COMMUNITY SERVICE DELIVERY</b> .....	<b>9</b>
	15.1 Managing Conflicts of Interest for Council-related Development Policy .....	9
	15.2 Review of Increased Ranger Patrols on Richmond Valley Council Beaches .....	9
<b>16</b>	<b>PROJECTS &amp; BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT</b> .....	<b>11</b>
	16.1 Asset Management Plans 2022-2032.....	11
	16.2 Renaming of Broadwater Rileys Hill Community Hall .....	12
	16.3 Colley Park Master Plan .....	12
<b>17</b>	<b>ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES</b> .....	<b>13</b>
	17.1 Quarterly Budget Review Statement for the Quarter ended 31 December 2022.....	13
	17.2 Section 7.11, 7.12 and Section 64 Developer Contributions and Expenditure Update 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 to 31 December 2022 .....	14
	17.3 Financial Analysis Report - December 2022 and January 2023 .....	15
	17.4 Review of Gifts and Benefits Policy .....	15

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

21 FEBRUARY 2023

<b>18</b>	<b>GENERAL BUSINESS .....</b>	<b>16</b>
	Nil	
<b>19</b>	<b>MATTERS FOR INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>16</b>
19.1	Disclosure of Interest - Appointment of Designated Person.....	16
19.2	Grant Application Information Report - December 2022 and January 2023 .....	16
19.3	Richmond Valley Revitalisation Plan 2020 - Update .....	16
19.4	Customer Experience Report 1 October – 31 December 2022.....	17
19.1	Development Applications Determined Under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the Period 1 December 2022 to 31 January 2023 .....	17
19.6	Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange Statistics as at 31 December 2022 .....	17
19.7	BlazeAid Thank you .....	17
19.8	Internal Audit and Risk Committee Minutes 15 February 2023 .....	18
<b>20</b>	<b>QUESTIONS ON NOTICE .....</b>	<b>18</b>
	Nil	
<b>21</b>	<b>QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING (IN WRITING).....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>MATTERS REFERRED TO CLOSED COUNCIL .....</b>	<b>19</b>
22.1	Tender VP339938 - Mobile Amenities .....	19
22.2	Write-off of Monies Under Delegation.....	19
<b>23</b>	<b>RESOLUTIONS OF CLOSED COUNCIL .....</b>	<b>20</b>

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

21 FEBRUARY 2023

**MINUTES OF RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL  
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 10 GRAHAM PLACE, CASINO  
ON TUESDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2023 AT 6PM**

*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 Patrick Deegan and Cr Debra McGillan.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Vaughan Macdonald (General Manager), David Timms (Acting Director Community Service Delivery), Ryan Gaiter (Director Organisational Services), Ben Zeller (Director Projects & Business Development), Jenna Hazelwood (Chief of Staff), Julie Clark (Personal Assistant to the General Manager and Mayor) and Lewis Martin (IT Support 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**

Nil

## **4 APOLOGIES**

### **RESOLUTION 210223/1**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That the apology received from Cr Sandra Humphrys be accepted and leave of absence granted.

**CARRIED**

## **5 MAYORAL MINUTES**

Nil

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

21 FEBRUARY 2023

**6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES****6.1 MINUTES ORDINARY MEETING HELD 20 DECEMBER 2022****RESOLUTION 210223/2**

Moved: Cr Debra McGillan

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council confirms the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 20 December 2022.

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

Nil

**8 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Nil

**9 PETITIONS**

Nil

**10 NOTICE OF MOTION**

Nil

**11 MAYOR'S REPORT****11.1 MAYORAL ATTENDANCE REPORT 13 DECEMBER 2022 - 13 FEBRUARY 2023****RESOLUTION 210223/3**

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council receives and notes the Mayoral Attendance Report for the period 13 December 2022 – 13 February 2023.

**CARRIED****12 DELEGATES' REPORTS**

Nil

**13 MATTERS DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE**

Nil



**13.1 MATTERS TO BE DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE****RESOLUTION 210223/4**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That items 14.2, 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 17.2, 17.4 identified be determined without debate.

**CARRIED**

**14 GENERAL MANAGER****14.1 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR AND COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Under the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) Councillors may elect a Deputy Mayor for the mayoral term or a shorter period.

The Deputy Mayor may exercise any function of the Mayor at the request of the Mayor, or if the Mayor is prevented by illness, absence or otherwise from exercising the function, or if there is a casual vacancy in the office of Mayor.

As Richmond Valley Council has a popularly elected mayor, the mayoral term covers the entire term of the elected council (usually four years). Traditionally, Council has elected its Deputy Mayor for a one-year term and the next election is now due to be conducted. However, as there is only some 18 months remaining in the 2021-24 Council term, Council may wish to extend the term of office on this occasion.

Additionally, Council is due to elect a new representative on the Richmond Valley Council Local Traffic Committee and may also wish to extend this appointment to the end of the 2021-24 term of office.

It is recommended that the method of conduct for the election of Deputy Mayor be by open voting.

**RESOLUTION 210223/5**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Robert Hayes

That:

1. Council elects a Deputy Mayor for the remainder of the 2021-24 council term.
2. Nominations for the position of Deputy Mayor be submitted in accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, Schedule 7.
3. The method of conduct for the election of Deputy Mayor be by open voting.
4. Following declaration of the election result, nomination forms be destroyed.
5. Following the appointment of a Deputy Mayor, notification be made to the Office of Local Government and Local Government NSW (LGNSW).
6. Council appoints one (1) Councillor representative to the Richmond Valley Council Local Traffic Committee for the remainder of the 2021-24 council term.

**CARRIED**

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

21 FEBRUARY 2023

The General Manager, as Returning Officer for the election, advised that he had received one nomination for the position of Deputy Mayor from Cr Morrissey; signed by two other Councillors supporting the nomination. The General Manager provided an opportunity for further nominations from the floor, however none were submitted.

There being no further nominations, Cr Morrissey was declared elected as Deputy Mayor for the duration of this term of Council.

The General Manager called for nominations for a Councillor representative on the Richmond Valley Council Local Traffic Committee. Cr Hayes was nominated and accepted the nomination. Following acceptance of the nomination and there being no further nominations, Cr Hayes was declared elected as Councillor representative on the Richmond Valley Council Local Traffic Committee, for the duration of this electoral term.

**14.2 COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2023****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

2023 will be a landmark year for Richmond Valley Council as the community continues to rebuild, recover and grow after the catastrophic floods of 2022. Council will deliver one of its largest ever infrastructure programs, including major road reconstruction and asset repairs, while also completing more than \$20m in signature projects that were underway before the floods. This work will continue alongside Council's continued advocacy to all levels of Government for more assistance for flood-affected communities. This year will also see the long-term planning that Council has completed over the past 12 months begin to unlock new opportunities for housing, jobs and investment throughout the Valley over the next 20 years. This will help to support the Richmond Valley's long-term recovery and secure its place as an emerging leader in the regional economy.

**RESOLUTION 210223/6**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council:

1. Notes the ambitious works program for 2023 to support continued recovery and growth in the Richmond Valley; and
2. Continues to actively seek government funding for priority community projects in the Mid-Richmond and Casino.

**CARRIED**

**14.3 REBUILDING THE RICHMOND VALLEY DELIVERY PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Richmond Valley Council has completed the first six months of its Rebuilding the Richmond Valley interim Delivery Program (July-December 2022) with substantial progress in all areas. Following the catastrophic floods of February-March 2022, Council resolved to delay its new Community Strategic Plan for 12 months and to concentrate on immediate flood recovery works for 2022-2023.

It was expected that the flood recovery journey would take at least three years, with activity during the first year focused on:

- Understanding the scale of the damage and how long it will take to fix
- Completing emergency repairs to essential infrastructure, such as water, sewer and roads
- Getting people back into their homes wherever possible
- Fixing essential facilities, such as halls and sports grounds, so that communities could come together again
- Supporting the long-term recovery of our environment
- Advocating for support and funding from state and federal governments to complete the recovery process.

Six months into Year One of the program, we have seen positive progress in all these areas, although continued delays with regional buy-back, relocation and house resilience programs remain a major concern for Council and the community. The next six months of the program will focus strongly on getting these issues resolved.

The following two years of the program will concentrate on major repairs and reconstruction for flood damaged roads and bridges, major infrastructure upgrades, further improving preparedness and response to natural disasters and supporting long-term economic growth and prosperity for the Valley.

**RESOLUTION 210223/7**

Moved: Cr Robert Hayes

Seconded: Cr Robert Mustow

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the progress report for the first six months of the Rebuilding the Richmond Valley Delivery Program;
2. Acknowledges the outstanding efforts of the community in its continued journey towards recovery from the 2022 floods;
3. Continues to advocate strongly for:
  - a) accelerated progress in regional housing solutions, including the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation's Resilient Homes and Resilient Lands programs, and
  - b) Government support and funding assistance to complete major infrastructure works, including repair of the Naughtons Gap landslip and replacement of Casino Sewage Treatment Plant.
4. Invites Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation Chief Executive David Witherdin to a future Councillor Information Session to provide an update on progress within the Richmond Valley local government area.

**CARRIED**

**15 COMMUNITY SERVICE DELIVERY****15.1 MANAGING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST FOR COUNCIL-RELATED DEVELOPMENT POLICY****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Recent amendments to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021, require Council to have a Conflicts of Interest Policy for Council-related Development Applications and to consider the policy in determining any such development applications (DAs). The new requirements come into force on 3 April 2023 and a draft policy has been prepared for Council's consideration.

**RESOLUTION 210223/8**

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow  
Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council:

1. Places the draft Managing Conflicts of Interest for Council-related Development Policy on public exhibition for a period of 14 days
2. Notes that following exhibition, the policy will be presented to the March Ordinary Meeting for Council's consideration and determination to meet the required timeframes for adoption.

**CARRIED**

**15.2 REVIEW OF INCREASED RANGER PATROLS ON RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL BEACHES****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In recent years, Council has explored options to deal with anti-social behaviour, vehicle offences and dog issues that were being experienced on the region's beaches, particularly Airforce Beach. This has resulted in increased patrolling of these areas during busy holiday times and weekends.

Council rangers, supported by NSW Police and other agencies, conducted regular beach patrols over the summer holiday period, with some 109 penalty infringement notices and 33 cautions being issued. Most of the fines related to illegal camping in Evans Head and offences on Airforce Beach, including speeding. It is recommended that the practice of increased patrols should continue during 2023, to provide an ongoing deterrent to anti-social behaviour and improve public safety.

**MOTION:**

Moved: Cr Robert Hayes  
Seconded: Cr Debra McGillan

That Council:

1. Notes the results of beach patrols and compliance activities conducted over the 2022-23 summer holiday season
2. Continues to undertake beach patrols on weekends and school holiday periods, as required, with the ongoing support of the NSW Police and Government agencies.

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

21 FEBRUARY 2023

3. Consults with relevant government agencies, with a view to closing vehicular access to the beach from 9pm – 5am effective immediately, and
4. Considers permanently closing the beach to vehicular access if there is no improvement over the next six months, following public and government agency consultation.

**AMENDMENT**

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council:

1. Notes the results of beach patrols and compliance activities conducted over the 2022-23 summer holiday season
2. Continues to undertake beach patrols on weekends and school holiday periods, as required, with the ongoing support of the NSW Police and Government agencies.
3. Receives a further report on the process of limiting vehicular access to Airforce beach.

The motion was subsequently withdrawn and the amendment became the motion.

**RESOLUTION 210223/9**

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council:

1. Notes the results of beach patrols and compliance activities conducted over the 2022-23 summer holiday season
2. Continues to undertake beach patrols on weekends and school holiday periods, as required, with the ongoing support of the NSW Police and Government agencies.
3. Receives a further report on the process of limiting vehicular access to Airforce beach.

**CARRIED**

**16 PROJECTS & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT****16.1 ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANS 2022-2032****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council is required under the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework, to prepare an Asset Management Policy, Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plans as part of the Resourcing Strategy supporting the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program.

Under the IP&R guidelines, Council must review its Asset Policy, Strategy and Plans following a Local Government election. The Asset Management Strategy and Plans must be for a minimum timeframe of ten years.

The Asset Management Policy and Asset Management Strategy were presented to Council for consideration and adopted on 20 September 2022.

Council must prepare and adopt Asset Management Plans for each class of assets detailing how the asset portfolio will meet the service delivery needs of the community.

This report presents four (4) Asset Management Plans 2022-2032, recommended for adoption including the Roads and Transport, Stormwater, Sewer, and Water Supply Network. The Land, Buildings and Other Structures Asset Management Plan will be presented at a future Council meeting.

**RESOLUTION 210223/10**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council considers and adopts the following four Asset Management Plans (AMP):

- Roads and Transport AMP 2022-2032,
- Stormwater AMP 2022-2032,
- Sewer AMP 2022-2032, and
- Water Supply Network AMP 2022-2032.

**CARRIED**

**16.2 RENAMING OF BROADWATER RILEYS HILL COMMUNITY HALL****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council has received a request from the Broadwater Rileys Hill Community Centre Committee to rename the hall 'Broadwater Community Hall'. The committee advised that the current name causes confusion for identification and location.

This correspondence was supported by the Rileys Hill Community Hall Committee acknowledging the confusion often experienced as a result of the two separate halls having similar names.

During public consultation Council received two submissions regarding the name change. One resident supported the name change due to the created confusion. A second resident objected to the name being 'Broadwater Community Hall' but rather suggested 'Broadwater Memorial Hall' in acknowledgement of the RSL Sub-branch who donated the land.

The land upon which the hall has been constructed is known as Broadwater Memorial Park, which contains the Broadwater Memorial Tennis Club facilities, and the War Memorial Monument.

The hall was originally constructed and opened in 1996 as a shared community centre for Broadwater and Rileys Hill.

The NSW Address Policy and User Manual requires addresses to be clear, logical, and unique, to assist with communication within a community and for any essential services like Australia Post, ambulance, and other emergency services. A building name can be used as part of a property address for identification, and it is recommended that Council considers a name change for clear identification purposes.

**RESOLUTION 210223/11**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council approves the new name of the currently named facility 'Broadwater Rileys Hill Community Centre' to 'Broadwater Community Hall'.

**CARRIED**

**16.3 COLLEY PARK MASTER PLAN****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council staff have been working with stakeholders over the past 12 months to establish a draft Master Plan for future development of Colley Park. A final draft document is presented to Council for consideration, following recent workshops with each key stakeholder group and community consultation.

The Colley Park Master Plan was prepared jointly with the draft Stan Payne Oval Master Plan. The Stan Payne Master Plan is currently undertaking additional consultation with The Bandjalang People as native title exists over part of the reserve. This report will be presented at a future Council meeting.

**RESOLUTION 210223/12**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council adopts the draft Colley Park Master Plan.

**CARRIED**

**17 ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES****17.1 QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW STATEMENT FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report outlines the proposed adjustments for the 2022/2023 budget for the quarter ended 31 December 2022.

The proposed changes see Council's projected operating surplus from continuing operations for 2022/2023 increase to \$34,400,998, from the budget surplus of \$25,041,838 at 30 September 2022. The net operating result before capital grants and contributions has increased to a surplus of \$5,436,566.

Income from continuing operations has increased by \$12,466,686, to a projected total of \$111,669,948. This is largely due to ongoing natural disaster recovery funding arrangements for reconstruction efforts post the February 2022 flood event AGRN1012. Expenses from continuing operations have increased by \$3,107,526 to a projected cost of \$77,268,951.

Council has performed a thorough review of its capital works program, resulting in an overall increase of \$519,574 to a projected total of \$54,083,322. The delivery and budgeting of Council's capital works program has been strongly impacted by supply constraints and contractor availability along with continuing with recovery and reconstruction projects which are taking priority. It is expected that these impacts will be felt throughout the current financial year and likely into the 2023/2024 financial year as the community and economy recovers. As at the end of December the Capital Works program is 41.26% complete, which is a pleasing position considering the abovementioned constraints. In a normal year Councils Capital works program would total approximately \$20 to \$25 million, as at 31 December the actual spend is \$22,312,354. Council will continue to ensure its capital works program is closely monitored, with any adjustments required to be included in future quarterly budget reviews or monthly budget adjustment reports to Council.

Council's unrestricted cash surplus has remained unchanged at \$287,260 as of 31 December 2022.

A detailed Quarterly Budget Review Statement for the second quarter of the 2022/2023 financial year has been circulated separately to each Councillor. These changes are disclosed by priority areas on pages 4-8 of the Quarterly Budget Review Statement and detailed explanations are provided on pages 9-18.

The Director of Organisational Services provided a presentation to the meeting on the proposed budget adjustments.



## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

21 FEBRUARY 2023

**RESOLUTION 210223/13**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Robert Hayes

That Council:

1. Receives the Quarterly Budget Review Statement as at 31 December 2022; and
2. Approves the recommended budget variations.

**CARRIED****17.2 SECTION 7.11, 7.12 AND SECTION 64 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS AND EXPENDITURE UPDATE 2021/2022 AND 2022/2023 TO 31 DECEMBER 2022****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council receives contributions, raises levies and enters into planning agreements on development works that are subject to a development consent issued by Council. This report provides an update on developer contributions income and expenditure for the previous 2021/2022 financial year and the current 2022/2023 financial year to 31 December 2022.

Council collected a total of \$1,518,852 in developer contributions in the last financial year 2021/2022 and expended \$756,387. Unexpended developer contributions held in cash reserves totalled \$10,724,161 as at 30 June 2022.

During the current financial year 2022/2023 to 31 December 2022, Council has collected a total of \$1,918,524 in developer contributions and expended \$24,298.

Details of the different types of contributions are provided in the report.

**RESOLUTION 210223/14**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council receives and notes the update on Section 7.11, Section 7.12 and Section 64 developer contributions for the 2021/2022 financial year and 2022/2023 financial year to 31 December 2022.

**CARRIED**

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

21 FEBRUARY 2023

**17.3 FINANCIAL ANALYSIS REPORT - DECEMBER 2022 AND JANUARY 2023****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the status and performance of its cash and investment portfolio in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* s.625, Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl.212, Australian Accounting Standard (AASB 9) and Council's Investment Policy.

The value of Council's cash and investments at 31 December 2022 and 31 January 2023 is shown below:

Month	Bank Accounts	Term Deposits	Floating Rate Notes	Fixed Rate Bonds	TCorp IM Funds	Total
December 2022	\$16,157,908	\$41,000,000	\$4,750,390	\$2,000,000	\$14,663,377	\$78,571,675
January 2023	\$14,910,163	\$39,000,000	\$4,750,390	\$2,000,000	\$15,073,449	\$75,734,003

The weighted average rate of return on Council's cash and investments as at 31 December 2022 was negative (0.72%) which was below the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index for December is 0.25%, which is Council's benchmark.

The weighted average rate of return on Council's cash and investments for January 2023 was 10.30% which was above the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index for January of 0.27%.

**RESOLUTION 210223/15**

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow  
Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council adopts the Financial Analysis Report detailing the performance of its cash and investments for the months of December 2022 and January 2023.

**CARRIED****17.4 REVIEW OF GIFTS AND BENEFITS POLICY****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Following a review of the existing Gifts and Benefits Policy, a clause has been added to ensure that all offers of gifts and benefits are required to be reported to the General Manager, whether they are accepted or declined. The change was recommended during a Governance Health Check, procured by Council in recent years to ensure compliance with industry best practice.

**RESOLUTION 210223/16**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey  
Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council adopts the revised Gifts and Benefits Policy.

**CARRIED**

Page 15

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

21 FEBRUARY 2023

**18 GENERAL BUSINESS**

Nil

**19 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION****RESOLUTION 210223/17**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

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

**CARRIED****19.1 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST - APPOINTMENT OF DESIGNATED PERSON****RESOLUTION 210223/18**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council receives and notes the newly appointed designated person position.

**CARRIED****19.2 GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION REPORT - DECEMBER 2022 AND JANUARY 2023****RESOLUTION 210223/19**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council receives and notes the Grant Application Information Report for the months of December 2022 and January 2023.

**CARRIED****19.3 RICHMOND VALLEY REVITALISATION PLAN 2020 - UPDATE****RESOLUTION 210223/20**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council receives and notes the Richmond Valley Revitalisation Plan 2020 update.

**CARRIED**

**19.4 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE REPORT 1 OCTOBER – 31 DECEMBER 2022****RESOLUTION 210223/21**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council receives and notes the Customer Experience Report for the period 1 October – 31 December 2022.

**CARRIED**

**19.1 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT FOR THE PERIOD 1 DECEMBER 2022 TO 31 JANUARY 2023****RESOLUTION 210223/22**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council receives and notes the Development Application report for the period 1 December 2022 to 31 January 2023.

**CARRIED**

**19.6 NORTHERN RIVERS LIVESTOCK EXCHANGE STATISTICS AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022****RESOLUTION 210223/23**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council receives and notes the financial year to date Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange Statistics as of 31 December 2022.

**CARRIED**

**19.7 BLAZE AID THANK YOU****RESOLUTION 210223/24**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council receives and notes the correspondence provided to BlazeAid thanking the group for their significant contribution to the Richmond Valley Community.

**CARRIED**

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ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

21 FEBRUARY 2023

**19.8 INTERNAL AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MINUTES 15 FEBRUARY 2023****RESOLUTION 210223/25**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That Council receives and notes the Minutes of the Internal Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 15 February 2023.

**CARRIED****20 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Nil

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

## 22 MATTERS REFERRED TO CLOSED COUNCIL

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993:

### 22.1 Tender VP339938 - Mobile Amenities

This matter relates to a (d)(i) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - (a) 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 personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors).

### 22.2 Write-off of Monies Under Delegation

This matter relates to (b) discussion in relation to the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer.

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - (b) 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 discussion in relation to the personal hardship of a resident or ratepayer.

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

The Chair called for representations from the gallery.

There were no verbal representations from the gallery in respect of this item.

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

## RESOLUTION 210223/26

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Sam Cornish

That:

1. Council enters Closed Council to consider the business identified in Item 22.1, together with any late reported tabled at the meeting.
2. Pursuant to section 10A(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the media and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis the business to be discussed is classified confidential under the provisions of section 10(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) *Local Government Act 1993*

**.CARRIED**

Council closed its meeting at 7.02 pm

The Open Council meeting resumed at 7.07pm.

The resolutions of the Closed Council meeting were read by the Director Projects & Business Development and the Director Organisational Services.

## **23 RESOLUTIONS OF CLOSED COUNCIL**

### **22.1 Tender VP339938 - Mobile Amenities**

That Council:

1. Declines all tenders for Tender VP339938 – Mobile Amenities, due to them being non-conforming to the tender specifications.
2. Applies Clause 178 (3e) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 to authorise the General Manager to enter into direct negotiations with suitable suppliers with a view to obtaining the best outcome from a financial and delivery perspective, and to finalise the terms of the contract or agreement and affixing the seal of Council where necessary.
3. Notes that the outcomes of the negotiations will be reported to Council for information at a future meeting

### **22.2 Write-off of Monies Under Delegation**

That Council receives and notes the Write-off of monies totalling \$31,778.56 under the General Manager's delegation and the policy to write off charges that were levied for services that have been subject to Water Leak and Excess Water consumption charges, due to impacts of the 2022 floods on water meter and water supply services.

The Meeting closed at 7.10 pm.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 21 March 2023.

.....  
**CHAIRPERSON**

## Council Policy

Richmond  
Valley  
Council



<b>Policy Title:</b>	<b>Managing conflicts of interest for council-related development</b>
<b>Policy Number:</b>	CPOL15.22
<b>Focus Area:</b>	11D2: Deliver consistent regulatory and compliance services
<b>Responsibility:</b>	Development & Certification
<b>Meeting Adopted:</b>	Date of Council Meeting – Resolution Number

### OBJECTIVE

This policy aims to manage potential conflicts of interest and increase transparency at all stages of the development process for council-related development.

### SCOPE

The policy applies to all council-related development, as defined below.

### DEFINITIONS

In this policy:

**Application** means an application for consent under Part 4 of the Act to carry out development and includes an application to modify a development consent but does not include an application for a complying development certificate.

**Council** means Richmond Valley Council.

**Council-related development** means development for which Council is:

- The applicant developer (whether lodged by or on behalf of Council)
- The landowner, or
- Has a commercial interest in the land the subject of the application, where it will also be the regulator or consent authority.

**Development process** means application, assessment, determination, certification, and enforcement.

**The Act** means the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

A word or expression used in this policy has the same meaning as it has in the Act, and any instruments made under the Act, unless it is otherwise defined in this policy.

### POLICY

#### Introduction

Richmond Valley Council is committed to ethical, transparent, and equitable management of all its development processes. In circumstances where Council must manage the preparation, assessment, and regulatory processes for its own development proposals, or where it has a commercial interest in a development, it will take particular care to identify any potential conflicts



of interest and to manage them openly and consistently. The aim is to ensure that everyone who submits a development application for assessment, whether they are a private developer, or Council, is treated in the same manner, with the same high standards.

Council undertakes development for a variety of reasons. This may be as simple as building a new bus shelter or upgrading a local playground, or as complex as a major redevelopment of community infrastructure, such as a public swimming pool or showground. Council may also, on occasion, undertake development to provide a social outcome, such as providing more housing, or to support economic stimulus through commercial investment, such as the upgrade of the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange.

This policy covers the full range of Council development activities. It should also be applied in conjunction with the Model Code of Conduct requirements, prescribed by the *Local Government Act 1993*. Under the Model Code, councillors and council employees have responsibilities to manage personal conflicts of interest when dealing with any council-related matters.

While the policy specifically addresses the requirements of the 2022 conflicts of interest amendments to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (the Regulation), it also provides guidance on managing potential conflicts before a development application is submitted and after development consent is granted for council-related development. Additionally, it considers matters where council may not be the developer, but the application may still have potential impacts on its operations or commercial interest, for example where private development is proposed next to a Council building or asset, or in direct competition with a business operated by the Council.

## Process for identifying and managing potential conflicts of interest

### Initiating a development

Where Council proposes a new development, the manager of the business unit responsible for the project will consult with the Director of Community Service Delivery, or her delegate, to determine whether a Development Application will be required for the works.

Where a development application is required, an initial risk assessment will be undertaken to determine whether the project is considered high, medium, or low Risk for potential conflicts of interest, based on the guidance provided in this policy. The assessment will be referred to the General Manager, or his delegate, for concurrence.

### Risk categories

Council will use the following guidance in determining the risk category for a proposed development:

**Low risk:** Minor changes, alterations, or additions, with low impact, low construction risk and capital value of <\$250,000. No additional management controls will be required.

**Medium risk:** Projects up to \$5m in capital value, with moderate community impact, construction risk and complexity. Appropriate management controls will be required.

**High risk:** Complex projects, with high community impact/sensitivity, high construction risk and capital value exceeding \$5m. Multiple management controls will be required.

### Preparing a Risk Management Statement

Once the General Manager concurs with the initial risk assessment, a Risk Management Statement for the development will be prepared, using a range of strategies from the Risk Management Table (Appendix 1), as appropriate and in consultation with the Manager of Development & Certification. Where Council initiates the development, the Risk Management Statement will address the pre-application phase, as well as the development assessment, determination, and subsequent regulatory processes.

In low risk matters, it is expected that no additional management strategies will be required, and this must be noted. In high risk, complex matters, particularly where Council has a commercial interest, a third party may be engaged to prepare or review the Risk Management Statement.

The Risk Management Statement will be attached to Council's project management plan for the works.

### Submitting a development application

The Risk Management Statement will be lodged via the NSW Planning Portal with the development application. Where a council-related development is assessed as high risk, the General Manager must approve the Risk Management Statement. A sample statement is attached at Appendix B.

The Manager of Development and Certification will be responsible for ensuring that the identified conflicts of interest are recorded in the DA register, as required under the Regulation. Council will undertake regular internal audits of the DA register to ensure compliance.

### Advertising the development application

All Council-related development applications must be exhibited for a minimum of 28 days, in accordance with the requirements of the Act (Schedule 1, clause 9B). A copy of the Risk Management Statement must be included in the exhibition.

### Assessing and determining the development application

All Council-related development applications will be assessed and determined in accordance with the controls outlined in the Risk Management Statement for the development. Council will undertake regular audits of compliance with these requirements, in consultation with its Internal Audit and Risk Committee.

### Post-approval regulatory requirements and certification

If a Council-related development application is approved, the Director of Community Service Delivery and the relevant Project Manager will be responsible for ensuring post-approval processes, such as certification, inspections, and compliance matters, are carried out in accordance with the Risk Management Statement for the project.

Certification of the development will be in accordance with industry standards, including the *Building and Development Certification Act 2018*, Environmental Planning and Assessment (Development Certification and Fire Safety) Regulation 2021, and the Department of Fair Trading's *Practice Standard for Registered Certifiers*.

Council will undertake regular audits of compliance with requirements for medium-high risk developments, in consultation with its Internal Audit and Risk Committee.

### Managing conflicts where Council is not the applicant

There will be circumstances where Council does not initiate a development, yet still has potential conflicts of interest in the matter. Low risk examples might include circumstances where a proponent seeks to locate permanent outdoor dining facilities on a Council footpath. Higher risk examples may include instances where a private development proposal may impact Council lands, facilities, or business operations. Examples might include proposed developments adjoining Council facilities or proposed commercial activities that would compete for market share with existing Council businesses.

In circumstances where Council is the landowner, but not the applicant, the provisions of this policy will apply in accordance with the conflicts of interest amendments to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021. In these instances, Council will be required to provide owner's consent for lodgment of the application. In doing so, the General Manager, or his delegate, will be responsible for preparing a Risk Management Statement and supplying this to the applicant with the owner's consent.

In circumstances where Council is neither the landowner nor the applicant, yet has potential impacts from the development proposal, the General Manager, or his delegate, will be responsible for determining and implementing appropriate risk management strategies for assessment, determination, and post-assessment regulation of these proposals based on the control measures outlined in this policy.

### Exempt Development

**Exempt development** is minor development with minimal environmental impacts. This includes routine maintenance of roads and public facilities. These works are excluded from the development application process. Council must ensure that when undertaking exempt development it complies with all the predetermined requirements for that development type.

### Development Without Consent

**Development without consent** includes activities that can be undertaken without a development application. This includes infrastructure related construction and implementation of Plans of Management.

The Regulation does not required Council to prepare a Risk Management Statement for these activities. However, Part 5 of the Act requires consideration of the likely impact of an activity on the environment and preparation of a Review of Environmental Factors (REF).

Council must publish on its website those REFs it produces:

- having a capital investment value (CIV) >\$5m, or
- that require any of the following approvals/permits-
  - *Fisheries Management Act 1994* approval (sections 144, 200, 205 or 219)
  - *Heritage Act 1977* (section 57)
  - *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (section 90)
  - *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (section 47-49 or 122), or
- that the determining authority consider are in the public interest.

Council will incorporate a Risk Management Statement into its REF process.

## REFERENCES

Department of Planning and Environment (Sept 2022). *Council-related Development Application Conflict Of Interest Guidelines*. <https://pp.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/news/council-related-development-application-conflict-interest-guidelines>

## REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed by Council at the time of any relevant legislative changes, compliance requirements, or at least every four years.

Version Number	Date	Reason / Comments
1	Date	New policy

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Richmond Valley Council – CPOL15.22 Managing conflicts of interest for  
council-related development

Adopted:

Page 6 of 10

APPENDIX A

**Table of Risk Management Strategies**

Level of Risk	Low	Medium	High
Examples of Council-related development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outdoor dining on Council footpath – with permanent fixtures or seating</li> <li>Applications for minor development that encroaches a road reserve</li> <li>Commercial fit-outs by tenants in Council facilities – for example cafes or gyms at Council pools or other buildings</li> <li>Capital Value Investment (CIV) &lt;\$250K</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subdivision with &lt;24 lots</li> <li>Capital Investment Value (CIV) &lt;\$5M</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regionally Significant Development</li> <li>State Significant Development</li> <li>State Significant Infrastructure</li> <li>Capital Investment Value (CIV) &gt;\$5 Million</li> <li>Subdivision with &gt;24 lots</li> </ul>
Non-Council-related development	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjoining land with a Council interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential commercial impacts on Council</li> </ul>

Management Strategies that may be applied			
Level of Risk	Low	Medium	High
Pre-Application Planning	No additional strategies required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential Conflicts of Interest is identified early to ensure appropriate strategies are employed throughout the project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential Conflicts of Interest is identified early to ensure appropriate strategies are employed throughout the project</li> </ul>
Application Preparation	No additional strategies required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council prepares the application but seeks independent consultancies to provide advice on significant constraints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application prepared by an independent consultant</li> <li>Independent specialist consultancies used to provide advice on significant constraints</li> </ul>

Richmond Valley Council – CPOL15.22 Managing conflicts of interest for council-related development

Adopted:  Date

Page 7 of 10

<b>Management Strategies that may be applied</b>			
<b>Level of Risk</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
Assessment	No additional strategies required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application is assessed by Council staff not directly involved in the project design and application preparation</li> <li>• Optional - The assessment report is peer reviewed by an independent consultant or other council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment by an independent consultant</li> </ul>
Determination	No additional strategies required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Assessment Panel (DAP) reviews the assessment report, recommendation, and conditions prior to determination under delegation</li> <li>• Determination by Council – where considered controversial, called up by at least 2 Councillors, or it exceeds the parameters for DAP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regionally Significant Development will be determined by the Northern Regional Planning Panel</li> <li>• State Significant Development or State Significant Infrastructure will be determined by the Minister</li> </ul>
Post Consent Certification	No additional strategies required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Certifier carries out the process in accordance with relevant legislation and guidelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private Certifier, or where private certification is not available, Council certifier with pre-approved probity plan.</li> </ul>
Enforcement	No additional strategies required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council-related development will be treated the same as non-Council development for regulatory enforcement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council-related development will be treated the same as non-Council development for regulatory enforcement</li> </ul>
Development without consent	No additional strategies required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council prepares a REF but seeks independent consultancies to provide advice on significant constraints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• REF prepared by an independent consultant</li> <li>• Independent specialist consultancies used to provide advice on significant constraints</li> </ul>

Richmond Valley Council – CPOL15.22 Managing conflicts of interest for council-related development

Adopted:

Page 8 of 10

## APPENDIX B

**Sample Conflicts of Interest Risk Management Statement**

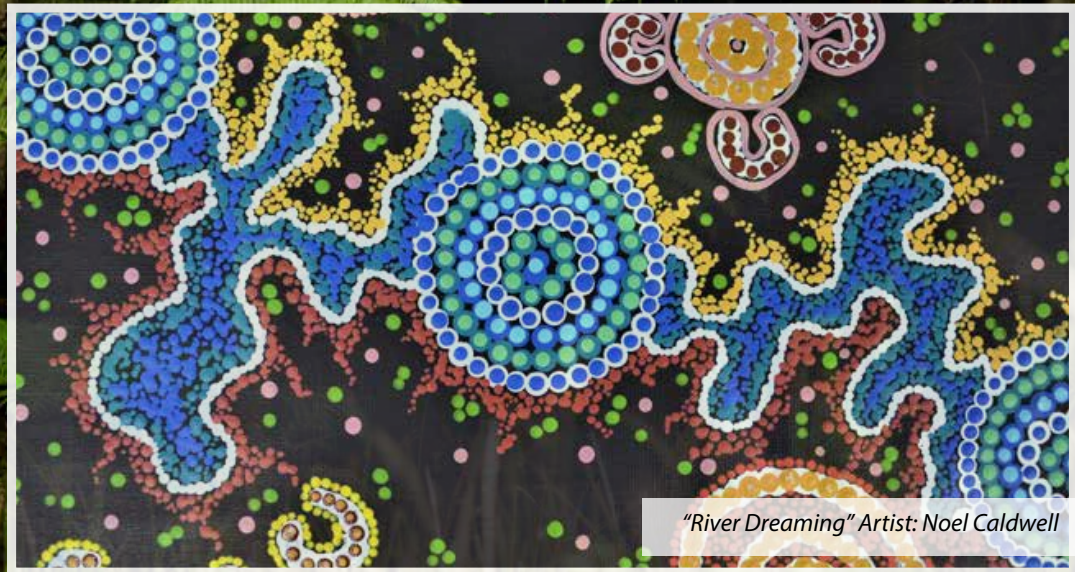
<b>Richmond Valley Council Conflicts of Interest Risk Management Statement</b>	
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Regional sports stadium</b>
<b>DA Number</b>	
<b>Potential conflicts</b>	Richmond Valley Council is the applicant for the redevelopment of the XXX Park Sports Stadium. The project has a CIV of \$20M and is therefore Regionally Significant Development. Council expects to receive revenue through the commercial lease and operation of the facility, including usage fees, events, kiosk/cafe facilities, a gymnasium, and several commercial lease spaces.
<b>Assessed level of Risk</b>	<b>High</b>
<b>Management strategy</b>	<p>Council is managing potential conflicts of interest in this matter as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application will be prepared by an independent consultant</li> <li>• Council will engage another independent planning consultant to assess the application</li> <li>• The development is Regionally Significant Development and will be determined by the Northern Regional Planning Panel</li> <li>• A private certifier will be engaged to undertake the certification for the development</li> <li>• Key project milestones following the development consent will be reported to public Council Meetings</li> <li>• The facility will not operate until a final occupation certificate, or appropriate interim occupation certificate, has been issued for the development</li> <li>• Council will ensure that it follows the appropriate EOI and appointment processes before entering a lease to manage the facility or to let commercial spaces.</li> </ul>
<b>Contact</b>	Anyone with concerns about Council fulfilling its obligations under this Statement should report their concerns to the Council or the NSW Local Government Ombudsman.



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Richmond Valley Council recognises the people of the Bundjalung nation 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.



*"River Dreaming" Artist: Noel Caldwell*

# INTRODUCTION

Richmond Valley Council's Sustainable Communities Strategy outlines Council's commitment and goals providing structure for the balance between growth and sustainability whereby future proofing our diverse local government area.

Sustainability is about managing and maintaining a balance with all the things we value. It is about creating a healthy balance between growth and livability supporting strong economic growth while maintaining and enhancing our natural environment.

## LIVEABILITY AND GROWTH

Richmond Valley Council is actively encouraging growth and investment in our region to provide the jobs and housing our community needs. We want to create great places to live, that preserve the unique lifestyle of our Valley. Our challenge over the next 20 years will be to strike a balance between supporting employment, housing and investment and protecting what we love about this place, including our green corridors, rivers and waterways, farmland and open spaces. This strategy sets a path to create liveable, sustainable communities for our current and future generations. Liveability is about healthy sustainable lifestyles creating recreational and economic benefits for the community. By growing and enhancing our natural environment, connectivity and efficiency we can continue to attract people and economic growth to our Valley.



## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR AND GENERAL MANAGER

The Richmond Valley's role in the Northern Rivers region is changing, as we continue to rebuild our community from bushfire and flood and emerge as a leading employment centre. The future of our Valley is strong, but we must strive for a healthy balance between supporting long-term growth and protecting our unique lifestyle and local identity, and the landscapes, rivers and beaches that we love.

The Richmond Valley is a special place and it will continue to attract new people and investment over the coming years. Our challenge is to welcome new opportunities while learning to live sustainably within a changing climate. We know that the coming years will bring more challenges, with increasing drought and flood and the need to build long-term resilience within our communities. This strategy takes a practical approach towards creating and supporting liveable, sustainable settlements within our Valley and protecting our unique environment.

The strategy focusses on preserving our bushland and biodiversity, protecting our rivers and waterways and building our resilience to natural disasters and a changing climate. There is also a commitment from Council to lead by example by improving the sustainability of its own operations and infrastructure.

The Sustainable Communities Strategy provides a way forward for all of us to work together to help ensure that the Richmond Valley remains a beautiful place to live, work, play and invest in the future.



Mayor  
Cr. Robert Mustow



General Manager  
Vaughan Macdonald





## OUR APPROACH

The strategy focuses on four key themes:

-  **Resilient Communities**
-  **Bushland & Biodiversity**
-  **Rivers & Waterways**
-  **Environmental Services**

Each theme covers key environmental priorities which sets a goal for the future, outlines why it is important and lists a set of strategic actions to achieve these goals.

This document outlines the key areas the Council will seek to actively progress through to 2028. These themes provide the framework for establishing further targeted priorities beyond that time.







# OUR COMMUNITY

The Richmond Valley LGA is defined by a diverse range of environments from the coastline and coastal fringes, to the alluvial floodplains, and undulating foothills of the Great Dividing Range. The LGA has an area of 3051km<sup>2</sup>, with dimensions of about 70km (north to south) by 77km (east to west), with terrain ranging in altitude from sea level to just over 650 metres at Busbys Flat.

The region is undergoing a significant period of growth with Richmond Valley being named one of four regional job precincts to drive investment and development opportunities into existing industries in agriculture, manufacturing and renewable energy.

Strong industrial and economic growth in the region is expected to see increases in the region's population. Population growth is expected to bring increased pressure on housing and infrastructure, as well as a stronger dependency on our natural resources such as our agricultural land and water supply. The Richmond River is the region's key natural asset supplying the area's water supply which was crowned best tasting tap water in Australia in 2021. It is vital that we get the balance right between liveability and growth to protect and enhance our region.



8 Sustainable Communities Strategy 2022-2028



# 3051KM<sup>2</sup> OF LAND IN THE RICHMOND VALLEY

**388KM<sup>2</sup> IS CONSERVATION AREAS**

- 173KM<sup>2</sup> NATIONAL PARK
- 109KM<sup>2</sup> NATURE RESERVE
- 68KM<sup>2</sup> STATE CONSERVATION AREA
- 36KM<sup>2</sup> ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION ZONE (E2)
- 67KM<sup>2</sup> BUNGAWALBIN NATURE RESERVE
- 0.4KM<sup>2</sup> JABIRU GENEEBEINGA WETLANDS

**31KM<sup>2</sup> WILDERNESS AREA**

WILDERNESS AREAS HAVE CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AS THEY OFTEN CONTAIN ABORIGINAL SITES AND POSSIBLE REMNANTS OF THE AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE AS IT EXISTED BEFORE COLONISATION.

**5KM<sup>2</sup> WORLD HERITAGE AREA**

**490KM<sup>2</sup> STATE FOREST**

**38KM OF COASTLINE**

**RIVERS & WATERWAYS**

**RICHMOND RIVER**

**140KM**

**EVANS RIVER**

**15KM**

**WILSONS RIVER**

**2KM**

**BUNGAWALBIN CREEK**

**52KM**

# OUR CHANGING CLIMATE



HIGHER AVERAGE TEMPERATURES



HIGHER RISK OF DROUGHT



MORE FREQUENT FLOODS



MORE SEVERE STORMS

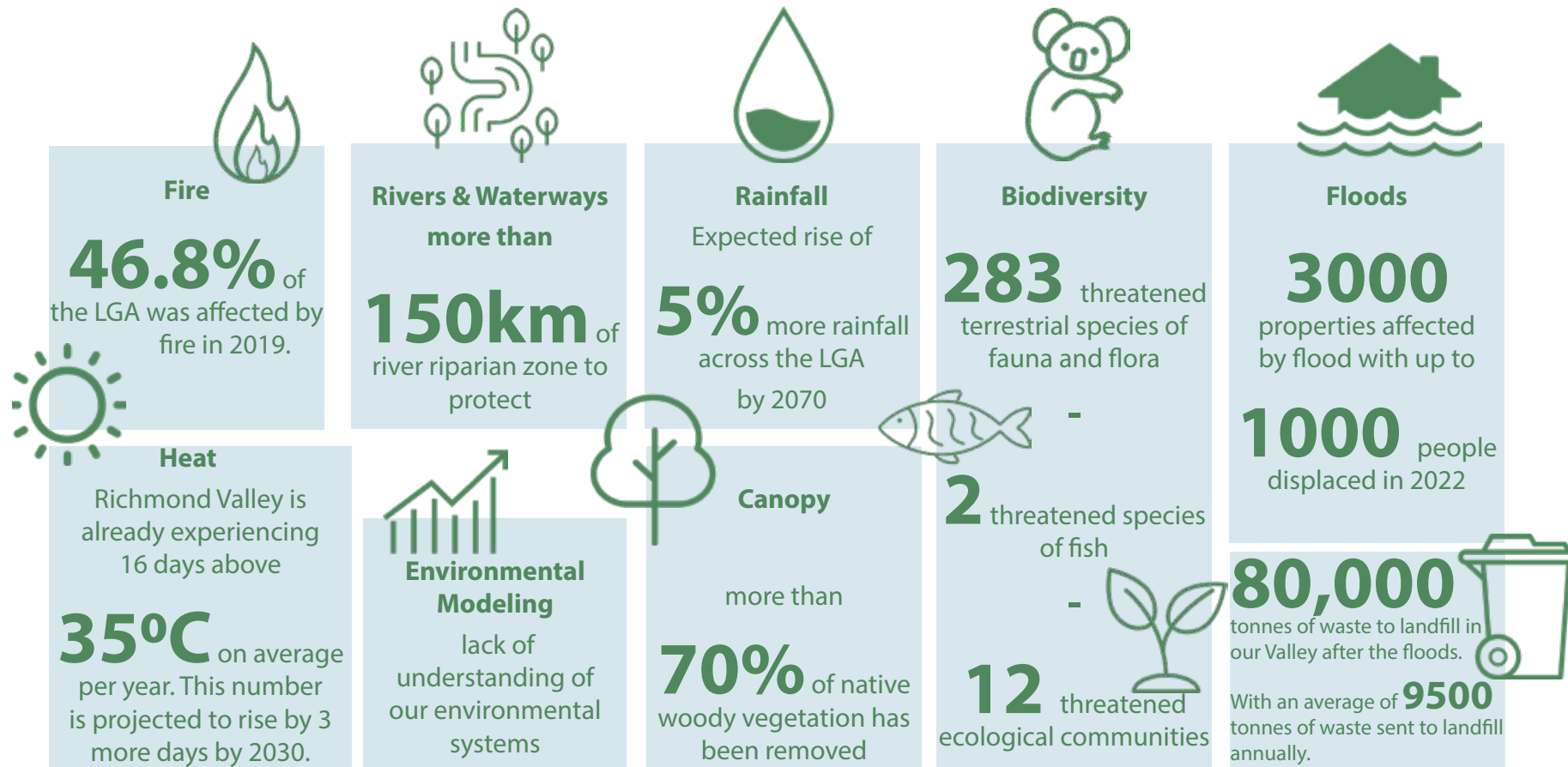


RISING SEA LEVEL

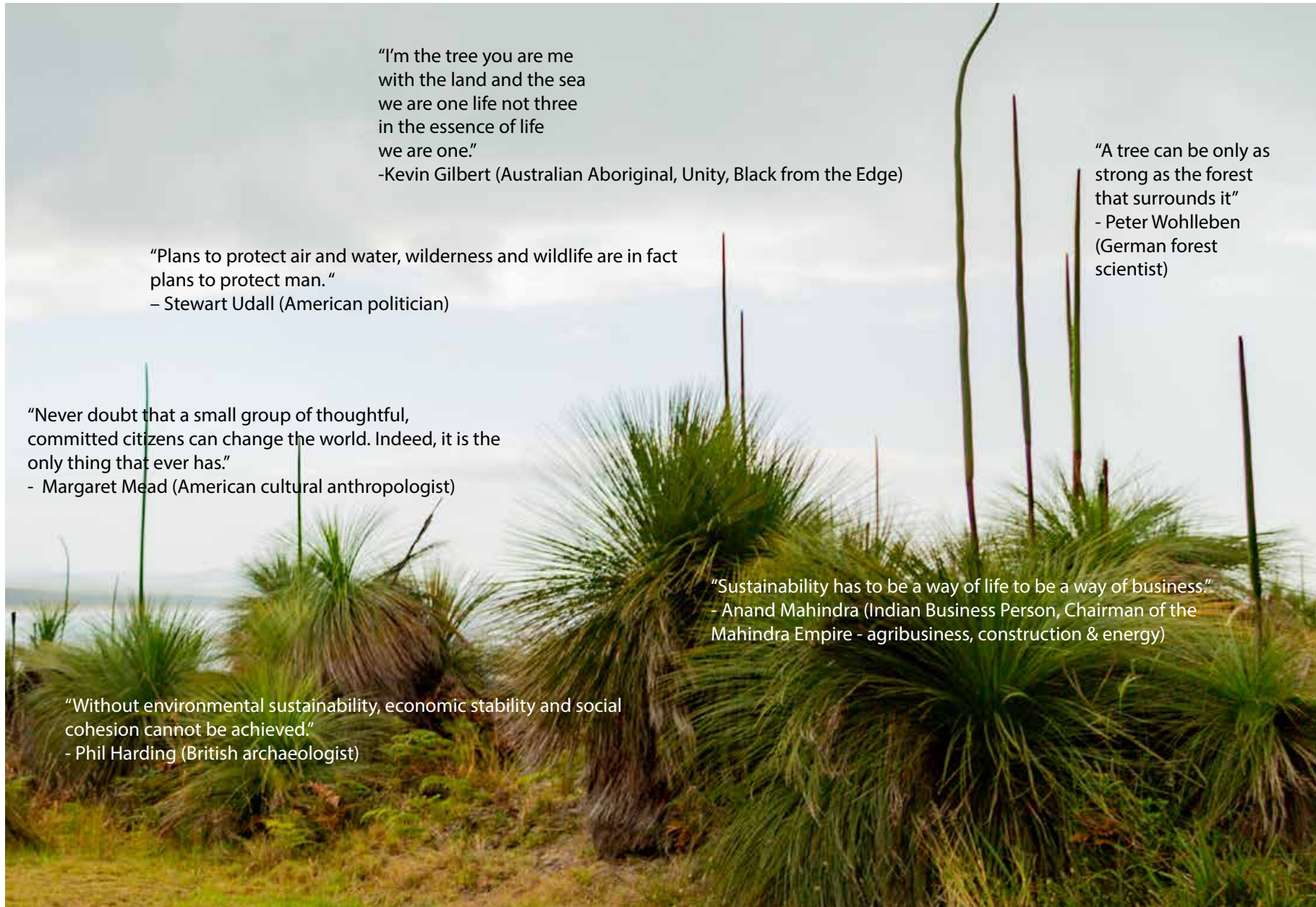


HIGHER RISK OF FIRE

# OUR CHALLENGES







"I'm the tree you are me  
with the land and the sea  
we are one life not three  
in the essence of life  
we are one."  
-Kevin Gilbert (Australian Aboriginal, Unity, Black from the Edge)

"A tree can be only as  
strong as the forest  
that surrounds it"  
- Peter Wohlleben  
(German forest  
scientist)

"Plans to protect air and water, wilderness and wildlife are in fact  
plans to protect man."  
- Stewart Udall (American politician)

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,  
committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the  
only thing that ever has."  
- Margaret Mead (American cultural anthropologist)

"Sustainability has to be a way of life to be a way of business."  
- Anand Mahindra (Indian Business Person, Chairman of the  
Mahindra Empire - agribusiness, construction & energy)

"Without environmental sustainability, economic stability and social  
cohesion cannot be achieved."  
- Phil Harding (British archaeologist)



**RESILIENT  
COMMUNITIES**

**OUR GOALS:**

**Working together  
to create resilient  
communities in a  
changing environment.**

14 Sustainable Communities Strategy 2022-2028

## **OUR TARGETS:**

- Build resilience to a changing climate by improving our knowledge of natural disasters and improving our community's preparedness and response.
- Improve long-term flood planning and bushfire risk management.
- Reduce our demand on natural resources.
- Increasing canopy cover and shaded areas within our townships to create greener cooler areas to improve the liveability and natural environment within our region.
- Support and encourage sustainable use of resources through targeted sustainability communications and engagement programs.
- Recognise and promote sustainability improvements achieved by local individuals, schools, businesses and community organisations.



# RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The Richmond Valley has been severely impacted in recent times by a number of natural disasters ranging from bushfire, drought, flood and localised storm events.

Climate change is likely to increase the risk of these events reoccurring causing significant damage to our community and affecting the livability of our region.

Increases in average temperature greatly impacts the liveability of our region; it discourages walking and cycling and promotes driving vehicles which produce greater emissions.

Air conditioning usage increases which creates higher demand on our natural resources and affects electricity prices.

Council aims to cool our urban environments by increasing shaded areas which promote healthy and sustainable lifestyles, also providing corridors for our local flora and fauna to thrive.

We will support our community to develop a high level of resilience through a number of targeted initiatives in order to be able to withstand the effects of climate change.

## OUR ACTIONS:

- Develop the Cooling the Richmond Valley initiative.
- Develop a community engagement program to provide information and improve understanding of the value of trees in building a resilient community.
- Protect, enhance and increase our existing bushland, parks and green spaces.
- Encourage and promote green infrastructure such as sustainable shaded parks, increase canopy cover and install solar charging stations.
- Complete the Richmond Valley Flood Study and Floodplain Risk Management Plans.
- Support safe development in bushfire and flood prone areas while protecting the environment.
- Contribute to the Northern Rivers Resilience Initiative and advocate for solutions to mitigate future flood impacts.
- Review the Richmond Valley Adverse Event Plan to incorporate lessons from the 2022 flood.
- Continue to support farm-based food sales, farmers markets and paddock to plate initiatives.







# BIODIVERSITY & BUSHLAND

**OUR GOALS:**

**Protect and enhance  
our unique natural  
ecosystems to support  
life in our Valley.**

16 Sustainable Communities Strategy 2022-2028

## OUR TARGETS:

- Understand our region's natural environment and its intrinsic biodiversity values in order to prioritise targeted management actions.
- Take steps to restore disturbed ecosystems and enhance local ecological value.
- Create strong partnerships to protect and enhance our local natural environment.
- Increase bushland and biodiversity links in our townships.
- Increasing community knowledge and connection to local bushland and biodiversity.
- Investigate ways to protect local biodiversity and bushland from development pressures.

*The koala is threatened by wide-scale climate change drivers: increased frequency and intensity of drought and high temperatures; the increasing prevalence of weather conditions which promote bushfire; and a shrinking climatically suitable area.*

*(Adam-Hosking et al. 2011; McApline et al. 2021a)*



# BIODIVERSITY & BUSHLAND

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Our flora and fauna which make up our important natural environment provide essential ecological processes which provide our community with necessary oxygen and clean water.

Our region's population is growing, resulting in increased pressure on our localised natural species which rely on our natural resources to survive. Considering the impacts increased urban development, industrial growth and population growth can have on our environment, the need to protect our region's bushland and biodiversity has never been more vital. This presents a unique challenge for Council to consider the needs of an expanding population while maintaining and enhancing our natural environment which draws people to our region and supports our natural ecosystems.

By strategically protecting and enhancing our bushland and biodiversity we can support the growth and liveability of our region while improving the quality of life of our community.

## OUR ACTIONS:

- Engage and work with neighbouring councils to promote biodiversity and bushland conservation.
- Support management of interface between conservation areas and other land uses through planning, policy, compliance, education and preservation activities.
- Participate in local and regional natural resource management groups, community groups and local Aboriginal groups.
- Investigate bio banking potential for sites in bushland areas.
- Continue to actively work with and contribute to the North Coast Regional Koala group.
- Restore and enhance native flying fox habitat.
- Explore opportunities to enhance native fish habitat.
- Celebrate our natural assets, and their contribution to the liveability of our Valley, through social media and our communications team.
- Develop tools to better protect our natural environment, local biodiversity and remnant vegetation from development and other pressure.



## OUR TARGETS:

- Plan and prioritise restoration of riparian habitat zones along the Richmond River.
- Develop targeted actions to manage river water quality risks.
- Work towards securing long-term water supply for our region.
- Assess and improve Council's water and sewer infrastructure.
- Increase community education on preserving water and the importance of wetlands, rivers and waterways to our overall health.

# RIVERS & WATERWAYS

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The Richmond Valley is known for its stunning river systems and waterways which stretch from the alluvial floodplains which form the base of the Great Dividing Range to the Evans Head coastline and coastal fringes.

Our natural rivers and waterways are the lifeblood of the Richmond Valley. Feedback often received from the community is that people love living in our region because of our amazing river systems.

The Richmond River is responsible for the majority of our region's immediate water supply, making it a key natural asset within the region which requires strategic and considered actions to enhance and maintain our current water supply for the Valley.

The need to plan for increased population growth and dependency on this key natural asset is paramount. Council's aim is to implement actions to protect our region's water security while enhancing and maintaining the environmental values of our rivers and waterways.



19

Sustainable Communities Strategy 2022-2028

## OUR ACTIONS:

- Advocate for riverbank assessment and restoration programs in Casino, the Mid Richmond and Bungawalbin.
- Seek funding to design and deliver riparian habitat restoration programs.
- Manage high risk on-site sewage and liquid trade waste management systems.
- Ensure compliance of underground petroleum storage systems.
- Partner with State Government agencies to support Richmond River water quality monitoring.
- Investigate and promote methods to Increase stormwater harvesting and reuse on public and private land.
- Secure long-term water supply for Casino and the Mid Richmond.
- Educate on water sensitive urban design and water wise programs including: wetlands; rivers; waterways; and acknowledging water rebates for water efficient products for our community
- Work with water utilities to improve stormwater and sewer infrastructure.



# ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

**OUR GOALS:**

**Council leading the way to reduce energy, water and recover more resources.**

20 Sustainable Communities Strategy 2022-2028

## OUR TARGETS:

- Explore opportunities to use Council resources more efficiently.
- Taking steps to understand and reduce our carbon footprint.
- Reduce Council's water usage.
- Investigating methods to divert Council waste from landfill.
- Investigate energy audit opportunities and implement renewable energy on Council buildings and facilities.
- Demonstrate environment and sustainability as a core principle within Council's governance framework



# ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

It is Council's responsibility to lead by example in our community and make progressive changes to become more actively environmentally sustainable.

By recognising the decisions we make each day affect the growth and liveability of our region. We can put measures in place to reduce our footprint and provide a framework for our community to replicate.

This means Council will implement strategic actions to minimise energy and carbon usage, reduce waste production and make environmentally conscious purchasing decisions.



21

Sustainable Communities Strategy 2022-2028

## OUR ACTIONS:

- Investigate energy efficiency upgrades across our Council buildings and facilities.
- Ensure environmental considerations in all procurement decisions, including mandatory weightings in tenders.
- Investigate appropriate Council buildings to have rainwater and stormwater tanks added to buildings.
- Continue with water efficiency upgrades at Council buildings and facilities.
- Continue to improve the water efficiency of our parks through improvements through targeted management practice.
- Work with Resource Recovery team to reduce waste to landfill.
- Increase staff understanding of waste avoidance, disposal options and contamination.
- Support alternative waste management options for affordable waste solutions for the community.
- Manage compliance with environmental licenses.
- Investigate base line data on Council's carbon footprint and usage.
- Investigate alternative fleet options and the viability of electric vehicles as technology progresses
- Support Council projects to incorporate reducing the environmental footprint of all master plans.



















































