



DELIVERY PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT

JULY - DECEMBER 2023



**Richmond
Valley
Council**

Integrated Planning & Reporting

This Progress Report details action taken against the Delivery Program 2023-2025, adopted by Council in June 2023. This report relates to the first and second quarters of the 2023/2024 year.



Council has developed four key directions for its future plans based on the feedback we received from our community consultation program. These directions also reflect the work we have completed for our key strategic plans, such as the Richmond Valley Growth Management Strategy and Sustainable Communities Strategy. Together, they create the framework for the objectives, strategies and actions that will help to deliver our goals and priorities.

Direction One

Strengthening our role in the region

This direction is based on the Richmond Valley Growth Management Strategy and the remaining actions of the Rebuilding the Richmond Valley Recovery Plan. It also includes strategies from the Key Directions in Economic Development paper presented to the local business community for consultation. The direction focuses on building back better after the floods, identifying opportunities for our community to grow, strengthening our economy and providing more housing, jobs and services.

Direction Two

Creating great places to live

This direction is based on direct consultation with the community, including our two community surveys and the community on-line ideas board. It focuses on creating vibrant, liveable and safe communities – providing opportunities to learn, create and celebrate, enhancing our town centres and retail precincts and ensuring that our parks, playgrounds, sports fields and community facilities are well maintained. It also looks at strategies to adapt to a changing climate and build resilience against future natural disasters.

Direction Three

Protecting our unique environment

This direction is based on our Sustainable Communities Strategy, adopted by Council following community consultation. It focuses on preserving our native bushland and biodiversity, maintaining healthy rivers, beaches and waterways, and helping our Valley transition to a circular economy in the way we manage our future resources.

Direction Four

Delivering for our community

This direction focuses on the role that Richmond Valley Council will play in helping to deliver this plan. It includes Council's civic leadership in engaging with and advocating for our community, as well as our responsibilities for managing community resources and providing great service.

Strengthening our role in the region

OBJECTIVE 1: Rebuild and reconnect our communities

Principal Activity 1A1: Restore and reconnect social infrastructure
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Council's recovery efforts have focused on restoring the Richmond Valley road network. This has been undertaken firstly via emergency works funding, and now complemented by Essential Public Asset Reconstruction and other grant applications. Successful grant and EPAR claims for key infrastructure like Naughtons Gap Road, Spring Grove Road, Manifold Road and the Tatham Bridges has seen reconstruction commence. Repairs to other Council assets such as water and sewer infrastructure, community halls and sporting precincts has ensured community groups can recommence their activities. Works will continue for the foreseeable future as the post-flood reconstruction task is expected to take some three years. On Schedule
Principal Activity 1A2: Prepare long-term plans for Mid-Richmond villages
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Consultants have been engaged to draft Mid Richmond Place/Adaptation Plans. The NSW Reconstruction Authority is co-funding the plans as they will now include an Adaption Plan component. A draft Discussion Paper was received late December 2023, with community consultation to take place in January-February 2024. The proposed timeframe for public exhibition of the plans is May/June 2024 with the final plans proposed to be presented to Council in July 2024 for adoption. On Schedule
Principal Activity 1B1: Deliver Disaster Recovery Roadworks and water/sewer repairs
Responsible Officer: General Manager
All emergency repair works to flood-damaged water and sewer assets have been completed and Council is now concentrating on resilience works to make these facilities more flood-proof in future. This includes raising electrical switchboards at sewage pump stations, improving back-up power supplies for water and sewerage assets and replacing and relocating the South Casino sewage transfer system further away from the riverbank. Work on this project is scheduled to commence in Q1 2024. Work is also progressing on flood repairs to roads, bridges and culverts throughout the Richmond Valley. Council is currently finalising its claims for Disaster Relief Funding for the repairs, with a total of 78 claims, totalling more than \$100m being submitted. Key restoration projects, such as the Naughton's Gap landslip are already underway and further road repairs will progress as government funding is received over the next two years. On Schedule
Principal Activity 1C1: Continue to work with the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation & other agencies to support regional recovery
Responsible Officer: General Manager
Council continues to strengthen working relationships with the NSW Reconstruction Authority to support the community's continued flood recovery. This includes participating in the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Steering Committee and liaising with the Infrastructure Co-ordination Office on essential flood repairs. Council has also partnered with the Reconstruction Authority to pilot a combined Place Planning/Adaptation Planning project for the Mid Richmond communities. The Place Plans will include future options for housing, economic development and community facilities in Evans Head, Broadwater, Rileys Hill, Woodburn and Coraki. They will also explore opportunities to build resilience against future flooding and adapt to a changing climate. Community consultation for these Plans will be conducted in earl 2024. On Schedule

OBJECTIVE 2: Establish the Richmond Valley as a regional growth centre

Principal Activity 2A1: Undertake long-term planning for the Valley's future
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council is progressing with the implementation of its Growth Management Strategy, with preparation of a Housing Strategy for the Richmond Valley being a priority action. The Woodburn CBD Master Plan process has commenced and funding is currently being sourced to undertake the Casino CBD Master Plan. Work has commenced for scoping of essential infrastructure assets required to facilitate growth. On Schedule
Principal Activity 2A2: Develop and implement the Richmond Valley Masterplan
Responsible Officer: General Manager
Council is currently still completing the eight strategic plans that will ultimately inform the RV Masterplan. This includes the Mid Richmond Place Plans, CBD masterplans for Casino and Evans Head and the RV Economic Development Strategy. The other three key components: The Community Strategic Plan, Richmond Valley Growth Management Strategy and the Casino Place Plan have been completed. These will be supported by the Regional Jobs Precinct Masterplan, due to be finalised in early 2024. Formation of the new Live and Invest team will support this process. The Masterplan is due to be completed in the final quarter of 2024-25. On Schedule
Principal Activity 2A3: Deliver the Community Strategic Plan
Responsible Officer: General Manager
Council adopted the Richmond Valley 2040 Community Strategic Plan, and supporting IP&R plans, at its 29 June 2023 meeting. The first six months of the 2023-25 Delivery Program have been delivered, with quarterly reporting tracking progress. The majority of Principal Activities from the Delivery Program are progressing on schedule. On Schedule
Principal Activity 2B1: Activate the Richmond Valley Regional Jobs Precinct
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
The Regional Jobs Precinct process is behind schedule based on original estimate timeframes. Council teams have reviewed the technical documents that make up the RJP Masterplan which is proposed to go on public exhibition from February 2024. Council is keen to implement the strategies and actions from the Masterplan and continue with the activation of the RJP. With the final Masterplan due to be released in June 2024, it is expected that this activity will return to schedule next quarter. Behind Schedule
Principal Activity 2C1: Increase educational opportunities
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Council has explored several potential outcomes through working with the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation. Introductory sessions with proponents of a trade school, potentially based out of a former school site in Casino, have been undertaken. On Schedule
Principal Activity 2C2: Grow Government-led services
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Council has previously worked with Government to establish services in the Richmond Valley with the most recent example being the partnership between Local Land Services to provide their services from a Council facility. The recent Economic Development Study paper identified that our LGA is under-represented when it comes to government services being based here. On Schedule

Principal Activity 2D1: Activate residential development on flood-safe land
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council is playing a key advocacy role supporting the activation of flood free residential land in the region. The NSW Governments "Resilient Lands Program" has identified a large site in the Richmond Valley which is capable of supporting significant residential development. Council Officers continue to work with proponents and state agencies to facilitate the approvals process. Council is currently reviewing and updating a number of development servicing and contributions plans which will support residential growth in the Richmond Valley.
On Schedule
Principal Activity 2D2: Provide a range of housing to suit all needs
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
A number of strategic projects are underway which aim to address and explore the available mechanisms to provide a range of housing options. The provision of flexible planning requirements afford quality design outcomes for new and in-fill development. Funding has been sought to develop a housing strategy for Richmond Valley. Council Officers support NGOs thorough the planning process to develop inclusive affordable housing options.
On Schedule
Principal Activity 2E1: Work with regional partners to deliver the Northern Rivers Rail Trail
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
The Casino-Bentley section of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail is expected to open in April 2024. Council has undertaken a collaborative approach with other Northern Councils to establish the full Tweed-Casino trail. RVC in particular have supported Lismore in their efforts to secure funding for their section. The next focus for the partnership will be to establish a governance model for the full trail to assist with the optimal leveraging of the trails potential.
On Schedule
Principal Activity 2E2: Establish Casino Showground as the premier equine facility in the Northern Rivers
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Council commissioned a racing industry expert to undertake a strategic review of opportunities for the Showground precinct in 2021. This consultant has been re-engaged to provide advice on potential governance models and fee structures and to provide advice on resourcing and management structures for the precinct. The aim is to provide a regional facility that caters for the needs and resources of local community-based groups but also to expand and encourage the growth of racing and equestrian pursuits.
On Schedule



Casino Showground progress

Principal Activity 2E3: Upgrade regionally significant infrastructure

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council continues to focus on major infrastructure investments to promote future growth and economic prosperity of the Richmond Valley. This includes establishing the Woodburn-Casino Road as a major transport and tourism link, with \$10m of upgrade works on the Woodburn-Coraki section of the road now completed. Further funding has been received to improve the flood resilience of the road, including replacement of the two Tatham Bridges. This work will progress in 2024. Pre-planning has also commenced to replace the ageing Casino STP with a modern plant that will cater for future industrial and residential growth in the town. Consultants have been engaged to assist Council with the scoping, design and procurement processes. Funding opportunities for this significant project are being sought.

On Schedule

OBJECTIVE 3: Grow and diversify our economy

Principal Activity 3A1: Encourage new manufacturing and processing industries to relocate to the Richmond Valley
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
The Reynolds Road industrial estate has seen Council negotiate with several new manufacturing and processing industries. Contracts for land sale with one of these proponents has been executed with other discussions ideally leading to new business establishment later in the year. On Schedule
Principal Activity 3A2: Strengthen supply chains for key manufacturing industries
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Council has leveraged significant government investment in repairing and upgrading damaged road and bridge infrastructure which is critical to efficient supply chains. MR145 has been upgraded to the value of over \$10m. Challenging infrastructure repairs on Naughtons Gap Road and the Tatham Bridges have had funding committed whilst funding options are being pursued for the Broadwater Bridge - all critical industry supply chain routes. On Schedule
Principal Activity 3B1: Improve visitor accommodation options throughout the Valley
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
A review of visitor accommodation in the Richmond Valley has commenced. This will inform the strategy which will include a focus on emerging opportunities such as the rail trail. Work continues with improving and promoting the Coraki Caravan Park which includes collaborations with Kui Parks and other relevant tourism platforms. On Schedule
Principal Activity 3B2: Explore new opportunities for visitor experiences
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
The review of the Destination Management Plan has commenced. The aim is to have the reviewed plan presented to Council in April 2024. The review will include a comprehensive audit of tourism experiences in the Richmond Valley to determine opportunities for growth and the creation of new experiences. Council is collaborating with Lismore and Tweed Councils to build on the existing success of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail as a premier nature-based tourism opportunity in the region. The Richmond Valley Section of the Rail Trail is due for completion early 2024. On Schedule
Principal Activity 3C1: Identify key service industry growth areas
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Council commissioned an Economic Development Discussion Paper in 2023 that identified primary industries and manufacturing continue to drive growth in the region. The study noted that due to demand, a shift toward population enabling services like construction, education/training and health care is occurring. Further work will be carried out to establish how continued growth in these emerging industries can be encouraged and supported in future. On Schedule
Principal Activity 3D1: Support emerging and value-add agricultural industries
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Council has held numerous discussions with an existing agricultural sales business to expand and relocate their operations which would provide value-add opportunities to their current services. With the leasing of the NRLX operations to an industry specialist, further discussions with interested agricultural-based businesses can occur offline to fully explore entrance into the Richmond Valley agricultural market. On Schedule

Principal Activity 3D2: Support continued productivity on significant agricultural lands
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>The proposed drafting of a Rural Lands Strategy and review of the LEP will support the protection and continued productivity of significant agricultural lands. The Sustainable Communities & Environment team engage with agricultural industries to educate them on reducing carbon footprint and encourage protection of environmentally sensitive areas such as riparian zones.</p> <p>On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 3D3: Establish the NRLX as the premier livestock exchange in Northern NSW
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>The NRLX had established itself as the second largest saleyard operation in NSW with further actions to realise potential growth identified in the 2022 Business Plan. An unsuccessful EOI process for stakeholders to partner in the future growth of the NRLX resulted in the temporary closure of the facility in late 2023. Council's decision to lease the facility to a market operator will ideally resolve these issues and ensure the facility can achieve the required financial, operational and WHS outcomes. This will set the NRLX back on the path to being a key feature of the NSW agricultural industry.</p> <p>Behind Schedule</p>

Inaugural rail trail business engagement workshop

Richmond Valley Council, in partnership with Lismore City Council, held its first business engagement workshop at the Casino Golf Club in November 2023 to bring together industry experts and entrepreneurs to explore innovative strategies to capitalise on the Northern Rivers Rail Trail.

The workshop, facilitated by leading regional tourism expert, Dr Meredith Wray, attracted 30 participants, and provided a platform for attendees to engage in interactive discussions, gain valuable insights and establish important networks.

Workshop attendees had the chance to connect with peers, industry leaders, and potential partners through the structured networking session.

The diverse range of topics covered during the event included an update on the Casino to Bentley section, discussion around creating rail trail experiences and lessons from the business development program on the Tweed section, including an overview of the Connect Program.



Regional tourism expert, Dr Meredith Wray, leads the discussion on rail trail business opportunities

Creating great places to live

OBJECTIVE 4: Celebrate our local identity and lifestyle

Principal Activity 4A1: Celebrate our diverse community and increase inclusion and understanding

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

A new Disability Inclusion Action Plan was adopted by Council at the December 2024 Ordinary Meeting. Council regularly participates in the Aboriginal inter-agency meetings and provides funding and support to cultural events such as NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week.

On Schedule



Naidoc Week 2023

Principal Activity 4A2: Support and deliver local events and festivals

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council committed to a new 3-year sponsorship and support packages for Primex and Beef Week at the beginning of 2023. The Casino Truck Show broke all records last year and Buckin' by the Beach was a huge success. Festival of the Waters is a new initiative which Council worked with the local communities of Coraki and Woodburn to deliver. The drafting of an Arts and Cultural Plan has commenced which will provide a framework to support public art and cultural events in the Richmond Valley. This draft plan is due mid-2024.

On Schedule



Casino Truck Show 2023

Principal Activity 4A3: Enhance local libraries to be culturally enriching and informative spaces

Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services

The library has conducted over 500 programs since 1 July 2023. These include programs held within the library as well as a very successful outreach program and target groups from babies to the elderly. The library collection is continually enhanced with a focus on diversity. eResources are also frequently updated and with the library involved in a consortium with other public libraries, there is a greater range of eResources to select from.

On Schedule

Principal Activity 4B1: Implement community Place Plan actions

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Casino Place Plan has been adopted by Council. Consultants have been engaged to draft place/adaptation plans for the Mid Richmond. These plans are scheduled to be presented to Council mid 2024 for endorsement. An appropriate funding source is being investigated to develop a CBD masterplan for Casino which is a key action from the Place Plan.

On Schedule

Principal Activity 4B2: Maintain town centres, local parks and cemeteries to a high standard

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

A proactive and adaptable approach is taken with regard to service levels to ensure Richmond Valley's open spaces are maintained to the highest levels and are safe. Service levels set for responding to customer requests and urgent issues are being met. A draft scope for the Cemeteries Strategy has been prepared which incorporates the new Internment Industry Scheme legislation with the aim of engaging a consultant early 2024 to undertake this work.

On Schedule

Principal Activity 4C1: Provide well-maintained public recreation, sports facilities & swimming pools

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

Major upgrades to the Casino, Evans Head and Woodburn pools have all recently been completed. Funding programs for sports facilities in the wake of the weather event have been taken advantage of with significant work being undertaken in Evans Head, Woodburn, Coraki and Casino. Most recently the splash pad completion at Coraki and a successful grant for the swimming club building in Casino has been announced which continues a positive trend for the RV pools network.

On Schedule



Casino Pool Reopening September 2023



Casino Pool Reopening September 2023

Principal Activity 4C2: Provide safe family-friendly play spaces and outdoor meeting areas

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

Major Park upgrades to Crawford Square, the creation of the Barker Street pop-up park and shade replacement programs at Coraki, Woodburn and Evans Head were completed this year. Focus will now shift to creating a masterplan for Woodburn Oval and delivering elements of the Stan Payne Oval masterplan. Broadwater Park and Albert Park, Casino will also benefit from upgrade works in the coming months.

On Schedule

OBJECTIVE 5: Live sustainably in a changing climate

Principal Activity 5A1: Support regional disaster planning, response and recovery
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Richmond Valley continues to be an active member of the Northern Rivers Local Emergency Management Committee and provides the executive administration support to the committee. Planning and preparedness has been the focus of the Committee post the 2022 flood events with the suite of emergency management plans and procedures under review. Council is participating in a number of state and federal government projects such as the spontaneous volunteers' guideline, early warning flood height monitoring and evacuation centre audits. On Schedule
Principal Activity 5A2: Partner with agencies to deliver community education programs and resilience initiatives
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council Officers work with local agencies such as Red Cross to deliver education programs which will build capacity within the community to better respond and recover from disasters. Council Chairs the Richmond Valley Community Resilience Network which meets monthly. On Schedule
Principal Activity 5B1: Complete Richmond Valley Flood Study and Floodplain Risk Management Plan
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
The new Flood Study, incorporating levels from the 2022 floods, has been completed and endorsed by Council. Funding is currently being sought to undertake a Floodplain Risk Management Plan. On Schedule
Principal Activity 5B2: Implement the Richmond Valley Adverse Event Plan
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
The review of the Adverse Event Plans actions has commenced. Actions which have not been completed will be incorporated into other strategic plans of Council to reduce duplication of effort. On Schedule
Principal Activity 5C1: Implement demand management programs to reduce water consumption
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council has a number of internal initiatives in place, with further options being developed to address demand management and reduction in water consumption. There are initiatives such as replacement of water saving hardware (taps, toilets), drought tolerant species selection for plantings and network leak detection survey. Discussions have commenced with Rous County Council with the aim of delivering collaborative water education projects in 2024. On Schedule
Principal Activity 5D1: Develop street-tree planting, shade and greening programs
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Work is progressing on development of the street-tree planting program, with positive response from the community. The program will include a community survey and scoping for a number of pilots so initiatives can be tested and implemented in 2024. Council also continues to pursue opportunities for greening programs at local parks and facilities and to partner with local groups and agencies to develop and deliver greening programs to protect habitat, improve biodiversity and offset the impacts of climate change. The Community Strategic Plans sets a target of 15,000 additional shade trees by 2040 and Council is well on the way to achieving and exceeding that target. On Schedule

Principal Activity 5E1: Promote awareness of sustainability programs and options
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council's planning and building controls address energy efficiency and urban design requirements which need to be applied to development proposals. Council staff regularly update the website to promote current sustainability information and programs which address energy and water efficiency initiatives. Water efficiency initiatives are often in conjunction with Rous County Council.</p> <p>On Schedule</p>

OBJECTIVE 6: Provide infrastructure that meets community needs

Principal Activity 6A1: Develop and maintain asset management systems

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

Council has implemented a new suite of Asset Management Plans and has recently undertaken an Asset Delivery resourcing realignment. The resourcing and framework review has provided the Assets team with the necessary direction to plan, maintain, upgrade, and dispose of assets based on inspection regimes, condition ratings, asset criticality and financial modelling. Asset management is now scoped and planned by the team and handed over to delivery teams where quality assurance and adherence to scope is regularly monitored. The collaborative approach between the assets and infrastructure departments of Council is providing better asset management outcomes for the Richmond Valley.

On Schedule

Principal Activity 6B1: Maintain regionally significant infrastructure and advocate for long-term investment

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

Key relationships have been formed with State Government agencies to continue the Richmond Valley's recovery journey. Close liaison with the Reconstruction Authority, the Infrastructure Coordination Office, Regional NSW and Transport for NSW, has seen a steady flow of funding to enable critical repairs but also betterment upgrades to key infrastructure. A reset of our Disaster Recovery approach has enabled Council to obtain essential asset and betterment funding for critical projects such as Naughtons Gap landslip, the Tatham Bridges, and the Casino to Woodburn Road. Council advocacy for better repair claim approval systems by TfNSW has been actioned with outcomes beginning to be realised through successful EPAR approvals.

On Schedule



Coraki-Woodburn roadworks



Coraki Ellangowan roadworks



Tatham Bridge, due for reconstruction in 2024



Jacky Bulbin Bridge works



Naughtons Gap Road early works

Principal Activity 6C1: Deliver local infrastructure maintenance and renewal programs

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

Maintenance and renewal programs for the RV's network of local roads, bridges, footpaths and cycleways are in place and being actioned. These programs have improved in accuracy due to the investment in a dedicated Asset Inspector resource and a change in Council's asset management philosophy. The network is assessed for its condition and criticality and then prioritised for regular maintenance and renewal programs that are regularly tested and reviewed.

On Schedule

Principal Activity 6D1: Plan for future water/sewer services and upgrades

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Richmond Valleys future growth is aligned with the ability to provide suitable infrastructure. Water and Sewer has a number of significant infrastructure projects planned to be delivered in the next 8 years. These include the construction of a new STP for Casino, upgrades to Casino's WTP and an upgrade of Evans Head STP to double its capacity. To support this infrastructure planning and delivery, a consultant has been engaged to draft new Development Servicing Plans with this body of work due to be finalised early 2024.

On Schedule

Principal Activity 6D2: Deliver water capital works program

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council continues to plan and deliver significant upgrade works for its water networks. Investigations have commenced into the upgrade to the Casino Raw Water Pump Station which will address options for renewal of the Powder Activated Carbon system, to protect water quality. Upgrades to the Casino WTP electrical distribution board have commenced. The electrical upgrade is crucial and will enable further upgrade works to be completed at the plant.

On Schedule

Principal Activity 6D3: Deliver quality water supply services

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Asset inspections are undertaken in accordance with scheduled programs to ensure the ongoing supply of quality potable water. A review of the Drinking Water Quality Management System is due to commence in 2024.

On Schedule

Principal Activity 6D4: Deliver sewer capital works program
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Significant sewer capital works need to be scoped and delivered in the next 5 years. Projects such as the Evans Head STP augmentation, new STP for Casino as well as annual program of pipe replacement, pump station upgrades and the like are being prioritised in accordance with risk and funding availability. Consultants have been engaged to project manage the Casino STP project. Council will continue to engage consultants and construction companies to assist with the delivery of the capital program. On Schedule
Principal Activity 6D5: Manage our water/sewer business effectively
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Water and Sewer services are meeting and often exceeding community service levels and performance standards. The Inflow and Infiltration Strategy has been completed and the water servicing/pricing review has commenced. A review of the liquid trade waste program has been conducted and alterations to the regulatory and enforcement process have resulted. On Schedule
Principal Activity 6D6: Improve local stormwater and drainage networks
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
In 2023, Council engaged a consultant to produce a storm water hydraulic model that studied the impacts of storm water flooding issues in the Casino area. The model identified the water flows, restrictions and ponding locations that sow increased pressure on the storm water infrastructure system due to increased rain frequency, quantity, urban surface density and development. The report has provided six options for mitigation options which Council resolved to explore funding opportunities for. Similar studies for other localities are identified in the 2023-25 delivery program. On Schedule

Casino Truck Show smashes records

With the doubling of entrants, the 2023 North Coast Petroleum Casino Truck Show claimed the title of the biggest truck show in the southern hemisphere, previously held by TMC Trailers Trucking Industry Show in Christchurch, New Zealand.

The official number of trucks judged was 580, however, around 40 missed the registration deadline so all up 620 bangers of all shapes and sizes filled the streets of Casino. This equates to more than \$300,000,000 in value. Calculating attendees via the density check method found the 2023 NCP Casino Truck Show has eclipsed all records for attendance at a Richmond Valley single-day event, attracting a record turnout of 14,000.

The Casino Truck Show was started in 2011 by locals Darren Goodwin and the late Tiny Lollback, who both loved the industry and their hometown of Casino. The idea was borne following the demise of the Lismore Show. The inaugural show was held in the Primex grounds and remained there for three years before moving to the town centre.



Casino Truck Show 2023

Protecting our unique environment

OBJECTIVE 7: Preserve native bushland and biodiversity

Principal Activity 7A1: Deliver community education programs on habitat protection and responsible land management

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council officers regularly participate in group forums and educational workshops to remain up to date with new initiatives and funding opportunities. Council collaborates with various government departments, industry bodies and NGO's to develop and deliver educational programs for the community which aim to protect and enhance habitat and responsible land management.

On Schedule

Principal Activity 7B1: Lead and support local habitat restoration programs

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council participates in and delivers a number of habitat restoration initiatives across the Richmond Valley. The flying fox habitat restoration program has been very successful with approximately 5,500 trees planted to date. Fish habitat projects and partnerships with the Northern Rivers Koala Network will benefit and protect local flora and fauna.

On Schedule



Queen Elizabeth Park river planting

Principal Activity 7C1: Preserve and enhance biodiversity in local wetlands

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council in partnership with Landcare are seeking opportunities to support wetland precincts by raising community and cultural awareness. Funding is being sought to develop a masterplan for the Jabiru Wetlands in Casino which will guide future enhancement and protection of wetland biodiversity.

On Schedule

OBJECTIVE 8: Maintain healthy rivers, beaches and waterways

Principal Activity 8A1: Secure Casino's water supply
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Casino Water Security Options Study has commenced. NSW Public Works have been engaged to undertake this work which is now expected to be delivered in the first quarter of 2024. Investigation of the "dead storage" in the Jabour Weir pool is underway and if found feasible, pre-construction planning and costings will be commenced. On Schedule
Principal Activity 8A2: Secure the Mid-Richmond's water supply
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Rous County Council supplies potable water to the Mid Richmond communities. Council continues to work closely with Rous to ensure its Future Water Strategy provides for appropriate water quality and long-term water security in these communities. On Schedule
Principal Activity 8B1: Work with government agencies to improve the health of the Richmond River catchment
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council continues to work with regional groups and agencies to identify opportunities to protect the Richmond River catchment. However, in the absence of a whole-of-catchment governance model, led by State and Federal governments, it is challenging to achieve a consistent, strategic approach. Council will continue to advocate for the catchment management recommendations of the Regional Water Strategy to be implemented. On Schedule
Principal Activity 8B2: Work with stakeholders to address water quality risks
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
An On-site sewage management system (OSMS) inspection and approval program is in place and Underground Petroleum Storage System (UPSS) register has been created to facilitate compliance activities. Council has partnered with Rous County Council and NSW Fisheries to establish fish habitat and riparian zone improvements in Casino and Coraki. Water samples are taken year-round to monitor water quality in high recreational use areas as part of the continued beach watch program. On Schedule
Principal Activity 8C1: Improve connection between Casino CBD and the river
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
The link between the Casino CBD and the Richmond River will be explored during the consultation process for the upcoming Casino CBD Masterplan. Funding has been secured to upgrade the footbridge to Queen Elizabeth Park with a signature suspension bridge that will improve river access and connectivity to the southeast of the CBD. The Halstead Drive reconstruction project will be commenced in full in 2024 and will re-establish access to the river area under the Irving Bridge. On Schedule

Principal Activity 8C2: Seek funding to continue to upgrade the Evans Head foreshore and improve access to the river

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

Council's place planning initiative for Evans Head will gather community ideas for the future development of the beach and river accesses. Upcoming upgrades at the Surf Club foreshore and major carpark and access upgrades at Airforce Beach and access improvements to Sharks Bay will begin in 2024.

On Schedule

Principal Activity 8C3: Maintain and protect local beaches

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council Rangers regularly patrol beaches to ensure compliance with regulations. A review of public access arrangements to our beaches is being undertaken. Factors such as beach safety, enforcement guidelines and protection of the environment are being considered. Mechanisms such as the implementation of permits and the expansion of exclusion zones could assist in monitoring and controlling 4WD movements and protect the coastal environment.

On Schedule



Evans Head Malibu Classic

OBJECTIVE 9: Transition to a circular economy

Principal Activity 9A1: Develop and implement the Richmond Valley Circular Economy Strategy
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Following a detailed review in November 2023 it was determined to not wholly revamp the Waste Management & Resource Recovery Strategy as it is still relevant given its adoption in 2020 and timeframe of 2020-2030. The Strategy will be reviewed in Q3 to include circular economy principles and make reference to future residual waste disposal options. The optimal use of the new Cell 6 landfill and long-term landfilling options at regional facilities will need to be considered in the updated strategy. On Schedule
Principal Activity 9B1: Encourage manufacturers and consumers to take responsibility for managing recyclates and residual materials
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Council is providing ongoing support for North East Waste and the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Association's advocacy for product stewardship, where the onus is on manufacturers to maintain an ongoing responsibility for their product over its useful life. Education programs are initiated by Council and target schools and social media (both current and future producers of residual waste). On Schedule
Principal Activity 9B2: Support new recycling/re-use industries to establish in the Richmond Valley
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Continued engagement with NEWaste and ReCirculator (Southern Cross Universities Circular Economy Group). Cooperation with NEWaste, Clarence Valley and Tweed Councils has been scheduled for landfill operator training in January 2024. Discussion with Clarence Valley regarding their interest in the FOGO RFQ, and with Lismore regarding the possibility of RVC supplying recyclates to the Lismore MRF are progressing. The adopted strategy and ideal outcome from the development of the Reynolds Road Industrial Estate was to support the circular economy, with stated support for recycling and re-use industries. A development application has been approved for a recycling business to establish at the site. On Schedule
Principal Activity 9C1: Complete expansion and upgrade works at Nammoona Resource Recovery Facility
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
The construction of the leachate pond is completed and commissioned. The construction of Cell 6A is nearing completion with the final drainage layer currently being placed. Commissioning will take place through February 2024 with an early March opening date expected. Capping of existing cells will commence when their capacity has been exhausted, likely in 2025. The new cell under a full use regime is likely to provide 10-12 years of airspace. On Schedule

Principal Activity 9C2: Manage resource recovery facilities effectively
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Nammoona Landfill and Evans Head transfer station are both managed in compliance with legislation and site licences with no breaches reported. Recovery rates at both facilities have improved with new targets to be set as part of the Waste Strategy review in 2024. Site infrastructure and plant and equipment is currently adequate but is regularly monitored and serviced to ensure minimal downtime. It has been challenging to maintain full employment levels at these facilities in the current market, but the team have shown resilience and dedication to continue high quality operations whilst under-staffed. On Schedule
Principal Activity 9C3: Manage kerbside collection services effectively
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
New side arm, street bin truck, loader and trailer are all on schedule for delivery in January 2024. Post the delivery of these items, there are no immediate plant replacement requirements in the fleet. Collection routes are regularly reviewed and extensions assessed for viability. The CRM system is providing an adequate control for missed bin pickups with minimal occurrences being recorded. On Schedule

Solar panels on Council building

Richmond Valley Council has installed a 99kW solar power system on the administration building, marking a significant move towards sustainability. This initiative is a demonstration of Council's commitment to environmental responsibility and serves as a positive example for others to follow.

The solar system is expected to make a substantial impact by reducing up to 113 tonnes of CO₂ emissions, contributing to global efforts to combat climate change. In addition to its environmental benefits, the installation is a strategic decision to cut down on internal bills for Council. Solar power is not only clean, but also cost-effective, providing long-term financial savings.

This initiative also offers an opportunity for community awareness and education, encouraging residents and businesses to consider the benefits of renewable energy. By actively embracing solar power, the Richmond Valley Council is leading by example and building a more sustainable tomorrow for the entire community.



View via drone of the new solar panels on the Council administration building in Casino

Delivering for our community

OBJECTIVE 10: Lead and advocate for our community

Principal Activity 10A1: Develop and deliver the Richmond Valley Community Engagement Strategy

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council continues to deliver a comprehensive program of community engagement. This includes working with community and advisory groups, such as the newly-formed Discover Richmond Valley Advisory Group to explore emerging issues and opportunities. Council's engagement team also keeps the community up to date with regular posts of social media, community newsletters and information on Council's website. Work is nearing completion on RVC's new Community Engagement Strategy and Framework, which will be presented to Council in 2024.

On Schedule

Principal Activity 10B1: Advocate to federal and state government for community priorities and seek grant funding

Responsible Officer: General Manager

Council continues to advocate strongly for community priorities and to seek government funding for key infrastructure and facilities. In the past six months some \$57.5m in government funding has been secured for essential community projects. Highlights include: \$18m to replace the twin bridges at Tatham, \$4.6m additional funding to complete the Casino Showground redevelopment project, \$5.5m to improve flood resilience of the Woodburn-Coraki Road at Thearles Canal and Dairy Flat, \$8.1m across six community asset projects and \$15m to repair the landslip at Naughton's Gap. In the next six months, Council will continue to actively pursue funds for key infrastructure upgrades, including replacement of the Casino Sewage Treatment Plant, completion of the Woodburn CBD upgrade and further progress on the Three Villages Cycleway project for the Mid Richmond.

On Schedule



Concept Suspension Bridge – Concept artwork of the proposed Suspension Bridge across the Richmond River in Casino



Pictured Left: Representatives from Casino Netball, Casino Swimming Club & Casino Junior and Senior Rugby League, celebrating funding for their new clubhouses.

At right: Woodburn Pony Club and Woodburn Tennis Club will also receive funding for a new shared clubhouse, with Woodburn Hall receiving funds for a carpark upgrade.

Principal Activity 10C1: Provide representative and accountable community governance

Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services

Council's elected body are a cohesive group who maintain a community presence by being visible and accessible to the community. Members of the community are invited to attend Council meetings and submit applications for public access on items listed for resolution. All Council Meetings are live streamed via Councils Facebook page and recordings are accessible through Councils website.

Matters such as public liability claims are considered by relevant Council Officers on a merit basis with the claimant kept informed of progress and outcomes during the assessment process.

On Schedule

OBJECTIVE 11: Manage resources responsibly

Principal Activity 11A1: Undertake long-term financial planning and ensure compliance with financial regulation
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Council reviews and updates its long-term financial plan each quarter in-line with the preparation of the quarterly budget review statement. In doing this, future capital works programs are reviewed as well as projections on operating income and expenditure. On Schedule
Principal Activity 11A2: Strengthen procurement systems
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Council's procurement department recently underwent a staffing restructure process which included the addition of two new positions: Fleet Procurement Officer and a Depot Supervisor. These key positions will provide a more strategic approach for the procurement department, improving the oversight and delivery of plant and vehicles and taking a lead in responsibility for depots - compliance, safety, and forward planning. On Schedule
Principal Activity 11A3: Maintain efficient rating and revenue systems
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Each year when Council staff are forecasting revenue, different scenarios are run based on current land value and property numbers. The advalorem is corrected at each forecast to allow for even, fair and equitable movement between rating categories. On Schedule
Principal Activity 11B1: Implement the Richmond Valley Council Workforce Management Strategy
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
As part of Councils Workforce Plan, we have delivered our Youth Employment Scheme, Careers Expo, continued our local recruitment and indigenous engagement by signing up two Elsa Dixon sponsored roles. We continue to encourage woman into our workplace within non-traditional male dominated positions by promotion of our try a trades program. We are also delivering on our commitment to offer diversity and inclusiveness for marginalised and peoples living with disabilities, created actions and a pathway within our Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Richmond Valley Council were again finalists for the NSW training awards and had two nominees for Trainee of the Year North Coast. We continue to attract skilled workers to our Local Government Area by offering an attractive Employee Value proposition equal to the market and above our direct competitors. On Schedule
Principal Activity 11B2: Continue to provide local employment schemes and development opportunities
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
The Youth Employment Scheme Program and Careers Expo have been run again this year with continued success, these initiatives demonstrate to the community career pathways and opportunities within Local Government. The 2024 Youth Employment Scheme has successfully recruited 13 young local people into our organisation. On Schedule

Principal Activity 11C1: Implement Richmond Valley Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework
Responsible Officer: General Manager
<p>Work continues on implementing and further developing Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework and associated risk management systems and processes. Council participated in its first formal Continuous Risk Improvement Program assessment, in association with our insurer, CivicRisk Mutual and received a rating of "Developing" in its risk management processes, supported by a series of recommendations for system improvements. These recommendations are now being integrated into a three-year program, with a view to improving Council's risk management rating to "Proficient" at the next review. Council's Audit, Review and Improvement Committee continues to operate within its Charter and to provide valuable insights on process and systems improvements.</p> <p>On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 11D1: Use energy and resources more efficiently in council operations
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Opportunities to implement sustainable practices in our core business activities are continually being considered. Council has purchased software packages which will assist in the tracking of expenditure, especially energy bills, that will highlight opportunities to improve efficiencies and reduce costs. Solar panels have been installed on the Casino Administration Building to reduce energy costs. Further analysis will be undertaken on a number of Council assets which are high energy users to explore opportunities to implement more sustainable measures.</p> <p>On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 11E1: Identify opportunities for strategic investment and business development
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Recruitment for a new Invest and Live RV team commenced in 2024. The team will be accountable for enabling economic development in the Richmond Valley, but to also leverage initiatives such as the Casino Showground and the Rail Trail. Council has actively identified investment opportunities, for example Reynolds Road Industrial, and has further plans to invest strategically to attract business to the area including nationally established retailers.</p> <p>On Schedule</p>

OBJECTIVE 12: Provide great service

Principal Activity 12A1: Implement Council's Customer Service Charter
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Quarterly reports are provided to Council which outline the performance of customer service functions in accordance with service levels and expectations. Investigation into the use of technology for online services to improve the customer experience and accessibility are continually being assessed. Service levels will be reviewed following the commencement of a new Council term. On Schedule
Principal Activity 12B1: Provide transparent and timely development assessment and planning services
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council aims to provide quality and timely development and certification services to the community and industry which meet legislative requirements. Regular reviews of internal processes, policies and procedures are undertaken to ensure agreed services levels are met. Regular reports are provided to Council which detail processing timeframes, number of inspections carried out as well as the deliverables of the development concierge services. On Schedule
Principal Activity 12B2: Provide community-focused Ranger and regulatory services
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Ranger activities focus on education and proactive engagement with the community. Upgrades to current animal impounding facilities have commenced with funding provided by a grant. On Schedule
Principal Activity 12B3: Maintain public health and safety inspections requirements
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council is responsible for maintaining various regulatory registers and undertaking compliance inspections. Rolling programs are in place to deliver regulatory functions in areas such as food shops, public swimming pools and air-conditioning units. On Schedule
Principal Activity 12C1: Use technology to support a modern, mobile workforce
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Council will continue to deliver actions as part of the ICT strategy, this includes ongoing server upgrades to support the growing modern, mobile workforce. The actions implemented in Quarter Two were migration of TechOne to the cloud securing our key crown jewels database, improving patch management at the workstation level (Essential 8 item), improving email security through DMARC tools, and eliminating all out-of-support server operating systems through either upgrade or retirement. From a hardware perspective, we completed the upgrade of staff laptops, commenced a review of a new mobile phone for field staff, and signed off a tender to replace our printer/copier fleet. On Schedule

Principal Activity 12C2: Provide efficient corporate support services
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
<p>Council continues to look for efficiencies in technology which included the recent Laptop fleet upgrade and the roll out of Techone migration to the cloud. Staff are now able to access Techone from their smart phone or tablet device when away from the office. We went live with integration with the NSW Planning Portal using APIs directly into TechOne. AssetMaster is being updated, allowing integration with our GIS/Mapping solution. The Records team is meeting its key performance indicators. Audit reporting is being monitored to ensure good quality precis are being prepared and data capture is complete. Procedure reviews are ongoing to streamline processes.</p> <p>On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 12C3: Provide efficient operational support services
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Council depot facilities, mechanical and fabrication workshops are vital resources for the provision of efficient delivery of operational services. Master planning for Council's three depots is underway with Casino Depot masterplan ready for adoption. A depots supervisor has been appointed to take responsibility for the efficient operation of the depots.</p> <p>On Schedule</p>

Library receives Diversity & Inclusion Award

Forward-thinking by the library cataloguing team has been recognised with the announcement of Richmond-Upper Clarence Regional Library as the winner of the 2023 Knosys Libero Diversity & Inclusion Award.

The library made a connection with the Evans Head Living Museum and catalogued their book collection into the library catalogue. This has provided visibility and connection between the library and the museum in the community. The library team also reimagined how MARC tags could be used to better identify authors in their collection, celebrating diversity by highlighting cultural/national identity, and making them more easily discoverable.



Regional Library Manager displaying the Knosys Libero Library Award for Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion 2023

