

Richmond  
Valley  
Council



# AGENDA

## Ordinary Council Meeting

I hereby give notice that an Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held on:

**Date:** Tuesday, 19 March 2024

**Time:** 6pm

**Location:** Council Chambers  
10 Graham Place, Casino

**Vaughan Macdonald**  
**General Manager**

## Statement of Ethical Obligations

In accordance with Clause 3.23 of the Model Code of Meeting Practice, Councillors are reminded of their Oath or Affirmation of Office made under section 233A of the *Local Government Act 1993* and their obligations under Council's Code of Conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

### Oath or affirmation of office

The Oath or Affirmation is taken by each Councillor whereby they swear or declare to:

*Undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the people of the Richmond Valley and Richmond Valley Council, and that they will faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the Local Government Act 1993 or any other Act to the best of their ability and judgment.*

### Conflicts of interest

All Councillors must declare and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at Council meetings in accordance with Council's Code of Conduct.

All declarations of conflicts of interest and how the conflict of interest was managed will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the declaration was made.

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**1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

The Mayor will provide 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****3 PUBLIC ACCESS****4 APOLOGIES**

## 5 MAYORAL MINUTES

### 5.1 OPENING OF THE NORTHERN RIVERS RAIL TRAIL - CASINO TO BENTLEY SECTION

**Author:** Robert Mustow

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the completion of the Casino-Bentley section of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail and its official opening on 23 March 2024;
2. Commends all those involved in delivering this quality facility for the benefit of the Richmond Valley community;
3. Explores options and encourages complementary activities, such as trishaw usage, to enable people of all abilities to enjoy this new community asset;
4. Pursues funding opportunities to enable the completion of all elements of the Master Plan for the Casino to Bentley section of the Rail Trail;
5. Continues to advocate to all levels of government for the ultimate funding and completion of the full 132km length of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail from Casino to Murwillumbah.

#### REPORT

The opening of the Casino-Bentley section of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail on 23 March 2024 marks a major milestone for the Richmond Valley. Council has worked closely with neighbouring Councils and the Northern Rivers Rail Trail Supporters Group to deliver this quality facility and I look forward to the day when we finally see the full 132 km length of the Casino-Murwillumbah Trail across the Richmond Valley, Lismore, Byron Bay and Tweed local government areas completed.

The NSW Government released the *Casino to Murwillumbah Rail Trail Study – Final Report* in May 2014, which included a scoping study for the construction of a Rail Trail on the former Casino to Murwillumbah rail corridor, as it had been closed since 2004. The report estimated that \$900M would be needed to return the corridor to a standard that would enable frequent and quick train services to return to the corridor. At that time, it also estimated that \$75.5M would enable the development of a rail trail. The economic analysis in the report found that the Rail Trail would return a Benefit Cost Ratio of 2.54 (BCR of 1 is break-even) with a visitation of 88,320 day users only. Given the Tweed section of the Rail Trail has hosted over 140,000 visitors in its first year of operation, the economic benefits of the Rail Trail are likely to far exceed expectations especially when the additional sections of the Trail are completed.

Since the inception of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail Supporters Group in 2013, Councils in the Northern Rivers have supported the efforts of the group of community volunteers and leaders of the tourism industry who have championed the vision of preserving and revitalising the disused rail corridor between Casino and Murwillumbah, along with seeking Government support and funding to enable the Rail Trail to be developed. More detailed planning for the Casino to Bentley section of the Rail Trail began in 2019 by Richmond Valley Council, with strong support from our local members of parliament and a \$7.5m funding commitment from the Federal Government's National Tourism Icons Program. Council then progressed through the Master Planning phase, in consultation with the community and finalised the leasing arrangements for the rail corridor, before commencing construction in 2022. Despite the impacts of the Northern Rivers floods, I'm proud that we have stayed the course with this project and delivered a fantastic facility for the whole community to enjoy.

The Casino-Bentley section of the trail offers 13.4km of shared track for cycling and walking, with an adjoining bridle trail for horse riding. The journey includes seven bridges, changing rural landscapes and panoramic views from the rest area above the railway tunnel. The tunnel is home to a rare colony of microbats which will be carefully protected as part of the project. The Rail Trail also includes a new carpark and refurbishments to the Old Casino Station precinct, as well as parking and facilities at the Bentley end of the section, which will ultimately connect with Stage Two of the trail, continuing on to Lismore. There are additional components, including a childrens playground and primitive campground at the Bentley end of the Trail that are in the Master Plan and funding opportunities will be pursued to secure these additional attractions.

The Casino-Bentley section two of the Trail is an outstanding project and I'm sure it will soon be achieving the same popularity as the Murwillumbah – Crabbes Creek section. The Casino-Bentley section will be followed by section three which connects Bentley to Lismore to provide a further 16.3km of Rail Trail experience, attracting millions of dollars in annual visitor spend for the Richmond Valley. Council recently hosted the second of a series of business workshops to help local entrepreneurs explore new opportunities around the Rail Trail and I'm confident that we will see some new ventures opening their doors within the next 12 months.

Although the Rail Trail will be a great boost for tourism in our region, I believe the real benefits of this project will be for the thousands of local community members who will enjoy the facility every year. The southern section provides a safe cycling path from Northern Casino into town, with an ever-changing landscape for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy. I'm particularly delighted that our gala opening day on Saturday 23 March will include the option of taking a trishaw ride along the track – opening the rail trail experience to older residents and those with a disability to share this journey. The Casino-Bentley section offers a different experience to the northern end of the Trail, and the ultimate connection on to Lismore, due to open later this year, will make this a popular destination ride.

Council is also looking at ways to expand the visitor experience by developing other cycling options in the Richmond Valley. Last week, I met with the Premier, the Minister for the North Coast and the Minister for Regional NSW to outline our future plans and projects which include the Three Villages Cycleway, connecting Woodburn, Broadwater and Evans Head, and to seek government funding for this ambitious \$10m shovel-ready project. Combined with the popular mountain bike trails at New Italy, and opportunities for hiking and equestrian activities, which will complement the soon to be opened Casino Showground and racecourse \$15M upgrade, the Richmond Valley is set to become a major centre for active tourism.

Completion of the Casino-Bentley section of the Rail Trail would not have been possible without the leadership and support of our elected Councillors over the last decade and the tireless efforts of Council's Project Team and operational staff and the many local contractors who have contributed to the construction phase. I congratulate everyone on their efforts and look forward to seeing construction completed.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of the Australian Government in delivering this milestone and the dedication of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail Supporters Group who continue to advocate for the ultimate completion of the whole 132km or rail trail.

While Council has secured a long-term lease over the rail corridor, it remains under the ownership of the NSW Government and must be returned to service if it is ever required in the future. In the meantime, the Rail Trail project has provided a wonderful opportunity to transform an abandoned rail corridor into a quality Rail Trail experience for the whole community and visitors to enjoy.

I commend all those involved in this project and look forward to the many benefits that the Northern Rivers Rail Trail will bring to the Richmond Valley.



Cycling without Age trishaws on the Tweed section.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

**Nil**



**6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**6.1 MINUTES ORDINARY MEETING HELD 20 FEBRUARY 2024**

**Director:** Vaughan Macdonald

**Responsible Officer:** Julie Clark

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council confirms the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 20 February 2024.

**REPORT**

Refer attached Minutes.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

- 1. Unconfirmed Minutes 20 February 2024 (under separate cover)**

**7 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES**

**8 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

(Councillors to specify details of item and nature of interest)

**9 PETITIONS**

Nil

**10 NOTICE OF MOTION**

Nil

**11 MAYOR'S REPORT****11.1 MAYORAL ATTENDANCE REPORT 13 FEBRUARY 2024 - 13 MARCH 2024****Author: Robert Mustow****RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receives and notes the Mayoral Attendance Report for the period 13 February – 13 March 2024.

**February**

- 14<sup>th</sup> Destination North Coast Board Networking
- 16<sup>th</sup> Northern Rivers Joint Organisation Board Meeting Casino
- 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting with Minister for Local Government Ballina
- 20<sup>th</sup> Richmond Valley Council Ordinary meeting
- 21<sup>st</sup> Rous County Council Ordinary meeting
- 21<sup>st</sup> Regional Jobs Precinct Community Information Session (afternoon and evening session)
- 24<sup>th</sup> Fishermen's Monument unveiling at Evans Head
- 24<sup>th</sup> Fishermen's Reunion Dinner
- 27<sup>th</sup> Citizenship Ceremony Richmond Valley Council
- 27<sup>th</sup> Historical Society Casino discussion
- 27<sup>th</sup> General Manager Performance review meeting
- 28<sup>th</sup> Presentation to Mr & Mrs Doyle for combined 65 years of community service
- 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting/site visits with Richie Williamson Member for Clarence
- 28<sup>th</sup> Course Essential Cyber
- 29<sup>th</sup> Reconstruction Authority meeting Council Chambers

**March**

- 4<sup>th</sup> Business Engagement Workshop Rail Trail
- 5<sup>th</sup> Richmond Valley Councillor Information Session
- 9<sup>th</sup> Casino & District Historical Society Annual General meeting
- 12<sup>th</sup> Meetings with Premier of NSW, Parliament House Sydney
- 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting with the Hon Tara Moriarty MLC, Parliament House Sydney
- 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting with The Hon. Rose Jackson MLC, Parliament House Sydney
- 13<sup>th</sup> Presentation to Shirley Roach in appreciation of 50 years' service to the Northern Rivers Department of Health.

**ATTACHMENT(S)****Nil**

**12 DELEGATES' REPORTS****12.1 DELEGATES' REPORT MARCH 2024 - ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL****Director:** Vaughan Macdonald**Responsible Officer:** Robert Mustow**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receives and notes the Delegates' Report – Rous County Council for March 2024.

**REPORT**

Council delegates are required to report on meetings/forums attended on Council's behalf.

Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Sandra Humphrys have provided the following summary of the main items of business for the Rous County Council Ordinary Meeting held on 21 February 2024.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

- 1. Rous County Council meeting summary 21 February 2024**

## Rous Council Meeting 21 February 2024

### Summary of main items of business



#### 1. Election of chairperson and deputy chairperson properties

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Councillor Robert Mustow has been returned to the role of chairperson and Councillor Sharon Cadwallader as deputy chairperson.

Congratulations to both and they will hold office until the ordinary local government elections, expected to occur in September 2024.

#### 2. Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee – Appointment of Councillor member

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Congratulations to Councillor Big Rob being appointed as the non-voting councillor member on the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee for a two year term or until a casual vacancy occurs, whichever is the earlier.

#### 3. International Women's Day Event

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Rous is hosting an event for International Women's Day on 12 March 2024 at Invercauld House with the guest speaker being Rabia Saddique. Council approved Councillor Sarah Ndiaye to be Master of Ceremonies with the event running from 9am to 12 noon.

#### 6. Quarterly Budget Review Statement for quarter ending 31 December 2023

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The Quarterly Budget Review Statement (QBRs) is made up of a minimum of six key statements:

(QBRs1) Statement by the Responsible Accounting Officer on Council's financial position

(QBRs2) Budget Review Income and Expenses Statement

(QBRs3) Budget Review Capital Budget

(QBRs4) Budget Review Cash and Investments Position

(QBRs5) Budget Review Contracts and Other Expenses

(QBRs6) Budget Review Key Performance Indicators

Revenue has increased by \$2.0M, operating expenditure has decreased by \$0.7M, capital expenditure has decreased by \$0.4M and loan drawdowns have decreased by \$15.0M, resulting in an overall change of \$11.5M to be transferred from reserves.

A complete review of proposed capital works is to be undertaken as part of the annual budget process.

The overall internal reserves policy position is still forecast to be met, along with the New South Wales Treasury Corporation loan covenant requirement to hold reserves that equal 6 months of the next financial year's operating expenditure less depreciation.

## 7. Retail Bad Debt Write-off

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Council approved the write-off of a bad debt valued at \$5,759.01 associated with a retail water billing customer. Discussion around bad debt write-offs and how to deal with them is ongoing. To give councilors an understanding of Rous' position with bad debts and the Debt Management and Financial Hardship' policy, a workshop will be conducted at a date to be determined.

## 8. Information Reports

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### 1. Sustainable Water Partner Pilot Program

The Sustainable Water Partner Program (Pilot) implemented in 2023 built on the success of work undertaken previously which targeted businesses using more than 5 megalitres of water per annum.

The objective is to assist non-residential customers to improve water efficiency and reduce water/sewer bills. This consists of three parts: water efficiency plans, water efficiency projects and recognition.

The Pilot program deliverables are: -

- Lead initial engagement with targeted businesses.
- Conduct onsite water assessment of businesses.
- Produce a water efficiency plan for each business including water efficiency project of works.

The Water Conservancy was awarded the contract to deliver the services for the program, including the installation of smart meters to provide data usage.

The results achieved water savings for the businesses in the program and Rous is continuing to encourage other businesses to adopt the measures identified in their reports.

Rous will continue to promote the program to high water users and specific priority industry sectors, including a subset of each target business type across the region.

### 2. Retail Water Customer Account Assistance – Information report

In the six-month period July to December 2023, two applications were received for financial assistance, in accordance with section 356(1) Local Government Act 1993 (LG Act) and council's "Retail Water Customer Assistance' policy.

The 2023/24 financial year budget allocation for applications made in accordance with the 'Retail Water Customer Account Assistance' policy is \$25,000.00. The total value of financial assistance granted by the General Manager under delegated authority for this period equated to \$8,923.25.

### 3. Investments – as of 31 January 2024

- The RBA cash rate is 4.35%
- Total funds invested is \$35,778,872.
- Weighted Average Return is 4.70%
- Interest earned is \$149,275.
- The cheque account balance is \$668,942.
- Weel account balance is \$18,838.
- Investments with institutions that do not support the fossil fuel industry is \$6,500,000 (18.17% of current holdings)

4. Water production and consumption –

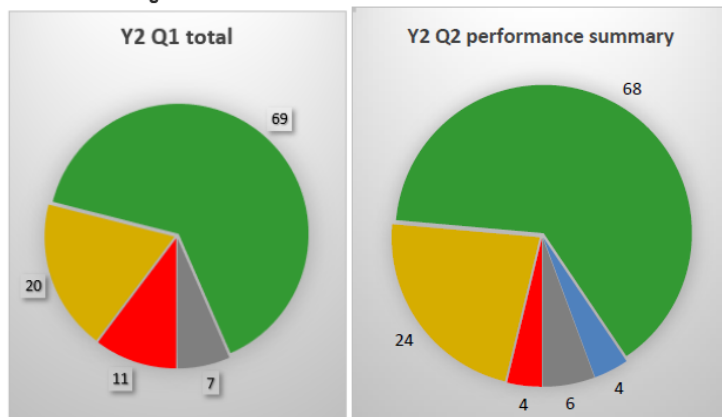
The table below is the January 2024 bulk water sales to the constituent councils in kilolitres compared to the corresponding January sales for 2023 and 2022.

Council	Jan 2022 (kL)	Jan 2023 (kL)	Jan 2024 (kL)	% of Total Sales
Ballina Shire Council	308,887	342,324	309,700	36.11%
Byron Shire Council	214,550	248,277	247,009	28.8%
Lismore City Council	243,023	242,167	243,506	28.39%
Richmond Valley Council	51,616	62,565	57,420	6.7%
<b>TOTAL MONTHLY CONSUMPTION BY CONSTITUENT COUNCILS</b>	<b>818,076</b>	<b>895,333</b>	<b>857,635</b>	

5. Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework – Delivery program / Operational plan progress update

A report on performance for the period 1 October to 31 December 2023. A report on performance for the twelve-month period ending 30 June 2024 is due to be furnished to Council’s August 2024 meeting.

Performance at a glance



The reduction in the total number of actions from 107 to 106 for Q2 is the result of merging two actions.

Refer to the attachment for comments on **Amber**, **Red**, and Grey items.

Blue: <b>COMPLETE</b> .
Green: <b>ACCEPTABLE</b> . On track according to schedule or not yet due to have started.
Amber: <b>MONITOR</b> . In progress but behind schedule.
Red: <b>REVIEW</b> . Corrective action required.
Grey: <b>NO LONGER REQ.</b>

Council’s business paper and draft meeting minutes can be found via the following link:  
<https://rous.nsw.gov.au/business-papers-and-meeting-minutes>

**13 MATTERS DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE**

Each Councillor is given the opportunity to indicate which items they wish to debate or question. Item numbers identified for debate or questioning will be read to the Meeting.

Following identification of the above items a motion will be moved in regard to the balance of items being determined without debate.

**13.1 MATTERS TO BE DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE****RECOMMENDATION**

That items identified be determined without debate.



## **14 GENERAL MANAGER**

### **14.1 NSW DISASTER MITIGATION PLAN**

**Author:** Vaughan Macdonald

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The NSW Government has released the State's first Disaster Mitigation Plan to help reduce the impacts of future disaster events, such as floods, bushfire and storms, on communities throughout NSW. The Plan, prepared by the NSW Reconstruction Authority, links with regional and local planning and will help to guide Council's future direction for adapting to a changing climate. Council is currently facing a \$150-200m repair bill for public infrastructure damaged in the 2022 floods and the new Plan sets out ways to reduce communities' exposure to disaster risks, as well as increasing resilience to support faster recovery from future events. Council will draw on the key directions of the Plan in preparing its future place management strategies.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council

1. Notes the release of the NSW State Disaster Mitigation Plan 2024-2026.
2. Continues to work with the NSW Reconstruction Authority to develop appropriate options for regional and local disaster mitigation planning that reflect the long-term needs and priorities of the Richmond Valley community.

#### **DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS**

Objective 1: Rebuild and reconnect our communities

1C Advocate for government investment to support economic recovery

1C1 Continue to work with the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation & other agencies to support regional recovery

#### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

The Disaster Mitigation Plan estimates that, without improved risk mitigation, the cost of building and infrastructure damage from future disasters in NSW could reach \$9.1 billion per year by 2060. Council is currently facing a \$150-200m repair bill for infrastructure damage from the 2022 floods and has relied heavily on government disaster funding to help cover the cost of these repairs.

#### **REPORT**

The NSW Disaster Mitigation Plan takes the first steps towards building a comprehensive framework for state, regional and local disaster risk management plans. It aims to reduce the future impacts of natural disasters by refocusing government policy on risk reduction strategies and encouraging state agencies and councils to work together to help communities prepare for worsening bushfires, heatwaves, floods, storms and coastal erosion in the future.

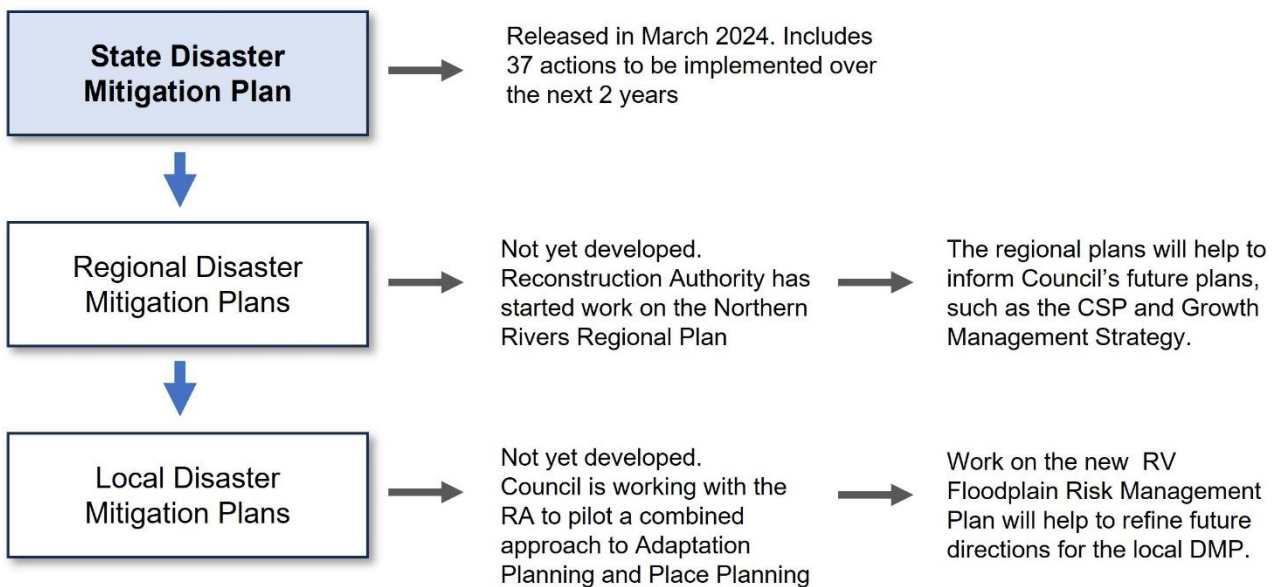
The Plan sets out high level directions to reduce communities' future exposure to disaster events by improving warning systems, building mitigation infrastructure (such as levees) improving evacuation options, undertaking managed relocation and introducing strategic planning controls. It also aims to reduce communities' vulnerability to future disasters by building resilience – such as introducing new building standards for housing, improving preparedness, modifying existing homes, and improving infrastructure design and construction.

The Plan includes 37 priority actions, to be delivered over the next two years, subject to funding. While this is a welcome step forward, Northern Rivers councils, who are now entering their third

year of recovery from the 2022 flood, will need to progress with their programs, while they wait for clearer direction on key issues. Guidance on matters such as planning controls, building codes and standards and the NSW Government’s future policy on managed relocation will not be finalised until at least mid-2025 and communities cannot wait that long to move forward with their recovery.

Richmond Valley Council is already well underway in delivering its 3-year Recovery Plan and progressing with future planning for the Mid Richmond communities. Council will continue to deliver these priority projects, while working closely with the NSW Reconstruction Authority to integrate any new requirements into our planning framework as they are developed. The diagram below shows how the plans will eventually fit together.

**PLANNING FOR DISASTERS**



At this stage, the regional and local levels of the Reconstruction Authority’s Disaster Mitigation framework are not yet developed. Work has commenced on a draft regional plan for the Northern Rivers and the Reconstruction Authority plans to develop final guidelines for regional and local adaptation planning later this year. Richmond Valley Council is playing a key role in refining the local model by partnering with the Authority to develop a pilot project, integrating Place Planning and Adaptation Planning for the Mid Richmond communities of Coraki, Woodburn, Broadwater and Evans Head. The lessons learned from this project will help to inform the final guidelines and Council can continue to refine its local planning as more information comes to hand. This will include any flood mitigation measures identified in the next iteration of Council’s Floodplain Risk Management Plan, which is due to commence later this year.

**Future approach to buy-backs**

The State Disaster Mitigation Plan continues to rely on planned relocation as a future mitigation strategy for communities impacted by disaster but acknowledges the need for greater collaboration on proposals such as voluntary house purchase. The Plan notes that:

*“One of the key tools to reduce risk is to change how and where we live through strategic land use planning. However, this can be challenging. For example, the managed relocation of people from homes in high-risk areas (known as buy-backs or voluntary purchase) can be disruptive and traumatic due to longstanding connections to homes, places, communities, and Country.*

*Effective risk reduction, particularly changes to strategic land use planning, requires a high degree of collaboration between all stakeholders, and difficult decisions may need to be made. These include managing the competing priorities and values attached to growth, housing supply, equity,*

*and environmental and social impacts. It requires open and collaborative conversations between those who benefit and those affected by different options, including community members, all levels of government, insurance and banking industries, and private businesses.”*

While the option of relocation is a complex decision, it is clear that the buy-back schemes trialled in the Northern Rivers after the 2022 flood have not always resulted in the best outcomes for local communities. Two years on, there continues to be uncertainty over available options, eligibility and timeframes for our Mid Richmond villages. Hopefully the lessons learned from the Northern Rivers experience will help to inform a more collaborative and transparent approach to planned relocation in the future. Council continues to work with the Reconstruction Authority and advocate for a final resolution to the Resilient Homes Program that will allow flood-affected communities to move on with confidence and reclaim their future.

## **CONSULTATION**

The State Disaster Mitigation Plan was prepared following consultation with community members, State government agencies, local councils and technical advisors. This included hosting 28 workshops with a total of 345 participants during the development phase.

## **CONCLUSION**

The NSW Government's new State Disaster Mitigation Plan takes an important step forward in improving risk management strategies for NSW communities in the face of increasing natural disasters in the future. The next levels of the planning framework are yet to be developed and it will be important that the NSW Reconstruction Authority continues to work closely with local councils and communities to develop appropriate risk reduction measures that reflect local needs and priorities.

## **ATTACHMENT(S)**

- 1. Managing the threat of extreme weather before disaster strikes**

**Paul Scully**

Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

**Jihad Dib**Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government  
Minister for Emergency Services  
Minister for Youth Justice**Media Release****Managing the threat of extreme weather before disaster strikes****Friday, 23 February 2024**

The NSW Government is today releasing the nation's first State Disaster Mitigation Plan (SDMP), developed by the NSW Reconstruction Authority.

The plan reveals the cost of building and infrastructure damage from natural disasters could hit \$9.1 billion per year by 2060 if mitigation steps are not taken, as more frequent and severe events take an increased toll on homes, businesses and government infrastructure.

This is up from an estimated average annual cost of damage at \$3.1 billion per year in NSW.

The NSW Reconstruction Authority was established following the 2022 NSW Independent Flood Inquiry, led by Professor Mary O'Kane and Mick Fuller.

The State Disaster Mitigation Plan was issued pursuant to the NSW Reconstruction Authority Act 2022, which requires the NSW Reconstruction Authority to prepare and implement a state disaster mitigation plan to provide guidance about the mitigation of disasters across NSW.

The Plan outlines how the rising costs of disasters can be addressed by refocusing government policy towards risk-reducing actions, and details how government agencies can work together to help communities prepare for worsening bushfires, heatwaves, floods, storms and coastal erosion.

The NSW Reconstruction Authority will help coordinate delivery of the actions to improve community resilience and mitigate against disasters.

Since 2019, NSW residents have endured over 65 declared disasters, costing taxpayers more than \$6 billion, with more than 20,000 homes damaged in 2022 alone.

Climate change is expected to increase the severity and frequency of natural disasters.

The SDMP includes a toolkit of measures to reduce communities' exposure and vulnerability to disasters through awareness and preparedness campaigns, evacuation infrastructure and warning systems.

The actions include:

- Boosting the State's "Get Ready" preparedness campaigns to ensure communities are better equipped.
- Building a new local government toolkit to guide councils in preparing for disasters and the impacts of climate change.
- Developing local Disaster Adaptation Plans that will help communities become more aware and prepared and will inform future planning processes and rebuilding and reconstruction efforts after a disaster occurs.

OFFICIAL

- Developing early warning systems so communities are better prepared when disaster strikes.
- Identifying mitigation infrastructure strategies and approaches to funding.
- Working with industry to review building codes to factor in greater building resilience through materials and design.
- Reviewing insurance levy arrangements and working with the insurance sector to factor in affordability in adaption planning.

The first three local Disaster Adaptation Plans are currently being developed for the Northern Rivers and Hawkesbury Nepean, while work will commence soon for a Central West plan.

In developing the SDMP, detailed analysis was undertaken to determine the biggest threats to NSW. The results showed that storms and floods present the highest risk to homes, businesses and infrastructure, while heatwaves and bushfires present the greatest risk to life.

Research for the plan shows the top 20 local government areas in NSW currently most at risk from multiple hazards are the Central Coast, Tweed, Clarence Valley, Ballina, Northern Beaches, Penrith, Hawkesbury, Sydney, Lake Macquarie, Blacktown, Canterbury-Bankstown, Sutherland Shire, Newcastle, Bayside, Liverpool, Wollongong, Parramatta, Lismore, Shoalhaven and the Inner West.

The authority will deliver the next State Disaster Mitigation Plan (SDMP) in 2026, which will identify projects for the longer term.

A copy of the plan can be viewed on the [NSW Reconstruction Authority](#) website from 9am AEST.

**Minister for Planning and Public Spaces Paul Scully said:**

“Historically, the state’s ability to prevent and prepare for disasters hasn’t worked as there has been only three per cent of funding spent on prevention and 97 per cent spent after an event.

“But we know that every dollar we invest in better preparing communities reduces future costs and will help make communities more resilient.

“The cost of inaction is too great: we need to better prepare and plan for disasters so we can lessen the burden on our communities. It gives us the tools we need to make better, more informed decisions about planning, so we can deliver more resilient homes away from areas of high-risk.

“This is our opportunity to build better so that we can better deal with disasters that come and equip communities with what they need.”

**Minister Emergency Services Jihad Dib said:**

“We’re shifting the dial in how we address disasters as well as making sure we do not inadvertently put people in harm’s way through bad planning decisions. For the first time, NSW finally has a plan to begin turning that around with information on how we can invest in reducing risks before disasters occur to better protect communities.

“Successive years of unprecedented natural disasters have highlighted the need for NSW to meet the challenges of the future by working to reduce both the actual and social costs of natural hazards to our communities. The first-ever State Disaster Mitigation Plan outlines the actions NSW collectively needs to take to reduce the risks our communities face, from bushfires and floods to storms and coastal hazards.

“There is no easy or simple solution to these challenges. The focus of the State Disaster Mitigation Plan is to provide a framework and clear actions for reducing risk where we can, and adapting where we can’t, through improved warning systems and a focus on resilient infrastructure.

“The increasing risk of natural disasters also increases pressure on our emergency services staff and volunteers, who put themselves on the line keeping communities safe. This plan will help to manage that risk by reducing the impact of disasters before they occur.”

OFFICIAL

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**Deputy CEO of the NSW Reconstruction Authority Simone Walker said:**

“The NSW Reconstruction Authority is the first entity of its kind in NSW with the dual responsibility of proactively reducing the impact of future disasters before they happen, as well as responding after.

“This milestone plan gives NSW communities the first ever roadmap to reduce the risk of future disasters.

“This is critical because every dollar we invest in reducing risks will help people recover faster and reduce the cost of future disasters.”

**MEDIA:**

**Kate Bryant | Minister Scully | 0455 609 661**

**Mark Scala | Minister Dib | 0414 746 651**

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**15 COMMUNITY SERVICE DELIVERY**

Nil

**16 PROJECTS & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

Nil

## 17 ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

### 17.1 FINANCIAL ANALYSIS REPORT - FEBRUARY 2024

**Director:** Ryan Gaiter

**Responsible Officer:** Rylee Vidler

#### 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 29 February 2024 is shown below:

Bank Accounts	Term Deposits	Floating Rate Notes	Fixed Rate Bonds	TCorp IM Funds	Total
\$18,429,247	\$34,000,000	\$6,750,390	\$4,500,000	\$16,319,611	\$79,999,248

The weighted average rate of return on Council's cash and investments at 29 February 2024 was 7.10% which was above the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index for February of 0.34%, which is Council's benchmark.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Financial Analysis Report detailing the performance of its cash and investments for the month of February 2024.

#### DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 11: Manage resources responsibly

11A Manage finances responsibly and provide value for money

11A1 Undertake long-term financial planning and ensure compliance with financial regulation

#### BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

As at 29 February 2024, Council has earned \$1,992,694 in interest, \$19,020 in fair value gains from fixed rate bonds and \$982,288 in fair value gains from funds held in TCorp, for a total investment income of \$2,994,002. This equates to 220.98% of the annual budget for interest and investment income of \$1,354,861. Council currently receives a net return of 4.70% on its Macquarie CMA Account after Council's financial advisors receive their commission of 0.05%. Commissions for the 2023/2024 financial year to 29 February total \$1,760.

Future fair value gains or losses will continue to be monitored and reported to Council.

#### REPORT

##### Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) Cash Rate Update

The RBA held the cash rate to 4.35% per annum at its February meeting.

##### Rate of Return

The weighted average rate of return on cash and investments in February was 7.10%, an increase in 102 basis points from the previous month. The rate of return is 676 basis points above the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index of 0.34% which is Council's benchmark.



Council's NSW Treasury Corporation IM Funds returned net gains of \$208,079 during the month of February. The Medium-Term Growth Fund (MTGF) returned a gain of \$122,970 and the Long-Term Growth Fund (LTGF) returned a gain of \$85,108.

During February, bond yields and most equity markets rose further. The RBA has not ruled out further rate increases, however, the economic data over the past few months has weakened the likelihood of this happening. Investors are now expecting the RBA to lower the interest rates around September and are predicting one to two cuts in 2024.

The MTGF has a recommended investment timeframe of seven or more years (original investment was October 2018) and the LTGF has a recommended investment timeframe of 10 or more years (original investment was June 2021) during which time it is expected that there will be ups and downs in fair value gains. However, it should be noted that, despite the variation in returns, there has been no impact on the principal sum originally invested by Council.

Term deposits and floating rate notes continue to offer increasing rates of return, which is positive, however, some banking institutions are still limiting the number of deposits they will accept, and others are not accepting any deposits at present.

### Council's Cash and Investments Portfolio

Council held cash and investments of \$79,999,248 at 29 February 2024. This was made up of Council's Business Online Saver Account (\$9,270,000), Macquarie Cash Management Account (\$8,029,497), Term Deposits (\$34,000,000), Floating Rate Notes (\$6,750,390), Bonds (\$4,500,000), NSW Treasury Corporation Investments (\$16,319,611) and other bank accounts (\$1,129,750).

Council's investment portfolio had maturity dates ranging from same day up to 1,742 days. Term deposits, floating rate notes and bonds of \$45,250,390 represented 56.56% of the total portfolio as at 29 February 2024.

Council made the following new investments during February 2024:

Banking Institution	Investment Type	Environmentally Sustainable Investment	Amount Invested	Investment Term	Interest Rate
NAB	Term Deposit	N	\$2,000,000	3 months	5.05%
Judo Bank	Term Deposit	Y	\$1,000,000	6 months	5.10%
Judo Bank	Term Deposit	Y	\$2,000,000	6 months	5.10%
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$5,000,000</b>		

Council had the following investment maturities during the month of February 2024:

Banking Institution	Investment Type	Environmentally Sustainable Investment	Amount Invested	Interest Earned
Bank of Queensland	Term Deposit	N	\$2,000,000	\$33,090
Judo Bank	Term Deposit	Y	\$1,000,000	\$12,855
Judo Bank	Term Deposit	Y	\$2,000,000	\$25,430
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$5,000,000</b>	<b>\$71,375</b>

Council had \$16,319,611 in longer term investments being the MTGF and LTGF held with NSW Treasury Corporation as at 29 February 2024. The investment values and fair value returns are shown below:

Investment Holding	Fair Value 29 February 24	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) at 29 February 24	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) YTD	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) Life of Investment
Medium Term Growth Fund	\$12,958,107	\$122,970	\$711,090	\$1,953,078
Long Term Growth Fund	\$3,361,504	\$85,109	\$271,198	\$361,504
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$16,319,611</b>	<b>\$208,079</b>	<b>\$982,288</b>	<b>\$2,314,582</b>

### Environmentally Sustainable Investments (ESI's)

Council's cash and investments portfolio of \$79,999,248, at 29 February 2024 includes \$42,569,612 or 53.2% with no direct investment in the fossil fuel industry.

These percentages include Council's investments with NSW Treasury Corporation and Northern Territory Treasury Corporation.

NSW Treasury Corporation has a stewardship approach to ESIs which focuses on managing environmental, social and governance (ESG) risks and opportunities, particularly climate change which is expected to impact portfolios over the long term. The stewardship policy states NSW Treasury Corporation believes incorporating these principles into investment decisions results in better risk-adjusted financial outcomes. Even though NSW Treasury Corporation takes this stewardship approach, its monthly reporting only highlights the different asset classes, not individual investments, and the level of investment in the fossil fuel industry.

Northern Territory Treasury Corporation utilises funds to assist with its infrastructure requirements such as housing, transport, health, and education services. While no statement has been provided on its investment strategy, it has been assumed that providing funding towards its own infrastructure will not involve direct investment in the fossil fuel industry.

### CONCLUSION

During the month February 2024, Council's investments have been made in accordance with the Act, the Regulations and Council's Investment Policy.

As at 29 February 2024 Council's cash and investments totalled \$79,999,248 with \$18,429,247 of this being funds held in bank accounts. The weighted average rate of return was 7.10% and total investment revenue equals 220.98% of budgeted revenue for the year to 29 February 2024.

### ATTACHMENT(S)

1. RVC Investment Pack - February 2024 (under separate cover)

**17.2 AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE, UPDATED TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**Director:** Ryan Gaiter

**Responsible Officer:** Latoya Cooper

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In July 2023 Council adopted the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) Terms of Reference in line with the Office of Local Governments update on the *Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW*. Since then, the Local Government Regulation 2021 has been amended to give statutory force to key elements of the Office of Local Government's Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW. The amended regulation commences on 1 July 2024 and as such the ARIC was required to update its Terms of Reference to reflect these minor modifications.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopts the updated Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Terms of Reference.

**REPORT**

The minor modifications made to the Terms of Reference include:

- the removal of reference to the Departmental Chief Executive changing to referencing 'Office of Local Government';
- the removal of reference to the Guidelines for risk management and internal audit for local government in NSW changing to referencing the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.
- change in reference from chair to chairperson.

**DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS**

Objective 10: Lead and advocate for our community

10C Lead with integrity

10C1 Provide representative and accountable community governance

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. Updated Terms of Reference (under separate cover)

**17.3 MONTHLY BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS REPORT - FEBRUARY 2024**

**Director:** Ryan Gaiter

**Responsible Officer:** Zakari Witt

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report details the proposed budget adjustments for the month of February 2024.

Council's projected operating result from continuing operations for 2023/2024 is proposed to increase by \$114,491 to a surplus of \$33,257,840. The net operating result before capital grants and contributions has decreased slightly from a deficit of \$1,986,917 to a deficit of \$2,103,436.

Income from continuing operations has increased by \$425,600 from the revised budget at 31 December 2023, with total income now projected to be \$109,812,337.

Expenses from continuing operations have increased by \$311,109 to a projected total of \$76,554,497 and Council's capital works program has increased \$221,328, resulting in a projected program for 2023/2024 of \$70,995,695.

Council's unrestricted cash surplus has remained unchanged at \$212,574 as at 29 February 2024.

The report provides further details of the proposed changes as well as the revised budget position as at 29 February 2024.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Approves the proposed budget adjustments for the month of February 2024.
2. Notes the revised budget position for 2023/2024 as at 29 February 2024.

**DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS**

Objective 11: Manage resources responsibly

11A Manage finances responsibly and provide value for money

11A1 Undertake long-term financial planning and ensure compliance with financial regulation

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

As detailed in the report.

**REPORT**

During the month of February 2024, the following adjustments are proposed.

**Income from Continuing Operations**

Income from continuing operations is proposed to increase by \$425,600, with \$309,081 in operating income and \$116,519 in capital income to bring the projected total to \$109,812,337.

Operational Income

It is proposed to increase the Reconnecting NSW Community Events operational income by \$60,341 in line with the grant program funded by the Department of Regional NSW along with an increase of \$236,000 for the expected sales from the biosolids project. Council is also expecting to receive \$12,740 in line with the koala strike mitigation strategy grant program funded by the NSW

Department of Planning and Environment for relocation and maintenance of two variable message sign trailers.

### Capital Grants and Contributions

It is proposed to increase capital income by \$66,592 for the purchase of two variable message sign trailers under the koala strike mitigation strategy grant program funded by NSW Department of Planning and Environment. A further \$49,927 is proposed to be allocated towards an options assessment report for Casino water treatment plant in line with grant funding received from NSW Department of Planning and Environment.

### **Expenses from Continuing Operations**

It is proposed to increase expenses from continuing operations by \$311,109 bringing the projected total to \$76,554,497. This consists of a proposed increase to the reconnecting NSW Community Events budget of \$110,739 in line with the grant program funded by the Department of Regional NSW with \$60,341 being funded from the final instalment and \$50,398 from the unexpended grant reserves. It is also proposed to allocate \$6,370 towards the koala strike mitigation strategy grant program funded by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment for maintenance works and a further \$194,000 towards the finalisation of the biosolids project.

### **Capital Expenditure**

It is proposed to increase capital expenditure by \$221,328 bringing the projected total capital works program to \$70,995,695 for the 2023/2024 financial year. This consists of \$37,000 for a spare submersible pump for sewer pump station 4 in Evans Head funded by sewer reserves, \$8,020 for repair work to the accessible ramp at the Broadwater Hall due to damage from the February 2022 flood event, funded by insurance reserves along with \$83,582 for modifications to the Casino administration building office space to allow more workspaces and promote a collaborative environment, funded from quarry reserves. A further \$26,134 is proposed to fund the replacement of optic fibre and pan tilt zoom cameras from the insurance reserve due to storm damage, along with \$66,592 in line with the koala strike mitigation strategy grant program funded by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment for the purchase of two variable message sign trailers. 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.

### **Revised Budget Position**

The impact of the proposed budget adjustments on the 2023/2024 budget is summarised in the table below with the important information for Council to note being the recommended changes for resolution.

Monthly Budget Adjustment - February 2024	Revised Budget 31-Dec-24	Recommended Changes for Council Resolution	Projected Year End Result 2023/2024
Income from Continuing Operations	109,386,737	425,600	109,812,337
Expenses from Continuing Operations	76,243,388	311,109	76,554,497
<b>Operating Result from Continuing Operations</b>	<b>33,143,349</b>	<b>114,491</b>	<b>33,257,840</b>
<b>Operating Result before Capital Income</b>	<b>(1,986,917)</b>	<b>(116,519)</b>	<b>(2,103,436)</b>
Add: Non-Cash Expenses	18,648,544	0	18,648,544
Add: Non-Operating Funds Employed	3,164,697	0	3,164,697
Less: Capital Expenditure	70,774,367	221,328	70,995,695
Less: Loan Repayments	3,599,103	0	3,599,103
<b>Estimated Funding Result – Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(19,416,880)</b>	<b>(106,837)</b>	<b>(19,523,717)</b>
Restricted Funds – Increase/(Decrease)	(19,629,454)	(106,837)	(19,736,291)
<b>Unrestricted Funds – Increase/(Decrease)</b>	<b>212,574</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>212,574</b>

**CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the proposed budget adjustments for the month of February 2024 will have no impact on the projected budget surplus of \$212,574 for 2023/2024 as all works are fully funded from reserves or the reallocation of funding from other project budgets. Overall, Council's projected financial position at year end remains on track and is in a satisfactory position.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

**Nil**

**18 GENERAL BUSINESS**

Nil

## 19 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

### RECOMMENDATION

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

#### 19.1 AGENCY INFORMATION GUIDE (GIPA ACT)

**Director:** Ryan Gaiter

**Responsible Officer:** Kate Allder-Conn

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the updated Agency Information Guide, as required under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act).

### REPORT

Under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act), agencies are required to adopt and maintain an Agency Information Guide (AIG). A review of the current version, adopted by Council in September 2022, has been undertaken.

The AIG must:

- Describe the structure and functions of the agency.
- Describe the ways in which the functions (in particular, the decision-making functions) of the agency affect members of the public.
- Specify any arrangements that exist to enable members of the public to participate in the formulation of the agency's policy and the exercise of the agency's functions.
- Identify the various kinds of government information held by the agency.
- Identify the kinds of government information held by the agency that the agency makes (or will make) publicly available.
- Specify the manner in which the agency makes (or will make) government information publicly available; and
- Identify the kinds of information that are (or will be) made publicly available free of charge and those kinds for which a charge is (or will be) imposed.

A review of Council's Agency Information Guide has been conducted in consultation with Council's Finance, Assets, Strategic Planning and Development teams. Relevant minor adjustments have been made to ensure currency of the document, including the following sections:

- Council structure
- Council's priorities (to match the recently adopted Community Strategic Plan)
- Vision and values
- Relevant legislation
- Council committees, and
- Information available from Council.



The AIG will be further reviewed following the local government election to be held in September 2024.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

- 1. Draft Agency Information Guide (under separate cover)**

**19.2 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT FOR THE PERIOD 1 FEBRUARY 2024 - 29 FEBRUARY 2024**

**Director:** Angela Jones

**Responsible Officer:** Denise Catlin

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receives and notes the Development Application report for the period 1 February 2024 to 29 February 2024.

**REPORT**

This report provides a summary of development activity on a monthly basis. All Development Applications determined in the month are outlined in this report, including Section 4.55 approvals, applications which were refused and withdrawn, and applications with no development value, such as subdivisions.

Council receives a fortnightly summary of the status of applications (including all received) and notifications of all determinations of Development Applications are included in the Community Newsletter on a monthly basis.

The total number of Development Applications and Complying Development Applications determined within the Local Government area for the period 1 February 2024 to 29 February 2024 was twenty-two (22), inclusive of three Privately Certified Complying Development Applications with a total value of \$3,363,386.00.

The graph below shows the number of development applications processed by Council over five financial years.

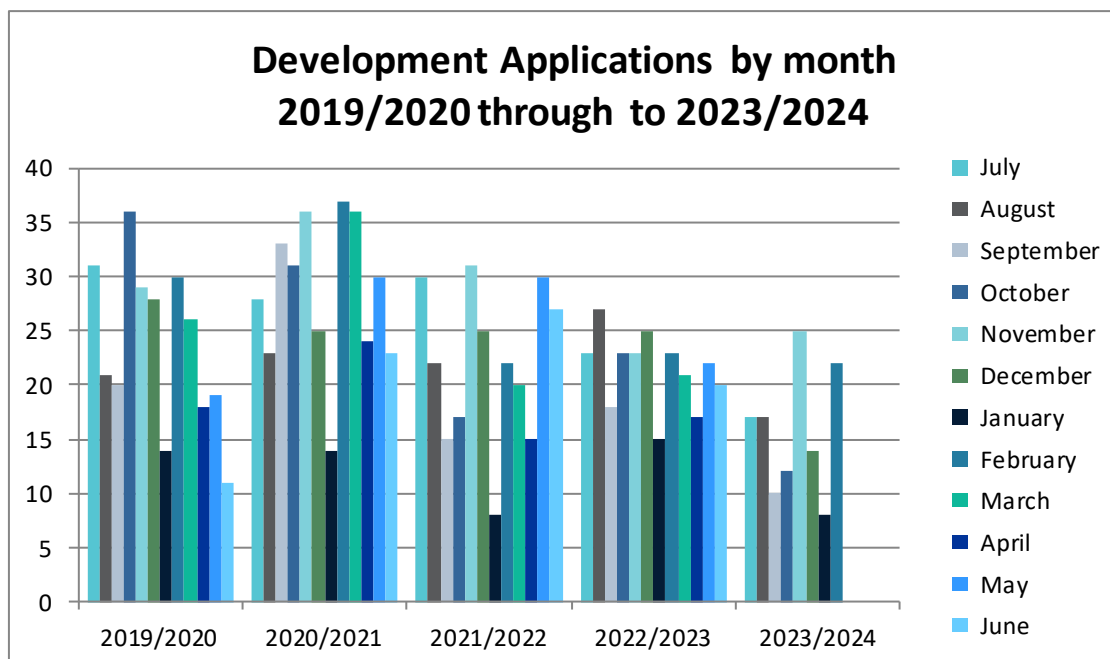


Figure 1: Monthly number of development applications processed by Council over five financial years.

Figure 2 provides the annual value of Development Consents issued by Council over five financial years and Figure 3 provides a detailed review of the value for the reporting month of February 2024.

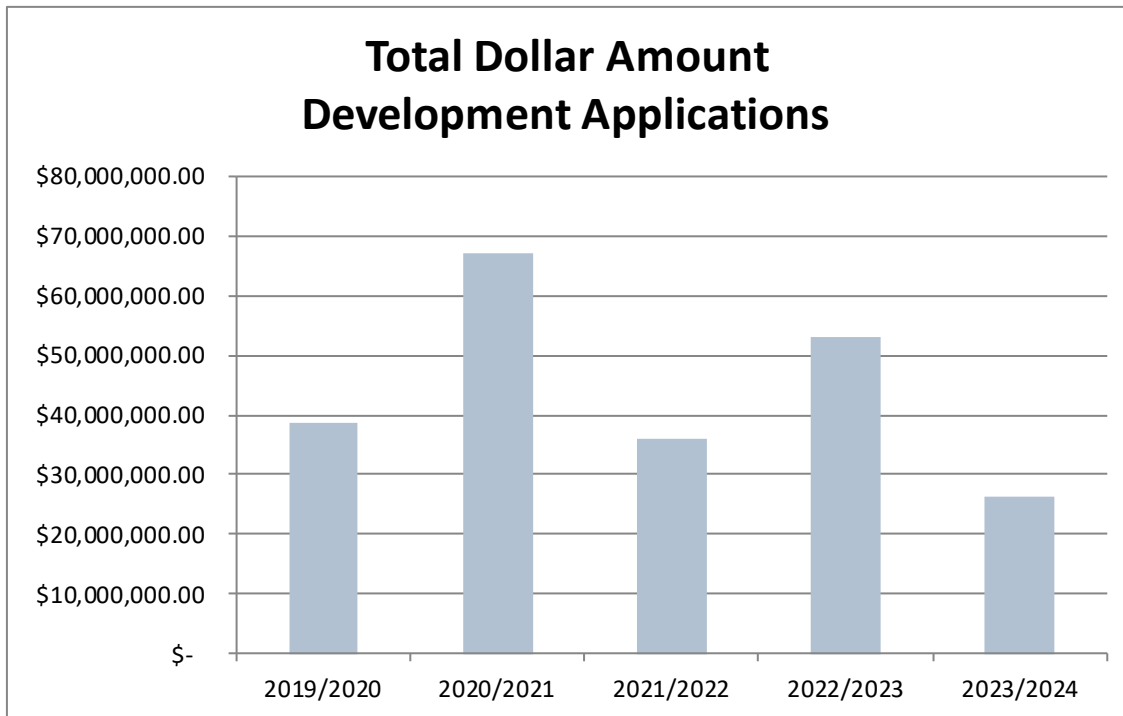


Figure 2: Annual value of development

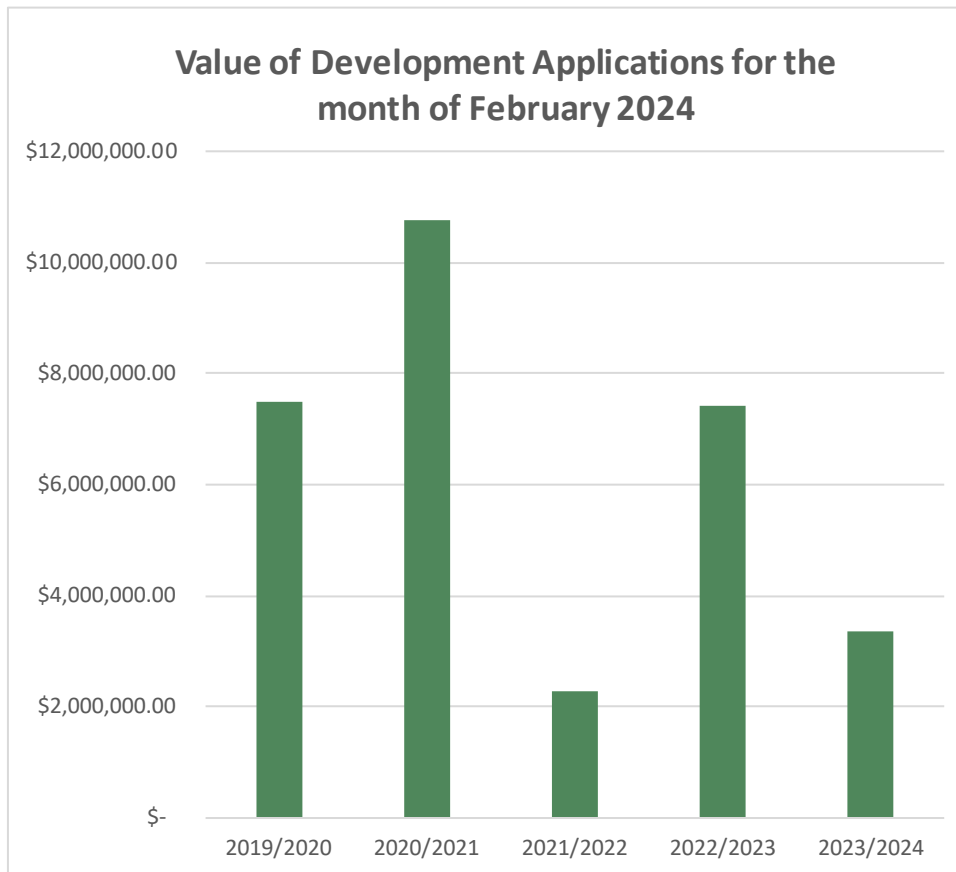


Figure 3: Value of development for the month of February 2024

**Number of Development Applications**

The number of applications received by Council does not necessarily reflect the value of developments, as single large developments can be equivalent in value to a large number of more standard type developments such as sheds, dwellings and small commercial developments.

Figures 4 and 5 detail the number of applications determined by Council over the past five years.

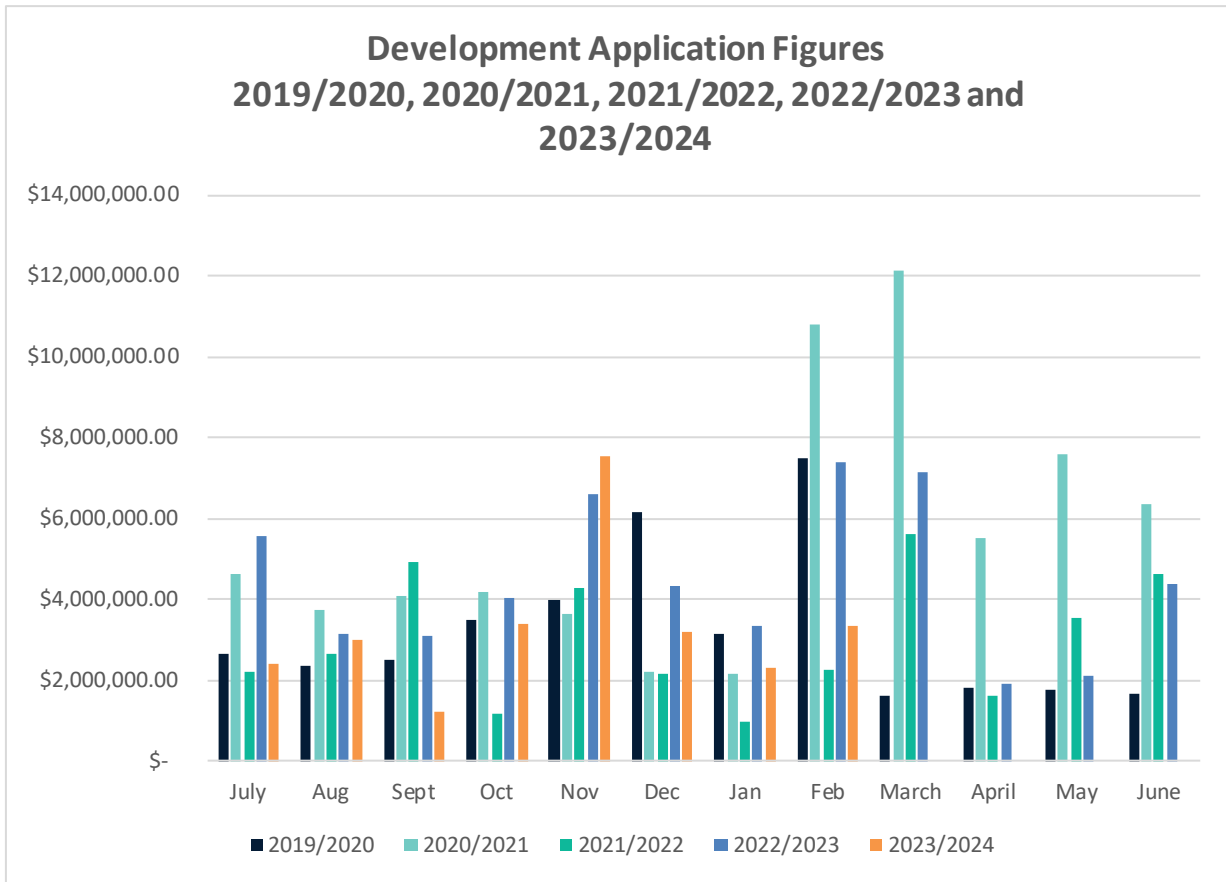


Figure 4: Value of development applications per month over five financial years.

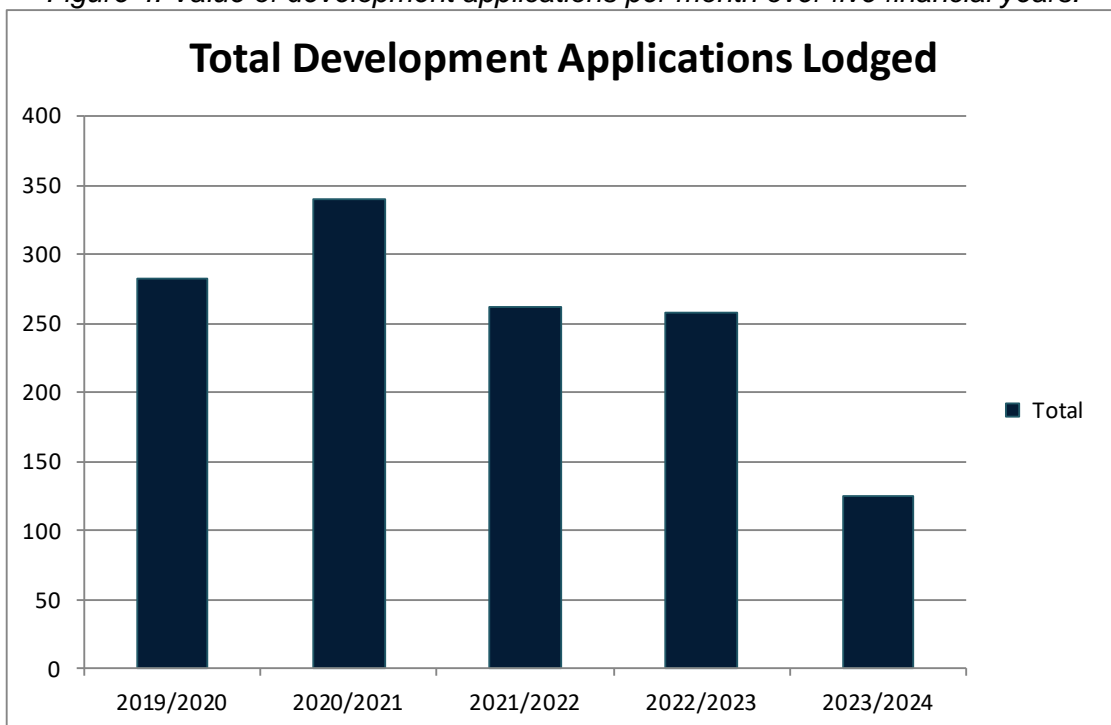


Figure 5: Number of Development Applications per annum over five financial years

**Activity for the month of February 2024**

General Approvals (excluding Subdivisions, Section 4.55)	15
Section 4.55 amendments to original consent	2
Subdivision	1
Refused	0
Rejected	0
Withdrawn	0
Complying Development (Council Approved)	1
Complying Development (Private Certifier Approved)	3
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS DETERMINED (Excluding withdrawn applications)</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Average assessment days for Planning applications determined in February 2024</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Average assessment days for Building applications determined in February 2024</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Average assessment days for applications determined in February 2024 (Planning &amp; Building Combined)</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>No. of Integrated development applications determined in February 2024</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>No. of Designated development applications determined in February 2024</b>	<b>0</b>

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

Nil

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 February 2024 to 29 February 2024								
Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Lodged	Date Accepted	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
DA2022/0195.01	Newton Denny Chapelle	The Presbyterian Church (NSW) Property Trust	93 Manifold Road, North Casino	S4.55(1A) Modification - additional tree removal to facilitate a driveway upgrade associated with approved bulk earthworks to enable a sports field expansion at an existing educational establishment	26/10/2023	30/10/2023	29/02/2024	\$0.00
DA2024/0040	Steve Ryan Builder Pty Ltd	Steve Ryan Builder Pty Ltd	53 Hartley Street, Casino	Construction of single storey dwelling on vacant block	29/09/2023	3/10/2023	28/02/2024	\$355,000.00
DA2024/0048	RS Holland	RS Holland	330 Brookers Road, Shannon Brook	Alterations and additions to an existing dwelling to create an expanded dwelling	10/10/2023	12/10/2023	22/02/2024	\$60,000.00
DA2024/0065	Newton Denny Chapelle	FA Ryan & GD Zweck	10 Taylors Lane, Woodview	Proposed rural subdivision to create 2 lots	16/11/2023	24/11/2023	6/02/2024	\$0.00
DA2024/0073	The Shed Company	AM & AJ Martin	1 Pagan Avenue, Casino	Construction of fully opened single level steel carport with a request to vary the building line setback	12/12/2023	14/12/2023	13/02/2024	\$14,610.00
DA2024/0074	Approved Pty Ltd	LJ & MAA Boulton	Ginibi Drive, Swan Bay	Single storey dwelling	12/12/2023	9/01/2024	13/02/2024	\$512,673.00
DA2024/0075	The Shed Company	Roman Catholic Church for the Diocese of Lismore	39-43 Adams Street, Coraki	9m x 12m Colorbond playground shelter over outdoor eating area	12/12/2023	19/12/2023	21/02/2024	\$25,220.00

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 February 2024 to 29 February 2024								
Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Lodged	Date Accepted	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
DA2024/0076	SD Thiele	SD Thiele & JM Bamback	48 Ransons Lane, Tomki	Construction of a single storey dwelling	12/12/2023	31/01/2024	28/02/2024	\$220,000.00
DA2024/0078	Newton Denny Chapelle	Summer Co Rural Pty Ltd	122 Centre Street, Casino	Proposed change of use from an existing restaurant/cafe to an office premises	13/12/2023	20/12/2023	15/02/2024	\$41,000.00
DA2024/0079	Ballina Pool Shop	D Stevens	2/44 Riverview Street, Evans Head	Concrete pool construction and associated works	13/12/2023	22/12/2023	23/02/2023	\$62,890.00
DA2024/0084	SeaO2 Algae	Eranda Pty Ltd	166 Langs Way, Woodburn	Installation of business identification signage on roof cover	21/12/2023	11/01/2024	22/02/2024	\$10,000.00
DA2024/0085	CL Smith	MA & CL Smith	10 Golf Links Road, Woodburn	Site earthworks to create fill pad and extend existing site fill	5/01/2024	11/01/2024	15/02/2024	\$60,000.00
DA2024/0086	BL & Designs	W Button	49 Ginibi Drive, Swan Bay	Construction of two-storey dwelling house and detached shed on vacant lot	5/01/2024	17/01/2024	22/02/2024	\$635,805.00
DA2024/0089	Northern Rivers Pools	L Hawdon	1665 Bruxner Highway, McKees Hill	Installation of an inground fibreglass swimming pool, its associated equipment & fencing	10/01/2024	16/01/2024	28/02/2024	\$65,920.00

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 February 2024 to 29 February 2024								
Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Lodged	Date Accepted	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
DA2024/0090	BM Renovations	SJ Ruttlely & JR McKellar	155 Whites Road, New Italy	Demolition of existing in-ground fibreglass swimming pool and proposed replacement of an in-ground fibreglass swimming pool	10/01/2024	23/01/2024	31/01/2024	\$83,400.00
DA2024/0091	Metricon Homes Pty Ltd - Robina	CL & JR Godfrey	95 Emu Park Road, Ellangowan	Proposed dwelling house and associated works	11/01/2024	19/01/2024	28/02/2024	\$690,521.00
DA2024/0095	AA Fergus	BL Sullivan & AA Fergus	63 Flatley Place, North Casino	Single storey storage shed	22/01/2024	30/01/2024	28/02/2024	\$45,500.00
MA2024/0002	DE Opdam	SA Pardon & DE Opdam	6 Little Pitt Street, Broadwater	S4.55(1A) Modification - Construction of a covered rear deck reduced to 3600 x 9000 and roof will be raised to 2990	17/01/2024	25/02/2024	23/02/2024	\$17,000.00

Summary of Council Certified Complying Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 February 2024 to 29 February 2024								
Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Lodged	Date Accepted	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
CDC2024/0016	C Wilson	RL & GP Barton	49 Eucalypt Drive, Swan Bay	Inground fibreglass swimming pool and associated fencing	23/01/2024	30/01/2024	12/02/2024	\$61,600.00



Summary of Privately Certified Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 February 2024 to 29 February 2024							
Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Submitted to Council for Registration	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
CDC2024/0018	Professional Certification Group	MA Catlin & JL Barton	29 Ginibi Drive, Swan Bay	**AMENDMENT TO CDC2024/0015** Construction of a single storey dwelling with attached double garage	2/02/2024	1/02/2024	\$0.00
CDC2024/0019	GMA Certification (NSW) Pty Ltd	JE Cusack	15 Wheat Street, Casino	Construction of a new dwelling	12/02/2024	9/02/2024	\$346,097.00
CDC2024/0021	Techton Building Services	TM & GE Garrett	199 Reardons Lane, Swan Bay	Construction of a swimming pool	26/02/2024	23/02/2024	\$56,150.00

### 19.3 GREENING PROGRAM UPDATE

**Director:** Angela Jones

**Responsible Officer:** Carla Dzendolet

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Greening Program Update report.

#### REPORT

The Richmond Valley 2040 Community Strategic Plan sets an ambitious target to plant at least 15,000 more shade trees by 2040, and Council is already well on track to achieve this goal through the Community Greening Program.

The Greening Program aims to improve biodiversity and off-set the impacts of climate change, by providing cool, green community spaces.

Key Principles of the program include:

1. **Right Tree, Right Place, Right Reason:** The program emphasises selecting climate-adaptive local plants strategically suited to their urban environment, ensuring optimal growth and benefits for street tree and shade plantings.
2. **Strategic Resilient Trees: The program aims to cultivate** resilient trees to counteract the urban heat island effect by strategically placing trees in areas to form microclimates. It will also help to increase local biodiversity by expanding the species selection to include more climate-appropriate native trees.
3. **Improve Liveability:** Beyond temperature reduction, the program seeks to make the community a better place to live by strategically planting trees that provide shade, enhance aesthetics, and contribute to a more enjoyable healthy outdoors environment.

The Greening Program involves –

- Community Engagement to understand community expectations, identify barriers and to pinpoint high priority areas for possible pilot projects.
- Pilot programs to trial new species to improve preferred tree species list to include climate adaptive native trees.
- The “Grow On” program aimed at schools and not for profit organisations to nurture local plants to enhance adaptability and strength for healthier growth.

The first stage of community engagement is complete where the Richmond Valley community was invited to participate in the Community Greening Program survey.

189 community participants engaged with the process and valuable feedback will now help shape the program's future. The response shows there is significant interest in the program. The insights shared by the community will inform and guide decisions regarding more shade, tree planting, maintenance, and community engagement initiatives moving forward. This first stage community engagement has been very rewarding and encouraging to see such interest.

The survey identified strong support for initiatives such as planting climate-adaptive trees, increasing the presence of indigenous and native trees, and introducing more flowering trees. Respondents overwhelmingly expressed the need for additional tree plantings, with emphasis on residential streets, public parks, new developments, and along walking paths. Nearly half of the participants expressed interest in future tree planting programs or adopting a street tree.

The Sustainable Communities and Environment Team which includes Open Spaces, will now commence mapping out what a pilot will look like and where the pilots will be considered. This pilot

may include community members adopting street trees supplied by Council in selected trial areas. There will be ongoing monitoring of the progress of the program to inform council of any matters which may arise plus plan future opportunities. Further community engagement will continue which is vital for the success of the program.

Other organisational and external stakeholder engagement will occur as necessary prior to the commencement of pilots.

Two schools and one not for profit organisation have expressed their interest in the Grow On program. Council is delighted with this response and will be engaging with the relevant parties to set out a pathway for our Grow On program.

More information about the survey results can be found in the attachment to this report.

#### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

##### **1. Community Greening Program Survey Results (under separate cover)**

**19.4 GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION REPORT - FEBRUARY 2024**

**Director:** Ryan Gaiter

**Responsible Officer:** Rylee Vidler

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receives and notes the Grant Application Information Report for the month of February 2024.

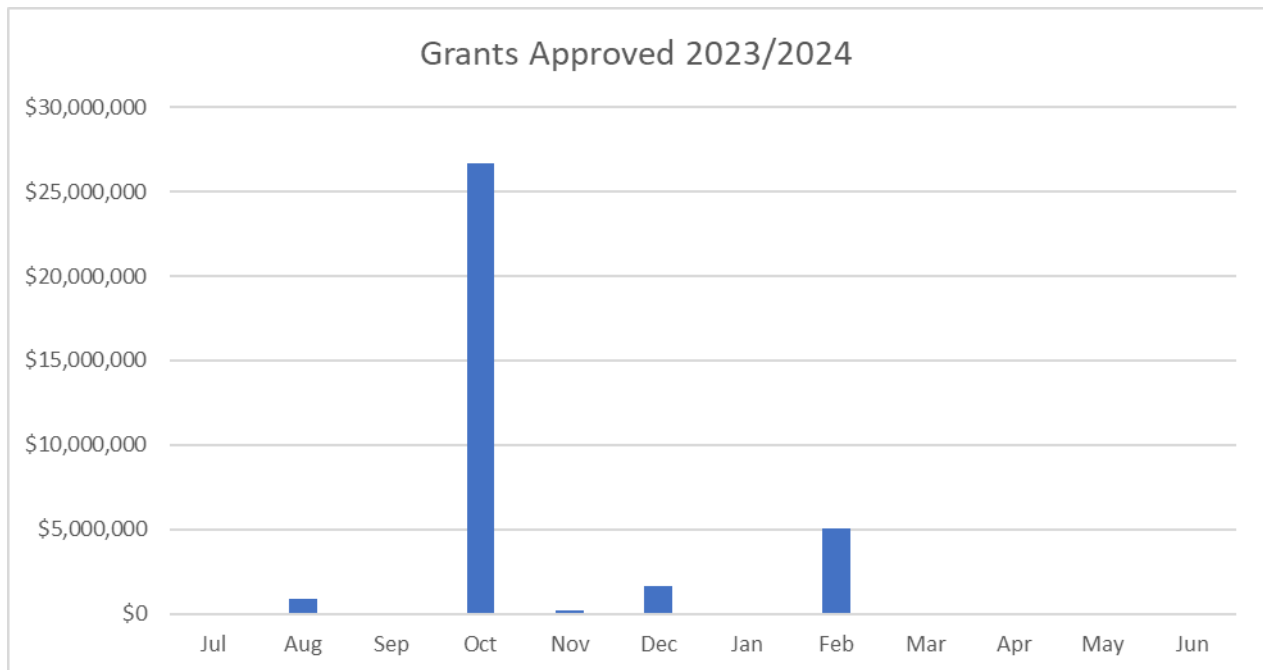
**REPORT**

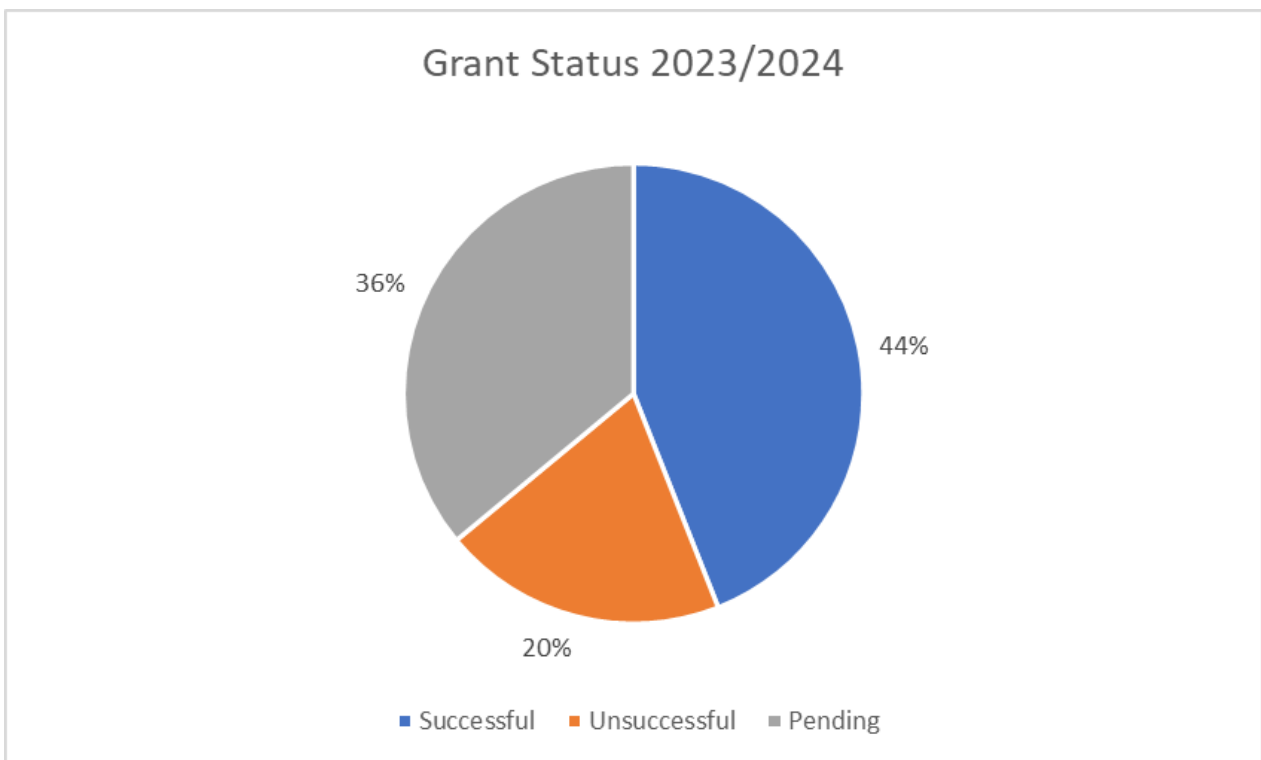
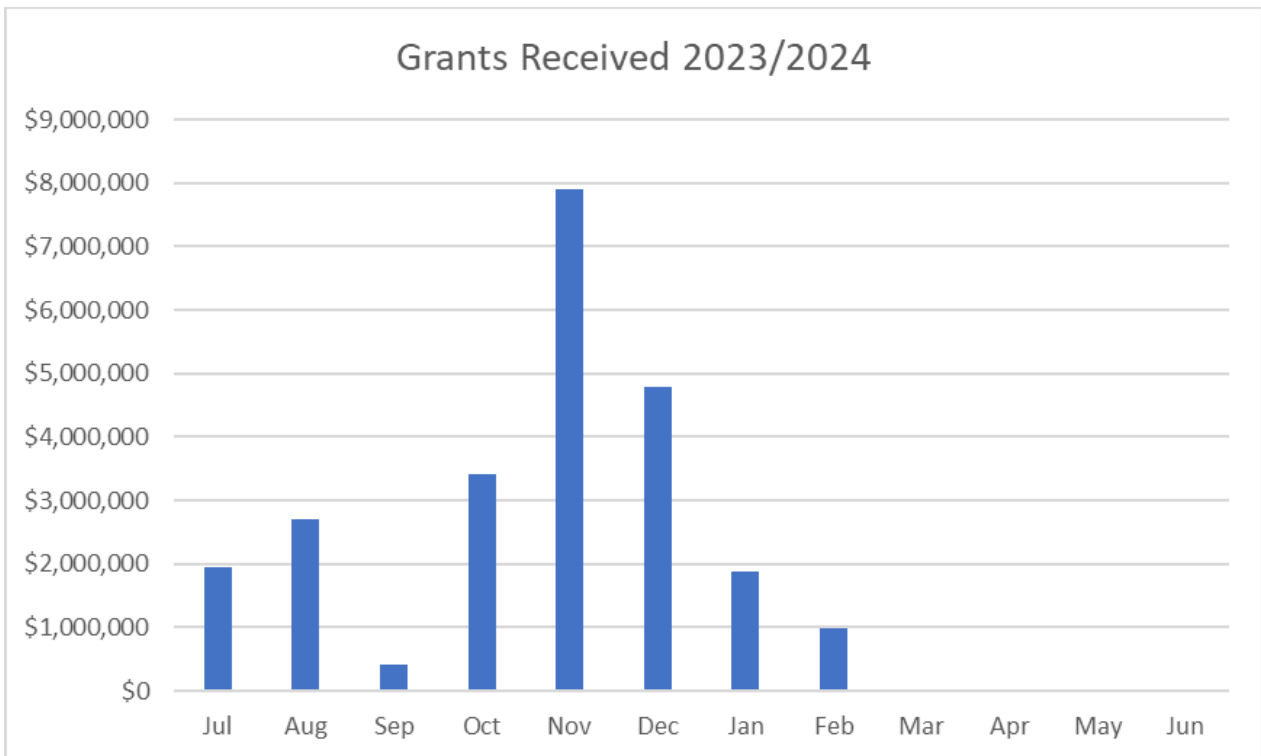
This report provides information on grant applications that have been approved, grants that have been received, grant applications that were unsuccessful and grant applications that were submitted for the month of February 2024.

During the reporting period, there were two grants approved and one was submitted. Council was notified of one unsuccessful grant application.

Council received funding for six grants totalling \$978,113.

A summary of grants approved and received, as well as the status of applications for the current financial year to 29 February 2024 is shown below:





**Grants that have been approved**

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Date Approved
NSW Severe Weather and Flooding from 22 February onwards - AGRN 1012 EPAR Works	Transport for NSW (State)	Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)	\$20,276,433	\$20,276,433	\$ -	N/A	Various
<p>Comment: Council has been approved for the following new EPAR projects: Cedar St, Richmond St and Wagner St (Woodburn), Oak Lane (Casino), Spring Grove Road, McDonalds Bridge Road, Sextonville Road, Upper Stratheden Road, Marks Lane, Upper Cherry Tree Road.</p> <p>Note: This is a cumulative total for all EPAR projects approved, previously reported \$15,269,825. There are currently 18 EPAR submissions approved.</p>							
McDonald Park Riverbank Restoration	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (State)	Biodiversity Conservation Program	\$ 30,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000	N/A	28 February 2024
<p>Comment: This funding will allow Council to restore the riverbank section at McDonald Park to improve riparian habitat values.</p>							

**Grant Applications Submitted**

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted
Indigenous Youth Cricket Program	Australian Sports Commission (Federal)	Play Well Participation Grant	\$ 12,330	\$ 12,330	\$ -	22 February 2024
<p>Comment: If successful, this funding will be used to engage Cricket NSW to facilitate two Indigenous Youth Cricket Programs in Casino and Coraki.</p>						

**Unsuccessful Grant Applications**

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Advised Unsuccessful
Richmond Valley Housing Strategy	Department of Planning and Environment	Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund Round 2	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	\$ -	29 March 2023	16 February 2024
<p>Comment: Number of applications exceeded the funding allocation. There was a 25% success rate.</p>							

**Grants that have been received**

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Date Received	Total Received
NSW Youth Week	Department of Communities and Justice (State)	Youth Week 2024	\$ 6,782	\$ 3,803	\$ 2,979	30 January 2024	\$ 3,803 8 February 2024	\$ 3,803
Comment: 100% funding received.								
Financial Assistance Grant 2023/2024	NSW Local Government Grants Commission (Federal)	Financial Assistance Grant	\$ 6,746,876	\$ 6,746,876	\$ -	N/A - Annual Allocation	\$ 87,539 16 February 2024	\$ 6,659,337
Comment: Quarter 3 instalment of the 2023/2024 FAG Grant.								
Regional Roads Block Grant 2023/2024	Transport for NSW (State)	Regional Roads Block Grant	\$ 1,070,000	\$ 1,070,000	\$ -	N/A - Annual Allocation	\$ 534,000 28 February 2024	\$ 1,070,000
Comment: Remaining 50% funding received.								
NSW Severe Weather and Flooding from 22 February onwards - AGRN 1012 EPAR Works	Transport for NSW (State)	Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA)	\$20,276,433	\$20,276,433	\$ -	N/A	\$ 172,051 28 February 2024	\$ 648,598
Comment: Progress payment for works completed on Evans Head Footpath and Woodburn Coraki Road.								
Broadwater Evans Head Road Shared Pathway (Design)	Transport for NSW (State)	Get NSW Active Program	\$ 172,000	\$ 122,000	\$ 50,000	28 February 2022	\$ 91,500 28 February 2024	\$ 91,500
Comment: Milestone Payment (Detailed Design Complete)								
Woodburn Evans Head Road Shared Pathway (Design)	Transport for NSW (State)	Get NSW Active Program	\$ 168,960	\$ 118,960	\$ 50,000	28 February 2022	\$ 89,220 28 February 2024	\$ 89,220
Comment: Milestone Payment (Detailed Design Complete)								

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

**Nil**



**19.5 AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**Director:** Ryan Gaiter

**Responsible Officer:** Hayley Martin

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receives and notes the Minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee held on 21 February 2024 along with the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Annual Report to Council.

**REPORT**

At the February Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting, Mr Ron Gillard (Chair) presented the first annual report of the audit committee, as required under the committee's Terms of Reference. The report covered the full calendar year of 2023 plus the meetings held in October and November 2022 during the initial establishment of the committee.

All scheduled meetings during this period were attended by all committee members either online or in person along with the internal audit contractor and representatives as well as occasional attendance from the Audit Office of NSW.

During the period there were four internal audits undertaken; Heavy Haulage, Cash Handling, Fees & Charges (Planning and Development) and Corporate Credit Cards.

At the commencement of the term of the committee, there were 67 internal audit actions open, an additional 42 were added during the period from the outcomes of the above audits, and 85 were completed overall. There are currently 24 outstanding audit actions which is a great achievement.

In addition to the audits completed, the committee also reviewed and improved the scope of works for three of the four audits completed as well as reviewing the current Request for Quote for the Physical Asset Security Audit.

Some of the key activities for the period included a visit from the Chair of the committee to tour the Richmond Valley, supporting council in the compliance with Modern Slavery Act, progressing the ICT Strategy and a gap analysis performed by Council against a NSW Audit Office Performance Audit on Financial Management and Governance in MidCoast Council.

The report also outlines some of the key priorities of the Committee for 2024 which will further align Council with the Office of Local Governments ARIC guidelines and the ARIC Terms of Reference.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

- 1. Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Minutes 21 February 2024 (under separate cover)**
- 2. Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, Annual Report (under separate cover)**

**20 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Nil

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

**22 MATTERS REFERRED TO CLOSED COUNCIL****RECOMMENDATION**

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 General Manager's Annual Performance Review - 2023/24**

This matter relates to (a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors).

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).

**23 RESOLUTIONS OF CLOSED COUNCIL**