

Richmond  
Valley  
Council



# **AGENDA**

## **Ordinary Council Meeting**

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

**Date: Tuesday, 21 May 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 MAYORAL MINUTE - CASINO COURT HOUSE RESUMPTION OF SITTINGS

**Author:** Robert Mustow

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. Writes to the Member for Clarence, Richie Williamson thanking him for his advocacy in achieving the reopening of the Casino Court House.
2. Writes to the Attorney General, Hon. Michael Daley acknowledging the reopening of the Casino Courthouse.

#### REPORT

The Casino Court House reopened on 9 May 2024, following two-years of repair and restoration works for damage sustained in the March 2022 flood. This is welcome news for our community, local police, legal services and businesses who were all severely impacted by the relocation of court services to Kyogle and Lismore during this extended period. In May last year, Council unanimously supported my Mayoral minute to write to the NSW Government and the Member for Clarence, seeking assistance to expedite the repair work and allow the Court House to reopen.

Our local member, Richie Williamson took up the challenge, advocating strongly for the repairs to be given top priority and delivering a Private Member's Statement in the NSW Parliament in May last year. Mr Williamson also wrote to the NSW Attorney General, Michael Daley supporting my Mayoral Minute and seeking urgent completion of the flood recovery work, given the impacts on the local community and economy.

It is pleasing to see that this advocacy has delivered results for our community, with the \$2.4m repair and restoration project finally completed. The increased activity in the Casino CBD on Court days is important for the economic viability of our local businesses.

I'd like to extend my personal thanks to the Member for Clarence for ensuring the repair works were completed as quickly as possible and court services could resume at Casino.



*The newly-restored Casino Court House is now back in service.*

**6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**6.1 MINUTES ORDINARY MEETING HELD 16 APRIL 2024**

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council confirms the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 16 April 2024.

**REPORT**

Refer attached Minutes.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

- 1. Unconfirmed Minutes 16 April 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 10 APRIL - 12 MAY 2024****Author: Robert Mustow****RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receives and notes the Mayoral Attendance Report for the period 10 April – 12 May 2024.

**April**

- 12<sup>th</sup> Casino CWA cuppa – Cancer Council fundraiser
- 12<sup>th</sup> Flavour Fest Celebration Casino Drill Hall
- 13<sup>th</sup> Cassino Art Gallery exhibition
- 13<sup>th</sup> Cobras Soccer Club - Colley Park Soccer amenities opening
- 15<sup>th</sup> Northern Rivers Community Leaders Forum
- 16<sup>th</sup> Essential Energy meeting
- 16<sup>th</sup> Richmond Valley Council Ordinary meeting
- 17<sup>th</sup> Rous County Council Ordinary meeting
- 19<sup>th</sup> Community Safety Precinct Committee meeting
- 20<sup>th</sup> Casino Showground Official Opening
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Citizenship Ceremony
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting with constituents
- 25<sup>th</sup> ANZAC day commitments throughout the Valley
- 28<sup>th</sup> Coraki Crime meeting
- 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting with constituent
- 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting with Minister Rose Jackson Murwillumbah
- 30<sup>th</sup> Housing Roundtable discussions Murwillumbah

**May**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Casino COW Country Music Muster Opening
- 4<sup>th</sup> Casino COW Country Music Muster
- 7<sup>th</sup> Richmond Valley Council Councillor Information Session
- 8<sup>th</sup> NSW Reconstruction Authority meeting
- 12<sup>th</sup> Woodburn/Evans Head & District Orchid & Foliage Society Inc. Autumn Orchid Show

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

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

That Council receives and notes the Delegates' Report – Rous County Council for May 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 17 April 2024.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

- 1. Rous County Council Meeting Summary 17 April 2024**

## Rous Council Meeting 17 April 2024

### Summary of main items of business



#### **1. Changes to the business rules for Quarterly Budget Review Statement reporting**

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Council approved changes to the internal business rules for the Quarterly Budget Review Statement reporting. The business rules will allow staff flexibility to make minor budget adjustments providing that the requirements of the business rules are met. Some key points about the business rules include:-

- An increase to the reporting threshold from \$5,000 to \$10,000.
- Allow budget changes to be made if they are within the financial limits of a previously approved budget item, related to the same cost centre or area of the organisation and are approved by the General Manager. For example, if a project has incurred expenditure of \$40,000 against an existing budget of \$50,000, the remaining \$10,000 could be used for additional works required within that cost centre.
- Allow budget reclassifications where changes to the proposed expenditure has a direct correlation to the same group for administrative purposes. For example, if a staff vacancy exists due to a staff member resigning, an existing budget for salaries could be relocated to fund a temporary appointment under a labour hire agreement.
- Budget increases cannot exceed the amounts approved by Council.

#### **2. Quarterly Budget Review Statement ending 31 March 2024 incl. adjustments**

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The results presented in the QBRS were noted and variations were authorised to the amounts from those previously estimated.

The Capital Works Program remains an important focus with a complete review of proposed capital works to be undertaken as part of the annual process.

Changes this quarter will provide a substantial increase to budgeted reserves. 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.

#### **3. Public exhibition: Draft Operational plan (inc. 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy)**

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Council endorsed the draft Operational plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy) for public exhibition (*copy available for viewing/comment on our website - closing date and time for submissions is 4.30pm Thursday, 24 May 2024*).

Council noted that adjustments approved at the meeting as part of the March 2024 Quarterly Budget Review Statement report will be included in the exhibited Operational plan as appropriate.

If public submissions are made during the public exhibition period, a report will be furnished to Council's June 2024 meeting, including staff comment on how the submissions have been considered, for Council to determine a position on endorsement of the Operational plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy).

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If no public submissions are made during the public exhibition period, the version of the draft Operational plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy) placed on public exhibition, is deemed to be adopted by Council.

Subject to any variations arising as a result of the public submissions, Council also approved external borrowings of \$30M for capital works projects for 2024/25.

#### **4. Revised Financial Reserves Policy**

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Council adopted a revised Financial Reserves policy. The existing policy was adopted in June 2019. The policy includes externally restricted funds, internally restricted funds, and unrestricted funds.

The revised policy includes cash funds for various purposes, including developer contributions, unexpended grants, trust accounts, and bulk water reserves. It also aims to simplify budget shock targets for each reporting unit within the Internally Restricted Cash Fund.

#### **5. Revised Risk Management Policy**

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Council's Risk Management policy was revised and updated. The revised policy is reflective of legislative changes as well as work being undertaken internally to boost overall risk management practice.

#### **6. Proposed Media and social Media Policy**

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The Office of Local Government (OLG) developed a Model Media and Model Social Media Policy in 2022 to assist councils in managing media engagement and social media platforms. Council adopted a new policy which is largely reflective of the OLG's 'model' policy. It aims to ensure consistent, accurate, and professional media engagement by councillors and staff, as well as a structure for managing social media platforms and a standard of conduct for council officials using social media in their official capacity.

#### **7. Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting – 2 April 2024**

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The minutes of the 2 April 2024 Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee were noted. Council also resolved to make a submission to the Office of Local Government seeking to permit county councils to include capital revenue in the assessment of financial performance. This included revisiting the issue at its June 2024 meeting to discuss potentially preparing a submission for the 2024 LGNSW Annual Conference.

#### **8. Information reports**

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i) Investments – March 2024

- The RBA cash rate is 4.34%. The 90-day average bank bill swap rate (BBSW) is also 4.34%.
- Total funds invested is \$34,162,185. This includes term investments and cheque account balance.
- Weighted Average Return is 4.88%. This represents an increase of 18 basis point compared to the February 2024 result (4.70%) and is 54 basis points above Council's benchmark.
- Interest earned is \$148,433. Interest earned compared to the original budget is \$395,487 above the pro-rata budget.
- Cheque account balance is \$285,551.

- 'Weel' (credit card) account balance \$67,311.
- Ethical holdings is \$5,000,000 (14.64% of current holdings)

ii) Tenders Awarded by General Manager under delegation

The following summary was included in Council's business paper. It sets out tenders and contracts valued up to \$1,000,000.00 awarded by the General Manager under delegation:

Tender/Contract	Start Date	Initial Value (Incl GST)	Contractors Name	Category
Perradenya Subdivision – New Amending DA – Surveyor Report	16/1/2024	\$ 270,228.20	Eco Logical Australia PL	Consulting/Engineer/ Project Mgmt
Rocky Creek Dam – Risk Rating Assessment & Safety Report	13/3/2024	\$ 310,400.00	Stantec Australia PL	Consulting/Engineer/ Project Mgmt

iii) International Women's Day Event

Council acknowledged the event hosted on 12 March 2024 celebrating International Women's Day and in particular Cr Ndiaye's contribution as emcee. The event aimed to recognise the contributions of women and raise awareness of ongoing challenges they face. The keynote speaker was Rabia Siddique, a retired British army officer and human rights lawyer. She shared her experiences with abuse, mental health, and discrimination, focusing on her time in the military.

A panel session featured female Rous employees sharing their experiences in male-dominated fields. The event sparked discussions on workplace challenges for women, and Rous plans to continue promoting diversity and inclusion. The event had 74 attendees, including representatives from other Councils.

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**

Nil

## 15 COMMUNITY SERVICE DELIVERY

### 15.1 DRAFT MID-RICHMOND PLACE PLANS

**Director:** Angela Jones

**Responsible Officer:** Tony McAteer

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has been working with members of the Mid-Richmond communities over the past six months to develop combined Place and Adaptation plans for Coraki, Woodburn, Broadwater/Rileys Hill and Evans Head.

The draft Plans have been prepared by consultants Place Design Group, in partnership with Meridian Urban and are now presented for Council's consideration and public exhibition. The NSW Reconstruction Authority has also partnered with Council on this project, to provide flood-impacted communities with the opportunity to identify key priorities for improved flood resilience and adaptation.

The Mid Richmond Place Plans address a 20-year planning horizon and will help to inform future land-use planning, civic improvements and signature projects for these communities.

It is proposed to exhibit the draft plans for 30 days.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the *Draft Coraki Place Plan* and *Draft Mid-Richmond Place Plan* for public exhibition for a period of 30 days.

#### DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 1: Rebuild and reconnect our communities

1A Revitalise flood-affected towns and villages

1A2 Prepare long-term plans for Mid-Richmond villages

#### BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

All actions will be incorporated into a future Community Strategic Plan and Local Strategic Planning Statement where projects, studies, management plans, master plans etc. and their budgetary requirements will be considered.

#### REPORT

The Mid Richmond Place Plans are part of Council's strategic planning framework which informs long-term planning for the towns and villages within the Richmond Valley. They address a 20-year planning horizon that can best capture long term opportunities and respond to challenges that face these communities.

Council resolved, as part of its Community Strategic Plan and 2023-25 Delivery Program to undertake Place Planning for the Mid Richmond communities of Coraki, Evans Head, Broadwater/Rileys Hill and Woodburn.

The Place Plans will help these communities to continue their flood recovery and identify key priorities for future growth, economic development, and signature projects. Council has partnered with the NSW Reconstruction Authority to pilot a combined approach to place planning and adaptation planning in this project. This considers the potential impacts of flooding on villages such

as Woodburn, Broadwater and Coraki, and explores ways to ensure the long-term sustainability and safety of these communities.

Through implementing the Place Plan project, Council aims to achieve:

- A clear direction for future land use in the Mid Richmond communities
- Improved flood resilience and community safety
- Agreed community priorities for place-making and social infrastructure
- Agreed priorities for future investment in infrastructure and community facilities
- Increased opportunities for economic development and job creation
- Increased housing options to meet community needs.

Consultancy firm Place Design Group, in partnership with Meridian Urban, was engaged in November 2023 to commence preparation of a Draft Coraki Place Plan and a Draft Mid-Richmond Place Plan, covering Woodburn, Broadwater/Riley's Hill and Evans Head. The NSW Reconstruction Authority has also supported the project to help explore local options for adaptation planning.

Since the start of the project, Council's team has worked closely with the consultants to analyse key issues, risks and opportunities for the five communities, and consider future growth potential and demographic profiles.

The consultancy team undertook a first round of community engagement during February and March 2024. The program involved a combination of on-line and face-to-face consultation methods such as pop-up consultation events, walk shops, a community survey, wishing trees and digital ideas board, and CBD business door knocks. Further consultation is scheduled to be completed with the Woodburn community around resilience, adaptation, and the village's future, as Council continues to seek clarification from the NSW Reconstruction Authority on future directions for the Resilient Homes Program. This consultation will be undertaken as part of the proposed exhibition period for the draft plans.

Council has developed the Woodburn plan based on the expectation that the community's clear preference is to remain in place and to build long-term resilience to future flood events. The consultants have prepared a series of possible adaptation pathways, based on the CSIRO's 'Maintain, Modify, Transform' adaptation model for further discussion with the Woodburn community and this approach has been supported by the Reconstruction Authority.

The draft Place Plans propose a range of innovative options for the Mid-Richmond communities, including key directions for revitalising town centres and public spaces, improving active transport links and providing more housing options. These ideas are presented for further community discussion and the exhibition period will help to refine the final directions and recommendations of the plans.

## **CONSULTATION**

Place Design Group and Meridian Urban conducted a program of targeted consultation with stakeholders to help develop the draft plans. This included both on-line and face-to-face activities. The following figure shows a timeline of engagement activities completed so far, as well as those to be undertaken as part of the draft plan exhibition period.



Figure 2 – Place Plan engagement timeline

Should Council endorse the Draft Plans for public exhibition, it is proposed to exhibit them from 24 May to 23 June 2024. Community Information Sessions will be conducted on Tuesday, 11 June at Woodburn, and Wed, 12 June at each of Broadwater, Coraki and Evans Head.

**CONCLUSION**

Work on preparing the Mid-Richmond Place Plans for the Coraki, Woodburn, Broadwater/Riley’s Hill and Evans Head communities has progressed over the past six months, with the draft plans now presented for Council’s consideration and public exhibition.

It is proposed to exhibit the plans for a minimum of 30 days. Following the exhibition period and review of public submissions, the final plans will be presented for consideration at the July council meeting.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

Nil

**15.2 RICHMOND VALLEY WATER FOR LIFE 2050 - DRAFT WATER STRATEGY****Director:** Angela Jones**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Over the past four years, Council has been exploring key directions for future water supply and sewerage management to ensure it can meet the needs of the Richmond Valley's growing community. The draft Richmond Valley Water for Live 2050 strategy brings these directions together to deliver more than \$200m in essential water and sewerage infrastructure over the next 25 years. This will include regionally significant projects, such as the \$65m replacement of the Casino Sewage Treatment Plant, which will support activation of the Regional Jobs Precinct and open the way for up to 1600 new homes in Casino. The draft strategy also secures the long-term needs of the Mid-Richmond communities, with completion of Stage 2 of the Evans Head STP and development of Rous County Council's groundwater project. It is proposed to exhibit the draft strategy for 28 days, before presenting the final document for Council's consideration at the July Ordinary Meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council endorses the draft Richmond Valley Water for Life 2050 strategy for public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

**DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS**

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

2A Plan for long-term sustainable growth

2A1 Undertake long-term planning for the Valley's future

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

The draft strategy includes capital investment of more than \$200m over a 25-year period, with some \$100m in works planned for 2025-29. This includes Council's three signature projects for water and sewer: Replacement of the Casino Sewage Treatment Plant (STP); completion of Stage 2 of Evans Head STP and Casino water security and Water Treatment Plant upgrade works. Part funding for the Evans Head STP and Casino water projects has been received from the NSW Government's Safe and Secure Water Program, with the remaining funds to be sourced from Council reserves. Replacement of the Casino STP is not yet fully funded, with Council including borrowings of \$20m in its Long-Term Financial Plan for this project and continuing to pursue options for Federal and State Government assistance. Other proposed works within the strategy will be funded through a combination of developer contributions, water and sewer charges and government grants.

**REPORT**

Over the past four years, Council has been exploring key directions for future water supply and sewerage management to ensure it can meet the needs of the Richmond Valley's growing community. This includes responding to the opportunities presented through the Regional Jobs Precinct, increased housing development on flood-safe land and continued growth in tourism.

The draft Richmond Valley Water for Life 2050 strategy brings these key directions together and sets a path to deliver the essential water and sewerage infrastructure that the community will need over the next 25 years. This will see more than \$200m invested in capital works, supported by water/sewer network improvements, environmental protection and community education programs. More than half of the planned capital expenditure will be required in the next five years as Council rolls out major projects such as the Casino STP replacement, Evans Head STP Stage 2, Casino

Water Treatment Plant upgrade and water security works, as well as the Rappville Sewerage Scheme.

The Casino water and sewerage works included in the draft strategy will support activation of the Regional Jobs Precinct, creating 1900 additional jobs for the community, as well as enabling major housing development at South Fairy Hill, with up to 1600 new homes in Stage One. These works will help to secure the town's long-term water supply, provide consistent high quality drinking water and improve the environmental performance of Casino's sewerage network.

Completion of Stage 2 of the Evans Head Sewage Treatment Plant will provide sufficient capacity for the three Mid-Richmond communities it serves, as well as catering for increased tourism for the next 25 years and improving the environmental performance of the plant. Improved long-term water security for Evans Head, Broadwater and Woodburn is also being addressed through Rous County Council's current development of the Mid Richmond Groundwater Project, providing a reliable second source for dry periods and additional water treatment.

Although the draft strategy's target date of 2050 may seem a long way into the future, it is important to provide sufficient lead-time for major water and sewer assets, which can take up to 10 years to design, construct and commission. These assets can remain in service for up to 100 years, so detailed planning is required. The draft strategy takes an adaptive planning approach, recognising that Council will need to keep reviewing its water and sewer plans on a regular basis to respond to changes and opportunities that arise over the next 25 years.

### **Key directions and objectives**

Although the main focus of the Water for Life 2050 strategy is the development, maintenance and operation of water and sewerage infrastructure, the program works in partnership with Council's Sustainable Communities Strategy to provide a strong emphasis on environmental performance. This includes reducing greenhouse gas emissions from Council's water and sewer operations as well as developing programs for water saving and catchment protection.

The draft strategy includes five Key Directions and 12 Objectives, with supporting actions, to address the community's long-term water supply and sewerage needs.

The five Key Directions are:

- Water security – including plans to secure long-term water supplies for Casino and the Mid Richmond, ensuring there is sufficient storage capacity and water pressure in Council's water networks and encouraging water saving in the community.
- Water quality – ensuring the community's water supply is always safe to drink and helping to protect our water catchment.
- Environmental performance – ensuring Council provides modern, reliable sewage treatment processes, effectively manages the performance of its sewerage networks, and reduces the impacts of its water/sewer operations on the environment.
- Efficiency – managing Council's water/sewer business responsibly, developing a skilled workforce and establishing long-term price-paths to fund its operations.
- Partnerships – working with the community to refine future plans and pricing structures, and continuing to work with Rous County Council to deliver projects for the Mid Richmond and secure our regional water supply.

### **Connecting with IP&R**

The draft strategy is designed to connect with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework (IP&R) and will help to inform future revisions of the Community Strategic Plan. Infrastructure works within the program have been divided into four-year stages, with Stage 1 (2021-25) nearing completion and Stage 2 due to commence in the next term of Council. Each stage can be translated directly into Council's Delivery Program, ensuring that the works will be delivered on schedule, and the community will receive regular reports on progress.

**CONSULTATION**

Council consulted on the key directions and signature projects within the draft strategy as part of its Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program consultations in 2023. It is proposed to exhibit the draft strategy for a period of 28 days for further community input, to help inform the final document. This will be presented to Council's July Ordinary Meeting. The Strategy also proposes additional community consultation on key issues such as water saving opportunities and water pricing in Stage 2 of the program (2025).

**CONCLUSION**

Council's draft Water for Life 2050 strategy builds on the foundation work undertaken in the 2021-24 Council term to plan for long-term growth and investment in the Richmond Valley. It sets a pathway to deliver more than \$200m in essential water and sewerage infrastructure over the next 25 years, while also improving environmental performance and efficiency of operations. It is proposed to exhibit the draft strategy for public comment for a period of 28 days.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

Nil

**16 PROJECTS & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

Nil

## **17 ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES**

### **17.1 INSURANCE UPDATE**

**Director:** Ryan Gaiter

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In a challenging market, where insurance cover can be difficult to source, Council is well placed through coverage provided by CivicRisk Mutual Pty Ltd (the Mutual) - Council's insurance provider since 1 July 2020. The Mutual offers a range of value-add services and competitive coverage rates, which continue to result in significant savings for Council.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receives and notes the information provided in the Insurance Update report.

#### **DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS**

Objective 10: Lead and advocate for our community

10C Lead with integrity

10C1 Provide representative and accountable community governance

#### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Council's insurance savings are detailed further in the report.

#### **REPORT**

Following an extensive tender process, Council awarded the contract for the provision of insurance related services and insurance coverage to CivicRisk Mutual Pty Ltd (the Mutual). The three-year contract commenced on 1 July 2020; with a two-year performance-based contract extension granted for the period 30 June 2023 to 30 June 2025.

Since the commencement of Council's relationship with the Mutual, Council has received significant support through challenging times and a hardening insurance market.

As a result of the major flood event in February 2022, the Mutual paid out the full flood cover limit of \$5 million, compared to the \$2 million payout neighbouring flood affected councils are reported to have received from the other local government mutual within the market. In addition, Council continues to be provided with ongoing flood cover for future flooding events.

Together with receiving competitive insurance rates, Council receives a number of other benefits under the contract, such as ongoing training sessions for staff and the opportunity to participate in committees that foster information sharing and networking.

Being part of the Mutual provides Council with access to a dedicated team made up of claims managers, insurance brokers, panel lawyers and other industry professionals. All of whom are available to respond quickly to enquiries and provide guidance as required.

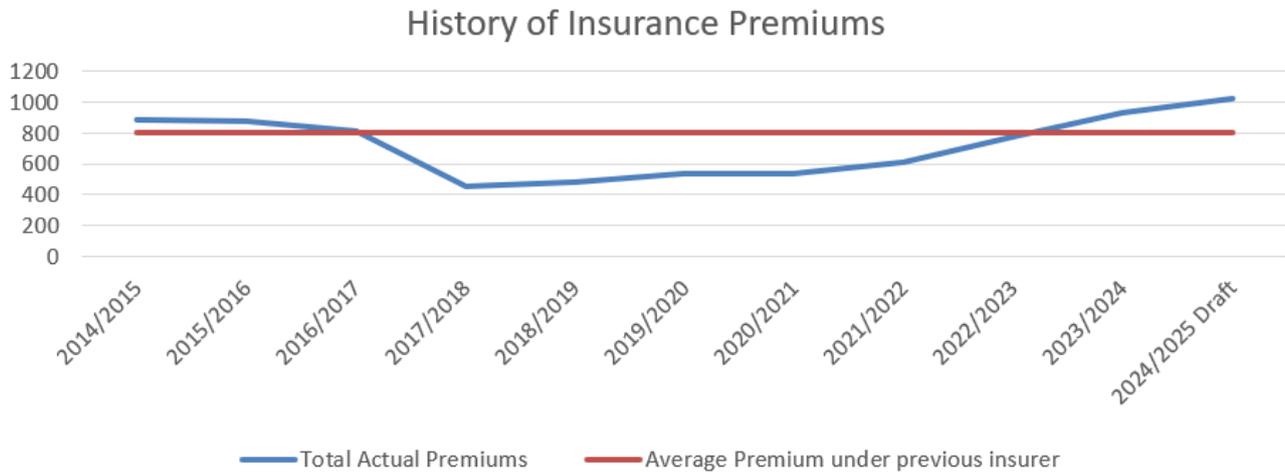
Additional advantages to Council's membership of the Mutual include the Continuous Risk Improvement Program (CRIP) which involves an assessment of Council's policies and practices with the intention of highlighting areas for improvement. Council was provided with the outcomes of the CRIP Audit in October 2023. The Audit, which is facilitated by an independent consultant, assesses Council's risk management practices against industry best-practice standards. The following areas were specifically considered: Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) framework, ERM implementation and management of insurable risk. Council is in the process of prioritising the twenty-eight recommendations in order that the most pertinent can be implemented.

A further Mutual initiative is the availability of Risk Enhance funding, which Council can apply for to assist in the funding of risk mitigation projects. Council was awarded an Excellence in Risk

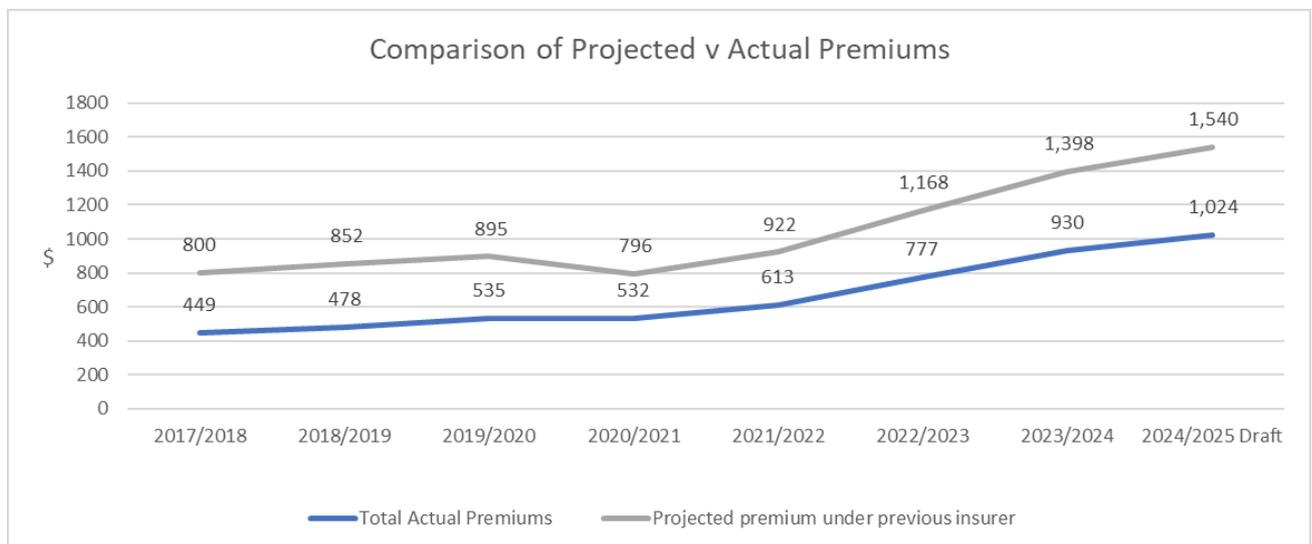
Management Award for its Flood Response 2022. The award included a prize of \$2,000 that Council is able to put toward a risk management initiative of its choice.

Financial Implications

Council reported to the community in December 2022, that savings on premiums, together with the flood payout, have led to financial benefits estimated in excess of \$4.4 million since 2017/2018. The graph below illustrates the history of actual premiums paid since 2014/2015 and the savings achieved through moving across to Council’s current insurer in 2017/2018.



Working on the assumption that Council would have been subject to the same percentage increase had it stayed with a previous insurer, who provided services to Council prior to the 2017/2018 financial year, insurance premiums would be considerably higher than we are currently paying. This is estimated at approximately \$1.398 million for the current financial year, instead of the \$930,000 we paid. The following graph shows how the two figures continue to grow further apart over time, with the potential cumulative savings across this period based on this assumption totalling \$3.033 million.



Savings on insurance premiums enable Council to provide additional services and infrastructure support to the community.

**CONSULTATION**

Nil

**CONCLUSION**

Following the undertaking of an extensive tender process, Council has been with its current insurance provider for four years. Within this time Council has benefited from financial savings,

superior disaster payouts, more suitable insurance cover and a network of councils that work together within the Mutual to improve risk in all member councils. The insurance market is very competitive, and having a provider that offers more than just insurance cover is a real benefit to Council.

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

**17.2 REVIEW OF DEBT RECOVERY POLICY**

**Director:** Ryan Gaiter

**Responsible Officer:** Kate Flynn

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council's Debt Recovery Policy was last reviewed in March 2021 and, given the current challenges Council is experiencing with rates and water charges arrears, it was considered timely to perform a review of the policy. The review sought to identify the impact of changes made to the Policy in 2021 on Council's outstanding debts and explore other avenues that could help with Council's debt collection efforts.

The addition of water restriction has had a significant impact on Council's outstanding water arrears, reducing the outstanding amount by approximately \$300,000 or 43%. To continue to receive sound debt recovery results from the restriction of services, the Debt Recovery Policy has been updated to refine the current process. The review also includes options to remove waste collection services, where continued arrears occur.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopts the revised Debt Recovery Policy.

**DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS**

Objective 11: Manage resources responsibly

11A Manage finances responsibly and provide value for money

11A3 Maintain efficient rating and revenue systems

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Nil.

**REPORT**

In March 2021 Council resolved to amend its Debt Recovery Policy to include the implementation of water restrictors. This was in response to council's growing water debt issue with over \$700,000 in water arrears. Since the implementation of the water restrictors, Council has reduced the total water arrears by approximately \$300,000 making a substantial impact on the overall balance.

With continued challenges with rates and charges arrears, it is important to look for ways to continue to manage access on user pay services and refine the policies and procedures of collecting outstanding debt. At present Council has limited avenues in relation to strategies to encourage ratepayers with outstanding rates balances to address their rates arrears. Removal of waste services is the main proposed change to the policy, as failure to pay these charges is an emerging issue. The ability to remove waste services from ratepayers who makes no attempt to pay their rates, will hopefully provide an incentive to make some effort in decreasing these arrears. It is proposed that this action would only be taken as a last resort before legal action was commenced, the ratepayer would also have received numerous reminders before this action would be taken.

Other changes in addition to the restriction of waste services as provided in the document include:

- minor corrections to grammar and formatting
- clarity around financial hardship
- extending the process of further restrictions of water to a minimum of 0.4L per minute

- capping the water main and legal action, as a last resort measure.

The updated version of the policy is attached, and if adopted, would be published on Council's website.

### **CONSULTATION**

Staff have consulted with the Waste, Water and Revenue Teams regarding the overall impact these policy changes may have on staff responsible for their implementation, and appropriate management strategies have been proposed to address potential impacts.

### **CONCLUSION**

Restricting services on unpaid debts is a last option for Council before taking legal action, and generally will occur after all other attempts at communication with the debtor have failed. It is important that Council continues to look for ways to refine the process of debt collection.

### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. **Debt Recovery Policy (updated) (under separate cover)**

**17.3 FINANCIAL ANALYSIS REPORT - APRIL 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 30 April 2024 is shown below:

Bank Accounts	Term Deposits	Floating Rate Notes	Fixed Rate Bonds	TCorp IM Funds	Total
\$16,533,167	\$23,000,000	\$6,750,390	\$4,500,000	\$16,248,477	\$67,032,035

The weighted average rate of return on Council's cash and investments at 30 April 2024 was negative (1.60%) which was below the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index for April of 0.35%, 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 April 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 30 April 2024, Council has earned \$2,588,909 in interest, \$19,020 in fair value gains from fixed rate bonds and \$911,153 in fair value gains from funds held in TCorp, for a total investment income of \$3,519,082. This equates to 259.74% of the annual budget for interest and investment income of \$1,354,861. Council currently receives a net return of 4.55% on its Macquarie CMA Account after Council's financial advisors receive their commission of 0.05%. Commissions for the 2023/2024 financial year to 30 April total \$2,327.

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 cash rate remained at 4.35% per annum as the RBA did not hold an April meeting.

**Rate of Return**

The weighted average rate of return on cash and investments in April was negative (1.60%), a decrease in 929 basis points from the previous month. The rate of return is 196 basis points below the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index of 0.35% which is Council's benchmark.

Council's NSW Treasury Corporation IM Funds returned net losses of \$302,817 during the month of April. The Medium-Term Growth Fund (MTGF) returned a loss of \$211,061 and the Long-Term Growth Fund (LTGF) returned a loss of \$91,756.

During April, bond yields rose sharply, and equity markets fell as investors now foresee interest rates to remain higher for longer. Inflation data from the March quarter has increased concerns that the RBA may raise increase rates again before lowering them.

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 \$67,032,035 at 30 April 2024. This was made up of Council's Business Online Saver Account (\$7,670,000), Macquarie Cash Management Account (\$8,033,561), Term Deposits (\$23,000,000), Floating Rate Notes (\$6,750,390), Bonds (\$4,500,000), NSW Treasury Corporation Investments (\$16,248,477) and other bank accounts (\$829,606).

Council's investment portfolio had maturity dates ranging from same day up to 1,742 days. Term deposits, floating rate notes and bonds of \$34,250,390 represented 51.10% of the total portfolio as at 30 April 2024.

Council made the following new investments during April 2024:

Banking Institution	Investment Type	Environmentally Sustainable Investment	Amount Invested	Investment Term	Interest Rate
Judo Bank	Term Deposit	Y	\$2,000,000	3 months	5.00%
National Australia Bank	Term Deposit	N	\$3,000,000	3 months	5.00%
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$5,000,000</b>		

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

Banking Institution	Investment Type	Environmentally Sustainable Investment	Amount Invested	Interest Earned
Bank of Queensland	Term Deposit	N	\$3,000,000	\$52,570
Bank of Queensland	Term Deposit	N	\$2,000,000	\$51,641
Judo Bank	Term Deposit	Y	\$2,000,000	\$25,430
Bank of Queensland	Term Deposit	N	\$2,000,000	\$51,077
National Australia Bank	Term Deposit	N	\$3,000,000	\$37,771
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$12,000,000</b>	<b>\$218,489</b>

Council had \$16,248,477 in longer term investments being the MTGF and LTGF held with NSW Treasury Corporation as at 30 April 2024. The investment values and fair value returns are shown below:

Investment Holding	Fair Value 30 April 24	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) at 30 April 24	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) YTD	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) Life of Investment
Medium Term Growth Fund	\$12,907,442	(\$211,061)	\$660,425	\$1,902,413
Long Term Growth Fund	\$3,341,035	(\$91,756)	\$250,728	\$341,035
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$16,248,477</b>	<b>(\$302,817)</b>	<b>\$911,153</b>	<b>\$2,243,448</b>

### Environmentally Sustainable Investments (ESI's)

Council's cash and investments portfolio of \$67,032,035 at 30 April 2024 includes \$38,498,477 or 57.4% 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 of April 2024, Council's investments have been made in accordance with the Act, the Regulations and Council's Investment Policy.

As at 30 April 2024 Council's cash and investments totalled \$67,032,035 with \$16,533,167 of this being funds held in bank accounts. The weighted average rate of return was negative (1.60%) and total investment revenue equals 259.74% of budgeted revenue for the year to 30 April 2024.

### ATTACHMENT(S)

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

**17.4 DRAFT OPERATIONAL PLAN 2024/2025 (INCLUDING DRAFT FINANCIAL ESTIMATES 2024/2028), DRAFT REVENUE POLICY 2024/2025 AND DRAFT LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2024/2034**

**Director:** Ryan Gaiter

**Responsible Officer:** Hayley Martin

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The following documents have been prepared in consultation with Councillors:

1. Draft Operational Plan 2024/2025 (including Draft Financial Estimates for the period 2024/2028),
2. Draft Revenue Policy 2024/2025, and
3. Draft Long-Term Financial Plan 2024/2034.

It is now proposed to place the documents on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That:

1. The Draft Operational Plan 2024/2025 (including Draft Financial Estimates 2024/2028), Draft Revenue Policy 2024/2025 and Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2024/2034 be placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days.
2. The draft documents be brought back to Council to consider any submissions received for final adoption at the Extraordinary Meeting of Council on 25 June 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 outlined in the report.

**REPORT**

Council is required to undertake its planning and reporting activities in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 by implementing the Local Government Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

The Draft Operational Plan (including Draft Financial Estimates 2024/2028) delivers an unrestricted cash surplus of \$252,366, in 2023/2024, with projected surpluses across the remaining three year forward estimates as shown in the following table:

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Budget Estimates	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	75,006	77,412	79,852	82,363
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	77,388	78,530	80,195	82,662
<b>Operating Result before Capital Grants and Contributions</b>	<b>(2,382)</b>	<b>(1,118)</b>	<b>(343)</b>	<b>(299)</b>
<b>Add: Capital Grants and Contributions</b>	34,892	33,349	38,652	23,807
<b>Operating Result including Capital Grants and Contributions</b>	<b>32,510</b>	<b>32,231</b>	<b>38,309</b>	<b>23,508</b>
<b>Add: Non-Cash Expenses</b>	20,419	20,739	21,132	21,534
<b>Add: Non-Operating Funds Employed</b>	3,463	4,035	2,746	21,037
<b>Less: Capital Expenditure</b>	57,406	50,594	55,425	61,301
<b>Less: Loan Repayments</b>	3,891	3,428	3,068	2,285
<b>Estimated Funding Result – Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(4,905)</b>	<b>2,983</b>	<b>3,694</b>	<b>2,493</b>
<b>Restricted Funds – Increase/(Decrease)</b>	(5,157)	2,728	3,429	2,221
<b>Unrestricted Funds – Increase/(Decrease)</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>272</b>

While the unrestricted cash result is important - and should be a surplus – the main focus is on Council's operating result before capital grants and contributions. Council's projected operating result before capital grants and contributions for 2024/2025 is a deficit of \$2,382,282, which improves to a projected deficit of \$298,732 over the four year forward estimates. It is pleasing to see Council is moving towards a break-even operating result before capital grants and contributions, which occurs in 2029/2030, year 6 of the 10-year long term financial plan. This was one of the key objectives of the special rate variation approved for the period 2019/2020 to 2022/2023 and is a key performance indicator across NSW Local Government. With significant proposed borrowings for the Casino Sewage Treatment Plant Upgrade in year 4, preparing a budget with improving financial performance is critical in achieving these loan borrowings and needs to continue to be a key focus for Council to demonstrate its ability to repay the debt. Challenges in achieving surplus operating results is sector wide and heightened by growth in expenditure outpacing growth in revenues for a consecutive number of years.

There have been several challenges in forming the 2024/2025 budget and maintaining an unrestricted cash surplus and an improving operating result.

Depreciation expenses have increased significantly over the past 12 months resulting in an overall increase in the depreciation budget of \$1 million for 2024/2025. Largely contributing to this increase is historically high indexation rates which are required to be applied to asset values at 30 June each year in line with accounting standards, along with comprehensive revaluations of assets. Further contributing toward this increase is the completion of some major infrastructure projects, namely, Casino Swimming Pool, Cell 6 at Nammoona Landfill, Casino Showground and Racecourse Upgrade and the Northern Rivers Rail Trail.

The new Local Government State Award that commenced 1 July 2023 included an additional award payment of \$1,000 to staff with at least 12 months continuous service with Council as at 30 June 2024. This additional payment also applies to the 2025/2026 year for employees with at least 12 months continuous service with Council as at 30 June 2025. This is estimated to cost Council \$240,000 in 2024/2025 and \$240,000 again in 2025/2026 which has had a significant impact on Council's operating result and cash surplus in those years.

In addition to the above, Council's approved rate peg for 2024/2025 of 4.60% has been applied, which is up from 3.7% in the 2023/2024 year.

**Major Capital Works**

The draft budget for 2024/2025 includes a sizeable capital works program of \$57.4m, which is likely to further increase as funding approvals for essential public asset reconstruction works from the February 2022 flood event continue to flow through.

Key projects for 2024/2025 include:

- Real Estate development projects \$1.85mil
- Casino Swimming Pool Clubhouse \$426k
- Naughtons Gap Road restoration \$7.813mil
- Regional Emergency Road Repair Fund (to be allocated) \$2.719mil
- Evans Head Urban Road EPAR work \$273k
- Woodburn Urban Road EPAR works \$791k
- Halsteads Drive restoration \$600k
- McDonalds Bridge Road \$1mil
- Tatham Bridges Replacement \$17.85mil
- Rural Reseals \$900k
- Betterment of Casino Footbridge \$3.3mil
- Illawong Lane Drainage \$1.4mil
- Water Mains Casino \$579k
- Water Mains Evans Head \$250k
- Enabling Infrastructure Project \$983k
- Regional Jobs Precinct \$1.02mil
- Casino Sewer Treatment Plant Augmentation \$3.6mil
- Evans Head Sewer Treatment Plant \$2mil
- Waste Management plant replacement & site capital improvements \$886k
- Fleet Management plant purchases \$3.8mil

**Draft Revenue Policy – Fees & Charges 2024/2025**

In developing the 2024/2025 income budget, the following increases have been proposed to Rates and Annual Charges:

- General Rates – to increase by 4.60% in-line with Council's IPART determined rate peg
- Domestic Waste Annual Charge – remain unchanged at \$683
- Non-Domestic Waste Annual Charge – remain unchanged at \$720
- Water Annual Charges – to increase by 7.50%
- Sewerage Annual Charges – to increase by 7.50%

There have been several challenges in setting the fees and charges for 2024/2025, in particular for water, sewer, waste, and cemeteries.

Following a comprehensive review of the water and sewer budgets across the forward 10-year long term financial plan (LTFP) there has been a substantial increase in operating costs, which includes an increase in depreciation, as mentioned above. The programmed capital works in these areas are also substantial with \$42mil projected for water infrastructure works across the forward 10-year LTFP and \$124.7mil in sewerage, which also incorporates significant borrowings. Taking into consideration the level of future capital works required in these essential service areas, as well as the increase in the cost of operations an increase in annual charges has been proposed for water and sewer to enable Council to meet the requirement by the NSW Office of Water to promote best practice pricing, the rationale for which includes full cost recovery. To achieve this, a minimum 7.5% increase in annual charges is proposed for 2024/2025, followed by 5% across the remainder of the LTFP to 2034.

A review of the waste management budget has resulted in identified future savings with the commissioning of Cell 6 at Nammoona. As such, it is proposed that the annual charges for waste, both Domestic and Non-Domestic, remain unchanged for the 2024/2025 year. This will provide

Council the opportunity to bring the domestic and non-domestic fee's back in line with neighbouring Council's as well as providing some relief to our rating customers.

Cemeteries and Crematoria New South Wales (CCNSW) have recently introduced the Interment Industry Scheme, under the Cemeteries and Crematoria Regulation 2022, constituting a licencing system for all cemetery operators. This comes with added requirements which all operators must adhere to, including increased service levels, maintenance standards and reporting obligations, which inevitably incurs additional costs to Council. A new levy has also been introduced under this scheme for each interment, payable by the customer to CCNSW. In the past, Cemeteries have been mildly subsidised by rate payers and this is only expected to worsen with these newly regulated standards. As such, it is proposed to increase some fees and charges for cemeteries by 15% in order to cover the costs that will be incurred by Council under this new scheme.

### ***Draft Operational Plan 2024-25***

Council adopted its new Community Strategic Plan (CSP), Richmond Valley 2040 and Delivery Program 2023-25 in June 2023. The CSP and Delivery Program include four Key Directions and 12 strategic objectives to achieve the community's vision:

#### *Strengthening our role in the region*

- Rebuild and reconnect our communities (supporting continued flood recovery)
- Establish the Richmond Valley as a regional growth centre
- Grow and diversify our economy

#### *Creating great places to live*

- Celebrate our local identity and lifestyle
- Live sustainably in a changing climate
- Provide infrastructure that meets community needs

#### *Protecting our unique environment*

- Preserve native bushland and biodiversity
- Maintain healthy rivers, beaches and waterways
- Transition to a circular economy (establishing future directions for waste management)

#### *Delivering for our community*

- Lead and advocate for our community
- Manage resources responsibly
- Provide great service

The Delivery Program is supported by annual Operational Plans. These plans include the actions that Council will undertake, each year, towards achieving its Delivery Program activities. Many of the actions in the Operational Plan relate to ongoing day-to-day activities within Council, such as processing development applications, managing libraries, providing regulatory services etc. These actions are carried over from year to year.

Of the 237 actions in Council's current Operational Plan, 119 are ongoing activities and it is proposed to carry these actions forward into the 2024-25 Operational Plan.

Other actions relate to projects or programs that will span more than one financial year, such as the current design works to replace the Casino STP and complete Stage 2 of the Evans Head STP, completing and commissioning Cell 6 at the Nammoona Resource Recovery Centre, and continued upgrade works on the Woodburn-Casino Road. These actions have also been carried forward into the draft 2024-25 Operational Plan.

Seventeen actions from the current Operational Plan have been completed, including construction of the Casino-Bentley section of the Rail Trail, completion of investigations into the Richmond Terrace upgrade at Coraki, and completion of the Casino Showground upgrade. These actions are further developed in the draft 2024-25 Operational Plan, to allow for continued improvements to the Rail Trail and ultimate connection to the Bentley-Lismore section, activation and further

development of opportunities around the Casino Showground upgrade, and continued advocacy for government funding to complete the Richmond Terrace project.

A copy of the Draft Operational Plan 2024/2025 (including Draft Financial Estimates 2024/2028), Draft Revenue Policy 2024/2025 and Draft Long-Term Financial Plan 2024/2034 have been circulated separately to Councillors.

### **CONSULTATION**

In accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements the Draft Operational Plan 2024/2025 (including Draft Financial Estimates 2024/2028), Draft Revenue Policy 2024/2025 and Draft Long-Term Financial Plan 2024/2034 will be placed on public exhibition for a period of at least 28 days. During that time public submissions on the documents can be made. A further report on the documents and submissions received will be presented to the Extraordinary Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 25 June 2024.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Draft Operational Plan 2024/2025 (including Draft Financial Estimates 2024/2028), Draft Revenue Policy 2024/2025 and Draft Long-Term Financial Plan 2024/2034 have been prepared based on extensive consultation with the community and are presented to Council for consideration. The report recommends that these documents be placed on public exhibition.

### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

Nil

**17.5 QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW STATEMENT FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**Director:** Ryan Gaiter

**Responsible Officer:** Zakari Witt

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report outlines the proposed adjustments for the 2023/2024 budget for the quarter ended 31 March 2024.

Council's projected operating result from continuing operations for 2023/2024 is proposed to increase by \$6,642,144 to a surplus of \$38,799,983. The net operating result before capital grants and contributions has improved slightly from a deficit of \$3,088,946 to a deficit of \$1,586,211.

Income from continuing operations has increased by \$4,802,310 from the revised budget, with total income now projected to be \$114,614,647. This is largely due to \$10mil in funding being received under a new Tripartite Funding Agreement towards essential public asset reconstruction works post the February 2022 flood, as well as an increase of \$2,300,000 in the interest revenue budget with higher than anticipated returns due to the positive performance of Council's investments.

Expenses from continuing operations have decreased by \$1,839,834 to a projected cost of \$75,814,664. Of this, \$1,200,000 relates to a reallocation from operational to capital expenditure for planning of the Casino Sewage Treatment Plant replacement.

Council's capital works program has been reviewed, resulting in a projected program for 2023/2024 of \$72,364,941, increasing the 2023/2024 programmed works by \$1,369,246. This program of works continues to be largely focused on disaster recovery works and the restoration of essential public infrastructure following the February 2022 flood event along with key grant funded projects to provide strategic infrastructure upgrades to the Richmond Valley. The delivery of this program of works will be heavily reliant on the availability of contractors and materials as well as favourable weather conditions for the remainder of 2023/2024. Year to date capital expenditure has increased significantly bringing the capital program to 62% complete. This is mainly due to several larger capital projects being underway such as reconstruction of the Naughtons Gap Road landslip. Council will continue to ensure its capital works program is closely monitored and the program is deliverable, with any adjustments required to be included in future monthly budget adjustment reports to Council.

Council's unrestricted cash surplus has remained unchanged at \$212,574 as of 31 March 2024.

A detailed Quarterly Budget Review Statement for the third quarter of 2023/2024 has been circulated separately to each Councillor. These changes are disclosed by priority areas on pages 4-8 of the Quarterly Budget Review Statement and detailed explanations are provided on pages 9-14.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Receives the Quarterly Budget Review Statement as at 31 March 2024; and
2. Approves the recommended budget variations.

**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

The budget review for the third quarter of the 2023/2024 financial year has resulted in Council's operating result from continuing operations improving to a projected surplus of \$38,799,983. The net operating result before capital grants and contributions has improved from a deficit of \$3,088,946 to a deficit of \$1,586,211.

Council's estimated budget result (unrestricted cash result) has remained unchanged from the 2023/2024 original budget at \$212,574. In overall cash terms, there is a decrease in the estimated funding from reserves of \$5,465,626 with an estimated total transfer from reserves of \$15,370,666 for the 2023/2024 financial year.

Income from continuing operations has increased by \$4,802,310, with total income from continuing operations now projected to be \$114,614,647. Largely contributing to the change is an increase in interest revenues for the 2023/2024 year of \$2,300,000, which is currently 259% of the original budgeted amount due to the positive performance of Council's investments, along with an increase in budgeted income for disaster restoration works of \$3.4mil, due to Council receiving \$10mil under a new Tripartite Agreement between Transport for NSW, the NSW Reconstruction Authority and Council. This new agreement enables funding to be provided to Councils in advance of expenditure with this initial payment being 20% of the estimated value of EPAR's that were submitted to TfNSW at that time and is expected to grow as Council finalises its applications for funding by 30 June 2024. This advance payment model assists with Council's cashflow and ensures we can continue to deliver for our community in all aspects of operations without the added cashflow burden associated with an estimated \$100mil road network restoration program.

In addition, a change in operating structure to an external lease of the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange (NRLX) and the cessation of trading for seven months, has resulted in a loss in income of \$2.62m and a reduction in operating expenditure of \$753,589. In the last year of normal NRLX operations being the 2022/23 year, an operating deficit of \$580,000 was realised. Under the proposed fee structure and operational model from the 2023 NRLX Business Plan, a surplus of \$450,000 for the 2023/24 year was envisioned, however with the ceasing of trade for seven months, and the subsequent lease arrangements with Outcross Agri-services, it is estimated that the deficit for the 2023/24 year will be close to \$1 million (this will be confirmed when Council's Annual Financial Statements are finalised, audited by the NSW Audit Office and publicly notified in November 2024).

Under full financial year operations with Outcross Agri-services leasing the facility, future deficits of \$200,000 are forecast starting in the 2024/25 year, which supports Council's move toward this leasing structure and will reduce the amount of subsidisation by all ratepayers towards this facility. This operating result will further improve when Council's loan borrowings for its contribution to the facility upgrades are finalised during 2024/25.

In summary, Council is better off under the lease arrangement with Outcross when compared to the old operating model, but worse off when compared to projected results under the proposed model in the 2023 Business Plan and subsequent unsuccessful EOI process, with the realisation of this one-off operating deficit. However, the leasing of the facility has removed the significant operating risks of a saleyard facility which is now the responsibility of Outcross Agri-services.

Expenses from continuing operations have decreased by \$1,839,834 to a projected total of \$75,814,664. Of this, \$1,200,000 relates to a reallocation from operational to capital expenditure for planning of the Sewer Treatment Plant replacement along with a reduction in operating expenditure for the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange as discussed above.

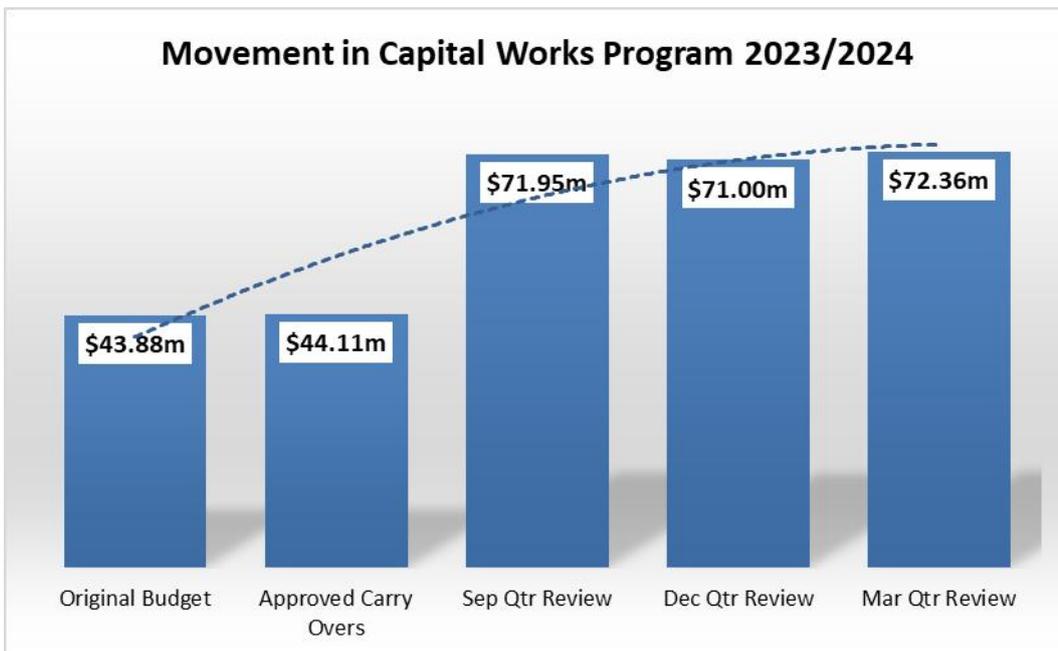
All recommended changes for Council resolution are disclosed by Priority Area on page 4 of the Quarterly Budget Review Statement and detailed explanations are provided on pages 9-14

Council's capital works budget has increased by \$1,369,246 to a program of \$72,364,941 as at 31 March 2024. The restoration of essential public assets following the February 2022 flooding event

continues to be the key focus of Council’s capital program. Year to date, capital expenditure has increased significantly when comparing to expenditure at 31 March 2024 due to several larger projects being underway. The capital works program is currently 62% complete and this is expected to increase significantly over the remainder of 2023/2024 year. As mentioned in previous quarterly review reports the delivery of this program will be heavily reliant on contractor availability as well as favourable weather conditions. Being one of the largest capital programs Council has ever had to undertake, it will require close monitoring throughout the remainder of 2023/2024 to make sure it is deliverable.

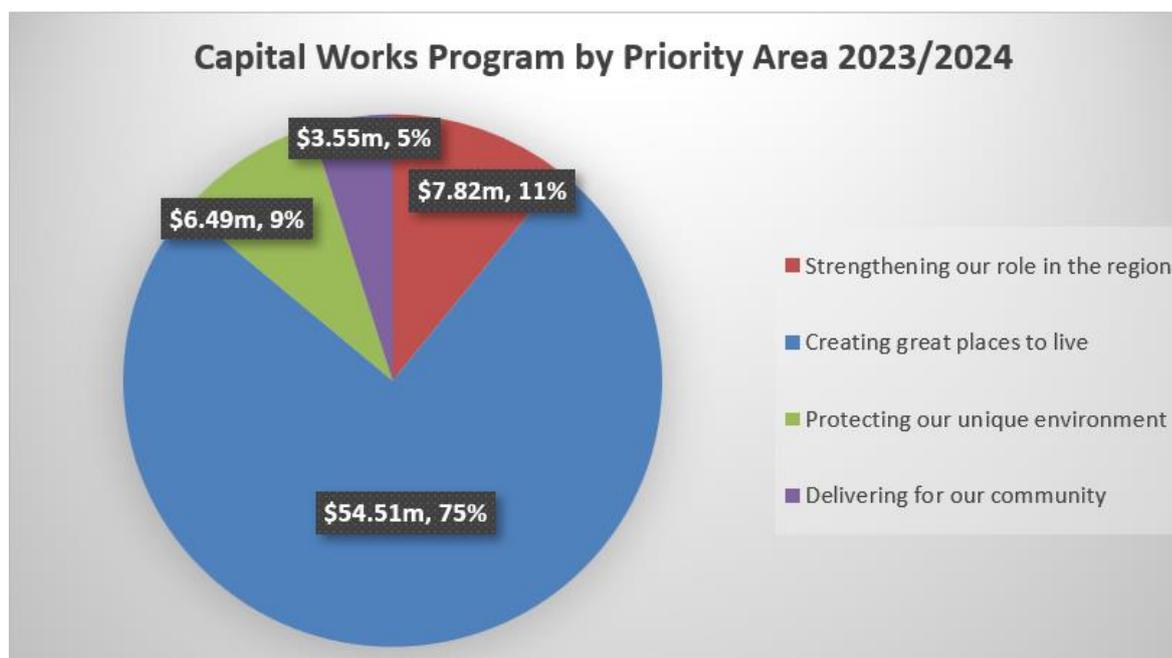
All recommended changes of \$1,369,246 to the capital works program are disclosed by priority area on page 6 of Council’s Quarterly Budget Review Statement and detailed explanations are provided on pages 9-14.

The following graph tracks the movement in the capital works program for 2023/2024 from the original budget, after the adoption of approved carry over works and other approved monthly adjustments up to the March Quarterly Budget Review.



This graph illustrates the increase in the capital works program and the importance of constantly reviewing priorities to make sure the works program is deliverable. This is important for Council as increasingly more natural disaster funding is being approved alongside Councils existing commitments.

The following graph provides a summary of the capital works program by priority area:



This graph illustrates that a considerable portion of Council’s capital works program is dedicated to making the Richmond Valley Council a great place to live with a focus on establishing a vibrant, liveable and safe community, with quality infrastructure that meets community needs.

Council’s projected budget position and recommended changes for Council resolution are summarised in the table below:

Quarterly Budget Review Statement for the quarter ended 31 March 2024	Revised Budget 2023/2024	Recommended Changes for Council Resolution	Projected Year End Result 2023/2024
Income from Continuing Operations	109,812,337	4,802,310	114,614,647
Expenses from Continuing Operations	77,654,498	(1,839,834)	75,814,664
<b>Operating Result from Continuing Operations</b>	<b>32,157,839</b>	<b>6,642,144</b>	<b>38,799,983</b>
<b>Operating Result before Capital Income</b>	<b>(3,088,946)</b>	<b>1,502,735</b>	<b>(1,586,211)</b>
Add: Non-Cash Expenses	18,648,544	0	18,648,544
Add: Non-Operating Funds Employed	3,164,697	192,728	3,357,425
Less: Capital Expenditure	70,995,695	1,369,246	72,364,941
Less: Loan Repayments	3,599,103	0	3,599,103
<b>Estimated Funding Result – Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(20,623,718)</b>	<b>5,465,626</b>	<b>(15,158,092)</b>
Restricted Funds – Increase/(Decrease)	(20,836,292)	5,465,626	(15,370,666)
<b>Unrestricted Funds – Increase/(Decrease)</b>	<b>212,574</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>212,574</b>

Pages 9 to 14 of the attached Quarterly Budget Review Statement contain the budget variation explanations. A summary of the main contributing factors within each Priority Area is as follows:

Strengthening our role in the region

- A revision of the Northern Rivers Livestock Exchange budget has resulted in a reduction in operating income of \$2,632,126 and operating expenditure of \$716,850, with the reduction in operating income being offset by an increase in capital grants of \$1,242,616 due to funding being received towards the upgrade of the NRLX Effluent management system, which Council was successful in securing \$5.7 million.

- Proposed transfer of \$690,000 in industrial land developments from the real estate budget to the 2024/2025 budget in line with revised project timeframes.

#### Creating great places to live

- Proposed decrease to Sports Grounds, Parks and Facilities capital expenditure budget mainly due to the transfer of \$591,277 to the 2024/2025 budget due to competing priorities and revised timeframes for various grant funded projects including \$198,984 for revitalisation of Shark Bay funded by the Department of Regional NSW and \$127,911 for Woodburn Oval irrigation connections funded by the Office of Sport.
- Proposed increase in Building and Maintaining Roads capital grants budget with \$3,386,766 for Essential Public Asset Reconstruction to bring the budget in line with the revised schedule of works.
- Proposed increase in Building and Maintaining Roads capital expenditure budget with \$1,531,766 for Essential Public Asset Reconstruction to bring the budget in line with the revised schedule of works.

#### Protecting our unique environment

- Proposed increase of Waste Management capital expenditure budget of \$1,162,446 for the construction of Nammoona waste facility Cell 6 in line with the revised schedule of works.
- Proposed transfer of \$188,703 in capital expenditure to the 2024/2025 waste management budget for the pound upgrades funded by the Office of Local Government due to a revised program of works.

#### Delivering for our community

- Proposed increase of \$2,300,000 to the financial services operating income budget in line with increased interest revenue on Council's investments due to the positive performance of our investments.

### **CONCLUSION**

At the end of the third quarter, Council's operating result from continuing operations is a projected surplus of \$38,799,983, with a projected deficit before capital grants and contributions of \$1,586,211. Council's capital works budget has increased to \$72,364,941 and this will be closely monitored to ensure all projects can be delivered. Council's estimated budget result (unrestricted cash result) has remained unchanged at \$212,574 and overall, Council's projected financial position at year end remains satisfactory.

### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

1. **Quarterly Budget Review Statement for the quarter ended 31 March 2024 (under separate cover)**

**18 GENERAL BUSINESS**

Nil

**19 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION****RECOMMENDATION**

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

**19.1 OUTCOME OF THE COMMUNITY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM 2023/2024 ROUND TWO FUNDING**

**Director:** Angela Jones

**Responsible Officer:** Marie Cullen

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receives and notes the allocations under the Community Financial Assistance Program 2023/2024 Round Two.

**REPORT**

Under Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (The Act) Council may by resolution contribute financial assistance to individuals, groups and organisations seeking financial assistance. At the February 2022 Ordinary Meeting Council resolved to delegate authority to the General Manager to approve the allocation of funds in accordance with Council's Policy 1.2 Community Financial Assistance Program.

Council has allocated \$79,585.00 in the 2023/2024 budget for the Community Financial Assistance Program. The policy provides for two approximately equal funding rounds, allowing for \$40,755.00 to be allocated in this second round. This round of funding was advertised in March 2024 and Council received 20 applications.

All applications received have been reviewed in accordance with the policy and 17 applications were deemed eligible. 16 projects will be partially or fully funded in this round.

In determining the allocation of funds, consideration was given to Council's Community Strategic Plan and the deliverables in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan, as well as Program eligibility requirements, prior funding, past acquittal performance and selection criteria.

Councillors had an opportunity to review the proposals and provide feedback at a workshop on 7 May 2024, with the General Manager approving the allocation of funds under delegation.

The following table summarises eligible projects that will be partially or fully funded.

Organisation	Purpose of funding	Amount allocated
Casino Community Men's Shed Inc.	Construction of new timber storage and drying shed improving safety and access to timber	\$3909.00
Casino RSL Sub-Branch	Purchase a modern sound system to support public services on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day	\$1000.00
The Scout Association of Australia NSW Branch 2nd Casino Scout Group	Purchase items to support youth development including STEM and creative activities, and radios and safety fencing for outdoor activities.	\$967.00

Upper Richmond Rotary Club	Provide breakfast for children that may not be able to have breakfast at home due to financial or other reasons.	\$2500.00
Casino Kings Basketball Association	Support the establishment of a much-needed basketball association in Casino.	\$2405.00
Casino Senior Citizens Centre Incorporated	Provide a social outing for senior citizens to enjoy a variety of activities including a visit to the Alpaca Farm.	\$1500.00
Coraki Golf Club	Support recreational activity for older people by installing bench seats at Coraki golf course.	\$4404.00
Woodburn Wolves Football Club	Purchase two portable goals to support training, games and help maintain condition of the new field.	\$5000.00
Evans Head Bombers JRLC	Purchase all the appropriate safety and training equipment for each of the Club's new teams.	\$2500.00
Evans Head Living Museum	Purchase binding machines and a Square register to support ongoing financial sustainability of the volunteer-run museum.	\$2880.00
Stan Payne Memorial Oval Committee	Replace existing fridges (which no longer cool effectively) with safer and more efficient fridges, to benefit all Stan Payne Oval user groups.	\$3000.00
Platypus RSL Day Club	Support older community members who need assistance with transport to attend a weekly volunteer-run Day Club.	\$2500.00
Northern Rivers Dirty Wheels MTB Club	Replace existing mower which is used to maintain 30km of purpose-built single-track mountain bike trails.	\$4000.00
Border Ranges Richmond Valley Landcare Network	Support existing local Landcare groups (at Rappville, Woodburn and The Gap) to improve their WHS practices and prepare a resource pack to support establishment of three additional local groups.	\$2360.00
Bentley Community Preschool	Employ a qualified physical movement and early childhood specialist to promote movement, safe and healthy living, and exercise with preschool children.	\$1000.00
Casino's Own Wireless Association Inc.	Support a volunteer community radio network by reducing electricity expenses through replacement of standard fluorescent tubes with LED tubes.	\$830.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$40,755.00</b>

Round Two was over-subscribed, and as such, the following applications have not been allocated funding in this round. Unsuccessful applicants will be advised of the outcome and offered feedback on their application and assistance to secure future funding or provided with alternative solutions to address their needs.

- Woodburn Pony Club
- Rotary Club of Evans Head
- Upper Richmond Rotary Club
- Backyard Sessions Evans Head

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

**Nil**

**19.2 EVENT SUPPORT SCHEME ALLOCATION 2024/2025****Director:** Angela Jones**Responsible Officer:** Tiarn Stenner**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receives and notes the allocations under the Event Support Scheme Application 2024/2025.

**REPORT**

Under Section 356 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act) Council may by resolution contribute financial assistance to individuals, groups and organisations seeking financial assistance. At the February 2022 Council meeting, Council resolved to delegate authority to the General Manager to approve allocation of funds in accordance with Council's Policy 9.04 Event Support.

Council has allocated \$44,190 in the 2024/2025 budget for the Event Support Scheme. This funding was advertised in February 2024 and Council received twelve (12) applications.

The remaining funds are allocated during the year, as we receive a significant number of requests for support from local event organisers.

All applications received have been reviewed in accordance with the policy. Eleven (11) applications were deemed appropriate for support. Evaluations included a recommendation from the Manager Community Connection, Events Officer and General Manager as to the appropriate cash and in-kind contribution to be provided.

In determining the allocation of funds, consideration was given to Council's Community Strategic Plan and the deliverables in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan, as well as eligibility requirements, prior funding, past acquittal performance and selection criteria.

The following table summarises eligible events that will be partially or fully funded.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Requested allocation</b>	<b>Event description</b>	<b>Amount allocated</b>
Casino Show	\$5,500 cash \$3,385 in-kind	The 130 <sup>th</sup> annual two-day agricultural event containing entertainment, demonstrations and competitions showcasing the agriculture sector of not only the Richmond Valley but surrounding LGA's.	\$2,500 cash \$2,745 in-kind
NSW Championship Working Dog Trials	\$5,000-\$10,000 cash \$2,590 in-kind	The aim of cattle dog trialling is to provide a competitive way to foster and encourage the use of training and herding dogs in the cattle industry – by providing a course that stimulates a mini work situation with all the skill requirements that would be used on a farm.	\$5000 cash \$2,590 in-kind
Evans Head Malibu Classic	\$1,650 cash \$650.70 in-kind	A four-day surfing event that attracts surfers from all over Australia. It is also a great spectator event with families gathering on the SLSC foreshore across the weekend.	\$1,500 cash \$650.70 in-kind

Woodburn Riverside Festival	\$4,000 cash \$835 in-kind	An annual full day of inexpensive family-oriented activities and entertainment based in the park.	\$2,000 \$835 in-kind
Lions Club of Casino	\$11,000 cash \$813.70 in-kind	This event is an opportunity for interested Lions to meet, discuss, socialise and network with members of 70 Lions Clubs. There will be multiple workshops and keynote speakers.	\$3,000 cash \$813.70 in-kind
Evans Head Fishing Classic	\$5500 cash \$950.70 in-kind	A seven-day fishing competition held in Evans Head.	\$2,500 cash \$950.70 in-kind
Casino Cow Country Music Muster	\$5,500 cash \$3,925 in-kind	The CCCMM is a country music festival held over six days, organised to showcase 15-20 Australian artists.	\$2,500 cash \$3,925 in-kind
Casino Truck Show Rodeo	\$10,000 cash \$1,790 in-kind	An action-packed rodeo featuring professional bull riding, amateur mini bulls, a celebrity bullock ride alongside family-friendly entertainment.	\$2,500 cash \$1,000 in-kind
Buckin by the Beach	\$10,000 cash \$755 in-kind	Buckin by the Beach is a premier event for families holidaying in Evans Head. This unique event blends the rugged spirit of rural living with the coastal charm of Evans Head. The event features various bull rising events and lots of other entertainment for all to enjoy.	\$2,000 cash \$755 in-kind
Woodburn New Years Eve Family Extravaganza	\$10,000 cash \$650.70 in-kind	All inclusive, family friendly event on New Years Eve with entertainment, food and market stalls and fireworks.	\$3,000 cash \$650.70 in-kind
Casino Gallery Watercolour Competition and Exhibition	\$3,000 cash	This competition will be hosted at the Cassino Gallery and will lay the foundation for an annual art cultural event. The competition will feature watercolour paintings and will be judged independently by accomplished artists with winners being awarded prize money.	\$1,500 cash
		Cash	\$28,000.00
		In-kind support	\$14,915.80
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$42,915.80</b>

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

Nil

**19.3 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2024 - 30 APRIL 2024**

**Director:** Angela Jones  
**Responsible Officer:** Andy Edwards

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receives and notes the Development Application report for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 April 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 April 2024 to 30 April 2024 was fourteen (14), applications with a total value of \$2,820,905.00.

During April 2024, one (1) flood affected development application being DA2024/0070 – 102 Baraang Drive, Broadwater was determined.

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

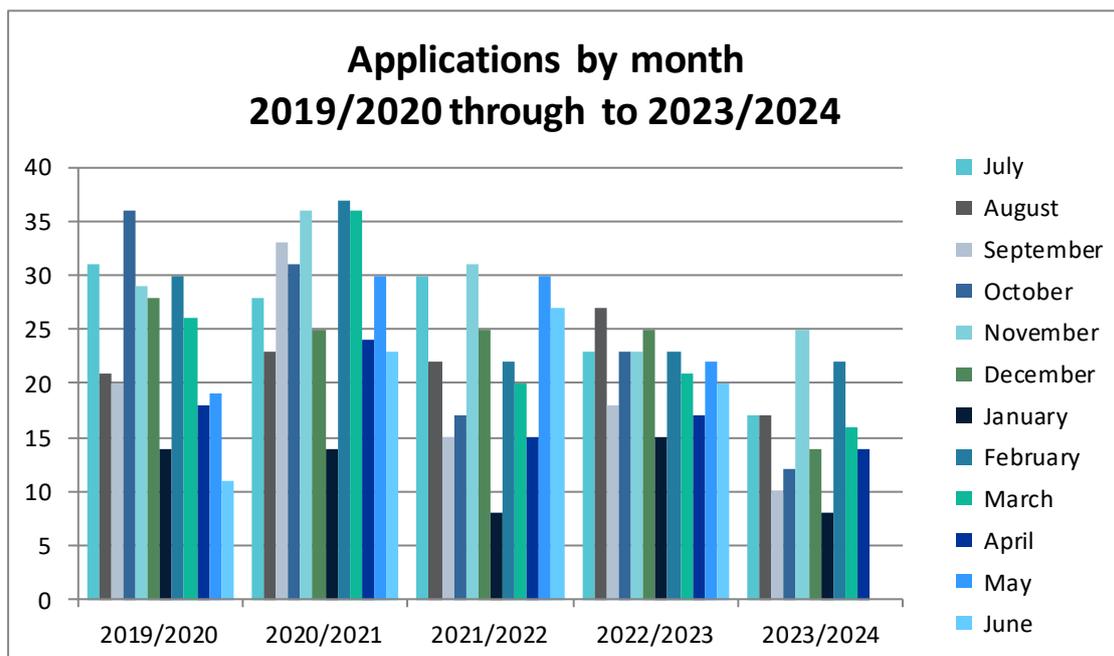


Figure 1: Monthly number of development applications and CDC’s processed by Council over five financial years.

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

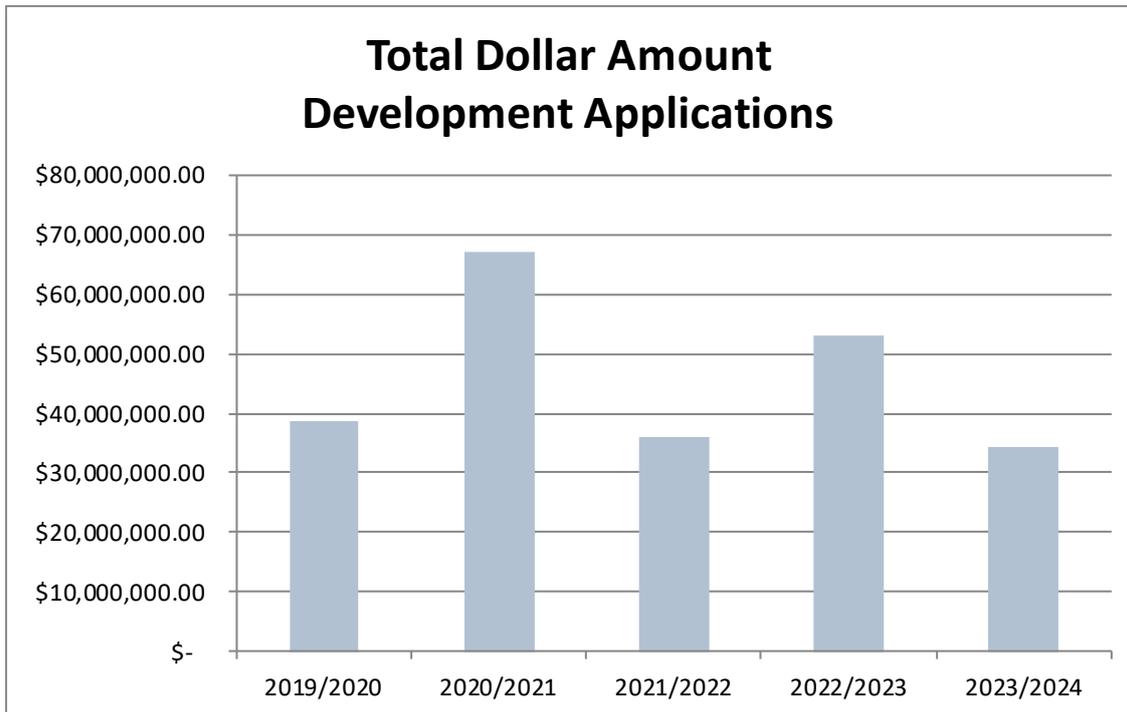


Figure 2: Annual value of development

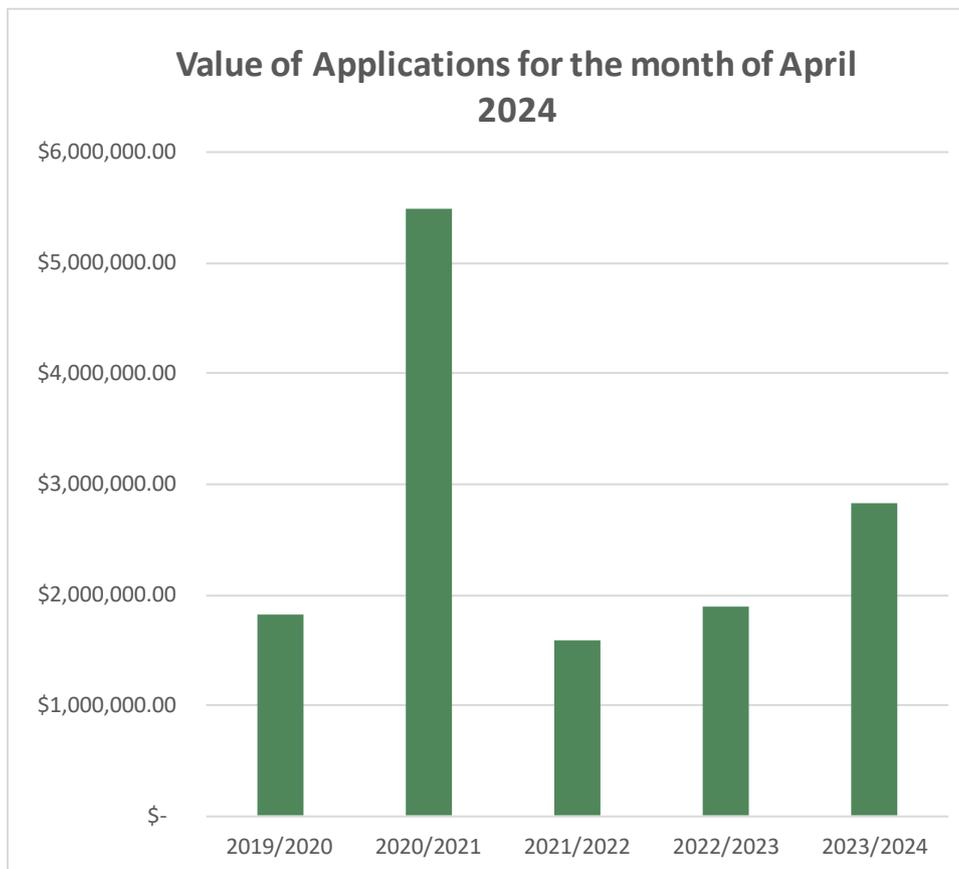


Figure 3: Value of development for the month of April 2024

**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.

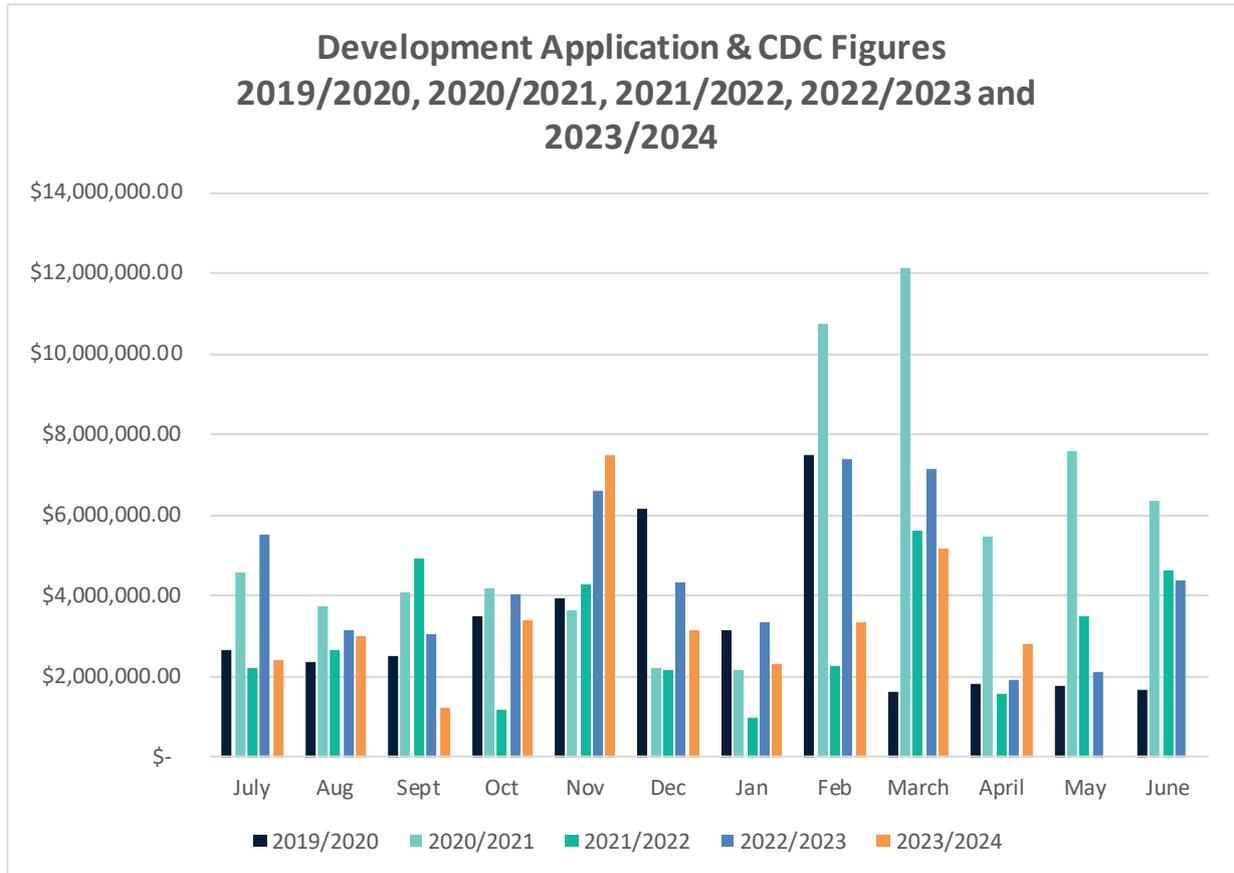


Figure 4: Value of development applications per month over five financial years.

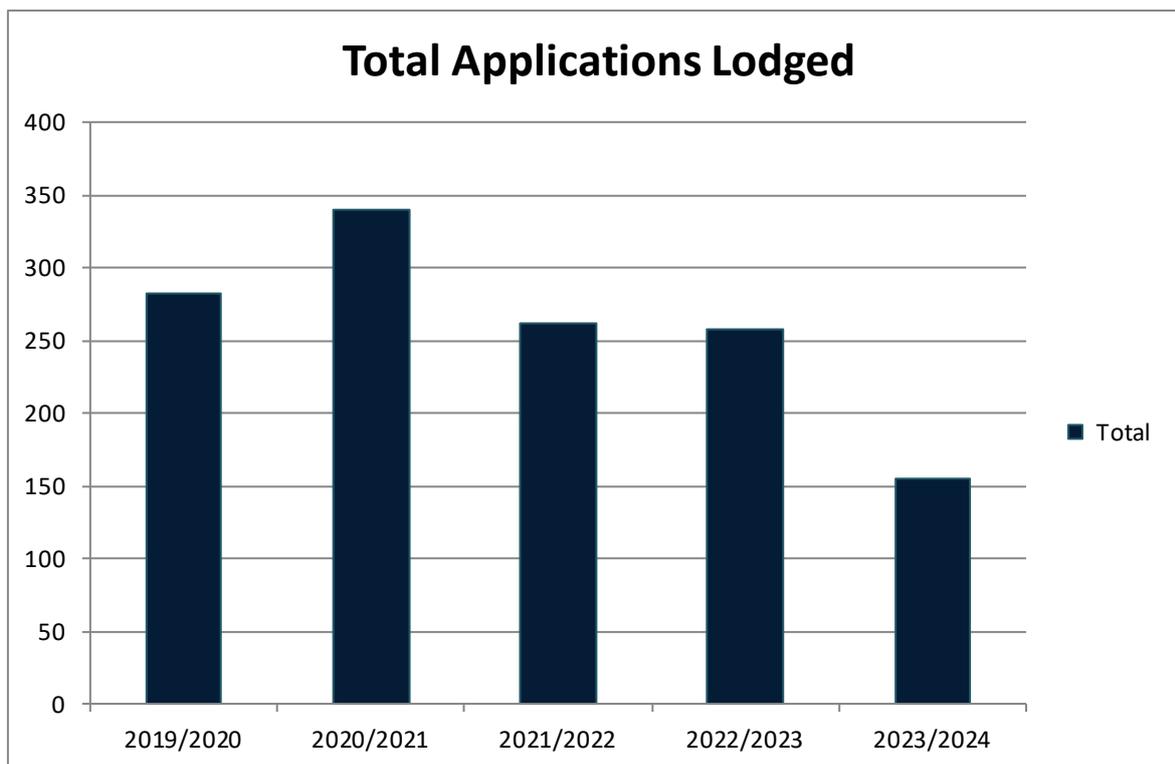


Figure 5: Number of Development Applications & CDC’s per annum over five financial years

**Activity for the month of March 2024**

General Approvals (excluding Subdivisions, Section 4.55)	10
Section 4.55 amendments to original consent	1
Subdivision	3
Refused	0
Rejected	0
Withdrawn	0
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS DETERMINED (Excluding withdrawn applications)</b>	<b>14</b>
Complying Development (Council Approved)	0
Complying Development (Private Certifier Approved)	0
<b>Average assessment days for applications determined in April 2024 (Planning &amp; Building Combined)</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>No. of Integrated development applications determined in April 2024</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>No. of Designated development applications determined in March 2024</b>	<b>0</b>

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

Nil

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 April 2024								
Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (in Portal)	Date Accepted (In Portal)	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
DA2024/0050	S D Henderson	C A & K M Berry	25 Fergusson Street, Casino	As built - extension to existing front and rear timber decks, extension to side carport and concrete driveway to rear carport including a request for variation to the DCP regarding side and rear boundary setbacks.	10/10/2023	11/10/2023	19/04/2024	\$38,000.00
DA2024/0054	Newton Denny Chapelle	J A Wannell	15 Northfields Road, Stratheden	Proposed animal boarding establishment	17/10/2023	23/10/2023	4/04/2024	\$110,300.00
DA2024/0077	Bogal Local Aboriginal Land Council	Bogal Local Aboriginal Land Council	4 Box Ridge Road, Coraki	Subdivision to create 17 Lots	13/12/2023	15/12/2023	18/04/2024	\$0.00
DA2024/0105	C C Rixon	V A & C C Rixon	310 Droneys Bridge Road, Stratheden	Proposed alterations and additions to existing dwelling, decking, inground fibreglass swimming pool and associated fencing	7/02/2024	19/02/2024	9/04/2024	\$742,500.00
DA2024/0107	R M Wimbus	A M Youman & R M Wimbus	17 Wirraway Avenue, Evans Head	Construction of a two storey dwelling, including above ground concrete swimming pool and associated fencing and earthworks	13/02/2024	27/02/2024	22/04/2024	\$896,500.00
DA2024/0109	Professional Planning Group - Pplan	E & C J Dujmovic	84 Currajong Street, Evans Head	Two lot strata subdivision of existing dual occupancy (detached)	16/02/2024	23/02/2024	9/04/2024	\$0.00
DA2024/0113	B Bowan	K E Maslen & B Gumbleton	19 Robinson Avenue, Casino	Construction of double carport in front of building line with a request to vary the DCP	19/02/2024	28/02/2024	23/04/2024	\$27,840.00
DA2024/0114	Living Pools & Spas Pty Ltd	P Bennett	705 Manifold Road, Bentley	New inground concrete swimming pool & associated pool fencing	20/02/2024	27/02/2024	15/04/2024	\$143,550.00
DA2024/0115	A P Hughes	A P Hughes	104 Baraang Drive, Broadwater	Construction of a new two storey dwelling	22/02/2024	27/03/2024	24/04/2024	\$350,000.00

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 April 2024								
Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (in Portal)	Date Accepted (in Portal)	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
MA2024/0006	Newton Denny Chapelle	P J Fuhrmann, J A Fuhrmann & H M Smethurst	23 Beech Street, Evans Head	Modification S4.55(1A) - Removal of additional trees, minor amendments to boundary fence and retention of vertical visual batten screen on Level 1	28/02/2024	20/03/2024	18/04/2024	\$0.00
DA2024/0124	R J Hayes	V J Ptolemy	1/9 Oak Street, Evans Head	Change of use to a florist, gift and coffee shop and any associated works	6/03/2024	18/03/2024	2/04/2024	\$19,800.00
DA2024/0126	Newton Denny Chapelle	Widosea Pty Ltd & Triasa Pty Ltd	108 West Street, Casino	Proposed two (2) lot Torrens Title Subdivision	7/03/2024	13/03/2024	9/04/2024	\$0.00
DA2024/0128	R J Hayes	Sly Bros Pty Ltd	25 River Street, Woodburn	Demolition of the existing timber framed house and the erection of a new 2 level home	8/03/2024	15/03/2024	18/04/2024	\$424,600.00

Summary of Council Certified Complying Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 April 2024								
Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (in Portal)	Date Accepted (in Portal)	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
Nil								

Summary of Flood Affected Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 April 2024								
Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (in Portal)	Date Accepted (in Portal)	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
DA2024/0070	A P Hughes	A P Hughes & S L Dyer	102 Baraang Drive, Broadwater	Raising of existing dwelling	28/11/2023	30/11/2023	15/04/2024	\$67,815.00

Summary of Privately Certified Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 April 2024 to 30 April 2024								
Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Submitted to Council for Registration	Date Accepted	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
Nil								

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

**Director:** Ryan Gaiter

**Responsible Officer:** Rylee Vidler

**RECOMMENDATION**

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

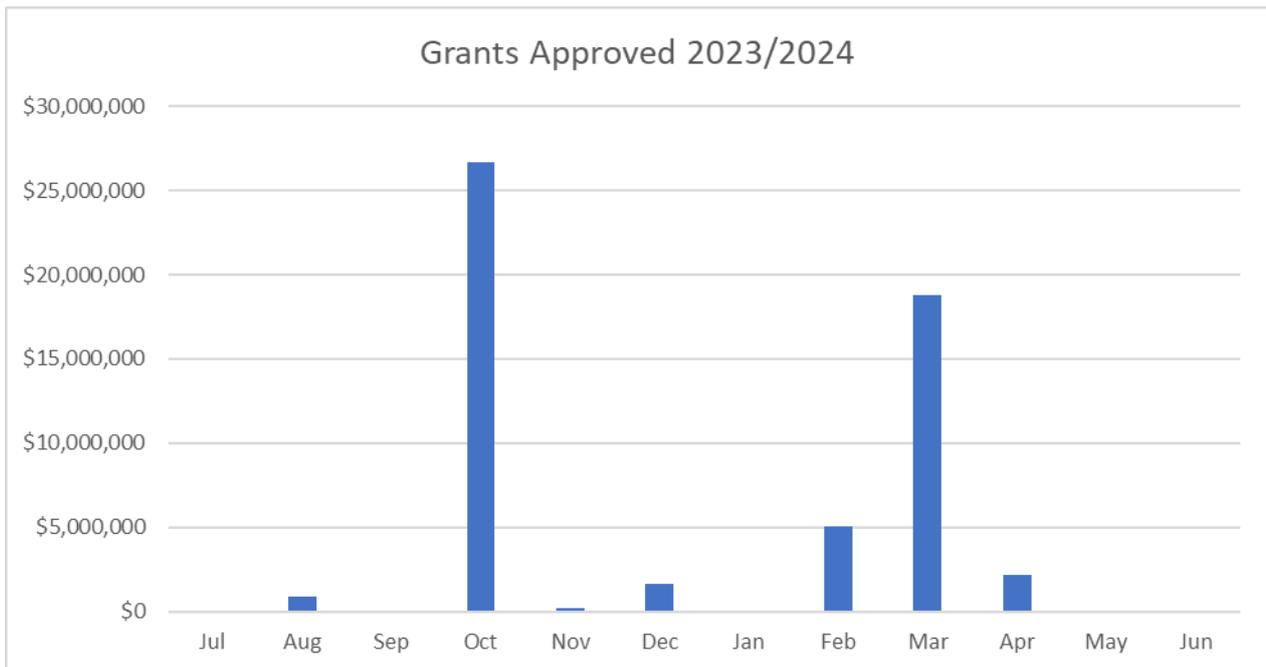
**REPORT**

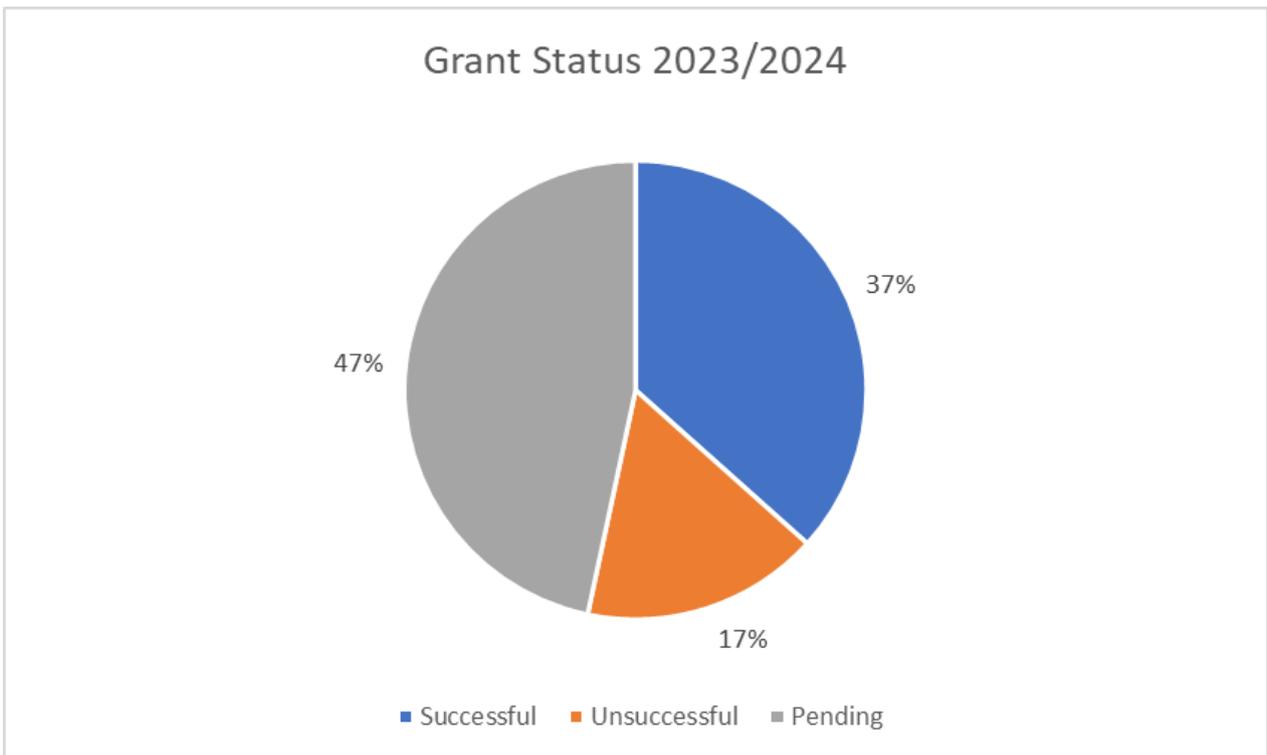
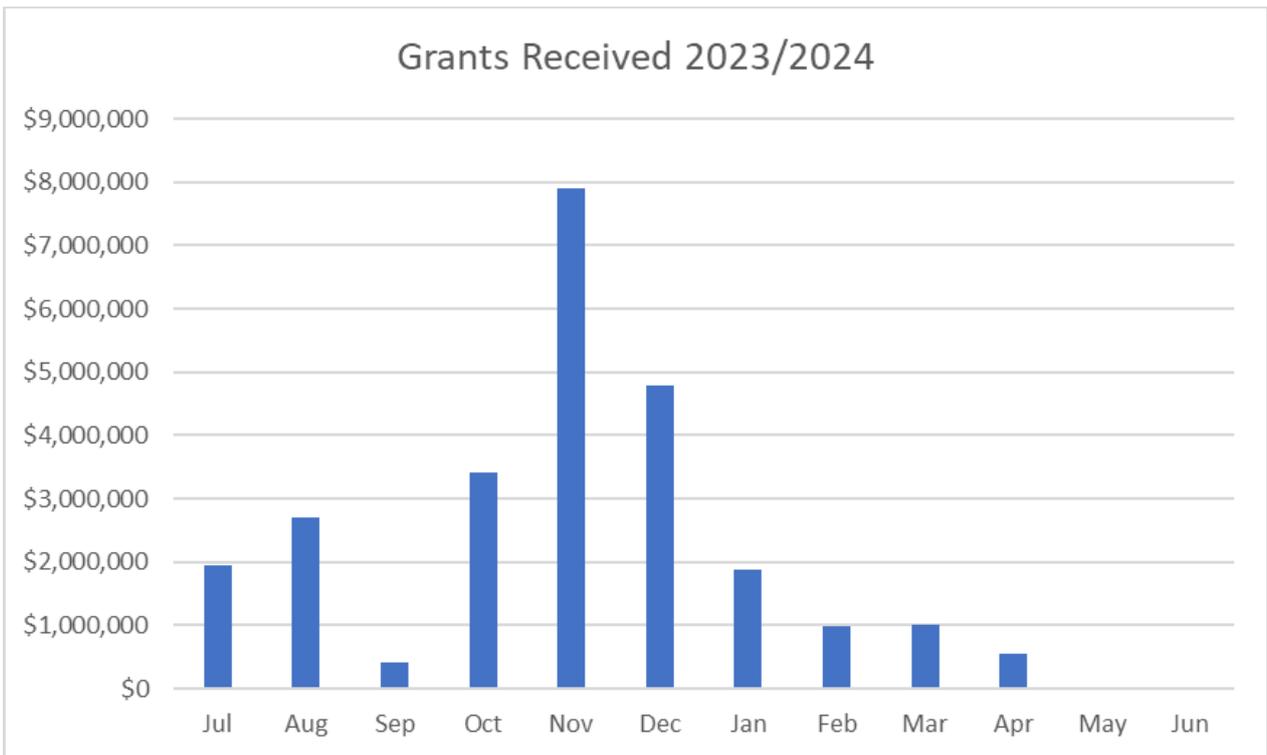
This report provides information on grant applications that have been approved, grants that have been received, grant applications that were unsuccessful and grant applications that were submitted for the month of April 2024.

During the reporting period, there was one grant approved and four submissions made. Council was not notified of any unsuccessful grant applications.

Council received funding for seven grants totalling \$543,684.

A summary of grants approved and received, as well as the status of applications for the current financial year to 30 April 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)	\$23,279,658	\$23,279,658	\$ -	N/A	Various
<p>Comment: Council has been approved for the following new EPAR projects: Manifold Road, Casino Town Roads 1, Spring Grove Road, Mongogorie Road, Cowan Lane, Creighton Lane, Backmede Road, Bells Road, Mortimer Lane, Riley Hill Road, Evans Head Town Roads 1.</p> <p>Note: This is a cumulative total for all EPAR projects approved, previously reported \$21,094,844. There are currently 30 EPAR submissions approved.</p>							

**Grant Applications Submitted**

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted
Casino Truck Show	Destination NSW (State)	Regional Event Fund Flagship Stream	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ -	9 April 2024
<p>Comment: If successful, this funding will allow for additional marketing activities to promote the Casino Truck Show.</p>						
Richmond Valley Street Fair	Transport for NSW (State)	Open Streets Program	\$ 21,500	\$ 21,500	\$ -	29 April 2024
<p>Comment: If successful, this funding will allow Council to temporarily close main streets in Casino and Evans Head to create engaging spaces that enhance foot traffic.</p>						
Richmond Valley Housing Strategy	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (Federal)	Housing Support Program	\$ 165,000	\$ 165,000	\$ -	29 April 2024
<p>Comment: If successful, this funding will allow Council to develop a local housing strategy that considers demographic factors, the supply and demand for housing, and local land use opportunities and constraints.</p>						
Casino Raw Water Pump Station 200kw Solar Farm	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Federal)	Community Energy Upgrades Fund Round 1	\$ 739,000	\$ 369,500	\$ 369,500	30 April 2024
<p>Comment: If successful, this funding will allow Council to install custom solar mounting frames to raise the panels above the flood levels and connect a 200kW solar system to the electricity supply on site.</p>						

**Grants that have been received**

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Date Received	Total Received
Casino Sewage Treatment Plant Business Case	Regional NSW (State)	Business Case and Development Fund	\$ 88,217	\$ 88,217	\$ -	23 August 2022	\$ 17,643 2 April 2024	\$ 88,217
Comment: Final 20% received for completed project.								
Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Program	Department of Education (State)	Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Program	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	\$ -	N/A	\$ 30,000 9 April 2024	\$ 30,000
Comment: Funding received for two traineeships.								
Richmond Valley Council Koala Vehicle Strike Mitigation Project 2023	Department of Planning and Environment - Environment and Heritage Group (State)	NSW Koala Strategy	\$ 79,332	\$ 79,332	\$ -	2 November 2023	\$ 79,332 15 April 2024	\$ 79,332
Comment: 100% payment received for project commencement.								
McDonald Park Riverbank Restoration	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (Federal)	Biodiversity Conservation Program	\$ 30,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000	N/A	\$ 10,000 15 April 2024	\$ 10,000
Comment: 50% payment received to allow project commencement.								
Casino Industrial Precincts	Public Works Advisory (Joint Federal and State)	Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund	\$13,333,000	\$ 9,969,000	\$3,364,000	N/A	\$ 3,714 24 April 2024	\$ 108,188
Comment: Progress payment for works completed at Reynolds Road.								
Rappville Sewer Augmentation	Public Works Advisory (Federal and State)	Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund	\$ 3,000,000	\$ 3,000,000	\$ -	N/A	\$ 17,255 24 April 2024	\$ 67,829
Comment: Progressive claim received for works performed on the Rappville Sewer network.								
Reynolds Road Bridge	Transport for NSW (State)	Fixing Country Bridges Round 2	\$ 1,285,800	\$ 1,285,800	\$ -	23 November 2021	\$ 385,740 24 April 2024	\$ 1,157,220
Comment: Milestone 3 payment received.								

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

**Nil**

**19.5 RATE RELIEF PROGRAM EXTENSION REQUEST****Author: Vaughan Macdonald****RECOMMENDATION**

That Council receives and notes the correspondence received from the Hon Jihad Dib MP, Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government advising Council's request for further rate relief for flood-affected residents across the Richmond Valley for the 2023/24 financial year is not able to be provided.

**SUMMARY OF CORRESPONDENCE**

Following a Notice of Motion from Cr Robert Hayes at the August 2023 Ordinary meeting, Council wrote to the Premier of NSW, the Hon. Chris Minns MP, seeking further rate relief for flood-affected residents across the Richmond Valley area for the 2023/24 financial year.

The response received follows:

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

- 1. Rate Relief Program Extension**

**The Hon Jihad Dib MP**

Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government  
Minister for Emergency Services  
Minister for Youth Justice



Ref: MINS-287005395-3426

Mr Vaughan MacDonald  
General Manager  
Richmond Valley Council  
10 Graham Place  
Casino NSW 2470

Email: [council@richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au)

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Re: Rate Relief Program Extension

Dear Mr MacDonald

I refer to your correspondence to the Premier of NSW regarding Richmond Valley flood recovery assistance. Your correspondence was referred to me for response in my capacity as Minister for Emergency Services. I apologise for the delay in responding to you while I sought detailed advice.

I acknowledge the challenges faced by the Richmond Valley community following the devastating 2022 flood events, and council's concerns around eligibility for the Resilient Homes Program (RHP) relating to the conclusion of the Rate Relief program into the 2022/23 financial year.

Since the Rate Relief program, a range of flood grants, temporary accommodation and recovery support initiatives have been implemented across the Northern Rivers to help rebuild the community. The NSW Government is focused on supporting residents in the recovery process and preparing communities in high-risk areas for future natural disasters.

This includes delivery of the \$800 million Resilient Homes Fund, including \$700 million for the Resilient Homes Program (RHP) and \$100 million for the Resilient Land Program (RLP). A funding allocation of \$100 million was also provisioned in the 2023/24 budget for the Northern Rivers as part of the Community Restoration Flood Fund. The NSW Reconstruction Authority is working with the Northern Rivers community to determine the priorities for where this funding will be directed.

We will continue to work with local decision makers on future opportunities to deliver relief to flood-affected people and businesses in the Northern Rivers.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jihad Dib".

**The Hon Jihad Dib MP**

Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government  
Minister for Emergency Services  
Minister for Youth Justice

30/04/2024

52 Martin Place Sydney NSW 2000  
GPO Box 5341 Sydney NSW 2001

02 7225 6090  
[nsw.gov.au/ministerdib](http://nsw.gov.au/ministerdib)

**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 Tender VP400913 - Country Lane Road Reconstruction**

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

**22.2 Tender REGPRO042425 - Supply & Delivery of Bulk Water Treatment Chemicals**

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

These matters are 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**