



Richmond  
Valley  
Council



## **DELIVERY PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT**

JANUARY – JUNE 2024

# Integrated Planning & Reporting

This Report details progress against the Delivery Program 2023-2025, adopted by Council in June 2023. This report relates to the third and fourth quarters of the 2023-2024 year – January to June.

Council has developed four key directions for its Delivery Program based on feedback received during our community consultation program and the work undertaken to develop long-term strategies, such as the Community Strategic Plan 2040, Richmond Valley Growth Management Strategy and Sustainable Communities Strategy. Together, they create the framework for the objectives, strategies and actions that will help to deliver our goals and priorities.



## Direction One - Strengthening our role in the region

This direction focuses on establishing the Richmond Valley as an emerging employment centre in the Northern Rivers. This includes building back better after the floods, identifying opportunities for our community to grow, strengthening our economy and providing more housing, jobs and services.

## Direction Two - Creating great places to live

This direction focuses on creating vibrant, liveable and safe communities – providing opportunities to learn, create and celebrate, enhancing our town centres and retail precincts and ensuring that our parks, playgrounds, sports fields and community facilities are well maintained. It also looks at strategies to adapt to a changing climate and build resilience against future natural disasters.

## Direction Three - Protecting our unique environment

This direction focuses on preserving our native bushland and biodiversity, maintaining healthy rivers, beaches and waterways, and helping our Valley transition to a circular economy in the way we manage our future resources.

## Direction Four - Delivering for our community

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

# Strengthening our role in the region

## OBJECTIVE 1: Rebuild and reconnect our communities

### Principal Activity 1A1: Restore and reconnect social infrastructure

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

Council continues to make major progress with flood recovery works, with current efforts focused on restoring and upgrading the Richmond Valley road network, firstly via emergency works and then through Essential Public Asset funding applications. Flood repairs to community infrastructure are nearing completion with buildings such as the Woodburn Information Centre, Woodburn Memorial Hall, Coraki Youth Hall, Broadwater Community Hall, and Coraki Museum being repaired. Sports fields at Woodburn, Casino, Evans Head, Coraki and Broadwater have been resurfaced, with minor continual works progressing. Broadwater Tennis Court is scheduled to be resurfaced, and the soft fall at Broadwater Hall Playground is scheduled to be completed by the end of July 2024. The Woodburn Pony Club and Tennis Club building has been carried over to 2024/2025, with this project receiving funding from the Community Local Infrastructure Program. Broadwater and Woodburn SES/RFS building flood repairs have been completed. Painting of public toilet facilities located at Evans Head and Woodburn are scheduled to be completed by the end of July 2024. Designs for the Woodburn CBD Masterplan are completed and, following adoption of the Mid Richmond Place Plans, Council is now able to explore grant funding opportunities for this project. Council advocated successfully for the Reconstruction Authority to use its planning powers to approve the Broadwater Public School rebuild to enable it to be ready for the 2025 school year.

**Status** On Schedule

### Principal Activity 1A2: Prepare long-term plans for Mid-Richmond villages

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery



*Undertaking community consultation for the Mid Richmond Place Plans*

Council partnered with the NSW Reconstruction Authority to pilot a new approach to combined Place/Adaptation Planning for the Mid Richmond communities of Coraki, Woodburn, Broadwater/Rileys Hill and Evans Head, as part of its flood recovery program. Consultants Place Design Group and Meridian Urban were engaged to lead community consultation and development of the plans over a six-month period. The project allowed residents to have a say on the future of their village and identify priorities for new community projects. The plans also developed local strategies to build long-term resilience to natural disasters, based on the CSIRO's 'Maintain/Modify/Transform' adaptation model.

The Plans were placed on public exhibition, and an extensive community and business consultation program was undertaken. Council resolved to adopt the Mid Richmond Place/Adaptation Plans at its 16 July 2024 Ordinary Meeting. Key actions from the Plans will now be incorporated into Council’s future Delivery Program and land use planning instruments. Council will also continue to pursue funding for signature projects identified in the Plans, including the Three Villages Cycleway.

**Status** Completed

**Principal Activity 1B1: Deliver Disaster Recovery Roadworks and water/sewer repairs**

**Responsible Officer:** General Manager

Work is progressing on flood repairs to roads, bridges and culverts throughout the Richmond Valley, with support from Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. Estimated total damage to local roads is \$100m, with repair works to continue for the next 2-3 years. Key restoration projects, such as the Naughton's Gap landslip, along with betterment projects at Dairy Flat and Thearles Canal are underway, with further works to progress in the following six months, following successful award of tenders for the Bentley rockslide repairs and replacement of the twin Tatham bridges. All emergency repair works to flood-damaged water and sewer assets have been completed, and Council is now concentrating on EPAR and resilience works to make these facilities more flood-proof in future. This includes raising electrical switchboards at sewage pump stations and improving backup power supplies for water and sewerage assets. The new pump station for the South Casino sewage transfer system, at Queen Elizabeth Park is now complete, providing a more flood-resilient solution for the future.

**Status** On Schedule

**Principal Activity 1C1: Continue to work with the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Authority & other agencies to support regional recovery**

**Responsible Officer:** General Manager

Council continues to work with the Reconstruction Authority to progress flood recovery and improve regional resilience. This includes regular meetings with the Authority regarding progress on the resilient lands and resilient homes programs, as well as working directly on development of the regional Disaster Adaptation Plan. Council received a \$245,000 grant through the Resilient Lands Program in June, to complete infrastructure investigations and technical reports that will help deliver up to 1600 new flood-safe homes near Casino. This initiative will help to grow the town’s population by 4000 over the next 15 years and open the way for further investment. Council also partnered with the Reconstruction Authority to pilot a combined Place Planning/Adaptation Planning project for the Mid Richmond communities, which was released for public exhibition in June 2024. These plans will set the future direction for growth and disaster adaptation in these towns and villages.

**Status** On Schedule

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

Principal Activity 2A1: Undertake long-term planning for the Valley's future
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council is progressing with the implementation of its Growth Management Strategy, with the preparation of a Housing Strategy for the Richmond Valley being a priority action. Council endorsed the Richmond Valley Regional Job Precinct Masterplan at its June meeting and, following Ministerial approval of the plan, amendments to Council's LEP and supporting instruments will be completed. Work has also been completed on the Woodburn CBD Streetscape Master Plan, and funding is currently being sourced to undertake the Casino CBD Master Plan and Evans Head CBD Masterplan. Work also continued on plans for essential infrastructure required to facilitate growth, with the Water for Life 2050 strategy released for public exhibition in May. This strategy identifies critical water and sewer infrastructure that will be required over the next 25 years, with a planned \$200 million investment in infrastructure</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 2A2: Develop and implement the Richmond Valley Masterplan
Responsible Officer: General Manager
<p>Council is currently finalising the eight strategic plans that will ultimately inform the development of the RV Masterplan. This includes the Mid Richmond Place Plans, CBD Masterplans for Casino and Evans Head, and the RV Economic Development Strategy. The other key components - the Community Strategic Plan, Richmond Valley Growth Management Strategy, and the Casino Place Plan - have been completed. These will be supported by the Regional Jobs Precinct Masterplan, which was endorsed by Council at its June meeting. The Masterplan will be an early consideration of the newly elected Council in October/November, along with the required update of the Community Strategic Plan by 30 June 2025. This strategic work sets the foundations for actions to deliver the Richmond Valley's ambitious vision for throughout the next term of Council.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 2A3: Deliver the Community Strategic Plan
Responsible Officer: General Manager
<p>Council adopted the Richmond Valley 2040 community Strategic Plan and supporting IP&amp;R plans at its June 2023 meeting. The first 12 months of the 2023-25 Delivery Program have now been completed, with quarterly reporting tracking progress. All principal activities from the Program have either been completed or are on schedule to be finalised within the life of the plan.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 2B1: Activate the Richmond Valley Regional Jobs Precinct
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>The draft Regional Jobs Precinct Masterplan, technical studies, and discussion paper were placed on public exhibition in February 2024, supported by extensive community consultation. Council received 63 submissions in response to the consultation and there were a number of subsequent amendments to the Masterplan.</p> <p>Council endorsed the Masterplan in June and it has now been referred to the NSW Minister for Planning for approval. Following approval, the proposed rezonings and amendments to the LEP can progress.</p>

Meanwhile, Council continues to receive keen interest from businesses seeking to relocate to its industrial subdivision in Reynolds Road, with a new recycling industry planning to commence operations. Plans are also in hand to activate further industrial land in Precinct 3 of the Regional Jobs Precinct.

**Status** On Schedule

**Principal Activity 2C1: Increase educational opportunities**

**Responsible Officer:** Director Projects & Business Development

Council has explored several potential outcomes by working with the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Authority. Introductory sessions with proponents of a trade school, potentially based out of a former school site in Casino, have been undertaken. Council will continue to work with potential providers to increase local opportunities for tertiary and trade training within the Richmond Valley.

**Status** On Schedule

**Principal Activity 2C2: Grow Government-led services**

**Responsible Officer:** Director Projects & Business Development

Council has previously worked with the NSW Government to establish services in the Richmond Valley. This includes partnering with Local Land Services to deliver services from a Council facility. Previous economic studies have identified that our LGA is underrepresented when it comes to government services being based here. Given the increasing trend for government departments to reduce working from home arrangements for their staff, and the lack of available office space in Lismore, the Invest and Live RV team is currently exploring opportunities for the Richmond Valley to house additional staff or encourage government departments to relocate.

**Status** On Schedule

**Principal Activity 2D1: Activate residential development on flood-safe land**

**Responsible Officer:** Director Community Service Delivery

Council is playing a key advocacy role in supporting the activation of flood-safe residential land in the region. The NSW Government's Resilient Lands Program has identified a large site at South Fairy Hill that is capable of supporting up to 1600 new homes in stage one of development. Council continues to work with the proponents of the development and relevant state agencies to progress this opportunity. The NSW Reconstruction Authority has provided funding to undertake feasibility studies and essential infrastructure planning for this site and Council is actively pursuing government funding to construct essential infrastructure, such as water and sewerage services. Council will continue to work closely with NSWRA and other landholders to progress the activation of flood-safe residential land throughout the Richmond Valley. This includes pursuing a small number of opportunities identified through the Mid Richmond Place Plans.

**Status** On Schedule

**Principal Activity 2D2: Provide a range of housing to suit all needs**

**Responsible Officer:** Director Community Service Delivery

A number of strategic projects are underway that will explore options for providing a range of housing choices within the Richmond Valley. The provision of flexible planning requirements affords quality design outcomes for new and in-fill development. Funding has been sought to develop a housing strategy for the Richmond Valley and Council continues to support NGOs through the planning process to develop local inclusive, affordable housing options.

**Status** On Schedule

**Principal Activity 2E1: Work with regional partners to deliver the Northern Rivers Rail Trail**

**Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development**

The Casino-Bentley section of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail has been completed and was officially opened in March 2024. So far, some 25,000 trips have been completed in the first four months of operation. The Trail is proving a popular destination for cyclists, walkers, runners and horse-riders, with locals and visitors keen to use the new facility. Plans to include more attractions, such as events, mobile food vans and pop-up bike hire are currently underway and patronage is expected to increase as the Bentley-Lismore connection nears completion. Council has worked closely with both Lismore and Tweed Councils to ensure that other sections of the 130 km Casino to Murwillumbah trail continue to be developed.

**Status** Completed

**Principal Activity 2E2: Establish Casino Showground as the premier equine facility in the Northern Rivers**

**Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development**

The \$14.4m upgrade of the Casino Racecourse and Showground is nearing completion, with the facility being opened for public use in April 2024. Interest has been strong from all forms of the equine industry, and event promoters are looking to take advantage of the upgraded facility. Key features, such as the new 40m x 80m covered arena, with seating for 2,500, together with the new powered camping area have increased opportunities for the venue to host major events, such as country music festivals, car shows, trade shows and markets. Event bookings for the second half of 2024 are strong, with the facility attracting a state-level working dog trial in July. The showground is also a popular venue for community groups and Council continues to work with user groups to develop a new operational model for the precinct.

**Status** On Schedule



*Opening the upgraded Casino showground and racecourse facility for public use.*

**Principal Activity 2E3: Upgrade regionally significant infrastructure**

**Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery**

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

**Status** On Schedule

## OBJECTIVE 3: Grow and diversify our economy

Principal Activity 3A1: Encourage new manufacturing and processing industries to relocate to the Richmond Valley
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Council is working with Regional NSW to establish the first solar panel recycling plant in NSW at Casino. A development application for a solar recycling plant has been approved at Reynolds Road Industrial Estate. Negotiations also continue with a timber biomass company exploring options for a Richmond Valley location.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 3A2: Strengthen supply chains for key manufacturing industries
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
A review was undertaken by Regional NSW as part of the RJP development work. The review found that economic activity in the Richmond Valley is well-served by existing freight and logistics networks, but further Opportunity exists in some key areas which would unlock economic growth. To support the business case for establishment of a future intermodal facility, a further market study of freight volumes in the region was completed. Council continues to focus on maintaining and improving key freight links within the Valley and has invested heavily in its road network, particularly the Woodburn-Casino Road, which provides an important link between inland agricultural areas, coastal communities and the Pacific Motorway.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 3B1: Improve visitor accommodation options throughout the Valley
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
A review of visitor accommodation in the Richmond Valley has commenced. This will inform a broader accommodation strategy, which will include a focus on emerging opportunities such as the Northern Rivers Rail Trail. Work continues to improve and promote the Coraki Caravan Park, including collaborations with Kui Parks and other relevant tourism platforms.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 3B2: Explore new opportunities for visitor experiences
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
The scheduled review of the Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan in late 2024 will incorporate a fresh action list for events, nature-based tourism, and agritourism, as well as an audit of the strengths and challenges the Valley faces. Workshops will be held in Casino and Evans Head in September 2024 to help develop the new Plan. Following the success of the jointly run Casino-to-Lismore Rail Trail workshops, further engagement is in the planning for existing businesses and new ventures to identify opportunities for developing and refining their product offerings.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule



<b>Principal Activity 3C1: Identify key service industry growth areas</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Director Projects &amp; Business Development</b>
A review was undertaken by Regional NSW as part of the RJP development work. The review highlighted an opportunity to drive tech-enabled agriculture and food processing by establishing a technical/scientific services hub, a training and skilling hub, and an engineering excellence hub in the Richmond Valley. Council will continue to work with Regional NSW to develop these opportunities and explore options for innovative agricultural industries.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
<b>Principal Activity 3D1: Support emerging and value-add agricultural industries</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Director Projects &amp; Business Development</b>
Council has held discussions with an existing agricultural sales business on options to expand and relocate their operations, which would provide value-added opportunities to their current services. With the leasing of the NRLX operations to an industry specialist, it is expected that further agricultural-based industries may also be attracted to the region. There is also emerging interest in non-traditional agricultural pursuits, such as the recently opened Sea02 Algae Farm at Woodburn
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
<b>Principal Activity 3D2: Support continued productivity on significant agricultural lands</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery</b>
The proposed drafting of a Rural Lands Strategy and review of the LEP, scheduled for 2024-25, will support the protection and continued productivity of significant agricultural lands within the Richmond Valley. The Sustainable Communities & Environment team engages with agricultural stakeholders and industries to collaborate with them on reducing their carbon footprint and encourage protection of environmentally sensitive areas such as riparian zones and waterways.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
<b>Principal Activity 3D3: Establish the NRLX as the premier livestock exchange in Northern NSW</b>
<b>Responsible Officer: Director Projects &amp; Business Development</b>
The NRLX had established itself as the second largest saleyard operation in NSW with further actions to realise potential growth identified in the 2022 Business Plan. An unsuccessful EOI process for stakeholders to partner in the future growth of the NRLX resulted in the temporary closure of the facility in the second half of 2023. Council's decision to lease the facility to a market operator has resolved these issues and will ensure the facility can achieve the required financial, operational and WHS outcomes. This will set the NRLX back on the path to being a key feature of the NSW agricultural industry. While Council is no longer involved in the daily management of the NRLX facility, it is committed to supporting the lessees to provide a high quality livestock exchange and remain a leader in the Northern NSW industry.
<b>Status</b> Completed

# Casino Showground and Racecourse upgrade

Casino Showground and Racecourse has reopened as a major hub for equine activities and events in regional NSW, following a \$14.4m upgrade of the facility.

The project attracted total funding of \$12.8m under the Australian and NSW governments' co-funded Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund, with additional funding from the NSW Showground Stimulus Program, Drought Communities Funding, Crown Lands and Council.

The upgraded facility was officially opened for public use on 20 April, with remaining works to be completed over the next few months. It includes a large undercover arena, an outdoor sand area, a new racing stable complex to accommodate up to 80 horses, new truck and float parking area, and an equestrian exercise area, incorporating round yards, a horse walker and a 50-metre equine pool.

Other works completed, such as the powered event camping area, will increase the facility's ability to host new events, including country music festivals, car shows, trade shows and markets, while continuing to support local activities such as the Casino Show, Beef Week and Gold Cup races, gymkhanas and rodeos. These events help to bring the community together and provide economic stimulus for the region, to support continued recovery from the 2019 bushfires and 2022 flood event.

The showground will also double as an evacuation centre, with options for local farmers to relocate livestock.



# Creating great places to live

## OBJECTIVE 4: Celebrate our local identity and lifestyle

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

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

A new Disability Inclusion Action Plan was adopted by Council at the December 2023 Ordinary Meeting and key actions from the plan have been incorporated into Council's 2024-25 Operational Plan. This includes improving employment options at Council for people living with disability and continuing to upgrade local facilities to improve accessibility. Council also regularly participates in local Aboriginal Interagency meetings and provides funding and support to cultural events such as NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week.

**Status** On Schedule

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

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council continued to offer sponsorship and support for local signature events such as Primex and Beef Week and to lead the way in delivering the highly successful Casino Truck Show. The 2023 Truck Show broke all records and the 2024 event is set to build on that success, with 600 entries and an estimated \$3.9m boost to the local economy. The Buckin' by the Beach rodeo, in January, was also a huge success and Council supported a new initiative for the communities of Coraki and Woodburn with the Festival of the Waters. Drafting of an Arts and Cultural Plan has commenced, which will provide a framework to support public art and cultural events in the Richmond Valley. This draft plan is due in 2024-25.

**Status** On Schedule



*Enjoying the activities at Coraki Splash Fest.*

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

**Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services**

The regional library services continued to grow, with increased visitation to local libraries and a 30% increase in membership in the 2023-24 financial year. Some 500 new members joined the library in the January-June 2024 period. Services such as free internet and Wi-Fi continue to be very popular, with printing and scanning also in high demand. The library also continued to provide a range of popular programs from tech-savvy and cyber security sessions for seniors to children's arts and crafts and early reading programs. School holiday activities proved a popular addition to the Evans Head library, with well-attended sessions in the summer and Easter holidays. Over the past six months, 605 programs were delivered for children and adults, with a total attendance of 3,812. The library collection, both physical and electronic, is continually enhanced and upgraded with a focus on diversity and the library plays an important role in easing social isolation and assisting with mental health.

**Status** On Schedule



*Enjoying children's programs at the library.*

**Principal Activity 4B1: Implement community Place Plan actions**

**Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery**

The Casino Place Plan was adopted by Council in April 2023 and work continued on implementing the key actions from the plan. In response to the recommendations, Council is currently seeking funding to develop a CBD masterplan for Casino, as well as housing strategy. The Mid Richmond Place/Adaptation Plans were endorsed by Council at the July 2024 Ordinary Meeting and key actions from these plans will be included in the new 2025-29 Delivery Program..

**Status** On Schedule

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

**Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery**

Council continues to maintain a proactive approach to customer service requests to ensure that the Richmond Valley's open spaces are safe and maintained to the highest standards. Over the past six months, the Open Spaces team has received positive feedback from the community on the presentation of towns, parks and cemeteries and continues to improve its maintenance schedules. Work is also progressing on preparing a revised Cemeteries Strategy for the Richmond Valley, incorporating the new Internment Industry Scheme requirements, recently introduced for NSW.

**Status** On Schedule

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

**Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development**

Major upgrades to the Casino, Evans Head and Woodburn pools have all recently been completed. Funding programs for sports facilities in the wake of the weather event have been taken advantage of, with significant work being undertaken in Evans Head, Woodburn, Coraki and Casino. Most recently, the splash pad completion at Coraki and a successful tender award for the swimming club building in Casino show Council's commitment to continued pool network upgrades. Visitation numbers post the Stage 1 Casino Pool Upgrade have increased by 14,000 visits in a single season.

**Status** On Schedule

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

**Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development**

Ongoing inspections, staff training, new equipment and locations are continually evaluated for suitability. Council has engaged with the community for the design of community spaces in a range of facilities. More recent examples include the development and implementation of masterplan upgrades at Casino Showground, Casino Swimming Pool, Stan Payne Oval, Colley Park and Crawford Square. Further community consultation is being undertaken for the development of Albert Park Rest Area and Woodburn Oval. Council staff have engaged with the community for minor upgrades at facilities, including Findlay Park Playground, Rileys Hill Playground and Basketball Court, and feedback was implemented into completed works.

**Status** On Schedule

## OBJECTIVE 5: Live sustainably in a changing climate

Principal Activity 5A1: Support regional disaster planning, response and recovery
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Richmond Valley continues to be an active member of the Northern Rivers Local Emergency Management Committee and provides executive administration support to the Committee. Planning and preparedness have been the focus of the Committee since the 2022 flood events, with the suite of emergency management plans and procedures under review. Council is participating in a number of state and federal government projects, such as the spontaneous volunteers' guideline, early warning flood height monitoring, and evacuation centre audits.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 5A2: Partner with agencies to deliver community education programs and resilience initiatives
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council Officers work with local agencies, such as the Red Cross, to deliver education programs that will build capacity within the community to better respond to and recover from disasters. Council chairs the Richmond Valley Community Resilience Network, which meets monthly.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 5B1: Complete Richmond Valley Flood Study and Floodplain Risk Management Plan
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
The new Flood Study, incorporating levels from the 2022 floods, has been completed and endorsed by Council. Funding is currently being sought to undertake a new Floodplain Risk Management Plan.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 5B2: Implement the Richmond Valley Adverse Event Plan
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
The review of the Adverse Event Plans actions has commenced. Actions that have not been completed will be incorporated into other strategic plans of Council to reduce duplication of effort.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 5C1: Implement demand management programs to reduce water consumption
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council has a number of internal initiatives in place, with further options being developed to address demand management and reduce water consumption. Total town water usage across the Richmond Valley averages 2730 ML per annum. Council's own water usage for its operations is 150.8 ML per annum. Strategies to reduce Council's water usage include replacing taps and toilets in public facilities with water-saving options selecting drought-tolerant species for plantings, and undertaking network leak detection surveys. Discussions have commenced with Rous County Council with the aim of delivering collaborative water education projects in 2024-2025. A recent project identified the highest water users in the Casino water supply and Rous County Council network, many of which are business/commercial entities. An engagement and education plan is currently being developed based on the findings of the project, with the aim of working with high water use industries to help them achieve efficiencies and reduce consumption.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule

Principal Activity 5D1: Develop street-tree planting, shade and greening programs

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Work is progressing on the development of the street-tree planting program, with a positive response from the community survey with nearly 200 respondents. The program will be developed with the information collected from the community survey including scoping for a number of pilots so initiatives can be tested and implemented in 2024. Council also continues to pursue opportunities for greening programs at local parks and facilities and partner with local groups and agencies to develop and deliver greening programs to protect habitats, improve biodiversity and offset the impacts of climate change. The Community Strategic Plan sets a target of 15,000 additional shade trees by 2040, and Council is well on the way to achieving and exceeding that target with 11,450 trees and shrubs planted for the Flying Fox habitat program in the Queen Elizabeth Park Riverbank precinct in Casino.

**Status** On Schedule

Principal Activity 5E1: Promote awareness of sustainability programs and options

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council actively encourages increased awareness of sustainability initiatives, with regular updates to its website and social media to promote current energy and water efficiency programs. Water efficiency initiatives are often promoted in conjunction with Rous County Council. As part of Council's commitment to encourage electric vehicle usage, two new locations have been identified to trial pole mounted Electric Vehicle charge stations - one in Evans Head and the other in Casino. Installation is scheduled for October 2024.

**Status** On Schedule

## OBJECTIVE 6: Provide infrastructure that meets community needs

Principal Activity 6A1: Develop and maintain asset management systems
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Council has implemented a new suite of Asset Management Plans and has recently undertaken an Asset Delivery resourcing realignment. The resourcing and framework review has provided the Assets team with the necessary direction to plan, maintain, upgrade, and dispose of assets based on inspection regimes, condition ratings, asset criticality, and financial modelling. Asset management is now scoped and planned by the team and handed over to delivery teams, where quality assurance and adherence to scope are regularly monitored. This collaborative approach between the assets and infrastructure departments of Council is providing better asset management outcomes for the community.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 6B1: Maintain regionally significant infrastructure and advocate for long-term investment
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Key relationships have been formed with State Government agencies to continue the Richmond Valley's recovery journey. Close liaison with the Reconstruction Authority, the Infrastructure Coordination Office, Regional NSW and Transport for NSW has seen a steady flow of funding to enable critical repairs and betterment upgrades to key infrastructure. A reset of Council's Disaster Recovery approach has improved access to essential asset and betterment funding for critical projects such as the Naughtons Gap landslip, the Tatham Bridges, and the Casino to Woodburn Road. Council advocacy for better repair claim approval systems by TfNSW has been actioned, and outcomes are beginning to be realised through successful EPAR approvals.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 6C1: Deliver local infrastructure maintenance and renewal programs
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Maintenance and renewal programs for Richmond Valley's network of local roads, bridges, footpaths, and cycleways are in place and being implemented. These programs have improved in accuracy due to the investment in a dedicated Asset Inspector resource and a change in Council's asset management resourcing alignment. The network is assessed for its condition and criticality and then prioritised for regular maintenance and renewal programs, which are regularly tested and reviewed.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 6D1: Plan for future water/sewer services and upgrades
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council continued to plan for major infrastructure to support growth within the Richmond Valley. Significant water and sewer infrastructure is scheduled to be delivered in the next 8 years to support new residential and industrial development in Casino and increased tourism in Evans Head. These include the construction of a new STP for Casino, upgrades to Casino's WTP, and an upgrade of Evans Head STP to double its capacity. To support this infrastructure planning and delivery, a consultant has been engaged to draft new Development Servicing Plans, with this body of work due to be finalised in 2024.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule



Principal Activity 6D2: Deliver water capital works program
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council continues to plan and deliver significant upgrade works for its water networks. Investigations have commenced into the upgrade to the Casino Raw Water Pump Station, which will address options for renewal of the Powder Activated Carbon system to protect water quality. Upgrades to the Casino WTP electrical distribution board have commenced. The electrical upgrade is crucial and will enable further upgrade works to be completed at the plant.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 6D3: Deliver quality water supply services
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
A review of the Drinking Water Management System (DWMS) was undertaken by specialist consultants, in conjunction with all regulatory agencies and Council. An Action Plan is being developed as a result of the review and is scheduled to be delivered in late 2024.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 6D4: Deliver sewer capital works program
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Work continues on scoping significant sewer capital works to be delivered in the next 5 years. Projects such as the Evans Head STP augmentation and the new STP for Casino are high-priority projects, with Council's annual program of pipe replacement and pump station upgrades being scheduled in accordance with risk and funding availability. Consultants have been engaged to project-manage the Casino STP project. Council will continue to engage consultants and construction companies to assist with the delivery of the capital program.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 6D5: Manage our water/sewer business effectively
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Water and Sewer services are meeting, and often exceeding, community service levels and performance standards. The Inflow and Infiltration Strategy has been completed, and the water servicing/pricing review has commenced. A review of the liquid trade waste program has been conducted, and alterations to the regulatory and enforcement process have resulted.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 6D6: Improve local stormwater and drainage networks
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
In 2023, Council engaged a consultant to produce a stormwater hydraulic model that studied the impacts of stormwater flooding issues in the Casino area. The model identified the water flows, restrictions, and ponding locations that show increased pressure on the stormwater infrastructure system due to increased rain frequency, quantity, urban surface density and development. The report has provided six options for mitigation options, which Council resolved to explore funding opportunities for. Similar studies for other localities are identified in future delivery programs.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule

# Naughtons Gap restoration

Work is progressing well on the Naughton's Gap Landslip restoration, with the project scheduled for completion by December 2024.

Council has received \$12.8 million for Essential Public Asset Restoration (EPAR) and a further \$3 million for Naughtons Gap Road Betterment. This funding ensures both repair and improvement elements of this vital section of road will occur.

Work commenced in March 2024 and includes the reconstruction of the damaged section of Naughtons Gap Road (including embankments) by removal of the existing failed material, construction of a 280m length piled retaining wall topped with a capping beam and a new sealed road with guard rail. The betterment works will see the installation of an upslope catch fence and subsurface drainage and sediment ponds.

Upgrades to the road on the northern side of Naughtons Gap which included safety improvements have also been completed by Council's road construction team in readiness for the re-opening of the road.



# Protecting our unique environment

## OBJECTIVE 7: Preserve native bushland and biodiversity

Principal Activity 7A1: Deliver community education programs on habitat protection and responsible land management
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council officers regularly participate in group forums and educational workshops to remain up to date with new initiatives and funding opportunities. Council collaborates with various government departments, industry bodies, and NGOs to develop and deliver educational programs for the community that aim to protect and enhance habitats and promote responsible land management.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 7B1: Lead and support local habitat restoration programs
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council participates in and delivers a number of habitat restoration initiatives across the Richmond Valley. The flying fox habitat restoration program has been very successful, with approximately 11,450 trees planted to date. Fish habitat projects on the Richmond River at Casino and Coraki are complete and Council is working to establish ongoing partnerships with the Northern Rivers Koala Network to protect local flora and fauna. There is a koala habitat regeneration project currently underway on the Rail Trail near Naughton's Gap, supported by Landcare and the Friends of Koala group.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 7C1: Preserve and enhance biodiversity in local wetlands
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council, in partnership with Landcare, is seeking opportunities to support wetland precincts by raising community and cultural awareness. Council has been successful in securing grant funding for weed management in the Jabiru Wetlands and funding is being sought to develop a masterplan for the wetlands, to guide future enhancement and protection of biodiversity.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule

## OBJECTIVE 8: Maintain healthy rivers, beaches and waterways

Principal Activity 8A1: Secure Casino's water supply
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council has been working with specialist consultants to undertake further assessment of Casino's water security according to the latest guidance from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). The studies have considered the potential impacts of climate change and identified a number of short-medium term solutions to significantly improve water security, including plans for accessing the deep-storage areas of the weir pool. The option of constructing an off-stream storage facility will continue to be investigated in conjunction with Public Works and DCCEEW and the proposed Casino connection to Rous remains a long-term consideration to provide a second water source for the town.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 8A2: Secure the Mid-Richmond's water supply
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Rous County Council supplies potable water to the Mid Richmond communities. Council continues to work closely with Rous to ensure its Future Water Strategy provides appropriate water quality and long-term water security in these communities. This includes supporting the Woodburn Groundwater Scheme, which is currently under development. The first stage of the scheme will include new water bores for emergency supply, with stage two including construction of a new water treatment plant.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 8B1: Work with government agencies to improve the health of the Richmond River catchment
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council continues to work with regional groups and agencies to identify opportunities to protect the Richmond River catchment. However, in the absence of a whole-of-catchment governance model led by State and Federal governments, achieving a consistent, strategic regional approach is challenging. Council will continue to advocate for the catchment management recommendations of the Regional Water Strategy to be implemented.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 8B2: Work with stakeholders to address water quality risks
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>An On-site Sewage Management System (OSMS) inspection and approval program is in place, with over 500 inspections carried out during the 2023/2024 year. An Underground Petroleum Storage System (UPSS) register has been created to facilitate compliance activities. Council has partnered with Rous County Council and NSW Fisheries to establish fish habitat and riparian zone improvements in Casino and Coraki. Water samples are taken year-round to monitor water quality in high recreational use areas as part of the continued beach watch program.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>

Principal Activity 8C1: Improve connection between Casino CBD and the river

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

Planning is being undertaken to connect the Rail Trail from the Old Casino Station through the CBD to the Riverbank. Council has successfully secured funding for the Suspension Bridge to Queen Elizabeth Park, which will link and improve access to the river. Funding has also been received for the restoration of Halstead Drive and once completed, will provide pedestrian access to the river. The Barker Street pop-up park and the Drill Hall Park site continue to provide passive recreation options near the river and CBD. The Open Spaces team provides regular maintenance to riverside parks, and the footpath and cycleway network provides access to the river.

**Status** On Schedule

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

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

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

**Status** On Schedule

Principal Activity 8C3: Maintain and protect local beaches

Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery

Council Rangers regularly patrol beaches to ensure compliance with regulations. A review of public access arrangements to our beaches is being undertaken. Factors such as beach safety, enforcement guidelines, and environmental protection are being considered as part of the review, to improve management of 4WD access.

**Status** On Schedule

## OBJECTIVE 9: Transition to a circular economy

Principal Activity 9A1: Develop and implement the Richmond Valley Circular Economy Strategy
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Following a detailed review in November 2023, it was determined not to wholly revamp the Waste Management &amp; Resource Recovery Strategy as it is still relevant given its adoption in 2020 and the timeframe of 2020-2030. The Strategy will be reviewed in 2025 to include circular economy principles and refer to future residual waste disposal options. The optimal use of the new Cell 6 landfill and long-term landfilling options at regional facilities will need to be considered in the updated Strategy.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 9B1: Encourage manufacturers and consumers to take responsibility for managing recyclates and residual materials
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Council is providing ongoing support for Northeast Waste and the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Association's advocacy for product stewardship, where the onus is on manufacturers to maintain an ongoing responsibility for their product over its useful life. Education programs are initiated by Council and target schools and social media (both current and future producers of residual waste).</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 9B2: Support new recycling/re-use industries to establish in the Richmond Valley
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>There is continued engagement with NEWaste and ReCirculator (Southern Cross Universities Circular Economy Group). Cooperation with NEWaste, Clarence Valley, and Tweed Councils for landfill operator training was completed in January 2024. Discussions with Clarence Valley regarding their interest in the FOGO RFQ, and with Lismore regarding the possibility of RVC supplying recyclates to the Lismore MRF, are progressing. The adopted strategy and ideal outcome from the development of the Reynolds Road Industrial Estate was to support the circular economy, with stated support for recycling and re-use industries. A development application has been approved for a recycling business to establish at the site.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 9C1: Complete expansion and upgrade works at Nammoona Resource Recovery Facility
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>The new \$7m Cell 6 landfill cell has been completed and will be in operation soon. The cell has the capacity for up to 13 years of landfilling space dependent on future filling strategies. Further site improvements have been made over the past three years, including vehicle access, the recycling area, the weighbridge, and staff amenities.</p> <p><b>Status</b> Completed</p>

Principal Activity 9C2: Manage resource recovery facilities effectively

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

Nammoona Landfill and Evans Head Transfer Station are both managed in compliance with legislation and site licences, with one minor breach reported. Recovery rates at both facilities have improved, with new targets to be set as part of the Waste Strategy review in 2025. Site infrastructure and plant equipment are currently adequate but are regularly monitored and serviced to ensure minimal downtime. It has been challenging to maintain full employment levels at these facilities in the current market, but the team have shown resilience and dedication to continue high-quality operations whilst understaffed.

**Status** On Schedule

Principal Activity 9C3: Manage kerbside collection services effectively

Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development

A new side arm, street bin truck, loader and trailer were all delivered and are in operation. There are no immediate plant replacement requirements in the fleet. Collection routes are regularly reviewed, and extensions are assessed for viability. The CRM system is providing adequate control for missed bin pickups, with minimal occurrences being recorded.

**Status** On Schedule

# Greening program to deliver 15,000 trees

Council's new Greening Program has completed its first year and is well on the way to meeting its target of 15,000 additional community shade trees by 2040.

The program aims to reduce the impacts of climate change, improve biodiversity and create more attractive public spaces by providing suitable shade trees in local streets and parks. This was one of the key priorities identified by the community during consultation for the Community Strategic Plan and a subsequent survey confirmed support for the program with 56% of respondents expressing interest in actively participating in local tree planting efforts.

Council is working with local schools and community groups to introduce a 'Growing on' program, raising suitable seedlings. So far two local schools have committed to growing over 200 native trees that are specific to their local area. These trees will be planted near the schools, distributed to local residents, or donated to local Landcare groups for community projects.

Over the past 12 months, 240 new shade trees have been planted in streets and parks across the Richmond Valley. An additional 2000 trees and shrubs have also been provided through riverbank habitat protection programs for fish and flying foxes.



*Planting street trees at Evans Head.*



# Delivering for our community

## OBJECTIVE 10: Lead and advocate for our community

Principal Activity 10A1: Develop and deliver the Richmond Valley Community Engagement Strategy
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
Council adopted a new Community Engagement Strategy and Framework at its April meeting, to guide future engagement activities on strategic plans, major projects and development matters. Council continues to deliver a comprehensive program of community engagement. This includes working with community and advisory groups to explore emerging issues and opportunities. Council's engagement team also keeps the community up to date with regular social media posts, community newsletters and information on Council's website.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 10B1: Advocate to federal and state government for community priorities and seek grant funding
Responsible Officer: General Manager
Council continues to advocate strongly for community priorities and to seek government funding for key infrastructure and facilities. In the past six months, significant government funding has been secured for essential community projects and flood recovery works. Council will continue to actively pursue funds for key infrastructure upgrades, including the replacement of the Casino Sewage Treatment Plant, completion of the Woodburn CBD Streetscape upgrade, restoration of Richmond Terrace, Coraki, and further progress on the Three Villages Cycleway project for the Mid Richmond.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 10C1: Provide representative and accountable community governance
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Members of the community are invited to attend Council meetings and participate in public access on items listed for resolution. All council meetings are live streamed via Council's Facebook page and recordings are accessible through Council's website. Copies of Council meeting agendas are posted on Council's website before each scheduled meeting.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule

## OBJECTIVE 11: Manage resources responsibly

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

Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services

Council reviews and updates its long-term financial plan each quarter in-line with the preparation of the quarterly budget review statement. In doing this, future capital works programs are reviewed, as well as projections on operating income and expenditure. In developing the LTFP for 2024-2034 Council performed a comprehensive review of its fees and charges, proposing a future price path to ensure operating costs are being met along with the ability to fund future capital works, which incorporates significant borrowings. This has assisted Council's operating result before capital grants and contributions break-even by year 6 of the 10-year LTFP which is a key performance indicator across NSW Local Government. Over the past 10 years Council's capital works program has increased from \$17m to in excess of \$60m, with operational expenditure increasing from \$46m to \$81m, demonstrating the growth in our local government area, as well as the challenges councils currently face in meeting increasing costs and major works programs.

**Status** On Schedule

Principal Activity 11A2: Strengthen procurement systems

Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services

In the last 6 months Council has implemented a new structure in the procurement team that provides sufficient resources to increase its oversight and training function for other Council sectors that undertake procurement. The restructure has also provided better operational control of the depots and improved the service delivery of the stores to internal stakeholders. Council continues to experience challenges with sourcing fleet, particularly large plant, in the post-pandemic market. With the fleet's existing Kenworth prime mover due for replacement and an 18-month waiting list for a new truck, Council took the new approach of considering a low-mileage near-new vehicle, which was available at auction. The successful procurement of the Kenworth has resulted in a net saving of \$110,000 and allowed council to continue to support local suppliers for servicing and parts. The new prime mover was a proud entrant in the 2024 Casino Truck Show.

**Status** On Schedule



*Council's newly-acquired Kenworth makes its debut at the Casino Truck Show.*

Principal Activity 11A3: Maintain efficient rating and revenue systems
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Council adopts fees and charges annually in line with relevant rate pegging and CPI as per the adopted budget. Each year, when forecasting, different scenarios are provided based on current land value and property numbers. The ad valorem is corrected at each forecast to allow for even, fair and equitable movement between categories.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 11B1: Implement the Richmond Valley Council Workforce Management Strategy
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
As part of its Workforce Plan, Council has implemented the YES strategy and Careers Expo, continued its local recruitment and Indigenous engagement by signing up two Elsa Dixon sponsored roles, and worked on encouraging women to join our workplace in non-traditional roles. Work also continues on improving inclusiveness for people living with disabilities through implementation of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan. RVC was a finalist again for the NSW Training Awards and also sponsored the SBAT Trainee of the Year award to demonstrate Council's commitment to local youth employment opportunities and growth.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 11B2: Continue to provide local employment schemes and development opportunities
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Council continues to engage with the community and local businesses through Careers Expos and information days showcasing career opportunities, current vacancies and training options within Richmond Valley Council. The Youth Employment Scheme offers annual traineeships to local school leavers and Council continues to explore options for cadetships and tertiary learning programs. Outreach programs such as Try A Trade, connecting women to non-traditional roles, continue to be popular with those seeking to re-enter the workforce.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 11C1: Implement Richmond Valley Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework
Responsible Officer: General Manager
Work continues on implementing Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework and associated risk management systems and processes. Recommendations from the Civic Risk Mutual Continuous Risk Improvement Program are being integrated into a three-year program, with the aim to improve Council's risk management rating at the next review. Council's Audit, Review and Improvement Committee continues to operate within its Charter and to provide valuable insights on process and systems improvements.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule

Principal Activity 11D1: Use energy and resources more efficiently in council operations
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Opportunities to implement sustainable practices in Council’s core business activities continued to be explored.</p> <p>The recent purchase of specialist software packages has assisted in tracking expenditures, especially energy bills, and has highlighted opportunities to improve efficiencies and reduce costs. These opportunities have led to several disconnections that were no longer required to reduce connection fees and renegotiations of energy contracts to reduce expenditure. Solar panels have been installed on several Council structures, including the Casino Administration Building, to reduce energy costs, with a 50% reduction in energy demand already achieved. Further analysis is being undertaken on a number of Council assets, which are high energy users, to explore opportunities to implement more sustainable measures. The software package also allows for water demand analysis and this data will be used to develop further strategies for reducing Council’s potable water usage.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 11E1: Identify opportunities for strategic investment and business development
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
<p>Recruitment for a new Invest and Live RV team has been completed. The team will be accountable for enabling economic development in the Richmond Valley and leveraging initiatives such as the Casino Showground and the Rail Trail. Council has actively identified investment opportunities, such as Reynolds Road Industrial, and has further plans to invest strategically to attract business to the area, including nationally established retailers. Council has recently settled on a land purchase which will further develop the region's ability to meet industrial lot demand and attract investment.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>

## OBJECTIVE 12: Provide great service

Principal Activity 12A1: Implement Council's Customer Service Charter
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Quarterly reports are provided to Council, which outline the performance of customer service functions in accordance with service levels and expectations.</p> <p>Investigation into the use of technology for online services to improve the customer experience and accessibility continues. Service levels will be reviewed following the commencement of the new Council term.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 12B1: Provide transparent and timely development assessment and planning services
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council continued to provide quality and timely development and certification services to the community over the past six months, determining a number of key applications for industrial and commercial investment in the Richmond Valley. Council consistently achieved its key performance indicator of 90% of Development Applications being processed in less than 40 days and continued to record some of the fastest turn-around times for DAs within the Northern Rivers region.</p> <p>Regular reviews of internal processes, policies and procedures are undertaken to ensure agreed services levels are met and legislative compliance is achieved. Regular reports are provided to Council, detailing processing timeframes, the number of inspections carried out, and development concierge services activities.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 12B2: Provide community-focused Ranger and regulatory services
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Ranger activities continue to focus on education and proactive engagement with the community. Upgrades to current animal impounding facilities have commenced, with funding provided by a NSW Government grant.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>
Principal Activity 12B3: Maintain public health and safety inspections requirements
Responsible Officer: Director Community Service Delivery
<p>Council is responsible for maintaining various regulatory registers and undertaking compliance inspections. Rolling programs are in place to deliver regulatory functions in areas such as food shops, public swimming pools, on-site sewerage management systems, and air-conditioning units. Over 500 on-site sewerage management systems were inspected during the 2023/2024 year, significantly exceeding Council's target of 250 inspections per annum.</p> <p><b>Status</b> On Schedule</p>

Principal Activity 12C1: Use technology to support a modern, mobile workforce
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Council is committed to implementing actions outlined in the ICT strategy. Quarter 4 has seen the development of several IT policies that set expectations and controls around the use of mobile technology aligned with protection of personally identifiable information and security. The first project has commenced in the TechOne Live program, which moves our core enterprise systems to browser/mobile native applications. Work was also completed on publishing the replacement for DA Tracker, now called AppTracker, which is customised for mobile use. Upgrade of GIS/mapping systems, to ensure they are easily accessible to staff working outside the organisation. Continues.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 12C2: Provide efficient corporate support services
Responsible Officer: Director Organisational Services
Council is actively seeking ways to improve efficiency through technology. The TechOne Live program commenced with the first project targeting the modernisation of our Finance and HR systems. The project will see changes to finance, payroll and human resource processes, tighter alignment of information across systems, improved productivity and removal of unnecessary functions and reports. TechOne is now using APIs to interact with NSW Planning Portal, and we have recently finalised the replacement of DA Tracker, which simplifies public interactions with DAs and CDCs while integrating data from TechOne. Our IT Policies have been updated and now align with various ISO standards to deliver best practice security, disruptive incident response and recovery, management of cloud services, and management of personally identifiable information PII.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule
Principal Activity 12C3: Provide efficient operational support services
Responsible Officer: Director Projects & Business Development
Council depot facilities, as well as mechanical and fabrication workshops, are vital resources for the efficient delivery of operational services. Master planning for Council's three depots is underway, with the Casino Depot masterplan ready for adoption. A depot supervisor position has been created to take responsibility for the efficient operation of the depots.
<b>Status</b> On Schedule

# Celebrating local identity through public art

Council has recently installed three unique totem poles on the Evans Head foreshore in response to a request from the Evans Head Progress Association to commission a public artwork that reflected the area's identity.

Council engaged Broadwater sculptor Greg Bowering to complete an installation which drew attention to the opening of the Evans River between the north and south wall. Greg presented a proposal titled Memorial Totems and partnered with well-known New Zealand sculptor Brett Sutherland to deliver the work.

Rather than a centralised monument, this artwork consists of three individual totems, each representing different aspects of Evans Head. The main focus of the totems is to capture the layered histories of Evans Head. The three images commemorate the place, its cultural histories, significant events, and ancestries.

The sculptors have used animal-based metaphors such as the osprey, snapper and tiger prawn, as well as capturing the Bandjalong three brothers' story.

The totems stand tall on the Evans Head foreshore, east of Cribb Reserve near the Riverfront Kiosk.



*Evans Head totem poles*