Richmond Valley Council

AGENDA

Ordinary Council Meeting

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

Date: **Tuesday, 17 February 2026**

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 APOLOGIES

4 MAYORAL MINUTES

Nil

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

5.1 MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 16 DECEMBER 2025

RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirms the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 16 December 2025.

REPORT

Refer to attached Minutes.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Unconfirmed Ordinary Minutes 16 December 2025 (under separate cover)

5.2 MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council confirms the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 22 January 2026.

REPORT

Refer to attached Minutes.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Unconfirmed Minutes 22 January 2026 (under separate cover)

6 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

7 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

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

8 NOTICE OF MOTION

Nil

9 MAYOR'S REPORT

9.1 MAYORAL ATTENDANCE REPORT 9 DECEMBER 2025 - 9 FEBRUARY 2026

Author: Robert Mustow

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Mayoral Attendance Report for the period 9 December 2025 – 9 February 2026.

December

- 9th Platypus Club Luncheon
- 9th Coraki Christmas Tree Light Up
- 10th Rous County Council Meeting
- 11th St Mary's Primary School Service
- 11th Historical Society Raffle Draw
- 11th Richmond Valley Council Staff Christmas party
- 13th Woodburn Carols by Candlelight
- 15th Richmond Police – Welcome Constables
- 16th Richmond Valley Council Ordinary meeting
- 17th Momentum Collective discussion
- 17th NSW Premier's Award Presentation by Richie Williamson MP to Millie Trustum
- 18th Tatham Bridge Traffic Opening
- 19th Rappville Christmas celebration
- 20th Evans Head Christmas tree light-up

January

- 12th Presentation – Rotary Exchange Student to Finland
- 19th Australia Day Selection Panel
- 22nd Richmond Valley Council Extraordinary meeting
- 26th Australia Day Celebrations and citizenship ceremony Rappville
- 28th Colour Run Fun Day Coraki
- 29th Australian Indonesia Association visit

February

- 6th Casino Community Garden discussion

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

10 DELEGATES' REPORTS

10.1 DELEGATES' REPORT FEBRUARY 2026 - ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Delegates' Report – Rous County Council for February 2026.

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 10 December 2025.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Rous Council Meeting Summary - 10 December 2025

ROUS

Council Meeting, Wednesday 10 December 2025

Summary of main items of business

For a copy of the agenda for the meeting click here.

Reports to Council

1. Council meeting schedule for 2026

View Agenda Item 9.1 (page 8)

(a) Council confirmed the meeting schedule for 2026 as outlined below, with meetings to be held on the third Wednesday of each scheduled month (excluding January), commencing at 10:00am.

(b) The dates are as follows:

- 18 February – Richmond Valley Council (Casino)
- 15 April – Rous County Council (Gallans Rd, Ballina)
- 17 June – Rous County Council (Gallans Rd, Ballina)
- 19 August – Rous County Council (Gallans Rd, Ballina)
- 21 October – Rous County Council (Gallans Rd, Ballina)
- 9 December – Rous County Council (Gallans Rd, Ballina)

(c) The Gallans Road office building works are expected to be completed in April 2026, at which point council meetings will be hosted there.

2. Annual Report 2024/25

View Agenda Item 10.1 (page 9)

(a) Council endorsed the Rous Annual Report 2024/25.

(b) The Annual Report is a key component of the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework, outlining Rous' progress on its Delivery Program and Operational Plan for the reporting year, along with audited financial statements and other prescribed information.

(c) This year's report was redesigned with Rous' updated branding and was compiled in close consultation with management and staff.

3. Dam Management Safety Report: Emigrant Creek and Rocky Creek Dams

View Agenda Item 11.1 (pages 10 - 23)

(a) Council noted significant investments by Rous in dam safety management, and the recommendations of the safety reviews and risk reports for Emigrant Creek and Rocky Creek Dams.

(b) The Consequence Category for both dams has been elevated due to revised flood modelling; Emigrant Creek Dam has changed from High-C to High-B, and Rocky Creek Dam has changed from High-C to High-A. See pages 12 – 23 for details.

(c) Rous is active in investigating and reviewing the condition of both dams and has a pipeline of proposed works to carry out, subject to the findings of investigations.

(d) Proposed future costs are subject to the usual approval processes as part of the preparation of the annual budget (and the associated 10-year Long-Term Financial Plan) and will be assessed against other priorities and available resources before being presented to Council for adoption.

(e) Dam safety is regulated under the Dams Safety Act 2015 and Regulation 2019, requiring Rous to maintain a Dam Safety Management System (DSMS) for Emigrant Creek and Rocky Creek Dams.

4. Regional Demand Management Plan: Annual Report 2024/25

View Agenda Item 11.2 (pages 24 - 36)

(a) Council received and noted the progress of demand management deliverables for the 2024/25 financial year, including expenditure, as outlined in the Annual Report.

(b) Delivery of the Regional Demand Management Plan (2023–2026) is on track for 2024/25, meeting objectives for water efficiency and community engagement.

(c) Engagement reached households, businesses, partner councils, community groups, and schools, through key programs including the Residential Behaviour Change Pilot Program ('The Ripple Effect'), the Education and Engagement Program, and the Sustainable Water Partner Program.

(d) Key highlights include the reinstatement of the Nightcap Water Treatment Plant tours, a 30% increase in school events, and Rous' public awareness campaign, 'Every Drop Counts,' received an Excellence in Communication Award as part of the RH Dougherty Events and Communications Awards.

(d) Rous' smart metering and water loss management programs have enhanced Council's ability to manage water use more efficiently across the network.

Policies

5. Land Management Policy

View Agenda Item 12.1 (pages 37 - 38)

(a) Council revoked the policy titled 'Land Management' dated 21 April 2021, and reaffirmed the classification of all Council owned land as 'Operational' to align with the resolution for the revocation of the Land Management Policy.

6. Community Grants Program Policy

View Agenda Item 12.2 (pages 39 - 40)

(a) Council approved the public exhibition of the draft Community Grants Program Policy and invited submissions.

(b) If no significant submissions are received, the policy will be deemed adopted. If significant submissions are received, Council will consider them at the next meeting.

(c) The draft Community Grants Program Policy establishes a formalised avenue for funding requests received from the community to support activities, programs, or events delivered within the Rous operational area.

(d) The first iteration is proposed as a trial, with an initial total funding allocation of $20,000, enabling applicants to apply for a minimum of $1000 and a maximum of $2,500 per application.

(e) Subject to Council endorsement and budget availability, applications for the program are anticipated to open in June 2026.

(d) Council to report on successful grant applicants at future ordinary meetings.

Information reports

7. Council received and noted various information reports.

View Agenda Items 13.1 – 13.8 (pages 41 - 73)

1. Gallans Road – Project update (pages 42 - 47)
2. Strategic Land Purchases 2025 – Status report (pages 48 – 50)
3. Investments – October 2025 (pages 51 – 57)
4. Investments – November 2025 (pages 58 – 64)
5. Disclosure of Interest Returns (page 65)
6. Annual 'Model Code of Complaint Statistics' (pages 66 – 70)
7. Length of Service Milestone Awards (pages 71 – 72)
8. Actions Pending (page 73)

Length of Service Milestone Awards

View Agenda Item 13.7 (pages 71 – 72)

(a) Council acknowledged and extended its thanks to the Rous employees who achieved significant length of service milestones, recognising their dedication and commitment to Council and the community.
(b) For 2025 the following milestone anniversaries have been achieved:

- 5 Years: Lindy Owen, Michael Wells, Lauren Edwards, and one anonymous staff member.
- 10 Years: Joseph Yeadon, Jason Nelson, Stewart Enever, Rhys Oates, and Kim Edwards.
- 20 Years: Guy Bezrouchko, Rhonda Eyears, Peter Lovett, and Steven Clarke.
- 35 Years: Rodney Hoskins.

Delegates reports

8. Councillor Hauge's Delegate report – 32nd NSW Coastal Conference

View Agenda Item 14.1 (pages 74 - 76)

(a) Council received and noted the Delegate Report provided by Cr Elia Hauge regarding the 32nd NSW Coastal Conference 2025.

(b) The report recommends that Council continue advocating strongly to the NSW Government for the $70 million in funding required for Operation Richmond River Recovery, which represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to address fundamental drivers of Richmond River ecosystem decline while supporting affected landowners through a just transition process, and was widely praised by conference delegates as an urgent program for coastal, catchment and community wellbeing.

(c) Three Rous staff presented at the conference, Chrisy Clay (who was a keynote speaker), Lauren Edwards and Greg Telford. Their presentations positioned Rous as a leader in integrated catchment-coastal management.

9. Councillor Gordon's Delegate report – LGNSW Annual Conference, November 2025

View Agenda Item 14.2 (pages 77 - 79)

(a) Council received and noted the Delegates LGNSW Conference November 2025 report, provided by Cr Andrew Gordon.

(b) The conference was attended by more than 1,000 local government representatives from across NSW.

(c) Major themes included housing and planning reforms, workforce development (highlighting the $250 million Fresh Start Program, of which Rous is a recipient), and regional collaboration.

(d) At the conference, 136 motions were considered with 115 carried – sharing LGNSW's advocacy agenda for 2026. Items 53 and 58 were carried and are significant to Rous.

Confidential matters

10. Workplace Consolidation – Update on DA 23/343

View Agenda Item 15.1 (page 80)

(a) Council received and noted the confidential Workplace Consolidation – Update on DA 23/343 report, provided by Phillip Rudd.

(b) Delegated the General Manager authority to enter into an agreement with Ballina Shire Council to pursue alternate intersection treatment options as outlined in the report.

(c) Noted the impact on timing and budget to complete the intersection treatment works.

11 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.

11.1 MATTERS TO BE DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE

RECOMMENDATION

That items identified be determined without debate.

12 GENERAL MANAGER

12.1 DELIVERY PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT, JULY - DECEMBER 2025

Author: Vaughan Macdonald

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Richmond Valley Council has completed the first six months of its 2025-2029 Delivery Program, with strong progress in achieving the community's priorities over the July-December 2025 reporting period. A number of key milestones have been achieved, including commencement of the $3.5m Casino Suspension Bridge, official opening of the $1.6m Broadwater Bridge upgrade and commencement of another stage of the Three Villages Cycleway. Work on Council's $100m road flood repair program also progressed well, along with plans for major water and sewerage upgrades. The past six months have also seen a major boost to the local economy, with $15.6m in new commercial, industrial and tourism investment approved by Council, and a further $1.5b in major solar farm projects approved by the NSW Government.

Of the 75 Principal Activities in the Delivery Program, 73 are currently on schedule, with plans in place to bring the remaining two projects – review of the Destination Management Plan and finalisation of the Floodplain Risk Management Plan – back on track in early 2026. A full report on progress is attached.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives the July-December 2025 Progress Report on the 2025-2029 Delivery Program and notes the significant progress across the four Key Directions of the plan.
2. Continues to advocate strongly for Government funding to deliver the community's priority projects.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 1: Establish the Richmond Valley as a regional growth centre

1A2 Deliver the Community Strategic Plan

1A2.1 Develop, deliver and report on Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plans

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The Delivery Program activities are funded via a number of sources including Council's own resources, together with Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements and government grants and assistance programs.

REPORT

Richmond Valley Council has completed the first six months of its 2025-2029 Delivery Program, with significant progress being achieved in all areas. The Delivery Program reflects the community priorities identified in the Richmond Valley 2040 Community Strategic Plan (adopted by Council in June 2025) and includes four key themes:

1. **Strengthening our role in the region** – focussing on steady, well-managed growth for the Valley, diversifying our economy and providing more housing, jobs and services. This theme also addresses our ongoing challenge to adapt to a changing climate, build resilience and continue to support flood recovery.

2. **Creating great places to live** – focusing on creating vibrant, liveable and safe communities, providing opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to come together. This theme also aims to ensure that our parks, playgrounds, sports fields and community facilities are well maintained and fit for purpose and that essential infrastructure and services, such as roads, water, sewer and waste management meet community needs

3. **Protecting our unique environment** - focusing on preserving our native bushland and biodiversity, maintaining healthy rivers, beaches and waterways and reducing our impacts on the environment

4. **Delivering for our community** – Focusing on the role that Council will play in helping to deliver the Community Strategic Plan priorities, including Council's civic leadership in engaging with and advocating for our community, as well as its responsibilities for managing community resources and providing great service.

These themes are divided into a total of 75 Principal Activities, outlining the main projects, plans and programs Council will complete over the next four years.

Of the 75 Principal Activities, 73 are currently on schedule, with two activities running behind schedule. These include:

- Renewal of the Richmond Valley Destination Management Plan, which has been rescheduled to include additional industry consultation and research and consider the key directions of the NSW Visitor Economy Strategy and the North Coast regional Destination Management Plan. This project is underway with Council to consider a draft Plan by June 2026.

- Finalisation of the new Richmond Valley Floodplain Risk Management Plan. This project was on schedule until November, when the need for further technical review delayed the draft plan. The revised draft is expected in early 2026.

A full progress report for the July-December 2025 period is attached. The report details progress on each of the 75 activities and will be made available on Council's website, with copies provided at local libraries.

Signature projects and priority works

Over the past six months, Council has made significant progress in delivering its signature projects and priority works. This includes:

- Continued work on the twin Tatham Bridges replacement, with the project now nearing completion.

- The official opening of the $1.6m Broadwater Bridge upgrade

- Commencement of the $3.5m Casino pedestrian suspension bridge

- Progress on the detailed design of the new Casino Sewage Treatment Plant

- Continued work on the detailed design and approvals for Evans Head Sewage Treatment Plant Stage 2

- Further progress on the Stage One Casino Water Security project and the upgrade of the Casino Water Treatment Plant

- Commencement of another stage of the Three Villages Cycleway, the Evans Head to Woodburn section.

- Continued progress on Council's ongoing road repair program, following the 2022 flood, with $30.2 million of the $52 million approved Essential Public Asset Reconstruction (EPAR) works now completed – all within the approved budget. Council is progressing further funding applications for road repairs following the 2025 Cyclone Alfred event.

- Commencement of community engagement and planning for the Casino CBD Masterplan

Supporting continued growth

- Council has also continued to advocate strongly for more housing for our growing community, with the Mayor and General Manager meeting with the Premier and key NSW Government Ministers to advocate for more assistance with housing activation. Council also continues to pursue funding under the Resilient Lands Program to help deliver more housing on flood-safe greenfield sites.

- The local economy also saw a major boost in the past six months, with more than $15.6m in commercial, industrial and tourism developments approved by Council, including an $8.5m new boutique hotel development, with visitor accommodation, café and restaurant. NSW Government approval for two major solar farm developments in the Richmond Valley was also finalised, with a third proposal currently under assessment. These $1.5 billion projects will create more than 300 jobs in the construction phase and generate enough power for more than 200,000 homes

Delivering for our community

Other highlights of the reporting period included:

- Delivery of another successful Casino Truck Show event in August, attracting a crowd of 40,000 and providing a $4.9m boost to the local economy

- Community engagement on key issues such as future access to Airforce Beach, review of Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan, the Youth Voice Your Choice survey and consultation activities for the Casino CBD Masterplan

- Provision of more than $37,000 in community grants to local groups through Council's Financial Assistance Program

- Opening of the Casino Library's new meeting rooms and continued growth in membership and programs

- Further upgrades to local playgrounds, parks and sports fields, including refurbished picnic shelters, BBQs and additional shade trees at the Shark Bay reserve and new shade sales for the Woodburn Oval playground.

- Further success in the Best Tasting Tap Water competition for the Casino Water Treatment Plant team, with a National commendation, following on from winning the NSW title last year.

- Further solar installations, street-tree plantings and riverbank restoration projects

- More local jobs for school leavers, with 16 new apprentices and trainees joining Council's Youth Employment Scheme.

A copy of the Delivery Program Progress Report can be accessed by clicking on the below link:

https://richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/DP-Progress-Report-Version-2-1.pdf

CONCLUSION

Council has made significant progress in the first six months of its 2025-2029 Delivery Program, with the majority of Principal Activities on schedule. A detailed report on progress has been prepared for community information and Council will continue to advocate strongly for more government funding to deliver priority projects and facilities, housing and employment opportunities.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

13 OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

Nil

14 PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

14.1 DA2026/0091 - CLAUSE 4.6 RICHMOND VALLEY LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN VARIATION AT 395 REARDONS LANE SWAN BAY

Director: **Tina Kao**

Responsible Officer: **Kate Imeson**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has received Development Application no. DA2026/0091 seeking consent for a proposed Torrens Title Subdivision from three (3) Lots into four (4) Lots at Lots 831, 832, 833 DP 847683, commonly known as 395 Reardons Lane, Swan Bay.

As a result of the proposed subdivision, two existing dwellings will be located on proposed Lot 2, thus creating a detached Dual Occupancy Development where the dwellings would be located 150 metres apart, exceeding a development standard by 50 metres, or 50%.

This has necessitated the submission of a Clause 4.6 variation of Clause *4.2B Erection of dual occupancies and dwelling houses on land in Zone RU1, R5 and C3*, under the *Richmond Valley Local Environmental Plan 2012* (LEP), to permit the detached Dual Occupancy to have a dwelling separation distance exceeding 100 metres.

In accordance with the *Department of Planning and Environment Guide to Varying Development Standards November 2023*, where the extent of variation is greater than 10% the elected council has the function in determining the variation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, pursuant to clause 4.6 of the *Richmond Valley LEP 2012*, approves a development standard variation within DA2026/0091 to permit two dwellings located on a single allotment in exceedance of the maximum 100 metres separation provided for in clause 4.2B(4)(c).

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 9: Manage resources responsibly and provide great service

9F1 Provide transparent and timely development assessment and planning services

9F1.4 Manage statutory processes efficiently

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil

REPORT

Development Application no. DA2026/0091 seeks consent for a proposed four (4) lot Torrens Title Subdivision and reclassification of a dwelling house and a rural workers' dwelling on proposed Lot 2 to a detached dual occupancy development at 395 Reardon's Lane, Swan Bay (Lots 831, 832 and 838 DP 847683).

Pursuant to the LEP, the subject site is zoned RU1 Primary Production (minimum lot size 40 ha) and R5 Large Lot Residential (minimum lot size 7,000 m²). Currently, Lot 832 contains a rural workers' dwelling approved under BA1995/12, and Lot 833 contains a dwelling house approved under BA1971/108, with a separation distance of approximately 150 metres.

Following the proposed subdivision, both structures will be situated on proposed Lot 2. The development seeks to reclassify these structures as a detached dual occupancy, maintaining a separation greater than 100 metres.

The proposal involves a variation to Clause 4.2B Erection of dual occupancies and dwelling houses in Zones RU1, R5, and C3, specifically Clause 4.2B(4)(C), which requires dwellings to be within 100 metres of each other. The proposed separation of 150 metres exceeds this standard by 50 metres, representing a 50% variation (see figures below).

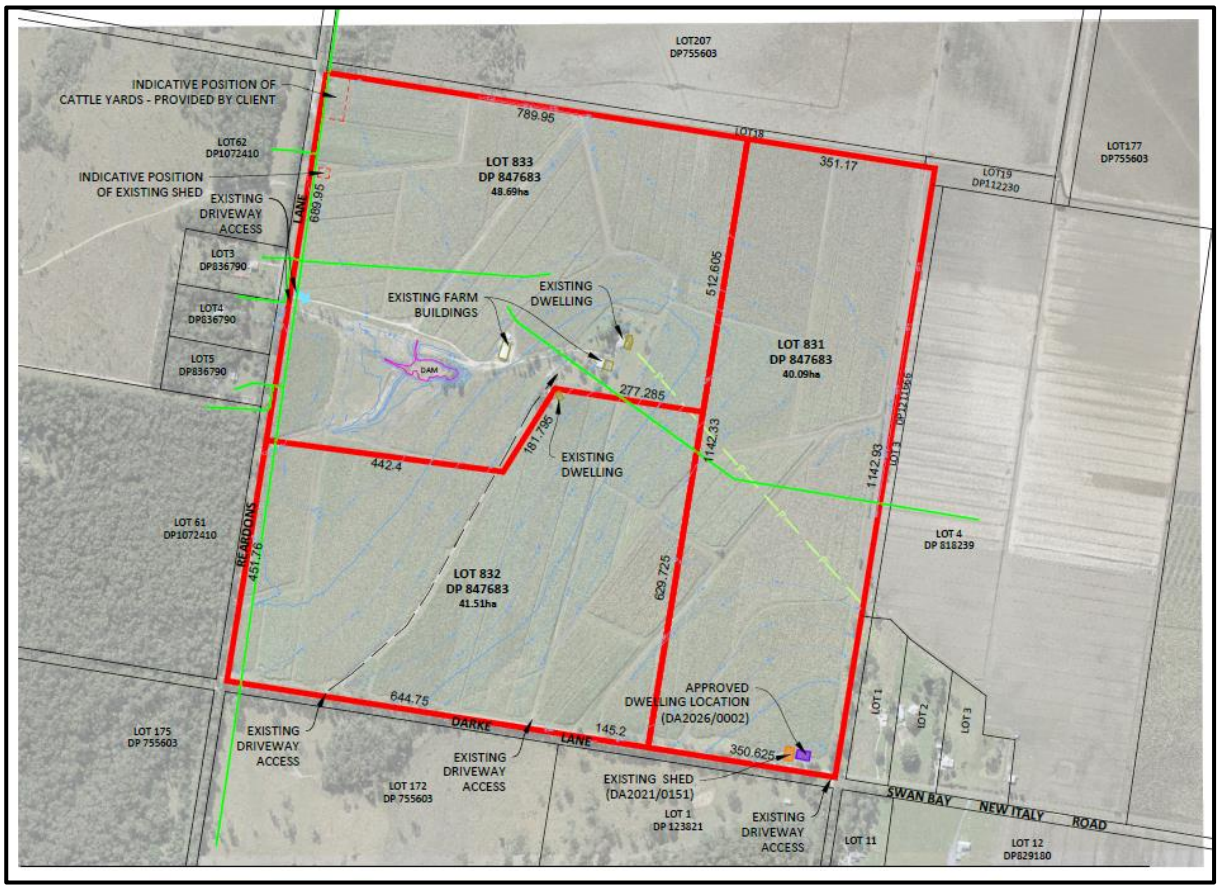


Figure 1: Existing Lots

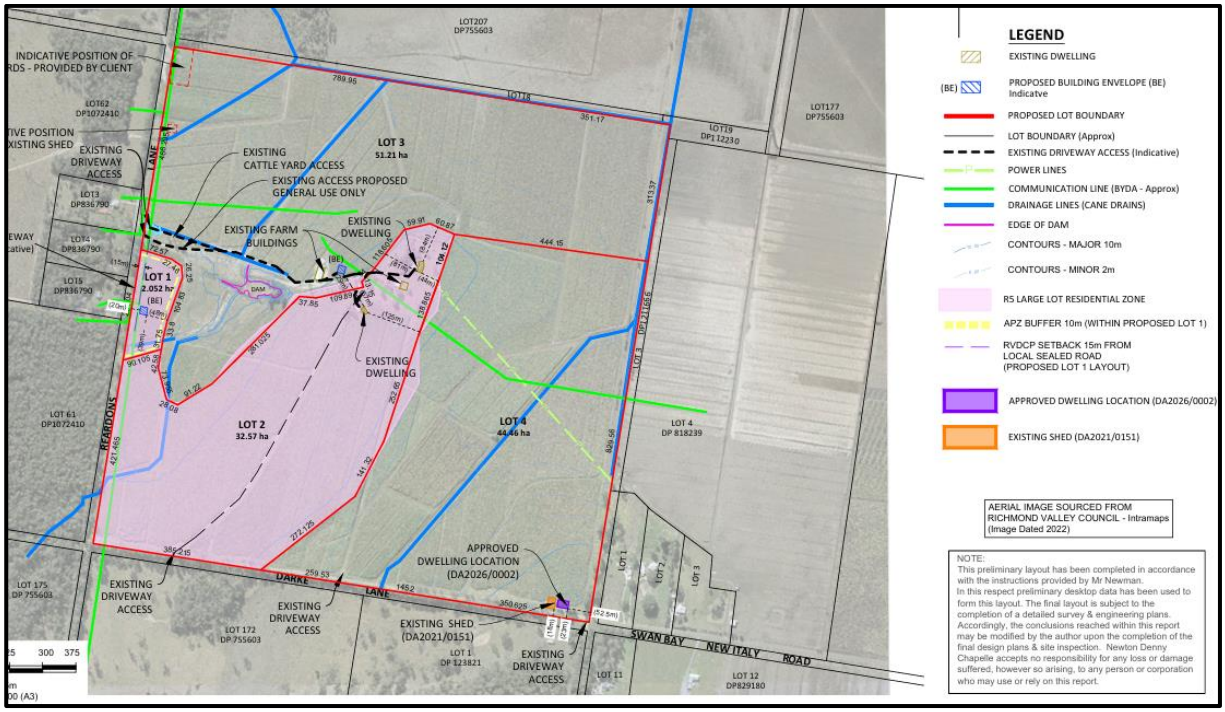


Figure 2: Proposed Lot Layout

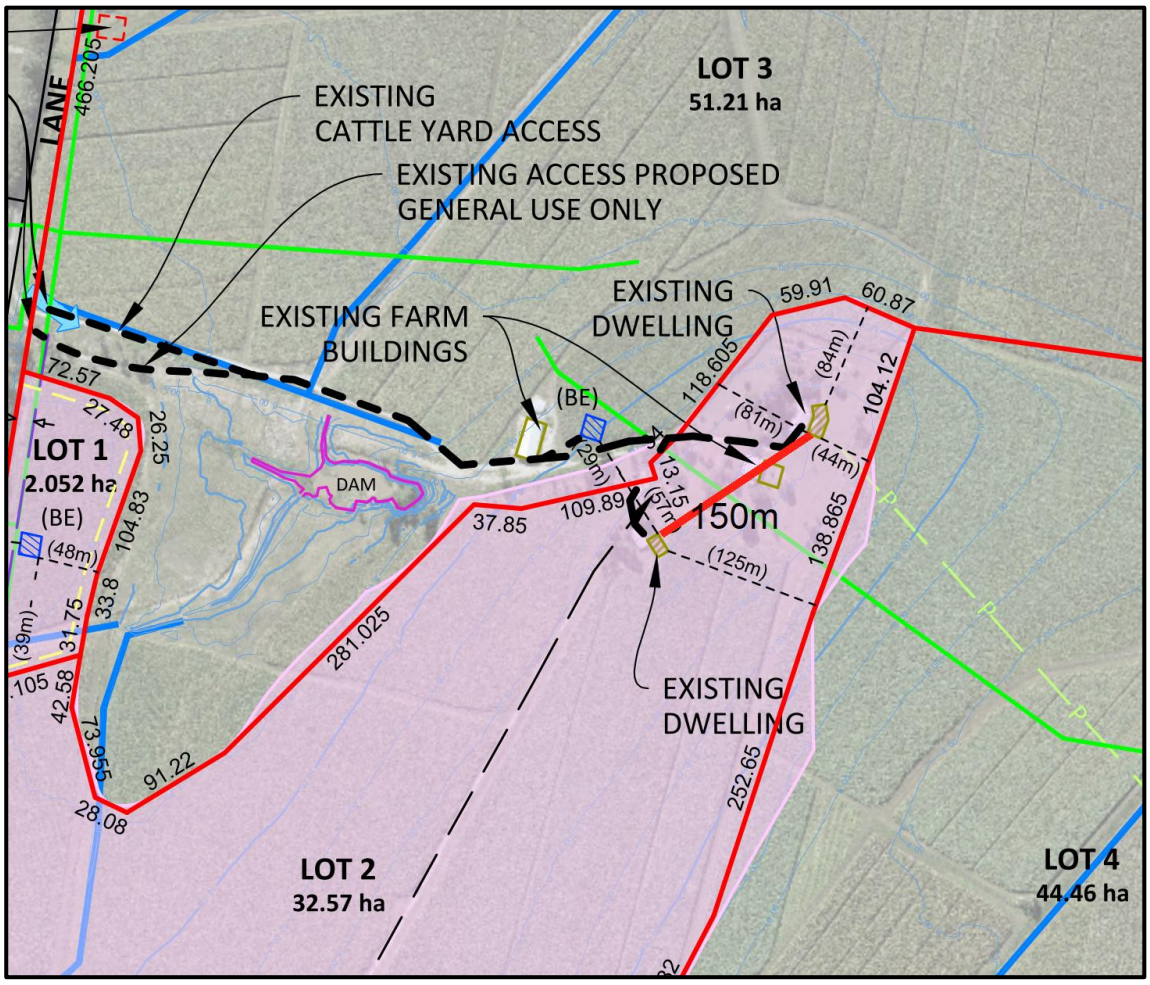


Figure 3: Extract from the proposed subdivision plan detailing the dwellings and separation distance

The objectives of Clause 4.2B are to minimise unplanned rural residential development, allow replacement of existing dual occupancies or dwelling houses in rural and conservation zones, provide alternative housing for rural families and workers, ensure development is compatible with

the land's production, character and environmental capacity, and specify consent considerations such as access, siting, land suitability and impacts.

Clause 4.6 of the LEP allows a consent authority to vary a development standard in certain circumstances where the environmental planning objectives can be satisfied notwithstanding the non-compliance. However, an applicant must formally lodge a written request justifying the variation and the consent authority must consider whether the applicant's variation request has adequately demonstrated that the provisions of clause 4.6 have been satisfied.

The applicant has lodged a variation request, outlining that compliance with the standard is unreasonable or unnecessary, and that the proposal meets the objectives of the relevant development standards. The proposed detached dual occupancy on Lot 2, zoned R5 Large Lot Residential under the LEP, is considered consistent with the zone's objectives and compatible with surrounding land uses. With exception of the LEP variation request, the development application complies with the relevant legislation, policies, and standards.

CONSULTATION

Consultation was undertaken as part of the assessment process, with the development application placed on public exhibition from 3 to 17 December 2025, a period of 14 days in accordance with Council's *Community Participation Plan 2020*. The exhibition period has now concluded, and no submissions were received by Council. Internal consultation has been undertaken to confirm all relevant development assessment matters have been appropriately considered.

CONCLUSION

Development Application no. DA2026/0091 seeks consent for a four (4) Lot Torrens Title Subdivision at 395 Reardons Lane, Swan Bay. The development results in a detached dual occupancy development which exceeds the 100 metre building separation standards provided for within clause 4.2V(4)(c). As such, a clause 4.6 variation to the 100m separation distance has been requested with the development application.

The applicant's written request satisfactorily demonstrates that compliance with the standard is unreasonable and unnecessary in this instance and that there are sufficient environmental planning grounds to support the variation. It is therefore recommended that Council approves the variation.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

15 INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES & PROJECTS

15.1 RELOCATION OF CORAKI PLAYGROUND

Director: **Ben Zeller**

Responsible Officer: **Kim Anderson**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the Ordinary Council Meeting of July 2024, Council adopted the Coraki Place Plan as part of its broader strategic planning framework. The Place Plan sets out a clear vision and land use direction for Coraki, identifying twelve key directions, including “Revitalise Coraki Memorial Park and riverfront open space.”

This direction highlights the need to enhance both passive and active recreational opportunities, building on existing assets such as the beach, boat ramp, jetty, and Coraki Memorial Park itself. A specific action from the plan includes securing funding to manage erosion and stabilisation of the riverbanks, particularly in response to flood events and elevated tides.

The Coraki Playground, located within Memorial Park at the junction of the Richmond and Wilson Rivers, is a valued asset for both residents and visitors. However, its location has presented ongoing challenges due to flood impacts and the Richmond Terrace landslip, which continues to compromise the site’s safety and long-term viability. Despite recent repair and enhancement works completed in June 2024 including installation of shade sails, surface upgrades, and equipment repairs, the continued effects of erosion and Cyclone Alfred impacts have again raised concerns about the playground’s sustainability in its current location.

Previous assessments indicate limited options to prevent the progressive landslip from undermining the site, prompting the need to explore relocation options. Relocation is currently unfunded and would require a major budget adjustment however it does align with the Coraki Place Plan’s goals to enhance local amenity and recreational opportunities.

Council staff have commenced preliminary design and cost planning, with cost estimates of $215,000 for a larger, relocated playground with full amenities including fencing, shade sails, surfacing, and demolition of the existing site.

In September 2025, Council conducted community consultation on potential relocation sites, receiving 18 submissions. Based on community feedback and technical assessments, strong feedback proposed relocation of the playground to Windsor Park, with some support to maintain the playground within Memorial Park adjacent to the CBD.

In December 2025, Council carried out further targeted consultation by sending letters to residents adjoining Windsor Park. This process resulted in 1 submission, which suggested having two playgrounds—one in Windsor Park and one retained in Memorial Park (adjoining caravan park).

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the options for the relocation of Coraki Playground and the feedback received from the community;
2. Endorses Windsor Park as the preferred location for the project and actively seeks funding opportunities to support its delivery;
3. Notes that the existing Coraki Playground in Memorial Park, will remain in service until such time as the facility can no longer be maintained or repaired, or the new facility at Windsor Park is constructed.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 4: Celebrate our local identity and lifestyle

4D2 Provide family-friendly play spaces, community meeting places and shared pathways

4D2.6 Investigate options for the repair or relocation of the Coraki Riverside Playground

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

This project is currently unfunded, and cost estimates are based on the options presented in the report.

A larger playground in the new location is estimated at a cost of $215,000. This includes demolition of existing playground, installation of play equipment, drainage, concrete edging, fencing, Takura Softfall and shade sails.

Possible funding sources could be external grant opportunities, 7.12 contributions, or future Community Benefit Scheme proceeds related to upcoming renewable energy projects in the Richmond Valley.

REPORT

At the Ordinary Council Meeting of July 2024, Council adopted the Coraki Place Plan, a part of Council's strategic planning framework which intends to establish a clear vision and land use planning direction for the area. The plan identified twelve key directions, with the seventh direction being to 'Revitalise Coraki Memorial Park and riverfront open space.'

Within this direction, the plan notes an aim to 'enhance passive and active recreational opportunities and amenities, building on and enhancing existing elements including the beach, Coraki Memorial Park, boat ramp and jetty'. It also includes a direct action to 'seek funding to monitor and manage the public riverbanks of Memorial Park and surrounds for erosion and stabilisation management requirements over time – particularly following flood events or elevated tides.' The Coraki Playground is located within the area commonly known as the Coraki Memorial Park, adjacent to the junction of the Richmond and Wilson Rivers.

Image 1– Coraki Memorial Park

Image 2 – Coraki Playground and riverbank erosion line

The playground is a popular attraction for both locals and park visitors with Council receiving consistent feedback on its condition.

The playground's location provides significant and ongoing maintenance challenges, with the Richmond Terrace landslip directly affecting the foundations of the playground. In its history, the playground's perimeter fence has been moved inward, to avoid the progressive encroachment of the slip. Additional to the landslip, the playgrounds' location at the juncture of the two rivers ensures regular flood and weather damage.

In June 2024, Council completed a repair and enhancement project of the playground, installing shade sails, replacing flooring material and repairing damaged play equipment.

The continued erosion of the bank and the effects of Cyclone Alfred in March 2025 have again brought the condition of the playground into question. Previous investigations have shown that there are minimal options to prevent the landslip from eventually undermining the playground, particularly the shade sail poles. This provides Council and the public with an unnecessary risk, whereby the most logical solution is to explore relocation options for the playground.

Any immediate decision to relocate the playground would be subject to a major budget adjustment, as the project is currently unfunded. Sourcing funding to enhance the amenity and recreational attractiveness of Coraki is consistent with the adopted place plan.

Council staff have undertaken pre project planning for design and cost estimates.

The cost for construction of a larger playground is estimated at $215,000. This includes demolition of existing playground, installation of play equipment, drainage, concrete edging, fencing, Takura Softfall and shade sails.

Image 3 – Encroachment of riverbank erosion on Coraki Playground.

Council has undertaken some initial investigations on some potential locations for the playground, each with their own benefits and challenges. Council invited community feedback on the proposed relocation of the playground during September 2025 and received 18 submissions. The responses are detailed in the table below.

Submission	**Number of Submissions**	**Comments**
Objection to relocation	3	The existing location is more appropriate, and request that Council consider fixing the landslip rather than relocation of the playground.
Option 1 – Richmond Terrace – Opposite Police Station, Adjacent to Boat Ramp	1	Preference for option 1 with additional feedback for support of new improvements as currently being implemented at Woodburn.
Option 2: Richmond Terrace – Just South of Existing Location	5	With general feedback this option is closer to established facilities such as the BBQ, and public toilets, would like to see more picnic tables, and BBQ. Additional feedback that this is preferred due to being close to the CBD, making it easier for families, business and visitors to use the facilities.
Other – Windsor Park (next to skatepark)	7	This was not an option presented for public consultation, however presented the largest support on feedback received. Submissions further requesting BBQ, Picnic tables, and additional features such as a BMX pump track.
Other	2	Preference to be located adjoining the caravan park, or next to the dog park (sporting equipment at the other end of Richmond Terrace).
TOTAL	**18**	

Council then carried out further targeted engagement via letterbox drop to residents in the Windsor Park area. This process resulted in one submission, which suggested having two playgrounds—one in Windsor Park and one retained in Memorial Park (adjoining the caravan park).

Windsor Park emerged as the preferred location among those who provided input, reflecting a clear leaning toward its strengths as the most suitable site for a major playground investment. This support reinforces the park's suitability for a larger, modern and well-equipped play space that aligns with the broader vision for the village's recreational network. Focusing investment at Windsor Park ensures strong long-term community value, improved accessibility, and the capacity to accommodate future enhancements.

Image 4 – Proposed playground for Windsor Park.

Should Council support Windsor Park as the preferred location for the new, consolidated playground investment, it will be important to ensure that the community continues to have access to a safe and functional play space during the transition. It is proposed that the existing Coraki Playground at Memorial Park remains in service until it can no longer be reasonably maintained or repaired, or until the new Windsor Park facility is fully constructed which is reliant on securing a funding source. This approach avoids any gap in service provision, ensures families retain access to essential recreational infrastructure, and represents a practical and cost-effective way to manage ageing assets while directing major investment toward the long-term, higher-quality outcome at Windsor Park.

Image 5 – Potential location at Windsor Park

CONSULTATION

Council invited community feedback on the playground relocation options during September 2025. This was featured in Community Connection, Council's community newsletter, Facebook (4,900 views) and on Council's website. Council received 18 submissions with support for a playground at Windsor Park, the next preference being just south of the existing location within Memorial Park.

Council then carried out further targeted engagement by sending letters to the 53 adjoining residents of Windsor Park in December 2025. This process resulted in one submission, which suggested having two playgrounds—one in Windsor Park and one retained in Memorial Park (adjoining the caravan park).

CONCLUSION

The proposed relocation of the playground to Windsor Park will allow the community to benefit from a safer, more resilient, and future-focused recreational asset. While the existing playground at Memorial Park will continue to serve the community in the short term, its long-term viability remains constrained by erosion, landslip and flood risk, reinforcing the need for a strategic relocation. The community input received, alongside technical assessments, supports concentrating major investment at Windsor Park, reflecting strong alignment with broader planning objectives and the vision for a modern, high-quality destination play space.

Adopting this approach would allow Council to balance continuity of service with responsible asset management, maintaining the Memorial Park facility only while it remains safe and functional, and transitioning to a purpose-built, contemporary playground at Windsor Park once constructed.

Progressing to the next stage will involve detailed design, cost development, and the identification of funding pathways to deliver the new facility.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

16 ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

16.1 CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

Responsible Officer: **Catherine Davis**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council adopted its revised Code of Meeting Practice in December 2025. The revised Code incorporates the mandatory provisions of the new Model Code of Meeting Practice for NSW Local Government, which applies to all local councils from January 2026.. The new code aims to create more transparent, accountable and publicly accessible meetings.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Notes the commencement of the Model Code of Meeting Practice for NSW Local Government mandatory provisions and the additional guidance received from the Office of Local Government regarding implementation.;
2. Endorses the proposed arrangements for Public Forums as outlined in this report;
3. Adopts the proposed general order of business for ordinary meetings
4. Adopts the ordinary meeting dates for 2026 as outlined in this report.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 8: Lead and advocate for our community

8C1 Provide representative and accountable community governance

8C1.2 Review and update Council’s Code of Meeting Practice

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

REPORT

At the Ordinary October Council Meeting 2025 an updated Code of Meeting Practice [the updated Code] was endorsed for public exhibition. The updated Code reflected the mandatory provisions of the new Model Code of Meeting Practice for NSW Local Government and was later adopted at the Ordinary December 2025 Meeting. The mandatory provisions of the Model Code apply to all NSW councils from January 2026. The Office of Local Government has now issued further guidance to councils regarding the conduct of public forums, which are in keeping with the provisions adopted by Council in December.

Key changes to the code of meeting practice are outlined below:

1. Prohibition of Pre-Meeting Briefings

Mandatory rules now prohibit private pre-meeting briefings for councillors. The intention is to ensure that all key discussions occur in public, strengthening transparency.

2. Public Forums

The Public Forum provisions are now mandatory and provide councils the opportunity to determine the formalities.

- Council's adopted Code of Meeting Practice determined the following formalities:
  - (i) Public forum to be held prior to commencement of the Ordinary Council Meetings at a time determined by Council
  - (ii) A mandatory time limit of five (5) minutes per addresses will be applied
  - (i) A maximum of six (6) timeslots allocated at any one public forum session with each timeslot only able to address one (1) item on the agenda
  - (iii) All requests to address Council must be made in writing by 4.30pm on the Monday prior to the scheduled meeting with reference made to the agenda item.
  - (iv) A schedule of Public Forum participants is to be provided to Councillors by mid-day on the day of the meeting.
- It is proposed that the Public Forum should commence at 5:30pm prior to the scheduled 6pm Council Meeting, noting this may impact the start time of scheduled ordinary meetings in the event all six timeslots for addressing the council are filled and councillors elect to ask questions.

3. Increased Formality

The updated Code aims to ensure meetings are conducted in a way befitting a democratic chamber, enhancing public confidence in local decision-making.

- Dress Code – Business Casual
- Where physically able, councillors and staff are encouraged to stand when the mayor enters the chamber and when addressing the meeting
- Councillors are encouraged to stand when they are addressing Council.

4. Information considered at Closed Meetings

- Council must publish business papers for items of business that are considered during meetings that have been closed to the public on Council's website as soon as the information contained in the business paper ceases to be confidential.
  - (i) Prior to this, the Council must consult with any affected persons and provide reasons for why the information has ceased to be confidential.

5. Attendance by councillors at meetings by audio-visual link

Mandatory rules now restrict attendance by councillors at meetings by audio-visual link to circumstances where a councillor is prevented from attending a meeting because of ill-health, other medical reasons or because of unforeseen caring responsibilities. Attendance by audio-visual link may only take place with the approval of the council.

6. General formalities

- Notices of motions are to be submitted by 4:30pm Monday on the week preceding the meeting
- Motions which require the expenditure of funds must include a funding source if outside of council's currently adopted Operational Plan.

- The General Manager or their nominee may respond to a question with notice submitted by way of a report included in the business papers of the relevant meeting of council.
- The General Manager must include in the agenda any business of which due notice has been given.

7. Confirmation of the general order of business

It is proposed that the following general order of business for an Ordinary Meeting be adopted, noting the suggested order is similar to the current order of business.

- Acknowledgement of country
- Prayer
- Apologies
- Mayoral minutes
- Confirmation of minutes
- Matters arising out of the minutes
- Declaration of interests
- Notice of motion
- Mayor's report
- Delegates' reports
- Matters determined without debate
- General Manager
- Office of the General Manager
- Planning and Sustainable Communities
- Infrastructure Services & Projects
- Organisational Services
- Matters for information
- Questions on notice
- Matters referred to closed council
- Resolutions of closed council

8. Confirmation of meeting dates for 2026 Ordinary Meetings

It is further proposed that ordinary meetings continue to be conducted on the third Tuesday of each calendar month (with the exception of June - Budget meeting), commencing at 6pm, on the following dates:

- 17 March
- 21 April
- 19 May
- 30 June
- 21 July
- 18 August
- 15 September
- 20 October

- 17 November
- 15 December

NSW Legislative Council - Motion of Disallowance

It is noted that during the Ordinary Meeting on 16 December 2025 further discussion took place prior to adoption of the Code in relation to numerous mandatory provisions, particularly expressing disappointment in the requirement to adopt provisions restricting attendance at meetings by audiovisual link and the abolition of information sessions. During that discussion, it was noted that Council had previously made submissions to the Office of Local Government on these matters and that Local Government NSW had also made representations.

The matter continues to be debated in the NSW Legislative Council. Doctor Amanda Cohn, Member of the Legislative Council, on 9 September 2025 tabled a motion to disallow the Local Government (General) Amendment (Model Code of Meeting Practice) Regulation 2025. Doctor Cohn spoke to the motion on 25 November 2025, raising the following issues (summarised):

a) That the restriction on attendance at meetings by audiovisual link was not in keeping with community expectations around supporting flexible work arrangements, diversity and inclusivity in representation in councils

b) That the prohibition on information sessions has and will continue to cause unintended consequences by some council's continuing the practice using 'workaround' mechanisms, which encouraged the opposite to the aim of transparency, suggesting that the Code would better be served by preserving information sessions and publishing minutes of those sessions prior to an ordinary meeting; and

c) That the provisions on public forums effectively placed a restriction on community engagement.

Debate on this motion was adjourned until early 2026. Until such time as debate is resumed and a vote on the motion is confirmed, the current Code of Meeting Practice adopted at the December 2025 meeting is in effect. In the event the motion is carried, a further report to Council will be provided.

CONSULTATION

Nil

CONCLUSION

The updated Code of Meeting Practice adopted by Council at the December 2025 Ordinary Meeting is now in effect. Having regard to notable mandatory provisions and encouraged practices, endorsement of the Public Forum arrangements, adoption of the general order of business and dates for ordinary meetings will ensure compliance with the updated Code.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

16.2 SOCIAL MEDIA AND MEDIA POLICY UPDATE

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

Responsible Officer: **Catherine Davis**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The use of social media continues to grow in both professional and personal contexts. Considering evolving digital practices, reputational risks and legal obligations, the Office of Local Government (OLG) issued model media and social media policies to provide a framework when dealing with the media. The model policies aim to ensure that media engagement by councillors and staff is consistent, accurate, professional, and enhances the council's reputation. Additionally, the model policies endeavour to clarify the responsibilities and expectations of council representatives depending on their role.

Council has revised its Media and Social Media Policies to incorporate key elements of the OLG model policies, to better reflect current expectations, technologies and risks.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the updated Media and Social Media Policies.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 8: Lead and advocate for our community

8C1 Provide representative and accountable community governance

8C1.4 Ensure Richmond Valley Council complies with statutory requirements and processes

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

REPORT

The use of social media continues to grow in both professional and personal contexts. Considering evolving digital practices, reputational risks, and legal obligations, the Office of Local Government (OLG) prepared model policies to provide a framework for councils when dealing with the media. The model policies aim to ensure that media engagement by councillors and staff is consistent, accurate and professional, and enhances the council's reputation.

Council's current media policy was last updated in 2017, and the social media policy in 2019. Since then, the media landscape has evolved significantly, with increased use of social media, a rise in misinformation, and changing expectations around transparency and crisis communication. Council has now revised its Social Media and Media Policies and incorporated key elements of the OLG model policies, to better reflect current expectations, technologies, and risks. The updated policies aim to modernise and standardise media engagement across the organisation and are attached for consideration.

Key changes to the Media Policy

Centralisation of media engagement:

All media enquiries must be directed to the Communications team to ensure consistent messaging and reduce reputational risk.

Proactive media strategy:

Emphasis on pre-emptive media engagement, including media briefings; and strategic use of media to support organisational goals and campaigns.

Crisis communication framework:

A clear escalation process for high-risk media issues, use of prepared statements and media training for senior staff, and to provide input on any areas of concern or further clarity required.

Key changes to the Social Media Policy

Clearer definition of social media:

The definition has been expanded to include new platforms such as TikTok, and private messaging apps where work-related discussions occur and clarifies that the scope includes both personal and professional accounts when content relates to the organisation.

Separation of personal and professional use:

Employees and councillors are encouraged to maintain clear boundaries between personal and professional identities online, however, guidelines for disclaimers when employees identify themselves as affiliated with the organisation have been included.

Several areas in the policy refer to social media activity “in connection with” a council official’s role. Section 8 of the policy provides guidance on how public content is distinguishable from private usage.

Conduct expectations:

Council’s expectations contain stronger language around respectful communication, anti-discrimination, and avoiding content which could damage the organisation’s reputation; and applies equally to personal accounts if posts relate to work, colleagues, customers, or stakeholders.

Security and confidentiality:

The policy reinforces the prohibition of sharing confidential or sensitive information, even in closed or private groups; and includes updated guidance on the use of secure platforms for official communications.

Employee responsibilities:

A new requirement to report incidents where organisational reputation is at risk due to social media activity has been included in addition to guidelines for handling online harassment, misinformation, or impersonation.

Monitoring and compliance:

The policy clarifies the organisation's right to monitor publicly available content and investigate breaches; and outlines disciplinary actions for non-compliance. This does not amount to the organisation taking any sort of management role in private social media accounts.

Record keeping requirements:

Under the State Records Act 1998 any social media content created, shared or received by a councillor that is related to their work as a councillor is considered a State record. Clause 3.2 of the policy identifies that councillors are responsible for the administration of their own social media platforms, including ensuring compliance with record keeping obligations under the State Records Act 1998. Accordingly, record keeping obligations for councillors includes self-capture, ensuring completeness and providing captured records to Council for preservation within Council's record keeping systems.

Clause 7 of the policy contains guidance with respect to Council's records management and privacy requirements. For clarification, Councillors, as administrator in control of their own social media accounts, may make their own requirements for ensuring accurate and timely completeness of records capture.

To support councillors in navigating their responsibilities in accordance with the policies, training will be provided to councillors who have not completed prior training or for any councillor requiring further or refresher training.

It is noted that the draft policies were brought before Council for consideration at the December 2025 Ordinary Meeting, with the matter deferred for further consideration. The deferment related to questions previously raised by Cr Murray, and the requirement for all councillors to receive a copy of query responses and due consideration time. Councillors were provided with a copy of responses on 23 December 2025. A copy of the document provided is attached to this report.

CONSULTATION

The draft policies were submitted to Council's internal Consultative Committee and Councillors for review and feedback prior to presenting to Council for adoption.

CONCLUSION

Council's current media and social media policies require updating to better reflect current media considerations and to standardise requirements of media engagements across the organisation. The Office of Local Government has provided model media and social media policies, which have provided key guidance in achieving this aim.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **Council Policy - Media (under separate cover)**
2. **Council Policy - Social Media (under separate cover)**
3. **Social Media and Media Policies - Councillor queries and responses (under separate cover)**

16.3 FINANCIAL ANALYSIS REPORT - DECEMBER 2025 AND JANUARY 2026

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 as at 321 December 2024 and 31 January 2026 is shown below:

Month	Bank Accounts	Term Deposits	Floating Rate Notes	Fixed Rate Bonds	TCorp IM Funds	Total
December 2025	$15,882,943	$42,000,000	$6,250,000	$3,000,000	$18,688,846	$85,821,789
January 2026	$20,319,454	$39,000,000	$6,250,000	$3,000,000	$18,815,891	$87,385,345

The weighted average rate of return on Council's cash and investments at 31 December 2025 was 3.59% which was below the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index for December of 3.72% (annualised), which is Council's benchmark.

The weighted average rate of return on Council's cash and investments at 31 January 2026 was 5.00% which was above the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index for January of 3.65% (annualised).

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopts the Financial Analysis Report detailing the performance of its cash and investments for the months of December 2025 and January 2026.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 9: Manage resources responsibly and provide great service

9A1 Undertake long-term financial planning and ensure compliance with financial regulations

9A1.2 Maintain Council's investment portfolio in accordance with requirements and aim for the best long-term benefit for the community

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

As at 31 December 2025, Council has earned $1,411,379 in interest and $776,671 in fair value gains from funds held in TCorp, for a total investment income of $2,188,049. This equates to 89.53% of the annual budget for interest and investment income of $2,444,032.

As at 31 January 2026, Council has earned $1,546,264 in interest and $903,717 in fair value gains from funds held in TCorp, for a total investment income of $2,449,980. This equates to 100.24% of the annual budget for interest and investment income of $2,444,032.

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

REPORT

Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) Cash Rate Update

The RBA held the cash rate at 3.60% at the December meeting and did not meet in January.

Rate of Return

The weighted average rate of return on cash and investments in December was 3.59%, an increase in 112 basis points from the previous month. The rate of return is 12 basis points below the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index of 3.72% (annualised) which is Council's benchmark.

Council's NSW Treasury Corporation IM Funds returned net gains of $23,629 during the month of December. The Medium-Term Growth Fund (MTGF) returned a gain of $9,462 and the Long-Term Growth Fund (LTGF) returned a gain of $14,167.

The weighted average rate of return on cash and investments in January was 5.00%, an increase in 140 basis points from the previous month. The rate of return is 135 basis points above the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index of 3.65% (annualised) which is Council's benchmark.

Council's NSW Treasury Corporation IM Funds returned net gains of $127,046 during the month of January. The Medium-Term Growth Fund (MTGF) returned a gain of $93,370 and the Long-Term Growth Fund (LTGF) returned a gain of $33,676.

Inflation increased by 0.9% during the December quarter and the unemployment rate decreased from 4.3% to 4.1% during the month of December pushing market expectations to an RBA rate hike at the February meeting.

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 Investment Portfolio

Council held cash and investments of $85,821,789 at 31 December 2025. This was made up of Council's Business Online Saver Account ($9,500,000), Macquarie Cash Management Account ($5,025,127), Term Deposits ($42,000,000), Floating Rate Notes ($6,250,000), Bonds ($3,000,000), NSW Treasury Corporation Investments ($18,688,846) and other bank accounts ($1,357,817).

Council's investment portfolio had maturity dates ranging from same day up to 1,813 days. Term deposits, floating rate notes and bonds of $51,250,000 represented 59.72% of the total portfolio as at 31 December 2025.

Council made the following new investments during December 2025:

Banking Institution	Investment Type	Environmentally Sustainable Investment	Amount Invested	Investment Term	Interest Rate
Judo Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	6 months	4.45%
Credit Union SA	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	6 months	4.47%
Move Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	6 months	4.45%
QBank	Floating Rate Note	Y	$500,000	2.4 Years	3mBBSW +1.2%
Suncorp Bank	Fixed Rate Bond	Y	$2,000,000	5 Years	5.00%
Total			**$8,500,000**		

Council had the following investment maturities during the month of December 2025:

Banking Institution	Investment Type	Environmentally Sustainable Investment	Amount Invested	Interest Earned
Bank of Sydney	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	$44,877
Bank of Queensland	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	$42,904
Move Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$2,000,000	$28,981
Macquarie Bank	Floating Rate Note	N	$1,000,390	$154,951*
Northern Territory Treasury Corporation	Fixed Rate Bond	Y	$2,000,000	$93,786*
Total			**$9,000,390**	**$365,499**

* Total interest earned across the life of the investment. Interest was paid quarterly whilst held.

Council had $18,688,846 in longer term investments being the MTGF and LTGF held with NSW Treasury Corporation as at 31 December 2025. The investment values and fair value returns are shown below:

Investment Holding	Fair Value 31 December 25	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) at 31 December 25	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) YTD	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) Life of Investment
Medium Term Growth Fund	$14,600,592	$9,462	$515,272	$3,595,562
Long Term Growth Fund	$4,088,254	$14,167	$243,678	$1,088,254
Total	**$18,688,846**	**$23,629**	**$758,950**	**$4,683,816**

Council held cash and investments of $87,385,345 at 31 January 2026. This was made up of Council's Business Online Saver Account ($13,975,000), Macquarie Cash Management Account ($5,014,797), Term Deposits ($39,000,000), Floating Rate Notes ($6,250,000), Bonds ($3,000,000), NSW Treasury Corporation Investments ($18,815,891) and other bank accounts ($1,329,657).

Council's investment portfolio had maturity dates ranging from same day up to 1,813 days. Term deposits, floating rate notes and bonds of $48,250,000 represented 55.22% of the total portfolio as at 31 January 2026.

Council did not make any new investments during January 2026:

Council had the following investment maturities during the month of January 2026:

Banking Institution	Investment Type	Environmentally Sustainable Investment	Amount Invested	Interest Earned
AMP Bank	Term Deposit	Y	$3,000,000	$56,548
Total			**$3,000,000**	**$56,548**

Council had $18,815,891 in longer term investments being the MTGF and LTGF held with NSW Treasury Corporation as at 31 January 2026. The investment values and fair value returns are shown below:

Investment Holding	Fair Value 31 January 26	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) at 31 January 26	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) YTD	Fair Value Gain/(Loss) Life of Investment
Medium Term Growth Fund	$14,693,691	$93,370	$608,642	$3,688,932
Long Term Growth Fund	$4,121,930	$33,676	$277,354	$1,121,930
Total	**$18,815,891**	**$127,046**	**$885,996**	**$4,810,862**

Environmentally Sustainable Investments (ESI's)

Council's cash and investments portfolio of $85,821,789 at 31 December 2025 includes $66,938,846 or 78% with no direct investment in the fossil fuel industry.

Council's cash and investments portfolio of $87,385,345 at 31 January 2026 includes $64,065,891 or 73.3% with no direct investment in the fossil fuel industry.

These percentages include Council's investments with NSW 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.

CONCLUSION

During the months of December 2025 and January 2026, Council's investments have been made in accordance with the Act, the Regulations and Council's Investment Policy.

As at 31 December 2025 Council's cash and investments totalled $85,821,789 with $15,882,943 of this being funds held in bank accounts. The weighted average rate of return was 3.59% and total investment revenue equals 89.53% of budgeted revenue for the year to 31 December 2025.

As at 31 January 2026 Council's cash and investments totalled $87,385,345 with $20,319,454 of this being funds held in bank accounts. The weighted average rate of return was 5.00% and total investment revenue equals 100.24% of budgeted revenue for the year to 31 January 2026.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **RVC Investment Pack - December 2025 (under separate cover)**
2. **RVC Investment Pack - January 2026 (under separate cover)**

16.4 QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW STATEMENT FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

Responsible Officer: **Hayley Martin**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The budget review report for the quarter ended 31 December 2025 has been prepared to provide Council and the community with information regarding Council's financial performance and proposed amendments to the 2025/2026 budget.

This Quarterly Budget Review Statement is presented in the Office of Local Government's (OLG) newly introduced (mandatory) reporting format.

Council's projected net operating result before capital grants and contributions for 2025/2026 has decreased slightly by $36,038, to a deficit of $11.85 million. This decrease is primarily due to a transfer from unexpended grants in internal reserves towards operating expenditure for the funded project.

Operating results from continuing operations including capital grants and contributions but excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment increased by $6.65 million, bringing the surplus to $65.634 million. This outcome stems from income increasing by $8.04 million to $138 million, primarily due to an increase in capital grants and contributions. Detailed notes on significant adjustments are available on pages 4-6 of the Quarterly Budget Review Statement.

As at 31 December 2025, Council's actual revenue is tracking at 58% of the projected year-end result and expenditure from continuing operations at 48%, indicating consistent delivery against the operational budget.

Council's capital works program has been reviewed, resulting in proposed decrease in the current program for 2025/2026 of $8.487 million, to $79.190 million. Current expenditure for the capital program is at 31% of the revised budget. This is expected to rise substantially through the remainder of 2025/2026 as several key grant funded projects progress. Notable projects include the Casino Industries Activation (Patrica St roundabout), betterment of the NRLX effluent management system, Casino suspension bridge, and Woodburn-Evans Head shared pathway. The capital budget will continue to be closely monitored, and any required adjustments will be presented in future financial reports to Council.

Council's unrestricted cash surplus has remained unchanged at $301,339 as of 31 December 2025, projecting a consistent cash position.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Receives the Quarterly Budget Review Statement as at 31 December 2025; and
2. Approves the recommended budget variations.

DELIVERY PROGRAM LINKS

Objective 9: Manage resources responsibly and provide great service

9A1 Undertake long-term financial planning and ensure compliance with financial regulations

9A1.4 Provide regular reports to Council on financial performance and ensure compliance with requirements for external audit

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

As detailed in the report.

REPORT

The budget review for the second quarter of the 2025/2026 financial year has resulted in Council's operating result from continuing operations including capital grants and contributions but excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairments increasing by $6.65 million to a projected surplus of $65.634 million. The net operating result before capital grants and contributions has decreased $36,038 to a deficit of $11.85 million. The improvement in the net operating result including capital grants and contributions is attributed to the movement in income and expenses from continuing operations as detailed below.

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 December 2025	Revised Budget 2025/2026	Recommended Changes for Council Resolution	Projected Year End Result 2025/2026
Operating Income	84,544,051	1,355,369	85,899,420
Operating Expenses	96,364,538	1,391,408	97,755,945
Net Operating Result before Capital Grants and Contributions	**(11,820,487)**	**(36,039)**	**(11,856,525)**
Add: Capital Grants & Contributions	46,131,751	6,685,557	52,817,308
Net Operating Result including Capital Grants and Contributions	**34,311,264**	**6,649,518**	**40,960,783**
Add: Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	24,672,900	0	24,672,900
Net Operating Result excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-financial assets	**58,984,164**	**6,649,518**	**65,633,683**
Add: Other Non-Cash Expenses	2,263,093	0	2,263,093
Add: Non-Operating Funds Employed	5,229,623	0	5,229,623
Less: Capital Expenditure	87,677,318	(8,486,844)	79,190,474
Less: Loan Repayments	3,385,226	0	3,385,226
Estimated Funding Result – Surplus/(Deficit)	**(24,585,664)**	**15,136,362**	**(9,449,302)**
Restricted Funds – Increase/(Decrease)	(24,887,003)	15,136,362	(9,750,641)
Unrestricted Funds – Increase/(Decrease)	**301,339**	**0**	**301,339**

As illustrated in the table above, Council's estimated budget result (unrestricted cash result) has remained unchanged from the 2025/2026 revised budget at $301,339. In overall cash terms, there is a decrease in the estimated funding from reserves of $15.186 million with an estimated total transfer from reserves of $9.7 million for the 2025/2026 financial year. This predominately reflects grant funding received in 2025/2026 for work scheduled in the 2026/2027 year, largely impacted by the advance payment for natural disaster restoration works.

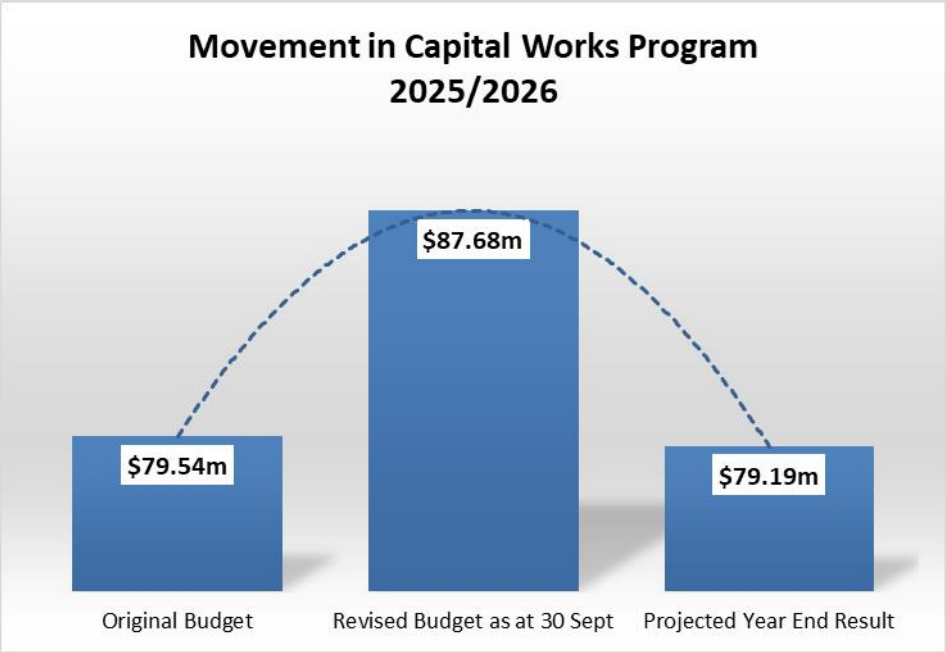
Income from continuing operations (operating income plus capital grants and contributions) is proposed to increase by $8.04 million to $138.7 million and expenses from continuing operations are proposed to increase by $1.39 million to $97.75 million. Significant adjustments include the advance payment of natural disaster restoration funding attributing to an increase in capital grants and contributions of $6.7 million with further details provided on pages 4-6 of the Quarterly Budget Review Statement.

As at 30 September 2025, Council's actual revenue is tracking at 58% of the projected year-end result and expenditure from continuing operations at 48% of the projected year-end total, indicating consistent delivery against the operational budget.

Council's capital works program has been reviewed, resulting in revision of the current program for 2025/2026 to a projected total of $79.190 million, decreasing the programmed works by $8.487 million. Current expenditure for the capital program is at 31% of the revised year-end result. This is expected to rise substantially through the remainder of 2026 as several key grant-funded projects progress. Notable projects include betterment of the Casino Industries Activation (Patricia St roundabout), NRLX effluent management system, Casino suspension bridge, and Woodburn–Evans Head shared pathway. The capital program will be closely monitored, recognising the ongoing risks that large scale projects present, particularly in relation to contractor availability and

weather delays. Given Council's continued focus on disaster recovery efforts, maintaining oversight of the capital budget remains a priority.

The following graph illustrates the movement in the 2025/2026 capital works program, illustrating the progression that previously approved changes and current recommended changes have on the projected year-end result.



The movement reflects a significant re-adjustment in the capital program to better align with the original program of works, driven by recovery and betterment projects following the 2022 floods and Cyclone Alfred in March 2025 . As indicated, delivery of these works will depend heavily on contractor availability and favourable weather. The capital budget will continue to be closely monitored, and any required adjustments will be presented in future budget adjustment reports to Council.

All recommended changes for continuing operations and capital are disclosed in Council's Quarterly Budget Review Statement. Changes in continuing operations are shown on page 3, with detailed explanations provided on pages 4–6. Capital changes are disclosed on page 10, with further details on pages 11.

CONCLUSION

At the end of the second quarter, Council's operating result from continuing operations, including capital grants and contributions but excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairment, is a projected surplus of $65.63 million. Excluding capital grants and contributions, the result reflects a projected deficit of $11.85 million. Council's capital works budget is currently $79.19 million and will continue to be closely monitored to ensure all projects are delivered on time and within budget. Council's estimated budget result (unrestricted cash result) has remained unchanged at $301,339, demonstrating a consistent cash position. Overall, Council's projected financial position at year end remains satisfactory.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. **Quarterly Budget Review Statement for the quarter ended 31 December 2025 (under separate cover)**

17 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

RECOMMENDATION

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

17.1 RICHMOND VALLEY - RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

General Manager: Vaughan Macdonald

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the report Richmond Valley – Residential Development Update.

REPORT

Council's 2025-2029 Delivery Program acknowledges the need to provide more homes for our growing community, to meet increasing housing demand and address the current housing shortage.

Council has been actively promoting opportunities for further residential growth in the Richmond Valley and has identified future development lands within its Growth Management Strategy. Discussions have also been held with landowners and potential developers of key privately owned sites in existing urban areas. With the significant increase in land values over the last decade the private development market has shown interest but hasn't yet delivered beyond rural residential subdivisions. Given the current community need for housing, the demand for greater housing diversity and the slowness of the private market to respond, Council is continuing to monitor the situation and consider appropriate development opportunities, as it has done over the past two decades.

An article in the Sydney Morning Herald on 16 January 2026 highlights the current situation faced across the Richmond Valley, with the median rent increase being the 2nd highest across NSW at 14.5%. With rental supply very challenging to secure, this is inhibiting people moving to the area for work. Given the significant projects to commence during 2026, including the Richmond Valley Solar Farm, demand for housing and worker accommodation is predicted to continue to be strong.

At the December 2025 Council Meeting, an update was provided on the current options for housing development, with Council resolving to continue to progress the exploration of these options with landowners/proponents and provide further reports for consideration of these matters, as required. Further commercial in confidence information on one of these options was provided to the Extraordinary meeting of Council in January 2026, with the matter deferred to enable further information to be provided at the February meeting.

Liaison on a number of options is continuing with relevant stakeholders including discussions with the NSW Reconstruction Authority given its role in rebuilding the Northern Rivers and the options identified in the Resilient Lands Strategy to generate new flood-safe housing supply. Further information is being sought on options and available information is being assessed with a view to developing a business case on any preferred proposals for future consideration of Council.

Council's preferred position remains that the private development market proceeds with current residential development options, including Summerland Estate and The Meadows, and is liaising with and supporting any interested developers to activate housing supply. Should discussions progress to the point of a Council decision being required, a future report will be brought to a Council meeting.

17.2 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT FOR THE PERIOD 1 DECEMBER 2025 - 31 JANUARY 2026

Director: **Tina Kao**

Responsible Officer: **Andy Edwards**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Development Applications report for the period 1 December 2025 to 31 January 2026.

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.

Councillors receive 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.

The total number of Development Applications and Complying Development Applications determined within the Local Government area for the period 1 December 2025 to 31 December 2025 was twenty-one (21) with a total value of $5,281,256.00.

The total number of Development Applications and Complying Development Applications determined within the Local Government area for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 January 2026 was thirteen (13) with a total value of $4,250,497.50.

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

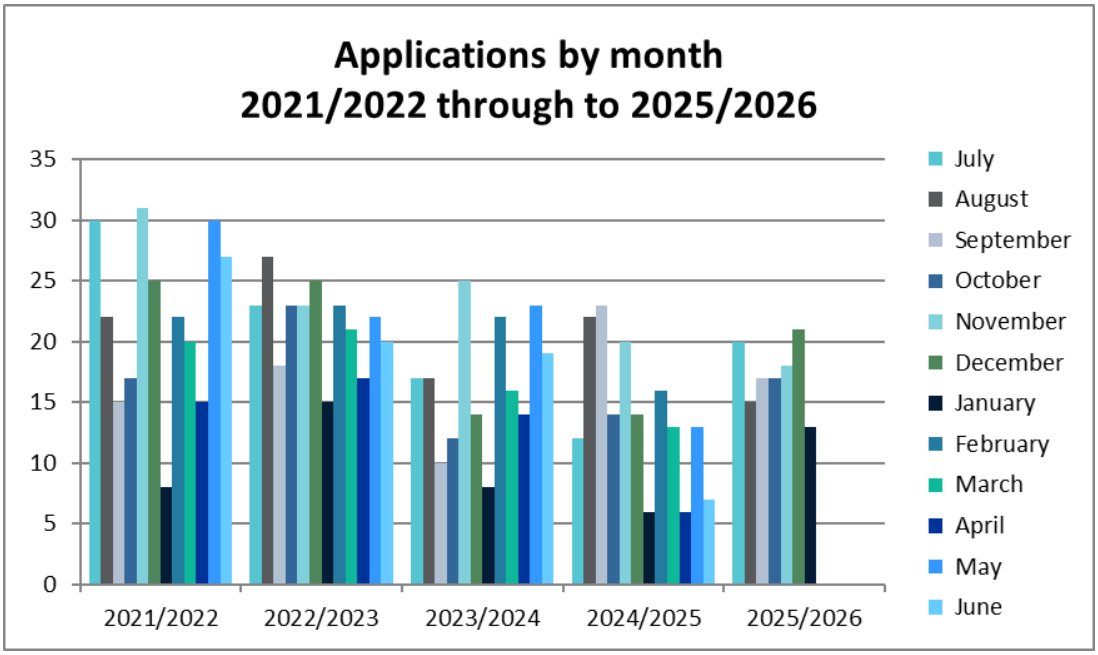


Figure 1: Monthly number of development applications and CDC's processed by Council over five financial years.

Figure 2 provides the annual value of Development Consents including CDCs issued by Council and private ceritifers over five financial years.

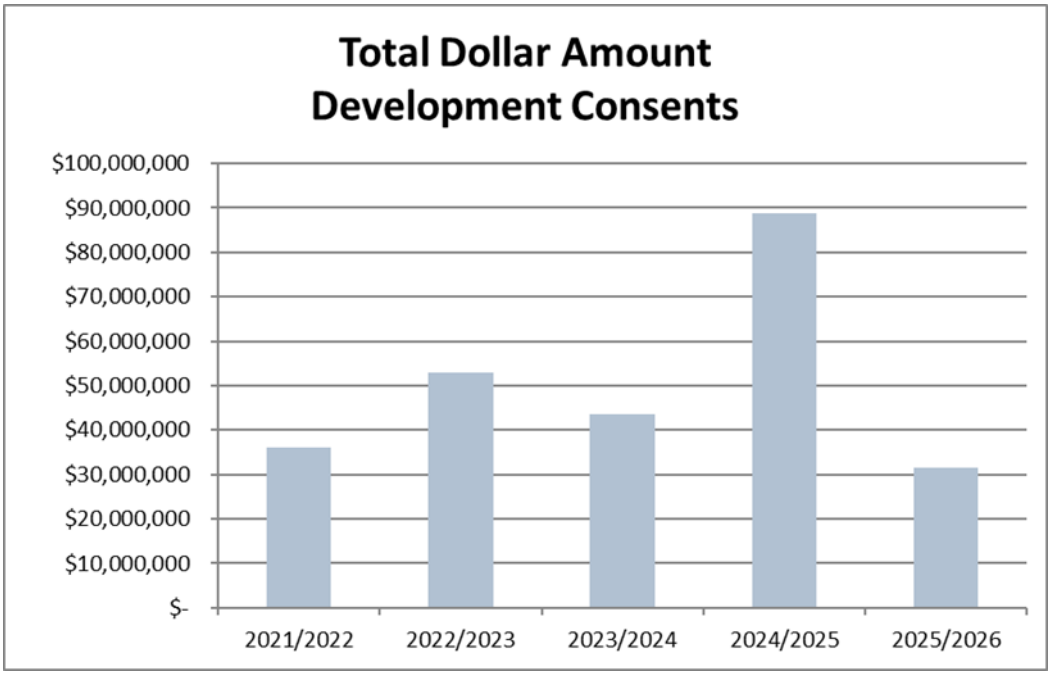


Figure 2: Annual value of development

Figure 3 and 4 provides a detailed review of the value for the reporting months of December 2025 and January 2026.

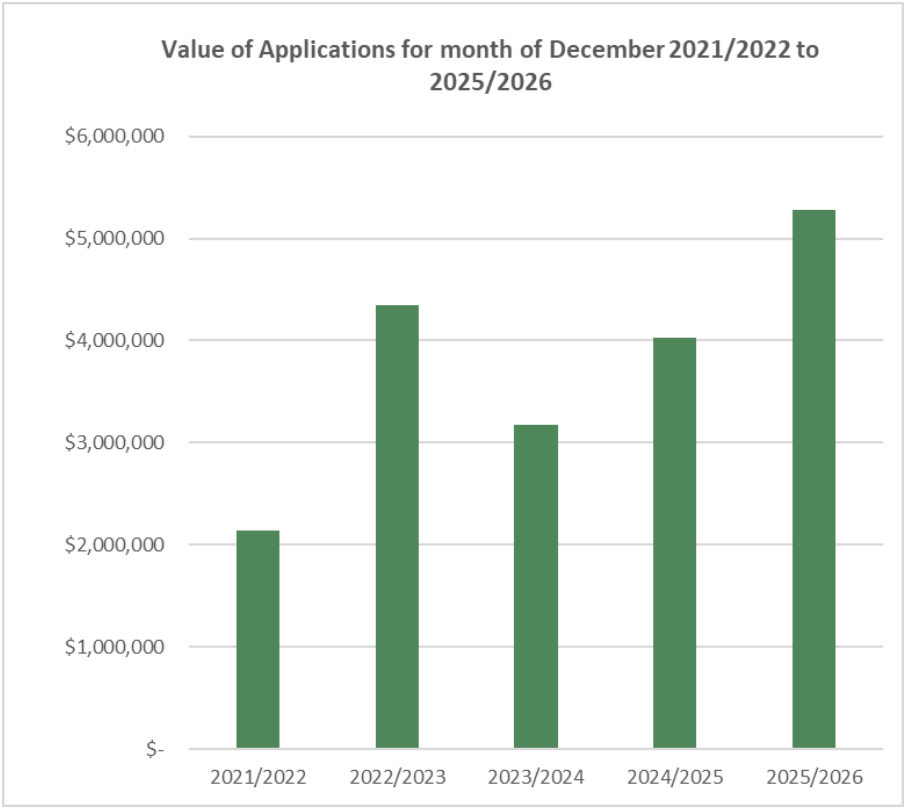


Figure 3: Value of development for the month of December from 2021/2022 to 2025/2026

2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
25	25	14	14	21

Table 1: Number of Applications for the month of November from 2021/2022 to 2025/2026

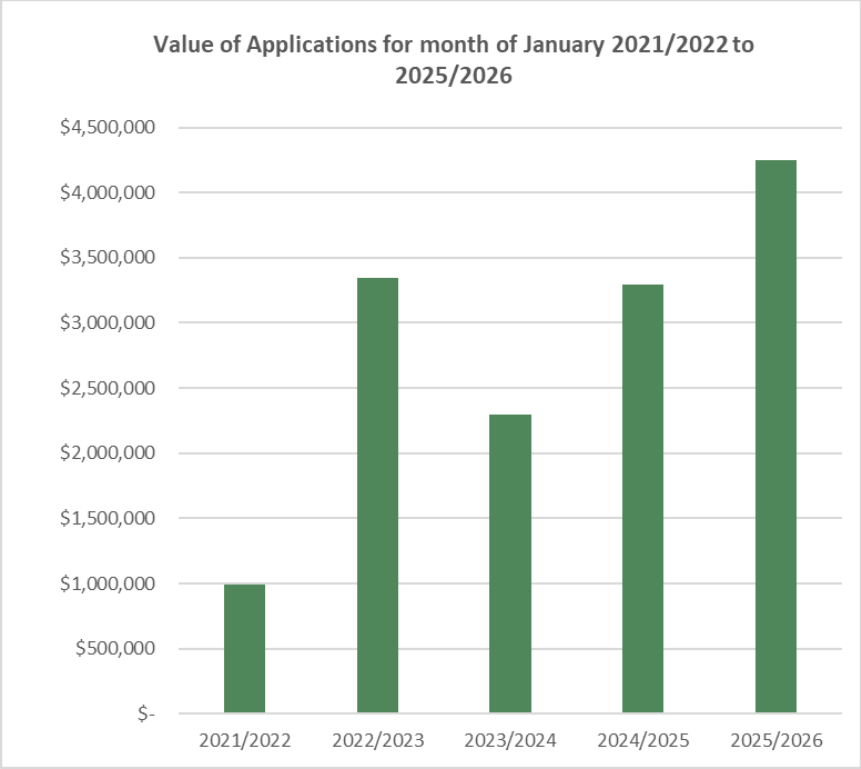


Figure 4: Value of development for the month of January from 2021/2022 to 2025/2026

2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
8	15	8	6	13

Table 2: Number of Applications for the month of November from 2021/2022 to 2025/2026

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 5 and 6 detail the value and number of applications determined by Council over the past five years.

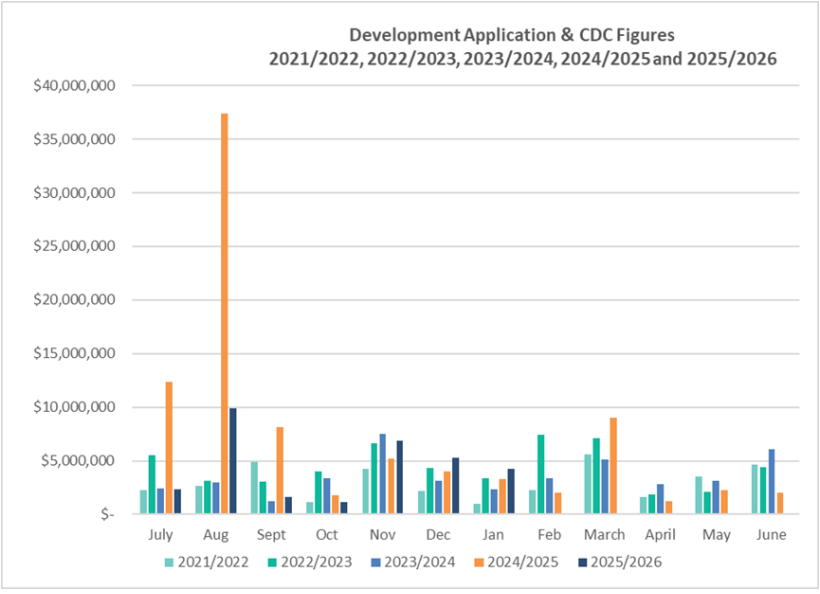


Figure 5: Value of development applications per month over five financial years.

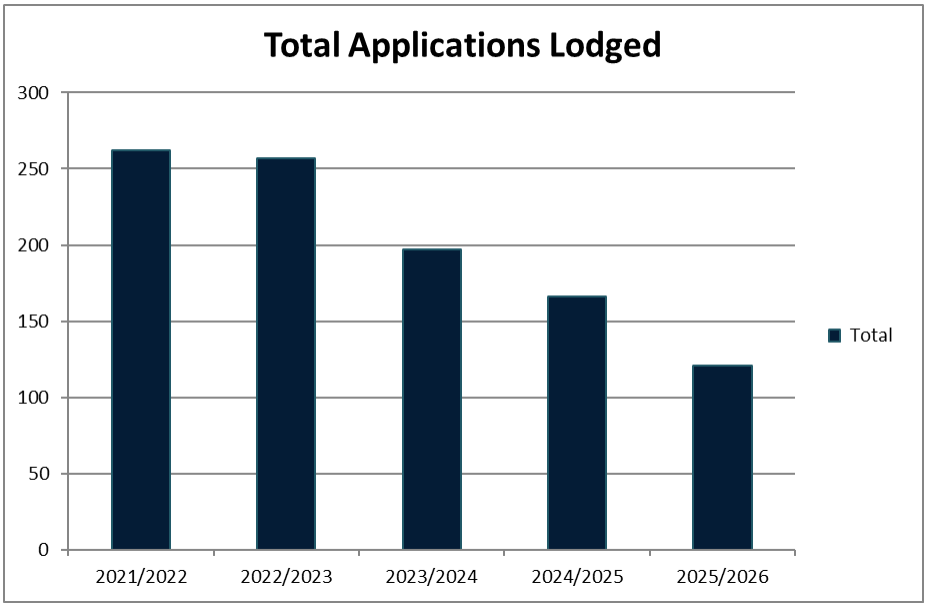


Figure 6: Number of Development Applications & CDCs per annum over five financial years

Activity for the month of December 2025

General Approvals (excluding Subdivisions, Section 4.55)	13
Section 4.55 amendments to original consent	3
Operational Consent	-
Deferred Consent	-
Subdivision	2
Refused	-
Complying Development (Council Approved)	-
Complying Development (Private Certifier Approved)	3
Amended Complying Development (Private Certifier Approved)	-
TOTAL NUMBER OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED	**21**
Rejected	-
Withdrawn	-
Average assessment days for applications determined in December 2025 (Planning & Building Combined)	**35**
No. of Integrated development applications determined in December 2025	**-**
No. of Designated development applications determined in December 2025	**-**

Activity for the month of January 2026

General Approvals (excluding Subdivisions, Section 4.55)	8
Section 4.55 amendments to original consent	1
Operational Consent	-
Deferred Consent	-
Subdivision	2
Refused	-
Complying Development (Council Approved)	-
Complying Development (Private Certifier Approved)	2
Amended Complying Development (Private Certifier Approved)	-
TOTAL NUMBER OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED	**13**
Rejected	-
Withdrawn	-
Average assessment days for applications determined in January 2026 (Planning & Building Combined)	**51**
No. of Integrated development applications determined in January 2026	**1**
No. of Designated development applications determined in January 2026	**-**

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 December 2025 to 31 December 2025								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (In Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost $**
DA2026/0039	Newton Denny Chapelle	The Presbyterian Church (NSW) Property Trust	17 Brumby Place, North Casino	The proposed change of use to create mixed use development comprising a dwelling house & educational establishment, including the construction of a 2 metre high fence, and retain the use of the dwelling for residential purposes independent from the school.	4/09/2025	3/10/2025	11/12/2025	62,700.00
DA2026/0052	Newton Denny Chapelle	Walter Corp Pty Ltd	137-141 Johnston Street, Casino	Building alterations and additions to the existing building and change of use to establish an industrial activity being a beef jerky processing facility	16/09/2025	10/10/2025	9/12/2025	205,000.00
DA2026/0060	Construction & Build Ready Pty Ltd	H Ayre & N F Dallison	Vidlers Road, Yorklea	Shed	23/09/2025	16/10/2025	10/12/2025	71,500.00
DA2026/0071	B Felsch	S X & R Hung	22 Woodburn Street, Evans Head	Change of use to a beauty salon and ancillary works	2/10/2025	28/10/2025	2/12/2025	29,700.00
DA2026/0074	R J Hayes	Whitebait Capital Pty Ltd	62 Woodburn Street, Evans Head	Construction of detached dual occupancy with associated works and Torrens Title Subdivision	7/10/2025	6/11/2025	9/12/2025	546,150.00

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 December 2025 to 31 December 2025 (Cont'd)								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (In Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost $**
DA2026/0080	A J Gaiter	A J & M Gaiter	Ginibi Drive, Swan Bay	Construction of a colourbond shed with amenities, new OSMS and ancillary works	13/10/2025	16/10/2025	9/12/2025	116,500.00
DA2026/0084	J P J Smith	K A & J P J Smith	43 River Street, Broadwater	Proposed alterations and additions to existing dwelling - inclusive of demolition of minor structures, addition of deck and carport, internal works include bathroom/ensuite and lift.	20/10/2025	28/10/2025	5/12/2025	275,000.00
DA2026/0085	Perry Homes (Aust) Pty Ltd	K Dokter & D L Crook	90 Ginibi Drive, Swan Bay	Single dwelling	20/10/2025	28/10/2025	10/12/2025	449,117.00
DA2026/0087	Newton Denny Chapelle	L J Larsson	535 Benns Road, Shannon Brook	Development consent is sought for the use of 'As Built' alterations and additions to an existing Rural Industry (Grain Storage & Processing Facility) upon Lot 1 DP 876258. The application also involves the formalisation of the usage of other existing buildings on the site.	21/10/2025	27/10/2025	22/12/2025	2,622,079.00
DA2026/0088	C P Horne	C P Horne	27 Ivory Circuit, Casino	Shed with 'as built' concrete slab requiring variation to DCP	22/10/2025	23/10/2025	17/12/2025	12,950.00

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 December 2025 to 31 December 2025 (Cont'd)

Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (In Portal)	Date Accepted (In Portal)	Determination Date	Estimated Cost $
MA2026/0012	Ardill Payne & Partners	K W & H M Bloem	14 Riverview Street, Evans Head	S4.55 (1A) - Modification of the approved plans of the new two storey residential building: the first floor comprising of a three bedroom dwelling, and the ground floor being a one bedroom secondary dwelling.	22/10/2025	11/11/2025	18/12/2025	0.00
DA2026/0089	Approved Services Pty Ltd	T J & E L Martin	690 Old Dyraaba Road, Woodview	Construction of a New Dwelling House	30/10/2025	10/11/2025	12/12/2025	553,007.00
MA2026/0013	R J Hayes	A G & M J Underhill	3/51 Cassia Street, Evans Head	S4.55 - 1A - Proposed modification to conditions 1,8,9 and 30 - Renovations and additions to an existing brick veneer detached unit including new front entry deck and ancillary works.	31/10/2025	6/11/2025	19/12/2025	0.00
DA2026/0090	J A Nommensen	D A & J A Nommensen	32 Diary Street, Casino	Removal of carport and replace with a 8 x 6 shed	2/11/2025	5/11/2025	18/12/2025	26,480.00
DA2026/0092	C Crook	T R Hicks	89 Farley Street, Casino	6m x 3.5m shed replacing existing 6.6 x 3.6m timber and tin shed	4/11/2025	10/11/2025	18/12/2025	28,490.00
DA2026/0093	Newton Denny Chapelle	M L Lousick	4 Bent Street, Casino	Proposed Torrens title subdivision to create two (2) lots.	4/11/2025	13/11/2025	16/12/2025	44,000.00

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 December 2025 to 31 December 2025 (Cont'd)								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (In Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost $**
DA2026/0101	R N Parkinson	R N Parkinson	20 Johnston Street, Casino	As built 4.88m x 2.44m swimming pool and associated works	12/11/2025	14/11/2025	18/12/2025	2,510.00
MA2026/0016	Newton Denny Chapelle	C F & J D Larcombe	33 Manifold Road, North Casino	Relocation of effluent disposal area for Lot 14 DP1109802	21/11/2025	9/12/2025	16/12/2025	0.00

Summary of Flood Affected Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 December 2025 to 31 December 2025								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (In Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost**
Nil								

Summary of Privately Certified Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 December 2025 to 31 December 2025								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Submitted to Council for Registration**	**Date Accepted**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost**
CDC2026/0014	Techton Building Services	C J & K P Hogan	58 Cassia Street, Evans Head	Alterations & Additions to an Existing Dwelling to Create a New Robe to Bed 1 & Additions to Bed 3 Walls	18/12/2025	9/01/2026	17/12/2025	83,515.00
CDC2026/0015	The trustee for Crawford Family Trust t/as East Coast Building Consultants	S T Darragh	55 Simpson Parade, Casino	Construction of a new 10.5m x 6m shed on concrete slab	19/12/2025	9/01/2026	19/12/2025	42,558.00

CDC2026/0016	NSW Building Approvals	JP Benson Pty Ltd	169 Canterbury Street, Casino	Proposed fit out of existing shop for a sushi restaurant	22/12/2025	9/01/2026	22/12/2025	110,000.00

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act with a Clause 4.6 Variation for the period 1 December 2025 to 31 December 2025

Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (in Portal)	Date Accepted (In Portal)	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
Nil								

Summary of Development Applications Refused under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 December 2025 to 31 December 2025

Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (in Portal)	Date Accepted (In Portal)	Refusal Date	Estimated Cost
Nil								

Summary of Development Applications Rejected under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 December 2025 to 31 December 2025

Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (in Portal)	Date Accepted (In Portal)	Rejected Date	Estimated Cost
Nil								

Summary of Development Applications Withdrawn under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 December 2025 to 1 December 2025

Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (in Portal)	Date Accepted (In Portal)	Date Withdrawn	Estimated Cost
Nil								

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 January 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (In Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost $**
DA2026/0083	TFA Project Group	Richmond Valley Council	Victory Camp Road, Casino	New parcel distribution centre, including subdivision and ancillary works	17/10/2025	30/10/2025	13/01/2026	2,719,200.00
DA2026/0094	Newton Denny Chapelle	M Trovato	1 Ferrier Court, Casino	Construction of dwelling house to create detached dual occupancy with ancillary works and Torrens Title Subdivision.	5/11/2025	28/11/2025	22/01/2026	321,940.00
DA2026/0096	B C Schneider	B C Schneider	22 Bruton Street, Casino	Construction of 9m x 7.5m shed with an attached 6.7m x 7.5m awning including a variation to the DCP	7/11/2025	12/11/2025	14/01/2026	35,100.00
DA2026/0098	Untapped Planning	P & C D Burkinshaw	65 Gregors Road, Spring Grove	Relocated Dwelling to create dual occupancy with associated works	11/11/2025	25/11/2025	27/01/2026	205,040.00
DA2026/0102	Fernleigh Drafting & Council Services	E M O James & A D Murphy	53A Sextonville Road, Casino	Detached Steel Framed Shed	13/11/2025	18/11/2025	14/01/2026	16,170.00
DA2026/0104	Newton Denny Chapelle	J R & D I Hansen	14 Mangrove Street, Evans Head	Construction of a detached garage, carport and driveway.	13/11/2025	17/11/2025	14/01/2026	140,800.00
DA2026/0106	Emma Holt & Associates	J T Troy	500 Coraki Ellangowan Road, West Coraki	Alterations to resited three bedroom single storey dwelling house, construction of a driveway and installation of a sewage system.	16/11/2025	1/12/2025	27/01/2026	201,173.50

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 January 2026 (Cont'd)

Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (In Portal)	Date Accepted (In Portal)	Determination Date	Estimated Cost $
MA2026/0015	Burton & Carter Pty. Ltd.	R O McGeary	37 Park Street, Evans Head	S4.55 (2) - Modification to approved dwelling, including amendments to Boat and Car Shed, Garage, Ensuite Lift Area, Decks and associated works.	17/11/2025	4/12/2025	30/01/2026	0.00
DA2026/0107	R J Gaiter	R J & S Gaiter	62 Eucalypt Drive, Swan Bay	Construction of 2 (detached) sheds (20 x 10 m and 6 x 6m), including septic system and 3 x water tanks	17/11/2025	3/12/2025	21/01/2026	154,000.00
DA2026/0112	R J Hayes	H J & G W Riches	18 Bottlebrush Crescent, Evans Head	Construction of a steel framed shed on a raft concrete floor to be used for storage including request to vary DCP.	27/11/2025	2/12/2025	20/01/2026	49,500.00
DA2026/0114	R J Hayes	H M & M M Aarts	16 Carrabeen Street, Evans Head	Rear deck additions to an existing 2 level brick veneer home.	27/11/2025	2/12/2025	30/01/2026	33,000.00

Summary of Flood Affected Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 January 2026

Application ID	Applicant	Owners	Location	Development	Date Received (In Portal)	Date Accepted (In Portal)	Determination Date	Estimated Cost
Nil								

Summary of Privately Certified Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 January 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Submitted to Council for Registration**	**Date Accepted**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost**
CDC2026/0017	Buildcert Certification Pty Ltd	H W Everett & J L Chapple	6 Duncan Street, Broadwater	New Dwelling	23/01/2026	30/01/2026	23/01/2026	371,574.00
CDC2026/0018	Buildcert Certification Pty Ltd	H W Everett & J L Chapple	6 Duncan Street, Broadwater	Retaining Wall & Associated Earthworks	23/01/2026	30/01/2026	23/01/2026	3,000.00

Summary of Development Applications determined under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act with a Clause 4.6 Variation for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 January 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (in Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Determination Date**	**Estimated Cost**
Nil								

Summary of Development Applications Refused under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 January 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (in Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Refusal Date**	**Estimated Cost**
Nil								

Summary of Development Applications Rejected under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 January 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (in Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Rejected Date**	**Estimated Cost**
Nil								

Summary of Development Applications Withdrawn under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the period 1 January 2026 to 31 January 2026								
Application ID	**Applicant**	**Owners**	**Location**	**Development**	**Date Received (in Portal)**	**Date Accepted (In Portal)**	**Date Withdrawn**	**Estimated Cost**
Nil								

17.3 PACIFIC HIGHWAY - ROAD HANDOVER UPDATE

Director: **Ben Zeller**

Responsible Officer: **Kim Anderson**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the Pacific Highway – Road handover update report.

REPORT

Richmond Valley Council is seeking to resolve the reclassification of approximately 16 km of bypassed road corridors (Langs Way, Baraang Drive, and Tuckombil Road) from State Roads to Regional Roads following the completion of the Woolgoolga to Ballina Pacific Highway Upgrade. These corridors, which were previously part of the State managed network, now serve primarily local and regional traffic and should fall within Council's jurisdiction.

This project is identified in the delivery program and is a key enabler for several strategic initiatives including the Mid-Richmond Place Plans, Three Villages Cycleway and Woodburn Streetscape improvements. A mutually beneficial agreement for the reclassification has never been negotiated between Council and Transport for NSW (TfNSW) since the completion of the highway upgrade with Council's position is that several assets remain in poor condition and have accompanying safety implications that require significant investment to rectify.

Council has consistently advocated for a resolution to this issue and has recently conducted productive discussions, particularly with the TfNSW Deputy Secretary, Road Maintenance and Resilience.

TfNSW has subsequently indicated its renewed intention to transfer these corridors to Council and has held preliminary discussions to clarify the scope, standards, and funding arrangements associated with the handover. The previous lack of formal communication and timeline has created uncertainty for Council's asset planning and budgeting processes.

To support the reclassification process, Council has engaged Living Infrastructure Pty Ltd as a specialist consultant, with the project scheduled for completion by 30 June 2026. The consultancy aims to streamline assessment timeframes, mitigate organisational and financial risks, and maximise Council's access to available funding throughout the handover process. Project activities include detailed condition assessments of the assets, forecasting of costs and liabilities, analysis of maintenance and renewal requirements, and the development of costings for any necessary rectification works.

Following a stakeholder site inspection in early December 2025, a range of asset defects and required rectification works were identified. These works include shoulder grading, heavy patching, crack sealing, guard rail replacement, stockpile remediation, river slip repairs, and safety enhancements at the interchange roundabouts. To meet the required project timeframes, it is proposed that TfNSW undertake a portion of the rectification works and provide a financial contribution to enable Council to complete the remaining works.

Council has previously opposed assuming maintenance responsibility for the concrete roundabouts at the Woodburn and Broadwater Interchanges due to the significant costs associated with meeting traffic control requirements on a motorway corridor. Following recent site inspections, proposed rectification works now include the installation of a continuous 5-metre concrete strip along the outer edge of each roundabout, which will enhance safety and additionally improve sight distances for motorists.

Council is also negotiating with TfNSW for a financial contribution to support the restoration of towns and villages impacted by the highway bypass. This negotiation includes consideration of funding to assist with the Woodburn CBD streetscape improvements as part of the broader asset handover consideration.

Further work is being undertaken for the potential reclassification of MR145 – Woodburn Coraki Road/Casino Coraki Road from a Regional classified road to a NSW State owned asset. This road is a critical transport link providing essential connectivity, facilitating economic activity, enabling access to services, and maintaining resilience within the broader transport network, particularly during natural disaster events when alternative routes are regularly compromised. Given its strategic importance and the scale of maintenance and renewal obligations required to sustain its performance, MR145 is more appropriately managed as a State Road.

A further report will be presented to Council as the project progresses to provide ongoing updates and provide for recommendation a final negotiated position with Transport for NSW for the reclassification of this road asset.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

17.4 CIVIC HALL MASTERPLAN

Director: **Ben Zeller**

Responsible Officer: **Kim Anderson**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the Civic Hall Masterplan report and proposed community consultation, and that following consultation, a further report will be presented to Council seeking adoption of the final Master Plan.

REPORT

Council, with the assistance of STEA Architecture consultants, had prepared a Draft Masterplan for the Casino Civic Hall. Public consultation commenced in June 2019 with a workshop held at the Civic Hall, where feedback and information were gathered from stakeholders and interested community members. The draft document was subsequently developed over several months, supported by specialist trades and consultants engaged to provide expert input across relevant disciplines.

The draft Masterplan provided a detailed assessment of the condition of the Civic Hall and outlined potential development and restoration opportunities. It placed strong emphasis on reinstating the building's original art deco character while ensuring contemporary utility and functionality. The document addressed all aspects of the halls structure and its compliance with applicable building codes and regulations that influence its operation and use. Significant consideration had been given to the hall's role as a performing arts venue, reflected in the detailed analysis of associated theatre technologies and operational requirements.

Renewed cost estimates for the proposed renewal works have been prepared to support Council's pursuit of future funding opportunities and to demonstrate a clear strategic approach to the long-term management of the Civic Hall. Since the commencement of the Masterplan process, Council has secured grant funding that enabled renewal of the main hall floor, lighting upgrades, installation of fans, improvements to the speaker system, transition to a functional chair system, and interior painting.

The high-level estimate for major refurbishment works, building extensions, and comprehensive theatre and services upgrades is $5,587,612. Council will identify appropriate grant funding opportunities, with delivery of the works likely undertaken in stages.

The formal adoption of the draft Masterplan was delayed due to the impacts of COVID-19 and subsequent natural disasters. It is proposed that the draft Masterplan be placed on public exhibition for 28 days, with notification provided to original stakeholders and the broader community, inviting comment and feedback prior to presenting a final draft to Council for adoption at a future meeting.

The Casino Civic Hall features in the current Community Strategic Plan with a specific action 4B1.3 'Seek funding for upgrades to Casino Civic Hall to attract more touring performances.' Adoption of the masterplan is the first step toward achieving this action.

Click on the following link to view the plan http://richmondvalley.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Casino-civic-hall-master-plan-Rev-19-08-2020.pdf

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Revised Masterplan Cost Estimate - 2026 (under separate cover)

17.5 QUARTERLY CAPITAL WORKS UPDATE

Director: **Ben Zeller**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Quarterly Capital Works Update.

REPORT

Council adopted a significant Capital Works program budget for the 2025/26 financial year, of $79,543,272. Via quarterly adjustments, the budget is varied by Council approval, to allow for changes in delivery timeframes, new funding announcements, and delivery impacts because of market and environmental conditions.

As of 31 December 2025, the Capital Works budget has increased to $90,406,974.

This budget consists of 603 individual 'projects' and can be summarised as follows:

- 143 projects with a budget of greater than $50,000 with a total budget of $88,184,774
- 460 projects with a budget of less than $50,000 with a total budget of $2,222,200

As of 31 December 2025, actual expenditure of $24,661,399 has been incurred against the budget of $90,406,974 or 27.3%.

Some major projects and programs are scheduled for significant progress in the next six months, which will increase the percentage spent against budget. These include:

- NRLX Effluent System
- Bruxner Highway Roundabout and Industrial Activation
- Rappville Sewerage Scheme
- Tatham Bridges
- Woodburn – Evans Head Shared Pathway
- Casino Suspension Bridge
- Stan Payne Oval Lighting Upgrade
- Urban sealed roads EPAR allocation
- Local sealed roads EPAR allocation
- Regional roads EPAR allocation

The 603 projects currently under management by Council's project teams can be further summarised by their status as follows:

- 198 in the planning and/or design phase
- 190 in the delivery phase
- 183 completed
- 32 to be removed/transferred to next year's program

Council has several 'high value' projects as part of this year's program. These can be summarised as follows noting that budget amounts are for this financial year only:

Tatham Bridges:

Status: Delivery Phase

Budget: $8.9 million

Spent (at 31/12/25): $5.6 million (62.9%)

Bridges are open to traffic, with removal of old bridges completed in February 2026. Final progress claims to be reconciled and project decommission to finish by first quarter 2026.

NRLX Effluent System:

Status: Planning Phase

Budget: $5.7 million

Spent (at 31/12/25): $106,000 (1.8%)

Negotiations are close to finalisation with a company who applied for the market tender. The likely program will see completion in third quarter 2026 with the majority of budget spent by mid-2026.

Woodburn/Evans Head Shared Pathway:

Status: Delivery Phase

Budget: $5.4 million

Spent (at 31/12/25): $539,000 (9.9%)

Construction has commenced with initial drainage and footpath works progressing. Project completion estimated for mid-2026.

Casino Industries Activation – Bruxner Highway Roundabout and Internal Works:

Status: Delivery Phase

Budget: $6.6 million

Spent (at 31/12/25): $1.4 million (21%)

Road widening for the roundabout has commenced with other work around land acquisition, power easements and full subdivision planning underway. This project is estimated for completion by mid-2026.

Rappville Sewerage Scheme:

Status: Delivery Phase

Budget: $4.8 million

Spent (at 31/12/25): $224,000 (4.6%)

Section 60 application is close to approval. Community consultation for construction phase is commencing next week with a significant spend on pressure sewer pods undertaken in preparation for installation. This project is due for completion and commissioning in mid-2026.

Councillors have been issued with a hard copy of the quarterly Capital Works Update Report (as of 31 December 2025) to support them in providing accurate updates to constituents.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

17.6 CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2025

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

Responsible Officer: **Ngarie Macqueen**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Customer Service Report for the period 1 October – 31 December 2025.

REPORT

Customer Service Delivery

Council's team is committed to consistently delivering professional and caring customer service to the Richmond Valley community through all areas of works performed. The information contained within this quarterly report demonstrates the significant variety and volume of tasks completed by Council's customer-facing staff working within several different teams throughout the organisation. Relevant benchmarks, as outlined in the Customer Service Charter and Standards, are discussed below where appropriate.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TEAM

Call Statistics

A total of 8,601 calls were handled by the contact centre team during the reporting period. This includes 5,620 calls received through the queue, 128 calls directly to Customer Experience (CE) agents and 2,853 outbound calls made by CE staff. The contact centre has exceeded all service targets for the reporting period, including 84.85% of calls answered within industry standard of 30 seconds. The average time each caller spends in the queue is 18 seconds, 0.63% average of abandoned calls, and an average call time of 2:37 minutes.

A total of 39,441 calls were handled by the contact centre team during the 2025 calendar year. This includes 24,729 calls received through the queue, 563 calls directly to Customer Experience (CE) agents and 14,149 outbound calls made by CE staff.

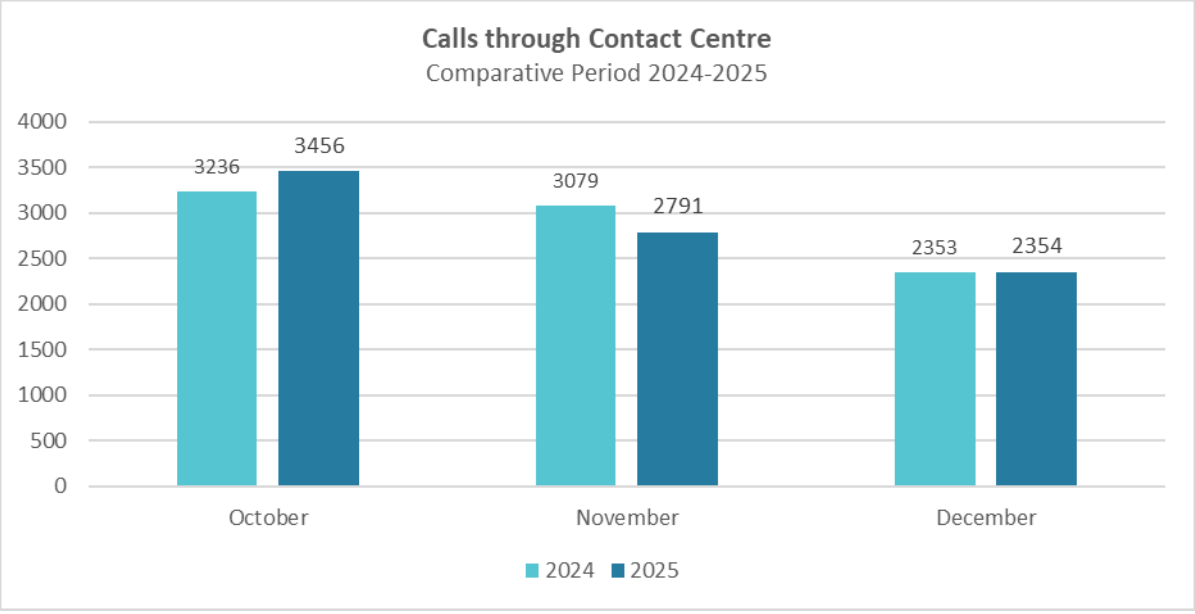


Figure 1: Calls received through the contact centre

Receipt and Administration Statistics

A total of 2,713 receipts were processed for the reporting period. November saw an increase in the number of receipts processed, which can be attributed to the rates instalment period.

Customers preferred payment methods are as follows:

- 60 % EFTPOS
- 24% cash
- 12% bank transfer
- 4% cheque

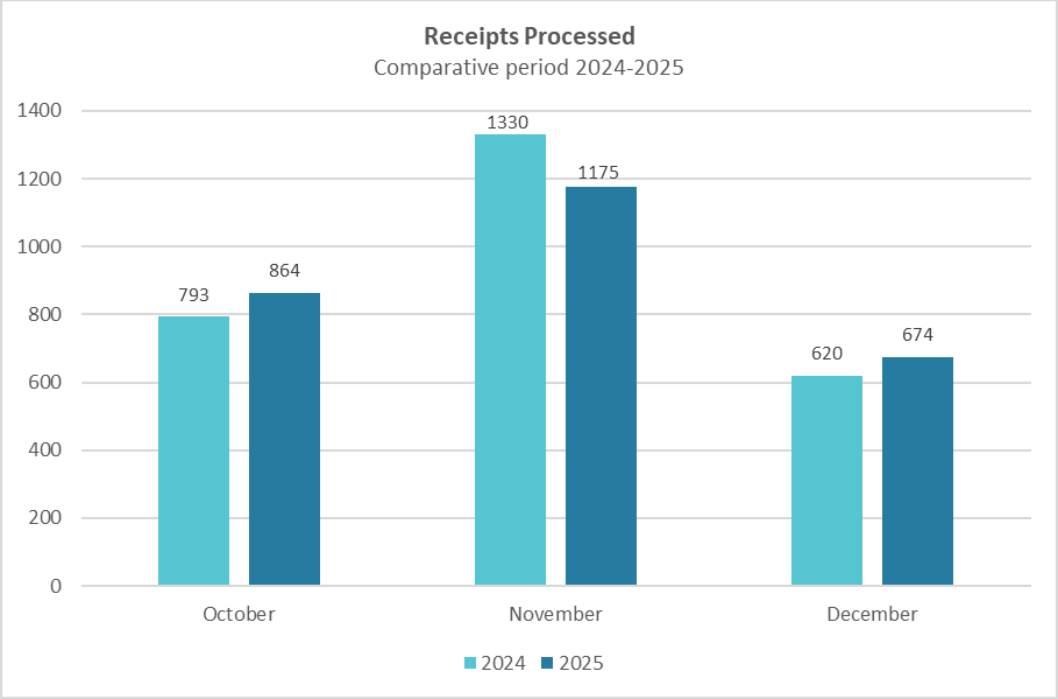


Figure 2: Total number of receipts

Certificates and Customer Requests

A total of 438 Section 735A, 10.7, and 603 Certificates were received in the reporting period with 99.5% completed within set timeframes in accordance with Council's service standards.

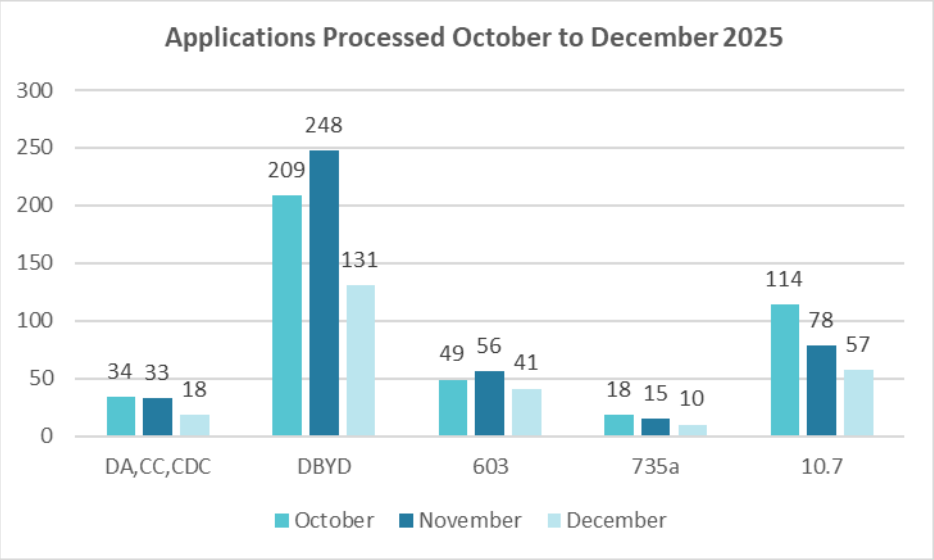


Figure 3. Applications received

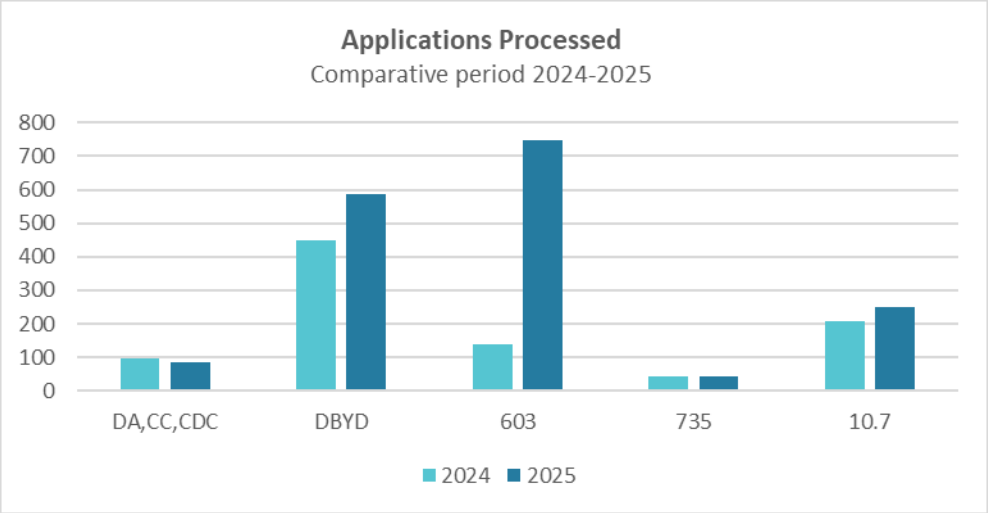


Figure 4. Applications comparison

OneRoad – Key Statistics

Members of the CE team collaborate with Roads and Drainage, Events, and Assets teams, as well as Emergency Services to ensure all scheduled and unplanned road incidents are entered through the One Road portal in a timely manner. Road users can be confident conditions and closures on Live Traffic app are current and are regularly updated to include details of expected delays and alternative routes to minimise disruptions.

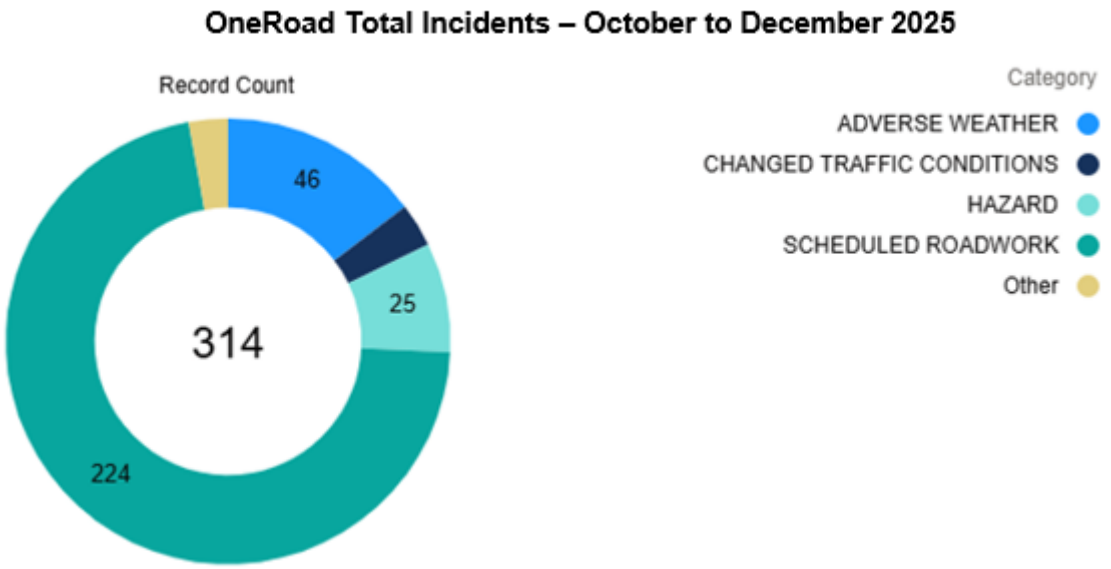


Figure 5: Total planned and unplanned road incidents recorded

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT TEAM

Development Concierge

The Development Concierge fielded 547 enquiries during the reporting period. Most of the enquiries for the reporting period were in relation to residential alterations and additions, including swimming pools and sheds.

The Development Concierge remains committed to customer response service levels, by end of the next business day. Complex enquiries may require greater research which is generally done with the assistance of technical staff. Customer enquiries are answered with verbal and email responses.

The first responders continue to offer a portal assist service to applicants, providing full case management throughout the assessment process to ensure customers receive quality support and imposed timeframes are achieved.

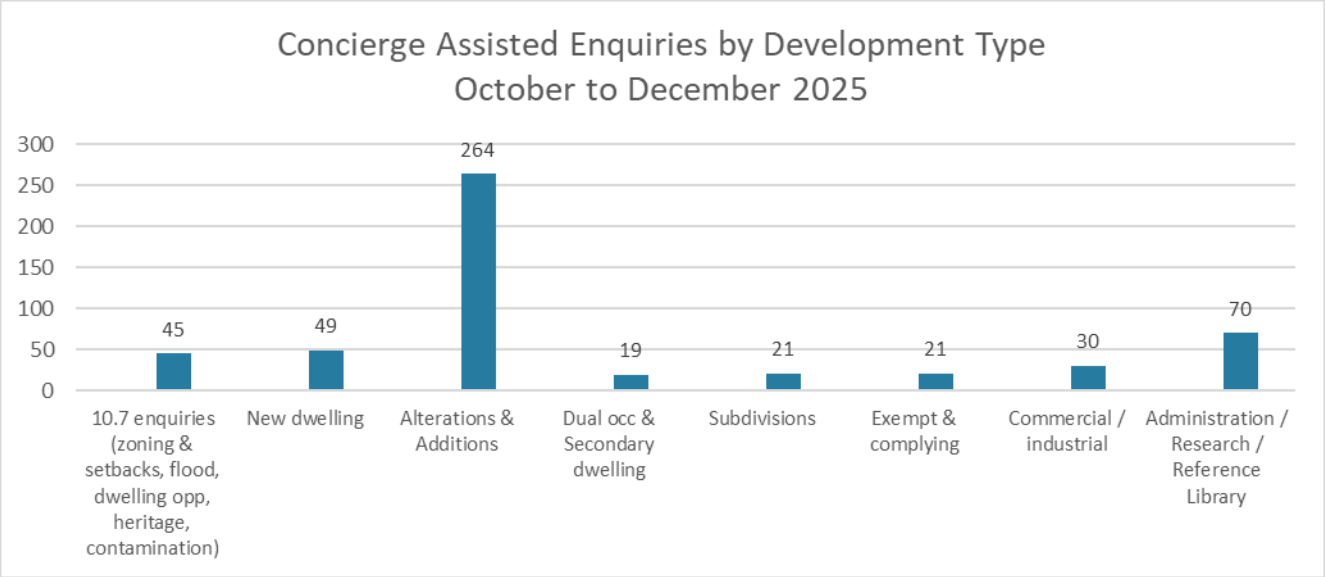
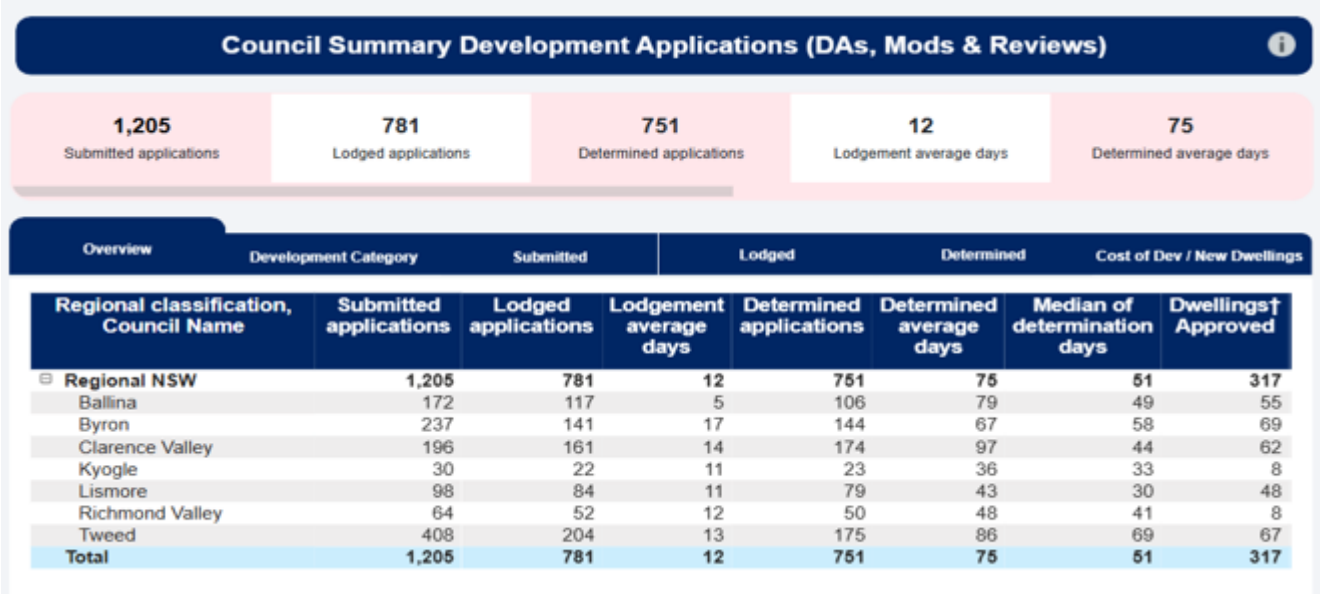


Figure 6: Concierge enquiries by type

E-Planning Portal – Key Statistics

To combat the national housing crisis, the NSW Government has set a target for an additional 377,000 homes in NSW by 2029. To achieve this, all councils have been given notice to reduce assessment times in line with the Minister's expectations, with the aim of fast tracking the approval process and achieving the new home target within the tight timeframe. Councils' pre-assessment and assessment times will be monitored monthly by the Department of Planning to ensure they are maintaining their assigned assessment times.

Council regularly delivers the most efficient assessment times across all development types, in comparison to all councils in the Northern Rivers area.



Council Summary Development Applications (DAs, Mods & Reviews)

1,205	781	751	12	75
Submitted applications	Lodged applications	Determined applications	Lodgement average days	Determined average days

Overview | Development Category | Submitted | Lodged | Determined | Cost of Dev / New Dwellings

Regional classification, Council Name	Submitted applications	Lodged applications	Lodgement average days	Determined applications	Determined average days	Median of determination days	Dwellings† Approved
Regional NSW	**1,205**	**781**	**12**	**751**	**75**	**51**	**317**
Ballina	172	117	5	106	79	49	55
Byron	237	141	17	144	67	58	69
Clarence Valley	196	161	14	174	97	44	62
Kyogle	30	22	11	23	36	33	8
Lismore	98	84	11	79	43	30	48
Richmond Valley	64	52	12	50	48	41	8
Tweed	408	204	13	175	86	69	67
Total	**1,205**	**781**	**12**	**751**	**75**	**51**	**317**

Figure 7: NSW Planning Portal Council summary comparison

Application Type	Totals	October	November	December
Total DA Received	**64**	23	28	13
Total CC Received	**19**	9	5	5
Complying Development	**2**	2	0	0
Subdivision Certificate	**7**	2	4	5
S138 - Road Reserve Activities	**6**	7	4	5
S68 - Plumbing Permits & Events	**87**	40	30	17
PC Appointments	**24**	12	6	6
Occupation Certificate	**29**	14	10	5
Building Certificate	**5**	2	2	1
Private Certificate	**27**	10	7	10

Figure 8: Applications received via the NSW Planning Portal

REGIONAL LIBRARY TEAM

New Members and Visitation – Key Statistics

The figures below display a comparison of newly joined members to the Regional Library service, and visits to all Regional Library branches throughout the October-December period. There was a 7% increase in the number of new members joining the Regional Library as compared to the same period in 2024, with overall visitation up by 110.77%. This large increase in visitation relates in part to an issue with the gates that measure visitation to library buildings not functioning correctly during this quarter in 2024.

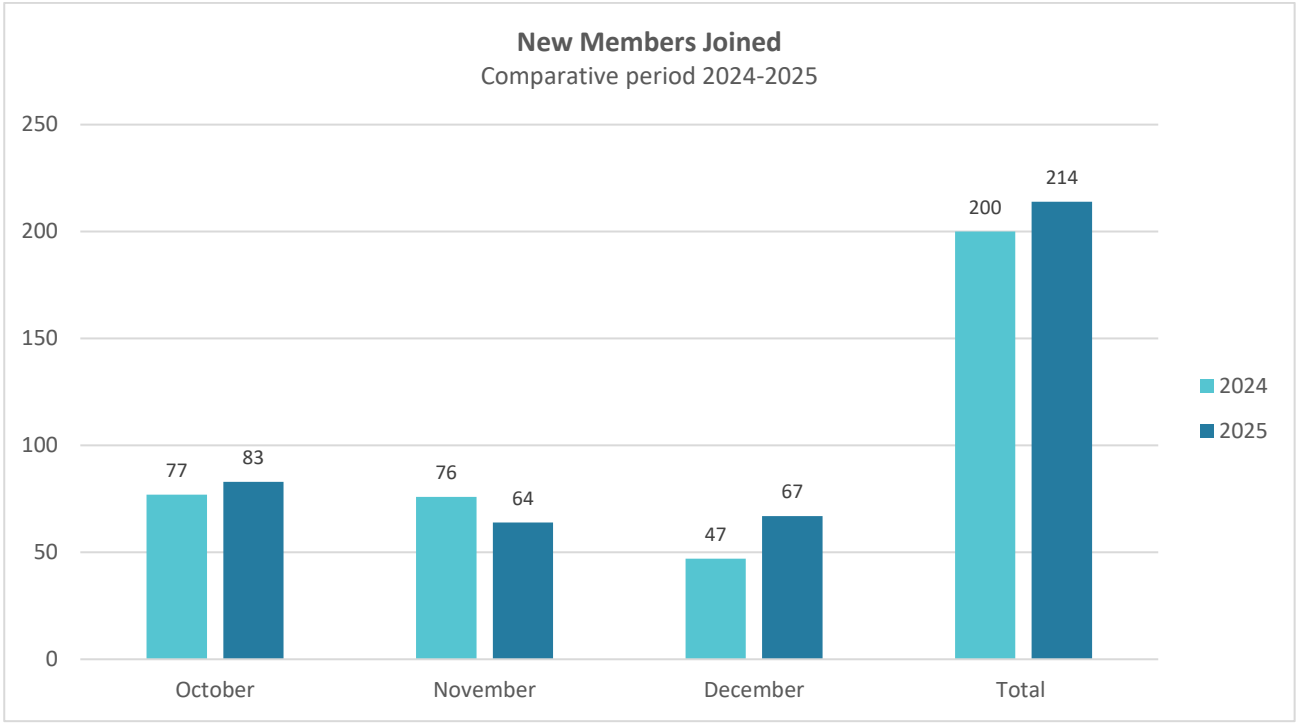


Figure 9: The number of new members to join the Regional Library

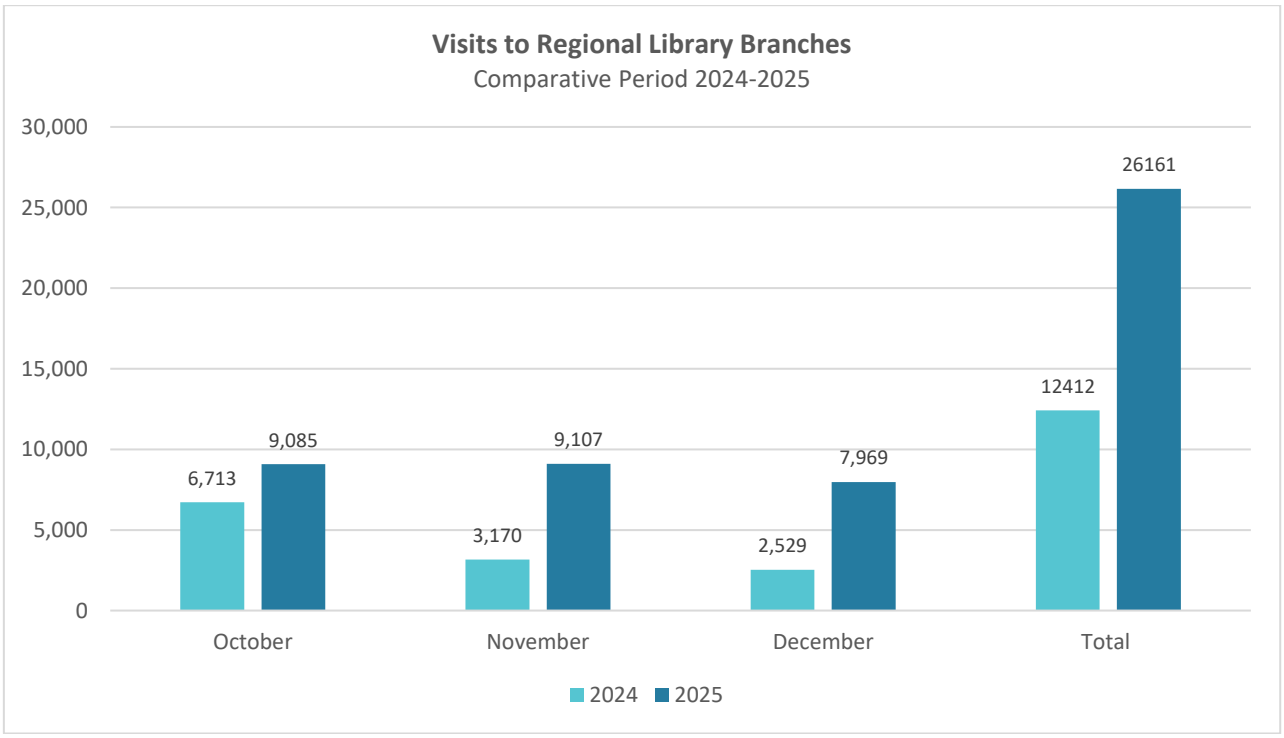


Figure 10: Visits to Regional Library branches

Loans for the Regional Library – Key Statistics

The figures below display the number of loans for the Regional Library's physical and digital collections for the October-December period. As compared to the same period for the previous year there has been a 18.57% increase in digital loans, and a 4.74% decrease in physical loans.

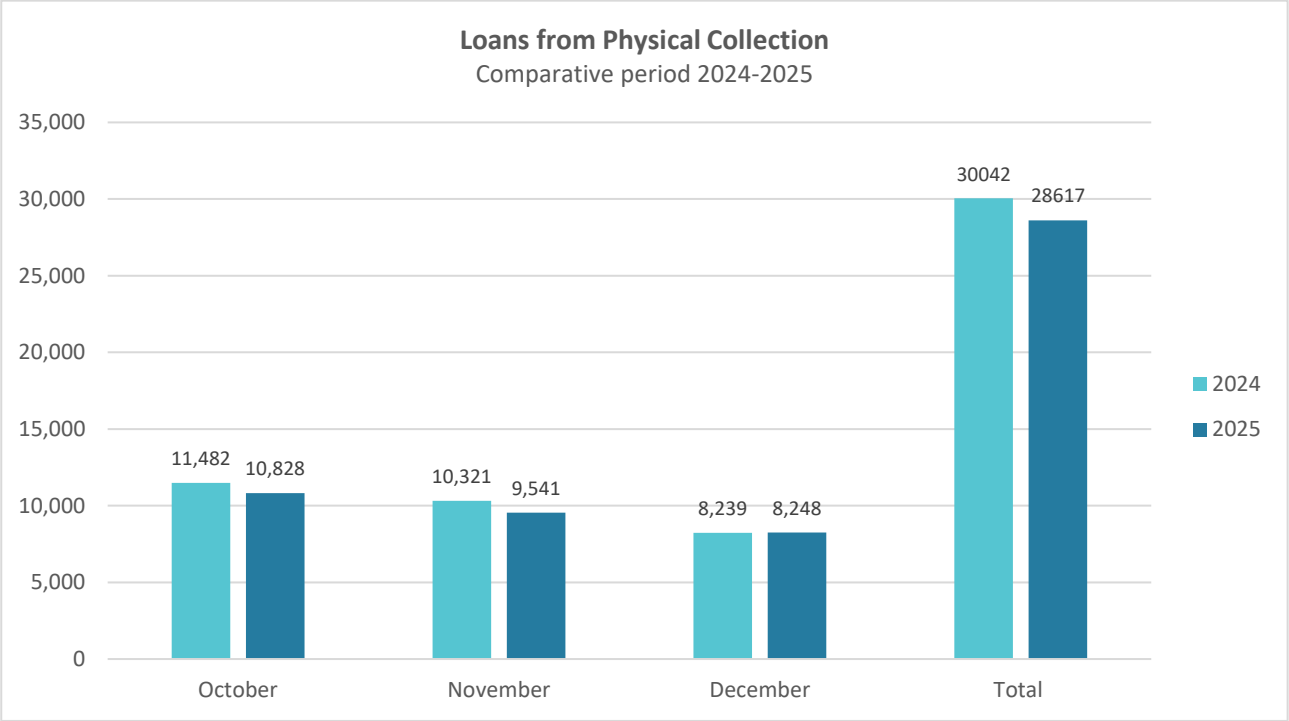


Figure 11: Loans from the Regional Library's physical collection

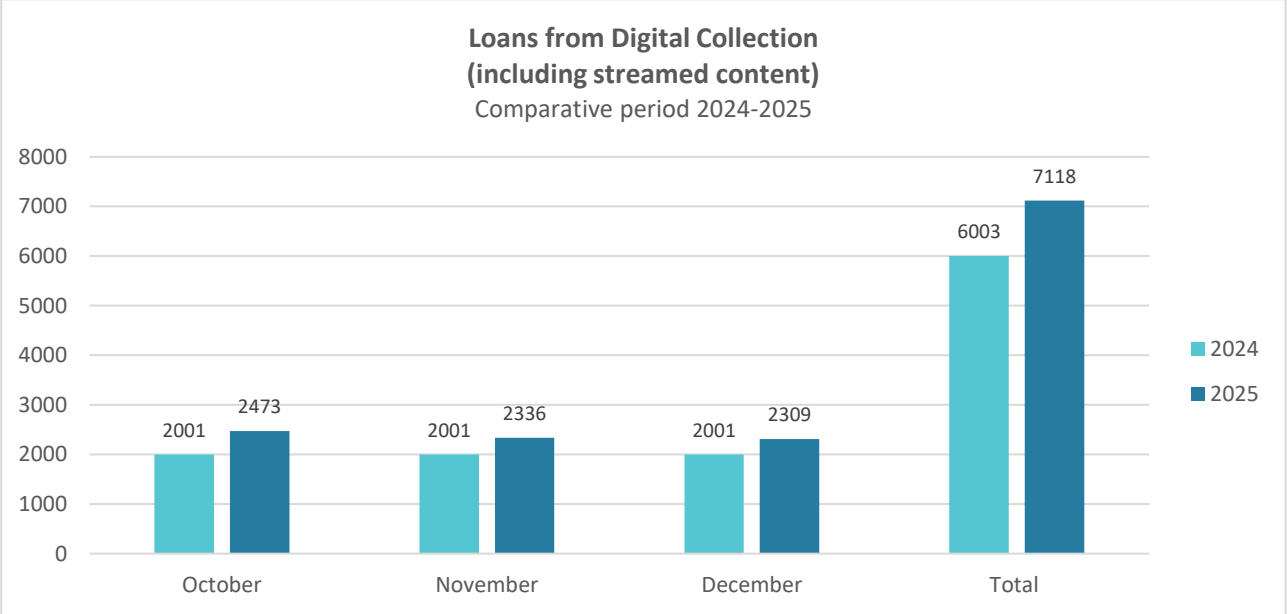


Figure 12: Loans from the Regional Library's digital collection

Regional Library Programs and Events – Key Statistics

The Regional Library team continues to develop and run a range of programs and events for community members of all ages both onsite at library branches and in an outreach capacity within

the community. During the October-December period there was a 21.22% increase in the number of programs and events held and a 16% increase in the number of attendees as compared to the same period in 2024.

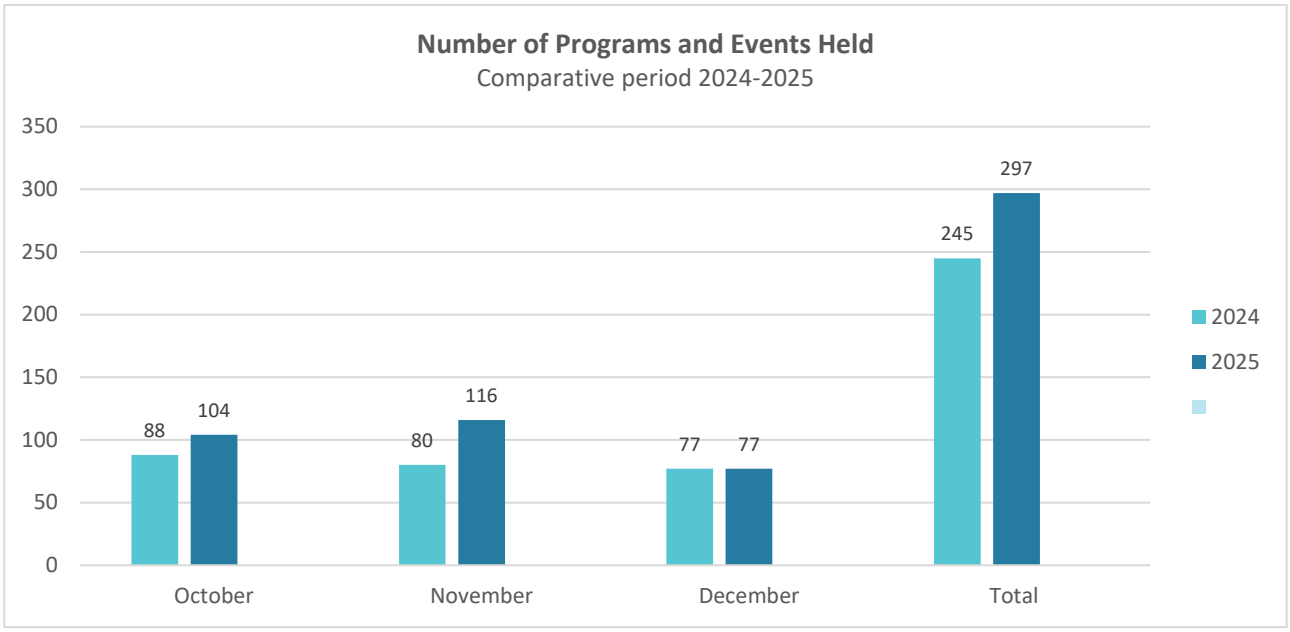


Figure 13: Number of programs and events held by the Regional Library

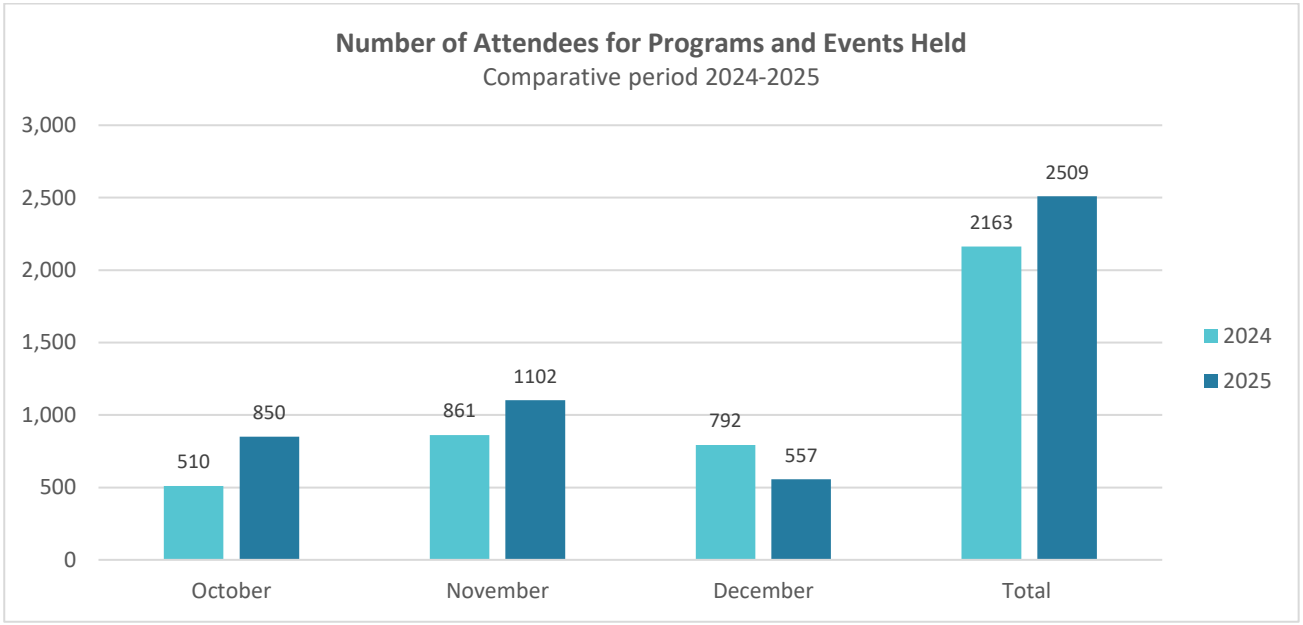


Figure 14: Number of attendees for programs and events held by the Regional Library

Richmond Valley Council Team

Customer Request Management System - Key Statistics

During the reporting period, 2,285 new requests were logged. Waste and Resource Recovery were the highest percent of requests received for this quarter, which can be attributed in part to the additional collection service in Evans Head over the Christmas period.

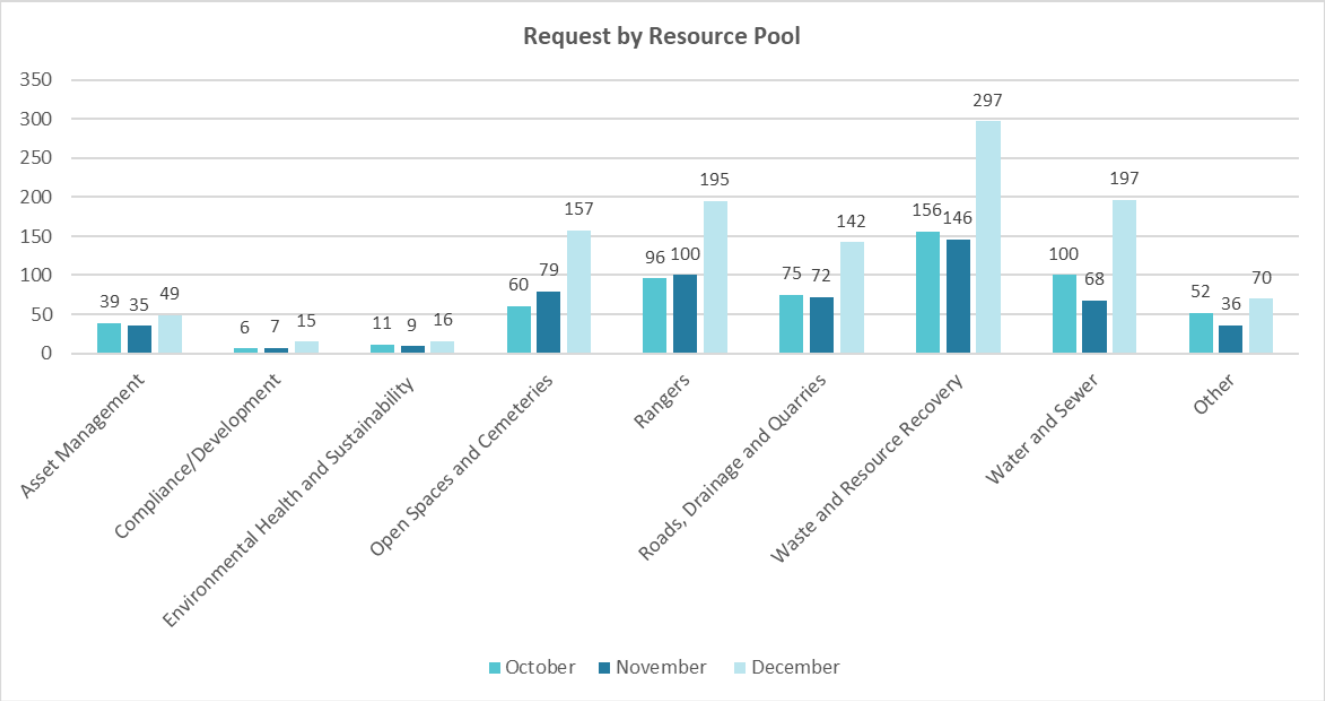


Figure 15: Number of customer requests received

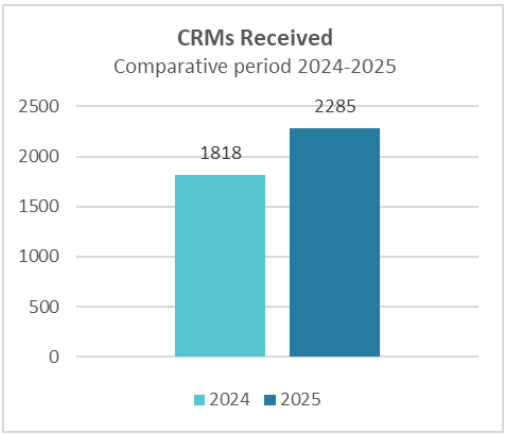


Figure 16. Customer requests comparison

CONCLUSION

The data presented in this report reflects the breadth of work continuously being performed by Richmond Valley Council's customer-facing staff; from facilitating the dissemination of Council and community information, supporting Development Applications, responding to direct community requests, through to facilitating access to literature, research, and a place to relax in our Regional Library branches.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

17.7 GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION REPORT - DECEMBER 2025 & JANUARY 2026

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

Responsible Officer: **Rylee Vidler**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Grant Application Information Report for the months of December 2025 and January 2026.

REPORT

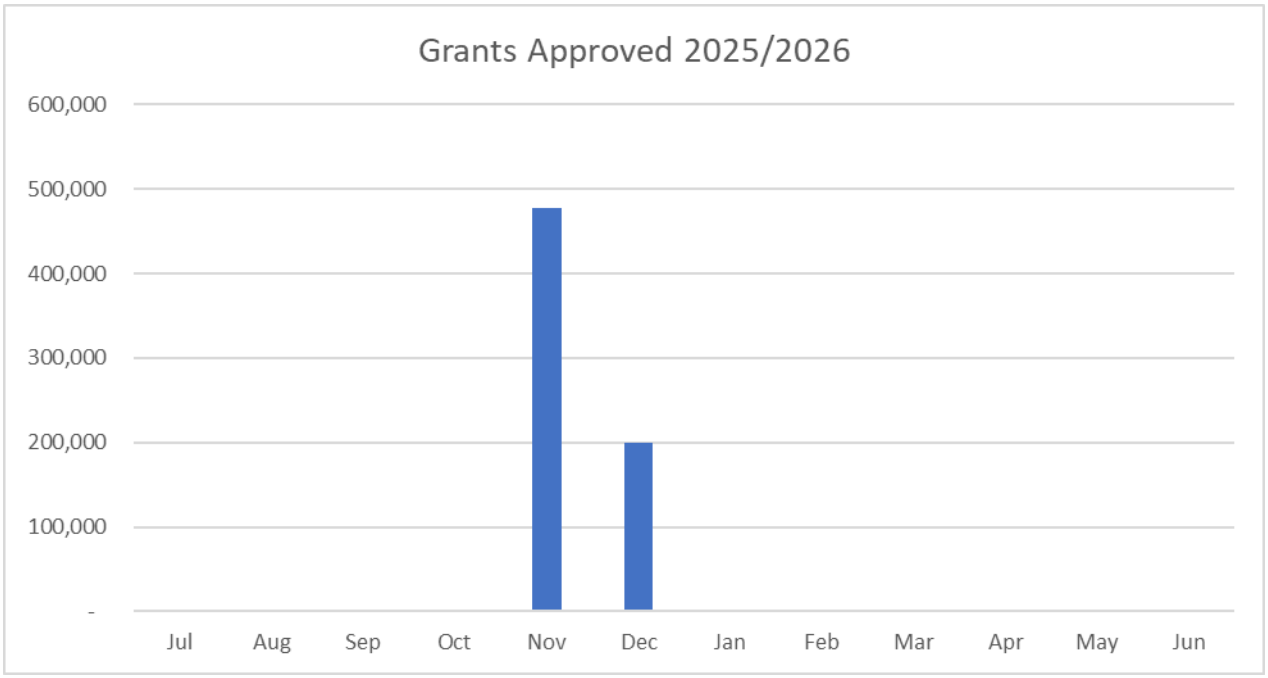
This report provides information on grant applications that have been approved, grants that have been received, grant applications that were unsuccessful and grant applications that were submitted for the months of December 2025 and January 2026.

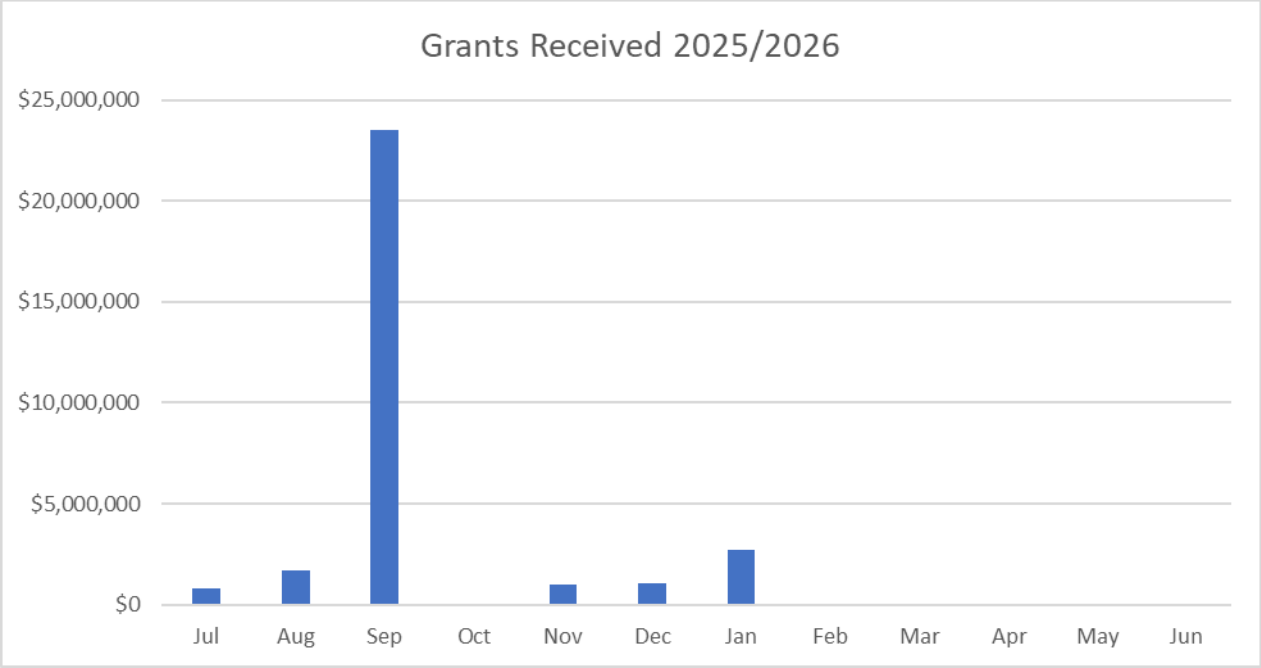
During December, Council was notified of three successful grant applications and submitted seven new applications. Council was not notified of any unsuccessful grant applications.

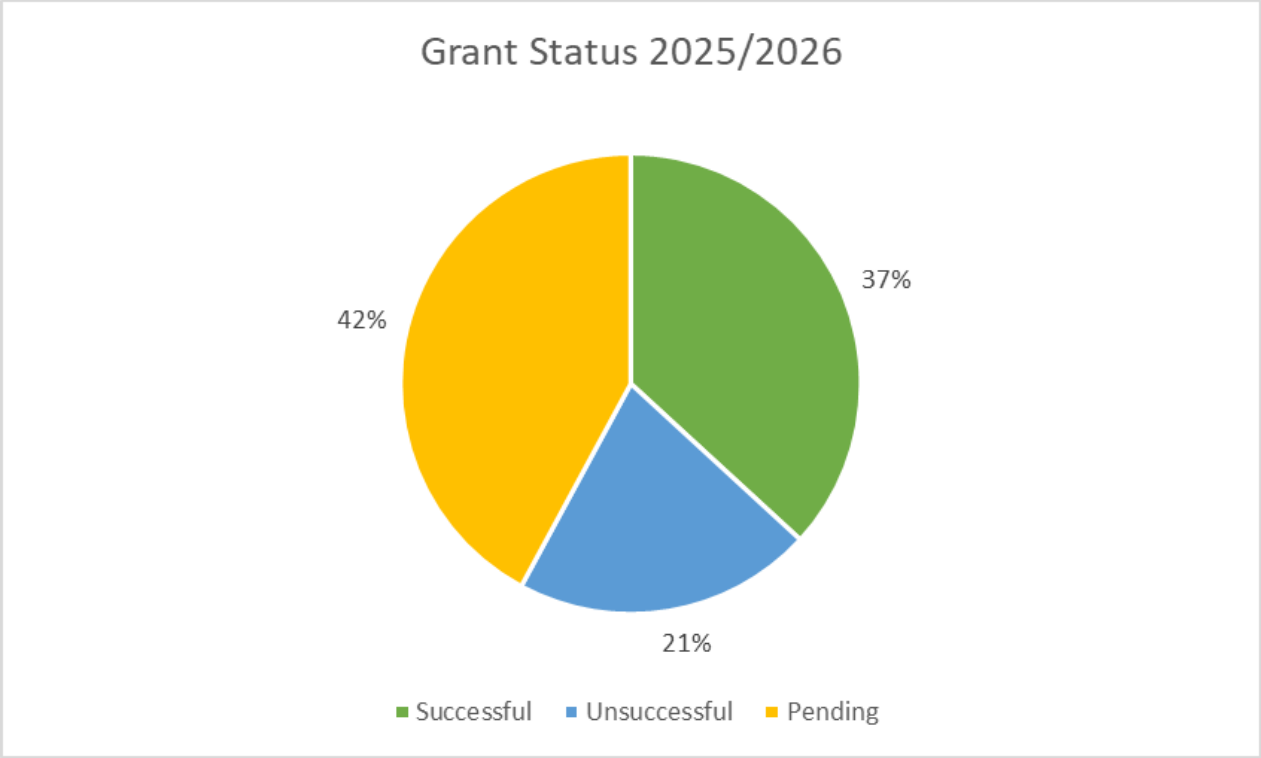
During January, Council did not submit any new applications and were not notified of any successful or unsuccessful applications.

Council received $1,054,959 from three approved grants during December, and $2,718,800 from three approved grants in January.

A summary of grants approved and received, as well as the status of applications for the current financial year to 31 January is shown below:




Grants Received 2025/2026
$25,000,000
$20,000,000
$15,000,000
$10,000,000
$5,000,000
$0
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec
Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun


Grant Status 2025/2026
37%
42%
21%
Successful
Unsuccessful
Pending

Grants that have been approved - December 2025

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Date Approved
Canterbury Colches Street Casino Improvements	Transport for NSW (State)	Towards Zero Safer Roads Program - Fatal Crash Response	$ 108,256	$ 100,000	$ 8,256	30 October 2025	16 December 2025
Comment: This funding will be used to improve the safety of the intersection at Canterbury and Colches Street Casino. Proposed work includes tree trimming, pedestrian refuge islands and signage, pavement works and line marking.							
McDonalds Park Boat Ramp Access Track Repair	Transport for NSW (State)	Boating Infrastructure Maintenance	$ 65,200	$ 49,900	$ 15,300	25 September 2025	22 December 2025
Comment: This funding will be used to repair the washouts in the McDonalds Park boat ramp.							
Coraki Boat Ramp Resurface	Transport for NSW (State)	Boating Infrastructure Maintenance	$ 78,015	$ 50,000	$ 28,015	25 September 2025	22 December 2025
Comment: This funding will be used to resurface the top of Coraki boat ramp.							

Grant Applications Submitted - December 2025

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted
Increase Water Security for Casino Racecourse and Showground	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (State)	Crown Reserves Improvement Fund	$ 546,365	$ 546,365	$ -	4 December 2025
Comment: If successful, this funding will allow Council to install two 245,000L water tanks, stormwater and irrigation pipelines, electric pumps and a pump shelter to boost on-site water storage.						
Richmond Park Masterplan	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (State)	Crown Reserves Improvement Fund	$ 100,000	$ 100,000	$ -	4 December 2025
Comment: If successful, this funding will allow Council to develop a masterplan for the ongoing maintenance, improvement and rejuvenation of Richmond Park.						
Jabiru Wetland Continued Weed Maintenance	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (State)	Crown Reserves Improvement Fund	$ 20,000	$ 20,000	$ -	4 December 2025
Comment: If successful, this funding will allow Council to continue to manage invasive weed species throughout Richmond Park.						
Design of the Cassia Street Shared Path Evans Head	Transport for NSW (State)	Get NSW Active	$ 40,700	$ 40,700	$ -	12 December 2025
Comment: If successful, this funding will allow Council to develop shovel ready designs for a shared pathway along Cassia Street to connect Currajong Street to Ash Street (Evans						
Design of the Casino Active Transport Corridor	Transport for NSW (State)	Get NSW Active	$ 278,300	$ 278,300	$ -	12 December 2025
Comment: If successful, this funding will allow Council to develop shovel ready designs for a active transport corridor connecting Dyraaba Street industrial precinct, Northern Rivers Rail Trail, Casino CBD, Queen Elizabeth Park and Casino Lifestyle Village.						
Design of Shared Pathway from Woodburn to Broadwater	Transport for NSW (State)	Get NSW Active	$ 368,000	$ 368,000	$ -	12 December 2025
Comment: If successful, this funding will allow Council to develop shovel ready designs for a shared pathway from Woodburn to Broadwater, connecting Richmond Street in Woodburn to Rileys Hill Road and Baraang Drive in Broadwater.						
Design of Enabling Infrastructure for Summerland Estate	Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (State)	Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund Round 4	$ 267,678	$ 250,000	$ 17,678	15 December 2025
Comment: If successful, this funding will allow Council to prepare construction-ready designs for the critical water and sewage enabling infrastructure to service over 1500 homes in the new Summerland Estate residential precinct at Fairy Hill, NSW.						

Grants that have been received - December 2025

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Date Received	Total Received
YES Program	Office of Local Government (State)	Local Government Apprentice, Trainee and Cadet Program Round 1	$ 519,276	$ 519,276	$ -	8 November 2024	$ 5,212 1 December 2025	$ 60,234
Comment: Payment received for second milestone claim.								
Roads to Recovery 2024/25 to 2028/29	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (Federal)	Roads to Recovery Program	$ 8,819,517	$ 8,819,517	$ -	N/A - Annual allocation	$ 101,560 17 December 2025	$ 1,404,443
Comment: Quarter 2 instalment for the 2025/2026 allocation.								
Broadwater Bridge	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (Federal)	Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (LRCIP)	$ 1,580,313	$ 1,580,313	$ -	N/A	$ 948,187 17 December 2025	$ 1,580,313
Comment: Final payment received for completion of project reporting.								

Grants that have been received - January 2026

Project Name	Funding Body	Funding Name	Project Value	Grant Funding	Council Funding	Application Submitted	Date Received	Total Received
AGRN1198 - Cyclone Alfred Recovery	NSW Reconstruction Authority (State)	Community Recovery Support Fund	Up to $1,000,000	Up to $1,000,000	$ -	N/A	$ 170,000 16 January 2026	$ 170,000
Comment: First instalment of funding for recovery works following Cyclone Alfred.								
Casino Industrial Precincts	Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (State)	Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund	$ 13,333,000	$ 9,969,000	$3,364,000	N/A	$ 1,993,800 22 January 2026	$ 7,814,034
Comment: Progress payment for works completed on Casino Industrial Precinct.								
Regional Roads Block Grant	Transport for NSW (State)	Regional Road Block Grant Program	$ 1,110,000	$ 1,110,000	$ -	N/A - Annual allocation	$ 555,000 28 January 2026	$ 1,110,000
Comment: Final 50% payment received.								

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

17.8 WRITE OFF OF MONIES UNDER DELEGATION

Director: **Ryan Gaiter**

Responsible Officer: **Sheree Ros**

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the write-off of monies totalling $2,165.27 under the General Manager's delegation.

REPORT

At Council's Ordinary Meeting held on 21 April 2015, it was resolved that where the General Manager exercises his delegation regarding write-offs that exceed $1,000, an information summary report be submitted to Council on a bi-annual basis.

This summary report covers the period commencing 1 July 2025 – 31 December 2025. The General Manager has exercised his delegation to write off monies over $1,000 two (2) times due to two concealed water leak applications.

- Property 145405 $1,032.15 – this write off was due to a concealed water leak which was identified due to excessive water consumption. The leak was identified 6.06.2025 and repaired on 6.06.2025. There was a major underground water leak in the front yard.
- Property 111745 $1,133.12 - this write off was due to a concealed water leak which was identified due to excessive water consumption. The leak was identified 15.09.2025 and repaired on 16.09.2025. The cause of the leak was old rural poly pipe.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

18 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

18.1 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

The following questions on notice were received from Councillor Robert Hayes

Question

1. What role does Council play in monitoring, protecting, and improving the health of the Richmond River, including current initiatives, partnerships with state agencies or community groups, and any future plans?

2. Could an update be provided on the status of the Floodplain Risk Management Plan review? In addition, which elements of the proposed update will come from the Flood Risk Committee?

Response

1. **Health of the Richmond River**

   The NSW *Local Government Act 1993* gives Councils broad responsibilities to provide for the current and future needs of the local community, specifically Section 9(1)(e) requires:

   "to properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development."

   However, the overall responsibility for catchment management and governance rests with the NSW Government. Plans to improve catchment management are outlined in the Far North Coast Regional Water Strategy and Implementation Plan.

   The *Richmond Valley Water for Life 2050* strategy sets out the priorities for water security for the communities of the Richmond Valley, and ecological health of the river and catchment is acknowledged in this strategy to underpin water security in the area.

   Council continually monitors water quality upstream of the Jabour Weir and recently worked in partnership with WaterNSW to assess risks to Casino's source water quality under the *Town Water Risk Reduction Program*. Rous is the water utility for the Mid-Richmond catchment area, and takes the lead in managing source water quality for the towns of Coraki, Woodburn, Evans Head and Broadwater.

   There are 5 LGAs that make up the Richmond River catchment area. While Richmond Valley Council LGA covers around 40% of the total of the Richmond River Catchment area, most of the land adjacent to the river and tributaries is private land used for primary production, with cattle grazing being prominent in the upper reaches of the catchment and sugarcane and cropping prominent on the lower floodplains. Apart from a few small Council-owned town parks, Council has limited direct control over land management and agricultural practices that impact river health on a catchment scale.

   Rous County Council's *Richmond River Estuary Coastal Management Program Scoping Study 2023* highlighted the cause to the poor health of the Richmond River estuary is catchment-wide, coming from sediment/erosion, nutrients, acid sulfate soils, blackwater, and pesticides.

   Council's Sustainable Communities and Environment team is involved in the following initiatives that aim to improve and protect the health of the Richmond River.

Riparian and Wetland

- Initiative funded by the NSW Government for the restoration and protection works across 3 sites in the Richmond Valley at a cost of $300,000 over 2 years, comprising Windsor Park Restoration Work; Jabiru Geneebeinga Wetlands Weed Control and Protection Works; and

the Riverbank Protection Showcase Project in Partnership with the Casino Food Company at the Casino raw water pump station.

- Other grant funded projects to improve riparian areas and wetlands, such as McDonalds Park, North Richmond Terrace restoration work and restoration under the Flying Fox Habitat Restoration Program funded by LG NSW, and the team continues to actively seek grant funding.

Partnerships and collaborations

- Participating in the Northern Rivers Disaster Adaptation Planning and DCCEEW coastal practitioners working groups.
- Richmond River Coastal Management Program being led by Rous, which is currently under review by Richmond Valley Council to determine level of contribution and feasibility compared with other initiatives such as contributions via the Richmond River Collaborative Partnership Steering Committee**.**
- Ongoing support for community groups such as Landcare and the Richmond Riverkeeper, such as participating and contributing to the Richmond Riverfest, along with environmental restoration works and tree planting/seedling growing in collaboration with local schools.
- Initiatives to raise community awareness and garner support for protecting the health of our waterways.
- Meeting operational obligations to prevent pollution from Council managed activities and facilities, such as compliance in waste, wastewater and stormwater management.
- Managing catchment risks through regular inspection of on-site sewerage management systems near waterways and monitoring of underground fuel tanks.

Numerous reports, including the *Richmond River Governance and Funding Framework* (2019) commissioned by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage with Councils in the Northern Rivers region, identified that the core challenge in restoring the ecological health of the Richmond River is overcoming fragmented, short-term policy approaches.

To address this core challenge, a priority focus of Council's Sustainable Communities team is to work with all catchment stakeholders through the Richmond River Collaborative Partnership Steering Committee. This committee is comprised of representatives from the 5 LGAs, several government agencies, First Nations representatives, Southern Cross University, key industry bodies and special interest community organisations. The committee is looking to propose a new governance structure that would bypass the core challenges and better manage Richmond River health.

2. **Flood Risk Management Study and Plan**

Council has been working with the Floodplain Risk Management Plan Committee (the Committee) and the consultant team at BMT to prepare a Floodplain Risk Management Plan (the Plan). BMT was to deliver a draft of the Plan to the Committee in November 2025, which was to be followed by a report to Council in December 2025, however, the need to undertake further technical review, relating to flood levels and the potential impacts on future development has led to delays. It is important that these issues are resolved to ensure a consistent approach to proposed development in the Mid-Richmond communities.

The Technical Working Group (TWG) recently met with the consultant team to resolve these issues and expedite the delivery of the draft Plan. As a result, BMT has committed to additional resourcing of the project to deliver the draft Plan towards the end of February 2026.

On receipt of the draft Plan, BMT will present the Committee with an overview of the Plan and receive its feedback, aiming to have the Committee endorse the draft prior to it being reported to Council.

Upon receiving Council's in-principle endorsement of the draft Plan, it will then be publicly exhibited. From there, submissions will be reviewed, with recommended amendments made to the Plan.

The amended Plan will be put to the Committee for final endorsement and reported to Council for adoption. This is anticipated to occur by mid-2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That the response to the Questions on Notice by Councillor Hayes, regarding the health of the Richmond River and the Flood Risk Management Study and Plan be received and noted.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Nil

19 QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING (IN WRITING)

20 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:

20.1 Tender - VP478065 - Casino Water Treatment Plant Augmentation - Project Management & Technical Support Services

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

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - (d)(i) 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 commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

21 RESOLUTIONS OF CLOSED COUNCIL